

SEA STATEMENT

FOR THE

OFFALY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

for:

Offaly County Council

Áras an Chontae
Charleville Road
Tullamore
County Offaly



by:

CAAS Ltd.

1st Floor
24-26 Ormond Quay Upper
Dublin 7



OCTOBER 2021

Table of Contents

Section 1	Introduction	1
1.1	Introduction and Legislative Context	1
1.2	Content of the SEA Statement	1
1.3	Implications of SEA for the Plan.....	1
Section 2	How Environmental Considerations were/were not integrated into the Plan	2
2.1	Introduction.....	2
2.2	Instances whereby Environmental Considerations were not integrated into the Plan.....	2
2.3	Consultations	3
2.4	Communication of environmental sensitivities throughout the SEA process	4
2.5	Appropriate Assessment.....	4
2.6	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	4
2.7	Consideration of Alternatives	4
2.8	Integration of environmental considerations into Zoning of the Plan	4
2.9	Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan.....	5
Section 3	Environmental Report and Submissions/ Observations	23
3.1	Introduction.....	23
3.2	SEA Scoping Notices and Submissions.....	23
3.3	Submissions on the Environmental Report for the Draft Plan	23
3.4	SEA documents including SEA Environmental Report	24
Section 4	Summary of Alternatives considered.....	25
4.1	Introduction.....	25
4.2	Limitations in Available Alternatives	25
4.3	Alternatives for Population Allocations.....	25
4.4	Alternatives for Rural Areas.....	26
4.5	Alternatives for Land Use Zoning	28
4.6	Reasons for choosing the alternatives for the Plan in the light of the other reasonable alternatives	33
Section 5	Monitoring Measures	36
5.1	Introduction.....	36
5.2	Indicators and Targets.....	36
5.3	Sources	36
5.4	Reporting and Responsibility	37

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Legislative Context

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027.

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including land use. The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004. The Regulations have been amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

1.2 Content of the SEA Statement

Where SEA is undertaken, the Regulations require that a Statement is made available to the public and the competent environmental authorities after the making of the Plan.

This Statement is referred to as an SEA Statement.

The SEA Statement is required to include information summarising:

- a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
- b) how the following have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan:
 - the environmental report,
 - submissions and observations made to the planning authority on the Draft Plan and Environmental Report, and
 - any transboundary consultations (these are not relevant to this SEA).
- c) the reasons for choosing the Plan in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- d) the measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

1.3 Implications of SEA for the Plan

SEA has been undertaken on the Plan and the findings of the SEA are expressed in an Environmental Report, the first published version of which accompanied the Draft Plan on public display. The Environmental Report was updated in order to take account of changes to the original Draft Plan that were made on foot of submissions and recommendations in the submissions.

Offaly County Council have been provided with the findings of SEA output during their consideration of the Plan and before the Plan was adopted.

Section 2 How Environmental Considerations were/were not integrated into the Plan

2.1 Introduction

Environmental considerations were presented to the Council for its consideration through:

1. Consultations;
2. Communication of environmental sensitivities throughout the SEA process;
3. Appropriate Assessment;
4. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
5. Consideration of alternatives;
6. Integration of environmental considerations; and
7. Integration of individual SEA and AA provisions into the Plan.

2.2 Instances whereby Environmental Considerations were not integrated into the Plan

The Plan, considered as a whole, contributes towards environmental protection and management and sustainable development and complies with various legislative requirements. This is identified throughout the SEA documentation.

Various Plan provisions that would contribute towards the sustainable development of the County would, at the same time, have the potential to conflict with the environment, were mitigation measures not taken into account. This is normal and mitigation measures have been integrated into the Plan to deal with these potential effects.

However, a small number of provisions have been adopted by the Elected Members as part of the Plan that are particularly internally inconsistent with the overall approach provided for by the Plan. These provisions relate are detailed below.

Rahan

As identified in the Chief Executive's Report with regard to Rahan's change in typology from a Sráid to a Village:

"For the purpose of the county development plan settlement hierarchy, the distinction made between Villages and Sráids is that Villages are serviced by mains wastewater treatment, whereas Sráids are not. Without mains wastewater treatment, a settlement is dependent on individual on-site effluent treatment systems and therefore cannot develop at a sustainable rate. Rahan has no mains wastewater treatment plant. College View housing estate is served by a shared septic tank system and the remainder of the properties in the Sráid have individual effluent treatment systems.

The policy approach for Sráids is the promotion of balanced sustainable development, in an incremental and consolidated manner with the emphasis on small scale development over a medium to long term period, in keeping with the character of the settlement. The Rahan Sráid Plan includes a variety of objectives to support local facilities and amenities, including the development of facilities to improve tourism potential (see also response to Submissions Ref. CDP/D/28).

It is recommended that Rahan is designated as a Sráid under the county settlement hierarchy, thus no change to the draft Plan."

Taking the above into account, there is potential for significant adverse environmental effects, including on water resources, ecology and human health, to occur as a result of lack of water services infrastructure – which could result in increased pressure for development in surrounding less well serviced and connected rural areas. These effects would be mitigated by measures providing for environmental protection and management that have been integrated into the Plan.

Various Land Use Zonings

Material Alterations (such as MA262, MA263, MA265, MA274, MA276, MA277, MA299, MA330, MA349, MA352, MA368, MA395, MA401, MA408 and MA409) that have been adopted as part of the Plan were advised against, with SEA documentation identifying at the time that:

"There is no planning justification for these Proposed Alterations, they would not align with objectives relating to sustainable development, relate to greenfield lands in many cases and would present additional, unnecessary and potentially significant adverse effects on various environmental components. Potentially significant adverse effects, alone and/or in combination with other similar changes alterations to zoning, would be likely to include:

- Effects on ecology and ecological connectivity

- Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces
- Increased loadings on water bodies
- Conflict with efforts to maximise sustainable compact growth and sustainable mobility
- Occurrence of adverse visual impacts

Where such alterations are beyond the established settlement envelope, potentially significant adverse effects would be likely to include:

- Difficulty in providing adequate and appropriate waste water treatment as a result of zoning outside of established built development envelopes of settlements
- Adverse impacts upon the economic viability of providing for public assets and infrastructure
- Adverse impacts upon carbon emission reduction targets in line with local, national and European environmental objectives
- Conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality
- Conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors
- Potential effects on human health as a result of potential interactions with environmental vectors

MA330 could potentially impact upon the protection of a European site and has been subject to Stage 2 AA. The AA recommended that the following text is integrated into the Plan at further modification stage: "Any proposal for development at these lands must demonstrate that it will not affect the nearby Ferbane Bog SAC, including as a result of changes to drainage patterns".

BLO-07 "Any proposal for development at the lands to the north west of the town as shown in the Ferbane Town Objectives Map must demonstrate that it will not affect the nearby Ferbane Bog SAC, including as a result of changes to drainage patterns." was integrated into the Plan to mitigate the concerns relating to MA330.

Similarly, in advance of the Draft Plan being placed out on public display a number of Members' motions were included that were advised against and identified by the SEA documentation at the time as having potential for likely significant environmental effects. These included: Enterprise and Employment zoning, Moneygall (has no established planning justification, would facilitate the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and would fail to consolidate zoning); New Residential Zoning, Rhode (not consistent with the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas); and a Boundary change at Dunkerrin Sráid (no established planning justification and would provide for a less compact form of development, facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the Sráid).

Architectural Heritage

Certain Material Alterations (MA422, MA423, MA424, MA425 and MA426) that were adopted as part of the Plan were advised against, with SEA documentation identifying at the time that these alterations:

"...would reduce the protection of architectural heritage by removing a structure that merits inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures from this list."

Wind Energy

Certain Material Alterations (MA440 and MA444) that were adopted as part of the Plan were advised against, with SEA documentation identifying at the time that these alterations:

"...would not provide the most evidence-based framework for development and has the potential to:

- Undermine and negate practical measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions climate change in compliance with high-level climate action policy; and
- Restrict the potential for wind energy development in the County, which is contrary to national energy policy that supports reductions in the reliance on fossil fuels and the development of renewable energy resources including wind energy infrastructure."

2.3 Consultations

As environmental authorities identified under the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, as amended, the following authorities were sent SEA scoping notices indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to the Offaly County Council: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht; Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; Environmental Protection Agency; Meath County Council; Westmeath County Council; Roscommon County Council; Galway County Council; Tipperary County Council; Laois County Council; and Kildare County Council.

Detail on submissions made on foot of the SEA scoping notice is provided under Section 3.2.

Detail is also provided on submissions that were made on the Draft Plan and/or the SEA Environmental Report while they were on public display (see Section 3.3).

2.4 Communication of environmental sensitivities throughout the SEA process

Environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan before it was placed on public display. Individual sensitivities that were considered by the Planning Team preparing the Plan included the following:

- European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas);
- Other Ecological Designations;
- Status of Surface and Ground Waters;
- Various entries to the Water Framework Directive's Register of Protected Areas;
- Groundwater Vulnerability;
- Water Services Capacity, Performance and Demand;
- Cultural heritage (archaeological and architectural) sensitivities; and
- Landscape Designations.

A number of these sensitivities are mapped on Figures 2.1 to 2.3.

2.5 Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Stage 2 AA have been undertaken alongside the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.¹

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

¹ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available, (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

2.6 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken alongside the Plan. The requirement for SFRA is provided under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (Department of Environment and Office of Public Works, 2009) and associated Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular PL2/2014. Recommendations from the SFRA have been integrated into the Plan.

2.7 Consideration of Alternatives

Consideration of the environmental effects arising from a variety of different alternatives for the Plan (see Section 4) has contributed towards the protection and management of the environment within the Plan.

2.8 Integration of environmental considerations into Zoning of the Plan

Environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan's zoning through an interdisciplinary approach.

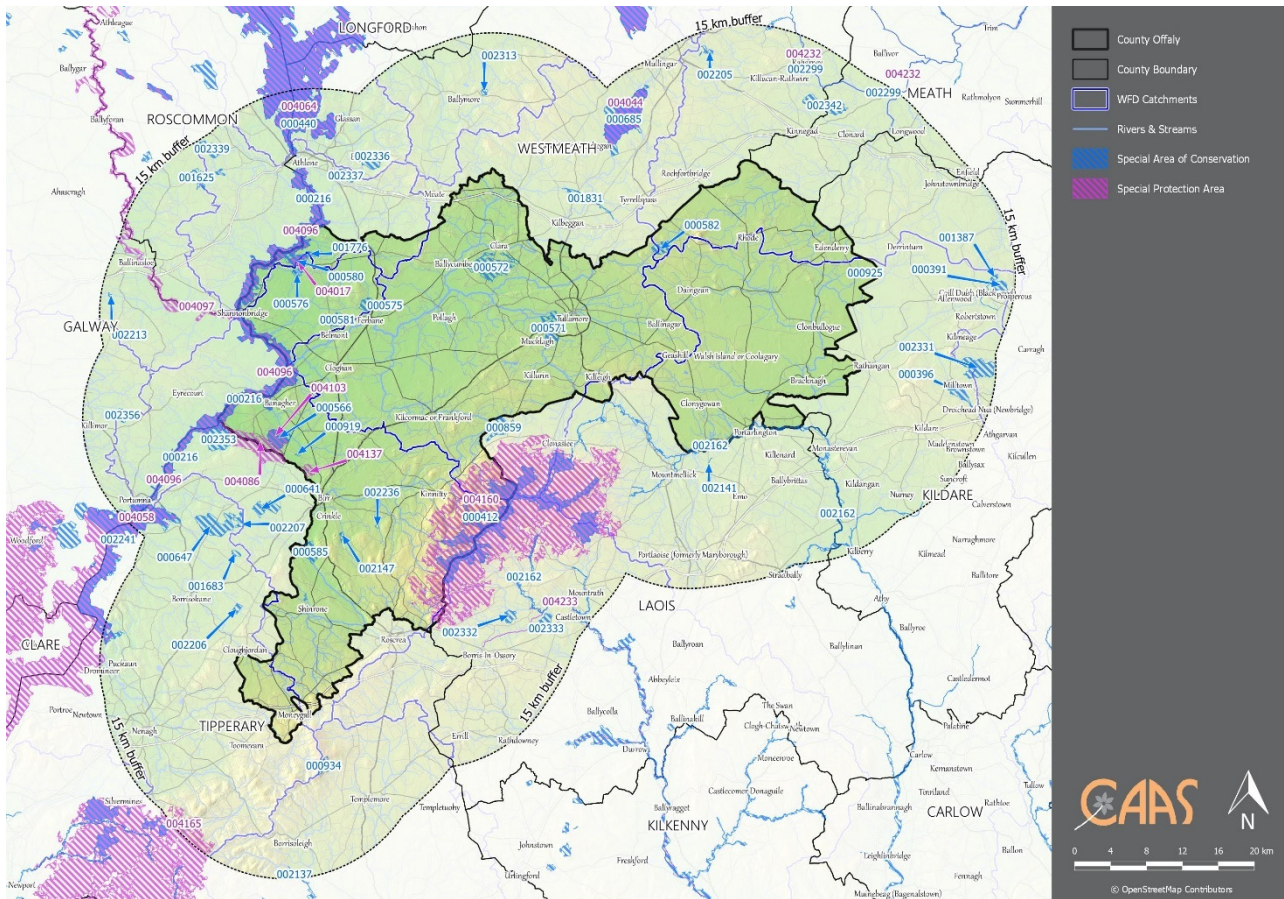
Zoning has been applied in a way that primarily seeks to achieve sustainable and compact growth, taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES.

The detailed Plan preparation process undertaken by the Planning Department combined with specialist input from the SFRA process facilitated zoning that avoids inappropriate development being permitted in areas of high flood risk. Various provisions have been inserted into the Plan which provide for flood risk management at project level.

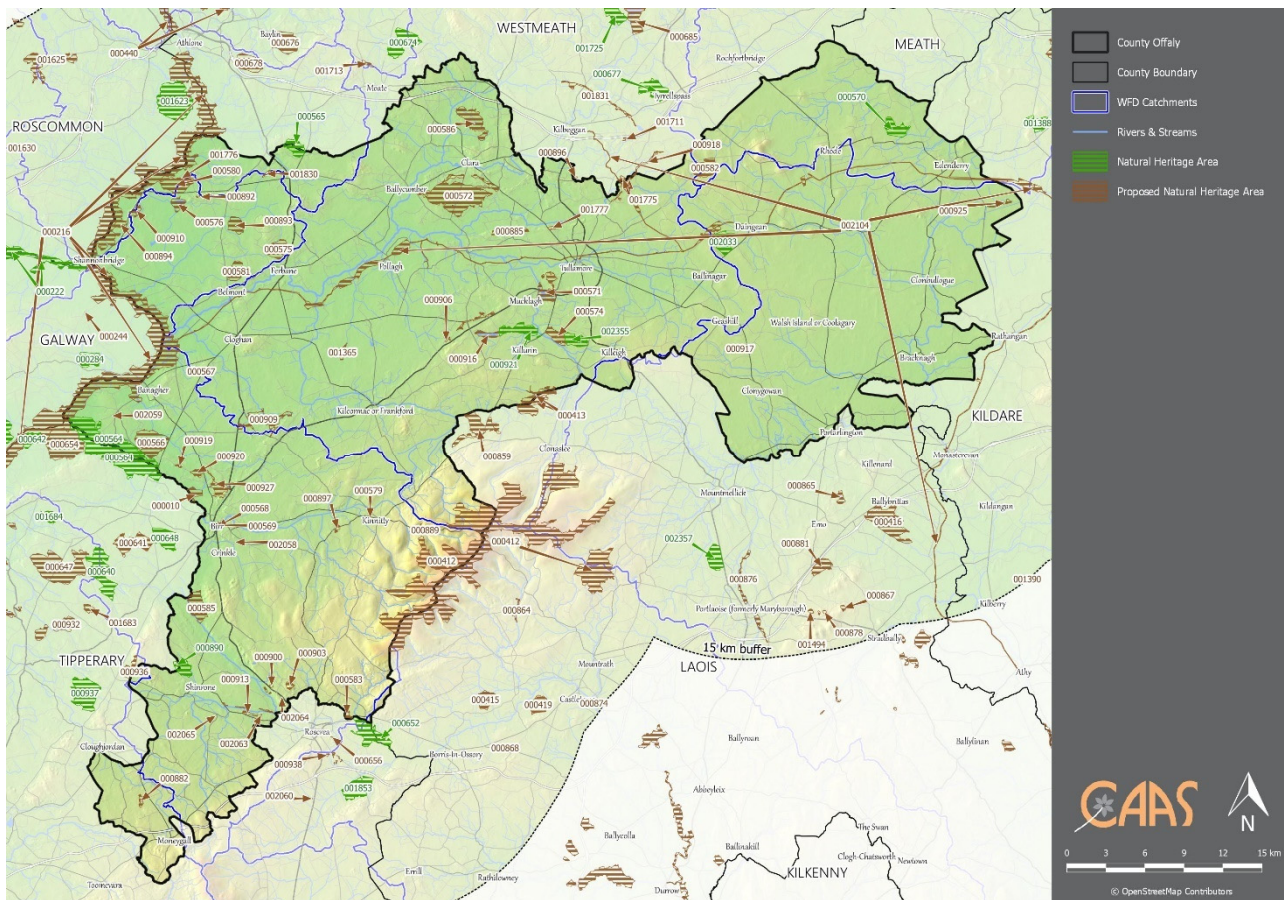
Also taken into account were environmental sensitivities relating to ecology, cultural heritage, landscape and water, as well as overlay mapping of environmental sensitivities.

2.9 Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan

Table 2.1 links key mitigation measure(s) - which have been integrated into the Plan - to the potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. The integration of these measures into the Plan occurred over a number of iterations and was informed by, inter alia, various communications through the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. The measures generally benefit multiple environmental components i.e. a measure providing for the protection of biodiversity, flora and fauna could beneficially impact upon the minimisation of flood risk and the protection of human health, for example.

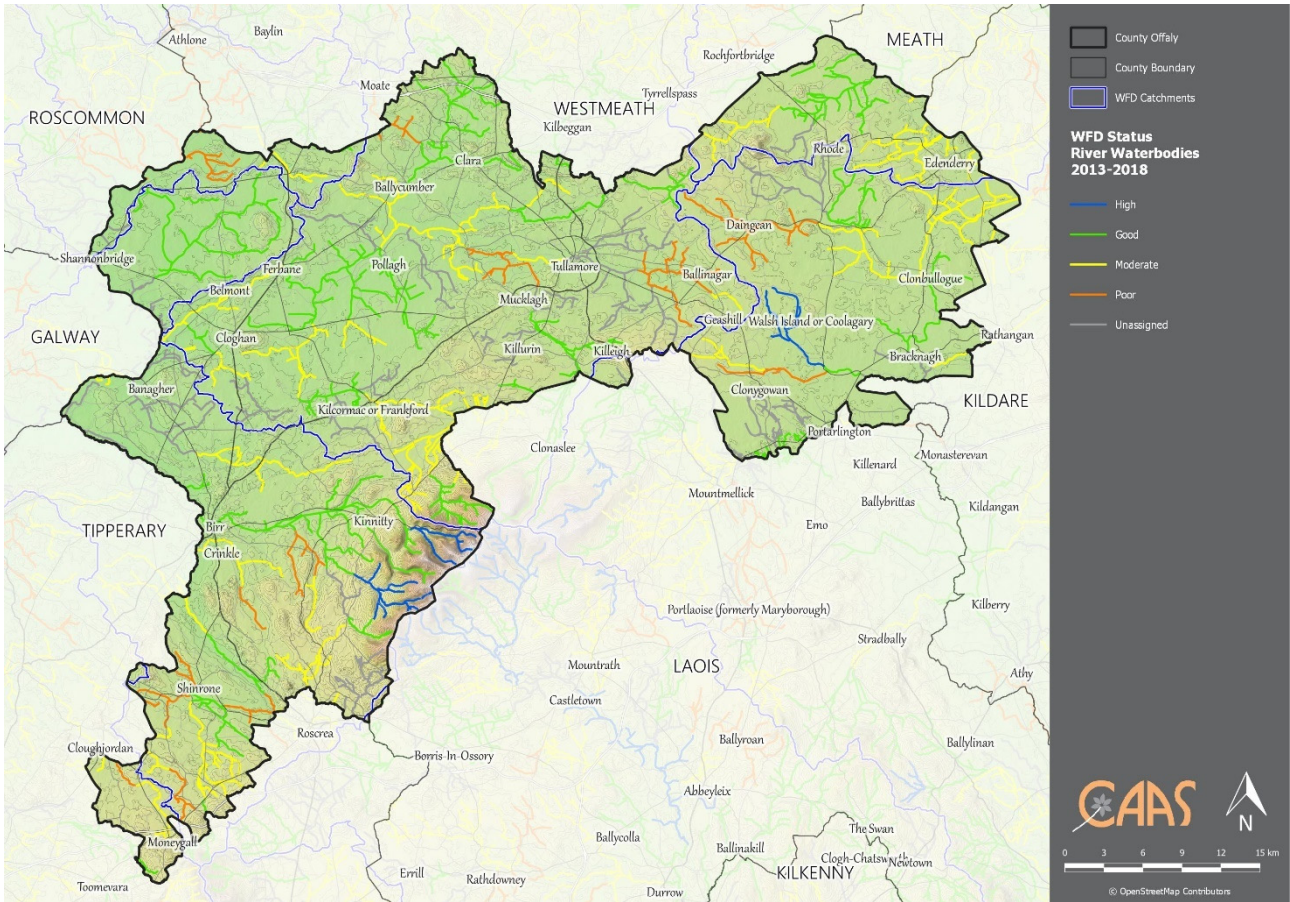


European Sites within and adjacent to the Plan area

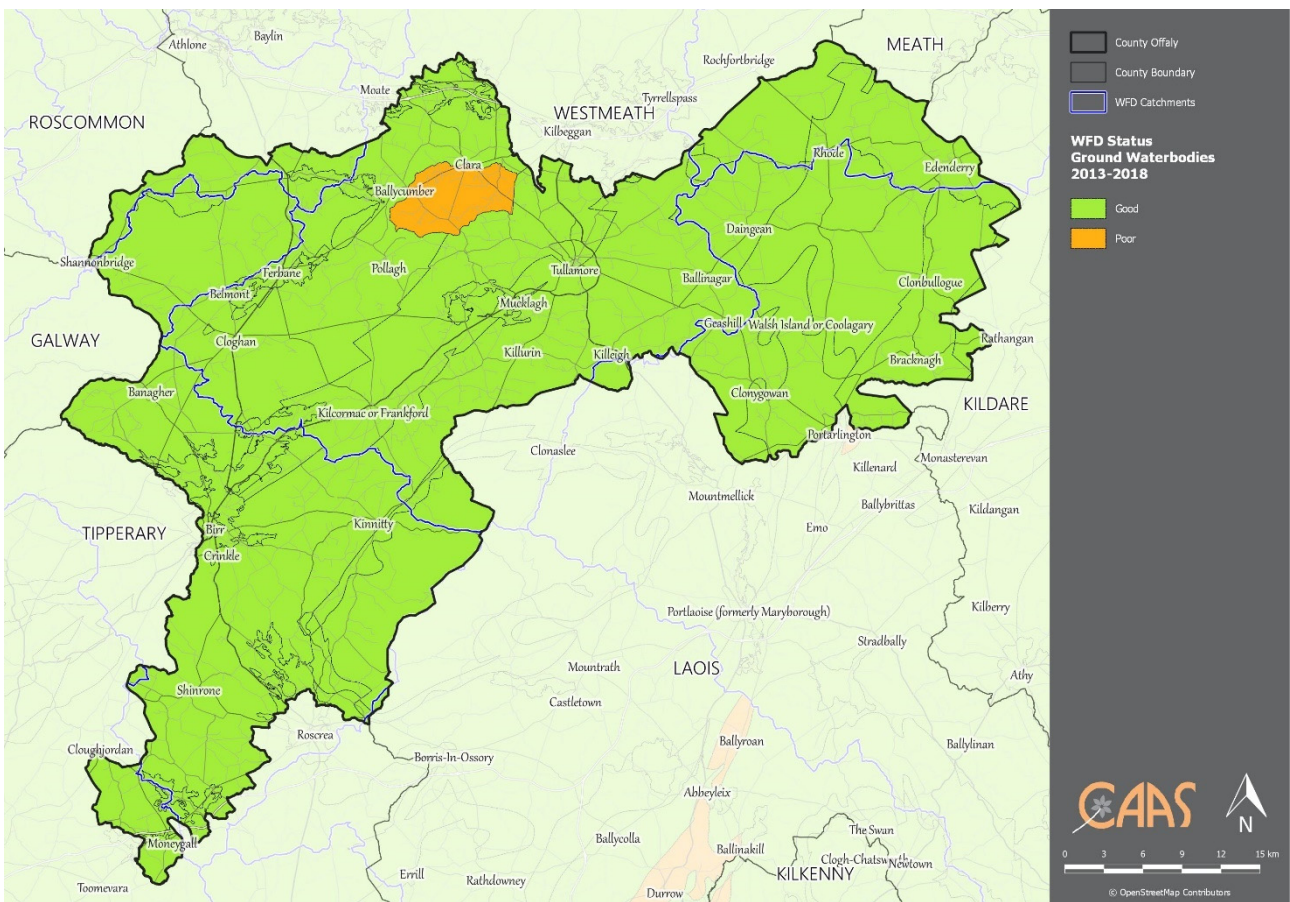


Other Ecological Designations within and adjacent to the Plan area

Figure 2.1 Selection of Individual Environmental Sensitivities taken into account (1 of 3)

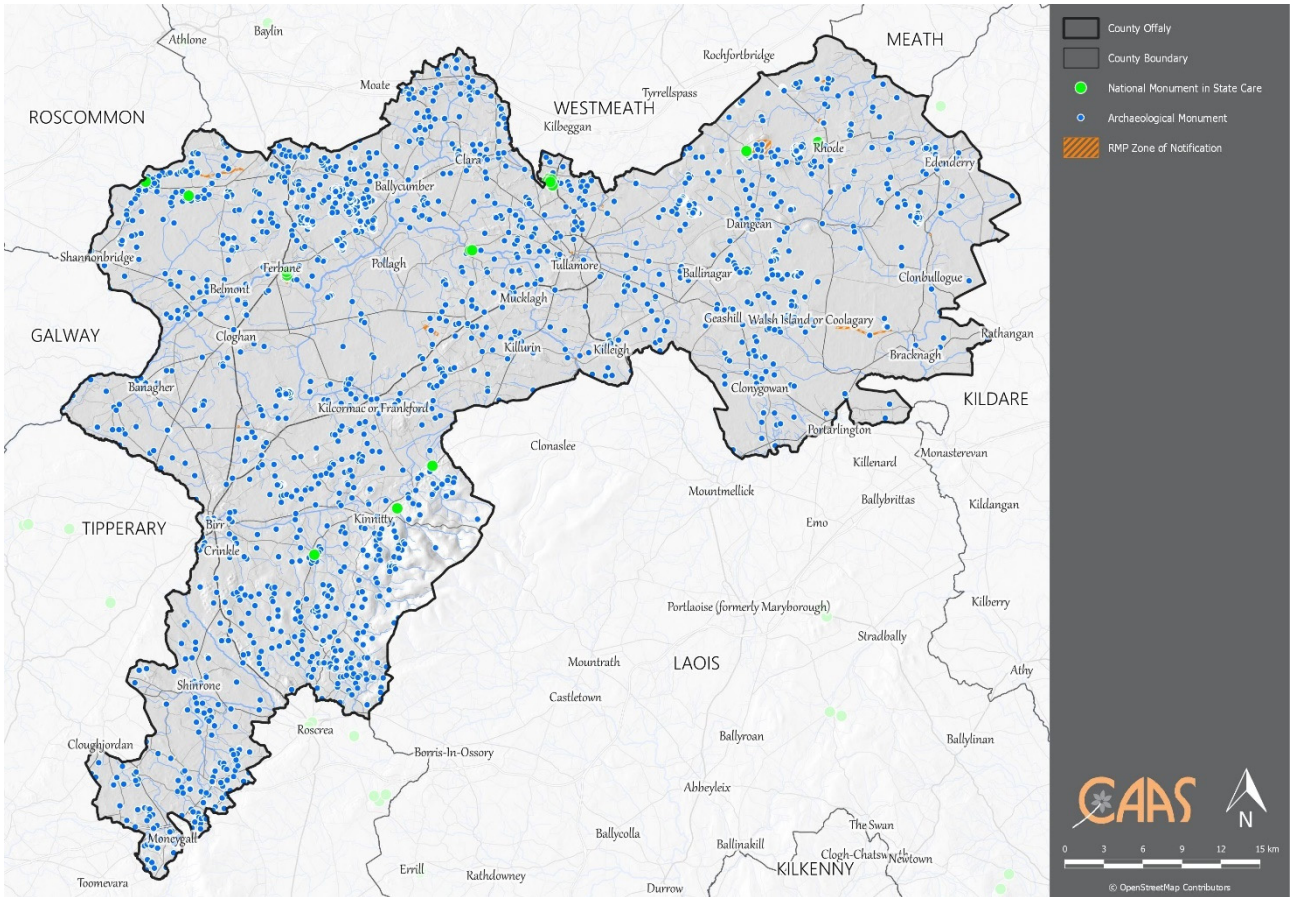


Surface Water Status

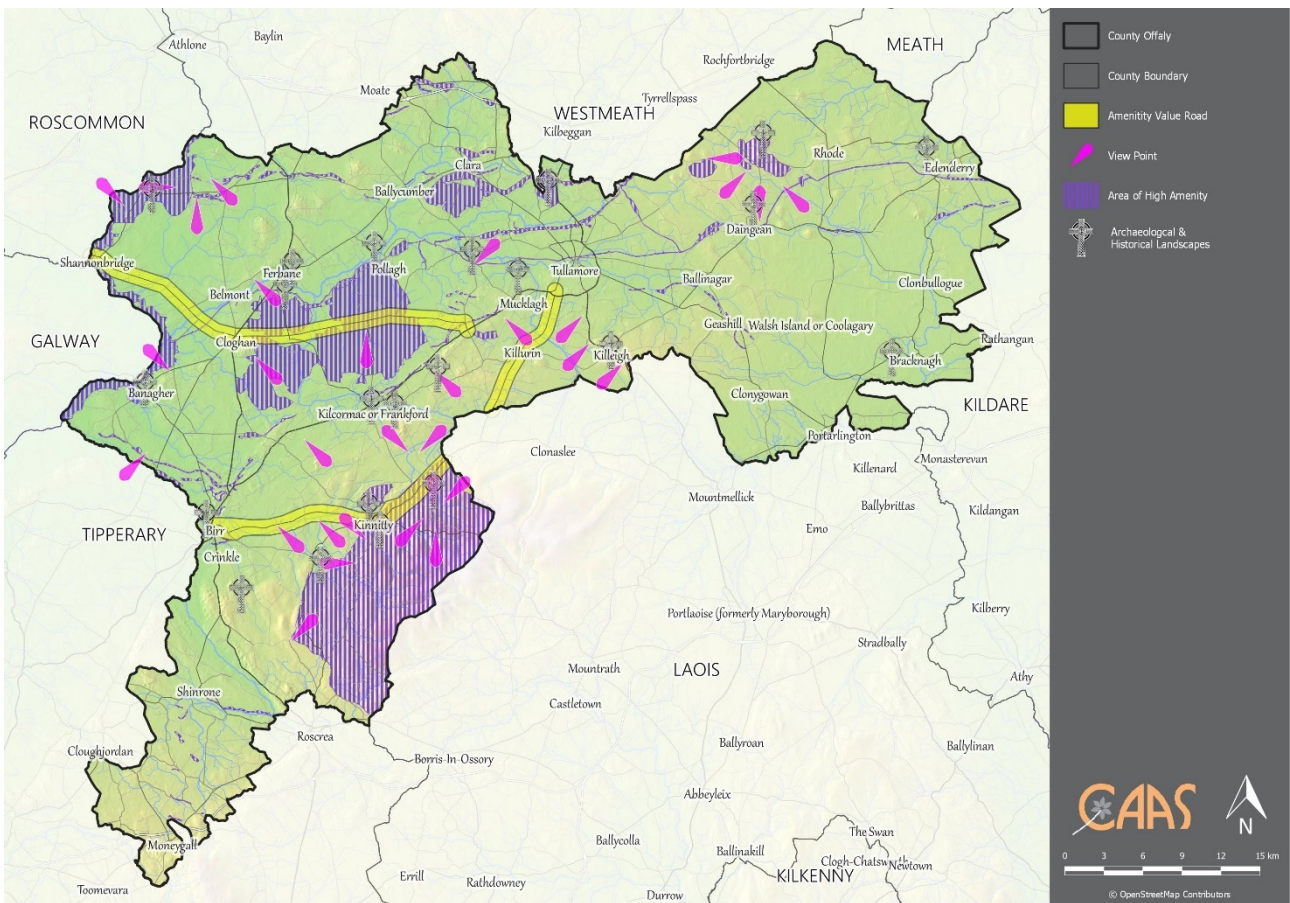


Groundwater Status

Figure 2.2 Selection of Individual Environmental Sensitivities taken into account (2 of 3)



Archaeological Designations



Landscape Designations

Figure 2.3 Selection of Individual Environmental Sensitivities taken into account (3 of 3)

Table 2.1 Integration of Environmental Considerations

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
All	Various	<p>Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Plan</p> <p>The following environmental assessments have been undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the Plan. An iterative process has been followed whereby each revisions of the Plan has been informed by the assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and Natura Impact Report (NIR)</i> AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a plan or project on European Sites designated for habitats or species. AA is required by the EU Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish law through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The screening report determined that the implementation of this County Development Plan was likely to have a significant effect on European Sites. Accordingly, a NIR was compiled. The findings of the AA are included in the NIR that accompanies the Plan. That report provides a clear understanding of the likely consequences of the Plan on European Sites. All AA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan. The emerging conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.² <i>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</i> SEA is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it, in this case the County Development Plan. SEA is required by the EU SEA Directive as transposed into Irish law through the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) as amended. The findings of the SEA are included in the SEA Environmental Report that accompanies the Plan. That report provides a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the adoption and implementation of the Plan. All SEA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan. <i>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</i> SFRA is an assessment of flood risk and includes mapped boundaries for Flood Risk Zones, taking into account factors including Catchment Flood Risk Management Plan data, site walkovers and flood risk indicators. SFRA is required under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (Department of Environment and Office of Public Works, 2009) and associated Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular PL2/2014. All SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan. <p>In addition to the above assessments, an Ecosystems Services Approach was taken in the preparation of the Plan (see Chapter 2 Core Strategy sub-section 2.1.5).</p>	Integrated into Chapter 1 Introduction
All	Various	<p>Ecosystems Services</p> <p>In preparing this Plan and developing policies and objectives, the Council have followed these Ecosystem Services³ Approach principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of natural systems - by using knowledge of interactions in nature and how ecosystems function (including in Chapter 3 Climate Action and Energy). Taking into account the services that ecosystems provide - including those that underpin social and economic well-being, such as flood and climate regulation (including in Chapter 3 Climate Action and Energy), resources for food, fibre or fuel (including in Chapter 5 Economic Development Strategy), or for recreation, culture and quality of life (including in Chapter 4 Biodiversity and Landscape, Chapter 6 Tourism and Recreational Development, and Chapter 10 Built Heritage). Involving people - those who benefit from the ecosystem services and those managing them need to be involved in decisions that affect them. Public consultation has informed the preparation of the Plan. <p>The Council will promote an Ecosystem Services Approach, following the above principles, in its decision-making processes, including those relating to the preparation of statutory land use plans.</p> <p>In recognition of the need to manage natural capital⁴, provisions have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards management of air quality, noise pollution, light pollution, water quality and integrated catchment management.</p>	Integrated into Chapter 2 Core Strategy
All	Various	<p>United Nations Sustainability Goals</p> <p>Sustainability is at the heart of planning. Since 2015, Ireland has been a signatory for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as outlined in Figure 1.2 and which frame national agendas and policies to 2030.</p>	Integrated into Chapter 1 Introduction
All	Various	<p>The following Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken for relevant new infrastructure, however this would not apply to national road schemes which are progressed in accordance with statutory processes and TII publications, including various TII Planning Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Impacts that include headings such as "Constraints Study", "Route Corridor Selection" and "Environmental Impact Assessment:</p> <p>Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental constraints (including those identified in Section 4 of the accompanying SEA Environmental Report) and opportunities (such as existing linear infrastructure) will assist in the identification of possible route corridor options; 	Integrated into Chapter 8.6.4 Corridor & Route Selection Process

² Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available, (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the Plan to proceed; and (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

³ Ecosystems are multifunctional communities of living organisms interacting with each other and their environment. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human well-being (ecosystem services) either directly or indirectly contributing towards human well-being.

⁴ Renewable and non-renewable resources (for example, plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals).

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially feasible corridors within which infrastructure could be accommodated will be identified and these corridors assessed. The selection of the preferred route corridor will avoid constraints and meet opportunities to the optimum extent, as advised by the relevant specialists; and In addition to the constraints identified above, site-specific field data may be required to identify the most appropriate corridors. <p>Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially feasible routes within the preferred corridor will be identified and assessed. The selection of preferred routes will avoid constraints and meet opportunities to the optimum extent, as advised by the relevant specialists, taking into account project level information and potential mitigation measures that are readily achievable; In addition to the constraints identified above, site specific field data may be required to identify the most appropriate routes; and In addition to environmental considerations, the identification of route corridors and the refinement of route lines is likely to be informed by other considerations. 	
All	Various	<p>Construction and Environmental Management Plan</p> <p>Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) shall be prepared for larger scale projects and this requirement shall be assessed on a case by case basis as part of the development management process. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures contained in any accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report or Appropriate Assessment and in this Development Plan. CEMPs shall typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location and details of site compounds, refuse storage areas, construction site offices and staff facilities, site security fencing and hoardings, on-site staff car parking; Details of construction traffic - timing and routing, directional signage, measures to obviate queuing, alternative arrangements for pedestrians and vehicles, and measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris; Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels; Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater; Disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, including compliance with 2006 Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment; A water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains; Details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan; If peat is encountered - a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan; Measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed); Appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases; and Details of appropriate mitigation measures for lighting specifically designed to minimise impacts to biodiversity, including bats. 	Integrated into Chapter 11.5.2 Waste Management
All	Various	<p>DMS-107 Undergrounding of Services</p> <p>All services, including ESB, telephone and television cables shall be placed underground, where possible. Service buildings or structures shall be sited as unobtrusively as possible and must be screened.</p> <p>Proposals should demonstrate that environmental impacts including the following are minimised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat loss as a result of removal of field boundaries and hedgerows (right of way preparation) followed by topsoil stripping (to ensure machinery does not destroy soil structure and drainage properties); Short to medium-term impacts on the landscape where, for example, hedgerows are encountered; Impacts on underground and underwater archaeology; Impacts on soil structure and drainage; and Impacts on surface waters as a result of sedimentation. 	DMO-107
All	Various	<p>Reasonable Alternatives and Existing Infrastructural Assets</p> <p>It is Council policy to require that environmental assessments should address reasonable alternatives for the location of new energy developments, and where existing infrastructural assets such as sub-stations, power lines and roads already exist within the proposed development areas, then such assets should be considered for sustainable use by the proposed development where the assets have capacity to absorb the new development.</p>	CAEP-23
All	Various	<p>Environmental considerations and Limitations in the types of uses</p> <p>There are a wide range of land uses identified under each of the Land Use Zoning Objectives. Proposals for development will need to demonstrate compliance with the various written provisions of the Plan, as relevant, including those relating to environmental protection and management. Environmental considerations, such as those related to elevated levels of flood risk or European site ecological designations, may limit the types of uses that may be possible at certain sites. Prospective applicants are encouraged to engage with the Planning Authority at the earliest opportunity to seek guidance as to the appropriateness of emerging proposals.</p>	Chapter 12.1
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated	<p>Designated and Non-Designated Sites</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect, conserve, and seek to enhance the county's biodiversity and ecological connectivity.</p> <p>It is Council policy to conserve and protect habitats and species listed in the Annexes of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (as amended) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Wildlife Acts 1976 (as amended) and the Flora Protection Orders.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support and co-operate with statutory authorities and others in support of measures taken to manage proposed or designated sites in order to achieve their</p>	BLP-01 BLP-02 BLP-03 BLP-04 BLP-05

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
	<p>infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats. 	<p>conservation objectives.</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect and maintain the conservation value of all existing and future Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries and Biogenetic Reserves in the county.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory avoidance or mitigation, on plant, animal or bird species protected by law.</p> <p>It is Council policy to consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and take account of any licensing requirements, when undertaking, approving or authorising development which is likely to affect plant, animal or bird species protected by law.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 and the Offaly Heritage Plan Key Actions 2017-2021 and future editions in partnership with relevant stakeholders subject to available resources.</p> <p>It is Council policy to work with all state agencies to promote the development of all aspects of park management in the Slieve Bloom Mountains.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council that no plans, programmes or projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects).</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council that all projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and subsequent Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or The plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000. <p>It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the impact of development within or adjacent to national designated sites, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves likely to result in significant adverse effects on the designated site is assessed by requiring the submission of an Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified professional, which should accompany planning applications.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council in accordance with Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive and Regulation 27(4) of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015 to strive to avoid pollution or deterioration of bird habitats outside Special Protection Areas.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to take account of the objective and management practices proposed in any management or related plans for European Sites (SACs and SPAs) in and adjacent to the county published by the Department including the National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Management Plan 2017-2022 and any subsequent editions.</p>	<p>BLP-06 BLP-07 BLO-02 BLO-03 BLO-04 BLO-05 BLO-06</p>
		<p>Peatlands</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect the county's designated peatland areas and landscapes, including any historical walkways through bogs and to conserve their ecological, archaeological and cultural heritage and to develop educational heritage.</p> <p>It is Council policy to work with adjacent local authorities and relevant stakeholders in promoting a National Park designation for the peatlands in the midlands and a 'Regional Peatway' connecting natural and cultural attractions.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support the provision of outdoor pursuits, walking and cycling routes through the county's peatlands and network of industrial railways linking the River Shannon Blueway, Royal Canal, Grand Canal and Barrow Blueway across the midlands as outlined in the 'Major Cycling Destination in the Midlands of Ireland –Feasibility Study 2016', which is a priority of the 'Outdoor Recreation Plan State Lands and Waters' (2017).</p> <p>It is Council policy to support the National Parks and Wildlife Service in carrying out an EU LIFE fund supported raised bog restoration project in restoring the following Special Areas of Conservation sites in the county to favourable conservation status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clara Bog; Ferbane Bog; Mongan Bog; Moyclare Bog; Raheenmore Bog; and Sharavogue Bog. <p>It is Council policy to support collaboration between Offaly County Council, Regional Transition Team and relevant stakeholders of a partnership approach to integrated peatland management for a just transition that incorporates the management, rehabilitation and restoration / re-wetting of significant tracts of peatlands in conjunction with appropriate</p>	<p>BLP-14 BLP-15 BLP-16 BLP-17 BLP-18 BLO-10 BLO-11</p>

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>developed after uses. Peatlands It is an objective of the Council to require the preparation and submission of a Hydrological Report/Assessment for significant developments within and in close proximity to protected raised bogs and to take account of same in the assessment of impacts on the integrity of peatland ecosystems. It is an objective of the Council to work with relevant stakeholders on suitable peatland sites in order to demonstrate best practice in sustainable peatland conservation, management and restoration techniques to promote their heritage and educational value subject to ecological impact assessment and appropriate assessment screening.</p>	
		<p>Waterways, Lakes and Wetlands It is Council policy to protect the landscape associated with the River Shannon, including the Callows and views of special interest, and also to encourage the development of Shannonbridge, Banagher and Shannon Harbour as focal points. It will also be Council policy to investigate the possibility of providing a Linear Park based on the River Shannon from Banagher to Meelick, which takes account of the sensitive ecological nature of the Callows area. It is Council policy to preserve riparian buffer strips free from development by reserving a minimum of 10 metres either side of all watercourses (measured from top of bank) with the full extent of the protection determined on a case by case basis by the Council, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities. It is Council policy to promote clear span bridging structures as the preferred option for culverts Any development proposal requiring culverting should also document stream habitat lost and provide compensatory habitat where possible. Realignment of water courses should incorporate stream enhancement measures, as outlined in Office of Public Works Environmental Guidance. The Council will consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland in relation to riparian and instream works as appropriate. It is Council policy to promote the removal of historic culverts and infilling of watercourses. It is Council policy to consider the Waterways Corridor Study 2002 and protect the recreational, educational and amenity potential of navigational and non-navigational waterways within the county, such as the Grand Canal Corridor, towpaths and adjacent wetland landscapes, taking into account more recent heritage and environmental legislation (including the SEA Directive) and environmental policy commitments. It is an objective of the Council to maintain a riparian zone for larger and smaller river channels based on the Inland Fisheries Ireland updated guideline document, 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment, a Guide to the Protection of Watercourses through the use of Buffer Zones, Sustainable Drainage Systems, Instream Rehabilitation, Climate / Flood Risk and Recreational Planning'. It is an objective of the Council to (a) investigate the feasibility of and cooperate with relevant agencies in providing a Linear Park based on the River Shannon from Banagher to Meelick, which takes account of the sensitive ecological nature of the Callows area and (b) to support the development of an overall vision/strategy for the Shannon Callows in co-operation with all stakeholders to ensure that the area is appropriately managed at a landscape scale.</p>	<p>BLP-19 BLP-20 BLP-21 BLP-22 BLP-23 BLO-12 BLO-13</p>
		<p>Trees, Forestry and Hedgerows It is Council policy to support the protection and management of existing networks of woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to strengthen local networks. It is Council policy to encourage the planting of native species in all new residential developments (individual and multiple units) and as part of landscaping for commercial and industrial developments. It is Council policy to require, where practical, the management of mature trees, such as tree surgery instead of felling particularly where the trees contribute to amenity. It is an objective of the Council to preserve individual trees and groups of trees that are included in Table 4.13 and 4.14. It is an objective of the Council to consider the making of Tree Preservation Orders to protect trees and woodlands of high value. It is an objective of the Council to encourage the preservation and enhancement of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees, not listed in Table 4.13 and 4.14; (a) in particular, on the grounds of Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes and on approaches to settlements in the county; and (b) as part of the development management process, require the planting of native, deciduous, pollinator friendly trees in all new developments where possible. It is an objective of the Council to encourage pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the management of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. It is an objective of the Council to encourage the retention, wherever possible, of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatment in the county. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, provision of the same type of boundary will be required of similar length and set back within the site in advance of the commencement of construction works on the site (unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority).</p>	<p>BLP-24 BLP-25 BLP-26 BLO-12 BLO-14 BLO-15 BLO-16 BLO-17 BLO-18</p>
		<p>Green Infrastructure Strategy It is an objective of the Council to require all new developments to identify, protect and enhance ecological features by making provision for local biodiversity (for example, through provision of swift boxes or towers, bat roost sites, green roofs, etc.) and provide ecological links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process.</p>	<p>BLO-19</p>
		<p>All Ireland Pollinator Plan It is Council policy to support the aims and objectives of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 and any subsequent editions by delivering appropriate management actions as set out in their guidance documents.</p>	<p>BLP-32</p>
		<p>Invasive Species It is Council policy to continue to deliver and support measures for the prevention, control and/or eradication of invasive species within the county, and to seek details of how these species will be managed and controlled where their presence is identified. It is an objective of the Council to require, as part of the planning application process, the appropriate eradication/control of invasive species when identified on site or in the</p>	<p>BLP-34 BLO-20 BLO-21</p>

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>vicinity of a site, in accordance with Regulation 49 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 to 2015.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to continue to maintain mapping identifying the location of invasive species in the county in conjunction with the National Biodiversity Data Centre.</p> <p>Light Pollution It is Council policy to require that the design of lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light pollution into the surrounding environment. New schemes shall ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on residential or visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding area.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to seek to minimise the harmful effects of light pollution in the future provision of outdoor lighting, including investigating measures to improve the approach to street lighting and ensuring that new developments are lit appropriately and that environmentally sensitive areas are protected.</p> <p>Increases in visitor numbers It is Council policy to seek to manage any increases in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance and impacts on existing infrastructure. Visitor / habitat management plans will be required for proposed tourism projects as relevant and appropriate</p>	<p>ENVP-23 ENVO-13 TRP-09</p>
Population and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential adverse effects arising from flood events. Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors. 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors.</p> <p>Human Health It is Council policy to assess, as relevant, proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, mitigation measures shall be introduced in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level. Application of this policy will take into account instances whereby activities are licensed by other bodies through other processes (such as Integrated Pollution Control Licensing or Industrial Emissions Licensing).</p> <p>Major Accidents Directive – Seveso III It is Council policy, for the purposes of preventing / reducing the risk or limiting the consequences of a major accident involving dangerous substances, to have regard to the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive, and any regulations under any enactment giving effect to that Directive, and the recommendations of the Health and Safety Authority, in the control of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The siting of new establishments; The modification of existing establishments; and Development within the consultation distance of such establishments. <p>Radon It is Council policy to ensure the implementation of the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations (including any updated/superseding regulations that may be published within the lifetime of this Plan).</p> <p>Wind Farms It is Council policy that in assessing planning applications for wind farms, the Council shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> have regard to the provisions of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006, the Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change 2017 and the Draft revised Wind Energy Guidelines 2019 which are expected to be finalised in the near future; have regard to 'Areas Open for Consideration for Wind Energy Developments' in the Wind Energy Strategy Designations Map from the County Wind Energy Strategy; the impact of the proposed wind farm development on proposed Wilderness Corridors as detailed in Objective BLO-28 of Chapter 4; have regard to Development Management Standard 109 on wind farms contained in Chapter 13 of this Plan; and have regard to existing and future international, European, national and regional policy, directives and legislation. 	<p>ENVP-24 ENVP-16 ENVP-15 CAEP-38</p>
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands. Potential for riverbank erosion. 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Water.</p> <p>Soil Protection, Contamination and Remediation Offaly County Council require that all undeveloped, contaminated sites be remediated to internationally accepted standards prior to redevelopment (i.e. brownfield development). Treatment/management of any contaminated material shall comply as appropriate with the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended) (waste licence, waste facility permit), and the Environmental Protection Act 1992 (as amended) (Industrial Emissions licensing, in particular the First Schedule, Class 11 Waste). These measures will ensure that contaminated material will be managed in a manner that removes any risk to human health and ensures that the end use will be compatible with any risk.</p> <p>Geology, Eskers and Quarries It is Council policy to protect from inappropriate development and maintain the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest as contained in the scheduled list of geological heritage sites identified in Table 4.11 Offaly Geological Sites.</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage, where practical and when not in conflict with ownership rights, access to geological features in the county.</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect and conserve the landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity value of esker systems in the county as identified in the Offaly Esker Study, 2006.</p> <p>It is Council policy to assess the impact of proposals for quarry development on nearby eskers, with reference to their status or relative importance, for example, amenity, landscape and scientific value in the context of the overall esker system.</p> <p>It is Council policy to recognise the natural heritage value of disused quarries as rich habitats and to encourage landowners to preserve quarries post extraction as habitats rather than levelling or infilling the quarry area where possible subject to health and safety considerations and the protection of the relevant conservation objectives, qualifying interests and integrity of Natura 2000 sites.</p>	<p>Integrated into Chapter 11.5.3 Waste Management</p> <p>BLP-09 BLP-10 BLP-11 BLP-12 BLP-13 BLO-07 BLO-08 BLO-09</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>It is an objective of the Council to protect county geological sites and mushroom stones identified in Table 4.11 Schedule of County Geological Sites identified by the Irish Geological Heritage Programme for Protection in County Offaly.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to increase pedestrian and cycling access to esker and geological sites in turn increasing appreciation of esker and geological heritage, where possible, subject to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to consider, in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Westmeath County Council, the Geological Survey of Ireland and others, the potential designation of the north Offaly esker landscape as a UNESCO Geopark, to promote the unique geological heritage of the area.</p>	
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events. 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets.</p> <p>Water Quality/Status</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and any subsequent Water Management Plans are fully considered throughout the planning process.</p> <p>It is Council policy to manage, protect and enhance surface water and ground water quality to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and the Local Authority Waters Programme in achieving and maintaining at least good environmental status for all water bodies in the county. Development proposals shall not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands.</p> <p>It is Council policy that in assessing applications for developments, that consideration is had to the impact on the quality of surface waters having regard to targets and measures set out in the River Basin Management Plan, and any subsequent local or regional plans.</p> <p>It is Council policy that all proposed development which may have an impact on a high status water quality site will require site specific assessment to determine localised pressures and demonstrate suitable mitigation measures in order to protect these sites.</p> <p>It is Council policy to promote and comply with the environmental standards and objectives established for:</p> <p>(i) Bodies of surface water, by the European Communities (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009, made to give effect to the measures needed to achieve the environmental objectives established for bodies of surface water by the European Water Framework Directive; and</p> <p>(ii) Groundwater, by the European Communities (Groundwater) Regulations 2010, made to give effect to the measures needed to achieve the environmental objectives established for groundwater by the European Water Framework and Groundwater Directives, for which standards and objectives are included in the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect groundwater sources through the implementation of the Groundwater Protection Scheme and Source Protection Zones. Development proposals within these zones which have the potential to pose a risk to groundwater will be required to demonstrate that no reasonable alternative site is available and that groundwater quality will be protected to the satisfaction of the Council.</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to ensure, through the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan, and any other associated legislation, the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the county.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to protect through its regulatory controls and in conjunction with the Local Authority Waters Programme, water bodies with 'high ecological status'; to restore water bodies that have fallen below 'high ecological status'; to maintain water bodies at 'Good Status'; and to mitigate threats to water bodies identified as 'At Risk' i.e. 'Moderate and Poor Status'.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to protect both ground and surface water resources; to work with Irish Water to develop and implement Drinking Water Safety Plans to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment; and to work with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes in respect of Source Protection Plans for Group Water Schemes to protect these sources.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to comply with the Blue Dot Catchments Programme.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that agricultural developments are designed and constructed in a manner that will ensure that groundwater watercourses and sources of potable water are protected from the threat of pollution in line with Water Quality Regulations and the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>Sustainable urban drainage systems and Surface Water</p> <p>It is Council policy to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDs) where appropriate, for new developments or for extensions to existing developments, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.</p> <p>Flood Risk Management</p> <p>It is Council policy to support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive, the Flood Risk Regulations (S.I. No. 122 of 2010) and the 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Department Circular PL2/2014 or any updated / superseding version.</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any superseding document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standard DMS-106. Where a development/land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, then the development proposal will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test and site-specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 and Circular PL2/2014 (as updated/superseded). In Flood Zone C, (See DMS-106 where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1%, Flood Zone C), site-specific Flood Risk Assessment may be required and the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed. The County Plan SFRA datasets (including Benefitting Lands mapping), emerging CFRAMS mapping (including National</p>	<p>ENVP-01 ENVP-02 ENVP-03 ENVP-04 ENVP-05 ENVP-06 ENVP-07 ENVP-08 ENVO-01 ENVO-02 ENVO-03 ENVO-04 CAEP-30 REDP-05</p> <p>CAEP-67</p> <p>CAEP-53 CAEP-54 CAEP-55 CAEP-56 CAEP-57 CAEP-58 CAEP-59 CAEP-60 CAEP-61 CAEP-62</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>Indicative Fluvial mapping), and the most up to date CFRAM Programme climate scenario mapping should be consulted by prospective planning applicants and the planning authority in determining planning applications.</p> <p>It is Council policy to require a Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for all planning applications in areas at risk of flooding (fluvial, pluvial or groundwater), even for developments deemed appropriate in principle to the particular Flood Zone. The detail of these site-specific FRAs will depend on the level of risk and scale of development. A detailed site-specific FRA should quantify the risks, the effects of selected mitigation and the management of any residual risks. The assessments shall consider and provide information on the implications of climate change with regard to flood risk in relevant locations. The 2009 OPW Draft Guidance on Assessment of Potential Future Scenarios for Flood Risk Management (or any superseding document) and available information from the CFRAM Studies shall be consulted with to this effect.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that applications to existing developments in flood vulnerable zones provide details of structural and non-structural risk management measures to include, but not be limited to specifications of the following - floor levels, internal layout, flood resilient construction, flood resistant construction, emergency response planning, access and egress during flood events.</p> <p>It is Council policy to work with other bodies and organisations, as appropriate, to help protect critical infrastructure, including water and wastewater, within the county, from risk of flooding. Any potential future variations to the Plan shall consider, as appropriate any new and/or emerging data, including, when available, any relevant information contained in the CFRAMS Flood Risk Management Plans and as recommended in the SFRA for the Plan.</p> <p>It is Council policy to have regard to the findings and recommendations of the current Strategic Flood Risk Assessment prepared as part of the County Development Plan.</p> <p>It is Council policy to consult with the Office of Public Works (OPW) in relation to proposed developments in the vicinity of drainage channels and rivers for which the OPW are responsible, and the Council will retain a strip of 10 metres on either side of such channel where required, to facilitate access thereto.</p> <p>It is Council policy to consult, where necessary, with Inland Fisheries Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant agencies in the construction of flood alleviation measures in Offaly.</p> <p>It is Council policy to work with the OPW and other relevant Departments and agencies to implement the recommendations of the CFRAM programme to ensure that flood risk management policies and infrastructure are progressively implemented, and to also work with catchment-based Flood Planning Groups, (including where catchments go beyond the Council's administrative boundary) in the development and implementation of catchment-based strategies for the management of flood risk – including those relating to storage and conveyance.</p> <p>It is Council policy that where resources are available and subject to compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives, the Council will contribute towards the improvement and / or restoration of the natural flood risk management functions of flood plains.</p> <p>It is Council policy to take account of and incorporate into local planning policy and decision making, including possible future variations to this plan, the recommendations of the Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs), including planned investment measures for managing and reducing flood risk.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to ensure that flood risk management is incorporated into the preparation of Local Area Plans in accordance with 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to co-operate with the Office of Public Works (OPW) in the delivery of the Birr, Portarlington and Rahan Flood Relief Schemes and other schemes that may be brought forward in the lifetime of this Plan.</p> <p>12.6.1 Constrained Land Uses</p> <p>Flood risk areas in settlement plans are represented by a 'Constrained Land Use' designation. This designation generally limits new development, but will facilitate existing development uses within these areas that may require small scale development such as small extensions. Development proposals within these areas shall be accompanied by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment, carried out in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014 (or as updated), which shall assess the risks of flooding associated with the proposed development.</p> <p>Proposals shall only be considered favourably where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities, or increase the risk of flooding to other locations and be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The nature and design of structural and non-structural flood risk management measures required for development in such areas will also be required to be demonstrated, to ensure that flood hazard and risk will not be increased. Measures proposed shall follow best practice in the management of health and safety for users and residents of the development.</p> <p>LUZO-14 Facilitate the appropriate management and sustainable use of flood risk areas designated as 'Constrained Land Use' on Settlement Plan zoning maps.</p> <p>13.8.3 Flood Risk Assessment</p> <p>The Council will have regard to the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Local Authorities (DEHLG and OPW 2009) when assessing planning applications. The key requirements for the management of development in areas at risk of flooding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All development proposals within or incorporating areas at moderate to high risk of flooding will require site specific and appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessments. • All development proposals within or incorporating areas at moderate or high risk of flooding will require the application of the Development Management Justification Test in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG and OPW, 2009). • Any proposal that is considered acceptable in principle shall demonstrate the use of the sequential approach to inform the site layout and design of development. Proposals shall also demonstrate that mitigation and management measures can be put in place and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere. <p>DMO-106 Flood Risk Assessments</p>	<p>CAEP-63 CAEO-11 CAEO-12 LUZO-14 Section 12.6.1 Constrained Land Uses DM Section 13.8.3 Flood Risk Assessment DMO-106 Flood Risk Assessments</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
Air and Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives. Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality. Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors. Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management. 	<p>Also refer to the overall approach to land use zoning and sustainability provided by the Plan. Various other Plan provisions including those under headings such as Peatlands, Compact Growth, Sustainable Mobility and Integrated Transport and Landuse Planning, Reasonable Alternatives & Existing Infrastructural Assets, Renewable Energy and Low Carbon District Heating.</p>	
		<p>Air Quality It is Council policy to manage air quality in accordance with relevant legislation and policy. It is Council policy to promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011, or any updated/superseding documents. It is Council policy to require activities likely to give rise to air emissions to implement measures to control such emissions and to undertake air quality monitoring. Application of this policy will take into account instances whereby activities are licensed by other bodies through other processes (such as Integrated Pollution Control Licensing or Industrial Emissions Licensing). It is an objective of the Council to reduce harmful emissions and achieve and maintain good air quality for the county. It is an objective of the Council to actively promote measures to reduce air pollution and combat climate change including promotion of energy efficient buildings, cleaner home heating, green infrastructure, active and public transport modes, electric vehicles and innovative design solutions. It is an objective of the Council to promote sustainable design and construction to help reduce emissions from the demolition and construction of buildings. It is an objective of the Council to work with relevant agencies to support local data collection in the development of air quality monitoring.</p>	ENVP-17 ENVP-18 ENVP-19 ENVO-09 ENVO-10 ENVO-11 ENVO-12
		<p>Noise It is Council policy to promote the implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive and associated regulations through the Offaly County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 and any subsequent Plan. It is Council policy to promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life. Planning permission will not normally be granted for new uses / development or extensions of existing uses that produce significant and unacceptable levels of noise and/or vibration at site boundaries or within adjacent noise sensitive areas, especially residential areas. It is Council policy that noise sensitive development proposals located within proximity to a noise source, such as an existing or proposed national road, should include noise attenuation measures.</p>	ENVP-20 ENVP-21 ENVP-22
		<p>Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation It is Council policy to support and facilitate European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the following documents, taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Action Plan (2019 and any subsequent versions); National Mitigation Plan 2017 (or subsequent editions); National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions); Relevant provisions of any Sectoral Adaptation Plans prepared to comply with the requirements of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, including those seeking to contribute towards the National Transition Objective, to pursue, and achieve, the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by the end of the year 2050; and Offaly Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. <p>It is Council policy to support the implementation and provision of the decarbonisation projects listed in Table 3.2 of the County Development Plan. It is Council policy to raise general awareness of issues associated with climate action and climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is Council policy to support local, regional, national and international initiatives for climate adaptation and mitigation and to limit emissions of greenhouse gases through energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources which make use of all natural resources, including publicly owned lands, in an environmentally acceptable manner. It is Council policy to support the transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency. It is Council policy to support the National Dialogue on Climate Action in an effort to increase awareness of climate change, behavioural change and adaptation actions and in doing so provide an ongoing platform for planning climate resilience with a focus on personal responsibility at all levels. It is Council policy to support the creation of a Sustainable Development Trust, through Green Offaly, a Public Participation Network Initiative, which facilitates, creates and assists in the delivery of Green Projects and Programmes by working in partnership with all sectors of the local community. It is Council policy to cooperate with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) in respect of adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, and future climate change adaptation strategies. CAEP-15 It is Council policy to support the enhancement of carbon sinks such as peatlands, forestry, and permanent grasslands, with consideration of in conjunction with other climate mitigation actions such as the re-wetting and restoration of cut away peatlands, where appropriate. CAEO-01 It is an objective of the Council to implement the current Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for County Offaly. CAEO-02 It is an objective of the Council to consider a variation of the development plan within a reasonable period of time, or to include such other mechanism, as may be appropriate, to ensure that the development plan will be consistent with the approach to climate action recommended in the revised Development Plan Guidelines as adopted or any relevant guidelines.</p>	CAEP-07 CAEP-08 CAEP-09 CAEP-10 CAEP-11 CAEP-12 CAEP-13 CAEP-14 CAEP-15 CAEO-01 CAEO-02

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>Compact Growth, Sustainable Mobility and Integrated Transport and Landuse Planning It is Council policy to proactively encourage decarbonisation of local journeys by focusing on compact growth and reduced sprawl by targeting infill and brownfield lands in the existing built-up footprint of settlements. It is Council policy to improve walking and cycling connectivity within settlements and in particular with schools, town centres and employment areas, and to work with the National Trails Office, Coillte, the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling in this regard.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure It is Council policy to maintain existing green infrastructure and encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of open space amenities; • Sustainable management of water; • Protection and management of biodiversity; • Protection of cultural heritage; and • Protection of protected landscape sensitivities. <p>Economic Development: Climate Action REDP-15 It is Council policy to support the agricultural sector to employ green technologies in the provision of its goods and services, while taking measures to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable, low carbon and circular economy. REDP-16 It is Council policy to encourage the development of environmentally sustainable practices with a low carbon footprint, particularly agriculture, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the open countryside and that groundwater, watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution. REDP-17 It is Council policy to support the development of renewable energy in rural areas, where it is considered appropriate i.e. where it is demonstrated that such development would not result in significant environmental effects. Such development will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. REDP-18 It is Council policy to encourage state and private afforestation, both native broadleaf and coniferous species, in appropriate locations, in co-operation with Coillte and the Forest Service and in line with national policy and Forest Service Guidelines. In addition, it is policy to encourage the Forest Service to avoid a proliferation of new forest road entrances, particularly in Areas of High Amenity.</p> <p>Traffic and Transport Assessment A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) must examine the traffic and transport impacts of a proposed development, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads and junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development are adequate to accommodate the proposed development without causing additional delays to existing and future road based traffic. A TTA is important in demonstrating how to encourage a shift towards sustainable travel modes by those using the retail development in question. The TTA must also address urban design impacts of the proposed public and private transport proposals. A TTA will be required for retail developments over a threshold of 1,000sq.m. gross floorspace; and, at the discretion of the Planning Authority, a TTA may be required for retail developments below this threshold.⁵</p>	<p>CAEP-21 CAEP-22</p> <p>CAEP-64</p> <p>REDP-15 REDP-16 REDP-17 REDP-18</p> <p>Chapter 7: Retail and Town Centre Strategy and Regeneration</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). • Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures 	<p>Also see measures under CEMP requirement, other environmental components including Population and Human Health and various Land Use and Phasing provisions from the Plan.</p> <p>Water Services and Surface Water WSP-01 It is Council policy to ensure the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure in order to manage and conserve water resources in a manner that supports a healthy society, economic development requirements, a cleaner environment and climate change mitigation. WSP-02 It is Council policy to liaise and co-operate with Irish Water in the implementation and delivery of the 'Water Services Strategic Plan' (2015, under review in 2020), the 'Irish Water Business Plan 2015-2021', the 'Irish Water National Water Resources Plan' (expected in 2021) and the 'Irish Water Investment Plan 2020-2024' (or any amendment thereof) and other relevant investment works programmes of Irish Water, to provide infrastructure to service settlements in accordance with the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy. WSP-03 It is Council policy to work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water supply and wastewater infrastructure, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water supply and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate future growth in accordance with the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy. WSP-04 It is Council policy to require developments to connect to public wastewater infrastructure and public water supplies, where available, including group water schemes, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Authority. WSP-05 It is Council policy as the Regulatory Authority to promote the protection of private water sources, the development of community connections (water and wastewater), and improvement works to septic tanks in accordance with national policy and regulations, and to administer the multi-annual Rural Water Programme (2019-2021). WSP-06 It is Council policy to ensure that development is permitted in tandem with available water supply and wastewater treatment and to manage development, so that new schemes are permitted only where adequate capacity or resources exists or will become available within the life of a planning permission. Prior to applying for planning permission, applicants shall consult with Irish Water regarding feasibility and capacity for water services connection. Applicants shall submit proof of documentation that connection to a group water scheme has been granted, where applicable.</p>	<p>WSP-01 WSP-02 WSP-03 WSP-04 WSP-05 WSP-06 WSP-07 WSP-08 WSP-09 WSP-10 WSP-11 WSP-12 WSP-13 WSP-14 WSP-15 WSP-16 WSP-17 WSP-18</p>

⁵ As per Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines, National Roads Authority, 2014

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
	<p>the mitigation of potential conflicts).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). Increases in waste levels. Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure. Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter. 	<p>WSP-07 It is Council policy to ensure the delivery and phasing of services in the county is subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>WSP-08 It is Council policy to ensure any proposal for geothermal or other energy subsurface exploration is accompanied by an assessment that addresses the potential impacts on groundwater quality.</p> <p>Water Supply</p> <p>WSP-09 It is Council policy to collaborate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its role as the lead authority for water services to provide an adequate and appropriate drinking water supply that complies with the EU (Drinking Water) Regulations and the Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended), and any future amendments. In this respect, Offaly County Council will have regard to the Environmental Protection Agency 2019 publication 'Drinking Water Report for Public Water Supplies 2018' (and any subsequent update) in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the county, and in conjunction with Irish Water, undertake recommendations made by the EPA arising from any failure to meet drinking water standards and any enlistment on the EPA's remedial Action List.</p> <p>WSP-10 It is Council policy to engage with Irish Water to endeavour to facilitate developments which have requirements for water by allowing potential surface and ground water resources of County Offaly and the potential water resources of the River Shannon to be utilised, where practicable and possible, subject to appropriate safeguards.</p> <p>WSP-11 It is Council policy to promote the conservation and sustainable use of water in existing and new development within the county and to encourage demand management measures among all water users including rain water harvesting and grey water recycling.</p> <p>WSP-12 It is Council policy to monitor and regulate Group Water Schemes in accordance with national policy and regulations.</p> <p>WSP-13 It is Council policy to protect the Irish Water Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project pipeline corridor from inappropriate development that would prejudice the delivery of the project and to refer any planning applications within the development corridor to Irish Water for comment.</p> <p>Waste Water</p> <p>WSP-14 It is Council policy to co-operate and support Irish Water to eliminate untreated discharges from settlements in the short-term, while planning strategically for long-term growth in tandem with Project Ireland 2040 and in increasing compliance with the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive to 90% by the end of 2021, to 99% by 2027 and to 100% by 2040.</p> <p>WSP-15 It is Council policy to support strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure investment by Irish Water and to support Irish Water in providing and maintaining adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment infrastructure to service zoned lands and developments over the lifetime of the Plan in accordance with the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy.</p> <p>WSP-16 It is Council policy to liaise with Irish Water to ensure the compliance of wastewater treatment systems with existing licences, EU Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management Plan, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and the EU Habitats Directive.</p> <p>WSP-17 It is Council policy to encourage and support a changeover from septic tanks/private wastewater treatment plants to public collection networks wherever feasible, subject to connection agreements with Irish Water and to ensure that any future development connects to the public wastewater infrastructure where it is available.</p> <p>WSP-18 It is Council policy to ensure that the proposed wastewater treatment system for development in unserved areas complies with the relevant EPA Codes of Practice.</p> <p>WSP-19 It is Council policy to require / implement appropriate buffer zones surrounding all effluent treatment plants suitable to the size and operation of each plant.</p> <p>WSP-20 It is Council policy to have regard to the policies and objectives contained in Irish Water's National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan.</p> <p>WSP-21 Private wastewater treatment plants for multi-house developments will not normally be permitted.</p> <p>Surface Water</p> <p>WSP-22 It is Council policy to ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place which meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan and to promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.</p> <p>WSP-23 It is Council policy to limit and manage the permitted stormwater run-off from all new developments. The maximum permitted surface outflow from any new development shall be restricted to that of a greenfield site before any development takes place unless otherwise agreed with Offaly County Council.</p> <p>WSP-24 It is Council policy to require new development to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system and to incorporate Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).</p> <p>WSP-25 It is Council policy to promote the use of green infrastructure, for example green roofs, green walls, planting and green spaces for surface water run-off retention purposes, in the interests of flood mitigation and climate change adaptation.</p> <p>General</p> <p>WSO-01 It is an objective of the Council to work closely with Irish Water to service development with significant economic development potential and to align the supply of water services to the envisaged settlement size as per the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy. The availability of water services must not be a pre-cursor to large-scale growth in inappropriate locations.</p> <p>Water Supply</p> <p>WSO-02 It is an objective of the Council to support Irish Water's National Programme of Investment to reduce leakage minimising the demand for capital investment.</p> <p>WSO-03 It is an objective of the Council to co-operate with Irish Water in the delivery of the Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project and to ensure the maximum benefit from this project to County Offaly, in particular with respect to economic development potential and security of supply.</p> <p>WSO-04 It is an objective of the Council to engage with Irish Water to examine significant raw water sources which may be made redundant by the Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region with a view to reserving and protecting them for future back up or 'windfall' type economic development opportunities where high water use is required.</p> <p>WSO-05 It is an objective of the Council to provide guidance and advice regarding the protection of water supply to private wells with the overall responsibility for protection remaining with the householder.</p>	<p>WSP-19 WSP-20 WSP-21 WSP-22 WSP-23 WSP-24 WSP-25 WSO-02 WSO-03 WSO-04 WSO-05 WSO-06 WSO-07 WSO-08 WSO-09</p>

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>Waste Water WSO-06 It is an objective of the Council to support appropriate options for the extraction of energy and other resources from sewage sludge subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process. WSO-07 It is an objective of the Council to support the servicing of small towns and villages through the serviced sites initiative to provide an alternative to one-off housing in the countryside, in accordance with National Policy Outcome 18b of the National Planning Framework and Regional Policy Objective 4.78 of the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.</p> <p>Surface Water WSO-08 It is an objective of the Council to improve surface water infrastructure and sustainable drainage and to reduce the risk of flooding, to facilitate the growth of settlements as per the county's settlement hierarchy. WSO-09 It is an objective of the Council to utilise, where appropriate, the provisions of Section 48 and 49 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) to generate financial contributions towards the capital costs of providing surface water infrastructure in the county.</p> <p>Waste Management ENVP-12 It is Council policy to continue to fulfil its duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008, including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills. ENVP-13 It is Council policy to require the provision of recycling infrastructure where it is considered necessary and will assess requirements for recycling facilities on a case by case basis as part of the development management process. Construction and Environmental Management Plan Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) shall be prepared for larger scale projects and this requirement shall be assessed on a case by case basis as part of the development management process. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures contained in any accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report or Appropriate Assessment and in this Development Plan. CEMPs shall typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and details of site compounds, refuse storage areas, construction site offices and staff facilities, site security fencing and hoardings, on-site staff car parking; • Details of construction traffic - timing and routing, directional signage, measures to obviate queuing, alternative arrangements for pedestrians and vehicles, and measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris; • Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels; • Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater; • Disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, including compliance with 2006 Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment; • A water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains; • Details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan; • If peat is encountered - a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan; • Measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed); • Appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases; and <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Details of appropriate mitigation measures for lighting specifically designed to minimise impacts to biodiversity, including bats.</p> <p>Tourism and Infrastructure Capacity Tourist and recreation facilities, in particular accommodation, shall be generally located within towns and villages unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive justification of the need for the development by its nature and space requirements to be located outside towns and villages, for example, golf courses, swimming, angling, sailing/boating, pier/marina development, water sports, equestrian and pony trekking routes, adventure/interpretative centres and associated ancillary uses, tourist related leisure facilities including walking and cycling; • Evidence that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact upon the scenic value, heritage value and the environmental, ecological or conservation quality of primary tourism asset(s) and its general environment; • Evidence that potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes have been considered and mitigation measures proposed. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals; • Compliance with development management standards set out in this chapter; and • Evidence that, where feasible, existing ruinous or disused buildings or existing heritage buildings have been re-used to maximum potential. <p>This list is not exhaustive and the Council may consider other requirements contained in the chapter on a case by case basis with planning applications should the need arise.</p>	<p>Integrated into Chapter 11.5.2 Waste Management ENVP-12 ENVP-13 ENVP-14 ENVO-05</p> <p>DMS-82 Tourist Facilities</p>
Cultural Heritage	Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and	<p>Protected Structures It is Council policy to ensure the protection, sympathetic and sensitive modification, alteration, extension or reuse of protected structures or parts of protected structures, and the immediate surrounds included and proposed for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, together with the integrity of their character and setting.</p>	BHP-01 BHP-02 BHP-03 BHP-04

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
	protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.	<p>It is Council policy to ensure the protection of the curtilage of protected structures or proposed protected structures and to prohibit inappropriate development within the curtilage or attendant grounds of a protected structure which would adversely impact on the special character of the protected structure including cause loss of or damage to the special character of the protected structure and loss of or damage to, any structures of architectural heritage value within the curtilage of the protected structure.</p> <p>It is Council policy to promote best practice and the use of skilled specialist practitioners in the conservation of, and any works to, protected structures. Method statements should make reference to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Advice Series on how best to repair and maintain historic buildings.</p> <p>It is Council policy to favourably consider the change of use of any structure included on the Record of Protected Structures provided such a change of use does not adversely impact on its intrinsic character and is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.</p> <p>It is Council policy to actively encourage uses that are compatible with the character of protected structures.</p> <p>It is Council policy to retain where practicable a protected structure which has been damaged by fire, and to retain those elements of that structure that have survived (either in whole or in part) and that contribute to its special interest.</p> <p>It is Council policy to prohibit the demolition of any protected structure unless the Council is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. The demolition of a protected structure with the retention of its façade will likewise not generally be permitted.</p> <p>It is Council policy to require an Architectural Heritage Assessment Report, as described in Appendix B of the Architectural Heritage Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2013), to accompany all applications involving a protected structure.</p> <p>It is Council policy to advise owners of protected structures in preparation of funding applications under Built Heritage Scheme of the Historic Structures Fund.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that in the event of a planning application being granted for development within the curtilage of a protected structure, the proposed works to the protected structure should occur, where appropriate, in the first phase of the development to prevent endangerment, abandonment and dereliction of the structure.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that measures to upgrade the energy efficiency of Protected Structures and historic buildings are sensitive to traditional construction methods and materials and do not have a detrimental physical, aesthetic or visual impact on the structure. They should follow the principles and direction given in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's publication Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to review the Record of Protected Structures on an on-going basis and make additions, deletions and corrections as appropriate over the period of this Plan.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to prepare a Buildings at Risk Register to prevent the endangerment of Protected Structures.</p> <p>Architectural Conservation Areas</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage the retention of original windows, doors, renders, roof coverings, street furniture and other significant features of historic buildings and landscape features within Architectural Conservation Areas.</p> <p>It is Council policy to proactively promote conservation through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and other schemes available to the Council.</p> <p>It is Council policy to preserve the character of Geashill Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and any future ACA's in County Offaly by ensuring that any new development within or contiguous to the ACA is sympathetic to the character of the area and that the design is appropriate in terms of scale, height, plot density, layout, materials and finishes having regard to the advice given in the Statements of Character for each area.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to investigate the designation of further Architectural Conservation Areas at appropriate locations throughout the county.</p> <p>Vernacular Buildings</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage the protection, retention, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation of the vernacular heritage of Offaly.</p> <p>It is Council policy to consider the guidance in "The Thatched Houses of Kildare" and "Reusing Farm Buildings, A Kildare Perspective" published by Kildare County Council in assessing planning applications in County Offaly relating to thatched cottages and traditional farm buildings.</p> <p>It is Council policy to preserve the character and setting (for example, gates, gate piers and courtyards) of vernacular buildings where deemed appropriate by the planning authority.</p> <p>It is Council policy to seek the repair and retention of traditional timber and/or rendered shop fronts and pub fronts, including those that may not be protected structures.</p> <p>It is Council policy to communicate and work with owners of thatch buildings regarding the availability of conservation grants and funding.</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage where appropriate the covering of thatch with metal, as a measure for the protection of buildings which are unoccupied and showing signs of considerable distress.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support proposals to refurbish vernacular structures that are in a run down or derelict condition, provided that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate traditional building materials and methods are used to carry out repairs to the historic fabric; and • Proposals for extensions to vernacular structures are reflective and proportionate to the existing building and do not erode the setting and design qualities of the original structure which make it attractive. <p>It is an objective of the Council to identify and retain good examples of vernacular architecture and historic street furniture in situ, for example, cast-iron post boxes, water pumps, signage, street lighting, kerbing and traditional road and street surface coverings.</p> <p>Industrial Heritage</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect the industrial heritage of Offaly, including mills, historic industrial buildings, canals and historic bridges.</p> <p>It is Council policy to utilise the information provided within Mills of County Offaly: An Industrial Heritage Survey (2009) when assessing development proposals for surviving industrial heritage sites.</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect and enhance the built and natural heritage of the Grand Canal and ensure that development within its vicinity is sensitively designed and does not</p>	<p>BHP-05 BHP-06 BHP-07 BHP-08 BHP-09 BHP-10 BHP-11 BHO-01 BHO-02</p> <p>BHP-12 BHP-13 BHP-14 BHO-03</p> <p>BHP-15 BHP-16 BHP-17 BHP-18 BHP-19 BHP-20 BHP-21 BHO-04</p> <p>BHP-22 BHP-23 BHP-24 BHP-25 BHP-26</p>

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
		<p>have a detrimental effect on the character of the canal, its built elements and its natural heritage values and that it adheres to the Waterways Ireland's Heritage Plan 2016-2020. It is Council policy to encourage appropriate change of use and reuse of industrial buildings, provided such a change does not seriously impact on the intrinsic character of the structure and that all works are carried out in accordance with best conservation practice.</p> <p>It is Council policy to seek the retention and appropriate repair/maintenance of the historic bridges and harbours of the county whether they are protected structures or not.</p> <p>It is Council policy to restrict vehicular access onto public roads that were formerly towpaths and any development permitted with access off a towpath must be screened effectively with trees and hedging. In relation to planning applications for housing in the open countryside with access proposed off towpaths, applicants must demonstrate compliance with Policy SSP-27 as towpaths are located within Natural Heritage Areas and Areas of High Amenity.</p>	BHP-27
		<p>Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage the protection, conservation, promotion and enhancement of Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes in the county and support public awareness, enjoyment of and access to these sites where appropriate.</p> <p>It is Council policy to encourage the conservation, preservation, restoration and protection in their original setting of mausoleums and monuments: follies, grottoes; garden buildings and other structures of particular beauty or historic, environmental, architectural or industrial significance.</p> <p>It is Council policy to discourage development that would lead to a loss of, or cause damage to, the character, the principle components of, or the setting of Country</p>	BHP-28 BHP-29 BHP-30
		<p>Houses, Gardens and Demesnes.</p> <p>Houses, Gardens and Demesnes.</p> <p>It is Council policy to consider the "Guidance Notes for the Appraisal of Historic Gardens, Demesnes, Estates and their Settings" published by Cork County Council 2006 in the appraisal and description of the impacts of proposed developments in County Offaly within or in close proximity to country houses and demesnes on historic designed landscapes, demesnes and gardens.</p>	BHP-31
		<p>Archaeological Heritage</p> <p>It is Council policy to support and promote the protection and appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the county's archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).</p> <p>It is Council policy to seek to promote awareness of and access to archaeological sites in the county where appropriate.</p> <p>It is Council policy to consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in relation to archaeological sites within and/or adjoining a proposed development.</p> <p>It is Council policy to facilitate the identification of important archaeological landscapes in the county.</p> <p>It is Council policy that any development that may, due to its size, location or nature, have implications for archaeological heritage (including both sites and areas of archaeological potential / significance) shall be subject to an archaeological assessment. When dealing with proposals for development that would impact upon archaeological sites and/or features, there will be presumption in favour of the 'preservation in situ' of archaeological remains and settings, in accordance with Government policy. Where permission for such proposals is granted, the Planning Authority will require the developer to have the site works supervised by a licenced archaeologist.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that archaeological excavation is carried out according to best practice as outlined by the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the National Museum of Ireland and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland and to protect previously unknown archaeological sites and features, where they are discovered during development works.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure the protection and preservation of underwater and terrestrial archaeological sites, both known and potential in riverine or lacustrine locations including wrecks such as the remains of bridges.</p> <p>It is Council policy to require archaeological assessment, including underwater archaeological assessment where relevant, for such developments that due to their location, size or nature may have implications for archaeological heritage. Such developments include those that are located at or close to an archaeological monument or site, those that are extensive in terms of area (0.5 hectares or more) or length (1 kilometre or more and developments that require an Environmental Impact Statement.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to protect archaeological sites and monuments, and archaeological objects, which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and to seek their preservation in situ (or at a minimum, preservation by record) through the planning process.</p>	BHP-33 BHP-34 BHP-35 BHP-36 BHP-37 BHP-38 BHP-39 BHP-40 BHO-05
		<p>Monastic Sites</p> <p>It is Council policy to retain the nominated status of the area comprising the National Monument at Clonmacnoise, enclosing eskers, Mongans Bog, Clonmacnoise callows, Fin Lough and the limestone pavement at Clorhane as the "Clonmacnoise Heritage Zone" in accordance with the recommendations of the study of the area carried out by the Environmental Sciences Unit of Trinity College, Dublin as shown in Figure 10.7 of this Plan.</p> <p>It is Council policy to investigate the potential of Durrow Demesne as a public amenity and tourism asset.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support and promote the protection and appropriate management of all monastic sites in the county.</p> <p>Mass Rocks and Holy Wells</p> <p>It is Council policy to preserve, protect and, where necessary, enhance mass rocks and holy wells in the County.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the nomination by the Government of Ireland, of two Monastic sites, Clonmacnoise in its own right and Durrow, as a suite of potential sites, on the tentative list for inclusion to the UNESCO World Heritage sites list. It is an objective of the Council to explore the potential of further designating the Monastic Sites at Clonmacnoise and Durrow as prospective UNESCO World Heritage Sites.</p>	BHP-41 BHP-42 BHP-43 BHP-44 BHO-06
Landscape	Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts	<p>Wind Farms</p> <p>It is Council policy that in assessing planning applications for wind farms, the Council shall:</p> <p>(a) have regard to the provisions of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006, the Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable</p>	CAEP-38

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendation integrated into the Plan included within	Plan Reference
	with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.	<p>Energy and Climate Change 2017 and the Draft revised Wind Energy Guidelines 2019 which are expected to be finalised in the near future;</p> <p>(b) have regard to 'Areas Open for Consideration for Wind Energy Developments' in the Wind Energy Strategy Designations Map from the County Wind Energy Strategy;</p> <p>(c) the impact of the proposed wind farm development on proposed Wilderness Corridors as detailed in Objective BLO-28 of Chapter 4;</p> <p>(d) have regard to Development Management Standard 109 on wind farms contained in Chapter 13 of this Plan; and</p> <p>(e) have regard to existing and future international, European, national and regional policy, directives and legislation.</p>	
		<p>Extractive Industry</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure those extractions (quarries / sand and gravel pits) which would result in a reduction of the visual amenity of Areas of High Amenity, eskers, esker landscapes, protected views or damage to designated sites, habitat types or species shall not be permitted. It is Council policy that all such workings should be subjected to landscaping requirements and that worked out quarries should be rehabilitated to a use agreed with the Council which could include recreational, biodiversity, amenity or other end-of-life uses. Planning applications for extraction shall be assessed against section 28 Ministerial Guidelines. The use of these rehabilitated sites shall be limited to wastes such as soil, stone and subsoils and sites shall be authorised under the appropriate waste regulations. Where the Council considers and accepts that in cases where inert material (for example soil, stones and subsoil) cannot be recycled or otherwise sold, such materials may be considered for the phased restoration and landscaping of the site in line with planning conditions imposed.</p>	REDP-19
		<p>Landscape</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect and enhance the county's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the county's existing landscape.</p> <p>It is Council policy to seek to ensure that local landscape features, including historic features and buildings, hedgerow, shelter belts and stone walls, are retained, protected and enhanced where appropriate, so as to preserve the local landscape and character of an area, whilst providing for future development.</p> <p>It is Council policy to ensure that consideration of landscape sensitivity is an important factor in determining development uses.</p> <p>It is Council policy to require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany significant proposals, located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes. This assessment will provide details of proposed mitigation measures to address likely negative impacts.</p> <p>It is Council policy to control advertising structures and hoardings in the open countryside. The Council will use its enforcement powers under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to secure the removal of unauthorised advertising signs and hoardings including those that are affixed to trailers, wheeled vehicles etc.</p> <p>Landscape</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to prepare a County Landscape Character Assessment in accordance with all relevant legislation and guidance documents and following the forthcoming National and Regional Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to have regard to the Landscape Sensitivity Areas in Tables 4.18, 4.19 and 4.20 in the consideration of planning applications.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to protect skylines and ridgelines from development where such developments will create significant visual intrusion.</p>	BLP-38 BLP-39 BLP-40 BLP-41 BLP-42 BLO-23 BLO-24 BLO-25
		<p>Protection of Key Scenic Views, Key Prospects and Key Amenity Routes</p> <p>It is Council policy to require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany significant proposals that are likely to significantly affect Key Scenic Views and Prospects as listed in Table 4.21 and Key Amenity Routes as listed in Table 4.22.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to protect Key Scenic Views and Key Prospects contained in Table 4.21, and Key Amenity Routes as listed in Table 4.22 from inappropriate development.</p>	BLP-43 BLO-26
		<p>Areas of High Amenity</p> <p>It is Council policy to protect and preserve the county's Areas of High Amenity namely the Slieve Bloom Mountains, Clonmacnoise Heritage Zone, Durrow High Cross, Abbey and surrounding area, the River Shannon, Lough Boora Discovery Park, Grand Canal, Croghan Hill, Raheenmore Bog, Pallas Lake, Clara Bog, Clara eskers, Eiscir Riada and other eskers. Notwithstanding the location of certain settlements, or parts of, for which there are settlement plans (Towns, Villages, Sráids), within the Areas of High Amenity, it is not the intention of this policy to hinder appropriate sustainable levels of development (as set out in the plans and subject to proper planning). Further, it is policy to facilitate the sustainable extension and expansion of existing visitor, tourist related or other rural enterprises within the Areas of High Amenity, where such development is appropriate and where it can be demonstrated that it gives 'added value' to the extending activity and to the immediate area which is the subject of the 'Area of High Amenity' designation.</p> <p>It is Council policy, to ensure that issues of scale, siting, design and overall compatibility (including particular regard to environmental sensitivities) with a site's location within an Area of High Amenity are of paramount importance when assessing any application for planning permission. The merits of each proposal will be examined on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>It is Council policy to support the preparation of a masterplan that conserves and protects the Clonmacnoise monastic site and will co-operate with the Office of Public Works and other stakeholders in its preparation and implementation.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to ensure that new development, whether individually or cumulatively, does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of or the scenic value of the Areas of High Amenity listed in Table 4.17. New development in Areas of High Amenity shall not be permitted if it;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes unacceptable visual harm; • Introduces incongruous landscape elements; and • Causes the disturbance or loss of (i) landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness; (ii) historic elements that contribute significantly to landscape character and quality such as field or road patterns; (iii) vegetation which is a characteristic of that landscape type and (iv) the visual condition of landscape elements. 	BLP-35 BLP-36 BLP-37 BLO-22

Section 3 Environmental Report and Submissions/ Observations

3.1 Introduction

This section details how both the Environmental Report and submissions and observations made to Offaly County Council on the Environmental Report and SEA process have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan and the SEA.

3.2 SEA Scoping Notices and Submissions

As part of the scoping process for preparation of the Plan, environmental authorities⁶ were notified that a submission or observation in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report could be made to the Council.

Three scoping submissions were made during the SEA scoping process. These submissions were taken into account during preparation of the SEA.

A submission from the Environmental Protection Agency provided specific comments and advice, covering issues including the following:

- Available Guidance
- State of the Environment Report – Ireland’s Environment 2016
- Transition to a low carbon climate resilient economy and society
- EPA SEA Search and Reporting Tool
- Environmental Authorities

A submission from the Geological Survey of Ireland (a division of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment) provided advice on County Geological Sites and online GSI Mapping Resources.

⁶ The following authorities were notified: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht; Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; Environmental Protection Agency; Roscommon County Council; Offaly County Council; Meath County Council; Cavan County Council; and Longford County Council.

A submission from Meath County Council provided advice on potential cross border issues including invasive species and the need to ensure consistency between the Meath and Offaly County Development Plans.

3.3 Submissions on the Environmental Report for the Draft Plan

Various submissions were made on the Draft Plan and/or associated environmental assessment documents while these documents were on public display. Certain submissions resulted in updates being made to the Plan.

Updates to the SEA/AA/SFRA documents made on foot of submissions include:

- To more clearly link the relevant legislative commitments referred to in the SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Environmental Objectives used in the assessment, the following text was included at SEOs relating to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets: "Please also refer to relevant legislation and requirements under Section 4.10, Section 8.8.3 and Appendix I. Targets under the national Climate Action Plan are reviewed and updated periodically and include those under the headings of Electricity, Built Environment, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry & Land Use and Enterprise."
- In Section 4.18 of the SEA Environmental Report, to add reference to the EPA-funded Environmental Sensitivity Mapping Web Tool www.enviromap.ie, which could also assist in lower tier consideration of plans and projects.
- In Section 5 of the SEA Environmental Report, to update an indicator and target as follows: "Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and subsequent objectives iterations as relevant)"; and "Avoid inappropriate zoning **and development** in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion".
- In Section 8.2 of the SEA ER, to refer to the EPA's guidance note 'Good Practice Guidance note on cumulative effects assessment in SEA', which has been considered in the assessment.
- To add additional measures for flood risk management into the Plan and to add detail on the Justification Test in the SFRA report.

3.4 SEA documents including SEA Environmental Report

The Draft Plan and accompanying documents (including SEA Environmental Report and AA and SFRA documents) were placed on public display, having integrated various recommendations arising from the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. Responses to submissions made during the period of public display of a Draft Plan were integrated into a Chief Executive's Report and considered by Offaly County Council.

A number of material alterations were proposed after public display of the Draft Plan. The Proposed Material Alterations were subject to Screening for SEA and AA and a selection of Alterations were subject to SEA and Stage 2 AA.

On adoption of the Plan, the Environmental Report that had been placed on public display alongside the Draft Plan was updated to become a final Environmental Report that is consistent with the adopted Plan, taking into account all changes that were made to the original Draft Plan that was placed on public display.

Section 4 Summary of Alternatives considered

4.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment.

4.2 Limitations in Available Alternatives

The Plan is required to be prepared by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which specifies various types of objectives that must be provided for by the Plan.

The alternatives available for the Plan are limited by the provisions of higher-level planning objectives, including those of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region. These documents set out various requirements for the content of the Plan including on topics such as land use zoning and the sustainable development of rural areas.

4.3 Alternatives for Population Allocations

Description

Following allocation of most of the County's projected new population across the County's settlements, taking into account the requirements of higher level planning objectives, a decision was required as to whether to provide for an unallocated extent of growth – either to the Self-Sustaining Towns of Edenderry or Portarlington or to the County's Key Town of Tullamore or Self Sustaining Growth Town of Birr.

- A.** Provide additional extent of growth to Tullamore or Birr; or
- B.** Provide additional extent of growth to Edenderry or Portarlington.

Summary of Evaluation

Edenderry and Portarlington have experienced rapid population growth with high levels of commuter focused residential expansion without equivalent increase in jobs and services. They have been identified by the Planning Department as needing consolidation and targeted 'catch up' investment in services, infrastructure, suitable transport options, amenities and local employment to become more self-sustaining.

Consequently, the key environmental differential factor between the two alternatives as a result of providing an additional extent of unquantified population allocation to either Tullamore or Birr (Alternative A) or Edenderry or Portarlington (Alternative B) relates to transport and associated emissions (interacting with Population and Human Health, Material Assets, Air and Climatic Factors).

Allocation of an additional extent of growth to Edenderry or Portarlington would potentially hinder the aforementioned needs being met and would be likely to result in higher levels of commuting, potentially conflicting with both efforts to improve sustainable mobility and greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the most.

Allocation of an additional extent of growth to Tullamore or Birr would be likely to result in lower levels of commuting, potentially conflicting with both efforts to improve sustainable mobility and greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the least.

All other environmental effects would be considered to be mitigated to similar degrees. It is noted that both Tullamore and Portarlington are identified by the EPA (2019⁷) as Priority Areas with respect

⁷ Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2018

to the European Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, that is waste water discharges from these plants are the sole significant pressure on water bodies at risk of pollution. However, the EPA also identify that Irish Water has improved waste water treatment at both Tullamore and Portarlington and that the EPA is monitoring surface waters in these areas to determine if the risk of pollution from waste water discharges has been satisfactorily resolved.

4.4 Alternatives for Rural Areas

(i) Alternatives for Areas under Strong Urban Influence

Description

- A. Include a "Housing in Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and Stronger Rural Areas⁸, & Areas of Special Control⁹" policy that considers a single dwelling for the permanent occupation of an applicant where a number of criteria can be demonstrated.
- B. Do not include a "Housing in Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and Stronger Rural Areas, & Areas of Special Control" policy that provides for a presumption in favour of applications for single houses by applicants, subject to various criteria being met.

Summary of Evaluation

Alternative A

Restricting development in rural areas that are under strong urban influence would positively impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The restrictions would help to both reduce levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and encourage brownfield development within existing centres.

Rural development would be directed towards appropriate rural areas and urban development would be directed towards established settlements. This alternative would prevent low density urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

Alternative B

Not restricting development in rural areas that are under strong urban influence would adversely impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The absence of restrictions would result in increased levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and less demand for brownfield development within existing centres.

Urban generated development would occur within rural areas outside of established settlements. This alternative would result in low density urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

⁸ Areas under Strong Urban Influence & Stronger Rural Areas include:

- Electoral Divisions where at least 15% of their workforce commute to a town of population over 10,000 or a town with more than 2,500 jobs
- Additional Electoral Divisions with generally stable or rising population

⁹ Areas of Special Control include:

- National/International Conservation Designations (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Natural Heritage Areas)
- Areas of High Amenity
- Source Protection Zones
- Restricted Regional Roads

(ii) Alternatives for consideration of Sráids in Rural Areas

Description

- A.** Provide focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Sráids as part of Rural Tier of Settlement Hierarchy.
- B.** Sráids are included within the wider open countryside but there is no focus or no targeted provisions for these locations.

Summary of Evaluation

Alternative A

Providing focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Sráids as part of Rural Tier of Settlement Hierarchy would provide a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within Sráids would be more likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and more likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape. Development would be required to be subject to siting, design, protection of residential amenities and normal development management criteria, subject to the satisfactory provision of infrastructure and services and in keeping with the character of the settlement.

Alternative B

Not providing a focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Sráids as part of Rural Tier of Settlement Hierarchy would be less likely to provide a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within the open countryside would be less likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and less likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape.

4.5 Alternatives for Land Use Zoning

Land use zoning has been applied in a way that primarily seeks to achieve sustainable and compact growth, taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES.

The Council have identified realistic alternatives for certain settlements, where these are available taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES.

Table 4.1 Assessment of Land Use Zoning Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Evaluation
Tullamore (Set 1)	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Tullamore (Set 2)	Green buffer along the bypass and canal and train lines: A. Provide	A green buffer along the bypass and train lines would help to protect future residential and employment populations from emissions to air including noise. Buffers along the canal would help to facilitate the protection of this amenity asset from visually intrusive developments. The green buffers would also contribute towards the protection of ecological connectivity, water management and protected structures and their context. The absence of a green buffer would make adverse impacts upon the aforementioned sensitivities more likely.
	Green buffer along the bypass and canal and train lines: B. Do not provide	
Birr (Set 1)	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Birr (Set 2)	Green belt between Crinkill Village and Birr Town: A. Provide	A green belt between Crinkill would facilitate the protection of the character of Crinkill village mature trees (some of which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders), non-designated biodiversity, an Esker between Crinkill and Birr Town which has been previously identified as an Area of High Amenity and the context of various structures of architectural value. The absence of a greenbelt would facilitate sprawl from the south of Birr town, and associated effects, and impacts upon the aforementioned sensitivities.
	Green belt between Crinkill Village and Birr Town: B. Do not provide	
Banagher (Set 1)	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Evaluation
Clara	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Daingean	Industrial zoning: A. Less compact - omit land to the south	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	Industrial zoning: B. More compact - include land to the south of the town	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Ferbane	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: A. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Kilcormac	Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zonings: A. Provide	The two areas of Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zonings would provide for needed sporting/athletic facilities, at both local and regional levels. Such facilities are necessary in making settlements more desirable places to live – so that they maintain populations and services. Attracting new populations into the County's settlements will reduce demand for development in areas that are less well serviced and connected – that type of development would be unsustainable and would have higher environmental impacts. The development of sporting/athletic facilities would present potential local impacts; residual impacts would be mitigated by the measures integrated into the Plan.
	Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zonings: B. Do not provide	
Ballinagar	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Ballycumber (Set 1)	Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning along river and park/playground: A. Provide	The Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning would contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage at the Ballycumber House and the natural heritage of the River Brosna and its adjacent lands. Furthermore this zoning could help to facilitate recreational activities along the canal and adjacent to Ballycumber House. Allowing for such activities are necessary in making settlements more desirable places to live – so that they maintain populations and services. Attracting new populations into the County's settlements will reduce demand for development in areas that are less well serviced and connected – that type of development would be unsustainable and would have higher environmental impacts. Facilitating recreational activities would present potential local impacts; residual impacts would be mitigated by the measures integrated into the Plan.
	Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning along river and park/playground: B. Do not provide	

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Evaluation
Ballycumber (Set 2)	Opportunity vacant site in the south east of the town: A. Provide	Encouraging the re-development of the Opportunity Site, which is a visually prominent site at the entry into the village, would reduce the need to develop less well serviced, less well connected sites elsewhere. Re-development of this site would make the village a more desirable place to live. Attracting new populations into the County's settlements will reduce demand for development in areas that are less well serviced and connected – that type of development would be unsustainable and would have higher environmental impacts. Facilitating re-development of the site would present potential local impacts; residual impacts would be mitigated by the measures integrated into the Plan.
	Opportunity vacant site in the south east of the town: B. Do not provide	
Belmont	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Cloghan	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Clonbullogue	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Coolderry	Employment zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	Employment zoning: A. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Geashill	New residential zoning to be provided: A. Behind existing residential development on the west side of the village	The potential environmental effects that could arise as a result of developments at the alternative sites are similar. Access to the site behind the existing residential development is constrained due to distance from the road and adjacent development/ownership. As a result, it is less likely, all other factors being equal, that this land parcel would be developed for the residential development provided for, thereby making the proper planning and sustainable development of this settlement less likely under this alternative and potentially resulting in increased demand for housing in sites that are less well serviced and further away from the village.
	New residential zoning to be provided: B. To the north of the R420 Regional Road	The potential environmental effects that could arise as a result of developments at the alternative sites are similar. Access to the site to the north of the R420 is not significantly constrained. As a result, it is more likely, all other factors being equal, that this land parcel would be developed for the residential development provided for, thereby making the proper planning and sustainable development of this settlement more likely under this alternative, meeting demand for housing and reducing the need to develop sites that are less well serviced and further away from the village.
Killeigh	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Evaluation
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Kinnitty (Set 1)	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Kinnitty (Set 2)	Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning at the Rectory: A. Provide	The Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning would contribute towards the protection of built and natural heritage at and surrounding the Rectory. Furthermore, this zoning would help to facilitate recreational activities around this site of architectural significance in Kinnitty. Allowing for such activities are necessary in making settlements more desirable places to live – so that they maintain populations and services. Attracting new populations into the County's settlements will reduce demand for development in areas that are less well serviced and connected – that type of development would be unsustainable and would have higher environmental impacts. Facilitating recreational activities would present potential local impacts; residual impacts would be mitigated by the measures integrated into the Plan.
	Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning at the Rectory: B. Do not provide	
Moneygall	Enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	Enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Mucklagh	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Pollagh/ Lemanaghan (Set 1)	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Evaluation
Pollagh/ Lemanaghan (Set 2)	Additional Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning in Lemanaghan: A. Provide	The Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning would provide for needed sporting facilities. Such facilities are necessary in making settlements more desirable places to live – so that they maintain populations and services. Attracting new populations into the County's settlements will reduce demand for development in areas that are less well serviced and connected – that type of development would be unsustainable and would have higher environmental impacts. The development of sporting facilities would present potential local impacts; residual impacts would be mitigated by the measures integrated into the Plan.
	Additional Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning in Lemanaghan: B. Do not provide	
Rhode	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Riverstown	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Shannonbridge	Enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact, further from village centre	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	Enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact, closer to village centre	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Shinrone	New residential zoning: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential zoning: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
Walsh Island	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: B. More compact	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.

4.6 Reasons for choosing the alternatives for the Plan in the light of the other reasonable alternatives

Selected alternatives for the Plan that emerged from the planning/SEA process are indicated on Table 4.2 below.

These alternatives have been selected and developed by the Planning Team and placed on public display by the Council having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects which were identified by the SEA and are detailed above; and
2. Planning – including social and economic – effects that also were considered by the Council.

Table 4.2 Selected Alternatives for the Plan

Tier	Alternatives Considered	Selected Alternative
Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy	Not available	n/a
Tier 2: Alternatives for Population Allocations	A. Provide additional extent of growth to Tullamore or Birr or B. Provide additional extent of growth to Edenderry or Portarlington	A. Provide additional extent of growth to Tullamore or Birr
Tier 3: Alternatives for Rural Areas	(i) Alternatives for Alternatives for Areas under Strong Urban Influence A. Include a Policy for "Housing in Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and Stronger Rural Areas, & Areas of Special Control" or B. Do not include a Policy for "Housing in Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and Stronger Rural Areas, & Areas of Special Control"	A. Include a Policy for "Housing in Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence and Stronger Rural Areas, & Areas of Special Control"
	(ii) Alternatives for consideration of Sráids in Rural Areas A. Provide focus to Sráids as part of Rural Tier of Settlement Hierarchy, supporting housing as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside or B. Sráids are included within the wider open countryside but there are no targeted provisions for these locations	A. Provide focus to Sráids as part of Rural Tier of Settlement Hierarchy, supporting housing as a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside
Tier 4: Alternatives for Densities	Not available	n/a
Tier 5: Land Use Zoning	Tullamore (Set 1 of 2) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Tullamore (Set 2 of 2) Green buffer along the bypass and canal and train lines: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide
	Birr, including Crinkill (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Birr, including Crinkill (Set 2 of 2) Green belt between Crinkill Village and Birr Town: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide

Tier	Alternatives Considered	Selected Alternative
	Banagher (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Clara (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Daingean (Set 1 of 1) Industrial zoning: A. Less compact – include land to the south of the town or B. More compact - omit land to the south of the town	B. More compact - omit land to the south of the town
	Ferbane (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Kilcormac (Set 1 of 1) Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zonings: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide
	Ballinagar (Set 1 of 1) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Ballycumber (Set 1 of 2) Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning along river and park/playground: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide
	Ballycumber (Set 2 of 2) Opportunity vacant site in the south east of the town: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide
	Belmont (Set 1 of 1) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Cloghan (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Clonbullogue (Set 1 of 1) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Colderry (Set 1 of 1) Employment zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Geashill (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning to be provided: A. Behind existing residential development on the west side of the village or B. To the north of the R420 Regional Road	B. To the north of the R420 Regional Road

Tier	Alternatives Considered	Selected Alternative
	Killeigh (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Kinnitty (Set 1 of 2) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Kinnitty (Set 2 of 2) Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning at the Rectory: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide
	Moneygall (Set 1 of 1) Enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Mucklagh (Set 1 of 1) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Pollagh/ Lemanaghan (Set 1 of 2) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Pollagh/ Lemanaghan (Set 2 of 2) Additional Open Space, Amenity and Recreation zoning in Lemanaghan: A. Provide or B. Do not provide	A. Provide
	Rhode (Set 1 of 1) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Riverstown (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Shannonbridge (Set 1 of 1) Enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact, further from village centre or B. More compact, closer to village centre	B. More compact, closer to village centre
	Shinrone (Set 1 of 1) New residential zoning: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact
	Walsh Island (Set 1 of 1) New residential and enterprise and employment zonings: A. Less compact or B. More compact	B. More compact

Section 5 Monitoring Measures

5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This section details the measures which will be used in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan.

Monitoring can both demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of significant adverse environmental effects not predicted and mitigated by this assessment, which are directly attributable to the implementation of the Plan, would necessitate consideration of these effects in the context of the Plan and potential remediation action(s) and/or review of part(s) of the Plan.

5.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives identified in the main SEA Environmental Report and used in the evaluation. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions. Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), the measures identified in that RSES SEA have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in most instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of land use plans will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring programmes.

Table 5.1 overleaf shows the indicators and targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated.

Monitoring is an ongoing process and the programme allows for flexibility and the further refinement of indicators and targets. The Monitoring Programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues – including unforeseen effects – as they arise.

5.3 Sources

The Plan will form part of the wider land use planning framework comprising a hierarchy of policies, plans, programmes, etc. This wider framework, including the National Planning Framework and the Eastern and Midlands RSES, is subject to its own SEA (and associated monitoring) requirements. At lower tiers of the hierarchy, Local Area Plans and individual projects will be subject to their own monitoring requirements as relevant.

In implementing the Monitoring Programme the Council will take into account this hierarchy of planning and environmental monitoring.

Sources for indicators may include existing monitoring databases (including those maintained by planning authorities and national/regional government departments and agencies) and the output of lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making (including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents and the output of any EIA monitoring programmes).

Internal monitoring of the environmental effects of grants of permission in the Council would provide monitoring of certain indicators on a *grant of permission*¹⁰ basis. Where significant adverse effects as a result of the development to be permitted are identified, such effects could be identified, recorded and used to inform monitoring evaluation.

¹⁰ The likely significant effects of development proposals on environmental sensitivities are further determined during the development management process. Documenting any identified effects as a result of a development to be permitted can help to fulfill monitoring requirements.

5.4 Reporting and Responsibility

A stand-alone Monitoring Report on the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan will be prepared in advance of the beginning of the review of the Plan. This report should address the indicators set out on Table 5.1. The Council is responsible for the ongoing review of indicators and targets, collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of remedial action

Table 5.1 Indicators, Targets, Sources and Remedial Action

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition of European sites • Number of spatial plans that have included ecosystem services content, mapping and policy to protect ecosystem services when their relevant plans are either revised or drafted • SEA and AA as relevant for new Council policies, plans, programmes etc. • Status of water quality in the County's water bodies • Compliance of planning permissions with Plan measures providing for the protection of Biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 4 "Biodiversity and Landscape" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require all local level land use plans to include ecosystem services and green/blue infrastructure provisions in their land use plans and as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species • Implement and review, as relevant, the Biodiversity Plan for Offaly as incorporated into the Offaly Heritage Plan 2017-21 • For planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Plan measures providing for the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 4 "Biodiversity and Landscape" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years). • Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years) • Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans • Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). • Consultations with the NPWS (at monitoring evaluation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where condition of European sites is found to be deteriorating this will be investigated with the Regional Assembly and the DCHG (and the DHPLG for water) to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance. • Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHPLG Water Section, the Regional Assembly, the EPA Catchment Unit and, as relevant, Irish Water to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance.
Population and Human Health	PHH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Plan measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 5 "Economic Development Strategy" • Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors resulting from development permitted under the Plan • Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures • Number of spatial plans that include specific green infrastructure mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 5 "Economic Development Strategy" • No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan • Increase in the proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures. • Implementation of Green Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal review of progress on implementing Plan objectives • Consultations with the Health Service Executive and EPA • CSO data • Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the waste water treatment plant or failure of the waste water treatment plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Council will contribute towards a response with the Regional Assembly, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity. • Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, the DHPLG, DCCA and NTA to develop a tailored response.
Soil (and Land)	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of population growth occurring on infill and brownfield lands compared to greenfield • Volume of contaminated material generated from brownfield and infill • Number of AA determinations and environmental assessments undertaken to support applications for brownfield and infill development prior to planning permission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4% as per the NPF. • Achieve the 40% target for growth on infill as per the NPF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Geoportal • Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the proportion of growth on infill and brownfield sites is not keeping pace with the targets set in the NPF and the RSES, the Council will liaise with the Regional Assembly to establish reasons and coordinate actions to address constraints to doing so.

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Water	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the WFD • Number of incompatible developments permitted within flood risk areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' • Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and subsequent iterations as relevant) • Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA Monitoring Programme for WFD compliance • Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHPLG Water Section, the EPA Catchment Unit, the Regional Assembly and, as relevant, Irish Water to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance. • Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the Waste water treatment Plant or failure of the plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly will coordinate a response between the relevant local authority, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity. • The Council will engage, as relevant, with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly and the OPW with respect to planning applications for development in areas of elevated flood risk.
Material Assets	MA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmed delivery of Irish Water infrastructure for all key growth towns in line with Irish Water Investment Plan and prioritisation programme to ensure sustainable growth can be accommodated • Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan • Proportion of population within who report regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To map brownfield and infill land parcels across the County. • All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan • Where septic tanks are proposed, for planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that the outfall from the septic tank will not – in combination with other septic tanks – contribute towards any surface or ground water body not meeting the objective of good status under the Water Framework Directive • Increased budget spends on water and waste water infrastructure • By 2020 all citizens will have access to speeds of 30Mbps, and that 50% of citizens will be subscribing to speeds of 100Mbps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) • CSO data • Consultations with Irish Water (at monitoring evaluation) • Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in conjunction with Local Authorities • Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment • Department of Public Expenditure and Reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the waste water treatment plant or failure of the waste water treatment plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Council will coordinate a response between the Regional Assembly, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity. • Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG and NTA to develop a tailored response.

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Air	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels of 74% • NO_x, SO_x, PM10 and PM2.5 as part of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels. • Improvement in Air Quality trends, particularly in relation to transport related emissions of NO_x and particulate matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSO data • Data from the National Travel Survey • EPA Air Quality Monitoring • Consultations with Department of Transport Tourism and Sport, Transport Trends and Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment (at monitoring evaluation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response. See also entry under Population and human health above
Climatic Factors	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Plan measures relating to climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 3 "Climate Action and Energy" • Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels • Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 3 "Climate Action and Energy" • Increase in the proportion of people resident in the County reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures • Decrease in the proportion of journeys made by residents of the County using private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels • Contribute towards transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050 • Contribute towards the target of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC), for all Member States to reach a 10% share of renewable energy in transport by 2020 • Contribute towards the target of aggregate reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions of at least 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050 across the electricity generation, built environment and transport sectors • To promote reduced energy consumption and support the uptake of renewable options and a move away from solid fuels for residential heating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA Annual National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory reporting • Climate Action Regional Office • Consultations with Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment (at monitoring evaluation) • CSO data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where trends toward carbon reduction are not recorded, the Council will liaise with the Regional Assembly to establish reasons and develop solutions • Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG and NTA to develop a tailored response

SEA Statement for the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Cultural Heritage	CH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context of these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) Consultation with Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (at monitoring evaluation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where monitoring reveals visitor pressure is causing negative effects on key tourist features, the Council will work with Regional Assembly, Fáilte Ireland and other stakeholders to address the pressures through additional mitigation
Landscape	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan To seek to align with the National Landscape Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where monitoring reveals developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, the Council will re-examine Plan provisions and the effectiveness of their implementation