

Proposed Amendment No. 1  
Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017  
Castletreasure Douglas

*Facilitate the Rezoning of lands designated as Metropolitan Greenbelt to Residential zoning SE-R-14 at Castletreasure, Douglas Cork City and extend settlement development boundary to encompass subject site.*

Draft SEA Environmental Report

21<sup>st</sup> December 2020



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council



We are Cork.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This is the Environmental Report on the strategic environment assessment of the proposed amendment to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 and it describes the assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the proposed amendment
- 1.1.2 Cork County Council previously set out its land use planning strategy for the development of the towns and villages of the county in a series of ten Electoral Area Local Area Plans. A substantial area of this former Municipal District is now under jurisdiction of Cork City Council.
- 1.1.3 Local Area Plans sit at the lower end of the planning policy hierarchy and must be consistent with the higher-level plans like the City Development Plan and the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy



- 1.1.4 The most recent Local Area Plan pertinent to this area was adopted in 2017. The Plans have a six year life ,Cork City Council has commenced the process of preparing a new City Development plan which will be in place in 2022 and it is anticipated that the status of all zoned lands including the this site which is subject to the proposed Amendment will be reviewed ahead of the publication of the Draft City Development Plan.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.1.5 From a legislative viewpoint, the concept of SEA was initially introduced by way of the Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27th June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive) which was transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) and Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004). Subsequently, these statutory instruments were amended by S.I. 200 of 2011 and S.I. No. 201 of 2011. This SEA is being undertaken under S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (as amended) in accordance with Article 8, insofar as this legislation relates to land-use planning.
- 1.1.6 Strategic Environment Assessment 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 stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations. The SEA process is undertaken using a

methodical iterative approach. The methodology followed in this report is derived from several sources including the appropriate legislation and guidance documents prepared on a national and EU level. Legally, the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), transposed Irish regulations and associated amendments to provide the legislative framework. The main sources of guidance include the documents detailed below:

- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2004;
- SEA Pack and Scoping Guidance Document, EPA.
- SEA Process Checklist, EPA.

## 1.2 Stages of SEA

1.2.1 There are a number of stages involved in the SEA process which are listed as follows:

- (1) Screening
- (2) Scoping
- (3) **Collection of baseline data, assessment and compilation of the Environmental Report (current stage).**
- (4) Consultation with designated environmental authorities on Environmental Report and Draft Plan.
- (5) Evaluation of submissions received in response to the consultation and amendments to the plan as appropriate with designated environmental authorities.
- (6) Issuing of the final SEA Statement identifying how environmental considerations have been integrated into the final adopted Plan.
- (7) Monitoring of significant environmental effects following adoption and implementation of the Plan.

1.2.2 This report only deals with stages 1-3.

### Screening

1.2.3 The purpose of screening is to determine definitively if there is a necessity for a strategic environmental assessment to be undertaken. There is a mandatory requirement under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 (as amended) to undertake a strategic environmental assessment in respect of Local Area Plans or amendments to, for areas with a population of 5,000 or more, so in this instance, screening was not required and the SEA process proceeds to the next stage.

### Scoping

1.2.4 The process of scoping for SEA is defined as the procedure whereby the range of environmental issues and the level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report are decided upon, in consultation with the prescribed environmental authorities. Scoping is necessary in order to establish, with objectivity, the potential impacts of the implementation of the draft plan on a number of environmental elements from consultations with a range of

environmental bodies and the incorporation of associated submissions into the draft plan by way of their inclusion in the Environmental Report.

1.2.5 Scoping for the current SEA was commenced with the circulation of a Draft Scoping Report to all the environmental authorities on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020. A total of one submission was received, from the EPA. The Scoping Report was finalised on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and issues raised were considered further in the preparation of the proposed amendment to the Local Area Plan and Draft SEA Environment Report.

### **Collection of Baseline Data, Assessment and Environmental Report.**

1.2.6 In order to assess the likely significant impacts of the Plan, baseline data on the current state of the environment has to be collected and evaluated and the potential effects of the plan predicted and considered. In accordance with legislation and guidance, the existing environment is described with respect to biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water (surface freshwater, coastal, transitional, groundwater, bathing and water services (drinking water and waste water treatment), air, climatic factors, material assets (roads, transportation, energy etc), cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage), landscape and the interrelationships between these factors as appropriate. Any existing problems relevant to the new Plan are also identified at this baseline stage.

1.2.7 Identification of baseline environmental status provides for the identification of key resources and sensitivities within the Plan area and the identification of potential threats to the environment, thus allowing for the inclusion of mitigation measures that may need to be incorporated into the new Plan to ensure that it does not exacerbate existing problems. Assessment of the baseline environment also enables plan-makers to consider how the environment might evolve in the absence of the proposed plan.

1.2.8 As the data is compiled and plan policies evolve the likely significant effects of implementing the plan are identified, described and evaluated and this is described in the Environmental Report.

1.2.9 The information to be contained in the environmental report is set out in Annex 1 of the SEA Directive and reproduced in Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as inserted by Article 12 of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004). The structure of this report is summarised as follows:

**Table 1: Information to be contained in an Environmental Report**

Item	Information to be contained in an Environmental Report	Relevant Section of Environmental Report
A	Outline of the contents and main objectives of the draft plan and relationship with other relevant plans or programmes	Section 2: Context of the Plan
B	Description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Section 3: Baseline Environment
C	Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Section 3: Baseline environment

D	Description of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as Natura 2000 sites	Section 3: Baseline environment
E	Description of environmental protection objectives (EPOs), established at international, EU or national level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	Section 4: EPOs
F	Description of the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and interrelationships between these factors	Section 6: Evaluation of the Proposed Amendment.
G	Description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan	Section 6: Evaluation of the Proposed Amendment.
H	Outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, with a description of how the assessment was undertaken and including any difficulties encountered in compiling the information	Section 5: Alternative Scenarios.
I	Description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring of the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan	Will be included in SEA Statement once Amendment is finalised
J	A non-technical summary of the above information.	

## Documenting the SEA process

- 1.2.10 The SEA Process produces two documents – this environmental Report which is published with the Proposed Amendment and an SEA statement which will be published at the end of the process, once the Amendment is adopted.
- 1.2.11 This Environmental Report will be submitted to the Elected Members with the Proposed Amendment. The Members must take account of the Environmental Report before the Plan is adopted. When the Amendment is adopted, an SEA Statement will be published, summarising, *inter alia*, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Amendment and the reasons for choosing the Amendment as adopted over other alternatives considered in the Environmental Report.
- 1.2.12 Should alterations to the Amendment be proposed, there will be a further submission period of not less than four weeks during which time submissions and/or observations may be made on the proposed alterations. If material alterations are proposed they will need to undergo a screening process to determine if SEA is required. The proposed alterations, the screening

document and SEA Environmental report, where relevant, will be sent to the Minister, the Board and the prescribed authorities and will be made available for public inspection.

## 1.3 Habitats Directive Assessment

- 1.3.1 Habitats Directive Assessment is an iterative process which runs parallel to and informs both the Amendment making process and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Process. It involves analysis and review of draft policies as they emerge during each stage of Amendment making, to ensure that their implementation will not impact on sites designated for nature conservation, nor on the habitats or species for which they are designated. Within this process, regard must also be had to the potential for policies to contribute to impacts which on their own may be acceptable, but which could be significant when considered in combination with the impacts arising from the implementation of other plans or policies.
- 1.3.2 The results of this analysis and review are presented in a Natura Impact Screening Assessment which is published alongside the proposed amendment. This screening process was carried out to ascertain if the Proposed Amendment to the Ballincollig Carrigaline MD Local Area Plan would be likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. The subject sites do not contain any Natura 2000 sites nor are they located directly adjacent to a Natura 2000 site.
- 1.3.3 The proposed Amendment is formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the nearest Natura 2000 site i.e. Cork Harbour SPA. The changes proposed in the Amendment are set within the context of a development framework already established by the adopted Ballincollig Carrigaline MD Local Area Plan 2017, the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and the Cork City Development Plan 2015. The impact of the implementation of the Amendment in terms of the environment and sustainable development is likely to be neutral.

### **Decision:**

There is no potential for significant effects. AA is not required.

1.3.4

## 1.3.5 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

- 1.3.6 As part of the preparation of the Proposed Amendment and in order to meet the needs of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and the requirements of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government / Office of Public Works Guidelines, "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" (2009), Cork City Council also undertook a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).
- 1.3.7 The assessment provides for an improved understanding of flood risk issues within the subject site and the spatial distribution of flood risk. The SFRA report sets out how the Flood Risk Assessment was undertaken, as well as how its findings were addressed and integrated into the proposed Amendment. A copy of the SFRA is included in Appendix A of this report. It should be read in conjunction with Proposed Amendment No 1 to the Ballincollig Carrigaline MD Local Area Plan 2017.

## 1.4 Difficulties Encountered

1.4.1 During the preparation of the Environmental Report, no new research was undertaken and information was gathered from existing sources of data with the exception of research conducted by Cork City Council as part of the preparation of the Draft City Development Plan 2021.. It should be noted that there are a number of areas where data was not readily available which include:

- No wetland inventory
- Information is largely paper based with exceptions of designated areas in digitised format (GIS)
- Lack of guiding legislation in some areas e.g. soils and their conservation.
- Limited Air Quality monitoring data for the plan area. The frequency of this monitoring is also identified as an issue.
- The lack of centralised data source for environmental baseline data posed a difficulty to the SEA process.

1.4.2 In addition, the status of a number of Transitional and Coastal Waterbodies was not available. Not only did this impede the preparation of the baseline assessment, it also highlights a potential problem with the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

## 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 In accordance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended a planning authority may at any time, and for any particular area within its functional area, prepare a local area plan in respect of that area.

2.1.2 In addition Section 30 (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 2019,Cork City Council may amend any Local Area Plan previously prepared by Cork County Council as it relates to its functional area.

## 2.2 Current County Development Plan Strategy

2.2.1 A new Cork County Development Plan came into force in 2014. This plan, which has also been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment, sets out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County as a whole, including population targets for each Municipal District and each of the main towns. Within each Municipal District a combined population target is also given for the villages and rural areas. The County Development Plan 2014 has also identified the amount of new housing required in each Municipal District / Town /Village to meet the needs of the target population.

2.2.2 The County Development Plan had been prepared so that it is consistent with national targets issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Region. The Plan also sets out county-wide objectives for issues such as housing, social and community facilities, economy and employment, town centres and retail, energy and digital economy, transportation and mobility, water services, heritage, green infrastructure and the environment and zoning and land use.

2.2.3 The Ballincollig Carrigaline Local Area Plan is consistent with the objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and comply with the Local Area Plan Guidelines for Planning

Authorities prepared by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and various legislative and other policy documents issued by the Government.

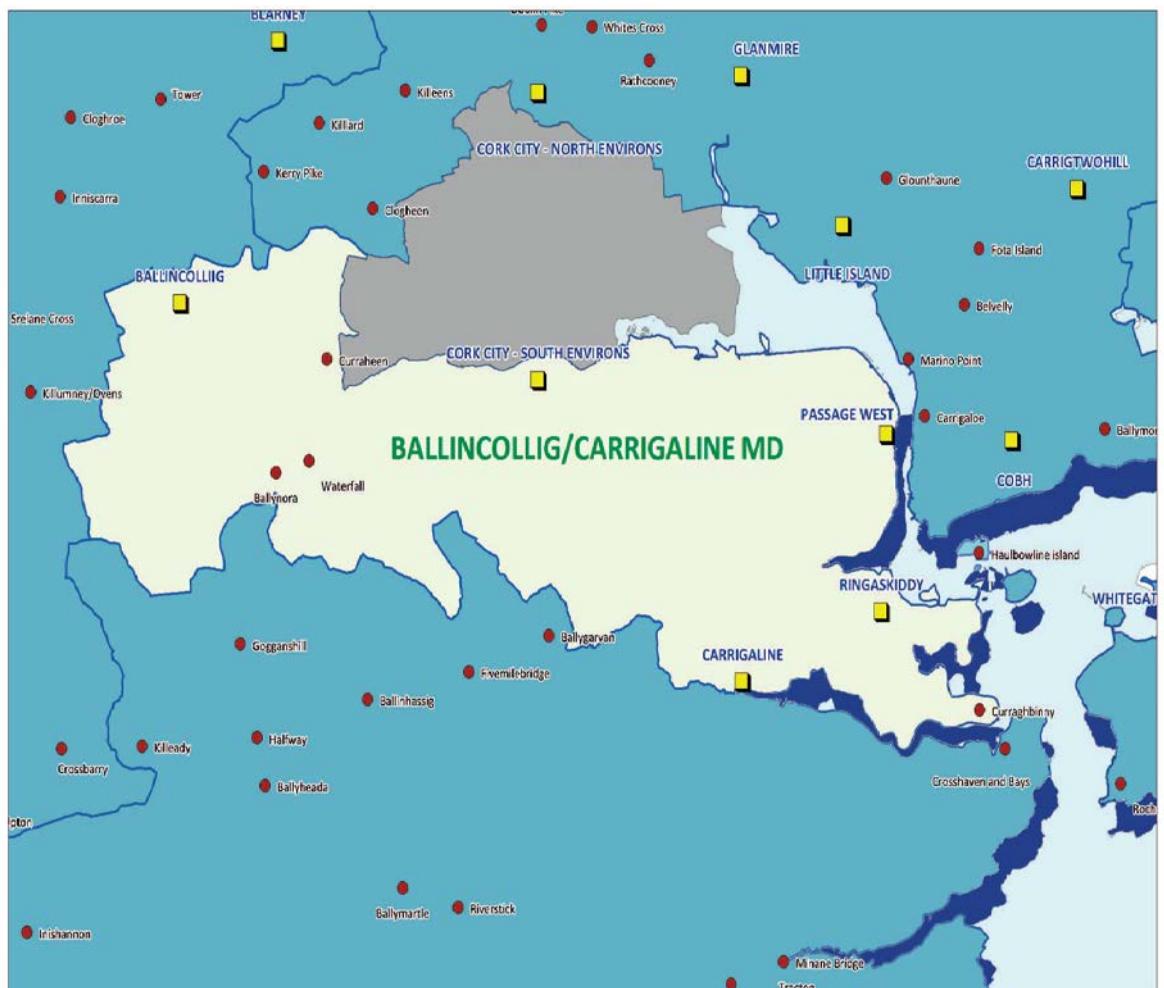
2.2.4 The Proposed amendment must similarly be consistent with the foregoing.

## 2.3 Proposed Amendment to the Local Area Plan Strategy

### Overview

2.3.1 The former Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District is located to the south of Cork City and in 2011 the population of the area stood at 71,946. This population is spread across a network of suburbs/settlements in particular the Cork City South Environs, 3 Main Towns, 5 smaller settlements and the open countryside. The district is largely urban based with over 91% of the population living in the Cork City South environs and 3 Main Towns, 0.3% living in smaller settlements and just over 8% living in the open countryside i.e. not within a settlement.

2.3.2 Cork City South Environs is the largest urban area within the former Municipal District with a population of 32,635 in 2011. The other urban areas are the Main Towns of Ballincollig, 17,368, Carrigaline (North), 9,917 and Passage West 5,790.



*Figure 2.1: Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Settlements*

## 2.4 Contents of the Proposed Amendment

2.4.1 The Draft Local Area Plan provides a blueprint for the development of the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District for the next 6 years. Set out below are details of the structure and broad chapter content of the Draft local Area Plan.

### Section 1 Introduction

This Section sets out the intention of Cork City Council to amend the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 30. 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 2019. The purpose of the proposed amendment is mainly to facilitate residential development in an area of high housing demand. The proposed alteration consists of material changes to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.

### Section 2 Site Context

2.4.2 This section set out the Site context and outlines the neighbouring land uses in the vicinity of the site.

### Section 3 Strategic Planning Context

2.4.3 The purpose of this section is to detail the relevant policies, legislations and major land use proposals against which the Proposed Amendment has been benchmarked.

2.4.4 These include

- The National Planning Framework
- The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
- Cork Metropolitan Transport Strategy
- The Cork County Development Plan 2014 as amended
- Ballincollig Carrigaline MD Local Area Plan
- The proposed M28 Motorway

### Section 4 Reasons for Rezoning Proposal

2.4.5 This section sets out the reasons for considering the proposed amendment which will facilitate rezoning at this location

### Section 5: Changes to the Ballincollig Carrigaline MD LAP 2017 arising from Amendment No 1

2.4.6 This section details the textual and mapping changes required to facilitate the proposed Amendment.

## Section 6; Conclusion

2.4.7 This section provides the justifications for the proposed Amendment and why a potential rezoning at this location is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 2.5 Relationship to other plans

### National Policy

2.5.1 **National Planning Framework:** The NPF is a 20-year high level strategy to guide development and investment in Ireland. The vision, as set out in the NPF, is the delivery of a regional focused strategy for managing growth and providing a counterbalance to the established concentration of growth in the Greater Dublin Area. To achieve this the NPF targets a level of growth for the other regions which combined will at least match the growth of Dublin and the East and Midlands Region. It also supports ambitious growth targets to enable the cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford to grow by at least 50% by 2040 and sees them as drivers of regional growth.

2.5.2 The NPF identifies ten National Strategic Outcomes which will be a central consideration in shaping the new City Development Plan. The outcomes will be realised a series of National Policy Objectives (NPOs) which the City Development Plan will have to be consistent with. The NPF is underpinned by the National Development Plan which is a 10-year strategy for public capital investment.

2.5.3 Compact Growth is the first National Strategic Outcome (NSO) and it has particular significance for spatial planning policy, requiring at least 50% of growth in Cork City to be located within and close to the existing 'built-up' area. This will allow better use of underutilised land and buildings including infill and brownfield land, with higher housing and employment densities. Higher densities and compact development will need to be accompanied by improved employment opportunities, amenities, health, education and environmental services, supported by sustainable mobility, reflecting NSOs 4,5, and 10. NSO 7 promotes enhancement of our natural and built heritage will help retain the unique character of our city

2.5.4 **Food Harvest 2020 – A Vision for Irish Agri-Food and Fisheries:** The agri-food and fisheries sector is Ireland's most important indigenous industry and is recognised as having a key role to play in Ireland's export-led economic recovery. With €7bn in exports the sector currently accounts for over half of manufacturing exports, by Irish owned firms. The geographical distribution of the sector ensures that any future wealth and employment generated will be of direct benefit to rural and coastal communities. The 2020 vision for the sector seeks to increase the value of primary output in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector by €1.5 billion by 2020 (an increase of 33% on 2007-2009 levels); increase value added in the agri-food, fisheries and wood products sector by €3 billion (+40%) and achieve an export target of €12 billion for the sector (+ 42%). Meeting these targets will have significant environmental challenges including reducing the carbon intensity of Irish agriculture and ensuring the sector plays its part in reducing our overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As a County with a strong agri-food and fisheries sector already, there is obvious scope of sustainable growth in this area which should bring many benefits to the County as a whole.

2.5.5 **National Climate Change Strategy (2007 – 2012) / Climate Change Adaption Framework 2012:** The National Climate Change Strategy 2007 – 2012 sets out a range of measures, building on those already in place under the first National Climate Change Strategy (2000) to ensure Ireland reaches

its target under the Kyoto Protocol. The Strategy provides a framework for action to reduce Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions.

2.5.6 Ireland is now subject to greater target and ambitions in the effort to combat Climate Change, revised legislation is currently making its way through the Legislature and it is anticipated that a new or revised National Climate Change Strategy will emerge in due course.

2.5.7 **The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework** introduces an integrated policy framework, involving all stakeholders on all institutional levels to ensure adaptation measures are taken across different sectors and levels of government to manage and reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. Under the Framework, the relevant Government Departments, Agencies and local authorities have been asked to commence the preparation of sectoral and local adaptation plans and to publish drafts of these plans by mid-2014

2.5.8 **National Renewable Energy Action Plan:** The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government's strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland's 16% target under European Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC. The development of renewable energy is central to overall energy policy in Ireland. Nationally, the Government's ambitions for renewable energy and the related national targets are fully commensurate with the European Union's energy policy objectives and the targets addressed to Ireland under the Renewable Energy Directive. Ireland's energy efficiency ambitions (20% of energy from renewable sources by 2020) as set out in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan are duly reflected in the NREAP.

2.5.9 **National Biodiversity Plan: Action for Biodiversity 2011 – 2016:** Ireland's second National Biodiversity Plan sets out a vision for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland and includes the overarching target of "reducing biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystems in Ireland by 2016, and achieving substantial recovery by 2020". The Plan sets out a number of strategic objectives and actions which are aimed at mainstreaming biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors, strengthening the knowledge base and increasing awareness of biodiversity in order to support the achievement of the target.

2.5.10 **Our Sustainable Future -A framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland (2012):** This framework recognises that the green economy and sustainable development agendas are a key element of Ireland's economic recovery strategy and sets out the range of environmental, economic and social measures required to move these agendas forward. The framework sets out 70 measures that will ensure we improve our quality of life for current and future generations and sets out clear measures, responsibilities and timelines in an implementation plan. These include areas such as the sustainability of public finances and economic resilience, natural resources, agriculture, climate change, transport, sustainable communities and spatial planning, public health, education, innovation and research, skills and training, and global poverty. The framework recognises that some aspects of the pattern of development that emerged in Ireland over the last decade present major challenges from a sustainable development perspective and spatial planning is one of the mechanisms, along with wider public policy coordination and fiscal policy, to effect change at national, regional and local level and deliver more sustainable communities.

2.5.11 **Smarter Travel. A new transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020:** Smarter Travel recognises that transport and travel trends in Ireland are unsustainable. Even with the investment in Transport 21, if we continue with present policies, congestion will get worse, transport emissions will continue to grow, economic competitiveness will suffer and quality of life will decline. Smarter travel is designed to show how we can reverse current unsustainable transport and travel patterns and reduce the health and environmental impacts of current trends and improve our quality of life. Actions are aimed at influencing overall travel demand and reducing emissions in both urban and rural areas. Key actions include the following:

- Actions to reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment and the use of pricing mechanisms or fiscal measures to encourage behavioral change,
- Actions aimed at ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, through improved public transport service and investment in cycling and walking,
- Actions aimed at improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport, and
- Actions aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets.

**2.5.12 National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 – 2016:** This National Action Plan for Social inclusion, complemented by the social inclusion elements of the National Development Plan 2007-2013: Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All, sets out how the social inclusion strategy will be achieved over the period 2007-2016. The overall goal of this Plan is to reduce the number of those experiencing consistent poverty to between 2% and 0% by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty by 2016.

**2.5.13 National Heritage Plan 2002:** The National Heritage Plan sets out a clear and coherent strategy and framework for the protection and enhancement of Ireland's national heritage. The core objective of the Plan is to protect the national heritage as well as promoting it as a resource to be enjoyed by all.

## Regional Policy

**2.5.14 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy:** The RSES is a strategic regional development framework supporting the programme for change set out in Project Ireland 2040. As the regional tier of the national planning process it ensures coordination between the National Planning Framework and the City Development Plan. The central themes of the RSES are place making, climate action and sustainable economic opportunity and growth. It states: 'Our cities are the pillars on which to base the RSES settlement and economic strategy'.

**2.5.15** The RSES sets out a settlement hierarchy for the region and population targets for Cork and the other cities to 2026 and 2031. It contains a large number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) which the City Development Plan will aim to achieve. The RSES also identifies key enablers, similar to those in the NPF, that are designed to underpin Cork City as the primary urban centre of the region. Importantly RSES supports Cork City's ambition to develop as a city of international scale. The RSES reinforces the National Strategic Outcome of high quality international connectivity through supporting investment and increased capacity in the regions ports and airports and provision of high quality digital connectivity. It supports the TEN-T network and the continued capital investment proposed in the and Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli Docks for regeneration. It also supports Cork airport as one the regions two international airports.

**2.5.16 Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)** Volume 2 of the RSES contains the Cork MASP which sets out principles and policy objectives to guide investment and sustainable development across the entire metropolitan area. The NPF states that Cork requires significantly accelerated and urban focused growth to more fully achieve its role as an international centre of scale to complement Dublin. The MASP reinforces this and states that the level of growth envisaged for Cork (Cork City to grow 50-60% by 2040 to 336,000 people uniquely positions the Cork Metropolitan Area as:

- A principal complementary location to Dublin with a strong international role;
- A primary driver of economic and population growth in the region;

- A compact region with increased regional connectivity; and
- A city region focusing growth on the delivery of sustainable transport patterns

2.5.17 The MASP population targets for the overall Cork Metropolitan Area envisage a growth of 104,657 people by 2031. Most of this growth will occur in Cork City, which would see an uplift in population of up to 75,000 people, to give a total of 289,000 people in Cork City by 2031. This will require commensurate growth in employment with close to 65,000 extra jobs needed in the Cork Metropolitan Area.

2.5.18 The MASP recognises that the concentration of this level of growth in Cork will require significant and concentrated investment in supporting infrastructure to deliver the houses, jobs and services required to meet the role and targets set out for Cork. It includes a range of specific objectives to deliver transport, environmental services, energy, flood protection, cultural, and amenity infrastructure, among others, which will be incorporated into the Development Plan.

2.5.19 **River Basin Management Plan for Ireland** This River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) outlines the new approach that Ireland will take as it works to protect its rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters over the next four years. Building on the lessons learned from the first river basin management planning cycle which were divided into regions, the Government is now planning on the basis that Ireland is defined as a single River Basin District. The new Plan uses a much-improved evidence base to underpin decision-making, at both national and local levels. This Plan also benefits from a stronger and more integrated approach to public consultation and engagement. The Government is introducing new initiatives and policies to address many of our water-quality challenges. The Plan builds on the measures implemented during the first planning cycle, but also seeks to implement supporting measures on a prioritised basis, where necessary.

2.5.20 **Southern Regional Waste Management Plan:** The Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region is the framework for the prevention and management of wastes in a safe and sustainable manner. The scope of the waste plan is broad and ultimately it needs to provide policy direction, setting out what we want to achieve and a roadmap of actions to get us there. The waste management plan is a statutory document prepared by the local authorities of the region. This waste plan covers the period from 2015 to 2021 and is required to be revised or replaced every six years. The preparation period for the plan extended over 18 months and afforded the local authorities an opportunity to take stock and evaluate the ways in which wastes have been managed in the region. This process allowed the authorities to identify measures which are succeeding and those which are not delivering the desired result. The outcome has led to the formulation of new policies and measures to improve the way wastes are prevented and managed in the region, while also introducing new steps to help realise the full potential of our waste as a resource.

2.5.21 **Cork County Development Plan 2014:** The Cork County Development Plan, 2014 adopted on the 8th December 2014 sets out the blueprint for the development of the county, underpinned by the core principles of sustainability, social inclusion, quality of design and climate change adaptation. The County Development Plan includes over 200 objectives on a range of issues including:

- Housing,
- Rural, Coastal and Island Development;
- Social and Community facilities;
- Economy and Employment;
- Town Centres and Retail Development;

- Tourism;
- Energy and Digital Economy;
- Transport and Mobility;
- Water Services, Surface Water (including Flooding) and Waste;
- Heritage;
- Green Infrastructure and Environment;
- Zoning and Land use.

2.5.22 The objectives of the County Development Plan have not been repeated in the Local Area Plan therefore the two documents must be read together when planning a development. All proposals for development, put forward in accordance with the provisions of this Local Area Plan, must currently demonstrate compliance with the objectives of the County Plan.

2.5.23 It is expected to remain in force (subject to any interim variations that Cork City or County Councils may make) until late 2020. It is a six year development plan for the County and former County Areas now under the jurisdiction of Cork City Council. The plan also sets out the overall planning and sustainable development strategy for the county which must be consistent with the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and the South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

2.5.24 The Plan is currently the principle strategic planning policy document in the subject area and . Detailed land-use zoning maps for the City South Environs are contained in the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.

2.5.25 **Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021:** The city plan which is currently under review of relevance due to the City Boundary Extension in 2019, additionally Cork City is the main economic and retail focus for the City South Environs and the focus of public transport services within the metropolitan area. The Plan includes a population target for the city of 150,000 by 2022 and re-emphasises the potential for the development of brownfield land in the City Centre, Docklands, Mahon and Blackpool to cater for the sustainable growth of the city. With the adoption of the National Planning Framework in 2018, these figures have now been superseded with a much more significant population target allocated to Cork City & Suburbs.

2.5.26 **Cork City Heritage Plan 2015-2020**, this plan identifies key actions for natural heritage and the actions from the Cork City Biodiversity Plan has been incorporated into the Cork City Heritage Plan 2015-2020.

2.5.27 **County Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014:** This plan addressed how the wildlife resources of the County, including native plants, animals and the ecosystems that they combine to produce, will be managed and protected. Its implementation will contribute to achieving national and international targets for the conservation of biodiversity in the context of constantly accelerating rates of species extinction and habitat loss and deterioration globally.

## Legislative Context

2.5.28 The Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive) and its transposed Irish legislation, including amendments form the legislative framework for the SEA process, including its documentation in the form of an Environmental Report. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) also forms an integral part of SEA and additional guidance from a European context and national context has been listed within this Section. Additional key

pieces of legislation pertaining to environmental considerations include the following list which is regarded as not exhaustive:

- EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)
- EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)
- The Wildlife Act, 1976 (as amended)
- The Flora (Protection) Order 1999
- UN Convention of Biological Diversity 1992 (ratified 1996)
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention 1971)
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations, 2001 and 2004 and Amendments (2010)
- Water Services Act, 2007
- Water Services (Amendment) Act, 2013
- European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations, 2009
- European Communities Environmental Objectives (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) Regulations, 2009
- European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010
- EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)
- European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2010
- EU Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)
- Bathing Water Quality Regulations, 2008
- Bathing Water Quality (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC)
- European Communities (Quality of Shellfish Waters) Regulations, 2006
- European Communities (Quality of Shellfish Waters) (Amendment) Regulations, 2009
- Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, 2007
- European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations, 2008
- Air Quality Standards Regulations, 2011
- Environmental Noise Regulations, 2006
- The European Landscape Convention, 2000

### 3 Environmental Baseline

## 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The environmental baseline of the former Municipal District is described in this section. This baseline information outlines the environmental context within which Proposed Amendment No 1 to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan will operate. The purpose of this section is to provide enough environmental baseline data to:

- support the identification of environmental problems;
- support the process of assessing the environmental effects;
- provide a baseline against which future monitoring data can be compared.

3.1.2 A number of key environmental issues set the context for the collection of the baseline data and each section includes an overview of the current situation, the key environmental problems and an analysis of the likely evolution in the absence of the Draft Plan. The Environmental issues are listed below:

- Population and Human Health,
- Biodiversity – Flora and Fauna,
- Soil,
- Water,
- Air and Climatic factors,
- Material Assets,
- Cultural Heritage,
- Landscape.

3.1.3 The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) circular SEA 1/8 and NPWS 1/8 requires that under the Habitats Directive an Appropriate Assessment of the ecological implications of the amendment is conducted. An appropriate assessment screening of the Proposed Amendment was conducted by Cork City Council and is provided as part of this Proposed Amendment.

## 3.2 Population and Human Health

3.2.1 In 2011 the population of the Cork City South Environs stood at 32,635. In the period to 2022, the population target allocated by the Cork County Development Plan 2014 provides for the population to fall by 1,327 persons or 3.8 % approximately. However, these figures are now obsolete having been superseded by revised population and housing targets for Cork City & Suburbs as prescribed in the National Planning Framework.

3.2.2 With regard to Human Health, impacts relevant to SEA are those which arise as a result of interactions with environmental vectors such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so they come in contact with human beings. These issues will be explored in the Environmental Report.

### Existing Sensitivities in relation to Population and Human Health

3.2.3 The National Planning Framework has made provision for the population of Cork City & Suburbs to increase leading to increased demand for housing within the area and the provision of supporting social, community and employment/commercial services, facilities and opportunities. The timely delivery of such services is important to the quality of life of the population.

3.2.4 Enabling population growth and sustainable patterns of development in key settlements may be hindered by delays in the delivery of key infrastructure required to facilitate development leading to a housing shortage in some areas and development being shifted to other, potentially less sustainable locations, frustrating efforts to plan for having people, jobs and services located closer together.

3.2.5 Dispersed settlement patterns can lead to an over dependence on car-based transport and long journeys to work which can have negative impacts on the health of the population and quality of life.

3.2.6 The economic decline of some settlements and/or the failure of others to realise the expected level of growth, can lead to reduced service provision, loss of job opportunities and reduced quality of life for the remaining residents of the area. A key challenge for the new City Plan which apply in this area is to promote the sustainable growth of the economy of all districts and City towns and to support the balanced socio-economic growth of our city.

3.2.7 Improved recreational/walking and cycling facilities are needed to support an increased uptake in physical exercise to help improve / maintain the health of the population. This amendment will facilitate this as it provides for a vital section of the Ballybrack Cycleway, a key element of the Cork Cycle Network Plan.

### **3.3 Biodiversity-Flora and Fauna**

3.3.1 European and National Legislation now protect the most valuable of our remaining wild places, through designation of sites as proposed Natural Heritage Area, Natural Heritage Areas, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. The designation of these sites at a national level is the responsibility of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and local Government but it is the responsibility of all of us to protect these sites. The process of designation of such sites is ongoing, with new sites being added, re-designated and boundaries of existing sites being adjusted. The key Natura sites in the former Ballincollig Carrigaline MD are outlined in Tables 1,2 and 3 below.

3.3.2 There is one SPA, one SAC and five pNHA's dispersed throughout the Ballincollig Carrigaline MD. The reasons for designation range from ecological, plants, ornithological, woodland, heath, bats and vegetation. The largest nature conservation area is the Cork Harbour SPA (4030). The four pNHAs include Douglas River Estuary pNHA1046, Monkstown Creek pNHA1979, Loughbeg pNHA1066 and Owenboy River pNHA1990.

<b>Table 1: Special Protection Areas</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Environmental Designation</b>	<b>Settlement</b>
Cork Harbour	SPA 4030	Douglas, Ringaskiddy, Rochestown, Monkstown, Passage West, Glenbrook

**Table 2 Special Areas of Conservation**

Name	Environmental Designation	Settlement
Cork Harbour Great Island Channel	SAC 1058	Douglas, Ringaskiddy, Rochestown, Monkstown, Passage West, Glenbrook

Table 3: Natural Heritage Areas		
Name	Environmental Designation	Settlement
Ballincollig Cave	pNHA 1249	Ballincollig
Douglas River Estuary	pNHA 1046	Douglas
Monkstown Creek	pNHA 1979	Ringaskiddy
Loughbeg	pNHA 1066	Ringaskiddy
Owenboy River	pNHA 1990	Carrigaline

## Protected Species

3.3.3 Cork Harbour is a large, sheltered bay system with several river estuaries – principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas and Owenacurra. The SPA site comprises most of the arterial areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas Estuary, Inner Lough Mahon, Lough Beg, Whitegate Bay and Rostellan inlet. Cork Harbour is an internationally important wetland site, regularly supporting in excess of 20,000 wintering waterfowl, for which it is amongst the top five sites in the country. Several of the species which occur regularly are listed in Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive, i.e. whooper swan, Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruff and Common Tern.

## Existing Sensitivities in relation to Biodiversity

3.3.4 The Proposed Amendment will make provision for the population of the City South Environs to increase leading to increased demand for housing within the area and the provision of supporting social, community and employment / commercial services, facilities and opportunities. The timely delivery of such services is important to the quality of life of the population.

3.3.5 Enabling population growth and sustainable patterns of development in key settlements may be hindered by delays in the delivery of key infrastructure required to facilitate development leading to a housing shortage in some areas and development being shifted to other, potentially less sustainable locations, frustrating efforts to plan for having people, jobs and services located closer together.

3.3.6 Dispersed settlement patterns can lead to an over dependence on car-based transport and long journeys to work which can have negative impacts on the health of the population and quality of life.

3.3.7 The economic decline of some settlements and / or the failure of others to realise the expected level of growth, can lead to reduced service provision, loss of job opportunities and reduced quality of life for the remaining residents of the area. A key challenge for the new plan is to promote the sustainable growth of the economy of the three main towns of the Municipal District to support the balanced socio- economic growth of the area.

3.3.8 Improved recreational/walking and cycling facilities are needed to support an increased uptake in physical exercise to help improve / maintain the health of the population.

3.3.9 At present water quality issues within Cork Harbour, which is a designated Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area, mean that development within the catchment is on hold

pending resolution of the water quality issues. This will affect development within the Fermoy Municipal District.

3.3.10 New development has the potential to impact on has biodiversity, flora and fauna through the loss of some greenfield land, habitat loss or disturbance, contribution to climate change and impacts on water quality.

3.3.11 Cork City Council is commissioning a baseline ecological status report for some areas which will help inform the development of the City Development and minimise the loss of ecological resources.

### 3.4 Soils

3.4.1 The SEA examined soil issues within the Municipal District, looking at the most common soil types within the plan area and how they might be affected by the development proposed in the Draft Plan. The SEA considered the challenges facing soil generally together with issues such as erosion, geology and quarrying as appropriate.

3.4.2 The most dominant soil types in Cork City South Environs are Brown podzolic and Grey Brown Podzolic which are medium to heavy texture with a great depth of profile. Brown podzolic display good physical characteristics and are usually devoted to cropping and pasture production, while Grey Brown podzolic are good all purpose soils.

<b>Table 4 Ballincollig Carrigaline MD Soil Types</b>			
Rolling Lowland	Brown podzolic 60% Less depleted of nutrients	Acid Brown earths 40% Most occur on lime deficient parent materials, therefore acidic in nature, relatively mature and well drained	Old Red sandstone, Lower avonian shale and Ryolite glacial till.

#### Existing Sensitivities in relation to Soil

4.5.3 Additional development may lead to damage to or loss of the soil resource or impact on its functions.

### 3.5 Water

3.5.1 This section of the SEA will consider issues in relation surface water (rivers and lakes, estuarine and coastal waters) and groundwater in the Municipal District as it relates to Cork City South Environs, looking at the status and quality of these waters. The section will also examine water services infrastructure (drinking water supply, wastewater treatment and storm water).

3.5.2 Consideration was given to current and future loading within key water catchments, the potential impacts of additional development on water quality, surface water management, climate change and the need for new infrastructure to serve anticipated demands.

3.5.3 Water services of the all the infrastructure requirements needed to facilitate new development is the most critical, as in the absence of it, no development can take place. Since

January 2014 Irish Water is responsible for the operation of public water services (drinking water and wastewater) including management and maintenance of existing water services assets. Those intending to carry out development must now obtain consent to connect to Irish Water Infrastructure for new development. Irish Water also has responsibility for planning for future infrastructure needs and for the delivery of new infrastructure and future decisions in relation to investment in new water services infrastructure will be made by Irish Water. Developers must also satisfy themselves that Irish Water will make adequate services available in order to meet the needs of any development they propose.

3.5.4 The Cork City Development Plan 2015, the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and Proposed Amendment No 1 to the Municipal District Local Area Plans are important documents that Irish Water should take into account in formulating its plans and programmes.

### **Existing Sensitivities in relation to Water**

3.5.5 The major issues arising in relation to water relates to the wider Cork City Area, where there are currently deficiencies in relation to Wastewater services, although it is considered that there is sufficient capacity to cater for the Proposed Amendment.

3.5.6 There is currently sufficient drinking water capacity in the City South Environs to cater for some of the proposed amendment subject to private investment by the landowners in co-operation with Irish Water.

3.5.7 . Additional investment will be required in the City South Environs in order to facilitate development in line with the projections of the National Planning Framework

### **Flooding**

3.5.8 The assessment and management of flood risks in relation to planned future development is an important element of the proposed Amendment Cork City South Environs has a number of rivers or streams either running through the built-up area or close by and are inevitably exposed to some degree of flood risk when those rivers or streams overflow their normal course. Similarly, in coastal areas flooding can periodically occur following unusual weather or tidal events.

3.5.9 Flood maps have been prepared in association with the OPW and these maps available to the public.

3.5.10 In the course of preparing this amendment, the land under active consideration for 'zoning' for future development was assessed in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. No flood risk is indicated on the subject site.

3.5.11 A detailed Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is set out in Appendix A of this document.

## **3.6 Air and Climatic Factors**

3.6.1 The SEA for the Proposed Amendment considered Air and Climatic Factors potentially affecting the plan area including air quality, noise, greenhouse gases etc.

3.6.2 Air quality is generally good in the City South Environs and Cork City is located in an area with a relatively mild climate and has an almost continuous movement of clean air. Nationally, it is now

evident that, due mainly to the very significant increase of vehicles on the public roads, the biggest threat now facing air quality in urban areas is emissions from road traffic. As the population grows and more development takes place emissions will rise.

3.6.3 Cork City and County Councils have prepared a joint Noise Action Plan which deals with the mitigation of noise within the Cork conurbation as well as along all national and some regional roads within the county. Common sources of noise within the City include road vehicles, aircraft, railways, industry, construction, commercial premises and entertainment venues, sports and recreation venues and windfarms.

3.6.4 Land Use Plans have an important role to play in the prevention and limitation of adverse noise effects and can ensure that conflicts do not occur between noise-generating and noise sensitive uses such as housing, hospitals, schools, places of worship etc., by guiding development to the right locations and where necessary, specifying design and layout solutions, planning authorities can limit the overall number of people exposed to potential noise effects.

### **Existing Sensitivities in relation to Air and Climate**

3.6.5 One of the key manifestations of climate change is flooding. Cork City Council has a body of information in relation to the areas that are at risk of flooding and will test the outputs of the proposed Amendment against that information as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the new plan., see Appendix A

3.6.6 The sprawling nature of the settlement of Cork City Environs results in high levels of car-based commuting which contributes to the overall transport emissions which impacts on air quality.

## **3.7 Material Assets**

3.7.1 The EPA SEA Process Draft Checklist (2008) defines material assets as the critical infrastructure essential for the functioning of society such as: electricity generation and distribution, water supply, wastewater treatment, transportation, etc. Water Supplies and Wastewater Treatment infrastructure will be dealt with under Water in Section 3.5. This section of the SEA will deal with other essential infrastructure within the plan area i.e. Transport (Road, Rail, Public Transport, airports, ports/ harbours) etc as appropriate and Waste.

### **Existing Sensitivities in relation to Material Assets**

3.7.2 Additional population and economic growth in the area is dependent on the provision of appropriate and sustainable water services and transport infrastructure to underpin sustainable growth. The Amendment has identified areas where additional investment is proposed through the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Study ( CMATS), particularly in the area of transport in order to meet population growth targets.

## **3.8 Cultural Heritage**

3.8.1 The SEA will consider Archaeological and Architectural Heritage. The City South Environs has a vast resource of archaeological heritage with over 19 monuments registered throughout the settlement.

3.8.2 Cork City has a wealth of industrial archaeology and this is protected through the archaeological record.

3.8.3 In terms of Architectural Heritage, the Planning and Development Act sets out the requirements for City and County Development Plans to protect structures of “architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific and technical interest” by including a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) or the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) to protect areas of townscape value. There are currently in excess of 1,400 structures on the RPS as part of the County Development Plan 2014 Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of protected structures in the former Ballincollig Carrigaline MD while Table 6 provides information at main town level.

There are 2 Architectural Conservation Areas designated within the Cork City South Environs, Under the Planning Act it is an objective to protect the special character of an area which generally comprises of a collection of buildings and their setting and in many cases may include a historic demesne or park.

Settlement Name	ACA	RPS	NIAH	Archaeology (* as per Urban Archaeology Survey)
Cork City South Environs	2	26	58	19 sites

## 3.9 Landscape

3.9.1 The landscape sensitivity of the City South Environs has been classified in accordance with Figure3.. The SEA will explore landscape issue as they relate to the Amendment process in accordance with the policy set out in the City and County Development Plans.

Landscape Character Types	Main Settlements located within LCT	LCT Value	LCT Sensitivity	LCT Importance
City Harbour and Estuary	South City Environs, Passage West, Ringsakiddy	Very high	Very High	National

# 4 Environmental Protection Objectives

## 4.1 Environmental Protection Objectives

4.1.1 This section identifies the Strategic Environmental Protection Objectives used in the assessment of the Proposed Amendment. Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) are methodological measures against which the environmental effects of the Plan can be tested. If complied with in full, EPOs would result in an environmentally neutral impact from the implementation of the Plan. The EPOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as

standards against which the provisions of the Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, unless mitigated.

4.1.2 The SEA Directive requires that the evaluation of plans and programmes be focused upon the relevant aspects of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. EPOs are developed from international, national and regional policies including various European Directives which have been transposed into Irish law and which are intended to be implemented within the County. The EPOs selected have also been informed by Table 4B of the SEA Guidelines (DEHLG, 2004), those used in the preparation of the current Municipal District Local Area Plan and the issues arising from the baseline assessment. The use of EPOs, although not a statutory requirement, does fulfil obligations set out in Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004).

4.1.3 The EPOs are linked to indicators which can facilitate monitoring the environmental effects of implementing the Amendment when adopted, as well as to targets which the Plan can help work towards.

## 4.2 Population and Human Health

4.2.1 The impact of the Amendment on the population and human health is potentially multifaceted as the plan interacts with all the environmental receptors. The plan guides physical land use and seeks to promote sustainable development, guiding the spatial distribution of population across the county. Key directives and policy documents relevant to population have been referenced earlier in this document and include the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy etc..

4.2.2 The impact of the plan on human health will be influenced by nature, location and design of new development permitted under the plan and its impact on environmental factors like water quality, air quality, noise, landscape and in the long term on climatic factors. The EPOs, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.3 Biodiversity-Flora and Fauna

4.3.1 The Cork City South Environs has a rich and diverse natural heritage which is described in the baseline section of this report (Chapter 3). Key directives and policy documents relevant to biodiversity, flora and fauna have been referenced earlier in this document and include the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the National Biodiversity Plan – Action for Biodiversity 2011-2016, Cork City Biodiversity Action Plan and the County Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014. The EPOs, Indicators and Targets set out in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.4 Soils

4.4.1 There is currently no legislation specific to protecting soil resources. Successive development plans have sought to protect and sustainably manage the soil resource of the City South Environs. The EPOs, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.5 Water

4.5.1 Water Quality is governed by a large body of legislation and is subject to regular monitoring. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Water Framework Directive has introduced a new approach to water protection. The current baseline status of waters in Cork is varied (see Chapter 3) and the improvement of less than good water quality status is a priority for the future. Key directives and policy documents relevant to water have been referenced earlier in this document and include the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and Groundwater Quality Directive 2006/118/EC. The EPO, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.6 Air Quality and Climatic Factors

4.6.1 The main impacts on air quality are likely to arise from traffic emissions and noise from traffic and other sources. The land use policies of the plan affect the journeys people make every day to work, school, shopping or for leisure purposes etc. At present approximately 90% of journeys to work within the county are made by the private car. The transport sector is also a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Key directives and policy documents relevant to Air/ Climate change include Directive 96/62/EC – Air Quality Framework Directive, the Kyoto Protocol and the National Climate Change Strategy (2007-2012) and Climate Change Adaption Framework 2012. The EPO, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.7 Material Assets

4.7.1 Material Assets, for the purposes of SEA, comprises the infrastructure the population needs for the functioning of society and includes roads, transport, water services, energy and telecommunications infrastructure, the building stock of the county, production facilities (factories etc), green infrastructure (parks open spaces, recreational facilities etc.). Large infrastructural installations have the potential to have significant effects on the environment, both during its construction/ development stage and during its use and operation. Such projects will generally require EIA as part of the planning process which would evaluate such impacts and introduce mitigation measures where necessary to minimise any negative environmental effects. The EPO, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.8 Cultural Heritage

4.8.1 Cork City South Environs has a rich architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage. Key directives, legislation and policy documents relevant to cultural heritage include the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2013, National Monuments Acts, National Heritage Plan 2000 and the Framework & Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (DAHGI 1999). The EPO, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.9 Landscape

4.9.1 The European Landscape Convention was signed in 2000 and came into force in Ireland in 2004. The European Landscape Convention aims to promote the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues. The Convention highlights the importance and need for public involvement in the development of landscapes. It encourages a joined-up approach through policy and planning in all areas of land-

use, development and management, including the recognition of landscape in law and is the first international treaty to be exclusively concerned with the protection, management and enhancement of the European landscape. The Convention covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It deals with ordinary and degraded landscapes as well as those of outstanding beauty.

4.9.2 The preparation of a National Landscape Strategy is underway since 2011 but has yet to be completed. A Draft Landscape Strategy for County Cork was prepared in 2008 and City Landscape Study also in 2008. Both documents identify landscapes in the city and county in terms of their Character, Value, Sensitivity and Importance and includes recommendations on balancing development and change with landscape protection. The Cork City Landscape Strategy is being reviewed as part of the City Development Plan process.

4.9.3 The EPOs, Indicators and Targets in Table 4.1 have been identified having regard to the policy context and the environmental baseline described in Section 3.

## 4.10 Flooding

4.10.1 In order to meet the needs of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and the requirements of the Department Guidelines “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management” the proposed Amendment has been subject to flood risk assessment procedures. Government Guidelines require, and it is an objective of this plan, that future development is avoided in areas indicated as being at risk of flooding.

**Table 4.1: List of Environmental Protection Objectives, Targets and Indicators**

Environmental Protection Objective	Targets	Indicators
<p><b>Population (P)</b></p> <p><b>EPO 1:</b> To ensure the sustainable development of area so people have the opportunity to live in communities with high quality residential, working and recreational environments with sustainable travel patterns.</p>	<p>Deliver on the population target for Cork City and Suburbs.</p> <p>Promote the economic development of the area.</p> <p>Co-ordinate new housing development and the delivery of social and community infrastructure</p> <p>Decrease journey time and distance travelled to work during the lifetime of the amendment and the new City Development Plan</p> <p>All large scale housing development to be accompanied by a Design Statement.</p>	<p>Significant increase in the population of Cork City South Environs.</p> <p>Distance and mode of transport to work/ school.</p>

**Table 4.1: List of Environmental Protection Objectives, Targets and Indicators**

Environmental Protection Objective	Targets	Indicators
<b>Human Health (HH)</b>  <b>EPO 2:</b> To protect and enhance human health and manage hazards or nuisances arising from traffic & incompatible land uses.	Avoid incompatible development nears SEVESO sites or IPPC licensed sites Ensure new development is well served with community facilities and facilitates including walking and cycling routes.	No of planning permissions granted within the consultation distance of Seveso sites/IPPc facilities. No of new primary health care/schools/creches/ community facilities provided. Amount of (Km) new cycleways provided.
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna (BFF)</b>  <b>EPO 3:</b> Throughout the city, conserve and restore ecosystems, habitats and species in their natural surroundings, and ensure their sustainable management, including the ecological corridors between them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the favourable conservation status of all habitats and species, especially those protected under national and international legislation.</li> <li>Implement the actions of the Cork County Biodiversity Action Plan.</li> <li>Establishment of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the County</li> <li>Protect habitats from invasive species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of developments receiving planning permission within designated sites or within the consultation distance of designated sites where the HDA process identified potential for impacts.</li> <li>Reduction in the quantum of greenfield land in the county as measured by the increase in the amount of brownfield land associated with each settlement and the no. of one off houses being built in the countryside.</li> <li>Number of actions achieved in Biodiversity Action Plan</li> <li>Progress on Green Infrastructure strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (S)</b>  <b>EPO 4:</b> Protect the function and quality of the soil resource in the Cork City South Environs.	Reduce the use of greenfield land by encouraging the reuse of brownfield sites. Encourage sustainable extraction of non-renewable sand, gravel and	No of brownfield sites that have been redeveloped. Volume of construction and demolition waste recycled. Reduction in number of vacant and derelict buildings.

**Table 4.1: List of Environmental Protection Objectives, Targets and Indicators**

Environmental Protection Objective	Targets	Indicators
	rock deposits and the reuse and recycling of construction and demolition waste.	
<b>Water (W)</b>  <b>EPO 5:</b> Maintain and improve the quality of water resources and improve the management and sustainable use of these resources to comply with the requirements of the WFD.	To achieve 'good' status in all bodies of surface waters (lakes rivers, transitional and coastal waters). Achieve compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC (protection of groundwater). Not to permit development where it would result in a WWTP exceeding the terms of its discharge license. Encourage future population growth in areas served by urban waste water treatment plants and public water supplies.	Trends in classification of overall status of surface water under Surface Water Regulations 2009 (SI No 272 of 2009) Trends in Classification of Bathing Waters as set by Directive 2006/7/EC. Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC. No of households served by urban waste water treatment plants/ septic tanks/ individual WWTP or other systems. No of households served by public water supplies. % of water unaccounted for.
<b>Air Quality and Climate Factors (AQ/C)</b>  <b>EPO 6:</b> Protect and improve air quality.  <b>EPO 7:</b> Contribute to mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.	Ensure air quality monitoring results are maintained within appropriate emission limits. Increase modal shift in favour of public transport, walking and cycling. Encourage production and use of renewal energy. Encourage energy efficiency in building design and construction. Provide flood protection measures where appropriate. Avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood risk.	Trends in Air Quality monitoring data. Percentage of population travelling to work by public transport, walking or cycling.  No of wind turbines permitted. No of developments permitted within areas at risk of flooding.
<b>Cultural Heritage (CH)</b>		

**Table 4.1: List of Environmental Protection Objectives, Targets and Indicators**

Environmental Protection Objective	Targets	Indicators
<p><b>EPO 8:</b> Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the character, diversity and special qualities of architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage in Cork City.</p>	<p>No loss of or adverse impact on the fabric or setting of monuments on the Record of Monuments (RMP).</p> <p>No loss of or adverse impact on the architectural heritage value or setting of protected structures.</p> <p>No loss of or adverse impact on structures recorded on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.</p> <p>Implement the Cork County Heritage Plan</p>	<p>Loss of or adverse impact on monuments on the Record of Monuments (RMP).</p> <p>Loss of or adverse impact on protected structures included on the RPS or structures included on the NIAH.</p>
<p><b>Landscape (L)</b></p> <p><b>EPO 9:</b> Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the character, diversity and special qualities of landscapes in Cork City.</p>	<p>No large scale development permitted in areas of high landscape value.</p>	<p>Number of large scale developments permitted in areas of high landscape value.</p>
<p><b>Material Assets (MA)</b></p> <p><b>EPO 10:</b> Make best use of the material assets of the area and promote the sustainable development of new infrastructure to provide for the current and future needs of the population.</p>	<p>Develop the road, rail and public transport infrastructure of the county to facilitate sustainable growth and travel patterns.</p> <p>Ensure appropriate water services infrastructure is delivered in areas targeted for population growth.</p> <p>Protect and optimise the use of the existing building stock.</p> <p>Facilitate the sustainable expansion of production facilities to enable economic growth and create new employment opportunities.</p> <p>Protect and enhance green infrastructure.</p>	<p>New critical infrastructural projects completed (projects identified by the CDP).</p>

**Table 4.1: List of Environmental Protection Objectives, Targets and Indicators**

Environmental Protection Objective	Targets	Indicators
	Protect existing recreational facilities and green infrastructure.	
<b>Flooding (F)</b>  <b>EPO 11:</b> Protect flood plains and areas at risk of flooding from inappropriate development.	No inappropriate development permitted in areas at risk of flooding.  All applications in areas at risk to be accompanied by detailed a flood risk assessment.	Number and nature of developments permitted in areas at risk

## Section 5: Alternatives

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The SEA Directive and Regulations require the Environmental Report to consider 'reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme' and the significant environmental effects of the alternatives selected. The alternatives must be reasonable and capable of implementation within the statutory and operational requirements of the Plan.

5.1.2 Two alternative scenarios have been considered during the drafting process for the preparation of the Proposed Amendment. Each scenario was prepared having regard to Ministerial Guidelines, the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, including its population targets, Any scenario that runs counter to these higher level plans would not be reasonable and has not been considered as part of the Environmental Assessment process.

### 5.2 Description of Alternative Plan Scenarios

5.2.1 The Ballincollig Carrigaline MD has an extensive urban structure comprising towns and villages. The Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan provided for the development of 5 main towns, Cork South Environs, Ballincollig, Carrigaline, Passage West Ringaskiddy and 2 villages, and other locations .

5.2.2 The Table below highlights the network of settlements provided for within the former Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan.

5.2.3 Successive strategies have sought to encourage balanced growth across the Metropolitan Area to sustain the economies and service levels of the main towns and villages and the key aims

of the Proposed Amendment support the continuation of this approach, seeking sustainable patterns of growth in urban and rural areas.

5.2.4 The scenarios considered in preparing this Proposed Amendment have therefore been prepared in this context. The overall level of growth allocated across the former Municipal District is the same for each scenario, in line with targets of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. The scenarios look at options for which concentrate the highest level of development in Cork City and Suburbs and one which allows for dispersed growth patterns.

### **Scenario 1: Public Transport**

5.2.5 This scenario seeks to focus a greater proportion of development in a smaller number of settlements to enhance the viability of bus based inter-urban public transport services. Under this scenario the potential for growth is still dispersed over the entire settlement network but a greater proportion of the growth is focused on a smaller number of locations.

5.2.6 Very little growth has been allocated to the rural area under this scenario. It is anticipated that the reduced growth targets for the rural areas combined with a revised approach to managing rural housing, would serve to further consolidate growth in those areas along the preferred public transport corridors.

5.2.7 In the former Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District, this scenario concentrates growth in the main settlements in Cork City and Suburbs, with most of the growth directed towards the City South Environs with the aim of delivering a sufficient critical mass of population in this area so as to justify further investments in primarily bus based public transport around the City and Suburbs and growth in other towns and rural areas outside of the City and Suburbs is curtailed.

### **Environmental Impacts of Scenario 1y**

5.2.8 Scenario 1 allocates the majority of growth to the City and Suburbs whilst curtailing growth in the remainder of the former Municipal District. Many of these settlements outside of the City and Suburbs have inadequate drinking water supply and/or wastewater treatment infrastructure, and significant public investment in infrastructure will be required to enable such development to take place. Such investment is essential to accommodate the growth and mitigate impacts on water quality, human health etc. Concentrating growth in the City and Suburbs will generally lead to a reduction in cumulative impacts on ground and surface water quality, heritage, landscape and biodiversity and will reduce the environmental effects normally associated with additional commuting such as increased energy consumption, emissions to air, road traffic noise etc. by way of increased Public Transport provision.

5.2.9 In Cork City and Suburbs where intense levels of growth are promoted, there is potential for negative environmental impacts on soil, air quality, biodiversity and landscape. Such impacts can however be managed by adherence to good practice guidance and procedures in development management. Intense development in some areas would also be balanced with lower development pressures in other areas, particularly in areas outside the city and suburbs which will lead to less pressure on biodiversity, groundwater resources, flora and fauna etc. and the general rural amenities of these areas.

5.2.10 Investment in infrastructure in Cork City and Suburbs can be more targeted, potentially leading to better quality provision/ design solutions/ economies of scale.

5.2.11 Within Cork City and Suburbs, the correlation between population growth and public transport infrastructure will have a neutral to positive environmental impact particularly on-air quality, climatic factors and human health due to the reduction in the need to travel and road traffic emissions. The concentration of population within the built-up area of the city and its

environs might also encourage a greater proportion of people to consider a move to other modes of transport such as walking and cycling with positive benefits on human health, air quality etc.

### **Planning Effects of Scenario 1**

5.2.12 While the settlement pattern for areas outside the City and Suburbs remains dispersed, overall commuting should decrease as a greater proportion of population growth is accommodated in Cork City where public transport is available, reducing commuting distances and car dependency with associated positive benefits for the population.

5.2.13 The concentration of growth in the manner proposed by this strategy may lead to reduced levels of investment in the other areas which may have negative impacts on quality of life and the quality of the urban environment if there are higher levels of vacancy. Reduced population targets for towns outside Cork City and Suburbs may also hinder their ability to secure investment in infrastructure in the future if there are lower levels of population and employment growth.

5.2.14 A concentrated settlement pattern means limited resources for infrastructural investment can be allocated more efficiently, reducing deficiencies in the level of service provided with potentially positive impacts on the environment primarily in the area of waste water treatment and water quality.

### **Scenario 2: Dispersed Growth**

5.2.15 In this scenario, significant growth is allocated across the main settlements with lower levels of growth in the City and Suburbs. The principle strength of this scenario lies in the balanced approach allowing for the majority of growth to take place in the main settlements but at the same time allowing for continued, more modest growth in the City and Suburbs continuing to support the economies of these areas to underpin local services and quality of life. The pattern of population distribution in this scenario is more dispersed than in the other scenarios as it seeks to support all the main towns in the MD outside of the City and Suburbs.

5.2.16 In this scenario, the majority of the growth is assigned to Carrigaline followed by Passage West with more modest growth in the other areas including Cork City South Environs

### **Environmental Impacts of Scenario 2**

5.2.17 The concentration of both population growth in Carrigaline and Passage West would serve to increase commuting patterns as more people would continue to commute to Cork City and Suburbs for employment and services. Such an approach would have a negative environmental effect by serving to sustain or increase CO2 emissions and would lead to a reduction of peoples quality of life

5.2.18 Focusing population growth across the former Municipal District also necessitates significant investment in water services infrastructure.

5.2.19 Also allowing for growth in rural areas will result in some negative impacts on the environment. It is unlikely that developments in rural area will be connected to public wastewater treatment networks. While not as significant on their own, the cumulative impact of rural development could have significant negative impacts both on biodiversity and particularly on water quality.

5.2.20 This scenario also gives rise to the growth of rural housing outside City and Suburbs which would contribute to further unsustainable commuting patterns and increased car dependency.

## Planning Effects of Scenario 2

5.2.21 In contrast to the other scenario, this scenario has a strong urban influence in that it allows for increased population for Carrigaline and Passage West helping them perform their function as the primary growth centres outside the City and Suburbs.

5.2.22 This scenario also recognises that there is a demand for growth in rural areas and considers additional growth in the villages and lower order settlements in former MD. Facilitating population growth in these areas would in turn encourage the retention of services in these locations. The scale of growth may however serve to undermine the growth of Cork City and Suburbs.

## Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios

5.2.23 The evaluation of the two proposed alternative scenarios for their respective impacts on the environment was undertaken utilising the Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) specifically developed to protect, maintain, conserve or restore environmental elements within the Municipal District. Each scenario was assessed as to whether it was likely to have a positive, negative, uncertain or neutral impact on the EPO's. The EPO's against which the three scenarios were assessed are set out in Section 4, Table 4.1 and are outlined below together with a matrix assessment of each scenario.

5.2.24 All scenarios are assessed on the basis that appropriate water services infrastructure will be available to cater for growth and development will not be permitted in the absence of this critical infrastructure.

EPO Reference number	Table 5.6: Environmental Objectives
EPO 1	To ensure the sustainable development of Cork City and Suburbs so the people of the city have the opportunity to live in communities with high quality residential, working and recreational environments with sustainable travel patterns.
EPO 2	To protect and enhance human health and manage hazards or nuisances arising from traffic and incompatible land uses.
EPO 3	Throughout the City and Suburbs conserve and restore ecosystems, habitats and species in their natural surroundings, and ensure their sustainable management, including the ecological corridors between them.
EPO 4	Protect the function and quality of the soil resource in County Cork and Cork City and Suburbs.
EPO 5	Maintain and improve the quality of water resources and improve the management and sustainable use of these resources to comply with the requirements of the WFD.
EPO 6	Protect and improve air quality.
EPO 7	Contribute to mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change
EPO 8	Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the character, diversity and special qualities of architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage of Cork City and Suburbs
EPO 9	Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the character, diversity and special qualities of landscapes in County Cork.
EPO 10	Make best use of the material assets of the county and promote the sustainable development of new infrastructure to provide for the current and future needs of the population.
EPO 11	Protect flood plains and areas at risk of flooding from inappropriate development.

### The Preferred Scenario

5.2.25 The Planning Acts require that a Local Area Plan and associated Amendments must be consistent with the objectives of higher-level strategies that applies to the area. This makes the consideration of alternative scenarios more difficult and the key parameters have already been determined. The provisions of the core strategy imply that higher level plans are the ones where the strategic alternative scenarios need to be considered and subjected to rigorous environmental assessment.

5.2.26 Given the parameters established by the Regional Planning Guidelines and the extensive nature of the designated settlement network within the county, the alternatives considered in preparing the draft plan are all rather similar in promoting balanced development across the county and have relatively similar impacts

5.2.27 Scenario 1 is the one that places the most emphasis on building on what has already been achieved within the City and Suburb in terms of supporting established employment areas and underpins Cork City and Suburbs position as the primary housing and employment market of the Southern Region and it is therefore the preferred scenario, giving the most positive interaction for most of the population with EPO 1. Scenarios 2 promoting a more dispersed development pattern would potentially undermine Cork City and Suburbs resulting in the loss of economic opportunities

Table 5.7: Alternative Scenarios interaction with Environmental Protection Objectives

	Positive Interaction with status of EPOs	Negative Interaction with status of EPOs	Uncertain Interaction with status of EPOs	Neutral Interaction with status of EPOs
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reduced investment and an overall reduction in the quality of life for the people living in the City Area

## 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 SEA legislation requires the Environmental Report to include the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan. This includes secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. The effects should be shown on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above.

## 6.2 Evaluation

6.2.1 The following section identifies the effects on the environment of implementing the Proposed Amendment to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan. The assessment is based on the Cork City South Environs chapter of the plan, looking at the key provisions and individual objectives of this Section the expected outcome of implementing the Amendment and the implications for the environment. The Amendment is then assessed for its likely interaction with the Environmental Protection Objectives and the assessment concludes with recommendations for changes to the Amendment if any. Interactions are assessed on the basis of being:

- Positive (+)
- Negative (-)
- Uncertain (?), or
- Neutral (Ne)

6.2.2 This exercise will set out any environmental problems that are likely to arise from the implementation of the proposed Amendment. Arising from this analysis, the Environmental Report provides recommendations on what mitigation measures will be taken. Mitigation measures can take the form of:

- Amend the wording of an existing objective
- Delete the objective
- Addition of a new objective

6.2.3 A column has been provided to show the Environmental Report's recommendations and another has been provided to display the resulting Amendment action or response to these recommendations. The Amendments action could be to reject, accept or to partly accept the Environmental Reports recommendation.

6.2.4 Proposed Amendment No 1 to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 document has been prepared by undertaking a review of the existing statutory plans for the area including the existing Local Area Plan and updating the provisions in this plan

as necessary to take account of any changes in national planning policy, legislation, government guidelines etc which has taken place in the interim and by changes in local circumstances, needs etc. It is important to recognise that the current statutory plans for this area were themselves subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment prior to adoption.

6.2.5 In addition, given the current body of planning knowledge gathered from previous planning work for the area, policy and objectives likely to give rise to significant environmental effect are simply not put forward in the first instance. In this way many of the possible environmental impacts of the Amendment were avoided or had previously been anticipated and mitigated for through the inclusion of objectives in the current statutory plans.

6.2.6 Both the current City and County Development Plans include many protective objectives in relation to issues such as Development Management and Protection of Amenities, Sustainable Residential Development, Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage, Biodiversity, Landscape, Water Quality, Pollution Control, protecting Air Quality, managing Noise and Light emissions, flood risk management, sustainable energy etc. All proposals for development under this amendment to the Local Area Plan, must comply in the first instance, with the all the provisions of the County Development Plan until such time as a new City Development Plan is adopted.

6.2.7 The objective contained in the proposed amendment was assessed for possible impacts within the context of these existing mitigation measures. Draft Local Area Plan

6.2.8 Key mitigation measures included in previous plans and carried forward in the proposed amendment relate to issues such as timely delivery of key infrastructure needed to cater for new development. In relation to water services for example the proposed Amendment recognises that water services infrastructure is needed to facilitate planned growth is not currently in place and must be provided. In response to this the proposed Amendment includes strong objectives requiring that appropriate and sustainable water and wastewater infrastructure is provided and operational in advance of the commencement of any discharges from the development.

6.2.9 In relation to Traffic and Transportation the Proposed amendment requires agreement be reached with the developers with regard to access to the proposed site and the number of dwellings and phasing be contingent allowed is contingent on the progress of the proposed M28 and ancillary local road network.

**Table 6.1: Evaluation of the Proposed Amendment to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan Objective**

Objective	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Uncertain (?)	Neutral (Ne)	SEA Recommendation	LAP Response
<b>Section 3 Main Towns</b>						
Objectives	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Uncertain (?)	Neutral (Ne)	SEA Recommendation	LAP Response
<b>Cork South Environs</b>						
Objectives	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Uncertain (?)	Neutral (Ne)	SEA Recommendation	LAP Response
SE-R-14	EPO-1 EPO-2  EPO -6  EPO-7  EPO-10  EPO-11			EPO-3 EPO-4 EPO-5 EPO-8  EPO-9	No change required	

### 6.3 Mitigation/Recommended Changes

6.3.1 This purpose of this section is to outline the mitigation measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of the Municipal District arising from the implementation of the Proposed Amendment, thereby consolidating the SEA process. Environmental issues have been identified in Section 3 and the environmental impact of the Proposed Amendment has been analysed in section 6.

6.3.2 As outlined above, as this is an amendment to the current plans for the area which have already been through the SEA process, many of the possible environmental impacts of objectives were avoided or had previously been anticipated and mitigated for through the inclusion of objectives in the current statutory plans for the area. Protective mitigation measures are also contained in the County Development Plan 2014 which remains in place until a City Development Plan is adopted. The objective of the Proposed Amendment was assessed for possible impacts within the context of these existing mitigation measures. As these mitigation measures negate or mitigate any negative impacts that could otherwise have been expected there were few recommendations arising from the SEA process.

**Issue One – The Correlation between Population Targets for the City South Environs and Infrastructure**

6.3.3 Cork City and Suburbs have been allocated substantial population target growth. Currently wastewater infrastructure is reaching capacity, however there are programmes in place for the delivery of adequate waste water services to address this issue, however if the programmes are not delivered in a timely manner, development may not proceed as planned. On the site of the proposed Amendment it will be important that development is implemented in accordance with the general and specific objective of the Proposed Amendment with a phasing schedule which provides for adequate mitigation measures.

#### **Mitigation Measures - Recommendations**

6.3.4 To achieve the population and growth targets aspired to by the Proposed Amendment the objective requires that appropriate Water and Wastewater infrastructure be provided in tandem with proposed development of the subject lands.

6.3.5 Furthermore the prospective developer, whose lands are the subject of this amendment and may be affected by the deficiencies highlighted above, are required to enter into agreement with Cork City Council and Irish Water on the timing and provision of the necessary infrastructure before the design and layout of the development is commenced. This requirement is contained within the site-specific objective.

#### **Conclusion**

6.3.6 The SEA Statement which will be prepared and made public on adoption of the LAP will include information on, among other things, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the LAP including how measures have been integrated into the Plan in order to mitigate effects of implementing the LAP. A number of mitigation measures have already been incorporated into the LAP and there is an opportunity for the outstanding mitigation measures to be incorporated at the amendment stage. It should be noted that the purpose of the SEA Statement is to record how these mitigation measures were incorporated into the final plan.

## **7.1 Introduction**

7.1.1 The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans are monitored in order to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action. Monitoring can also be used to analyse whether the Local Area Plan is achieving its environmental protection objectives and targets, whether such objectives need to be re-examined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.

7.1.2 Section 4 identifies the Strategic Environmental Protection Objectives used in the assessment of the Proposed Amendment. The Section also identifies a number of indicators that will be used to assess the environmental Impact of implementing the Amendment. In addition to the indicators set out in this Section, the evaluation of the Amendment also sets out additional indicators that can be used to monitor the impacts of the plan. A completed list of indicators that will be used to monitor the predicted environmental impacts of implementing the Amendment will be set out in the Environmental Statement that will be prepared in the final stages of the SEA process. .

## **7.2 Next Steps**

7.2.1 This Environmental Report forms a key element of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). However, the preparation of the environmental report does not bring the SEA process to an end. The SEA process should continue from the time the environmental report is completed through to the time Cork City Council monitors the implementation of the Proposed Amendment and will act as an important reference point for the continuing SEA of all policies, plans, strategies and programmes carried out by the Council.

*Table 6.1: General Overview of the Process after the Environmental Report*

A - Preparing the Environmental Report
B - Consulting on the Environmental Report and Draft Local Area Plan
C - Response of Consultation Authorities and the Public
D - Taking Account of Consultation Opinion
E - Adopting Local Area Plan
F - Providing Information
G - Monitoring plan

## **Preparing the Environmental Report**

7.2.2 This Environmental Report has been produced to comply with the requirements of the Guidance for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities on the Implementation of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). The Baseline analysis outlined the current state of the environment and was prepared using the most up to date information from a wide variety of state agencies. The evaluation of the Amendment as set out in Section 6, does not identify concerns with policies as they are presented in the Proposed Amendment.

## **Consulting on the Environmental Report and the Proposed Amendment.**

7.2.3 Consultation is an important element of the SEA process. The Environmental Report will be part of the consultation exercise for the Proposed Amendment to the Municipal District Local Area Plan. Consultation will be carried out with a range of statutory bodies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the public. As well as having an opportunity to comment on the Proposed Amendment, these bodies will have an opportunity to comment on the content of the environmental report and the overall SEA process.

## **Taking account of the consultation opinion**

7.2.4 It is recognised that the opinion expressed through the public consultation exercise can be very useful in improving the quality of the plan being prepared. In order to track these changes, the consultation exercise will aim to include documentation of all the comments and the changes made.

## **Adopting the Amendment**

7.2.5 The overriding aim of the SEA process is to improve the quality of the Proposed Amendment to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan and to ensure that it protects the environment; it is important that the relevant findings in the environmental report and any

outcomes from the consultation process are incorporated into the Amendment before its adoption.

## Providing information

7.2.6 Once the Proposed Amendment is adopted a number of post-adoption steps are required to conclude the SEA process. The essence of this stage is to provide information regarding the difference the SEA process has made to the plan. This will involve the publication of an Environmental Statement which will specify: -

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Amendment.
- How the environmental report has been taken into account;
- How opinions expressed during various consultations have been taken into account;
- The reasons for choosing the Amendment as adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives; and
- Measures to monitor significant environmental effects.

## Monitoring of Amendment

7.2.7 Once the Amendment is adopted and the necessary information is provided, Cork City Council will seek to monitor the significant environmental effects identified through the SEA process. The detail of the monitoring process will be included in the environmental statement. The framework for monitoring used in the environmental report /statement will be used to identify unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage so that, if necessary, the appropriate remedial action can be undertaken.

## 7.3 How to make a Submission

7.3.1 The Proposed Amendment to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan is available from the Council website at [www.ConsultCorkCity.ie](http://www.ConsultCorkCity.ie)

7.3.2 Or If required, a hard copy of the document may be inspected between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 4.00p.m, from Monday December 21<sup>st</sup> 2020 to Monday February 8<sup>th</sup> 2021 at the following location

- Planning Department, Ground Floor City Hall, Cork

7.3.3 Submissions or observations regarding Proposed Amendment No 1 Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan document are hereby invited from members of the public, children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children and other interested parties during the period Monday December 21<sup>st</sup> to 5pm on Monday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

7.3.4 Submissions may be made in either of the following two ways:

- On-line via [www.consultcorkcity.ie](http://www.consultcorkcity.ie) following the instructions provided  
OR
- In written form to the Director of Services, Strategic and Economic Development, Floor 2 Cork City Hall T12 T997

7.3.5 All such submissions lodged within the above period and prior to the close of business at 500pm on Monday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, will be taken into consideration in the finalisation of Amendment to the Ballincollig Municipal District Local Area Plan.

## 8.1 Non Technical Summary

8.1.1 This is the non-technical summary of the Environmental Report of the Proposed Amendment No 1 to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose of this summary report is to provide a clear synopsis of the overall findings of the SEA process in relation to the Proposed Amendment and outline the key likely environmental consequences of policies and objectives. Correspondingly, the findings of each chapter are dealt with below.

8.1.2 The SEA is being carried out in order to comply with the provisions of the SEA Regulations and in order to improve the planning and environmental management of the area. This report should be read in conjunction with the Proposed Amendment No 1 to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is an important mechanism in promoting sustainable development and in raising awareness of significant environmental issues and in ensuring that such issues are addressed within the capacity of the planning system. It seeks to inform the decision-making process before a decision is made to adopt the proposed amendment.

## 8.2 Proposed Amendment No 1

8.2.1 In accordance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended a planning authority may at any time, and for any particular area within its functional area, prepare or amend a local area plan in respect of that area.

8.2.2 The current Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan was adopted in 2017.

## 8.3 Environmental Baseline

8.3.1 This section of the Environmental Report summarises the environmental baseline in the City South Environs. The baseline assessment methodology contains the following steps:

- Description of the current state of the environment
- The primary environmental issues of relevance to the Plan
- The characteristics of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the Plan.
- The evolution of the environment in the absence of the Plan
- The interaction between environmental topics

8.3.2 The baseline has been compiled using all available datasets and in conjunction with indicators suggested during scoping. The main sources of data used in the compilation of this baseline were (amongst others):

- Scoping Responses from the Environmental Authorities
- Existing databases such as the EPA, Cork City Council, and the (CSO)
- Information supplied by Cork City Council during the SEA scoping stage.

8.3.3 The characteristics of the existing environment are described under the following headings:

- Biodiversity/Flora and Fauna
- Soil and Geology
- Water Resources

- Air and Climate
- Cultural Heritage including Architectural and Archaeological Heritage
- Landscape

## 8.4 Environmental Protection Objectives

8.4.1 This section aims to identify the relevant Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs). SEA objectives are used to help show whether the objectives of the plan are beneficial for the environment, to compare the environmental effects of alternatives, or to suggest improvements. The Environmental Protection Objectives set out in this section are set out under a range of topics and are used as the standards against which the future development scenarios, strategic aims, strategic principles and development objectives of the prosed Amendment can be evaluated, to help to identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if unmitigated.

## 8.5 Alternatives

8.5.1 The following section identifies and describes the alternative scenarios considered during the drafting process of the proposed Amendment. Article 5 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires the Environmental Report to consider “reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan. The alternative population growth scenarios that were considered included a concentrated population growth and a dispersed population growth and the preferred scenario from an environmental perspective is provided. Mitigation measures which attempt to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of the environment of implementing the preferred alternative are identified in this chapter where applicable.

## 8.6 Evaluation of the Proposed Amendment

8.6.1 This chapter outlines in a tabular form the likely positive and negative impacts of the Amendment policies on the EPO objectives detailed in Section 4. It is considered that the majority of the policies will either improve the state of the EPO or else are unlikely to interact with them adversely.

## 8.7 Monitoring

8.7.1 The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and amendments are monitored in order to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action. Monitoring can also be used to analyse whether the Strategy is achieving its environmental protection objectives and targets, whether such objectives need to be re-examined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.