

Chapter Five – SEA Objectives and Indicators

Introduction

The primary objective of the SEA is to provide for a high level of environmental protection and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of the County Development Plan (CDP).

The core objective of this report is to assess the CDP in terms of its overall environmental impact, both positive and negative and to indicate where necessary how improvements can be incorporated into the plan to improve the plans' environmental performance.

Environmental Objectives

In order to achieve the aim of assessing and improving the environmental performance of the Draft County Development Plan, a number of Environmental Objectives, specific to each environmental topic have been formulated. These Environmental Objectives are a fundamental part of the SEA process. The Objectives are derived through consultation between the planning authority, the report authors (guided by SEA guidelines, incorporating where relevant international, national and regional policies which govern environmental protection/conservation) and are based on the overall strategy of the planning authority to safeguard the environmental integrity of the County Development Plan area and to develop its functional area in a sustainable manner.

Environmental Objectives are distinct from the objectives and policies contained in the plan, though the process of preparing the Draft County Development Plan in conjunction with the SEA allows for the incorporation of environmental themes at an early stage of the process. The Environmental Objectives are used to assess the proposed development strategies of the Draft County development Plan, its policies and objectives, in order to evaluate and identify where conflicts may occur. The assessment is summarised in Chapter 7, a full assessment matrix is provided in Appendix 1.

Allied to the development of the Environmental Objectives are Environmental Indicators and targets. Indicators facilitate the monitoring aspect of the SEA, while targets provide a realistic and achievable target to which the CDP can work towards. The indicators are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.



Flora and Fauna (Biodiversity):

To conserve and protect the diversity of habitats both terrestrial and aquatic, and protected species within the county.



Human Beings:

To provide and promote a safe, healthy and high quality environment in which to live and work, and to promote the provision of suitable housing to accommodate a growing population.



Soil/Geology:

To ensure that the soil/geology environment is not unduly impacted upon through contamination and that preference is given to the development of brownfield sites.



Water:

- (1) To protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems with regard to their water needs..*
- (2) To protect from contamination water sources such as ground and surface water bodies.*
- (3) To avoid flooding of developed areas while maintaining natural flood plains.*
- (4) Avoid unnatural alterations to drainage systems which affects rivers flows.*



Air Quality and Climate Change

- (1) **Air quality:** To maintain and where possible improve air quality.*
- (2) **Climate Change:** To promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and energy usage.*
- (3) **GHG:** To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and promote energy conservation and the development of renewable energy resources*



Material Assets:

- (1) **Traffic:** To promote sustainable modes of transport and provide for ease of movement for all road users and to promote development patterns that protect and enhance road safety*
***Waste:** To encourage reuse/recycling of material wherever possible in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy pyramid and the Joint South Eastern Waste Management Plan*



**Material Assets:
Water supplies/wastewater**

- (1) **Wastewater:** To ensure that all zoned lands are connected to the public sewer network ensuring treatment of wastewater prior to discharge.*
- (2) **Water Supplies:** To promote long-term protection of available water resources through sustainable water use.*



Cultural Heritage:

- (1) To promote the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage, including*

architectural and archaeological heritage.

- (2) Maintain viable use of protected structures*
- (2) Promote the conservation of the cultural heritage of the County as identified in the County Heritage Plan.*



Landscape

- (1) To conserve and enhance valued natural landscapes and features within them.*
- (2) Protect and enhance the sustainable amenity value of water bodies, rivers, canals and wetlands in the County.*
- (3) Prevent unacceptable alterations to landscape character through the preservation of valued natural and historic landscapes.*