

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

# Non-Technical Summary

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Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Environmental Report of the Local Area Plan  
for Portlaoise 2018-2024

**Minogue and Associates**

**3/1/2018**

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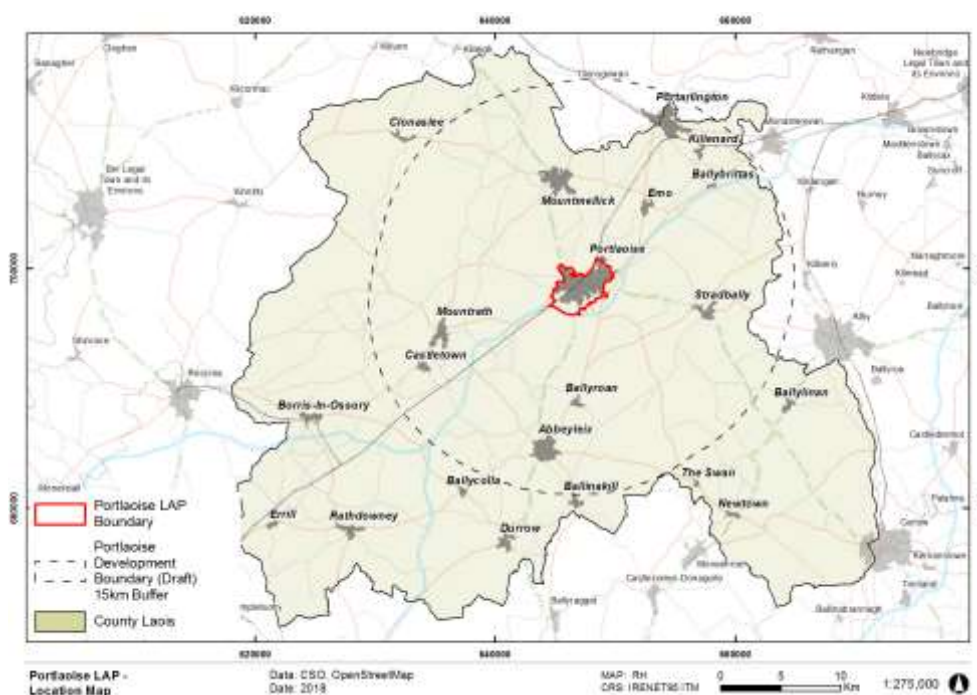
## 1 PURPOSE OF THE NON- TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This is the Non- Technical Summary of the environmental report for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Local Area Plan prepared for Portlaoise for the period 2014-2024. The purpose of the SEA is to formally and systematically assess the likely significant effects of implementing a plan or programme, in this instance the above LAP. The Environmental Report identifies the significant environmental effects of the plan on the environment and where significant effects are identified, recommends appropriate measures to avoid or reduce such effects. As the plan is being prepared the SEA identifies and influences proposals, particularly through avoiding areas of greatest environmental sensitivity. This Environmental Report forms part of the SEA process, documents the SEA process and is the key consultation document in the SEA process as it facilitates interested parties to comment on the environmental issues associated with the plan itself. This Environmental Report has been prepared under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I 436 of 2004).

### 1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives, Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 (CDP) and any subsequent reviews or variations. The Settlement Hierarchy of the Core Strategy from both development plans recognise Portlaoise as a “Principal Town”. Figure 1 below shows the outline of the Portlaoise LAP within the wider context of County Laois.

Figure 1 Location of Portlaoise Town within County Laois



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### 1.3 PLAN STRUCTURE AND SUMMARY

The LAP has been prepared and is on public display; the main contents of the LAP relate to the policy context as well as landuse zonings and policies and objectives around the following themes:

- Development vision and strategy
- Core Strategy
- Economic Development
- Town Centre Revitalisation including Opportunity Sites
- Key Infrastructure
- Transport and Movement
- Housing
- Community, Services and Culture
- Built heritage
- Natural Heritage, and
- Flood Management.

The LAP is supported by a number of environmental reports including:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
- Natura Impact Report
- A strategic flood risk assessment has also informed the plan preparation process.

## 2 CONTENTS OF SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

### 2.1 APPROACH TO THE SEA.

The SEA has been carried out alongside the LAP preparation. Table 1 below sets out the stages in the SEA process and how these relate to the plan preparation so far.

TABLE 1 STAGES IN THE SEA AND PLAN PREPARATION PROCESS

Stage of SEA	Plan
<b>Stage 1 Screening</b>	Screening is first stage of SEA to determine if the plan requires full SEA. As Portlaoise exceeds the 5,000 population threshold, the plan did not require Screening and commenced at Stage 2- Scoping.
<b>Stage 2 Scoping</b>	The purpose of this stage is to work out what environmental topics and issues should be included in the SEA. The Scoping report was issued to statutory bodies including the EPA and National Parks and Wildlife Service to discuss the potential environmental issues, baseline information, and approach to the SEA.

Stage of SEA	Plan
	Pre-draft consultation that was held in relation to the LAP also raised a number of environmental issues and these helped to inform the Scope of the SEA also.
<b>Stage3 Environmental Report-Current Stage</b>	<p><i>This is the current stage of the SEA and the LAP. The Environmental Report tells the story of the LAP and how environmental considerations have been addressed and included during the draft plan preparation process.</i></p> <p><i>The screening for appropriate assessment is also discussed in the Environmental Report.</i></p> <p><i>This report is the main consultation document of the SEA process and hence is on display alongside the plan along with supporting reports.</i></p> <p><i>Following the public display period there may be changes to the plan and the SEA will also assess these and update the Environmental Report as required.</i></p>
<b>Stage 4 SEA Statement</b>	This stage is the final output of the SEA process and tells the story of the SEA process. It is prepared once the plan is finalised and adopted.

## 2.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES.

Under the SEA Directive, the relationship between the plan and other relevant plans and programmes must be taken into account. A review of the relevant plans and programmes can be found in Appendix B of the SEA ER and a list of same is presented in Chapter 3 of the SEA ER.

The preparation of the plan must be considered within the context of a hierarchy of policies, plans and strategies which include international, national, regional and local level policy documents. These documents set the policy framework within which the plan will operate.

The LAP must be considered within the context of a hierarchy of policies, plans and strategies which include international, national, regional and local level policy documents. These documents set the policy framework within which the plan will operate. The Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 (LCDP 2017-2023) operates as the primary land use framework for the County. The LAP has been prepared having regard to the policies and objectives outlined within the above LCDP 2017-2023.

The key environmental protective objectives and policies of the LAP are consistent with this County Development Plan.

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### **3 CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE**

Baseline data was gathered for all parameters. Site visits were undertaken by the forward planners and SEA consultant in January 2018. Other data was gathered from the SEA ER of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, , Irish Water, the EPA, Met Eireann and other sources as appropriate.

#### **2.3.1 BASELINE OVERVIEW**

##### **Population and Human Health**

County Laois has experienced significant population growth in the past decade, growing by 26.3% over the ten year period between 2006 and 2016. In the same ten year period, Portlaoise experienced a significant population growth rate of 45%. The proportion of the county's population living within Portlaoise has grown steadily over this period, rising from 21% in 2006 to 26% in 2016.

Portlaoise benefits from a relatively young population, with 54.3% of the population below 35 years of age, compared to 47.1% elsewhere in the State. Portlaoise has a lower proportion of middle-aged and older residents, with just 16.1% of the population aged 55 or older, compared to 24% elsewhere in the State. Portlaoise also benefits from an ethnically diverse population, with 23% of its population being non-Irish. Of particular note, is that almost 15% of the population is made up of EU nationals excluding the UK.

##### **Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna.**

Much of the LAP lands can be classified as Built Land and Artificial Surfaces. In turn, this makes the areas of open space and water courses potentially important as green corridors and stepping stones for biodiversity.

The lands occurring within the LAP are not subject to any statutory conservation designations. However, a proposed Natural Heritage Area comprising The Ridge of Portlaoise extends to the north and south of the town along the Triogue River. The main habitats and species comprise the esker ridge and disused gravel pits, ash and hazel woodlands with species rich grasslands and is protected under the Wildlife Amendment Act, 2000. The River Triogue is another important ecological corridor and is hydrologically connected to the River Barrow and Nore SAC.

##### **Water resources including surface water management and flood risk.**

Water resources and their quality have a clear interaction and impacts with other environmental parameters, therefore its protection and enhancement is of particular importance. The latest information from the catchments.ie website shows the overall WFD status of the River Triogue and a tributary the Kylegrove Stream to be of Poor Quality (Q value of 3, 2-3) as it runs through the plan area.

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Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA<sup>1</sup>) has informed the preparation of the Draft LAP. There is a history of flooding of the Rivers Triogue and Boghlone in Portlaoise.

### **Soil and Geology**

Portlaoise is located within broad bedrock of Lower Carboniferous Limestones. Whilst much of the LAP lands are classified as urban according to the Teagasc soil map, reflecting the built up character of much of the LAP, the surrounding soils are primarily fine loamy drift with limestones. Alluvium soils associated with the River Triogue are present, as well as a series of gley soils.

### **Climate Change and Energy**

Agriculture is the largest contributor to overall emissions, however in terms of the LAP – energy and transport – the next largest contributors are the most relevant; A number of objectives included in the 2040 and Beyond: A Vision for Portlaoise are relevant in terms of addressing climate change and reducing carbon emissions, these include the following:

- The creation of a low carbon town centre
- The delivery of a walkable town centre
- The greening of Portlaoise town centre.

### **Material Assets**

Material assets can be explained as the critical infrastructure essential for the functioning of society such as: electricity generation and distribution, water supply, wastewater treatment and transportation.

Portlaoise has strategic road links to the entire country via the M7 and M8 motorways, the N77, N78 and N80 National Secondary Roads and a network of regional and local roads. The town is also located on the railway line connecting the south and west to Dublin. National and local bus routes also provide services in the town. Further upgrades are planned for the Inner Relief Road in 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> SFRA prepared by JBA Consulting

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The Portlaoise treatment plant has an overall treatment capacity of 39,000 pe; the domestic population of the Portlaoise Sewer Catchment is approx. 20,000. Portlaoise town was removed from the EPA Remedial Action List in early 2018.

The Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 for the Eastern-Midlands Region encompasses the local authorities: Dublin City, Dún Laoghaire- Rathdown, Fingal, South Dublin, Kildare, Louth, Laois, Longford, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath and Wicklow. The regional plan provides the framework for waste management for the next six years and sets out a range of policies and actions in order to meet the specified mandatory and performance targets.

Portlaoise is served by a high capacity electricity system and gas network. Within the settlement 5,615 households have broadband internet services. The high speed broadband network upgrade is being implemented by SIRO, which will give significant economic and social advantage to Portlaoise as a place to set up internet based businesses.

### **Built Heritage**

Known until 1902 as Maryborough, Portlaoise owes its current name to the 16<sup>th</sup> century 'Fort Protector' - one of two Crown Forts built by English forces in 1548 as military outposts after the defeat of the O'Moore and O'Connor clans and occupation of their territories. The urban core emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the growth of the town around the fort and the building of fine Georgian Terraces, a surviving example being on Church Street. The central town plan that we see today originated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century with a number of significant buildings such as the Market House, County Infirmary, new Barracks, and an emerging Catholic ecclesiastical quarter to the north and east of the Old Fort, combining the church of SS Peter and Paul and the Presentation Convent (the latter now identified as an Opportunity Site in the LAP).

There are approximately 25 no. archaeological monuments listed in the Record of Monuments and Places. A zone of archaeological significance has also been identified within the plan area. The historic core is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area and there are approximately 78 no. Protected Structures within the development boundary of Portlaoise.

### **Landscape**

Portlaoise serves a large agricultural hinterland and agricultural lands penetrate as strong wedges into the urban fabric. The town has two major parks – People's Park (Páirc an Phobail) on Timahoe Road to the south, and Linear Park off Ridge Road to the north. Numerous green 'pockets' are dotted through the town, including Old St. Peter's churchyard



and Ridge burial ground. The River Triogue forms a green /blue corridor traversing south /north through the town centre.




Townscape improvements in the form of tree planting and other streetscape improvements have taken place in the town. But poor quality interventions have degraded the overall quality of the public realm. The town centre lacks definition and poor traffic management prioritise vehicles over pedestrians.






#### 4 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES AND CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

##### 4.1 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

These SEA Objectives are presented in this chapter and are developed into a monitoring programme in the form of targets and indicators which are presented in more detail in Chapter Nine Monitoring Programme. To facilitate consistency with the primary landuse plan for the Counties and reflect data gathering requirements, these SEOs reflect where possible the SEOs developed for the SEA of the Laois CDP 2017-2023.. Where necessary the SEOs are adapted to reflect particular environmental considerations for this Portlaoise LAP. Where they differ from the above CDP SEA objectives, the text is shown in italic bold font. The results of this are summarized in a table, called an evaluation matrix (Chapter Six of the SEA ER). The Strategic Environmental Objectives are as follows:

**TABLE 2 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES FOR PORTLAOISE LAP**

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</b> 	B1: To ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species  B2: To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species  B3: To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of listed species
<b>Population and human health Noise</b> 	PHH1: To protect populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses <i>including adverse noise and air quality impacts</i>
<b>Water</b> 	W1: To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives
	W2: To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
	W3: To comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)
 <b>Soil and Geology</b>	S1: To avoid damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource <b>S2: To maximise the sustainable re- use of brownfield lands, and the existing built environment, rather than developing greenfield lands.</b>
 <b>Material Assets</b>	M1: To serve new development with adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment M2: To serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean M3: To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
<b>Climate Change, Air Quality and Noise</b>	C1: To reduce travel related emissions to air and to encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport C2: <i>Ensure that the LAP proposals are adaptive to expected climate change patterns in line with Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines (EPA) as appropriate</i>
 <b>Cultural Heritage</b>	CH1: To protect archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context CH2: To protect architectural heritage including entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
 <b>Landscape</b>	L1: To minimise significant adverse visual impacts within and adjacent to the County <b>L2 To protect and enhance landscape character and quality within and adjacent to the LAP area.</b>
 <b>Interrelationships</b>	<b><i>Maintain and improve the health of people, ecosystems and natural processes</i></b> <b><i>Actively seek to integrate opportunities for environmental enhancement</i></b>

## 5 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

One of the critical roles of the SEA is to facilitate an evaluation of the likely environmental consequences of a range of alternative development scenarios, in this case the Joint Portlaoise LAP 2018-2024.

These alternative development scenarios should meet the following considerations:  
 In the case of the LAP, possible alternatives include different land uses and scales of development were examined.

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1. **Continuation of Existing LAP landuse zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario).** Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.
  2. **Town centre consolidation:** This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.
  3. **Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure:** Promotion of development lands within the town centre for development and the designation of sequential areas where this type of development is considered appropriate in certain circumstances. It would also promote the development of neighbourhood centres to provide a level of retail services locally.

Following the assessment against the SEOs (Table 2) Alternative 3 provides for the most positive effects when assessed against the SEOS. This alternative provides for the promotion of development lands within the town centre for development and the designation of sequential areas where this type of development is considered appropriate in certain circumstances. It would also promote the development of neighbourhood centres to provide a level of retail services locally.

It acknowledges the need to consolidate Portlaoise through the town centre revitalisation whilst helping to meet the key objectives of the LAP. Therefore, the preferred alternative was developed by the planning team and others having regard to the key requirements of:

- Environmental effects identified through the SEA consideration of alternatives;
- Objectives of the Portlaoise LAP including social and economic effects of the development, and
- National Policy documents, and
- *2040 and Beyond: A Vision for Portlaoise*

By complying with appropriate mitigation measures - including those which have been integrated into the LAP - potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing this scenario would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

## **6 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES.**

As the plan process has been ongoing and an iterative process with the SEA, areas of particular environmental sensitivity have been avoided in the first instance where possible, and the plan elements as they have evolved have been amended during the process.

Key positive effects have been identified for population and human health, cultural heritage, landscape, transport and green infrastructure through the provision of integrated landuse and transport, town centre revitalisation, retention of hedgerows, integrating blue and green infrastructure, and buffer zones around the River Triogue.

Potential adverse effects on some biodiversity, soil and water and landscape SEOS are identified, therefore additional mitigation measures have been identified to strengthen the

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protection of water resources, as well as rewording particular measures in the LAP, also to further embed sustainable development across the LAP.

#### **MITIGATION MEASURES**

Within the Laois CDP 2017-2023 there are also a range of existing environmental protection measures which will also apply for development applications arising from the LAP.

Examples of mitigation measures that included additional SEA text are provided below; new wording from the SEA process are shown in **green, bold** font.

## Chapter 1 Key Plan Objectives

To require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of the **Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP;**

### Key Infrastructure Objective: KI 009:

Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in accordance with ~~the South Eastern River Basin District River Basin Management Plan/~~**National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures.**

The Table below summarises the Main Environmental Issues for each SEA Topic and Identifies the Key Mitigation Measures present:

**TABLE 3 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

SEA Theme:	Key Issues	Mitigation Measures in LAP
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	Provision of community facilities, public open space, housing and design; Transport Network and Public Transport; Environmental Health relating to air quality in particular.	Transport and Movement including: TM 08, TM 09 and TM 010 Natural Heritage including: NH P5 Economic Development including ED 04, ED 02 Town Centre Revitalisation TCR 01, TCR 04, TCR 05 TCR P1
<b>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</b>	Enhancing existing ecological resources Promoting and facilitating ecological connectivity Enhancing ecological considerations within the public realm Provision of green and blue infrastructure to enhance ecological connectivity and provide mitigation in relation to air quality as appropriate as well as water storage/surface water attenuation where possible. Managing and controlling alien invasive plant species Minimising soil sealing and sustainable use of soil	Key Plan objectives Numbers 7 and 8 Natural Heritage including NH P3 NH01 NH 02

<b>SEA Theme:</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Mitigation Measures in LAP</b>
	and water resources. Water quality of the surface waters.	NH 03  NH 010,NH 04, NH 05 and NH06, NH O12  Key Infrastructure including KKI 010
<b>Water Resources including Flooding</b>	Planning and mitigating flood risk Ensuring flood risk is fully considered and embedded in the LAP. Improving surface water quality Avoiding the spread of alien and invasive species	Key Infrastructure KI O9, KI 010 and KI P1  NH 012  FM O1, FM O2  FM P1 to 8
<b>Soil and Geology</b>	Maintaining and enhancing soil function and its carbon storage role where possible.  Retention of areas of greenfield in terms of flood risk, water storage, open space, green infrastructure and biodiversity considerations.  Potential soil contamination associated with brownfield sites or sites subject to previous industrial activities.  Because of the complex interrelationship between water, air and soil, declining soil quality can contribute to negative or declining water or air quality and function.	Town Centre Revitalisation policies and objectives  Opportunity Sites Natural Heritage including:  NH O1  NH P5
<b>Climate Change</b>	Planning for and adapting to climate change  Sectoral policies can assist in this including transport and energy  Measures including carbon sequestration in existing soils and additional appropriate vegetation planting associated with green infrastructure and ecological corridors.	Natural Heritage including  NHP 5, NHO 10  Transport and Movement including  TM P1 and TM O8
<b>Material Assets</b>	Planning for and maintaining sufficient water services and capacity for the plan area	Key Infrastructure KI 04 to KI

<b>SEA Theme:</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Mitigation Measures in LAP</b>
<b>including transport</b>	<p>Consideration of receiving waters for wastewater</p> <p>Encouraging sustainable use of resources</p> <p>Reducing reliance on private transport, and enhancing walking/cycling measures around the town and to the wider area</p> <p>Workable alternatives to private transport and future public transport services and infrastructure in the area</p> <p>Development standards affecting transport e.g. car parking</p> <p>Energy efficiency</p> <p>Promotion of the circular economy.</p>	<p>011</p> <p>Transport and Movement including:</p> <p>TM O10, TM O12, TM O13</p> <p>TMP 14</p> <p>Natural Heritage including</p> <p>NHP 5</p>
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<p>Potential for additional archaeological resources</p> <p>Enhancing and linking cultural heritage of the area</p> <p>Conservation and enhancement of ACA and support for same</p> <p>Promotion of heritage features as tourist attractions</p> <p>Archaeological input on the archaeological implications of any new development proposed in the Local Area Plan</p>	<p>Built Heritage including</p> <p>BHO1 to BH 015, BHP 1 to NHP 3</p> <p>Town Centre Revitalisation including</p> <p>TCR 01, TCR 03, TCR 04, TCR 05 and</p> <p>Opportunity Sites</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>Enhancing the public realm</p> <p>Integrating blue and green infrastructure</p> <p>Encouraging re-use of buildings</p> <p>Enhancing permeability for pedestrians and cyclists</p> <p>Greening the tow9</p>	<p>Town Centre Revitalisation including:</p> <p>TCR 01,TCR 03,TCR 10,</p> <p>Transport and Movement including TM O12</p> <p>Natural Heritage Including</p> <p>NH 02, NH 03, NH06</p> <p>Opportunity Sites</p>

## 7 MONITORING MEASURES

It is proposed, in accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive, to base monitoring on a series of indicators which measure changes in the environment, especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality, for example water pollution levels.

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Monitoring will focus on the aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly impacted upon by the implementation of the Portlaoise LAP.

The monitoring programme will consist of an assessment of the relevant indicators and targets against the data relating to each environmental component. Similarly, monitoring will be carried out frequently to ensure that any changes to the environment can be identified.


In turn the list below is subject to review at each reporting stage to reflect new data..

Laois County Council is responsible for the implementation of the SEA Monitoring Programme.



Table 4 below presents the SEA Monitoring Table. This table sets out the strategic environmental objectives, indicators and targets to be applied in monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the LAP, in accordance with Section 13J(2) of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004, as amended.





**TABLE 4 MONITORING MEASURES**


SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
 <b>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</b>	B1: To ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species	Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the plan	Internal monitoring of likely significant effects Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years). Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years). Consultations with the NPWS
	B2: To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Pla	No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years). Review of Council Ecological Network Mapping



SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	structure or their function act as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species			
	B3: To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species B3i	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Consultations with the NPWS


SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	2010 with regard to the protection of listed species			
<b>Population and human health</b> <b>Noise</b> 	PHH1: To protect populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses <b>including adverse noise and air quality impacts</b>	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from development provided for by the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan	Consultations with EPA and Health Service Executive
<b>Water</b> 	W1: To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)	W1: Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' <sup>47</sup> by 2015	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).
	W2: To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water	W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC	W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Data issued under the Water Framework

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
			Directive 2006/118/EC	Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual)
	W3: To comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)	W3: Number of incompatible developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk	W3: Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)
<b>Soil and Geology</b>	S1: To avoid damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource	S1: Soil extent and hydraulic connectivity	S1: To minimise reductions in soil extent and hydraulic connectivity	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<i>S2: To maximise the sustainable re- use of brownfield lands, and the existing built environment, rather than developing greenfield lands.</i>	<i>Permission granted on Opportunity Sites</i> <i>% Occupancy of buildings in town centre</i>	<i>Number of Opportunity Sites developed over lifetime of the plan</i>	<i>Grant by grant</i>

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	M1: To serve new development with adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment	M1: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	M1: All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)
	M2: To serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean	M2: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan	M2: No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)
	M3: To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse	M3i: Total collected and brought household waste M3ii: Packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers	M3i: Minimise increases in and, where possible, reduce household waste generation M3ii: Maximise increases in packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers	EPA National Waste reports
<b>Climate Change,</b>	C1: To reduce travel	C1: Percentage of population	C1: An increase in the	CSO Population Data

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
<b>Air Quality and Noise</b>	related emissions to air and to encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport	travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means	percentage of the population travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means	
	<i>C2: Ensure that the LAP proposals are adaptive to expected climate change</i> <i>Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines (EPA) as appropriate</i>	<i>Number of SUDs measures included and developed as part of planning applications.</i> <i>Number/extent of additional tree planting as part of planning applications.</i>	<i>An increase in extent of Blue and Green infrastructure linkages in plan area</i>	<i>Grants of permission</i>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	CH1: To protect archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Areas of Archaeological Potential and Significance (and the context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) -	CH1: Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Areas of Archaeological Potential and Significance (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where	Grants of Permission

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	CH2: To protect architectural heritage including entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context	protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan CH2: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan	relevant) from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan CH2: Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Consultation with Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
<b>Landscape</b>	L1: To minimise significant adverse visual impacts within and adjacent to the County	1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	L1: No developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<b>L2 To protect and enhance landscape character and quality within and adjacent to the LAP area.</b>	<b>Number of Opportunity Sites and interventions from A vision for Portlaoise 2014 implemented over lifetime of plan</b>	<b>Adherence to all principles in A Vision for Portlaoise 20140</b>	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
Interrelationships	<i>Maintain and improve the health of people, ecosystems and natural processes</i>	<i>Blue and Green Infrastructure measures implemented over lifetime of plan</i>	<i>Increased network of blue and green infrastructure achieved over lifetime of the plan</i>	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<i>Actively seek to integrate opportunities for environmental enhancement</i>	<i>As above</i>	<i>As above</i>	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).



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## **8 CONCLUSION**

The SEA and Natural Impact Report have been undertaken in line with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 to 2011 (as amended). Subject to the full and proper implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in this SEA Environmental Report and the Portlaoise LAP 2018-2024 including detailed design at planning application stage, it is considered that significant adverse impacts on the environment will be avoided.