
6. CONSULTATION

6.1. Introduction

Under the SEA Directive there is a very strong emphasis on consultation. The Directive clearly sets out who should be consulted with, how the results should be considered in environmental decision-making and how the process should be reported. In particular, environmental authorities and the public are to be given 'early and effective' opportunity within appropriate time frames to comment on the Environmental Report. In addition a statement must be produced on how their opinions have been addressed in the report.

In this SEA, consultation has played a strong role at all stages in the process including, the scoping phase as well as during the preparation of this Environmental Report. The Environmental Report will be made available to the elected members of Carlow County Council and the public in tandem with the Draft LAP. After the statutory consultation period the Environmental Report will take into account comments received and will be amended as required. As a final stage, a SEA Statement will be prepared outlining how the findings of the process have been taken into account and integrated into the LAP.

6.2. Consultation during the SEA process

The SEA Directive makes provision for consultation with the following prescribed bodies during the SEA process:

- Prescribed environmental authorities (Article 6)
- Transboundary consultation (Article 7)
- The general public (Article 6)

In this SEA the prescribed environmental authorities consulted with have been:

- Tadhg O'Mahony, Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, Co. Cork.
- The Manager, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Dun Sceine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2.
- Co-ordination Unit, Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources, 1st Floor, Elm House, Earlsvale Road, Cavan

Additional consultees to the SEA process were:

- The Office of Public Works
- Eastern Regional Fisheries Board
- Southern Regional Fisheries Board

Transboundary consultations were undertaken with neighbouring counties who might be affected by elements of this Plan, e.g. infrastructural provision. These were Laois County Council and Kildare County Council.

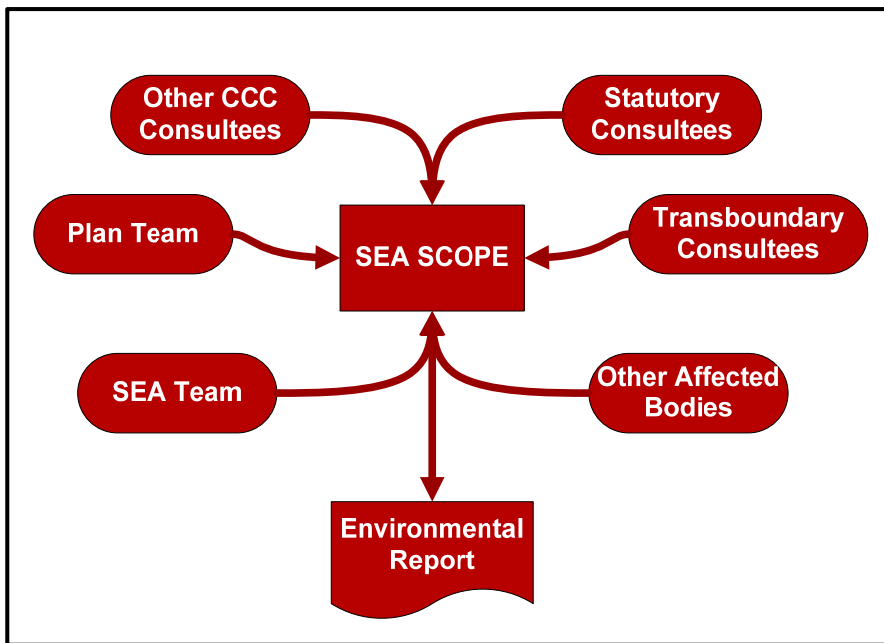
In addition extensive internal consultation was conducted between the SEA team, the Plan making team and those Sections within Carlow County Council with an interest in the SEA.

A full list of Carlow County Council personnel involved during the consultation process is given below:-

- Seamus O Connor, Director of Services, Carlow County Council
- Arlene O Connor, Executive Planner, Carlow County Council
- Eamonn Brophy, Senior Executive Officer, Carlow County Council
- William Garnerman, Conservation Architect
- Clíodhna Scanlon, Assistant Planner, Carlow County Council
- Cunnane Stratton Reynolds, Planning Consultants

The inclusion of the views and opinions of these various sections has been ongoing and central in the preparation of this Environmental Report. A schematic of this process is outline below in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Schematic of Scoping Consultation



6.3. Time frame for completing consultations

The time frame allowed for consultation in Ireland must be in accordance with the statutory time frames for the preparation of the LAP set out in the 2000 Planning and Development Act (DoEHLG, 2004). A consultation plan was devised for this SEA, which has run in parallel with the LAP process. The SEA consultation plan is outlined in Table 6.1.

Table 6-1: Overview of consultation plan for SEA of Draft Local Area Plan

Stages of SEA	Who to consult in domestic situation	Transboundary consultation	Output
SEA Scoping	Consult and meet with Statutory Authorities, Plan team, internal consultees and affected public. Take account of views expressed	Consultation of authorities in other counties likely to be affected	SEA Scoping Report
Environmental Report and draft of the LAP	Consultation with elected members of CCC and the general public. Take account of opinions expressed	Take account of results of transboundary consultation	Environmental Report
Adopted Plan SEA statement, Monitoring	Information made available to Statutory Authorities. Information made available to the public.	Information made available to the consulted neighbouring counties	Environmental Report, SEA Statement

While consultation has been ongoing, the Scoping process has been one of the most central and fruitful exercises in this SEA and is detailed below.

6.4. Scoping Exercise

As part of the scoping exercise undertaken for this SEA a Scoping Report was prepared based on an extensive literature review of relevant documents including:

- Appendix 5 of Carlow County Development Plan 2003, Carlow Town Environs Local Area Plan
- EPA databases for air and water quality including recently available ENVision mapping
- GSI database on groundwater vulnerability, subsoils and bedrock
- the Corine Landuse database
- the National Parks and Wildlife Service database for designated sites
- the OPW flooding database and

- the DoEHLG Sites and Monuments database.

6.5. Responses to Consultations

A summary of consultee's responses to the environmental scoping report is given below.

6.5.1. Environmental Protection Agency

FTC held a scoping meeting with the EPA at their Inniscarra offices, Cork on the 29th August 2007. The key issues identified during these discussions included:

- The provision of clean drinking water
- The impacts of developments on flooding in the area
- The requirements to protect groundwater
- The use of brownfield sites for development
- The protection of industrial heritage in the study area
- Landscapes and views particularly around the River Barrow
- Agreement on the preparation of a Wetland Management Plan for the settlement lagoons associated with Irish Sugar plc.

6.5.2. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

A response was received dated 28 September 2007 from the DoEHLG. The key issues raised were:

- Nature conservation – Impact of potential flooding areas on wetland and riverine sites and flood solutions which are based on flood management rather than engineered flood solutions.
- Nature conservation – Inclusion of “Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”.
- Archaeological Heritage – Provision of appropriate consideration of archaeological issues at all stages of planning and development process
- Archaeological Heritage – Use of National Heritage Plan (2002) in setting archaeological policies and principles
- Archaeological Heritage – Draft CDPs and LAPs to be forwarded to DoEHLG for comment
- Archaeological Heritage – Identification of areas of high archaeological potential using www.excavations.ie
- Archaeological Heritage – Use of “Framework and Principles for the protection of the archaeological heritage” in development
- Archaeological Heritage – Liaise with National Monuments Section in drafting the archaeological content of any proposed development
- Architectural Heritage – Provision of extent of scoping required to provide for architectural heritage.

6.5.3. Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

A response was received dated 24 September 2007 from the DoCENR. The key issues from the LAP implementation are considered to be:

- Water quality impact from surface water drainage and effluent discharges
- Interference with inland water morphology and aquatic habitats
- Changes in water flows by changes in land use patterns
- Potential for increase in flooding risk
- Effect of land use zoning on biodiversity.

In relation to the environmental objectives being set for water, it is suggested that objectives are designed to include the following:

- Ensure sufficient wastewater treatment capacity is available
- Implement Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) across the study area
- Achieve status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive.

The following indicators were suggested with respect to water and biodiversity:-

- Adequate provision of wastewater treatment capacity
- Water quality monitoring programme
- Water Framework Directive compliance
- Development in the 100 year flood plain
- Quantity of surface water being generated within the study area.

In relation to biodiversity, it is suggested that the following indicators are included in the SEA report:-

- Provision of bio-diversity plan in planning applications
- Record known loss of designated habitats and/ or species.

DoCENR recommended that the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board and the Office of Public Works are included as consultees in the SEA process.

6.5.4. Kildare County Council

No response was received.

6.5.5. Laois County Council

No response was received.

6.5.6. Carlow County Football Club

Carlow County Football Club submitted a response dated 17 September 2007 in which they raised the concern of land zoning immediately around their club grounds. They highlight that zoning of the adjacent lands to their club grounds as residential would lead to a severe environmental impact “affecting the progression of current and future generations of youth in Carlow”.

The issues raised during the consultation have all been accounted for in the various environmental objectives set out in Chapter 7 (refer to Tables 7.3 to 7.10). These are set out in Table 6.2 below.

6.5.7. The Office of Public Works

A copy of the scoping report was sent to the Office of Public Works at the request of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources on 02 October 2007. A response was received dated 09 October 2007.

The OPW's comments are as follows;

- Flooding to be considered as a strategic issue in relation to water/ hydrology
- Areas of benefiting land to be identified which should be assessed for flood risk prior to development zoning
- Inclusion of the highest flood level at relevant automatic gauges in and immediately adjacent to the study area
- Inclusion of historical flooding data
- Availability of flooding information at www.flooding.ie.

6.5.8. Eastern Regional Fisheries Board

A copy of the scoping report was sent to the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board at the request of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources on 02 October 2007. No response was received.

6.5.9. Southern Regional Fisheries Board

A copy of the scoping report was sent to the Southern Regional Fisheries Board at the request of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources on 02 October 2007. No response was received.

Table 6-2: Consultees Responses to Scoping Report

Issue	Respondent	Environmental Objective (O)/ Indicator (I) Tables 7.3 – 7.10
Land zoning around club grounds	Carlow County Football Club	PO1.1
Archaeological heritage	EPA	CHO1.1, CHO2.1, CHO3.1, CH04, CHO5
Protection of Designated Sites	EPA, DoCENR	BO1.1
Risk of Flooding	EPA, DoCENR	WO5.1, BO1.1, BO2.1
Landscape and Protection of Scenic Views	EPA	LO1.1
Protection of Groundwater	EPA	WO3.1, SGO4
Protection of Surface Water	EPA, DoCENR	WO1.1
Brownfield Site Development	EPA	SGO1.1, WO1.1
Protection of Non-Designated Sites	EPA	BO2.1
Surface water drainage and effluent discharges impact on surface water	DoCENR	WO1.1, WO1.2
Interference with inland water morphology and aquatic habitats	DoCENR	WO6.1
Changes in water flows by changes in land use patterns	DoCENR	WO6.1
Potential increased flood risk from changed land use patterns	DoCENR	WO5.1.2
Potential disturbance of biodiversity from land use zoning	DoCENR	BO1.1
Suggested objective: Wastewater treatment capacity	DoCENR	MAO3.1
Suggested objective: Implement SUDS across the study area	DoCENR	WO1.1.3
Suggested objective: Achieve status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive	DoCENR	WO1.1
Suggested indicator: Adequate provision of wastewater treatment capacity	DoCENR	MAI1.3
Suggested indicator: Water quality monitoring programme	DoCENR	WI1.1, WI1.2, WI2.1, WI3.1
Suggested indicator: Water Framework Directive compliance	DoCENR	WI1.1
Suggested indicator: Quantity of surface water being generated within the study area.	DoCENR	WI1.4
Suggested indicator: Development in the 100 year flood plain	DoCENR	WI5.1
Suggested indicator: Provision of bio-diversity plan in planning applications	DoCENR	BI2.2
Suggested indicator: Record known loss of designated habitats and/ or species.	DoCENR	BI1.1
Impact of potential flooding areas on wetland and riverine sites and flood solutions which are based on flood management rather than engineering flood solutions.	DoEHLG	WO5.1.2
Inclusion of “Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”.	DoEHLG	BO1.1.1
Provision of appropriate consideration of archaeological issues at all stages of planning and development process	DoEHLG	-
Use of National Heritage Plan (2002) in setting archaeological policies and principles	DoEHLG	CHO1.1
Draft CDPs and LAPs to be forwarded to DoEHLG for comment	DoEHLG	CHO1.1
Identification of areas of high archaeological potential using www.excavations.ie	DoEHLG	CHO4.1
Use of “Framework and Principles for the protection or the archaeological heritage” in development	DoEHLG	CHO4.1
Liaise with National Monuments Section in drafting the archaeological content of any proposed development	DoEHLG	-

Issue	Respondent	Environmental Objective (O)/ Indicator (I) Tables 7.3 – 7.10
Provision of extent of scoping required to provide for architectural heritage.	DoEHLG	-
Flooding to be considered as a strategic issue in relation to water/ hydrology	OPW	WO5.1, WO5.2
Areas of benefiting land to be identified which should be assessed for flood risk prior to development zoning	OPW	WO5.1, WO5.2, WO6.1
Inclusion of the highest flood level at relevant automatic gauges in and immediately adjacent to the study area	OPW	-
Inclusion of historical flooding data	OPW	-
Availability of flooding information at www.flooding.ie .	OPW	-