

1. ASSESSMENT OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

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1.1 Plans

The following development plans have been reviewed and taken into consideration as part of this assessment:

- > Kilkenny County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- > National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027
- > Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031

The review focused on policies and objectives that relate to Natura 2000 sites and natural heritage. Policies and objectives relating to sustainable land use were also reviewed

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Table 8.1 Review of plans

Plan	Key Policies/Issues/Objectives Directly Related to European Sites in The Zone of Influence	Assessment of development compliance with policy
<p>Kilkenny County Development Plan 2021-2027</p>	<p>2A To support and encourage sustainable compact growth and settlement patterns, integrate land use and transportation, and maximise opportunities through development form, layout and design to secure climate resilience and reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>2B To support the implementation of the National Climate Action Plan and the National Climate Action Charter for Local Authorities, and to facilitate measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by embedding appropriate policies within the Development Plan.</p> <p>2C To promote, support and direct effective climate action policies and objectives that seek to improve climate outcomes across the settlement areas and communities of County Kilkenny helping to successfully contribute and deliver on the obligations of the State to transition to low carbon and climate resilient society,</p> <p>2D To integrate appropriate mitigation and adaptation considerations and measures into all forms of development.</p> <p>2E To ensure that the Development Plan transposes, supports and implements strategic objectives of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy to create an enabling local development framework that: (a) promotes and integrates important climate considerations in local development and the assessment of planning applications and (b) supports the practical implementation of national climate policy and targets to assist in the delivery of the national transition objective.</p> <p>2F To adopt nature-based approaches and green infrastructural solutions as viable mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions where feasible. The Council will promote and support physical activity, active recreation and an active lifestyle.</p> <p>2G To reduce energy related CO2 emissions of Kilkenny County Council.</p>	<p>The Development plan was comprehensively reviewed, with particular reference to Policies and Objectives that relate to the Natura 2000 network and other natural heritage interests. No potential for cumulative impacts when considered in conjunction with the current proposal were identified.</p> <p>There will be no impact on designated sites as a result of the development. Best practice preventative measures will be implemented to avoid effects on European Sites. There will be no adverse effects on receptors listed as QIs/SCIs of European Sites, as a result of the development.</p>

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2H To achieve the commitment under the European Climate Alliance to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 10 percent every 5 years.

9A Continue to identify and map habitats and green infrastructure of county importance, and raise awareness and understanding of the county's natural heritage and biodiversity identifying green corridors and measures to connect them.

Development Management Requirements:

Require all developments in the early pre-planning stage of the planning process to identify, protect and enhance ecological features and habitats, and making provision for local biodiversity (e.g. through protection of existing breeding sites, and provision of appropriate new infrastructure such as swift, bat and barn owl boxes, bat roost sites, green roofs, etc.) and provide links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process

To protect and where possible enhance wildlife habitats and landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows and road verges, and to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside (such as ponds, wetlands, trees) which are not within designated sites. • To ensure that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation measures to conserve biodiversity, landscape character and green infrastructure networks are required in developments where habitats are at risk or lost as part of a development.

To protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character of the county, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development.

To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts on woodlands, trees, and hedgerows.

To have regard to, and seek the conservation of identified trees and woodlands from a) the National Survey of Ancient and Long-Established Woodlands, b) the Tree Register of Ireland (c) sites of significance identified in the Kilkenny Woodlands Survey 1997, (d) the National Survey of Native Woodlands, and (e) Survey of Mature Trees in Kilkenny City and Environs, in the assessment of planning applications

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	<p>To retain hedgerows, and other distinctive boundary treatment such as stone walls, when undertaking, authorising or approving development; where the loss of the existing boundary is unavoidable as part of development, to ensure that a new hedgerow is planted using native species, and species of local provenance to replace the existing hedgerow and/or that the wall is re-built using local stone and local vernacular design.</p> <p>To discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development and, where appropriate make use of Tree Preservation Orders to protect important trees and groups of trees which may be at risk or have an amenity, biodiversity or historic value.</p> <p>To require the planting of native broadleaved species, and species of local provenance, in new developments as appropriate.</p> <p>To require relevant development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on proposed development sites and (if necessary) require applicants to prepare and submit an Invasive Species Management Plan where such a species exists to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.</p> <p>For proposals connected to surface water systems, risks associated with the spread of crayfish plague shall be considered and applicants should submit a crayfish plague management strategy where appropriate.</p>	
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National Biodiversity Action Plan
2023-2030

- > **Objective 1: Adopt a Whole-of Government, Whole of Society Approach to Biodiversity.** Proposed actions include capacity and resource reviews across Government; determining responsibilities for the expanding biodiversity agenda providing support for communities, citizen scientists and business; and mechanisms for the governance and review of this National Biodiversity Action Plan.
- > **Objective 2: Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs.** Supporting actions will build on existing conservation measures. Efforts to tackle Invasive Alien Species will be elevated. The protected area network will be expanded to include the Marine Protected Areas. The ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy will be considered as part of an evolving work programme across Government.
- > **Objective 3: Secure Nature's Contribution to People.** Actions highlight the relationship between nature and people in Ireland. These include recognising the tangible and intangible values of biodiversity, promoting nature's importance to our culture and heritage and recognising how biodiversity supports our society and our economy.
- > **Objective 4: Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity.** This objective focuses on biodiversity research needs, as well as the development and strengthening of long-term monitoring programmes that will underpin and strengthen future decision-making. Action will also focus on collaboration to advance ecosystem accounting that will contribute towards natural capital accounts.
- > **Objective 5: Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives.** Collaboration with other countries and across the island of Ireland will play a key role in the realisation of this Objective. Ireland will strengthen its contribution to international biodiversity initiatives and international governance processes, such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

The action plans were comprehensively reviewed, with particular reference to Policies and Objectives that relate to the biodiversity, protected species and designated sites. The Proposed Project has been designed in order to avoid likely significant effect on biodiversity. Where the potential for adverse effect on biodiversity has been identified, mitigation will be implemented as prescribed within this chapter to ensure that there is no significant impact. Where pathways for effects on European Sites have been identified, mitigation shall also be implemented to ensure that there are no significant effects.

No potential for negative cumulative impacts when considered in conjunction with the current proposal were identified.

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<p>Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031</p>	<p>7. Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other environmental resources. Conserve and enhance our water resources to ensure clean water supply, adequate waste water treatment and greater resource efficiency to realise the benefits of the circular economy.</p> <p>10. Enhanced Green Infrastructure Identify, protect and enhance Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services in the Region and promote the sustainable management of strategic natural assets such as our coastlines, farmlands, peatlands, uplands woodlands and wetlands</p> <p>11. Biodiversity and Natural Heritage Promote co-ordinated spatial planning to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of our protected habitats and species including landscape and heritage protection.</p>	

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