

# Wexford County Council

Draft Noise Action Plan 2019 - 2023

SEA Screening Report



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT .....	1
1.2	REQUIREMENT FOR SEA OF THE DRAFT NOISE ACTION PLAN .....	2
1.3	PURPOSE OF SCREENING FOR SEA .....	2
1.4	OVERLAP WITH SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT .....	2
1.5	EXISTING REQUIREMENTS ALREADY IN FORCE .....	3
<b>2</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF THE NOISE ACTION PLAN .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	BACKGROUND .....	4
2.2	REVIEW OF ROUND 2 WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL NOISE ACTION PLAN 2013-2018 .....	5
	2.2.1 Completed Noise Control Measures .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.3	PURPOSE OF NOISE ACTION PLAN .....	5
2.4	SCOPE OF NOISE ACTION PLAN .....	5
	2.4.1 Wexford Development Plan 2013 – 2019 .....	6
2.5	NOISE SOURCES CONSIDERED IN THIS PLAN.....	7
<b>3</b>	<b>SCREENING FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION .....	10
3.2	SEA SCREENING ANALYSIS .....	10
3.3	SCHEDULE 1 SCREENING .....	18
3.4	SUMMARY .....	22
<b>4</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>23</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1	Extents of roads over 3 million vehicle passages per year .....	8
Table 3.1:	Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs).....	10
Table 3.2:	Range of Interactions .....	11
Table 3.3:	Screening Analysis of the relevant parts of the draft Noise Action Plan .....	12
Table 3.4:	SEA Commentary on the Screening Analysis of the relevant parts of the draft Noise Action Plan .....	12
Table 3.1:	Assessment of the Draft Noise Action Plan against Schedule 1 Criteria.....	18

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Wexford County Council are preparing a Noise Action Plan 2019 – 2023 in accordance with the requirements of EU Directive 2002/49/EC (known as the Environmental Noise Directive or ‘END’). The main aim of this directive is to establish a common approach across the EU to avoiding, reducing or preventing the harmful effects of exposure to environmental noise. It is the responsibility of Wexford County Council (under the Environmental Noise Regulations 2018) to act as the designated Action Planning Authority in the delivery of this Noise Action Plan.

The purpose of the Noise Action Plan is to provide an overview of the regulations and review the results of the latest strategic noise maps in the Wexford County Council administrative area (produced by TII in 2017). Additionally, it seeks to set out a proposed approach to strategically manage environmental noise for the period 2019-2023.

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report for the Draft County Wexford Noise Action Plan 2019-2023. The purpose of this report is to inform whether or not to undertake SEA on the Draft Noise Action Plan.

This report should be read in conjunction with the documents cited within, including the Draft Noise Action Plan.

## 1.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Strategic Environmental Assessment is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental consequences of implementing plan / programme initiatives prepared by authorities at a national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative means. The purpose is to ensure that the environmental consequences of plans and programmes are assessed both during their preparation and prior to adoption. The SEA process also gives interested parties an opportunity to comment on the environmental impacts of the proposed plan or programme and to be kept informed during the decision making process.

The European Directive (2001/42/EC) on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (the SEA Directive), was transposed into national legislation in Ireland through:

- S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011)
- S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011).

Under Article 3 of the Directive, an environmental assessment shall be carried out for plans and programmes covering a range of sectors with those of direct relevance to the Wexford Noise Action Plan being transport, as it is noted that Noise Action Plans are a form of “Transport” sectoral plan. As such, if an SEA is required for NAPs, they fall under the remit of S.I. No. 435 of 2011.

## 1.2 REQUIREMENT FOR SEA OF THE DRAFT NOISE ACTION PLAN

The Environmental Protection Agency's "Guidance Note for Noise Action Planning For the first round of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 (July 2009) - updated Sections June 2018 (Draft)", advises that SEA of a Draft Noise Action Plan may be deemed as necessary.

The purpose of the Noise Action Plan for County Wexford is outlined in **Section 2.1**. The Plan does not set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive. The Noise Action Plan for County Wexford will contribute towards the already existing framework for future development consent of projects relating to transport that are subject to the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. This framework includes existing legislation and plans relating to noise, land use and transport (including those identified under **Section 1.5**).

As a result, SEA Screening must be undertaken on the Draft Noise Action Plan in order to establish whether the plan would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment and would necessitate full SEA.

The Screening for the Strategic Environmental Assessment is being undertaken by RPS on behalf of Wexford County Council.

## 1.3 PURPOSE OF SCREENING FOR SEA

The SEA Directive requires that certain plans and programmes, prepared by statutory bodies, which are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, be subject to the SEA process. Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular plan, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA.

A screening of the Noise Action Plan for SEA was undertaken by Wexford County Council after which it was determined that the administrative provisions of Article 9(1) of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations (S.I. 435 of 2004) has not been met and that an SEA is not required.

## 1.4 OVERLAP WITH SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

A Screening for Appropriate Assessment is being carried out concurrently with the SEA Screening process. Appropriate Assessment is a process for undertaking a comprehensive ecological impact assessment of a plan or project, examining its implications, on its own or in-combination with other plans and projects, on one or more European Sites in view of the sites' Conservation Objectives, as referred to in Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive.

The purpose of the screening for AA is *to assess, in view of the best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the sites, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the site.*

There is a degree of overlap between the requirements of both the SEA and AA and in accordance with best practice; an integrated process of sharing gathered data has been carried out. These

processes together have informed and shaped the early issues identification for the Draft Noise Action Plan.

An Appropriate Assessment screening of the Draft Noise Action Plan has been carried out (see AA Screening Report), and concluded that on the basis of objective scientific information, that the Wexford Draft Noise Action Plan individually or in combination with other plans and projects will not have a significant effect on a European site. As such, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## 1.5 EXISTING REQUIREMENTS ALREADY IN FORCE

Existing requirements already in force that are taken into account by the screening exercise when considering cumulative effects and the degree of additionality that is provided for by the Noise Action Plan are identified in this section.

There are various measures already in force that provide for noise management. The Plan will further contribute towards these provisions. **At a national and regional level** these include the following:

- The Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992;
- The Roads Act 1993 to 2015;
- Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017;
- Building Regulations;
- IPPC/ Waste Licensing;
- National Planning Framework;
- Design Manual for Urban Road and Streets, DTTAS & DEHLG (April 2013);
- Our Sustainable Future, A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland, DCCAE (June 2012);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (Guidelines for Planning Authorities), DHPLG (March 2018);
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (May 2009);
- Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide. A companion document to the Draft Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (May 2009);
- Wind Energy Planning Guidelines;
- Quarry and Ancillary Activities;
- Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy; and
- Wexford Development Plan 2013 -2019.

At County Level, the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 – 2019, which was subject to full SEA contains various measures which contribute towards the management of noise and protection of human health. These measures are outlined in **Section 2.3.1**.

## 2 OVERVIEW OF THE NOISE ACTION PLAN

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

The Environmental Noise Directive (commonly referred to as END) was adopted by the EU on the 25th of June 2002 as Directive 2002/49/EC. The European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 (SI No. 549 of 2018) came into effect on the 31st of December 2018 and transpose EU Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC as amended by Commission Directive (EU) 2015/996 establishing common noise assessment methods and replacing Annex II of EU Directive 2002/49. These regulations replace the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, SI No. 140 of 2006.

The Regulations, *“provide for the implementation in Ireland of a common approach within the European Union intended to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise”* (SI No. 549 of 2018).

For the purposes of these Regulations, “environmental noise” means unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise emitted by means of transport, road traffic, rail traffic, air traffic, and from sites of industrial activity including the categories of activities specified in Annex I to Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2014 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control).

The Regulations designate the EPA as the national authority responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Regulations. The Agency's role includes supervisory, advisory and coordination functions in relation to both noise mapping and action planning, as well as reporting requirements for the purpose of the Directive.

The Regulations designate noise-mapping bodies and action planning authorities for the making and reviewing of strategic noise maps and action plans. Primary responsibility for both noise mapping and action planning is assigned to local authorities.

### 2.1 NOISE ACTION PLAN

As required by the END and Environmental Noise Regulations 2018, local authorities are responsible for carrying out action planning within their own administrative areas. Four main categories have been highlighted for investigation, including agglomerations and roads, rail and airports as part of the transport infrastructure.

Under Regulation 12, Wexford County Council is required to prepare a noise action plan which is defined in the Regulations as:

*“a plan designed for the purpose of managing noise issues and their effects, including noise reduction if necessary.”*

The purpose of a Noise Action Plan is defined in the END, is to prevent and reduce environmental noise where necessary and particularly where exposure levels can induce harmful effects on human health and to preserving environmental noise quality where it is good. Strategic noise mapping is a key element in determining areas for action.

## 2.2 NOISE CONTROL MEASURES COMPLETED UNDER ROUND 2 WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL NOISE ACTION PLAN 2013-2018

Wexford County Council has been proactive in noise control measures during the lifetime of the 2013-2018 Noise Action Plan. The following measures have been progressed during the lifetime of the plan:

- Both the Enniscorthy and New Ross bypass schemes are now nearing completion and will relocate traffic away from two large population centres.
- Wexford County Council has invested in noise monitoring equipment to facilitate noise monitoring at potential action areas, quiet areas and for complaint investigation.
- Wexford County Council has initiated noise monitoring and investigation of noise complaints including a comprehensive monitoring and reporting programme.
- Wexford County Council initiated a major wind farm noise survey of four windfarms in 2016/2017. The survey has been one of the most comprehensive noise surveys on wind farms carried out in the country to date and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment has utilised data from the study in determining future policy in terms of wind farm development. The programme included comprehensive monitoring and reporting.
- Wexford County Council initiated noise monitoring and investigation of noise complaints including a comprehensive monitoring and reporting programme on two windfarms in 2018.
- Wexford County Council have introduced designated 30km/hr speed limit zones in 254 housing estates across the county in 2019.
- The Council each year invests in traffic calming measures. In terms of traffic calming measures pedestrian crossings have been installed in the following locations, John Street New Ross, Ramsgrange village, Kilmuckridge village, Boolavogue village and Tara Hill.
- Wexford County Council implemented an Active Town Travel scheme on the R730 in 2014. The scheme provided a 2.5km cycle track and footpath along the R730 to link the business areas, leisure facilities and residential areas between Drinagh and Maudlintown in Wexford Town. The main aim of this project was to reduce car usage in this area and increase walking and cycling activities.
- Road surfacing materials are available that can reduce road traffic generated noise compared to hot rolled asphalt. These include Stone Mastic Asphalt (SMA) and Porous Asphalt. In general, Wexford County Council use SMA surfacing on all towns and village pavement schemes. On national roads, SMA surfacing works have been completed on the N11 and N30 in Enniscorthy Town in 2014 and 2015, the N30 New Ross in 2015, 2016 and 2018 and the N11 Oilgate in 2017. In general, SMA is also used in all urban areas.

## 2.3 SCOPE OF NOISE ACTION PLAN

The Draft Noise Action Plan addresses the issues laid out in the END and the corresponding transposed Environmental Noise Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 549 of 2018). Accordingly, the Noise Action Plan addresses the following (as per the Fourth Schedule of the Regulations):

- A description of the action planning area under investigation and the noise sources taken into account;
- The responsible authorities;
- The legal context;

- Any noise limit values in place;
- A summary of the results of the strategic noise mapping for 2017;
- An evaluation of the estimated number of people exposed to noise identification of problems and situations that need to be improved;
- A record of the public consultations organised in accordance with Regulation 12(5);
- Any noise-reduction measures already in force and any projects in preparation;
- Actions which the action planning authorities intend to take in the next five years, including any measures to preserve quiet areas;
- A long-term strategy to manage noise;
- Financial information (if available): budgets, cost-effectiveness assessment cost-benefit assessment;
- Provisions envisaged for evaluating the implementation and the results of this action plan.

### 2.3.1 Wexford Development Plan 2013 – 2019

The Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 sets out Wexford County Council's intentions for the future development of land, including measures for the improvement of the natural and physical environment and the provision of infrastructure.

There are certain key objectives which have been outlined in the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 regarding environmental noise management:

- To have regard to the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acts 1992 and 2003 and the Environmental Protection Agency Act (Noise) Regulations 1994 when assessing planning applications (Objective N01);
- To regulate activities which contribute to excessive noise other than those already controlled by the EPA (Objective N02);
- To ensure new development does not cause an unacceptable increase in noise levels affecting noise-sensitive properties. Proposals for new development with the potential for excessive noise will be required to submit a construction and/or operation management plan to control such emissions (Objective N03);
- To require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigations measures and monitors. The provision of a noise audit may be required where appropriate (Objective N04); and
- To ensure that relevant planning applications comply with the provisions of any Noise Action Plan or noise maps relating to the area (Objective N05).

Objective T38 of the development plan states that *"To ensure that traffic noise levels are considered in the assessment of all significant development proposals. This assessment will have regard to noise maps for national and major non-national roads to be prepared by the NRA and the Council further to Environmental Noise Regulation S.I. No. 140 of 2006"*. Regarding noise emissions arising from transport, noise mapping will be carried out by TII on national primary roads in the region, and individual local authorities will focus on non-national roads.



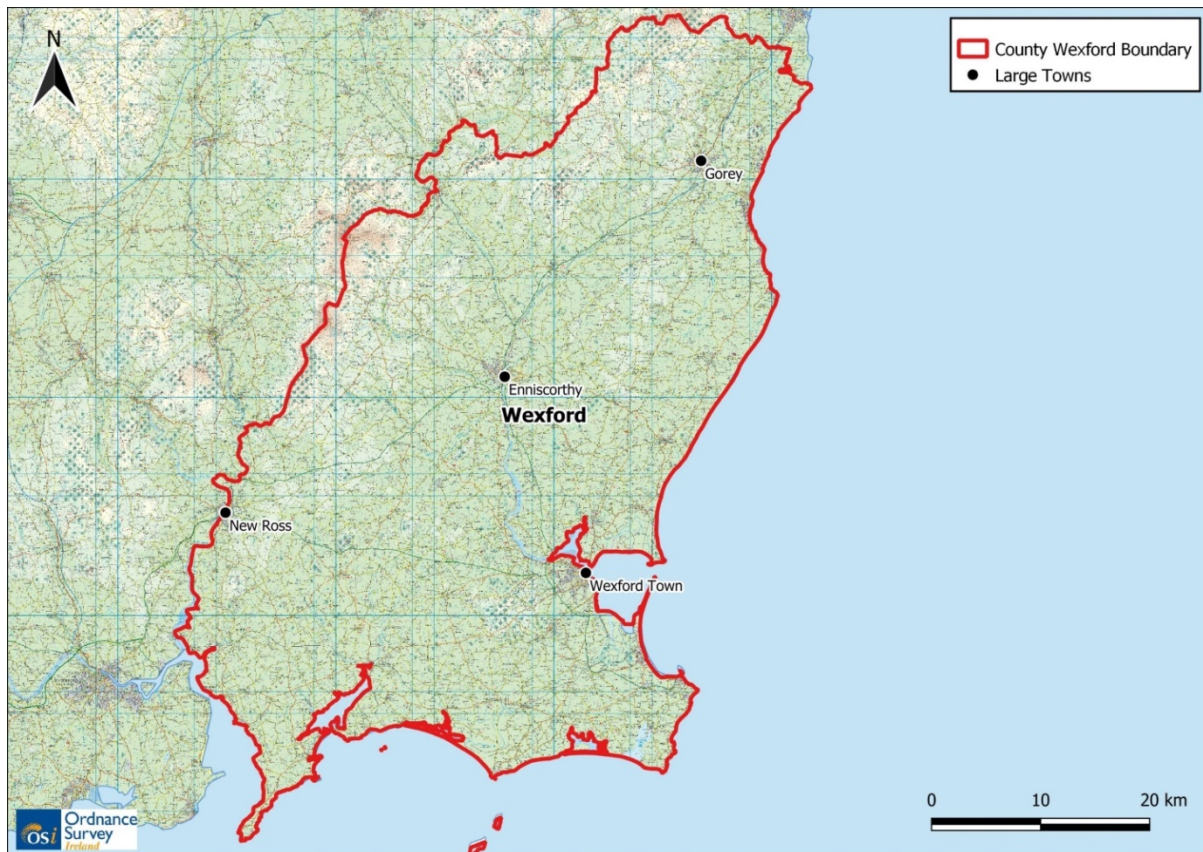
## 2.4 DESCRIPTION OF NOISE ACTION PLAN AREA

As required by the END and Environmental Noise Regulations 2018, local authorities are responsible for carrying out action planning within their own administrative areas. Four main categories have been highlighted for investigation, including agglomerations and roads, rail and airports as part of the transport infrastructure. Accordingly, each of the corresponding regulatory bodies are to be consulted before producing and implementing the Noise Action Plan: Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Irish rail, and the relevant airport authority.

### 2.4.1 Noise Action Plan Area

The Noise Action Plan covers the entire area of County Wexford as shown in **Figure 2.1**. The county, which covers an area of 236,527 ha, is located in the south east of the country and borders the counties of Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Wicklow. Wexford has four main towns, namely: Wexford, New Ross, Enniscorthy and Gorey. The former two towns are located in the south and west of the county, while the latter two towns support the northern part of the county. The county has a strong network of smaller towns, villages and rural settlements which support the county's rural population. Its distinctive landscape is one of rolling countryside to mountains, including Hook Peninsula on the southern coast, the Sloblands around Wexford town, the Slaney and Barrow river valleys, and the foothills of the Blackstairs Mountains in northwest of the county. Wexford is also a strong maritime county, with a coastline that extends to approximately 246 km and includes the ports of Rosslare and New Ross. Wexford is a constituent member of the Southern Region for regional spatial and economic planning and participates in the Southern Regional Assembly.

Based on the criteria set out in the Regulations, the only noise source requiring assessment relates to noise generated by major roads.



**Figure 2-1: Extent of Noise Action Plan Area**

## 2.5 NOISE SOURCES CONSIDERED IN THIS PLAN

Under the requirements of END and the Environmental Noise Regulations 2018, the designated noise mapping bodies are required to make strategic noise maps for the following:

- Major roads (> 3 million vehicles per annum).
- Major railways (defined as > 30,000 trains per annum).
- Major airports with >50,000 movements per annum.
- Agglomerations with > 100,000 inhabitants.

Wexford County Council is designated as the Action Planning Authority for all sections of major roads within its functional area, which experience a volume of traffic greater than 3 million vehicle passages per year. Mapping was carried out by the TII for both national roads and, at the request of Wexford County Council, non-national routes (regional roads) with this level of traffic within the county. For the third round of noise mapping, all roads which exceed the 3 million vehicles passages per year threshold are listed in **Table 2-1**.

**Table 2-1: Extents of roads over 3 million vehicle passages per year**

Road	Description
N11	M11/R772 roundabout to N25 roundabout west of Wexford Town
M11	Wicklow border north of Gorey to N11/R772 roundabout
N25	Kilkenny border at New Ross to Wexford Town to Rosslare Harbour
N30	R700 junction north of New Ross to R729 junction

Road	Description
N80	N11 roundabout to Carlow border at Bunclody
R730	Wexford Bridge to R769 junction in Wexford Town to N25 roundabout south of Wexford Town
R733	N25 roundabout west of Wexford Town to R730 junction
R741	Ferrybank to Castlebridge
R769	Wexford Bridge to N11/N25 roundabout west of Wexford Town

The total length of road centrelines designated as Major Roads, with an annual traffic flow above 3 million vehicles, was 151km within County Wexford, of which 22km was motorway (M11), 111km was National road, mainly describing the N11, N25, N30 and N80 with the remaining 18km consisting of non-national routes (regional roads) which met the mapping criteria.

The requirements for major railways, major airports or agglomerations of greater than 100,000 do not apply.

### 3 SCREENING FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section examines whether the provision of the Noise Action Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus warrant the undertaking of SEA).

The examination takes account of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 1 “Criteria for determining whether a plan or programme (or modification thereto) is likely to have significant effects on the environment” of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended.

#### 3.2 SEA SCREENING ANALYSIS

In undertaking the SEA screening analysis, the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) from the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 were used. SEOs are developed from international, national and regional policies which generally govern environmental protection. The SEOs are used as standards against which the policies and objectives of the Plan were evaluated in order to highlight those with the potential for environmental impact. The SEOs are shown in **Table 3.1**.

**Table 3.1: Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)**

Environmental Parameter	SEO	Objective
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1	Conserve and enhance the diversity of habitats and species within the county, and support the sustainable management of these areas.
	B2	Ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to protection of Natura 2000 sites and habitats and species listed under Annexes I and II of the Directive and prevent the loss of ecological networks and stepping stones or parts thereof which provide important connectivity for species
	B3	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of wildlife corridors and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a County level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
	B4	Protect aquatic and terrestrial habitats from the spread of invasive species
Population & Human Health	PH1	Protect and enhance peoples quality of life based on high quality residential, community, working and recreational environments
	PH2	Protect human health through minimising the risk of polluting emissions including noise and vibrations from incompatible land-uses and emissions to air/water/soil from traffic, industrial processes and extractive industry
Soil/Geology	S1	Prevent pollution or contamination of soils
	S2	Give preference to the use and regeneration of derelict, disused and infill sites, rather than greenfield sites
	S3	Minimise the amount of waste to landfill
	S4	Protect and conserve important geological sites
Water	W1	To ensure the protection from pollution/contamination and/or improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground water quality throughout the county



Environmental Parameter	SEO	Objective
	W2	Ensure new development will not be permitted within flood zones other than development which satisfies the justification test, as outlined in the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 for Planning Authorities
Air & Climate	AC1	Facilitate measures which seek to reduce all forms of air pollution and reduce dependence on travel by private car
	AC2	Promote use of renewable energy sources and support energy conservation initiatives
	AC3	Avoid development within flood risk areas and protect the marine and coastal environment from inappropriate works or development, and promote Integrated coastal zone management strategies.
Material Assets	MA1	Ensure that zoned land within town plans will not be developed if such development will lead to overcapacity of Wastewater Treatment Plants in order to ensure protection of the water resources within the plan area
	MA2	Maintain and improve the quality of, and access to, material assets such as open spaces, drinking water supply, and all other physical and social infrastructure
Cultural Heritage	C1	Promote the protection and conservation of the county's cultural heritage including the built environment and settings; archaeological (Recorded Monuments and archaeological zones), architectural (Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, materials and urban fabric), and manmade landscape features (e.g. field walls, footpaths, gate piers)
Landscape	L1	To avoid adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscapes which are the most valuable and sensitive to change, including seascapes, coastal scapes, and landscapes of historical and cultural importance

The range of interactions which outlines the potential environmental impact is outlined in **Table 3.2**.

**Table 3.2: Range of Interactions**

Symbol	Potential Environmental Impact
+	indicates potential beneficial environmental effects are already present, would be further contributed towards
-	indicates potential negative environmental effects are already present, would be further contributed towards and would be mitigated by compliance with the requirements of environmental and planning legislation, planning and licensing processes
+/-	indicates that either are present already and would be further contributed towards; or are potentially adverse and would be mitigated so as not be significant by compliance with the requirements of environmental and planning legislation, planning and licensing processes
0	indicates no significant interaction is present

Using the SEO codes (**Table 3.1**) and the interactions (**Table 3.2**), the assessment presented in **Table 3.3** below examines whether each relevant part of the Draft Noise Action Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus warrant the undertaking of SEA). The discussion and commentary to be read in association with this is presented in **Table 3.4**.

**Table 3.3: Screening Analysis of the relevant parts of the Draft Noise Action Plan**

Item	B1	B2	B3	B4	PH1	PH2	S1	S2	S3	S4	W1	W2	AC1	AC2	AC3	MA1	MA2	C1	L1
1	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+/-	0	-	-	-	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	-	-
2	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+/-	0	-	-	-	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+/-	0	-	-	-	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+/-	0	-	-	-	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	-	-

**Table 3.4: SEA Commentary on the Screening Analysis of the relevant parts of the Draft Noise Action Plan**

Item	Chapter	Relevant Part of the Draft Noise Action Plan	SEA Commentary
1	<b>Executive Summary</b>	The aim of the action plan is to manage existing road noise within the plan area and to protect the future environmental noise environment within the plan area.	<p>The Noise Action Plan for County Wexford will contribute towards the already existing framework for future development consent of projects relating to transport that are subject to EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended. As a result, SEA Screening must be undertaken on the Draft Noise Action Plan in order to establish whether the plan would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment and would necessitate full SEA.</p> <p>Long- term exposure to excessive environmental noise can have detrimental impacts upon human health. By improving the existing noise climate and protecting the future noise climate, the Draft Plan will contribute towards the protection of human health and sustainable development. There is existing protection already provided by the detailed framework of existing environmental and planning legislation, plans relating to noise, land use and transport and planning and licensing processes. The Noise Action Plan will form part of this extensive framework and will provide limited additionality with respect to existing provisions relating to noise avoidance and management. As such, the existing protection already provided has potential beneficial environmental effects. The Noise Action Plan will further contribute to these beneficial effects.</p>
2	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<p><b>Key Actions:</b></p> <p>The Noise Action Plan sets out the role and responsibilities of Wexford County Council as Action Planning Authority in regard to</p>	The action identifies the existing regime in place within the county. Any variation to the County Development Plan to take cognisance of the Noise Action Plan would be subject to its own

Item	Chapter	Relevant Part of the Draft Noise Action Plan	SEA Commentary
		<p>existing noise levels and the mitigation and protection measures for areas identified for treatment. The following key actions are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The potential noise impact of future development will be adequately managed through the Planning and Licensing processes, including existing provision for Environmental Impact Assessments. Implementation of existing regulations will continue, and the County Development Plan will take cognisance of the noise action plan.</li> </ul>	<p>environmental assessment/screening processes, as relevant. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The potential noise impact from increased traffic on major roads will be addressed by reviewing (and revising, if necessary) the Noise Action Plan every 5 years, or sooner where a material change in environmental noise in the area occurs. The noise action plan will be reviewed.</li> </ul>	<p>The lifetime of the plan is 5 years, after which time it is reviewed and updated, or sooner in the event of where a material change in environmental noise in the area has occurred. Where a review and/or modification(s) to the Noise Action Plan are required they will be subject to its own environmental assessment/screening processes. The plan and/or modification(s) will be screened to potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Carry out, following consultation with the EPA, a review of the landscape assessment and characterisation process in order to identify a process to delimit Quiet areas in open country that will be complementary to the findings of the County Wexford Landscape Character Assessment Study. Identify areas for delimiting and submit proposal to EPA and Minister for approval.</li> </ul>	<p>This action proposes a review of the landscape characterisation process to identify quiet areas in open country. This process is currently addressed through land use planning by Wexford County Council. Areas for delimiting will be identified and a proposal to the EPA and Minister for Communications, Climate Action and the Environment will be submitted for approval.</p> <p>The proposal may have to be subject to its own environmental assessment/screening processes, particularly if it involves a variation to the Wexford County Development Plan including the landscaping provisions. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The accuracy of predicted noise levels will be confirmed, and potential noise mitigation measures identified on a priority basis. Confirmation of maps will consist of visual</li> </ul>	<p>This action relates to CBA of potential noise mitigation actions and the preparation of a list of beneficial, achievable actions for noise mitigation. These actions would be likely to results in the</p>

Item	Chapter	Relevant Part of the Draft Noise Action Plan	SEA Commentary
		<p>inspection and where appropriate, noise analysis. A cost-benefit analyses on potential actions will be carried out and a list of beneficial, achievable actions for noise mitigation drawn up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="607 448 1310 576">▪ A budget will be identified with each relevant authority and a programme of works agreed and implemented. As with all proposed works, the delivery of any proposed actions will be contingent on funding being available.</li> </ul>	<p>interactions as discussed under Item 3. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>This action involves identification of a budget and implementation of the actions for noise mitigation. The programme for actions would be subject to its own environmental assessment/screening processes, particularly where a variation to the County Development Plan or a modification to the Noise Action Plan is required. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>



Item	Chapter	Relevant Part of the Draft Noise Action Plan	SEA Commentary
3	<p align="center"><b>Chapter 7</b> <b>Mitigation &amp; Protection</b> <b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Section 7.5 Review of Possible Mitigation Measures</b></p> <p>The plan outlines the mitigation measures related to road traffic which are focused on reducing the exposure to this noise source as summarised below:</p> <p>Where new residential development or other noise sensitive development is proposed in an area with an existing climate of environmental noise, there is currently no clear national guidance on appropriate noise exposure levels. Pending the introduction of such guidance, the EPA recommends that Action Planning Authorities take under consideration the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Scottish Office (The Scottish Office, Planning Advice Note PAN 1/2011: Planning and Noise &amp; Technical Advice Note: Assessment of Noise) – which provides advice on the role of the planning system in helping to prevent and limit the adverse effects of noise.</li> </ul> <p>Where new, or altered, sources of noise are introduced to existing residential or other noise sensitive locations; there are currently a number of guidance documents, which cover some of these situations (as outlined in Section 2). Where existing guidance does not cover the situation under consideration, the following UK Guidelines shall be taken into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Scottish Office (The Scottish Office, Planning Advice Note PAN 1/2011: Planning and Noise &amp; Technical Advice Note: Assessment of Noise)</li> <li>▪ BS 4142:2014 Method for Rating Industrial and Commercial Sound, British Standards Institution (BSI), London 2014</li> <li>▪ ProPG: Planning and Noise Guidance, “Professional Practice Guidance on Planning &amp; Noise: New Residential Developments” (May 2017)</li> </ul>	<p>Potential Noise Impact of development is currently managed through a range of statutory provisions including forward planning and development control, environmental assessments such as the Environmental Impact Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and current relevant guidance relating to noise.</p> <p>Potentially adverse environmental effects arising from any development or works are already present through the detailed framework of existing legislation, plans and processes relating to noise, land use and transport and would be further contributed towards by the Action Plan. In addition, the environmental effects would be mitigated by compliance with the requirements of environmental and planning legislation and planning and licensing processes, including the existing provisions of relevant land use plans(s). These provisions will mitigate any potential adverse environmental conflicts (those related to water, landscape, ecology, cultural heritage) arising from any development or works (those related to noise reduction/abatement measures such as noise barriers, road surfacing).</p> <p>It is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
4	<p align="center"><b>Chapter 7</b> <b>Mitigation &amp; Protection</b> <b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Section 7.8 Proposed Approach to Noise Mitigation</b></p> <p>The plan specifies the proposed approach to noise mitigation as detailed below:</p> <p><u>7.8.1 Areas Above Onset of Assessment Levels</u></p>	<p>The implementation of these measures would result in the aforementioned interactions discussed under Item 3. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>

Item	Chapter	Relevant Part of the Draft Noise Action Plan	SEA Commentary
		<p>Areas with predicted noise levels above the onset of assessment criteria will be prioritised using a standardized decision support matrix. This follows a review to confirm that the predicted noise levels are accurate, which will include field noise surveys to establish baseline field data.</p> <p>Mitigation measures such as those discussed elsewhere will be assessed for each area and following a cost-benefit analysis, a list of achievable actions for noise mitigation will be agreed with the relevant authorities.</p>	
		<p><u>7.8.2 Intermediate and Below Preservation Threshold Areas</u></p> <p>The implementation of existing planning and licensing regulations is considered adequate to address new development in areas both below the protection threshold and between the thresholds.</p>	<p>The implementation of these measures would result in the aforementioned interactions discussed under Item 3. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
		<p><u>7.8.3 Noise in the Planning Process</u></p> <p>Wexford County Council will consider developing noise control pre planning guidance to aid developers on planning applications issues in relation to noise.</p> <p>The pre planning process provides for developers to liaise with the local authority in advance of submitting planning applications. It is possible that this process can provide opportunities to discuss measures that will limit the impacts of noise from nearby roads. In the scenario where new residential development or other noise sensitive development is proposed in an area with an existing climate of environmental noise, there is currently no clear national guidance on appropriate noise exposure levels. The EPA has suggested that in the interim that action planning authorities should examine the planning policy guidance notes issued in England titled, 'ProPG Planning and Noise: Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise'.</p> <p>Wexford County Council will endeavour to utilise the planning process as necessary:</p> <p>a) To incorporate the aims of the present and future noise</p>	<p>The implementation of any guidance may have to be subject to its own environmental assessment/screening process, as relevant, if for example it involved an amendment to the Noise Action Plan. Where modifications to the Noise Action Plan are required they will be screened to potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>The continued use of the planning process which provides existing protection along with the detailed framework of existing environmental and planning legislation, plans relating to noise, land use and transport and planning and licensing processes will provide continued beneficial environmental effects. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>The implementation of these measures would result in the aforementioned interactions discussed under Item 3. As such it is determined that this part of the plan would not be likely to result</p>

Item	Chapter	Relevant Part of the Draft Noise Action Plan	SEA Commentary
		<p>action plans into the County Development Plan and into relevant local area plans, protecting larger areas from road noise.</p> <p>b) Developers are encouraged (or required at the discretion of the planning authority) to produce a sound impact assessment and implement mitigation measures as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For developments proposed near major roads (i.e. traffic volumes in excess of 3 million vehicles per annum or otherwise on a case by case basis).</li> <li>○ To ensure that future developments are designed and constructed in accordance with best Irish practice to minimise noise disturbances through good acoustic design.</li> </ul>	<p>in significant effects on the environment.</p>

### 3.3 SCHEDULE 1 SCREENING

This section examines whether the provision of the Noise Action Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus warrant the undertaking of SEA).

The examination takes account of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 1 “Criteria for determining whether a plan or programme (or modification thereto) is likely to have significant effects on the environment” of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended.

These criteria relate to the characteristics of the Plan itself and to the characteristics of the effects of implementation of the Plan and of the area likely to be affected.

The results of the SEA screening exercise for the Draft Noise Action Plan are summarised in **Table 3.5**. This should be read in conjunction with the Draft Wexford Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 as well as the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report.

**Table 3.5: Assessment of the Draft Noise Action Plan against Schedule 1 Criteria**

Criteria for determining whether the proposed Draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment	
Criteria	Assessment
1. The characteristic of the Plan having regard, in particular, to:	
The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size, operating conditions or by allocating resources	<p>The Plan does not set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive. The Noise Action Plan for County Wexford will contribute towards the already existing framework for future development consent of projects relating to transport that are subject to the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended. As such the plan provides for limited additionality with respect to existing provisions relating to noise avoidance and management.</p> <p>Potential Noise Impact of development is currently managed through a range of statutory provisions including forward planning and development control, environmental assessments such as the Environmental Impact Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and current relevant guidance relating to noise.</p> <p>The Noise Action Plan requires that all proposals to development under the Action Plan demonstrate compliance with the requirements of environmental and planning legislation and planning and licensing processes, including existing provisions of the relevant land use plan(s) such as the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 – 2019. As such, the Draft plan contributes and supports the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 – 2019.</p>
The degree to which the plan or influences other plans including those in a hierarchy	<p>The Noise Action Plan requires that all future proposals for development/works under the Action Plan demonstrate compliance with the requirements of environmental and planning legislation and planning and licensing processes, including existing provisions of the relevant land use plan(s) such as the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 – 2019, the Wexford Town and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 (as extended), the New Ross Town &amp; Environs Development Plan 2011-2017 (as extended), the Enniscorthy Town &amp;</p>



Criteria for determining whether the proposed Draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment	
Criteria	Assessment
	<p>Environs Development Plan 2008 - 2014 (as Extended) and Local Area Plans such as the Gorey Local Area Plan 2017-2023, Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2015 -2021 and Taghmon Local Area Plan 2009-2015 (as extended).</p> <p>Taking the above and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, arising from the degree to which the plan influences other plans, the Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The relevance of the plan, for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,	<p>By protecting the future noise climate and improving the existing noise climate, where necessary, the Noise Action Plan will contribute towards the protection of human health and sustainable development. This protection is already contributed towards by the detailed framework of existing legislation and plan relating to noise, land use and transport as outlined in <b>Section 1.5</b>. The Noise Action Plan is part of this existing framework and as such the plan provides for limited additionality with respect to existing provisions relating to noise avoidance and management.</p> <p>Taking the above and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
Environmental problems relevant to the plan,	<p>Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and legislative targets. Through its provisions relating to protecting the future noise climate and preserving and improving the exiting noise climate, the Plan contributes towards ensuring that environmental conditions do not deteriorate.</p> <p>In addition, the Draft Plan does not conflict with the objectives of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 – 2019. Should actions be developed over time, they will be consistent with the local authority mandate and therefore compliant with the provisions of the County Development Plan and supporting environmental assessments and guidance.</p> <p>Taking the above and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The relevance of the plan, for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	<p>The Noise Action Plan for County Wexford has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of EU Directive 2002/49/EC (known as the Environmental Noise Directive or “END”). The European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 (SI No. 549 of 2018) came into effect on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2018 and transpose EU Directive 2002/49/EC as amended. These regulations replace the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, SI No. 140 of 2006.</p> <p>Under Regulation 12, Wexford County Council is required to prepare a noise action plan which is defined in the Regulations as: “a plan designed for the purpose of managing noise issues and their effects, including noise reduction if necessary.”</p> <p>Taking the above and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:	

Criteria for determining whether the proposed Draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment	
Criteria	Assessment
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	<p>The Draft plan is for a period of 5 years from 2019 – 2023 and any work proposed in the plan will be contingent on finances being available.</p> <p>Taking <b>Schedule 1 Part 1</b> and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The cumulative nature of the effects	<p>The Draft Plan has been prepared to be consistent with national legislation and guidance that relate to the management and control of environmental noise. In addition it is also consistent with the specific objectives relating to pro-active management of noise detailed in the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019, the National Planning Framework 2040 and the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Therefore the plan will not give rise to specific environmental effects of result in cumulative environmental impacts.</p> <p>Taking <b>Schedule 1 Part 1</b> and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Draft Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The transboundary nature of the effects	<p>The Draft Plan is for the entire area of County Wexford, which covers an area of 236,527 ha and as such it is “<i>a plan designed for the purpose of managing noise issues and their effects, including noise reduction if necessary</i>”.</p> <p>Wexford County borders the counties of Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Wicklow. As required by the END and Environmental Noise Regulations 2018, local authorities are responsible for carrying out action planning within their own administrative areas. Therefore the plan is focused on Wexford County.</p> <p>In terms of transboundary effects it is considered that with proper regard to the environmental protection policies and objectives contained in the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 should physical infrastructure proposals arise from the Draft Plan, and the completion of planning and licensing processes including existing provision for Environmental Impact Assessments, no negative transboundary environmental effects are predicted.</p>
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	<p>The Draft Plan seeks to set out a proposed approach to strategically manage environmental noise for the period 2019-2023. The noise action plan sets out a programme of works over the 5 year period to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented to prevent and reduce environmental noise where necessary from major sources. As such, the plan is focused on implementing measures to improve existing noise levels at a local level (if appropriate) and identifying and implementing measures for the protection of the future environment from road noise.</p> <p>Therefore the Draft Plan would not be likely to result in significant risks to human health or the environment.</p> <p>Taking <b>Schedule 1 Part 1</b> and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Draft Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be	<p>The Draft Plan is a county-wide plan and is intended to provide an overview of the regulations and review the results of the latest strategic noise maps in the Wexford County Council administrative</p>

Criteria for determining whether the proposed Draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment	
Criteria	Assessment
affected),	<p>area (produced by TII in 2017). Additionally, the draft Plan seeks to set out a proposed approach to strategically manage environmental noise for the period 2019-2023.</p> <p>The appropriate use of the planning system can be used to help avoid, or minimise the adverse impacts of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development. Wexford County Council will utilise the planning and licensing processes including existing provision for Environmental Impact Assessments to manage potential noise impact of future development. As such, this is considered sufficient to address any potential spatial effects.</p> <p>Taking <b>Schedule 1 Part 1</b> and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Draft Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:	<p>Wexford has a particularly rich natural heritage and this is reflected in the number and importance of the Natura 2000 sites in the county.</p>
(a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	<p>The Plan will not set the context for land use or development activities outside of that already facilitated within existing land use plan(s) and therefore no areas are likely to be affected are identified.</p>
(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,	<p>The Draft Plan does not set the framework for any specific projects or activities that will result in the exceedance of environmental quality standards/limit values. The framework for such projects is set by higher-tier land-use plans, including the County Development Plan, which has been subject to SEA and AA to ensure the integration of environmental considerations into its preparation.</p>
(c) intensive land-use,	<p>The Draft Plan does not provide for additional land use or intensification of same. Land use zoning will remain the same as designated and provided in the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019.</p> <p>Taking <b>Schedule 1 Part 1</b> and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Draft Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status	<p>The Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 recognises the importance of sites with National, European or international protection status and sets out policies and objectives for their protection. These sites include those designated under the EU Birds and Habitats Directive, Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Ramsar Sites, Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments etc.</p> <p>The Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 has a strategic objective to protect and maintain the open nature of the county's countryside with reference to the recommendations of County Wexford's – Landscape Character Assessment (Volume 3 of the Development Plan). Four landscape character units have been identified in County Wexford. Classification of each landscape character area is based on a matrix of factors which includes tranquillity, which relates to low levels of built environment, traffic and noise.</p> <p>It is not considered that the Draft Plan would be likely to result in significant environmental effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.</p>

Criteria for determining whether the proposed Draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment	
Criteria	Assessment
	<p>A Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been prepared in parallel with the SEA Screening to assess the potential for the Draft Plan to give rise to likely significant effects on any European Site and to support a screening decision by Wexford County Council on whether full Appropriate Assessment, including the preparation of a Natura Impact Report (NIR) will be required in accordance with EU and national legislation. The assessment concluded on the basis of objective scientific information, that the Draft Plan individually or in combination with other plans and projects will not have a significant effect on a European site. As such, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.</p> <p>Taking <b>Schedule 1 Part 1</b> and the examination of the plan in <b>Table 3.4</b> into account, the Draft Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant effects on the environment.</p>

### 3.4 SUMMARY

Screening of the Wexford County Noise Action Plan 2019 - 2023 identified that implementation of the Plan will not have significant effects on the environment and that SEA of the Draft Plan is not required, as per the following findings:

- The Plan does not set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive;
- The Plan does not have the potential to result in impacts on any European sites or to influence other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact thereon, and therefore does not require a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive; and
- The Plan does not meet Schedule 1 criteria for plans or programmes likely to have significant environmental effects.



## 4 CONCLUSION

The Noise Action Plan for County Wexford will contribute towards the already existing framework for future development consent of projects relating to transport that are subject to EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended. As a result, SEA Screening must be undertaken on the Draft Noise Action Plan in order to establish whether the plan would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment and would necessitate full SEA.

This SEA Screening Report has examined the Draft Plan against the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 1 *“Criteria for determining whether a plan or programme (or modification thereto) is likely to have significant effects on the environment”* of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended.

The conclusion that arises from the SEA screening analysis is that the Draft Noise Action Plan would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects and does not require full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The screening for Appropriate Assessment undertaken on the Draft Plan has likewise determined on the basis of objective scientific information, that the Wexford Draft Noise Action Plan individually or in combination with other plans and projects will not have a significant effect on a European site. As such, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.