

STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT
SCREENING REPORT
Active Travel Strategy
for Fingal

Prepared for Fingal County Council under SI 435 of 2004, as amended
2023

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1 Introduction

The European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires an environmental assessment be carried out for all plans that are prepared for certain specified sectors, including landuse and transport of which the proposed **Active Travel Strategy for Fingal** (the plan) relates. The following Regulations transpose this Directive into Irish law:

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

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 (as amended) state that SEA is mandatory for certain plans while screening for SEA is required for other plans that fall below the specified thresholds. The purpose of this screening report is to determine whether the making and implementation of the plan will or will not, lead to significant environmental effects for the plan area and if it will require a full Strategic Environment Assessment.

In deciding whether a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, regard must be had to the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive - which is reproduced in the new Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as inserted by article 12 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004. The approach to this screening assessment is to assess the Six Pillars and actions contained in strategy against the criteria contained in Schedule 2a of the Regulations; this is presented in Section Three of this report and Annex A presents a more detailed commentary of each element.

An assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive has also been undertaken in conjunction with this SEA Screening report and should be read in tandem with this and the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal.

1.1 Background and Context

The Strategy sets out Fingal County Council's ambitions to increase the number of people choosing to walk and cycle for everyday short journeys, and as part of longer journeys by public transport. The strategy considers the full range of infrastructure and supporting initiatives which, when combined, can make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people. Active travel means travelling with a purpose using your own energy. It includes walking, scooting, running, wheeling and cycling. It includes all journeys, with an emphasis on distances under 5km, including trips to work, education, shopping, visiting friends and for recreation. Active travel considers the needs of those who use prams, pushchairs, scooters, wheelchairs and adapted cycles, as well as new mobility modes such as e-scooters and e-bikes.

Fingal is one of four Metropolitan local authorities in Dublin, comprising of 22% of the total Dublin population. It has one of the youngest, most highly educated and most diverse populations in the country. Fingal has a mix of urban and rural communities, often acting as commuter hubs to Dublin city centre, and to other regional towns such as Blanchardstown, Swords, and Malahide. The strategy is intended for use by planners, decision makers and anyone else within the council who is in a position to influence how people travel in the county.

“Our vision for Fingal is to ensure that walking, cycling and wheeling will become a realistic and safe choice for everyday short journeys. We will achieve this vision by putting active travel first in our planning, design and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives.”

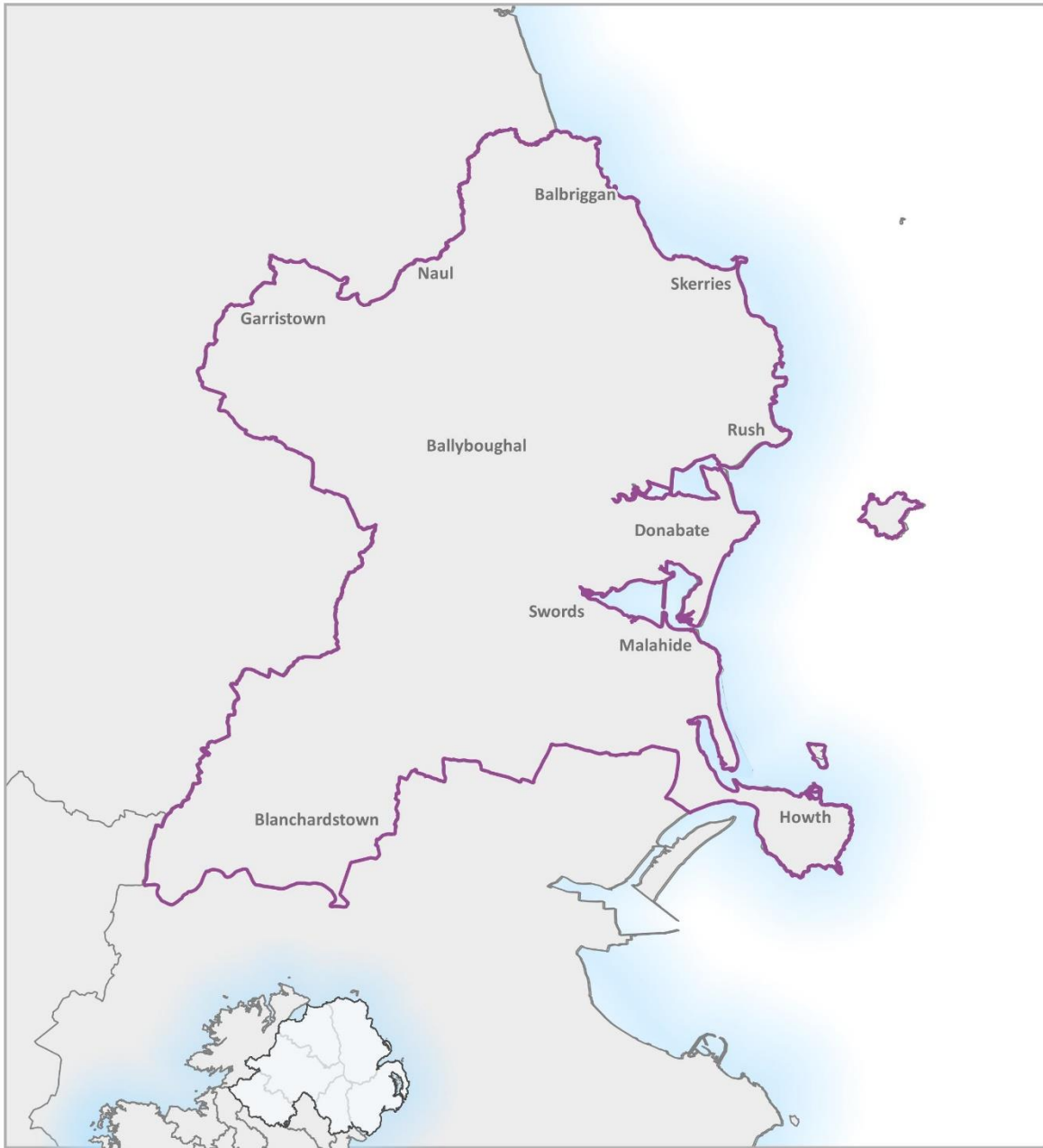
There are six pillars within the Active Travel Strategy:

1. Protected Cycleways
2. Towns and Villages
3. Connectivity
4. Road Safety
5. Mobility
6. Strategic Planning

The six pillars reflect the key priorities within the strategy. Protected Cycleways is principally focussed on infrastructure, whereas Strategic Planning is mainly about processes. The other pillars include a blend of hard measures (new or modified infrastructure such as traffic calming or cycle parking) and soft measures (revenue funded items such as cycle training, road safety campaigns and marketing promotions). Research has shown that both approaches are required for successful active travel outcomes.

Figure 1.1 shows the location of Fingal County.

Figure 1-1 Fingal County Boundary and Location



Fingal County Council
Strategic Environmental Assessment

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council




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2 Relevant Environmental Baseline Summary

This section presents text from the Non-Technical summary of the SEA ER of the draft Fingal CDP 2023-2029, showing key relevant environmental topics for the Active Travel Strategy.

2.1.1 Biodiversity

Green and blue infrastructure plays an essential role in creating a more healthy and liveable county. Green infrastructure including parks and open space, promote health and well-being and provide recreational facilities. Blue infrastructure refers to waterways and waterbodies such as rivers, canals and the sea. The limitations and social distancing requirements brought about because of COVID-19 have further highlighted the continuing need for the provision and access to these assets in our urban areas. There are 13 no. European sites within the administrative boundary of Fingal County.

Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000) Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation. The designation of these sites is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Further protection can be afforded to these areas by including appropriate protective measures in the Plan.

See Figures 2.1 and 2.2 for European Sites and Natural Heritage Areas/proposed Natural Heritage Areas within 15km of the county.

Figure 2-1 SACs and SPAs within 5,10 and 15km of county boundary

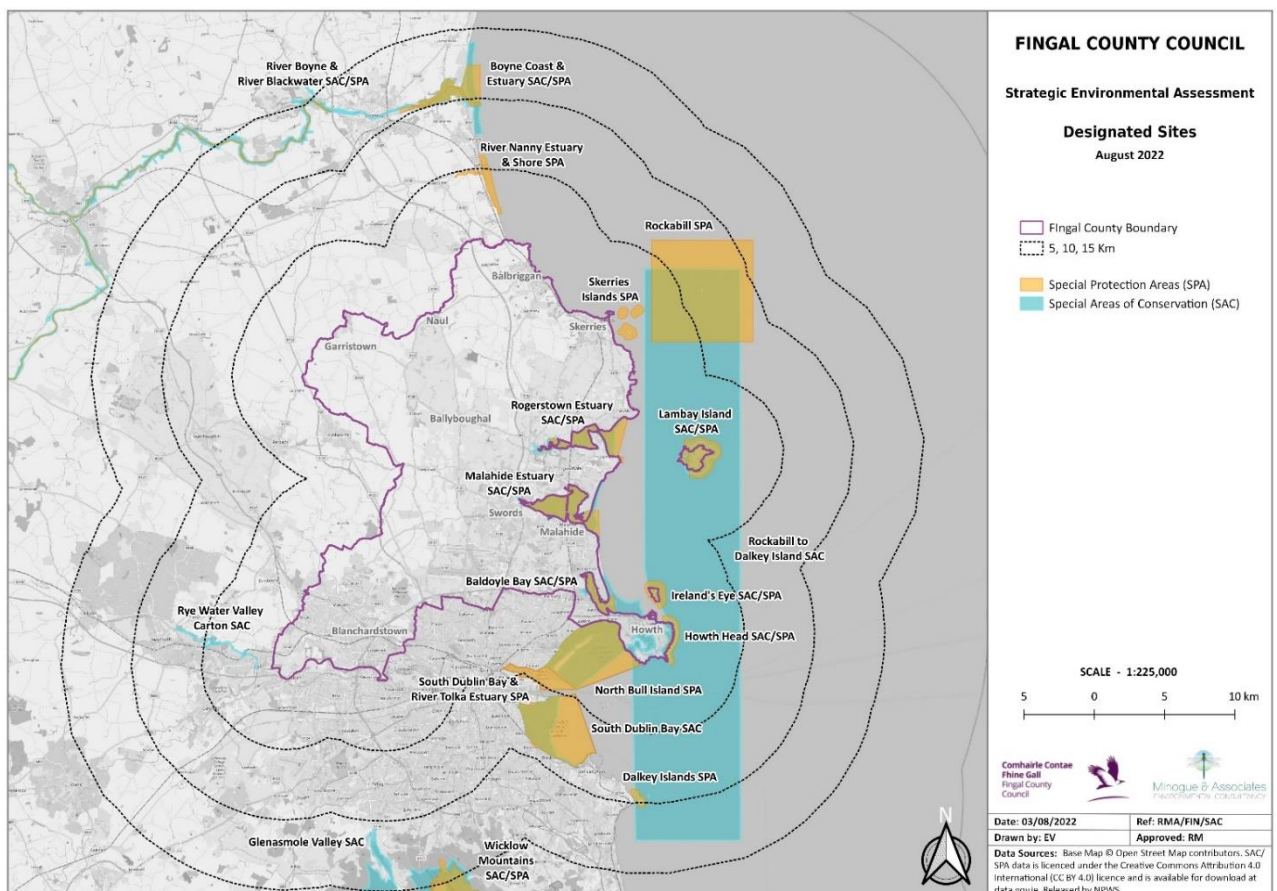
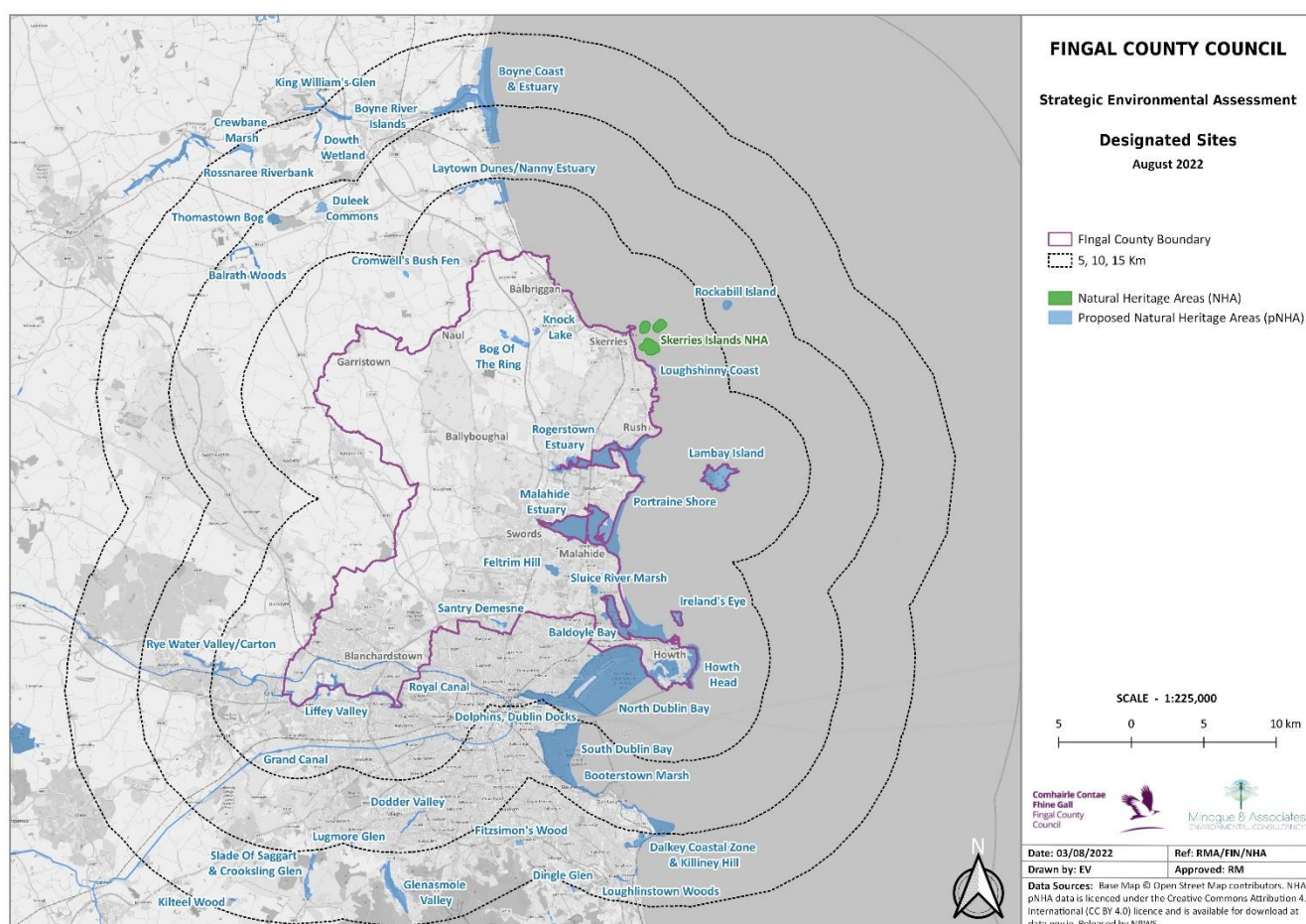


Figure 2-2 Proposed and Natural Heritage Areas 15km of County Boundary



2.1.2 Population and human health

Fingal was the third most populous local authority in Ireland (after Dublin City and Cork County) with a total of 296,020 people in 2016. Between 2006 and 2016 the population in Fingal increased by 23.3% or by just over 56,000 people. There was an increase of 7.4% (22,029 persons) between 2011 and 2016. This was considerably higher than the national average growth rate of 3.8% for the same period. The population of Fingal is projected to increase to between 327,000 and 333,000 by 2026.

The distribution of future household (including population) growth in the Plan is based on the key principles of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) of providing an adequate supply of quality housing to meet existing and future demand, including addressing the current housing crisis and homelessness. Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental factors such as air, water or soil through which contaminants could accumulate and have potential to cause harm through contact with human beings. The impact of development on human health is also influenced by the extent to which new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and the maintenance of the quality of water, air and soil.

2.1.3 Land, Soil and Geology

Agricultural land cover makes up the majority of the county with urban areas along the coast to the east and along the northern fringe of Dublin City to the south. Rural Fingal's rich agricultural land is

home to well-developed agriculture industries and centres of local food production. Agricultural activity in Fingal includes tillage of cereals and other crops, pasture and dairy. The rural landscape is also home to quarrying and landfill activities.

Land use patterns from agriculture to uses for residential developments, business parks and light industry can result in the loss of hedgerow boundaries and alteration or culverting of stream channels. The loss of agricultural and soil resources close to the metropolitan area of Dublin also increases dependency on imported food produce with corresponding increased 'food miles' and higher carbon emissions.

Fingal County Council manages approximately 2,000ha of public open space and many public parks in the county have significant tracts of woodland, framing important and often iconic landscapes. Tree canopy cover across Fingal, which has predominantly rural land cover (74%) is estimated at 6.5%.

The soil cover within Fingal is characterised by fine loamy drifts with limestones and siliceous stones. Clayey soils occur towards the north of Fingal. Urban / made ground is interspersed throughout the county, particularly along the coast and in the south of the county, reflecting settlement patterns. The coastal areas are by their nature characterised by the presence of rock outcroppings, beaches, sand dunes and tidal / marshy areas. Soils in the river valleys are comprised of riverine alluviums with marine alluviums deposited near the coast.

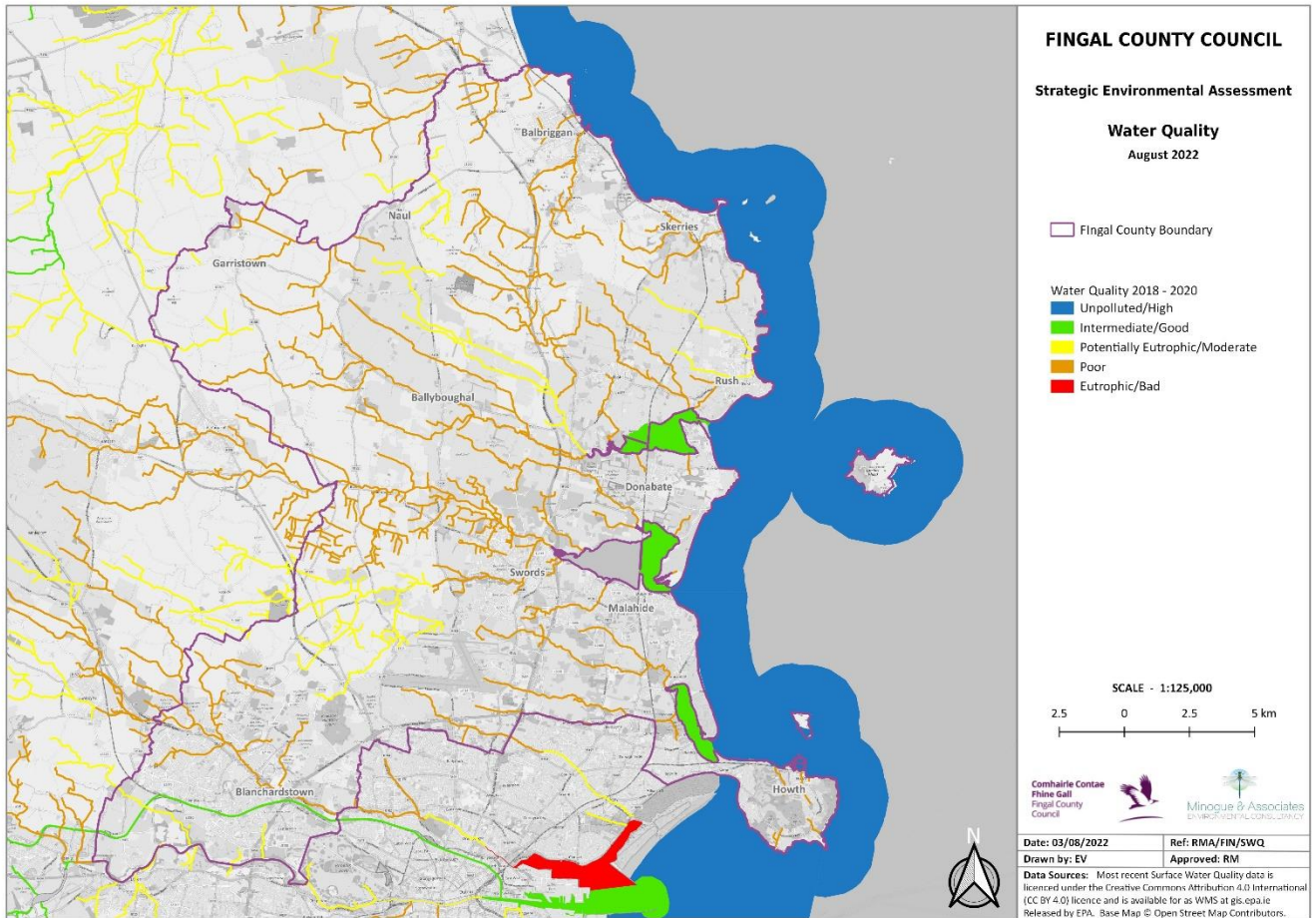
2.1.4 Water Resources

Fingal is traversed by a number of rivers and their tributaries including the River Liffey, River Tolka, River Ward, Broadmeadow River, Delvin River, Mayne River and Sluice River. These are important fisheries and wildlife resources as well as being significant for the ongoing provision of water services and for the management of flood risk. Other important river corridors include the River Matt, River Corduff, River Ballyboghil and River Santry. Fingal has no natural lakes. Therefore, it is important that the county's drinking water supply resources are protected so that reliable, safe and good quality water sources are always available.

The Water Framework Directive defines 'overall surface water status' as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorness of its ecological status and its chemical status. In order to achieve a 'good status' both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least 'good'. The status of the river waterbodies in the Plan area ranges from 'moderate' to 'poor' during the 2013- 2018 monitoring period. The latest EPA (2021) 'Water Quality in 2020 - An Indicators Report' indicates that in Fingal 6% of its rivers had a 'moderate' status, while 8% had 'poor' status.

Please see Figure 2.3 for Surface Water Quality.

Figure 2-3 Surface water quality



2.1.5 Air Quality and Noise

Air quality legislation in Ireland highlights the need ‘to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole’. The main sources of air pollution are domestic solid fuel burning, diesel fuelled vehicle emissions, agriculture, industry and even natural sources such as sea salt and wind-blown dust. The current trends in air quality in Ireland are reported in the latest EPA publication (2020) ‘Air Quality in Ireland 2019’. The report indicates that air quality in Ireland is generally ‘good’ however there are localised issues in some of our cities, towns and villages.

The objectives of EU and Irish noise legislation is ‘to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole’. The Dublin Agglomeration Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 has been prepared jointly by the four Local Authorities in the Dublin Area. The objective of the Noise Action Plan is to avoid, prevent and reduce where necessary, the long-term exposure to environmental noise. The Noise Action Plan aims to manage existing road noise and to prevent the future environmental noise. The Noise Action Plan for Fingal County is aimed at managing Environmental Noise from Road, Rail and Industrial sources within the Fingal County Council administrative area, but excludes noise from aircraft which is dealt with in a separate Noise Action Plan.

2.1.6 Climate Change

Climate change refers to a long-term, large scale change in global or regional climate patterns. In recent years, global temperatures have been rising. Urgent action is needed to address climate

change and to move Ireland towards a low carbon, climate resilient economy and society. The National Mitigation Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the level of decarbonisation required. The National Adaptation Framework sets out the national strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the country to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of positive impacts. The National Climate Action Plan 2021 is the Government's plan to tackle climate change. The Climate Action Plan sets out an ambitious course of action over the coming years to address the diverse and wide-ranging climatic impacts which Ireland is experiencing. The Climate Action Plan sets out clear 2030 targets for each sector with the ultimate objective of achieving a transition to a competitive, low-carbon and environmentally sustainable society and economy by 2050. Fingal County Council has prepared a Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024. The Climate Action Plan 2021 provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting the country on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.

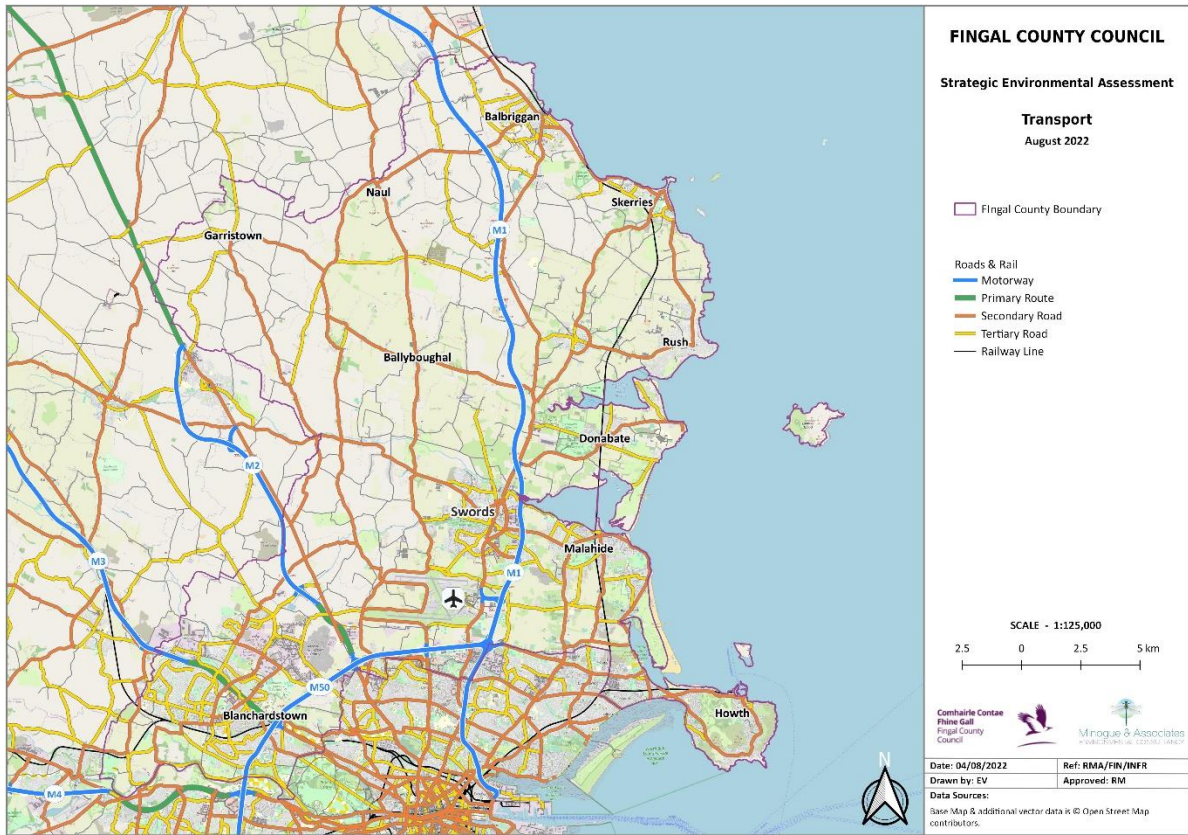
2.1.7 Transport

Dispersed settlement patterns and low population densities contribute to a high proportion of journeys being made by private car as there are no public transport or travel alternatives. In 2017, 96.7% of Ireland's transport energy demand was supplied by fossil fuels. Using more sustainable modes of transport is necessary to reduce Ireland's carbon emissions and reach the Government's goal of an 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050.

In terms of cycling and walking infrastructure, the National Transport Authority will help progress 23 no. projects over the county. These projects are part of a wider sustainable transport infrastructure programme to tackle climate change. The Active Travel Strategy identifies the following project in the county to support active travel infrastructure.

- Protected Cycle Lane projects – Hartstown, Huntstown, Baldoyle and River Valley

Figure 2-4 Transport – road and rail



3 Schedule 2a Screening assessment

3.1 Introduction

The following section and table below present the SEA Screening assessment of the Active Travel Strategy against the criteria provided in Schedule 2a of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2001-2011 which details the criteria for determining whether a plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment. More detailed commentary on the strategic themes and supporting actions are provided in Annex A to this report.

The Screening assessment should be read in conjunction with the Active Travel Strategy, and the accompanying Habitats Directive Screening report. Updates to the Active Travel Strategy following statutory consultation have been considered and included in Section 3.2 and Annex A.

Table 1 SEA Screening

Criteria for determining whether the proposed Active Strategy for Fingal is likely to have significant effects on the environment
1. The characteristics of the Plan having regard, in particular, to:
<i>the degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,</i>
<p>The Active Travel Strategy will be referred to in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029. Active Travel considerations will continue to be a requirement of future planning permissions – new developments shall give appropriate space for walking and cycling, and provide connectivity and permeability to adjoining neighbourhoods. All relevant Council policies to ensure they support active travel including (but not limited to) land use and transport, cycle parking standards, safe routes to Schools, interchange with Public Transport and our own operational procedures.</p> <p>The Strategy will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework.</p>
<i>the degree to which the Plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy,</i>
<p>The Strategy aims to embed active travel considerations into landuse and planning and will be included in the Fingal CDP 2023-2029. This is an objective of the draft CDP Connectivity and Mobility Chapter.</p>
<i>The relevance of the Plan in the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,</i>
<p>The strategy seeks to embed active travel and this provides for positive effects across a number of environmental considerations, notably addressing and contributing to reductions in Greenhouse Gas emissions associated with transport. Other considerations include population and human health effects as well as social inclusion, air quality, and the health benefits of increased walking and cycling behaviour.</p>

Environmental problems relevant to the Strategy

The Non Technical Summary of the SEA ER of the draft Fingal CDP 2023-2029 identifies a number of issues across SEA topics, the key ones relevant to the active travel strategy are Biodiversity, population and human health, climate change and material assets (transport)

Biodiversity issues, include:

- ♣ Development - construction and use of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructure and areas (For example development on greenfield sites, the construction and development of the road network and changes in farming practices).
- ♣ Transport systems - development / operation of the transport systems (For example the construction and development of the road network and light and noise pollution).
- ♣ Green Infrastructure - protecting the existing green infrastructure network from fragmentation and loss due to pressures of urban development within and adjoining the network.
- ♣ Ecosystem Services - recognising and promoting the value of ecosystem services that blue and green infrastructure networks provides to the county.
- ♣ Climate Change - (For example the loss of wetlands, due to climate change events i.e. storms and flood events.).
- ♣ Human-induced changes in water regimes - contamination arising through poor working practices, leakages or accidental spillage of materials (For example wastewater treatment systems in the vicinity of significant waterbodies.).
- ♣ Mixed source pollution - (For example emissions from transport, heating homes, leachate from landfills, water pollution from wastewater treatment systems, eutrophication and acidification from forestry).
- ♣ Coastal development - coastal erosion is an inevitable and necessary element of any healthy functioning beach and sand dune system. Coastal development and resultant shoreline defences can pose a significant risk to the entire beach due to wave reflection and scouring.
- ♣ Coastal - increased pressure on dune systems in coastal areas of the county - mainly from existing and potential increase in amenity and recreation activities, and associated access, including the development of greenways, but also overgrazing.
- ♣ Invasive Species and problematic species - continued control and management of invasive species. (For example, the loss of biodiversity as native species are shaded out, but also diseases and pathogens).

Existing population and human health issues / pressures on the population of Fingal include:

- ♣ Health and Well-being - continue the development of recreation and leisure facilities
- ♣ Access - the 'Access to and the use of Blue / Green Spaces in Ireland during a Pandemic' study highlighted significant differences between socio-economic groups in relation to the amount of time spent outdoors in blue / green spaces during the pandemic with the lowest income group reporting the lowest average number of days.
- ♣ Climate Change - potential impacts of climate change on human health from changes to local weather, including prolonged periods of hot or cold weather - which can lead to heat and cold stresses and their associated effects.

Water - the surface waterbodies in Fingal need to be improved to achieve 'good' ecological status in waterbodies by 2027.

- ♣ Water - water contamination arising through poor work practices, leakages or accidental spillage of materials, if efficient pollution control measures are not fully implemented and maintained.
- ♣ RBMP - implementation of the actions set out in the Plan

Existing air quality issues / pressures with environmental considerations include:

- ♣ Air emissions - associated with the high use of the private car.

Noise pollution is considered to be one of the most damaging and prevalent forms of nuisance and pollution in urban areas. High levels of traffic noise especially can have a detrimental effect on the quality of life, and on human health. Existing noise issues / pressures with environmental considerations include:

- ♣ High noise levels - areas of high noise.
- ♣ Noise levels - noise associated with increased traffic on major roads.
- ♣ Noise levels - increasing traffic volumes affect the acoustic environment.
- ♣ Noise levels - noise associated with aircraft / flight path.

The potential effects of Climate Change resulting in an increase in the frequency and severity of flooding and storm events must also be considered in the Plan. Severe rainfall and storm events as a result of Climate Change could adversely impact Fingal, leading to water shortages, residential flooding and disruption and damage to infrastructure.

Transport - the movement of people is key to the success of new development and areas, where adequate transport infrastructure (i.e. road, rail, cycle and pedestrian routes) to these developments and accessibility throughout the development / area (safe footpath and cycle paths) is fundamental to the development of Fingal.

the relevance of the Strategy in the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection).

Section 3 of the Strategy presents the policy and legislative framework relevant to the strategy, including the National Planning Framework, the Eastern and Midland Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy 2019 -2031, National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022), Draft Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042 (2022), Climate Action Plan: Securing our Future 2021, Fingal CC Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024 and Dublin Region Air Quality Plan. These policies seek to build on and deliver a range of legislative targets.

As the strategy will form part of the Fingal CDP 2023-2029 once adopted, it will be relevant to the implementation of EU environmental legislation including EU Habitats Directive, EU Water Framework Directive and EU EIA and SEA Directives.

No specific land use effects are identified in the Strategy and should development arise, the application of appropriate legislation such as the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive, the SEA directive and the EIA Directive, shall apply, as appropriate.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

<i>the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,</i>
At this strategic level, no landuse effects are identified. The intention to embed this Active Strategy to the forthcoming CDP 2023-2029 will ensure existing provisions, including environmental protection measures, will be applied as appropriate through the planning and consent process.
<i>the cumulative nature of the effects,</i>
At this point the action measures are somewhat generic and no specific land use effects are identified. Should projects arise from the Active Travel Strategy they will be subject to more detailed project level assessment and be in compliance with the statutory planning and environmental consenting regime.
<i>the trans boundary nature of the effects</i>
No transboundary effects are identified
<i>the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),</i>
No such risks are identified as arising from the plan. Strategic themes such as Protected Cycleways and Strategic Planning reduce risk to active travels and are positive.
<i>the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</i>
At this scale, no such effects are identified.
<i>the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</i>
(a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage A screening statement in support of Appropriate Assessment has also been prepared for this plan in line with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). A finding of no likely significant effects has been determined to inform Fingal County Council, the competent authority in their decision making.
(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, In order to be realised, potential projects or proposals arising from the Active Travel Strategy will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework.
(c) intensive land-use, No specific areas are identified for landuse effects or development activities in the plan and at this juncture no such effects are identified.

(a) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

A Screening report for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken and accompanies this strategy and SEA Screening report. The AA screening report has concluded that the Active Travel Strategy will not result in land use activities that have the potential to produce negative impacts to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites and will not have the potential to compromise the achievement of the conservation objective of European Sites. It can be concluded by Fingal County Council it is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

3.2 SEA Screening Determination

Section 9 (1) of the (2004) Regulations (S.I. No. 435) (as amended) states "*subject to sub-article (2), an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes*

(a) *which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, **transport**, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and **town and country planning or land use**, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or "*

(b) *which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site."*

The Active Travel Strategy does not provide consent; establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. In order to be realised, potential projects or proposals arising from the Strategy will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework. This screening exercise will be used to inform and embed the Active Travel Strategy into the draft Fingal County Development Plan 2023 - 2029 which has a suite of environmental protection measures that will apply. In addition, the existing Fingal CDP 2017-2023 includes a suite of environmental protection measures that apply currently.

The AA Screening of the Active Travel Strategy as set out in the accompanying Screening Statement in support of Appropriate Assessment shows that the plan will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in negative impacts to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites and will not have the potential to compromise the achievement of the conservation objective of European Sites.

Fingal County Council has undertaken the Screening under SI 435 of 2004 as amended, and has made a final SEA Screening determination that full SEA of the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal is not required.

In accordance with Article 9(5) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, Fingal County Council provided notice to the specified environmental authorities that the implementation of the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The SEA Screening report was issued to Statutory environmental authorities for a four-week period, with submissions received from the following consultees:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)
- Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM).

Please see Annex B of this Final SEA Screening Report for a summary of points raised and the SEA and AA response to same. In summary the EPA provided advice in relation to SEA Guidance, available datasets and reference to any infrastructural planning, and screening of changes to the plan. DAFM had no comments on the submission.

In response to concerns raised by the DHLGH the following minor changes have been made to the final Active Travel Strategy for Fingal as follows:

- additional text to clarify the planning hierarchy and that should any projects arise from the Active Travel Strategy they would be consistent and compliant with relevant consenting processes including, inter alia EIA, AA and EclA as appropriate. Page 2: "*Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.*"
- The removal of projects within the text previously listed on Page 18 (not actions or objectives) that references 'projects underway'. For the avoidance of doubt any projects yet to be subject to planning approval are now removed from the strategy.

Considering these minor revisions and clarifications, it has been determined that no likely significant effects are identified for the implementation of the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal County Council. Please see updated Annex A for SEA evaluation of these changes.

As stated previously, the Active Travel Strategy does not provide consent; establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. To be realised, potential projects or proposals arising from the Strategy will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework.

In light of the above, it can be determined by Fingal County Council that the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal does not require full SEA under SI 435 of 2004, as amended. An SEA Screening Determination has been prepared under SI 435 of 2004a s amended by SI 200 of 2011 and will be made available.

ANNEX A SEA commentary of Active Travel Strategy for Fingal

Protected Cycleways		
Actions		
FCC will work with NTA to deliver the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network, meeting high quality design standards set out in the National Cycle Manual		
<p>SEA comment:</p> <p>The Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network has been subject to full SEA and AA and an updated version of the plan has been issued for consultation in 2022.</p> <p>The existing and draft Fingal CDP provides a suite of environmental protection measures and these are identified as providing appropriate project level mitigation.</p> <p>Examples include-Draft CDP 2023-2029</p> <p>Objective CMO40 – Road and Street Proposals and Environmental Protection Work with the relevant national transport agencies. This is to ensure that all road and street network proposals have regard to pertaining environmental conditions and sensitivities including biodiversity, protected habitats and species. They also incorporate appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures as part of any environmental assessments.</p> <p>Objective DMSO1 – Screening for Appropriate Assessment ensure that all plans and projects in the County which could, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a European site or sites are subject to Screening for Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Objective DMSO2 – Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment ensure that all development projects within the County that are below the mandatory thresholds for Environmental Impact assessment, which could individually or in combination with other projects have significant effects on the environment are subject to EIA Screening.</p> <p>Objective DMSO3 – Local Authority Development ensure Local Authority development proposals are subject to environmental assessment, as appropriate, including Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment.</p>		
Towns and Villages		
<p>We will introduce active travel interventions to reduce car dependency in communities, with important regular destinations such as schools, rail stations, hospitals, sports clubs, and education campuses.</p> <p>Measures will include widening footpaths, walkability audits, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Safe Routes to School measures, one-way systems (for vehicles only) and pedestrianisation schemes built in line with the Government’s Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS) and actions arising from Local Transport Plans.</p>		
SEA Comment: these measures are not specified in terms of location but their scale and size are minor and are not identified as giving rise to adverse environmental effects as measures relate to existing infrastructure modifications (e.g., widening footpaths) or research (audits). Local Transport Plans will also be screened for SEA and AA.		
Connectivity		
<p>We will continue to assess new development proposals with more emphasis on the promotion of active travel infrastructure through the development, management and forward planning processes. In addition, we will review existing developments to assess any connectivity and permeability improvements that can be made. We will also assess any requests for improvements in this regard.</p>		
SEA comment: this relates to integration of active travel through planning considerations and as with Theme 1 above, the existing provisions in the draft Fingal CDP would apply. No significant adverse environmental effects identified.		
Road Safety		

We will seek to reduce the overall casualty rate for pedestrians and cyclists through a range of safety initiatives which will be set out in our Road Safety Plan. Each initiative will be reviewed to check that all messaging is appropriate to different age and user groups and does not achieve safety targets by discouraging walking and cycling

SEA Comment: positive effects relating to human health and modal shift by promoting safety of pedestrians and cyclists. No direct landuse effects identified.

Mobility

We will work with the NTA and local organisations such as Age Friendly Fingal to develop a structured network of coordinated bike share schemes; support the provision of electric bike sharing schemes, and put in place interoperability between schemes.

We will work with public transport operators to deliver measures which improve information, safety and cycle parking at bus stops, DART and regional rail stations and future Luas and Metrolink stops. We will monitor emerging mobility trends and respond accordingly (for example, the use of eScooters)

SEA comment: this action relates primarily to collaboration and co-ordination to support update of cycling and bike schemes, no significant adverse effects identified. Positive effects in relation to human health, air quality and climate action.

Strategic Planning

The Active Travel Strategy will be referred to in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029. Active Travel considerations will continue to be a requirement of future planning permissions – new developments shall give appropriate space for walking and cycling, and provide connectivity and permeability to adjoining neighbourhoods. We will review all relevant Council policies to ensure they support active travel including (but not limited to) land use and transport, cycle parking standards, Safe Routes to Schools, interchange with Public Transport and our own operational procedures. The following projects all have a part to play in promoting active travel:

- car share schemes
- car park management and charges
- treatment of on-street parking
- last mile, low emission deliveries
- marketing and information
- segmented cycle promotion such as Gear up for Cycle Training and Cycling Without Age Strategy

SEA comment:

This commits to inclusion of this Active Travel Strategy in the new Fingal CDP 2023 -2029. Potential projects are all either not directly related to land use or are minor, such as car park management. As with other actions, no significant adverse environmental effects are apparent, with positive effects seen in relation to modal shift, air quality, climate action and health.

Amendments to Final Active Travel Strategy following statutory consultation:

1. **Removal of reference to list of projects on Page 18 'projects underway'. SEA comment: this was removed to avoid confusion and the potential to consider the list of projects as having received planning permission. The removal is to avoid confusion and provide clarity in this regard. No significant effects on the environment identified by this change.**
2. **Inclusion of text to provide confirmation and clarification in relation to the planning hierarchy and requirement for compliance and adherence with any and all requirements of the forthcoming Fingal County Development Plan. This is stated on page 2 of the final report as follows: "Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area."**

SEA comment: again, the purpose of this additional text is to make clear the planning hierarchy which underpins the strategy. No significant effects on the environment identified by this change.

Annex B: Submissions from statutory environmental bodies under SI 435 of 2004 as amended and response to same.

SEA and AA responses to Statutory Consultation for Active Travel Strategy for Fingal			
Name	Key Point/Comment	SEA Response	AA Response
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Proposed SEA Determination We note your proposed determination regarding the need for SEA of the Plan.	Noted final determination will be made by FCC	n/a
	Infrastructure Planning In proposing the Plan, and any related amendments of the Plan and in implementing the Plan, adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Plan.	Noted and agreed. Provisions relating to infrastructure and environmental protection are included in the current CDP 2017-2023 (see for example Policies MT16-22) and the draft CDP 2023-2029 (eg: Policy CMP8 – Greenway Network). These objectives have already been assessed for SEA as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, and the draft Fingal CDP 2023 -2029. SEA Environmental Reports and Natura Impact Reports and the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.	n/a
	Useful sources of information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) WebTool • EPA SEA WebGIS Tool • EPA WFD Application • EPA AA GeoTool 	Noted.	
	State of the Environment Report – Ireland’s Environment 2020	Noted.	
	Future amendments to the Plan Where changes to the Plan are made prior to finalisation, or where modifications to the Plan are proposed following its adoption, these should be screened for potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations (S.I. No. 435 of 2004).	Noted. Amendments to the plan following statutory consultation have been screened and are provided in updated Annex A of this SEA Screening report.	n/a
	Appropriate Assessment You should ensure that the Plan complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where Appropriate Assessment is required, the key	Noted	Noted

	findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the Plan.		
	<p>Environmental Authorities</p> <p>Under the SEA Regulations (SI 435 of 2004, as amended), prior to making your SEA determination you should consult with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency; • Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage • Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; and • Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. 	Noted	
	<p>SEA Determination</p> <p>As soon as practicable after making your determination as to whether SEA is required or not, you should make a copy of your decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection in your offices and on your website. You should also send a copy of your determination to the relevant environmental authorities consulted.</p>	Noted SEA Determination is prepared and will be made available for public inspection and on Fingal CC website.	n/a
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage:	<p>Nature Conservation</p> <p>On consideration of the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal from a nature conservation perspective, this Department welcomes and supports the general thrust of this strategy, in that it sets out a range of initiatives with regards to infrastructure and policies in line with national targets encouraging the adoption of sustainable transport and reducing transport sector greenhouse gas emissions which should contribute to minimising climate change and linked global adverse effects on biodiversity.</p> <p>However, having studied the Active Travel Strategy itself and the SEA Screening Report and the</p>	<p>The consultation with statutory authorities has led to minor changes to the final report including the removal of reference to <i>'projects underway'</i>.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt please note:</p> <p><i>Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.</i></p> <p>In relation to the comments and concerns raised in this submission relating to Protected Cycleways are objectives already included in the Fingal CDP 2017 2023. These objectives</p>	<p>The consultation with statutory authorities has led to minor changes to the final report including the removal of reference to <i>'projects underway.'</i></p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt please note on the final plan page 2:</p> <p><i>"Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. "</i></p> <p>In relation to the comments and concerns raised in this submission</p>

	<p>Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report prepared in relation to this strategy, the Department does not accept the conclusion of these reports that the strategy could not have significant environmental effects or that it does not have the potential to result in negative impacts to the Qualifying Interests (QIs) for European sites or compromise the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for such sites. This Department consequently rejects Fingal County Council’s preliminary SEA Screening Determination that full SEA of the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal is not required.</p>	<p>have already been assessed for SEA and Appropriate Assessment as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.</p>	<p>relating to Protected Cycleways are objectives already included in the Fingal CDP 2017 2023. These objectives have already been assessed for SEA and Appropriate Assessment as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.</p>
	<p>One of the six pillars within the Active Travel Strategy is the provision of a network of Protected Cycleways. Greenway routes for Fingal are set out in maps included in the present Fingal County Development Plan (2017-2023) and in the Draft Fingal County Development Plan (2023-2029), as well as in the Draft Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Cycle Network Plan, 2022-2042, the Draft GDA Transport Strategy, 2022-2042, and the National Cycle Network Plan, 2022-2042. A number of the proposed greenway routes are through or adjacent to proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), such as the Royal Canal Greenway along the entire length of the route of the Royal Canal through the Fingal County Council area, or sections of greenway intended to be built near Chapelizod and St. Catherine’s Wood in or adjacent to the Liffey Valley pNHA. Construction of greenways may lead to adverse impacts on flora and fauna during both the greenways construction and operational phases.</p>	<p>The consultation with statutory authorities has led to minor changes to the final report including the removal of reference to specific projects.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, it is noted that the projects previously included in the draft Active Strategy are already included in the current Fingal CDP 2017 -2023 (please see for example: Objective ED 68 Fingal Coastal Way, Objective ED 69 Royal Canal Greenway, ED 70 Liffey Valley Greenway).</p> <p>These objectives have already been assessed for SEA and Appropriate Assessment as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.</p> <p>Reference is made to same in the draft CDP 2023-2029 (please see for example: GINHO74 – Coastal Way see also Table 6.1 of draft CDP for list of greenways). These are currently being assessed for SEA and AA and the current strategy will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan once adopted.</p>	<p>The consultation with statutory authorities has led to minor changes to the final report including the removal reference to specific projects.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, it is noted that the projects previously included in the draft Active Strategy are already included in the current Fingal CDP 2017 - 2023 (please see for example: Objective ED 68 Fingal Coastal Way, Objective ED 69 Royal Canal Greenway, ED 70 Liffey Valley Greenway).</p> <p>These objectives have already been assessed for SEA and Appropriate Assessment as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.</p> <p>Reference is made to same in the draft CDP 2023-2029 (please see for example:</p>

			GINHO74 – Coastal Way see also Table 6.1 of draft CDP for list of greenways). These are currently being assessed for SEA and AA and the current strategy will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan once adopted.
	Along the coast various sections of proposed greenway routes run through or in the immediate proximity of European sites forming part of the Natura 2000 network. As greenways are designed to cater for cyclists and pedestrians, they have the potential to result in increased footfall by the latter in Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) leading to erosion damage to QI habitats the SACs have been designated to protect.	Noted, please see above response	Noted, please see above response.
	<p>Though less likely to have significant effects on biodiversity, the proposed construction of cycle lanes along roadways, especially beside existing roads, could also result in the loss of roadside hedgerows, including townland boundary hedgerows, which may be of considerable value because of flora and fauna present in them.</p> <p>Increased levels of artificial lighting which may be installed on these cycle lanes, and on sections of greenway, may also have detrimental effects on fauna, especially bat species, which are afforded a system of strict protection under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). Adverse effects on certain more light sensitive bat species of lighting installed on the Royal Canal Greenway from Ashtown to Blanchardstown in Fingal have already been identified by the County Council, and it is the Council's intention to mitigate these effects along this stretch of the Royal Canal by</p>	<p>Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.</p> <p>Hedgerows Please see Objectives in Fingal CDP 2017-2023: <i>Objective NH27 Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.</i></p> <p>Please see following objectives in the Draft CDP 2023-2029 Objective CMO45 – Road Safety and Rural Roads Prioritise safety on rural roads and junctions, while having regard to the protection of biodiversity, Green Infrastructure and rural character present in roadside trees, hedgerows and banks.</p> <p>Policy GINHP21 – Protection of Trees and Hedgerows Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity</p>	<p>Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.</p> <p>Hedgerows. Please see Objectives in Fingal CDP 2017-2023: Objective NH27 Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.</p> <p>Please see following objectives in the Draft CDP 2023-2029</p>

	<p>making the lights there movement activated for some of the hours of darkness.</p>	<p>or biodiversity value and/ or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.</p> <p>Lighting: Please see Objectives in Fingal CDP 2017-2023: Objective LP01 Require that the design of lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment. New schemes shall ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring residential or nearby properties; visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Please see following objectives in the Draft CDP 2023-2029 Policy IUP41 – Light Pollution Promote appropriate lighting installations, availing of best practice as published by the relevant authority, designed to minimise light pollution / unwanted environmental effects while maximising the light reaching the public realm.</p> <p>Objective IUO63 – Design of Lighting Schemes Require that the design of lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment and new schemes shall ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring development, visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding areas.</p>	<p>Objective CMO45 – Road Safety and Rural Roads Prioritise safety on rural roads and junctions, while having regard to the protection of biodiversity, Green Infrastructure and rural character present in roadside trees, hedgerows and banks.</p> <p>Policy GINHP21 – Protection of Trees and Hedgerows Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/ or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.</p> <p>Lighting: Please see Objectives in Fingal CDP 2017-2023: Objective LP01 Require that the design of lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment. New schemes shall ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring residential or nearby properties; visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Please see following objectives in the Draft CDP 2023-2029 Policy IUP41 – Light Pollution Promote appropriate lighting installations, availing of best practice as published by the relevant authority, designed to minimise light pollution / unwanted</p>
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			<p>environmental effects while maximising the light reaching the public realm.</p> <p>Objective IUO63 – Design of Lighting Schemes Require that the design of lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment and new schemes shall ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring development, visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding areas.</p>
	<p>Among the projects listed as underway in the Active Travel Strategy are the Fingal Coastal Way (from Newbridge Demesne to Balbriggan) and as greenway projects – the Broadmeadow Greenway and Royal Canal Urban Greenway.</p>	<p>The consultation with statutory authorities has led to minor changes to the final report including the removal of reference to specific projects.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, it is noted that the projects previously included in the draft Active Strategy are already included in the current Fingal CDP 2017 -2023 (please see for example: Objective ED 68 Fingal Coastal Way, Objective ED 69 Royal Canal Greenway, ED 70 Liffey Valley Greenway) . These objectives have already been assessed for SEA and Appropriate Assessment as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.</p> <p>Reference is made to same in the draft CDP 2023-2029 (please see for example: GINHO74 – Coastal Way see also Table 6.1 of draft CDP for list of greenways). These are currently being assessed for SEA and AA and the current strategy will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan once adopted.</p>	<p>The consultation with statutory authorities has led to minor changes to the final report including the removal of reference to specific projects.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, it is noted that the projects previously included in the draft Active Strategy are already included in the current Fingal CDP 2017 - 2023 (please see for example: Objective ED 68 Fingal Coastal Way, Objective ED 69 Royal Canal Greenway, ED 70 Liffey Valley Greenway) and Table 6.1 of the draft CDP 2023-2029. These objectives have already been assessed for SEA and Appropriate Assessment as part of the Fingal CDP 2017 2023, the current plan proposal will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plans.</p>

			Reference is made to same in the draft CDP 2023-2029 (please see for example: GINHO74 – Coastal Way see also Table 6.1 of draft CDP for list of greenways). These are currently being assessed for SEA and AA and the current strategy will not result in any activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan once adopted.
	The SEA Screening Report prepared in relation to the Active Travel Strategy does not substantially address whether or not the strategy will have any significant effects on biodiversity, despite the potential outlined above for the construction of the Protected Cycleways as part of the strategy to adversely affect flora and fauna in and outside of sites designated to protect species and habitats of nature conservation value. In as far as it considers effects on biodiversity, the screening report appears to consider they can be evaluated at project level together with other environmental effects if and when projects in line with the Active Travel Strategy are brought forward, and presumably any measures required to mitigate adverse effects will then be proposed.	As shown in the above responses, the Active Travel Strategy aligns with the existing provisions of the current Fingal CDP 2017-2023 which has been subject to full SEA. Similarly, the Active Travel Strategy aligns with the objectives included in the draft Fingal CDP 2023-2029 which is undergoing full SEA. The strategy does not provide for additional activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan currently in place, or forthcoming CDP.	As shown in the above responses, the Active Travel Strategy aligns with the existing provisions of the current Fingal CDP 2017-2023 which has been subject to Appropriate Assessment. Similarly, the Active Travel Strategy aligns with the objectives included in the draft Fingal CDP 2023-2029 which is undergoing AA. The strategy does not provide for additional activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan currently in place, or forthcoming CDP.
	In a similar fashion, in as far as the AA Screening Report prepared in relation to the Active Travel Strategy considers the strategy’s potential effects on European sites, it states in Table 5.1 with regards to Protected Cycleways that “This measure aims to provide green sustainable transport options and develop high quality cycling facilities to encourage more people to switch to active travel. This measure, therefore, is positive and will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects on European sites.” The potential adverse effects on habitats due to higher human		Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan. As shown in the above responses, the Active Travel Strategy aligns with the existing provisions of the current Fingal CDP 2017-2023 which has been subject to Appropriate Assessment. Similarly, the Active Travel Strategy aligns with the objectives included in the

	<p>footfalls within SACs and disturbance of QI/SCI bird species for SPAs by pedestrians and dogs within, or ex-situ to, these sites, likely to result from the construction of greenways, and identified above by this Department, are not recognised in the AA Screening Report on the strategy and proposals for avoiding such detrimental effects are therefore not put forward in this document.</p>		<p>draft Fingal CDP 2023-2029 which is undergoing AA. The strategy does not provide for additional activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan currently in place, or forthcoming CDP.</p>
	<p>This approach to the AA of potential effects on European sites is in contrast to that adopted in the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) prepared on behalf of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in relation to the National Cycleway Network Plan 2022-2042, which was recently submitted to this Department and in Section 6 shows a strong commitment to avoiding impacts to European sites e.g. “In determining the final route alignment, there will be a general principle of avoiding any new construction within 200 m of a European site as a first preference.” Likewise, the NIS prepared in relation to the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy, 2022-2042, on behalf of the National Transport Authority (NTA) and also recently submitted to this Department, identifies risks and threats to a number of European sites and states “European sites may be vulnerable to greenway/cycleway developments due to their location.</p>		<p>Noted, please also note the alignment of any projects or proposals from the Fingal CDP 2017-2023 or forthcoming CDP 2023-2029. Please also See Section 3 Policy Context which references revelation national and regional plans including the National Cycleway Network Plan 2022 -2042 and the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042 on pages 14 and 15 of the strategy. These will inform and guide any landuse projects that may arise that are relevant.</p>
	<p>Recommendations In light of the above, the Department recommends that Fingal County Council should have amended SEA Screening and AA Screening Reports prepared on its behalf in relation to the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal to reflect the potentially significant effects on flora and fauna, and particularly on QIs for European sites, this strategy may result in, as outlined in the above observations by this Department, and leading</p>	<p>The points above are noted but would respectfully restate the following:</p> <p>Any land use development or activity progressed under this Strategy shall be required to comply with provisions of the current and future Fingal County Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.</p> <p>In this regard the Active Travel Strategy does not provide for additional measures than those already provided for in the Fingal CDP 2017 -2023 which has been assessed through full SEA and AA processes.</p>	

	<p>on from the presumed conclusions of these amended reports with regards to the strategy’s likely significant effects on biodiversity and especially European sites, should have a full SEA Report and a NIS prepared in relation to the Active Travel Strategy and conduct AA regarding it. Further, the County Council should refer the NIS and all other evidence including, but not limited, to scientific evidence that is required for the purposes of AA of the Active Travel Strategy to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in compliance with Regulations 42 (9) and 42 (10) of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats) Regulations, 2011, Statutory Instrument S.I. No. 477 of 2011, and shall take account of any submissions made to it by the Minister.</p>	<p>Similarly, the current draft Fingal CDP 2023 -2029 currently undergoing full SEA and AA also lists the following policies relating to Active Travel and application and measures will apply as appropriate upon adoption of the Fingal CDP 2023-2029.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, references to projects are removed that have not received planning and consent and additional text upfront (page 2) clearly states the alignment and requirement of the Active Travel Strategy with the statutory planning and consenting framework. The strategy does not provide for additional activities over and above those already committed to as part of the above plan currently in place, or forthcoming CDP.</p>	
<p>Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine</p>	<p>We refer to your recent correspondence concerning the above and wish to state that at this time the Department of Agriculture; Food and the Marine has no submissions or observations in regards to same.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Noted</p>

