

Flemington

Issues Paper

Draft Local Area Plan

January 2024



Fingal Development Plan 2023 - 2029

www.fingal.ie

Introduction

Fingal County Council intends to prepare a Local Area Plan for Flemington, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

A Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory document prepared by the Planning Authority in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including Sections 18, 19 and 20.

A Local Area Plan consists of a written statement and plans which must be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan, its core strategy and any Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031 that applies to the area of the Plan.

The Local Area Plan will consist of a written statement and maps setting out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and guidance as to how development can be achieved, what new infrastructure is needed and where public and private resource inputs are required for development proposed in the LAP area.

This pre-draft consultation offers the opportunity for stakeholders, organisations and the public to express their views and help shape a new LAP for Flemington.

This Strategic Issues Paper has been published to help inform discussion.

Your Role:

The preparation of the Flemington LAP will involve two phases. Firstly, a non-statutory Pre-Draft phase and secondly, a statutory Draft phase.

Fingal County Council is now beginning the Pre-Draft phase and has prepared this Strategic Issues Paper to inform the public and encourage discussion and debate. The Pre-Draft phase will be followed by the preparation and publication of the Draft LAP. During both phases, the Council will undertake public consultation and invite your comments.

Why get involved?

Local input is considered vital to the LAP process and we value what you have to say. We hope that this Strategic Issues Paper will stimulate interest and initiate debate resulting in constructive, positive and helpful feedback. Submissions are not limited to the issues raised in the paper so please raise any other issue of interest or area of concern which you consider relevant.

Please make your submission by **one** medium only as follows:

- **Online** at link URL: <https://consult.fingal.ie/en/browse>
- **In writing** to Senior Executive Officer, Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department, Fingal County Council, County Hall, Main Street, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 X8Y2

Having Your Say

Only submissions that are signed, addressed and received between **Thursday 1st February 2024** to **Friday 1st March 2024** can be accepted.

An information meeting for members of the public will be held in the Hamilton Suite, Bracken Court Hotel, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin, K32 DK88 on **Tuesday 13th February 2024 between 4pm and 7pm.**

All submissions received during this period will be considered by the Council in the drafting of the new Flemington Local Area Plan and details including the names of those making submissions may be shared with relevant Council Departments or their agents involved in the making of the LAP and may form part of reports linked to the making of the LAP.

What happens next?

Following on from Pre-Draft public consultation, Fingal County Council will commence the preparation of the Draft LAP informed by the submissions received as part of the pre-draft consultation/stakeholder engagement.

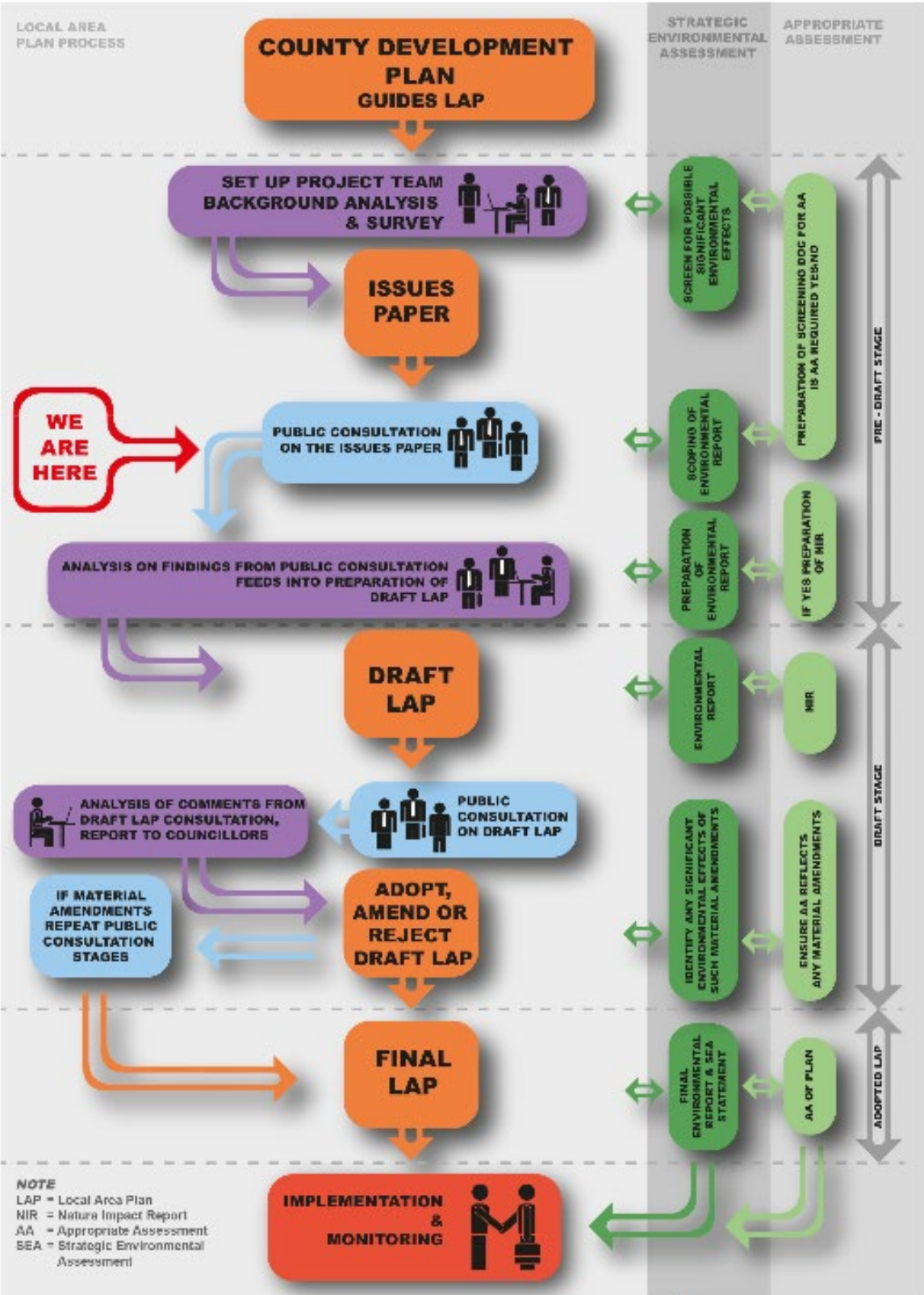
When the Draft LAP has been prepared, the statutory process will begin and the Draft Plan will go on public display for a period of 6 weeks, during which time you may make submissions and attend a public consultation/drop in event to view and discuss the Draft Plan.

Details of the process / timelines in preparing the Draft LAP are shown on Page 6.

Flemington Location Maps



LAP Process and Timelines



Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

Flemington – Location and Context

Flemington is located in north Balbriggan, approximately 1.5km northwest of Balbriggan town centre and 2.5km northeast of Junction 6 of the M1 motorway. The land is within the Balbriggan development boundary, is zoned RA – Residential Area and extends to 17.5 ha.

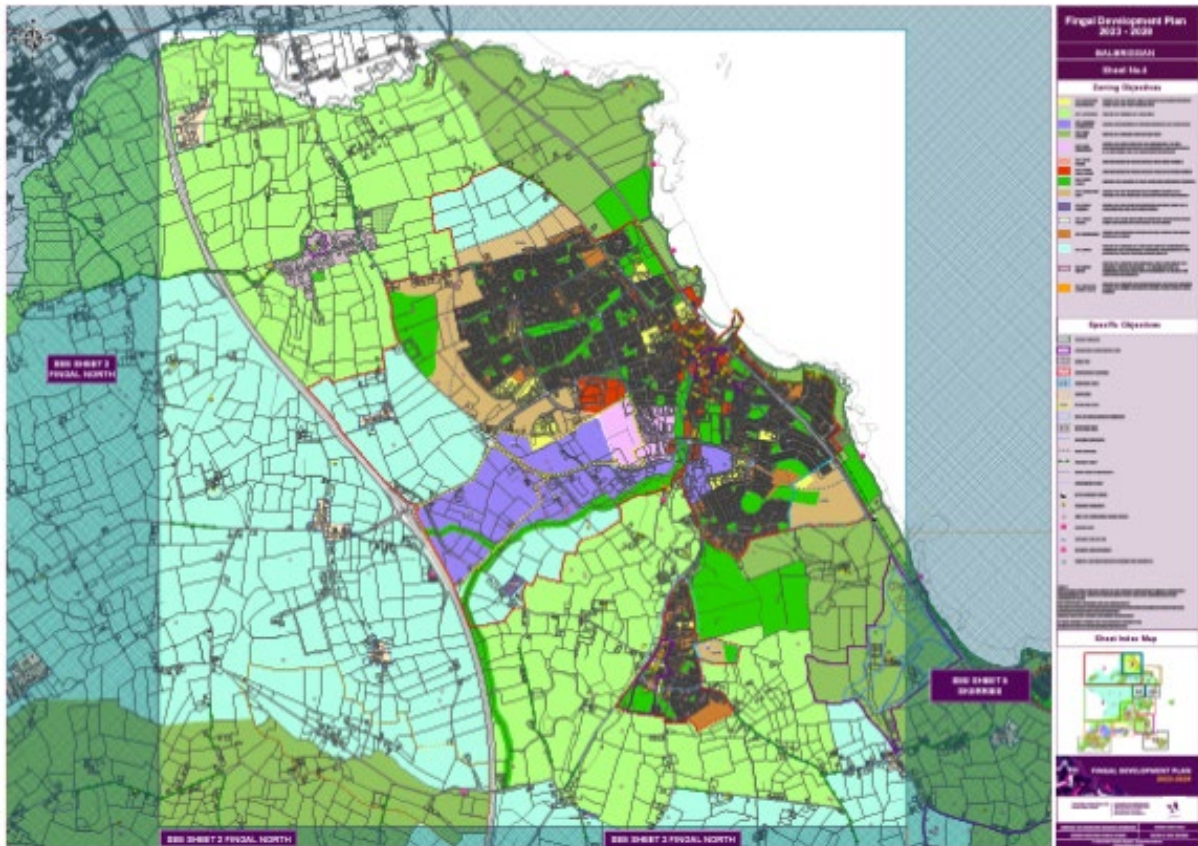
Core Strategy

Local Authorities are required to identify and reserve an appropriate amount of land in the correct locations to meet housing and population targets. This Core Strategy is central to all Development Plans and must be consistent with national and regional policy objectives set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (RSES).

The County is classified into two areas, the metropolitan area and the core area. The metropolitan area is closest to Dublin City and includes Swords and Blanchardstown, which are the largest population centres in Fingal. Northern Fingal, including Skerries and Balbriggan are located in the core area.

Flemington is located within the development boundary of Balbriggan, designated as a Self-Sustaining Town in both the RSES and the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. As described in the RSES, Self-Sustaining Towns are towns that require contained growth, focusing on driving investment in services, employment growth and infrastructure whilst balancing housing delivery.

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023



The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 sets out the Council's policies and objectives for the development of the County over the Plan period. It seeks to develop and improve, in a sustainable manner the social, economic, environmental and cultural assets of the County.

Flemington LAP lands extend to circa. 17.5 Ha and will provide a statutory framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area which is subject to the following Land Use zoning Objectives:

- **Residential Area 'RA' - 'Provide for new residential communities subject to the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.'**

Fingal Development Plan 2023 - 2024



The vision for this zoning objective seeks to ensure the provision of high quality new residential environments with good layout and design, with adequate public transport and cycle links and within walking distance of community facilities and provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.

Vision:

A Vision is an aspirational statement of the preferred long term future for a place. The Vision is an important part of the LAP because it sets the tone for the rest of the document.

A Local Area Plan sets out a vision for the area it covers, specifies the type, amount and quality of development needed to achieve that vision, while seeking to protect and enhance the environment and amenities. A draft LAP which will go on public display later in the process will contain a Vision informed by the comments received in response to this Issues Paper.



Urban Design and Placemaking

Urban Design involves examining all elements that contribute to a place—buildings, uses, streets, footpaths, open spaces and ensuring that those elements

blend harmoniously to create an attractive and distinct end product. The design and layout of new development should be based on an informed response to a site's setting and context. New development should represent an efficient use of land that enriches the local built environment and complements neighbouring areas.

Public realm is defined as all external spaces that are publicly accessible, including streets, parking areas, footpaths, squares and parks. A high quality public realm enhances the character of any locale and encourages people to utilise and enjoy public spaces, thereby contributing to the overall vitality and animation of an area. Measures to improve the public realm can include harmonising signage and reducing overall visual clutter by adopting a consistent approach in terms of street furniture, lighting and paving.

Key Issues/Questions:

What are your hopes for the future of the Flemington area?

Can you suggest a Vision for Flemington? What should it include?

What should the LAP target specifically to help achieve this vision?

What are the main features of Flemington that will contribute towards its character and will make it an attractive place to live, work and visit?

What are the key issues relating to the built environment in proximity to the lands which might impact the LAP?

What form of development would you like to see occur within Flemington?

What are your concerns for future development?

How can we improve 'quality of life' for people through place-making and design as part of this LAP?

What services and amenities (e.g. education, health, leisure, shopping etc.) will be required to meet people's needs?

Population and Housing

Population and Housing:

The LAP will assist in delivering the strategic long term growth of Balbriggan. As provided for in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, the undeveloped Residential Areas (RA) zoned lands which are the subject of this LAP, have the potential to provide for an additional c.650 no. residential units. New development areas should be connected, legible, attractive, well designed with a variety of adaptable dwelling types/sizes and densities, providing a sense of place and a high quality public realm. The future development of the LAP lands opens up opportunities to create a new urban landscape through the creation of a new built form and an enhanced environment. The principles of good urban design and the future built form are fundamental elements to creating, maintaining and enhancing a sense of place, ensuring that Flemington develops into an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Key Issues and Questions:

How should the LAP address the needs of the existing and future population of the Flemington area?

What type of housing is appropriate in Flemington (detached, semi-detached, terraced, apartment, etc.) and at what scale?

What can be done to integrate new housing and people into the area?

What steps should be taken to manage the impact of population growth?

What gaps are there in the existing housing market in the Flemington area (age friendly, family, single person, first time buyer, etc.)

How can the LAP aid and facilitate the delivery of more homes in the right locations?

Transportation and Movement

Transportation and Movement:

Flemington is located close to the M1 Motorway and R132 route which provides access to Drogheda to the north. Balbriggan is served by the main Dublin to Belfast rail line and commuter services to Dublin City.

Improving transport linkages, better use of the existing rail and bus network along with alternative ways of travelling such as cycling and walking will be encouraged through the plan which will help to promote a more sustainable way of living. New residential communities will be closely linked to and integrated with the existing communities.

We would like to hear your views on the future provision of public transport, the creation of new links to the town centre and local services and amenities, and existing strategic transport corridors in and around the area, as well as the future provision of walkways and expanded provision of cycle tracks to serve the area.

Key Issues and Questions:

What are the key transportation issues for the area?

What transport objectives should be included in the Plan? Which objectives should take priority?

What improvements could be made to public transport links?

What measures are needed to create safe, good quality and attractive streets for people to move around, socialise and to do business?

How can the use of public transport, cycling and walking be promoted and the use of the private motor car be reduced?

How can facilities for the elderly and mobility impaired be improved and/or provided?

Where should access points to the LAP lands from surrounding residential areas be reserved and where can existing linkages be improved?



Open Space & Recreation

Open Space and Recreation:

Recreational facilities and open spaces are important amenities which contribute to the character of an area and can include passive and active recreational areas, formal landscaping and natural spaces.

Public open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of a neighbourhood environment, in relation to passive and active amenity, and its ecological and environmental aspects and in this regard Flemington will benefit from the provision of new open space and recreational areas.

An expanding population generates increased demand for the provision of services and amenities and it is of the utmost importance that these are provided in tandem with new development. One of the key issues of the Local Area Plan process is to address the delivery of these essential facilities as new communities are created.

Key Issues and Questions:

Is there an adequate quantity and quality of play, open space and recreational facilities in the general Flemington area?

Where should new parks/open spaces and recreational areas be located?

How can the Plan provide for both passive and active recreation?

How do you think the Plan can provide opportunities for good connectivity for recreational walking and cycling purposes? Is there any specific location where you feel this Plan can address this issue?

Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity Heritage & Landscape

Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity, Heritage and Landscape:

The term Green Infrastructure is used to describe the interconnected networks of land and water all around us that sustain environmental quality and enrich our quality of life. This includes the nature conservation areas, parks, open space, rivers, floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, farmland and coastal areas which surround and are threaded through our towns and urban areas. The principles of Green Infrastructure planning are central to sustainable land use and development. Green Infrastructure is a 'quality of life' issue as it contributes to the protection of both the urban and rural environments - for people, for biodiversity and for our ecosystems.

The challenge we are now facing is how to balance the development of compact urban areas, through the intensification of mixed-use areas built around the public transport system, with more sustainable forms of development in order to encourage approaches which effectively work with nature.

The protection of the built and natural heritage forms an important element in the preparation of LAPs. In overall terms, the landscape, natural environment, and biodiversity are a valuable resource, which can be vulnerable to the effects of new development. In this regard, it is imperative to focus on maintaining and improving these resources and ensure that development is planned and managed so that it does not result in diminishing these natural assets.

Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity Heritage & Landscape

Key Issues and Questions:

How can we integrate a Green Infrastructure approach to the lands and have it incorporated into any new developments?

How best can we integrate new development with our natural heritage and landscape in a way that promotes biodiversity and in a way that does not lead to the loss of, or damage to, our natural heritage?

How do we best protect and manage the environmental resources available to deliver environmental, social and economic benefits and services to the local area?

How can the development process highlight the natural assets of the local area to a better extent?

What types of new routes and connections would best facilitate access to the new park in a sustainable and sensitive manner?

What policies should be included to protect and enhance our natural and built heritage? Are there areas or features of local historical and cultural value that we need to consider?



Education and Community

Education and Community:

Well-developed educational and community facilities can ensure a good quality of life and social interaction for all residents. These amenities can include childcare and educational facilities, nursing homes and health centres, libraries, facilities for older people, places of worship and community halls.

In terms of educational facilities, Flemington is currently served by St. Molaga's National School and Balbriggan Educate Together National School with further facilities to the south and towards the town centre. Flemington Community Centre is the primary community facility in the area.

It is envisaged that any future requirement for schools which may arise on foot of the development of the LAP lands will be delivered in a co-ordinated manner.

Key Issues Questions:

What type of community facilities and local services are needed in Flemington?

Do the current community facilities within the greater area cater for all sectors of the Flemington population, for example, the young and elderly populations?

Are there adequate schools in the area and are they easily accessible to the people that they serve?

Are there adequate health and childcare facilities in the Flemington area that are easily accessible to all?

Can you identify possible locations appropriate for community facilities?

Utility, Infrastructure and Communications

Utility, Infrastructure and Communications:

The sustainable growth of Flemington is dependent on the satisfactory provision of service infrastructure, utilities, energy and communication networks. There is a need to plan for all of these elements so as to ensure that there is adequate availability to support future sustainable development. The phasing of development in tandem with the provision of necessary infrastructure and utilities will also be critical to the future sustainable development of the area. The key areas for consideration include:

- **Wastewater Disposal**
- **Surface Water Disposal and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)**
- **Water Supply and Quality**
- **Waste Management**
- **Energy Infrastructure and Telecommunications**

What are the main infrastructure issues that should be considered in the Local Area Plan?

What measures should be included in the Plan to ensure that waste is reduced and disposal of waste is better managed?

What are the energy networks and telecommunication needs within the LAP area?

Are there water supply or water quality issues experienced in Flemington?

How can Sustainable Drainage Systems be further encouraged and utilised within Flemington?

How can the Flemington LAP encourage energy conservation and energy efficiency and the provision and development of alternative sources of renewable energy?

Climate Change, Renewable Energy & Flooding

Climate Change, Renewable Energy & Flooding:

The way in which urban areas such as Flemington develop into the future can have a huge impact at a local level on reducing the impacts of climate change.

This can include measures such as:

- **promoting reduced travel demand by integrating land use and transportation;**
- **encouraging passive solar design and energy efficient buildings;**
- **facilitating an increase in the modal share of sustainable modes of travel and,**
- **promoting waste reduction and the re-use of existing building stock.**

In the context of an urban area such as Flemington, it may be appropriate to investigate the potential for the use of renewable energy sources and the incorporation of energy efficiency measures into the Flemington LAP such as:

- **a requirement that development utilises renewable energy supply systems to meet an agreed minimum percentage of the buildings space and water heating requirements; or**
- **the use of measure such as the installation of a District Heating System which works like a domestic central heating system only on a larger scale.**

Development if not managed appropriately can exacerbate the natural flooding process. The Department of the Environment and the Office of Public Works have published *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009*, which require Planning Authorities to ensure that, where relevant, flood risk is a key consideration in preparing a Local Area Plan. The aim of the guidelines is to avoid flood risk where possible, substitute less vulnerable uses when avoidance is not possible and mitigate and manage the risk where

Climate Change, Renewable Energy & Flooding

avoidance and substitution are not possible.

As part of the preparation of the Local Area Plan for Flemington, Fingal County Council will include policies and objectives to support the reduction of the impacts of climate change, energy conservation and greater use of renewable energy sources/technologies as well as identifying measures to minimise the potential for flooding in the area.



Keys Issues and Questions:

How best can land use planning promote UN sustainable goals as part of this LAP e.g. sustainable cities and communities, climate action and good health and well-being.

How can renewable energy sources be better promoted in Flemington?

Are there energy initiatives that could be introduced into Flemington and facilitated through the Plan?

What areas in Flemington, if any, have experienced flooding? What have been the causes of such flooding?

What measures should be included in the Plan to deal with flood risk and assessment?

Environmental Assessment and Protection

Environmental Assessment and Protection:

There are three key environmental assessments relevant to the preparation of the draft LAP. These are Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

Any comments in relation to the preparation of the SEA, AA and SFRA for the draft LAP are welcome at this stage as well as when the draft LAP is put on display.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEA is a process allowing for the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. However, not all plans require SEA. If the potential environmental impacts of a plan or programme are identified as being very limited at the initial screening stage, SEA may not be required. If SEA is required, there are a number of steps involved in this process, including the following:

- Preparation of an environmental report where the likely significant environmental effects are identified and evaluated.
- Consultation with the public, contiguous local authorities and environmental authorities.
- Incorporation of the findings of the report and the outcome of the consultations in deciding whether to adopt or modify the draft Local Area Plan; and
- Publication of the decision on the adoption of the Plan and outline how SEA influenced the outcome.

Appropriate Assessment

AA is a process which comprises the assessment, based on scientific knowledge,

Environmental Assessment and Protection

of the potential impacts of the Plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of the Plan considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies which may impact on the site. It informs plans of the environmental impacts of alternative actions and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into plan making.

The Flemington LAP will be screened to determine if a full AA is required.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

SFRA is a process that will identify whether there may be any flooding or surface water management issues related to the site lands that may warrant further investigation. The SFRA will inform the LAP with regard to the level of risk and potential conflict at particular locations, and evaluate the strategic development options for the LAP lands.

Key Issues Questions:

What are the relevant environmental issues that need to be addressed and what environmental objectives should be included in this LAP?

What measures should be implemented in order to safeguard our environment and heritage in Flemington?