



comhairle bhaile atha thruim
trim town council



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meath county council



TRIM DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2008-2014

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT- ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2008

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This report has been prepared to comply with the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004). This report should be read in conjunction with the Trim Development Plan, 2008-2014.

1.2 Legislation and Legal Status of the SEA

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is carried out in response to the requirements of the European Communities, Council Directive of 2001 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, Directive 2001/42/EC, (otherwise known as the SEA Directive) which came into effect in Ireland on July 21st, 2004.

The enabling Statutory Instruments (S.I.'s) which transposed this Directive into law in Ireland are the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), and, the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004). The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004) amended certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in order to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive into Irish law in respect of land-use planning. These amendments facilitated the making of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004) which give effect to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive in the land-use planning sector. Development Plans for areas populated by less than 10,000 persons are not obliged to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment but this can be carried out at the discretion of the Planning Authority under Article 13A of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations as inserted by Article 7 of S.I. 436 of 2004, if the Planning Authority is satisfied that the implementation of the plan would have significant effects on the environment in accordance with set criteria included in Schedule 2A of those Regulations.

The information to be contained in the SEA Report, or the Environmental Report, is set out in Annex I of the Directive, Article 7 (13) (E) of S.I. 436 of 2004 and Schedule 2B of S.I. 436 of 2004.

This SEA has also been undertaken having regard to, where relevant, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's *Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities* (DoEHLG, 2004).

1.3 Purpose of Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEA outlines the environmental effects of implementing a plan prior to its adoption. In this regard as the initial scoping is carried out and the Environmental Report is prepared in respect of a plan yet to be adopted the SEA methodology included in this document includes an initial analysis of alternative scenarios which may be implemented prior to focusing on the preferred scenario (refer to section 4 of this report). SEA is an iterative process and is required to be repeated as pre- drafts and drafts and amendments to drafts unfold.

1.4 Conformity with SEA Regulations

This report has been written in accordance with Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004. The table overleaf is a reproduction of "Checklist of information to be contained in Environmental Report" from the 'Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities, DOEHLG 2004', and lists required information and displays relevant sections of this report.

Table 1.4 Information Required and Corresponding Section of this Report

Required Information	Corresponding Section of this Report
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Section 3
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan	Sections 5 to 13
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 5 to 13
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan, particularly those relating to protected European sites	Section 5
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or national level, which are relevant to the plan and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the plan	Sections 6 to 13
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment (Biodiversity, Population, Human Health, Fauna, Flora, Soil, Water, Air, Climatic Factors, Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, Landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors)	Sections 6 to 13
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the plan	Sections 6 to 13
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information	Section 4
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Sections 6 to 13
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Appendix A

Section 2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This section outlines the methodology used in preparing the SEA for the Trim Development Plan 2008-2014. The methodology used is as follows:

- Initiation of process, screening and scoping;
- Statutory consultation with environmental authorities;
- Analysis and information gathering;
- Outline of difficulties encountered in particular with deficiencies in existing baseline information;
- Consideration of alternatives.

Detail of statutory consultation with environmental authorities, methods used and the difficulties encountered in undertaking the SEA process are outlined in this section.

2.2 Screening of the Development Plan

As per the Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2016 Trim is designated a Moderate Growth Town. Moderate Growth Towns can accommodate an ultimate population of 15,000 persons. The current population of Trim as per 2006 Census is 6,870 persons. Article 7 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) which inserted Article 13A into the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, applies to development plans for an area where the population is less than 10,000 persons and outlines the requirements in respect of determining the need for an environmental assessment. Article 13 B as inserted into the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations by Article 7 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) applies to development plans for an area where the population is more than 10,000 persons or where the Planning Authority determines that implementation of a new development plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, a Planning Authority shall carry out an environmental assessment as of part of the review of the existing Development Plan and preparation of a new Development Plan.

2.3 Scoping

A scoping report (August 2007) was prepared by Meath County Council and Trim Town Council to determine the scope and the level of detail to be included in the environmental report. The scoping report was prepared having regard to Annex I of the SEA Directive, which sets out the topic headings which must be evaluated for purposes of SEA. The environmental assessment carried out in this report evaluates the topics as set out in Trim Development Plan scoping report.

2.4 Consultation with Environmental Authorities

The SEA Directive specifies in Article 6(3) that “member states shall designate the authorities to be consulted”. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources have been designated as environmental authorities that must be consulted by competent authorities while screening for or conducting SEA in the Republic of Ireland. The EPA is required to be consulted in all circumstances, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government should be consulted where it appears that the plan may have significant effects in relation to the architectural or archaeological heritage or to nature conservation and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources should be consulted if it appears that the plan might have significant effects on fisheries or the marine environment. In the case of the Trim Development Plan all authorities were consulted. The Department of Communications, Marine (now Energy) and Natural

Resources and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government both responded to the scoping report issued.

2.4.1 Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources submission

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources made the following comments;

Consideration should be given to the potential for significant impacts on:

- Water quality by surface water drainage and effluent discharges.
- Interference with inland water morphology and aquatic habitats by watercourse diversion, channel diversion and alteration or removal of river bank vegetation.
- Reduction or diversion of water flows by alteration of land use (Leading to alterations in flow regimes).
- Potential increased flood risk resulting from changed land use patterns.
- The effect of zoning on land use and its potential disturbance of biodiversity.

The following legislation may need to be considered:

- Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations
- Water Framework Directive
- Salmonid Waters Regulations
- Habitats Regulations
- Floods Directive (When enacted)
- Arterial Drainage Acts
- Fisheries Acts
- Phosphorus Regulations

The following is a list of suggested consultees:

- Eastern Regional Fisheries Board
- Office of Public Works (re; Flooding / Drainage issues)
- Eastern River Basin District Project Consultants C.D.M. (re; Water Framework Directive issues)

2.4.2 Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government submission

Principal issues raised include:

- In assessing impacts on archaeological heritage regard must be had to the European Convention on Protection of Archaeological Heritage, the National Heritage Plan and relevant policies at county level.
- Archaeological monuments that are in State ownership and monuments subject to preservation orders should be identified and zones of visual amenity identified for them.
- Any direct impact on a national Monument requires ministerial consent under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004. Areas of High Archaeological potential should be identified.
- Increased development pressure increases the potential for impacts on archaeology. Impacts can be avoided or lessened by following criteria set out in the 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage.'
- There should be liaison with the National Monuments Section of the DoEHLG when drafting the archaeological content of the Plan.
- An Appendix is attached to the submission which affords guidance in relation to the contents of the Environmental Report.

2.4 Environmental Protection Agency submission

A generic Scoping Issues Checklist was attached to the submission which identifies some key aspects which should be addressed during the SEA and Plan-making process. It is also recommended that reference be made to the Eastern River Basin District and associated information and reports.

2.5 Environmental Assessment Methods and Difficulties Encountered

Preparing the SEA involved the collation of currently available data from existing public documents in accordance with the SEA Guidelines. In predicting likely significant impacts of the plan, existing data sources were used as baseline data, then projected additional environmental 'loading' was inserted to make predictions on the potential impacts of implementing the Trim Development Plan.

Existing data sources included:

- The Environmental Report for the Meath County Development Plan prepared to comply with the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004). This higher level document provides general analysis of potential impacts for Trim and hinterland depending on generic planning solutions being applied to development / zoning proposals in the area.
- Landscape Characterisation Assessment for the Meath County Development Plan which provides an analysis of landscape character and an indication of potential capacity of landscapes (including that around Trim) to absorb development and potential environmental and visual impacts pertaining to same.

No new surveys regarding flora and fauna, air or water quality have been carried out. The SEA legislation does not require new data to be generated in preparation of the environmental report. In any event as the nature and scale of proposed development boundary extensions has not fully been determined such analysis would prove difficult.

Section 3 Statutory and Planning Context

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to define and set out the existing statutory and geographical frameworks which have to date influenced planning and development in Trim. This framework has provided the Planning Authority with guidance in respect of mitigating, reducing or avoiding potential environmental impacts to date.

3.2 Relationship with Existing Plans and Strategies

The Trim Development Plan is nested in a hierarchy of plans and strategies at the local, national and EU levels. These plans and strategies include, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016, the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005, the Meath County Development Plan 2007 - 2013, the Meath County Retail Strategy 2003, The DoEHLG Residential Density Guidelines 1999, the DoEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 amongst others. The main points of the plan and how they relate to existing plans and strategies are summarised in the table below.

Table 3.2 Principal Objectives of Development Plan and Correspondence with Existing Plans and Strategies

Principal Objectives of the Development Plan	Correspondence with Objectives of Existing Plans
Town centre expansion and brownfield/infill development with an emphasis on a high design quality	National Spatial Strategy Regional Planning Guidelines County Development Plan DTO Strategy
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	National Spatial Strategy Regional Planning Guidelines County Development Plan
Employment generation	National Spatial Strategy Regional Planning Guidelines County Development Plan
Protection & enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	National Spatial Strategy Regional Planning Guidelines County Development Plan Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	National Spatial Strategy Regional Planning Guidelines County Development Plan

Transportation provision	National Spatial Strategy Regional Planning Guidelines County Development Plan DTO Strategy
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3.3 County Context- Current and Meath County Development Plans & Trim Development Plan

The following County Meath towns are designated Moderate Growth Towns (County Towns and Towns with over 5,000 population) in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016 : Ashbourne, Kells, **Trim**, Dunboyne / Clonee and Kilcock. These centres are envisaged as having an interacting and supporting role to their adjacent Large Town.

The Meath County Development Plan (CDP) 2007 – 2013 is the statutory Development Plan for the County. Trim is identified as a moderate growth town along with Kells, Dunshaughlin and Ashbourne. Trim is located within a Primary Dynamic Cluster with Kells and Navan in the Regional Planning Guidelines. The County Development Plan states that it is critical that Moderate Growth Towns would develop in a self sufficient sustainable manner in the longer term and that the continued basis for their growth is that they do not become dormitory towns for the Metropolitan Area. In these instances, residential development would only be permitted if sufficient progress is made in providing employment, retail, social and community facilities within the settlement.'

Settlement Strategy SP2 of the Meath County Development states as follows '*To ensure that all of the Large Growth Towns and Moderate Growth Towns will in so far as practical be self sufficient incorporating employment activities, sufficient retail services and social and community facilities. Residential development will only be permitted if sufficient progress is made in providing employment, retail, social and community facilities within the settlement.*'

In respect of economic development, Meath County Council has identified five dynamic clusters, in to which economic development will be channeled in the first instance, namely, 1. **Navan-Trim-Kells**, 2. Metropolitan Area (Dunboyne-Clonee), 3. Ashbourne-Dunshaughlin-Ratoath (South-Meath Fringe), 4. M1 Corridor (Dublin-Belfast economic corridor), and 5. M4 Corridor (Maynooth, Kilcock, Enfield).

As the current process to review the existing Trim Development Plan is statutorily laid out, an understanding of the key points and developments envisaged is an essential starting point establishing a baseline with respect to desired / expected development character and intensity and associated environmental impacts in Trim. From the existing baseline, alternatives are considered and these are outlined in the next chapter.

The General Policy of the current Trim Development Plan is as follows:

- To provide for the areas, social, educational and economic functions.
- To provide for the preservation and improvement of amenities.
- To encourage development in a planned and contained fashion, considering visual impact, and avoiding urban sprawl.
- To provide necessary infrastructure for the required variety of land-uses. This shall be provided in a cost-efficient manner.

The General Development Objectives of the current Trim Development Plan are as follows:

- Balancing residential development with the provision of a mix of employment uses, and community/educational facilities-thereby reducing the need for commuting
- Conserving/protecting areas of natural importance or amenity value to residents in the area
- Promoting sustainable development in the development control process
- Encouraging reduced dependence on private car use, through the provision of new pedestrian links and cycle lanes.
- Promoting the development of tourism in the town and the towns status as a heritage town,
- Encouraging improved facilities for local community groups.

The following are the zoning designations in the current Trim Development Plan 2002-2008:

- A1** To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
- A2** To provide for new residential communities and community facilities and to protect existing residential areas.
- B1** To protect and enhance the special physical and social character of existing town and village centres and to provide for new and improved town centre facilities and uses.
- B2** To provide for new town centre activities in accordance with approved action area plans and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
- C1** To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses in the existing mixed use central business areas.
- D1** To provide for visitor and tourist accommodation and leisure facilities.
- E1** To provide for industry and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
- E2** To provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment in a high quality campus environment subject to the requirements of approved action plans and the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
- F1** To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
- G1** To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities.

3.4 Development Envisaged

In line with the strategic objectives for Trim in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016, the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, the Trim Development Plan 2008-2014 makes provision for the future development of Trim and will seek to maintain and enhance the role of Trim in the county in line with the Regional Planning Guidelines and as reflected in the County Development Plan and Housing Strategy contained therein.

It is envisaged that the emphasis of the Trim Development Plan will be placed on redevelopment and expansion of the town centre and infill opportunity sites to provide a broad mix of land uses to provide adequately for the existing town population and the future town population. Opportunities for employment creation will be encouraged. The Trim Development Plan will also seek to take greater advantage of the status of Trim as a Heritage town.

The principal objectives of the Trim Development Plan are as follows:

- Town centre expansion to a high design quality;
- Protection & enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town;
- Employment Generation;
- Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities
- Accommodation & servicing of residential growth.
- Transport proposals

Section 4 Consideration of Alternatives

4.1 Introduction and Background

Article 5 of the SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to consider “reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme” and the significant environmental effects of the alternatives selected. It is a mandatory objective of a Development Plan, that sufficient lands are zoned for particular purposes, where and to such extent as the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, requires the uses to be indicated. In relation to the location of new residential development, this is largely determined by higher level plans such as the RPGs and the County Housing Strategy. Alternative issues to be considered in this regard include targets for housing units to be provided from brownfield sites, identification of greenfield sites that can be serviced, prioritization of those which are closest to public transport, consideration of densities appropriate for different locations, as well as identification of areas to be avoided due to flooding and / or impact on heritage.

The alternatives examined were as follows:

4.1.1 Do Nothing Scenario

Under the do-nothing scenario which would result in no zoning of additional lands aside from those currently zoned, the Trim Development Plan area would maintain its current physical and socio-economic characteristics. Development would be market dependent within the existing development boundary and parameters. Future investment by the Planning Authority would be absent where not provided by the development plan and its role as a pro-active influence in the town would be lost. Adopting the do-nothing scenario would mean that parts of Trim would remain under-utilised with little physical, social or economic enhancement without proactive and positive direction from the Planning Authority.

4.1.2 Dezoning Scenario

The dezoning scenario relates to the removal of land use zoning objectives in the current Trim Development Plan on those lands on the perimeter of Trim. This may provide for protection of existing habitats within these land banks subject to farming practices. A further characteristic of this option would potentially be the adverse impact on market confidence in the town as a whole. Associated with a reduction in market confidence would be the stagnation of redevelopment within the town centre expansion. This stagnation would impact on development levies (contributions) collected by the Planning Authority. A reduction in levies will result in an associated reduction in improvement works to the area.

4.1.3 Rezoning Scenario - Urban Sprawl

The term urban sprawl is associated with unplanned development sprawl to green field sites outside of the town centre. The impact of this development model would likely to result in the town centre extension area remaining undeveloped as the development of this area could present more of a challenge to redevelop than greenfield sites. Therefore redevelopment of brownfield / infill opportunities are perhaps not the first sites to be selected if market forces only dictate. Urban sprawl would detract from the status of Trim as a heritage town and tourist destination. This development model often results in greater growth than anticipated and at a faster rate than anticipated with social, transport and piped infrastructure requirements problematic to plan to likely pace of growth.

4.1.4 Rezoning Scenario - Compact and Concentrated Growth

This development model focuses on consolidation of the existing town centre by developing brownfield, infill and town centre extension sites in Trim. As this option promotes development, development levies will be generated and Local Authority investment would follow. It facilitates the focusing of private and public sector investment limiting the geographic spread and often uneconomic demand for limited resources. This option should ensure that dereliction and non compatible uses are removed from Trim town centre and a renewed vibrancy is created within the core town centre area of Trim. This focus will assist in development of Trim as a tourist destination and reinforce its Heritage town status. The focus on Trim town centre encouraged by this scenario will be of community and public advantage and is not dictated by market forces which often focus on cheaper development sites (on outskirts of development envelope) at a cost to the community, the environment and urban form. This scenario will have the lowest environmental impacts subject to adoption of mitigation measures. This is the scenario which has been selected as the development model.

Section 5 Local Environmental Baselines

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report describes the current state of the environment in the Trim Development Plan area, adopting the environmental indicators included in the SEA Directive. Following this, in sections 6 to 14 below, each topic heading, as set out in the SEA guidelines (e.g. Population, Cultural Heritage, Material Assets etc) is fully assessed in accordance with the SEA guidelines.

The purpose of this section and the following sections is to identify the current state of the environment and relevant existing environmental objectives, against which the likely effects of implementing the Development Plan are assessed. This section provides a quantitative overview of the overall physical environment of the Development Plan area, the development related pressures, followed by estimate of overall change under the selected scenario, compact and concentrated development.

Baseline Description of the Current Physical Environment

5.2.1 Landscape

Human interaction with the natural heritage has produced a great variety of characteristic landscapes and landscape features. Areas of landscape value and sensitivity are included in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, Landscape Character Assessment. The particular sensitivities of these areas are set out spatially in great detail in the Landscape Character Assessment, Book of Maps which forms Appendix VI of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 - 2013.

The Landscape Character Assessment identified the following Landscape Character Areas:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1.) Teervurcher Uplands | 11.) South East Lowlands |
| 2.) North Meath Lakelands | 12.) Tara Skryne Hills |
| 3.) North Navan Lowlands | 13.) Rathmolyan Lowlands |
| 4.) Rathkenny Hills | 14.) Royal Canal |
| 5.) Boyne Valley | 15.) South West Lowlands |
| 6.) Central Lowlands | 16.) West Navan Lowlands |
| 7.) Coastal Plains | 17.) South West Kells Lowlands |
| 8.) Nanny Valley | 18.) Lough Sheelin Uplands |
| 9.) Bellewstown Hills | 19.) Loughcrew & Slieve na Calliagh Hills |
| 10.) The Ward Lowlands | 20.) Blackwater Valley |

Trim is included within the Landscape Character Area 5 – The Boyne Valley. The LCA assesses each Landscape Character Area for Potential Capacity to accommodate development with the following criteria: *Low, Medium, High*

Overview of Landscape Character Area 5: Boyne Valley (with particular reference to Trim Environs)

Landscape Character Type: River Corridors and Estuaries

Landscape Value: Exceptional

Landscape Sensitivity: High

Landscape Capacity: Medium ability to assimilate visitor attractions and the conversion of existing buildings, otherwise low ability to accommodate other forms of development

Key Viewpoints: No landscape viewpoints in the vicinity of Trim, however some lower level viewpoints have been separately identified in the existing Trim Development Plan

Landmarks: Trim Castle, Talbot Castle & Yellow Steeple

Registered Monuments: Numerous, most of the town is a zone of archaeological potential

Protected Churches: Yes

Medieval Structures: Numerous
Topography: 50 – 100 metres
Geology: Limestone and Shale
Soils: Mineral podsolised soils and peaty topsoil also infill
Hydrology: Generally Moderately Productive
Land Use: Built Development and Natural Grasslands
Ecological Sites: Candidate Special Area of Conservation

5.2.2 Natural Water Systems

Increases in population, development pressures and intensification of agriculture over recent decades has led to increased risk of environmental pollution of natural water systems. These include groundwater and surface water systems (rivers and lakes, estuarine and coastal waters.) Water quality is not only important for ecological reasons; all development depends on quality water supplies and for surface and waste water disposal. Water based recreation is an important aspect of tourism to both residents and visitors to Meath. Urban runoff is increasingly being highlighted as a source of pollution of water courses. Meath County Council has committed policies supporting SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) which deal urban surface water run off. The River Boyne, flows through the centre of the town. In 2003 the EPA graded the water quality of the river as moderate with a score of 3- 4 out of a maximum total of 5.

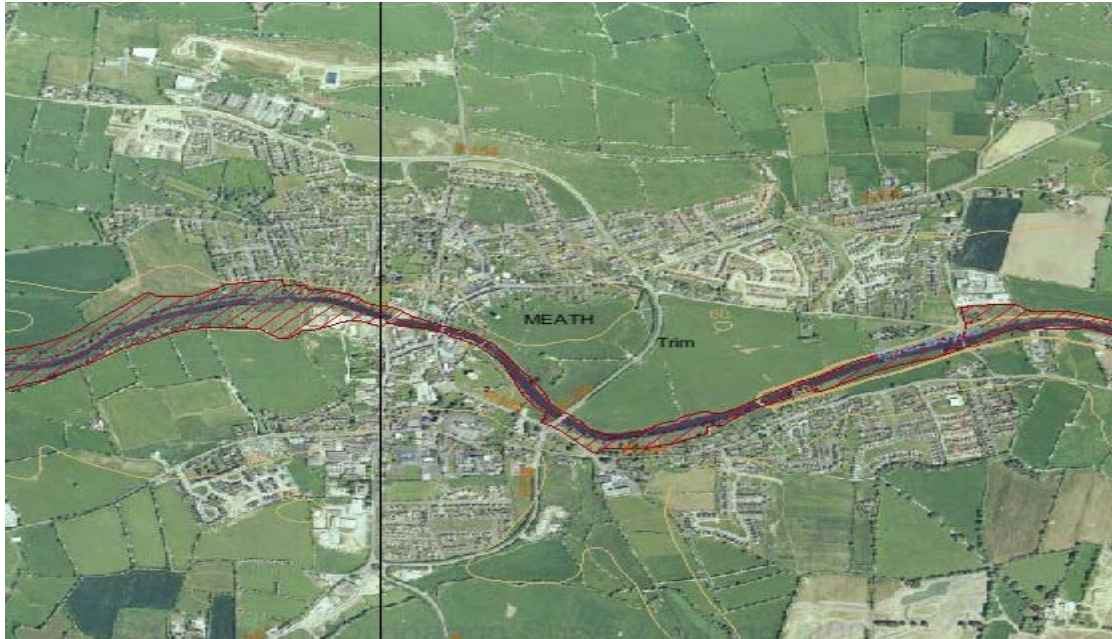


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5.2.3 Protected Natural Heritage

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are the prime wildlife conservation areas in Ireland. The legal basis on which they are selected is the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). This Directive seeks to protect wildlife and its habitats. The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 set out how these SACs are to be protected and managed by the relevant Planning Authorities. The SAC River Boyne & River Blackwater site code 002299 has relevance to the Trim Development Plan area.



Source: National Parks & Wildlife Service, DoEHLG ©

5.2.4 Habitats

Habitats on which the settlement centres are located beside include Inland Waters, Maritime Wetlands, Inland Wetlands, Scrub, Broadleaf Forests, Mixed Forests and Agricultural or Cultivated Land. The following descriptions for these habitats are taken from the Heritage Council's A Guide to Habitats in Ireland 2000.

The following are relevant to Trim Development Plan area:

Rivers, Canals and Drainage Ditches

Rivers are divided into watercourses that are mainly eroding, as in the case of upland streams, and those that are mainly depositing, as in the case of lowland rivers. No distinction is made between streams and rivers. Rivers differ from most artificial watercourses in that they have a strong unidirectional flow of water. They are dynamic systems where water levels and flow rates can fluctuate markedly. The entire channel is included as part of the river habitat, irrespective of water levels at the time of the survey. Natural watercourses may flood beyond the limits of their banks but note that floodplains are excluded.

Broadleaf

This general category includes woodland areas with 75-100% cover of broadleaved trees, and 0-25% cover of conifers. It should be used in situations where woodland stands cannot be classified as semi-natural on the basis of the criteria outlined above. Trees may include native and non-native species. Plantations of broadleaved trees are included if the canopy height is greater than 5 m, or 4 m in the case of wetland areas. Stands of immature or sapling trees are excluded. If a number of different broadleaved tree species contribute significantly to the canopy, the term 'mixed' should be used in the habitat title.

Mixed Forests

This general category includes woodland areas with mixed stands of broadleaved trees and conifers, where both types have a minimum cover of 25%, and a maximum of 75%. Trees may be either native or non-native species. Mixed broadleaved/conifer plantations are included if the canopy height is greater than 5 m, or 4 m in the case of wetland areas. Stands of immature or sapling trees are excluded.

Agricultural or Cultivated Land (lands abutting development boundary)

Arable Crops- Agricultural land that is cultivated and managed for the production of arable crops, including cereals (wheat, barley, oats, maize), and root, leaf, energy or fibre crops such as sugar beet, turnips, rape and flax. Fields of potatoes can be included here, but most other vegetable crops are excluded, as are market gardens. If small plots of any of the above crops are mixed with other vegetables or grown in glasshouses or polythene tunnels, they should be classified as horticultural land. Note that rye-grass leys planted as part of an arable rotation are excluded. Depending on the intensity of fertiliser or herbicide use, seed sources and soil type, arable crops may harbour a variety of weed species. Common Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*), Bladder Campion (*Silene vulgaris*), Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*), Common Field-speedwell (*Veronica persica*), Corn Spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*), Corn Marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*) and knotgrasses (*Polygonum* spp.) may be abundant in some arable fields. Other weeds that were formerly very common in corn or flax fields in Ireland but are now extremely rare include Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*) and the grass, Darnel (*Lolium temulentum*).

Tilled Land- This category should be used in situations where land has been tilled and prepared for planting but where the type of crop, or future use of the land, cannot be established. Areas of reclaimed or cleared land should only be included here if they have been prepared for planting.

Pasture- This category is used for intensively managed or highly modified agricultural grassland that has been reseeded and/or regularly fertilised, and is now heavily grazed and/or used for silage making. It includes regularly-reseeded monoculture grasslands and rye-grass leys that are planted as part of an arable rotation. These differ significantly from areas of permanent grassland. Improved agricultural grassland is typically species-poor. Sward quality varies depending on soil type, fertility, drainage and management. Rye-grasses (*Lolium* spp.) are usually abundant and may entirely dominate the sward, often in association with White Clover (*Trifolium repens*). Many improved varieties or cultivars of these plants are now widely sown. Other grasses that may be prominent include meadow-grasses (*Poa* spp.), Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), Crested Dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Among the more frequently occurring 'agricultural' herbs are Dandelion (*Taraxacum* spp.), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), plantains (*Plantago* pp.), Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), thistles (*Cirsium arvense*, *C. vulgare*) and docks (*Rumex* spp.). Some reseeded but poorly-drained fields may support abundant rushes.

5.2.4 Population

According to the 2006 Census figures published by the Central Statistics Office in April, the population of Trim and immediate environs was 6,870 persons. The population of the legally defined town council area was recorded as 1,375 persons. An Post Geodirectory data would indicate that the current population of Trim is c.8201 persons (28/05/07).

5.2.5 Air Quality and Climate

The existing ambient air quality in Trim is representative of an urban environment. The regional road network carries high volumes of traffic through Trim. This is considered to be a large influence on ambient air quality in the area. Its greatest potential influence is from vehicle emissions which principally comprise of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and PM₁₀.

The Irish climate is subject to strong maritime influences, the effects decreasing with increasing distance from the Atlantic coast. Because no area of the country lies more than 120 km from the sea, the range of mean temperatures across the country is narrow. Data from Met Eireann, the Irish Meteorological Service, indicates that December, January and February

are generally the coldest months of the year and most areas of the eastern half of the country experience rainfall in the region of 750 – 1100 mm per annum.

5.2.6 Soil

Soil is a biologically active complex mixture of weathered minerals, organic matter, organisms, air and water which provides the foundation for life in terrestrial ecosystems. Soil however, is not merely the sum of minerals, organic matter, water and air but a product of their interactions. It can be considered a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. A soil is distinguished from weathered parent material by the vertical differentiation it exhibits due to biological activity, so that the properties that are singled out in most systems of soil classification must be displayed in the soil profile. Soil occurs and is formed in the pedosphere, the envelope where soils occur and soil forming processes are active. Soil only develops where there is a dynamic interaction between the air, water, living organisms and geology. It is these dynamic interactions which contribute to the multiple functions which soils perform. These include supporting plant life and life within the soil, biogeochemical cycling of elements, energy cycles, water storage and exchange and ecosystem productivity.

According to the 'Soils of County Meath' by An Foras Taluntais Trim is located within the "Rathowen" Soil series. This soil series occupies ~14% of County Meath. This soil is basic in chemical reaction and is composed of Grey Brown Podzolics. These soils are well drained.

5.2.7 Water Supply

The capacity of the existing Trim Water Supply is 3,500 m³. This is due to be upgraded to 6,000m³ in 2008 by the ongoing Trim Water Supply Augmentation Scheme to cater for water supply requirements in the short term. The Water Services Investment Programme Assessment of Needs 2007 – 2013 has included the Trim / Summerhill /Rathmolyon Water Supply Scheme. It is planned to link these towns to the proposed new major water treatment plant at Dowdstown, near Navan, and decommission existing interim supplies at that stage.

5.2.8 Waste Water Disposal

The existing waste water treatment plant serving Trim is located at Newtown off the Dublin Road. The waste water treatment plant has been recently upgraded to cater for 12,700 P.E. Subject to minimal works (the provision of additional clarifier with surface area of at least 110 sq.m. it has the capacity to be upgraded to 16,000 p.e.) Its has a total aeration capacity of 17,500 taking 220 l/hd/d & 24 hrs retention in aeration tanks. Improvements are required also for the pumping station at Newtown and the sewer network. However, the Water Services Investment Programme Assessment of Needs 2007 – 2013 includes the sewer network improvement scheme for Trim. This will remove the threat of pollution from the River Boyne by replacing the Newtown Pumping Station and by upgrading / rehabilitating the associated sewers and rising main.

5.2.9 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Section 81 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 places a statutory obligation on Planning Authorities to ensure that all development plans must now include objectives to preserve the character of a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is:

- a) of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or
- b) contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

The designation of an ACA is a reserved function of the Council. Trim town centre and the Porch fields are designated ACAs in the current Trim Development Plan. The existing ACAs have been reexamined as part of the review of the Trim Development Plan. The streets included in the town centre ACA are French's lane, Bridge St., Castle St., Emmet St., High St., Market St., Mill St, Mill Lane, Haggard St., Navan Gate St., new Dublin Road, Patrick St., St. Loman's St., Summerhill Road to Mornington House, Watergate St., and Wellington place.

5.2.10 Areas of Archaeological Potential

The National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and structures, features, objects or sites listed in this Record are known as Recorded Monuments. 7 Areas of Archaeological Potential are designated under this legislation. The Development Plan identifies an area of archaeological potential to which specific objectives apply.

5.2.11 Protected Structures

Section 10(2) f of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended makes the protection of architectural heritage a mandatory objective. The Trim Development Plan contains a Record of Protected Structures (RPS). There are 63 structures listed in the current RPS. The proposed RPS is made up of the existing RPS which has been reassessed and the ministerial recommendations arising from the NIAH surveys.

Section 6 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

6.1 Introduction

This section commences the detailed evaluation of each of the eight environmental topics as set out in the SEA regulations. In doing so, each of the following sections is meeting requirements (B), (C), (E), (F), (G) and (I) of the SEA guidelines, as shown in section 1.4, table 1.4 above. Each of the Environmental topics i.e. areas of environmental sensitivity/interest are protected by a series of Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs). These SEOs comprise of adopted protective measures to minimise potential impacts as they may relate to the environment. Having regard to established environmental protective measures, i.e. SEOs which would be contained in any plan the scenarios (outlined in section 4) are environmentally proofed to assess their likely impacts. In addition this section outlines further measures to protect the environment as may be relevant to the environmental topic being considered and development alternative selected.

This section describes the above in relation to Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna. There are no known protected species of Flora or Fauna within Trim.

6.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives: Flora and Fauna

There are a number of existing adopted strategies and plans at National, Regional and local level which provide the Planning Authority with established strategic environmental objectives (SEOs) such applicable SEOs include those outlined below.

6.2.1 The National Biodiversity Plan (2002)

The National Biodiversity Plan (2002) sets out aims for the conservation of Ireland's biological diversity and requires Local Authorities to prepare and implement Local Biodiversity Action Plans. This plan seeks to secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement and sustainable use of biological diversity in Ireland. The overall objective of this plan is as follows 'To secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement, and sustainable use of biological diversity in Ireland and to contribute to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity globally.' Specific objectives include:

- Conserve habitat diversity, including all sites of special biodiversity importance.
- Conserve species diversity.
- Conserve genetic diversity, both wild and domesticated.
- Contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and to advancing other obligations of the CBD in the EU, regionally and internationally.

6.2.2 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and Mid East Region, 2004 – 2016

Section 9.6 Open Space and Recreation states that "Planning Authorities should 'Secure landscape and biodiversity enhancement.'"

6.2.3 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The CDP and Environmental Report establish objectives for the County at large and its associated Environmental report sets out SEOs. These are relevant to ensure a consistent approach to environmental protection and a consistent recognition of environmental values county wide. The CDP outlines as a goal in Section 8.2.1 'To ensure that features of Meath's natural heritage are protected, that bio-diversity is conserved and where possible enhanced, that watercourses are safeguarded from pollution, that landscapes maintained and enriched, and

that tourist and recreational uses are facilitated in a sensitive manner.’ The following policy and objective are relevant.

HER POL 1 ‘To protect, conserve and enhance the County’s bio-diversity and natural heritage including wildlife (flora & fauna), habitats, landscapes and/or landscape features of importance to wildlife or which play a key role in the conservation and management of natural resources such as water.’

HER OBJ 1 ‘To prepare and implement, in partnership with the County Meath Heritage Forum, relevant stakeholders and the community, a Biodiversity Action Plan for Meath’

The following are the SEO in respect of flora and fauna as outlined in the Environmental report of the County Development Plan.

- B1** Avoid damage by development to designated wildlife sites and protected species.
- B2** Conserve the diversity of habitats avoiding irreversible losses.
- B3** Ensure that any development promotes sustainable management of key wildlife sites and the ecological processes upon which they depend.
- B4** Protect aquatic ecosystems including the marine environment, and terrestrial ecosystems which are interdependent (promote integrated management strategies)
- B5** Provide opportunities for sustainable public access to wildlife and wild places.

6.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

Biodiversity – Flora / Fauna

SEOB1 Avoid damage by development to designated wildlife sites and protected species.

SEOB2 Conserve the diversity of habitats avoiding irreversible losses.

SEOB3 Ensure that any development promotes sustainable management of key wildlife sites and the ecological processes upon which they depend.

SEOB4 Provide opportunities for sustainable public access to wildlife and wild places.

SEO OB5 To protect, the conservation value of the River Boyne and Blackwater candidate Special Area of Conservation.

The above objectives have been set to ensure that impacts on the existing habitats are minimised. It will be the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that all individual planning applications and subsequent grants of permission consider the environmental objectives of the Trim Development Plan.

6.4 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

Initially, for a period of about 30 years, undeveloped areas and brownfield sites which if left undisturbed would improve as habitats due to the gradual colonisation of unmanaged grasslands by a variety of tree and shrub species which would provide an increase in habitat provision. Thereafter the habitat would stabilise as a habitat, with no further increase in species diversity. In some instances, in particular areas of undisturbed greenfield land this equilibrium will be reached already and the do nothing scenario will not affect species diversity. The do- nothing scenario does not preclude intensive farming practices which may have similar impacts on habitats as built development.

6.5 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as per scenario 1.

6.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban Sprawl

Urban sprawl will result in development on green field sites outside the current development boundary which would result in habitat loss at these locations as natural and semi-natural areas would be replaced with artificial surfaces. Therefore a loss to habitats and biodiversity in the area would result. Having regard to the more haphazard and extensive land take associated with urban sprawl, the loss of habitats would be greater.

6.7 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

Consolidated and concentrated growth at appropriate densities will reduce urban sprawl and associated land take and therefore will minimise erosion of habitats on the outskirts of Trims. Redevelopment of existing infill and brown field sites within Trim including the backlands area will result in habitat loss, as some of these areas consist of a greenfield areas which would be replaced with artificial surfaces. Habitats likely to be lost are not known to be of significant value and such lost is kept to a minimum in this scenario.

6.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

As outlined in previous sections development Scenario 4 is the chosen development scenario. In the planning of open space areas within new development the emphasis will be placed on the development of ecological corridors which permit the potential movement of wildlife and which include indigenous vegetation. Framework plans etc will seek to ensure that ecological corridors are provided therefore facilitating linkage of these corridors between sites. Planning Applications will be examined to ensure that mitigation measures are cumulatively implemented at each stage of development. i.e. site subdivision and boundary treatment together with the location and design of open spaces, amenity areas and other planted areas. while in many situations where lands are developed particularly for residential development existing ditches and associated hedgerows will be removed for planning, safety, security, traffic safety reasons etc every effort will be made to replace such habitats with ecological corridors.

6.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- Retention where possible of trees and hedgerows of value.
- The establishment of ecological corridors within new development which permit the potential movement of wildlife and which include indigenous vegetation.

6.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Ecology Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

Planning applications should be monitored by the Local Authority for impact on existing habitats. All planning permissions granted for development on greenfield sites within the town centre expansion area could be conditioned by the Planning Authority to require baseline ecological surveys prior to development taking place. This will facilitate an assessment of the

impacts on the flora and fauna of development. Indicators such as loss of biodiversity or impact on water quality of the cSAC should be used. Regular monitoring using such environmental indicators will track the on-going condition of the environmental receptors. If a deterioration in a condition occurs, remedial action to address the particular problem will be implemented.

Section 7 Population

7.1 Introduction

This section describes the detailed evaluation as set out in the SEA regulations of the environmental topic of population.

7.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives

There are a number of existing adopted strategies and plans at National, Regional and local level which provides the Planning Authority with established strategic environmental objectives (SEOs) such applicable SEOs include those outlined below. A critical issue in Trim, as with County Meath generally has been the development of settlements in Meath as predominantly commuter towns. The CDP in conjunction with the Meath County Enterprise board and other relevant agencies is attempting to address this issue.

7.2.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and Mid East Region 2004 – 2016

As is stated elsewhere in this report Trim is designated a Moderate Growth Town in the Regional Planning Guidelines and this designation establishes its place in the County settlement hierarchy.

The following objectives of the Regional Planning Guidelines are of relevance:

Objective 2.1 ‘Create a rational efficient settlement/service/economic hierarchy’ for the region.

Objective 3.1 states: ‘To maximise the scale of markets for the full range of economic inputs and outputs, with maximum accessibility at minimum transport cost’.

Objective 3.2 states: ‘To deliver serviced land in response to demand, fully integrated with transport corridors’.

Section 7.4 ‘Promote the location of quality employment and residential developments in proximity to each other in order to reduce the demand for travel and the dependence on private car transport.’

7.2.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The CDP and Environmental Report establish objectives for the County at large and its associated Environmental report sets out SEOs. These are relevant to ensure a consistent approach to environmental protection and a consistent recognition of environmental values county wide.

Settlement Strategy SP2 of the Managers Report on submissions received on the CDP states as follows ‘To ensure that all of the Large Growth Towns and Moderate Growth Towns will in so far as practical be self sufficient incorporating employment activities, sufficient retail services and social and community facilities. Residential development will only be permitted if sufficient progress is made in providing employment, retail, social and community facilities within the settlement.’

In respect of economic development, Meath County Council has in the CDP identified five dynamic clusters, in to which economic development will be channeled in the first instance. These locations 1. **Navan-Trim-Kells**, 2. Metropolitan Area (Dunboyne-Clonee), 3. Ashbourne-Dunshaughlin-Ratoath (South-Meat Fringe), 4. M1 Corridor (Dublin-Belfast economic corridor), and 5. M4 Corridor (Maynooth, Kilcock, Enfield).

The following are the SEOs in respect of population as outlined in the Environmental report of the County Development Plan.

P1 Improve people’s quality of life based on high quality residential, working and recreational

- environment, on sustainable travel pattern at all stages of life.
- P2** Minimise noise and vibration from traffic, industrial processes and extractive industry.

7.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan- Population

SEOP1 Improve people's quality of life based on high quality residential, working and recreational environment, on sustainable travel pattern at all stages of life.

SEOP2 Promote town centre expansion.

SEOP3 Promote employment generation.

SE OP 4 Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities

7.4 Estimate of Change Under a 'Do Nothing' Scenario

Natural increase may occur however stagnation will result where market confidence is threatened. Reduction in development will reduce the ability of the Planning Authority to recoup development levies and plan and provide services for population growth.

7.5 Estimate of Change Under a 'De Zone ' Scenario

Natural increase would not occur, therefore stagnation would result.

7.6 Estimate of Change Under a 'Re Zone- Urban Sprawl' Scenario

Rapid and unplanned population increase would occur within a sporadic haphazard geographic spread. Service provision for this development model is difficult and uneconomic to provide.

7.7 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

A planned and steady growth in population would occur directed to locations where services can be provided more readily.

7.8 Measures to Prevent Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

As outlined in previous sections development Scenario 4 is the chosen development scenario. The impacts of implementing this scenario associated with population are, in general, positive. It is important to ensure that any residential development occurs in tandem with job creation to address the issue of Trim as a self sustaining settlement and not a commuter town. Adequate training and job facilitation services should be in place to ensure that local people can avail of the job opportunities presented.

7.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- Improve people's quality of life based on high quality residential, working and recreational environment, on sustainable travel pattern at all stages of life.
- To ensure sufficient land is available for employment generating uses to achieve the optimum mix of job opportunities across a range of skill levels.

7.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Pop Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

Job creation should be monitored by appropriate local employment agencies such as FAS, County Enterprise Board and local development groups.

Section 8

Human Health (Air & Noise)

8.1 Introduction

This section describes the detailed evaluation as set out in the SEA regulations of the environmental topic of Human Health (Air & Noise).

8.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives

The European Union's Council Directive on ambient air quality and management (The Air Quality Framework Directive; 96/62/EC), which is transposed into Irish legislation by the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (SI 271), establishes strategic objectives relating to air quality and management. These objectives include setting pollutant standards which will avoid prevent and reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment, maintaining ambient air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases. Also member states are required to divide their territory into zones in order to apply an approach of assessment and management. European legislation on air quality has been framed in terms of two categories, limit values and guide values. Limit values are concentrations that cannot be exceeded and are based on WHO guidelines for the protection of human health. Guide values are set as a long-term precautionary measure for the protection of human health and the environment.

8.2.1 Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013

The CDP and Environmental Report establishes objectives for the County at large and its associated Environmental report sets out SEOs. These are relevant to ensure a consistent approach to environmental protection and a consistent reorganisation of environmental values county wide. Many of the issues relating to air and climate as, is outlined above, are dealt with at a higher strategic level. The following are the SEOs as outlined in the Environmental report of the CDP.

- A1** Reduce all forms of air pollution.
- A2** Reduce all waste of energy and maximise use of renewable energy sources.
- A3** Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to air including greenhouse gases.
- A4** Reduce the need to travel.

8.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOA1 Air/Climate/Noise - Minimise Emissions

SEOA2 Reduce all waste of energy and maximise use of renewable energy sources.

SEOA3 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to air including greenhouse gases.

SEOA4 Reduce the need to travel.

8.4 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

No material effects are likely to occur to existing baseline. Air quality in Ireland has been steadily improving in recent years. Decreases in air pollution are anticipated arising from national emission control initiatives which include continued improvements and reductions in vehicle emissions, increasingly stringent control of industrial emissions sources such as factories and workshops, increased usage of natural gas as a domestic heating source and the development of more sustainable energy sources such as wind generated electricity. Projected growth in road traffic in this area is likely to cause a gradual increase in noise levels in the general area.

8.5 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as above scenario.

8.6 Estimate of Change under a Re zone Scenario- urban sprawl

As this model represents unplanned, usually rapid growth, geographically spread over a large area this type of development is usually car based and would result in the associated air and noise pollution.

8.7 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

As growth in this model is concentrated within the town centre opportunities for use of more sustainable forms of transport i.e. pedestrian, cycle and public transport are possible.

8.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

All operational developments must ensure that they comply with the commonly applied (EPA, Local Authorities) daytime and night time noise limit values of 45 dB(A) L_{Aeq} at night and 55 dB(A) L_{Aeq} during the daytime, that is, that a development's contribution to noise levels at the site boundary of that development should not exceed 45 dB(A) L_{Aeq} at night and 55 dB(A) L_{Aeq} during the daytime. Should predicted noise emissions exceed these levels, a detailed noise impact assessment will be required. This impact assessment, where required, should demonstrate that the development will not lead to significantly increased noise levels at any sensitive receptor. In addition, developments are operational and fully developed, the combined contributions from all noise sources should not exceed the baseline noise levels by more than 10 dB(A).

To further ensure that all future residents are not adversely impacted by common neighbourhood noise sources, it is critical that all residential units are constructed to achieve the highest acoustic insulation performance between adjacent properties as specified by the Department of the Environment's *Building Regulations 1997, Technical Guidance Document E – Sound*, which specifies the minimum acceptable acoustic performance of walls and floors for residential units.

8.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- Minimise emissions by ensuring compliance with relevant noise and air emission standards.

8.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Air/Noise Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

All planning applications should include accurate and detailed predictions of the likely impacts that a proposed development during both construction and operational phases, may have on the receiving environment. These assessments should also include a description of the cumulative impacts from all existing sources in order to demonstrate that the local environment has sufficient capacity to accommodate any future potential sources of environmental emissions from the proposed development.

The local authority should conduct routine monitoring of air quality and noise emissions and will enforce any relevant planning conditions, to identify at the earliest instance if the integrity of the ambient environment is being maintained.

Section 9 Soil

9.1 Introduction

This section describes the detailed evaluation as set out in the SEA regulations of the environmental topic of Soil. Impacts on soil result directly in impacts on flora and fauna therefore this section should be considered in conjunction with Section 6 which deals with flora and fauna.

9.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives

There are a number of existing adopted strategies and plans at National, Regional and local level which provides the Planning Authority with established strategic environmental objectives (SEOs) such applicable SEOs include those outlined below.

9.2.1 The National Biodiversity Plan (2002)

This plan seeks to secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement and sustainable use of biological diversity in Ireland. The overall objective of this plan is as follows 'To secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement, and sustainable use of biological diversity in Ireland and to contribute to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity globally.'

9.2.3 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and Mid East Region 2004-2016

Section 9.6 states that 'Planning Authorities should; Secure landscape and biodiversity enhancement.'

9.2.4 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

Section 8.2.1 HER POL 1 'To protect, conserve and enhance the County's bio-diversity and natural heritage including wildlife (flora & fauna), habitats, landscapes and/or landscape features of importance to wildlife or which play a key role in the conservation and management of natural resources such as water.'

The following are the SEOs in respect of impacts on soils as outlined in the Environmental report of the County Development Plan.

- B1** Avoid damage by development to designated wildlife sites and protected species.
- B2** Conserve the diversity of habitats avoiding irreversible losses.
- B3** Ensure that any development promotes sustainable management of key wildlife sites and the ecological processes upon which they depend.
- B4** Protect aquatic ecosystems including the marine environment, and terrestrial ecosystems which are interdependent (promote integrated management strategies)
- B5** Provide opportunities for sustainable public access to wildlife and wild places.
- S1** Maintain the quality of soil.
- S2** Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands.

9.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOB1 Avoid damage by development to designated wildlife sites and protected species.

SEOB2 Conserve the diversity of habitats avoiding irreversible losses.

SEOB3 Ensure that any development promotes sustainable management of key wildlife sites

and the ecological processes upon which they depend.

SEOB4 Provide opportunities for sustainable public access to wildlife and wild places.

SEOS1 Maintain the quality of soil.

SEOS2 Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands.

9.4 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

No significant change is envisaged. Similar impacts to that outlined in Section 6 re flora and fauna.

9.5 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as per scenario 1.

9.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban Sprawl

Urban sprawl will result in development on green field sites outside the current development boundary which would result in significant soil removal and habitat loss.

9.7 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

Consolidated and concentrated growth at appropriate densities will reduce urban sprawl and associated land take and therefore will minimise necessity for soil removal and erosion of habitats on the outskirts of Trim.

9.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

As outlined in previous chapters development Scenario 4 is the chosen development scenario. The development management process should seek to minimise disturbance, compaction or removal of natural soil profile from areas not required for construction. All top soils removed during pre-construction ground preparation works should be temporarily stockpiled on-site and should be used for all subsequent post construction landscaping works. This should be done on a project to project basis which will ensure the orderly and efficient landscaping of individual developments.

9.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

To retain and conserve areas of natural soil profile with its constituent soil flora and fauna by - wherever practical - preserving undisturbed soil profiles in areas to be used for open space and planting.

9.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Soil Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

Development Management practices will monitor processes in relation to soil.

Section 10 Water

10.1 Introduction

This section describes the detailed evaluation as set out in the SEA regulations of the environmental topic of water- surface water and water supply.

10.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives- Surface water

10.2.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and Mid East Region 2004-2016

Objective 4.2 'To co-ordinate settlement pattern with strategic plans for (a) water resource management and (b) waste management and disposal'

Objective 5.4 'To provide a co-ordinated spatial organisation for services infrastructure (including water, wastewater, electricity, gas & telecoms) in designated corridors that supports and facilitate the orderly integrated development of the region in a sustainable manner'

10.2.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The following policies are of relevance in Section 4.8.3:

INF POL 62 To require all new large scale developments in all designated settlements to provide 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' (SUDS) as part of their development. Compliance with Volume 2, Chapter 4 of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study shall be required in all instances.

INF POL 63 To consult with the Office of Public Works in relation to proposed developments in the vicinity of drainage channels and rivers for which the OPW are responsible, and the Planning Authority will, in general, retain a strip of 10 metres on either side of such channel;

The following are the SEOs in respect of surface water as outlined in the Environmental report of the County Development Plan.

W1 Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (including future capacity)

W2 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to waters

W3 Mitigate the effects of floods and droughts including vulnerability to climate change. (extreme weather, sea level rise, coastal erosion)

W4 Promote sustainable water use based on a long term projection of available water resources.

10.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOW1 Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (including future capacity)

SEOW2 Protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems.

SEOW3 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to waters

SEOW4 Mitigate the effects of floods.

10.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

If no development occurs surface water outflows will continue to discharge as they currently do. In the case of greenfield sites this will be at the rate of agricultural run- off.

10.4 Estimate of Change under a Dezone Scenario

Environmental effects as for scenario 1 above.

10.5 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban Sprawl

Urban sprawl results in development on green field sites outside the current development boundary where SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) are less implementable. This development model may result in the development boundary moving closer to the cSAC.

10.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

As growth in this model occurs in a concentrated area, SuDS are more easily implemented.

10.7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

As outlined in previous sections development Scenario 4 is the chosen development scenario. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) for new developments will be required. All development applications should be assessed to ensure that the maximum permitted surface water outflow from any new development is restricted to that for the site, before the proposed development in line with international best practice. The most effective method of reducing the impact of urban runoff is to minimise the run-off in the first instance. The Planning Authority should consider, where possible, specifying permeable surfaces rather than hard standings, therefore, limiting the volumes of runoff.

Where prevention is not practicable, the application of sound environmental management or good housekeeping techniques should be enforced. These may include the correct storage and disposal of chemicals, oils and lubricants, various building chemicals (particularly during the construction phases of developments) in appropriately designed impermeable bunded areas. A rigorous policy of not connecting new sewers into the public sewer system until all such sewers are tested and mis-connections removed should be implemented to prevent unnecessary contamination of surface water run-off.

10.8 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To ensure that the necessary attenuation measures are implemented within the Development Plan area.
- To ensure that the appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (Suds) are implemented within the Development Plan area.

Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Surface Water Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

All development applications should be monitored to ensure that surface water run-off is being dealt with in accordance with the policies adopted by Meath County Council/Trim Town Council and in accordance with the policy determined to manage the cumulative effect of development throughout the entire catchment area.

10.9 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives in relation to water supply

10.9.1 Regional Planning Guidelines Greater Dublin Area 2004–2016

The following objectives are of relevance:

Objective 5.4 ‘To provide a co-ordinated spatial organisation for services infrastructure (including water, wastewater, electricity, gas & telecoms) in designated corridors that supports and facilitates the orderly integrated development of the region in a sustainable manner’

Objective 4.2 ‘To co- ordinate settlement pattern with strategic plans for (a) water resource management and (b) waste management and disposal’

10.9.2 Meath County Development Plan 2001

Section 3.5.3 Piped Services states as follows:

- ‘The fundamental basis for the Planning Authority’s approach to the development of piped services networks such as water mains and wastewater collection treatment and disposal networks, is to ensure that the environmental carrying capacity of the environment is respected and protected.’
- ‘Provide the necessary water supply and drainage facilities and address deficiencies in existing systems to underpin development in designated development areas’

10.9.3 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The following policies are of relevance in Section 4.6.4:

INF POL 29 ‘To continue the development and upgrading of the water supply system so as to ensure that an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of piped water of suitable quality is available for domestic, commercial, industrial, fire safety and other use for the sustainable development of the county in accordance with the settlement structure identified in this Plan and as finances permit.’

INF POL 30 ‘To protect and develop, in a sustainable manner, the existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the county and to control development in a manner consistent with the proper management of these resources.’

INF POL 31 ‘To promote public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, businesses and industries.’

INF POL 32 ‘To implement the Water Conservation Programme, in order to conserve valuable resources by reducing wastage.’

The following are the SEOs in respect of water supply as outlined in the Environmental report of the County Development Plan.

- W1** Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (including future capacity)
- W2** Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to waters
- W3** Mitigate the effects of floods and droughts including vulnerability to climate change. (extreme weather, sea level rise, coastal erosion)
- W4** Promote sustainable water use based on a long term projection of available water resources.

10.9.4 Relevant Strategic Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOW1 Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (including future capacity)

SEOW2 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to waters

SEOW3 Mitigate the effects of floods and droughts including vulnerability to climate change. (extreme weather, sea level rise, coastal erosion)

SEOW4 Promote sustainable water use based on a long term projection of available water resources.

10.9.4 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

If natural population increase occurs water demands may increase. Water conservation may decrease wastage.

10.9.5 Estimate of change under a De Zone scenario

Environmental effects as for scenario 1 above.

10.9.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban Sprawl

This scenario will place further demands on the water supply currently serving Trim. Urban sprawl occurs over a larger geographical area, therefore network provision is over a larger area and will be more costly to provide.

10.9.7 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

Adequate water supply available to serve this area subject to works included in the 'Assessment of Needs Scheme'. As growth in this model occurs in a concentrated area the cost of network provision is likely to be lower than the above scenario. In terms of provision of interim solutions a single solution can be provided in this model due to the limited geographical area associated with this development model.

10.9.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

No adverse effects

10.9.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To ensure that an adequate water supply and network is available for the sustainable development of Trim.

10.9.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Water Supply Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

All development applications should be monitored to ensure that they are generating water supply demand compatible with supply available. Impact on the water quality should be monitored and where deterioration in condition occurs, remedial action to address this will be implemented.

Section 11 Material Assets

11.1 Introduction

Material Assets include the provision of infrastructure and local services. This section describes the detailed evaluation of the environmental topic of Material Assets as set out in the SEA regulations as follows:

- Transportation;
- Wastewater;
- Gas Supply;
- Electricity Supply;
- Solid Waste Collection & Disposal;
- Information and Communications Technology.

11.2.1 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives -Transportation

11.2.1.1 Regional Planning Guidelines Greater Dublin Area 2004–2016

Objective 5.2 ‘To integrate the land use pattern with the transport system’

Objective 5.3 ‘To ensure that travel demand is sufficient to ensure viability’

11.2.1.2 DTO: A Platform for Change Strategy 2000-2016, 2001

The strategy has as an objective: ‘Reduce growth in the demand for transport, especially private transport; Reduce the need for car commuting by improving the reliability, availability and quality of public transport; Reduce travel times and congestion.’

The following will be encouraged:

- ‘Traffic management policies which will optimise the use of the road network for all users. Good quality cycling and pedestrian network.’
- ‘Increase capacity for public transport. Provide for proper management of access to the M50 and/or national arterial routes.’

Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The following policies are of relevance when considering transportation, Section 4.2.3:

INFRA SP 1 To provide for the efficient movement of goods and people in the interest of commerce and enterprise;

INFRA SP 2 To promote land use planning measures which facilitate transportation efficiency, economic returns on transport investment, minimization on environmental impacts and a general shift towards the use of public transportation throughout the county;

INFRA SP 3 To promote the location of quality employment and residential developments in proximity to each other in order to reduce the demand for travel and dependence on private car transport whilst development must be increasingly related to a significantly enhanced public transport system;

INFRA SP 4 To promote higher residential development densities within growth centres as facilitated by the DoEHLG Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities, so as to support viable public transport services.

The following is the SEO in respect of transport as outlined in the Environmental Report of the County Development Plan, 2007-2013.

M1 Maintain the quality of and access to assets such as aquifers, aggregates, ports,

motorways, and all physical and social infrastructure.

11.2.2 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOT1 To promote land use planning measures which facilitate transportation efficiency, economic returns on transport investment, minimization on environmental impacts and a general shift towards the use of public transportation in Trim;

11.2.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

In the event of the do nothing scenario, traffic is still likely to grow. The mitigation measures proposed as part of the Development Plan i.e. additional road linkages within the Town Centre and around the town and the proposed public transport improvements are unlikely to happen and therefore current issues concerning congestion in the Town Centre would prevail.

11.2.4 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as Scenario above.

11.2.5 Estimate of Change under a Re zone Scenario- urban sprawl

As this model represents unplanned, usually rapid growth, geographically spread over a large area this type of development is usually car based and would result in the associated increase in car based transport movements.

11.2.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

As growth in this model is concentrated within the town centre opportunities for use of more sustainable forms of transport i.e. pedestrian, cycle and public transport are possible and are more economical to provide.

11.2.7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

The general policy of the transportation policy is to reduce the number of car generated trips through integrating land use and transportation, facilitating infrastructure and encouraging alternative modes of transport such as walking and cycling. It also aims to improve general circulation and transport links to and from the town.

The strategy aims to maximise the development potential of existing material assets such as roads by concentrating development where these services exist.

In the context of the Trim Development Plan the environmental topic of Material Assets: Transportation interacts with Human Health (Air & Noise), (also refer to Section 8 above).

11.2.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

There are no potential significant effects predicted associated with the development of the area. TIA will however, be required with the larger applications.

11.2.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To promote land use planning measures which facilitate transportation efficiency, economic returns on transport investment, minimization on environmental impacts and a general shift towards the use of public transportation in Trim.
- To promote the provision of footpaths, cycleways, street landscaping, bus stops and quality public lighting within Trim.

11.2.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Transport Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

All planning applications should include detailed assessments of the likely impacts that a proposed development during both construction and operational phases, may have on the receiving transport environment. These assessments should also include a description of the cumulative impacts from all existing sources in order to demonstrate that the local environment has sufficient capacity to accommodate future development.

WASTEWATER

11.3.1 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives- Wastewater

11.3.1.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004 – 2016.

Objective 4.2 To co-ordinate settlement pattern with strategic plans for (a) water resource management and (b) waste management and disposal.'

Objective 4.2 'To provide a co-ordinated spatial organisation for services infrastructure (including water, wastewater, electricity, gas & telecoms in designated corridors that supports and facilitates the orderly integrated development of the region in a sustainable manner'.

11.3.1.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The following policies are of relevance, Section 4.6.5:

INF POL 39 To facilitate the provision of an adequate wastewater collection and treatment systems to all towns and villages in the County to serve existing and future populations in accordance with the Settlement Structure identified in this Plan, the Water Framework Directive 2000/23, the Water Services Investment Programme and as finances permit, thus improving the quality of Meath's surface, ground and coastal waters;

INF POL 40 To develop additional treatment capacity at existing plants where required to meet new developments;

INF POL 42 To co-operate with adjoining authorities to continue the sustainable development and improvement of the wastewater treatment systems throughout the County to meet the anticipated drainage requirements of the area.

INF POL 43 To implement the policies developed for the Dublin Region by the Greater Dublin

Strategic Drainage Study and to ensure that all developments will have regard to the policies as expressed in the Greater Dublin Drainage Study with particular reference to:

- .
- i) New Developments.
- ii) Environmental Management
- iii) Inflow, Infiltration and Exfiltration
- iv) Natural Amenities and Recreation
- v) Climate Change
- vi) Basements

vii) Surface Water Management

11.3.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOW3 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to waters

11.3.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

Wastewater treatment demands may increase in terms of PE to the plant if natural population increase occurs. However as outlined in section 5 capacity in the treatment plant is limited. Addressing the issue of the combined foul and surface water sewer in Trim may reduced the amount of surface water which is filtrating into the foul sewer.

11.3.4 Estimate of change under a De Zone scenario

Environmental effects as for scenario 1 above.

11.3.5 Estimate of Change under a Re zone Scenario- urban sprawl

Urban sprawl occurs over a larger geographical area, therefore network provision is over a larger area and will be more costly to provide. Due to the constraints as outlined in Section 5 interim wastewater solutions will be required over the plan period which would be in the form of multiple treatment plants in this scenario which are costly to provide and to monitor.

11.3.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

As growth in this model occurs in a concentrated area the cost of network provision is likely to be lower than the above scenario.

11.3.7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

Any development will increase demand for treatment capacity. The waste water treatment plant at Newtown in Trim has been recently upgraded to cater for 12,700 P.E. Subject to minimal works (the provision of additional clarifier with surface area of at least 110 sq.m. it has the capacity to be upgraded to 16,000 p.e.) Its has a total aeration capacity of 17,500 taking 220 l/hd/d & 24 hrs retention in aeration tanks. Improvements are required also for the pumping station at Newtown and the sewer network. However, the Water Services Investment Programme Assessment of Needs 2007 – 2013 includes the sewer network improvement scheme for Trim (ranked tenth). This will remove the threat of pollution from the River Boyne by replacing the Newtown Pumping Station and by upgrading / rehabilitating the associated sewers and rising main.

It is critical that the aforementioned works are carried out as the provision and safeguarding of infrastructural investment is a critical component of the development strategy for Trim. Without an environmentally sound means of disposing of waste water, the principals of sustainable development cannot be met.

11.3.8 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To ensure that an adequate wastewater treatment capacity and network is available for the sustainable development of Trim.

11.3.9 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Waste Water Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

All development applications should be monitored to ensure that they are generating wastewater demand compatible with supply available. Impact on water quality should be monitored and where deterioration in condition occurs, remedial action to address this will be implemented.

GAS SUPPLY

11.4.1 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives- Gas Supply

11.4.1.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004 – 2016

Objective 5.4 ‘To provide a co-ordinated spatial organisation for services infrastructure (including water, wastewater, electricity, gas & telecoms in designated corridors that supports and facilitates the orderly integrated development of the region in a sustainable manner’.

11.4.1.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

Section 4.10.10 outlines policies in terms of Energy Networks:

INF POL 79 To support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and projected residential, commercial, industrial and social needs of the County;

INF POL 80 To cooperate and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the future needs of the County;

INF POL 81 To support the statutory providers of national grid infrastructure by safeguarding such strategic corridors from encroachment by other developments that might compromise the provision of energy networks where strategic route corridors have been identified;

11.4.2 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

Trim is currently served by a gas network.

11.4.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

Existing status quo would remain.

11.4.4 Estimate of change under De zone scenario

Environmental effects as for scenario 1 above.

11.4.5 Estimate of Change under a Re zone Scenario- urban sprawl

As urban sprawl occurs over a larger geographical area therefore network provision is over a larger area and will be more costly to provide.

11.4.6 Estimate of Change under a Rezone Scenario- Urban consolidation and Concentration

As growth in this scenario occurs over a compact geographical area network provision would be less costly to provide than within above scenario.

11.4.7 Measures to Prevent Reduces and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

As no significant adverse impacts are predicted no mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

11.4.8 Operational Environmental Objective

No specific objectives have been set in relation to gas supply.

11.4.9 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Gas Supply Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	No
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

None necessary.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

11.5.1 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives -Electricity Supply.

11.5.1.1Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004 – 2016

Objective 5.4 ‘To provide a co-ordinated spatial organisation for services infrastructure (including water, wastewater, electricity, gas & telecoms in designated corridors that supports and facilitates the orderly integrated development of the region in a sustainable manner’.

11.5.1.2Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

Section 4.10.10 outlines policies in terms of Energy Networks:

INF POL 79 To support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and projected residential, commercial, industrial and social needs of the County;

INF POL 80 To cooperate and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the future needs of the County;

INF POL 81 To support the statutory providers of national grid infrastructure by safeguarding such strategic corridors from encroachment by other developments that might compromise the provision of energy networks where strategic route corridors have been identified;

INF POL 82 To protect areas of recognised landscape importance and significant landscape views from construction of large scale visually intrusive energy transmission infrastructure. In such circumstances it is an objective to seek alternative routing or transmission methods.

INF POL 83 To require the provision of electricity cables underground, especially in the urban environment, and generally within areas of public open space, in the interest of visual amenity.

INF POL 84 To require that, in all new developments, multiple services be accommodated in shared strips and that access covers be shared whenever possible.

Section 4.10.10 Policies in Relation to Transmission Lines

INF POL 85 To ensure that the development of high tension power lines will be restricted, and that new high tension lines will not be permitted adjoining existing dwellings, except where no other alternative can be shown to exist.

INF POL 86 To locate services, including electricity, telephone and TV underground, where possible, and that existing overhead cables and associated equipment should progressively be located underground with future capacity considered and appropriate ducting put in place.

11.5.2 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

No specific objectives have been set in relation to power supply.

11.5.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

If development does not proceed then any future upgrades to the existing electricity network will be used elsewhere.

11.5.4 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as Scenario 1 above.

11.5.5 Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Urban Sprawl

As urban sprawl occurs over a larger geographical area therefore network provision is over a larger area and will be more costly to provide.

11.5.6 Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Consolidation and Concentration

As growth in this scenario occurs over a compact geographical area network provision would be less costly to provide than within above scenario.

11.5.7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

The development will generate increased demand on the local electricity infrastructure. As no significant adverse environmental impacts are predicted no mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

11.5.8 Operational Environmental Objective

No specific objectives have been set in relation to electricity.

11.5.9 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Electricity Supply Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes

Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

None necessary.

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

11.6.1 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives-Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

11.6.1.1 EU 6th Environmental Action Programme (2001-2010)

“To decouple the generation of waste from economic growth and to achieve a significant overall reduction in the volumes of waste generated”

11.6.1.2 Regional Planning Guidelines Greater Dublin Area 2004–2016

Objective 4.2 ‘To co-ordinate settlement pattern with strategic plans for (a) water resource management and (b) waste management and disposal.’

11.6.1.3 Waste Management Plan for the North East Region 2005-2010

Key policy objectives are as follows:-

Waste Prevention and Minimization

The Local Authorities will:

- Continue the role of the Environmental Awareness Officers including programmes for households, schools, community and business sectors.
- Encourage community/voluntary groups to establish additional waste services or facilities (e.g. small scale facilities for recycling, reuse/repair) in their area and assist them to develop a strategy to provide such facilities for and with the members of their community.
- Advise on the potential sources of funding available.

Waste Collection and Recycling

Key initiatives involve:-

- Pursuing a policy of increasing the number of households participating in the collection service
- Provide as a minimum an additional 4 Recycling Centres to compliment door to door collection service. This would bring the regional total from 7 to 11 facilities. Dry recyclables, green, bulky and priority waste can be delivered to these centres.
- Install 50 new Bring Banks across the Region to bring the regional total to 141 facilities. Areas with limited collection service will be targeted.
- To implement the brown bin collection for organic waste generated by households. To encourage business to segregate waste by targeted information and regulation of waste producers and collectors.

11.6.1.4 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The following policies are outlined in Section 4.9.3

INF POL 64 To implement the provisions of the Waste Management Hierarchy and the Replacement North East Regional Waste Management Plan. All prospective developments in the county will be expected to take account of the provisions of the Replacement Regional Waste Management Plan and adhere to those elements of it that relate to waste prevention and minimization, waste recycling facilities, and the capacity for source segregation. Account will also be taken of the proximity principle and the inter regional movement of waste as provided

for under the Section 60 Policy Direction by the Minister of the Environment, Heritage & local Government (Circular WIR:04/05)

INF POL 65 To promote education and awareness on all issues associated with waste management, both at industry and community level. This will include the promotion of waste reduction by encouraging the minimization, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste within the county.

INF POL 66 To ensure the provision of quality cost effective waste infrastructure and services, which reflect and meet the needs of the community and to ensure that the 'polluter pays' principle is adhered to in all waste management activities.

INF POL 67 To ensure that all waste disposed of by private companies shall be undertaken in compliance with the requirement of the EPA and the Waste Management Legislation.

INF POL 68 To require the provision of bring banks, bottle banks or other appropriate recycling facilities as part of the overall development in the case of new or extended shopping centre developments and commercial neighbourhood centres, educational, sports, and recreational facilities. The sites shall be made available to the Local Authority at the developer's own expense and will be maintained by Meath County Council or its agents.

INF POL 69 To support the development of recycling sites/waste disposal sites or transfer stations and associated developments in appropriate locations, subject to normal planning and environmental sustainability considerations. In assessing applications for these types of development, the Planning Authority will have regard to the Groundwater Protection Plan and appropriate response matrix.

INF POL 70 To encourage the recycling of construction and demolition waste and the reuse of aggregate and other materials in future construction projects.

INF POL 71 To support the re-development of former quarries for construction and demolition waste recycling facilities subject to normal planning and environmental sustainability considerations.

INF POL 72 To promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness activities and community-based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.

Objectives in terms of Solid Waste / Waste Management

INF OBJ 45 To continue to expand environmental awareness initiatives designed to create increased public awareness of waste prevention minimization and reuse. Particular emphasis should be placed on local schools involvement;

INF OBJ 46 To identify suitable sites for additional Civic Amenity Sites and neighbourhood recycling facilities to cater for the projected increase in waste for recycling over the plan period

11.6.2 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

No specific objectives have been set in relation to solid waste disposal.

11.6.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

Natural increase may impact in a limited way on current trends of solid waste disposal.

11.6.4 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as Scenario 1 above.

11.6.5 Estimate of Change under a Re -Zone Urban Sprawl

The amount of waste generated in Trim would increase as a result of population increase. As urban sprawl occurs over a large area collection and recycling facilities is less economical to provide over a larger geographic area.

11.6.6 Estimate of Change under a Re -Zone Urban Consolidation and Concentration

As above, the amount of waste generated in Trim would increase resulting from population increase. In this scenario development occurs over a more limited land area therefore

collection and recycling facilities can be more economically provided. A more efficient use can be made of existing infrastructure.

11.6.7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

Development will generate demand for increased domestic and commercial waste disposal and collection services. The construction phases of developments will also produce significant volumes of waste. Developers are obliged to submit a construction and waste management plan prior to the commencement of any proposed construction activities. All waste material generated during both the construction and operational phases of development must only be collected by appropriately licensed waste contractors and disposed of in licensed waste facilities.

Where there is no side access to the rear garden (i.e. terraced housing) or in the case of apartments, dedicated bin storage facilities shall be provided at an appropriate location which does not impact on residential amenity or visual amenity. The design of these bin storage facilities should be of a high quality and should integrate with the built form and external appearance of the buildings in the vicinity.

11.6.8 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To meet the waste stream targets as set out in the North East Region Waste Management Plan, 2005-2010.
- To compile and implement construction and demolition waste management plans

11.6.9 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Solid Waste Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

Development applications shall be monitored to ensure that each complies with the environmental objective as above. Each development is obliged to have a construction and demolition waste management plan which Meath County Council or Trim Town Council must approve and monitor.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

11.7.1 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives- Information and Communications Technology.

11.7.1.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004 – 2016

Objective 5.1, “To provide a co-ordinated spatial organisation for services infrastructure (including water, wastewater, electricity, gas & telecoms in designated corridors that supports and facilitates the orderly integrated development of the region in a sustainable manner.” (p97).

11.7.1.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

Section 4.11 addresses the topic of Telecommunications and Information Technology. The following policies are outlined:

INF POL 87 To encourage the further co-ordinated and focused development and extension of telecommunications infrastructure including broadband connectivity in the County as a means of improving economic competitiveness and enabling more flexible work practices e.g. teleworking;

INF POL 88 To encourage coverage and capacity of mobile phone network infrastructure, while striving to reduce the number of telecommunications structures, by ensuring that ComReg's Code of Practice on Site Sharing is implemented and reciprocal national roaming is entered into;

INF POL 89 To encourage the location of telecommunications based services at appropriate locations within the County, subject to environmental considerations;

INF POL 90 To actively promote e-inclusion in Co. Meath through the planning process and by supporting strategies to encourage and enable lower income households to avail of modern broadband infrastructure.

INF POL 91 To seek to have appropriate modern information technology, including a carrier neutral, multi-duct infrastructure servicing every unit, incorporated into the overall design and layout of all new developments in Co. Meath, where feasible;

INF POL 92 To require the provision of telephone and TV cables underground, especially in the urban environment, and generally within areas of public open space, in the interest of visual amenity;

INF POL 93 To require that, in all new developments, multiple services be accommodated in shared strips and that access covers be shared whenever possible.

Policies with regard to Telecommunications and Information Technology

INF POL 94 To provide orderly development of telecommunications infrastructure throughout the county in accordance with the requirements of the *"Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures – Guidelines for Planning Authorities"* July 1996;

INF POL 95 To adopt a presumption against the erection of antennae in proximity to residential areas, schools or community facilities, structures of historical or architectural interest and areas and sites of archaeological importance;

INF POL 96 To reserve an area of land of 500 metres in radius around all existing school premises / identified school sites to be kept free from the erection of mobile phone masts;

INF POL 97 To secure a high quality of design of masts, towers and antennae and other such infrastructure in the interests of visual amenity and the protection of sensitive landscapes, subject to radio and engineering parameters;

INF POL 98 To encourage and facilitate pre-planning discussions with service providers and operators prior to the submission of planning applications. Through pre-planning discussions with operators it will be possible to ascertain an overall plan of the proposals for coverage in the county and determine where co-sharing is operationally viable;

INF POL 99 To encourage co-location of antennae on existing support structures and to require documentary evidence as to the non availability of this option in proposals for new structures. The shared use of existing structures will be insisted where the numbers of masts located in any single area is considered to have an excessive concentration;

INF POL 100 To avoid the location of structures in fragile landscapes such as areas of Special Visual Quality or archaeological heritage, where views and/or prospects are to be preserved as indicated on the above maps, and in areas adjacent to national monuments, archaeological sites or listed buildings and other structures.

11.7.2 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

No specific objectives have been set in relation to information and communications technology.

11.7.3 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

If development does not proceed any additional capacity will be used elsewhere.

11.7.4 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as Scenario 1 above.

11.7.5 Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Urban Sprawl

Demand for telecommunications will increase. As urban sprawl occurs over a larger geographical area therefore network provision is over a larger area and would be more costly to provide.

11.7.6 Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Consolidation and Concentration

Demand for telecommunications will increase. As growth in this scenario occurs over a compact geographical area network provision would be less costly to provide than within above scenario.

11.7.7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

Development will generate increased demand on the local telecommunications infrastructure. As no significant adverse environmental impacts are predicted no mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

11.7.8 Operational Environmental Objective

No specific objectives have been set in relation to information and communication technologies.

11.7.9 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Telecommunications Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	No
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	No

All development applications shall be monitored to ensure that they are generating demand for ICT compatible with the available service.

Section 12 Cultural Heritage

12.1 Introduction

This section describes the detailed evaluation as set out in the SEA regulations of the environmental topic of Cultural Heritage.

12.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives

12.2.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

Section 8.2.1 outlines as policy:

HER POL 1 To protect, conserve and enhance the County's bio-diversity and natural heritage including wildlife (flora & fauna), habitats, landscapes and/or landscape features of importance to wildlife or which play a key role in the conservation and management of natural resources such as water.

Section 8.3.2 Archaeological Heritage

HER POL 53 To protect archaeological sites, monuments (including their setting), underwater archaeology, and objects within the jurisdiction of Meath County Council, including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places or newly discovered sub-surface archaeological remains.

HER POL 59 To require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns in the villages and towns of Meath and to record evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc in the course of development.

Section 8.3.4 Architectural Heritage- Record of Protected Structures

HER POL 66 To preserve, protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Meath.

HER POL 67 To seek the protection of all structures (or, where appropriate, parts of structures) within the county which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, which are included in the Record of Protected Structures.

The Environmental Report which accompanies the Meath County Development Plan outlines the following SEO for Cultural Heritage [C1] and SEO for Landscapes [L1] were used in the evaluation process in order to highlight areas in which impacts may occur.

C1 Promote the identification, protection and conservation of the cultural, including architectural and archaeological, heritage.

L1 Conserve and enhance valued natural, historic and cultural landscapes and features within them.

12.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOCH1 Promote the identification, protection and conservation of the cultural, including architectural and archaeological, heritage.

SEOL1 Conserve and enhance valued natural, historic and cultural landscapes and features within them.

12.4 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

The Do Nothing Scenario is likely to have a less positive result in terms of cultural heritage than development as this is not a sufficiently proactive scenario to remove dereliction and create vibrancy in Trim.

12.5 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as Scenario 1 above.

12.6 Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Urban Sprawl

As urban sprawl occurs over a large geographical area, erosion of the landscape and setting of the Heritage town would result. This development scenario would be likely to result in the erosion of the approach to Trim which would create a poor lasting first impression for future visitors. In addition redevelopment opportunities in the town centre would be ignored.

12.7. Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Consolidation and Concentration

This scenario encourages the sensitive redevelopment of the existing town centre and town centre extension area which will result in the redevelopment and reuse of existing heritage buildings, therefore strengthening the existing town centre.

12.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

It is envisaged that the most significant effect will be the promotion of the archaeological and architectural heritage of Trim. Development will be carried out having regard to the adjacent established streetscapes. Consideration shall be given for the positive interaction of any new development with established streetscapes with respect to scale, design and form. Similarly, all development within the designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) will respect the integrity of all adjoining structures. The re-use and rejuvenation of older buildings fronting existing streets will be promoted. All development on the burgage plots to the rear of the established streetscapes will be carried out with a high quality of design with consistency in building width, depth and use of materials. Piecemeal development will be avoided where possible and the overall development approach taken will result in an enhanced streetscape character with increased connectivity to the towns historic past.

Archaeological assessment will be required to accompany planning applications. These assessments involve the excavation of test trenches which are used to identify any unrecorded archaeological remains and assist in providing a greater understanding of the potential impact of a proposed development on any archaeological remains.

12.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To preserve, protect and enhance the architectural and archaeological heritage of Trim.

12.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Heritage Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	Yes
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

Suitable monitoring and assessment as required by the Council within the Zone of Archaeological Potential shall be carried out including the submission of archaeological impact assessments.

Section 13 Landscape

13.1 Introduction

This section describes the detailed evaluation as set out in the SEA regulations of the environmental topic of Landscape i.e. a visual analysis.

13.2 Established Strategic Environmental Objectives

13.2.1 Regional Planning Guidelines Greater Dublin Area 2004 – 2016

Section 9.5 “Planning Authorities should: Adopt policies which will protect and enhance the architectural character and landscape settings of settlements in their Area” (p161)

13.2.3 Meath County Council Development Plan 2007-2013

A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) has been carried out as part of the County Development Plan review process. LCA is a process, which describes, maps and classifies landscapes objectively. Defining landscape character enables an understanding to be formed of the inherent value and importance of individual landscape elements and the processes that may alter landscape character in the future. The cultural and ecological aspects of the landscape cannot be divorced from its physical and visual characteristics so all of these elements are considered. The LCA is contained in Appendix IV of the County Development Plan.

The following policies are contained in the County Development Plan

HER POL 82 To ensure that development, particularly in sensitive landscapes, adheres to tailored design guidelines. Sensitive landscapes include demesne villages and LCA’s identified as being sensitive.

HER POL 83 To provide adequate protection of views and vistas that contribute to the appreciation of landscape character.

HER POL 84 To maintain scenic vistas and panoramic views from key vantage points and towards key landmarks and features within the landscape.

HER POL 85 To maintain the visual integrity of sensitive and exceptional - high value areas.

The Environmental Report which accompanies the Meath County Development Plan outlines the following SEO for Cultural Heritage [C1] and SEO for Landscapes [L1] were used in the evaluation process in order to highlight areas in which impacts may occur.

C1 Promote the identification, protection and conservation of the cultural, including architectural and archaeological, heritage.

L1 Conserve and enhance valued natural, historic and cultural landscapes and features within them.

13.3 Relevant Strategic Environmental Objectives of the Trim Development Plan

SEOL1 – Conserve and enhance valued natural, historic and cultural landscapes and features within them.

13.4 Estimate of Change under a Do Nothing Scenario

The Do Nothing Scenario is likely to have a less positive result as lands would remain unmanaged and would gradually become more unkempt and overgrown This therefore is not a sufficiently proactive scenario to create vibrancy in Trim.

13.5 Estimate of Change under a De Zone Scenario

Environmental effects as Scenario 1 above.

13.6 Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Urban Sprawl

As urban sprawl occurs over a large geographical area, erosion of the landscape would result.

13.7. Estimate of Change under a Re –Zone Consolidation and Concentration

This scenario encourages the development of an enhanced urban landscape, in terms of building design, open spaces and urban design relationships. A visual strengthening the existing town centre area would result.

13.8 Measures to Prevent, Reduce and Offset Significant Adverse Effects

As outlined in previous sections development Scenario 4 is the chosen development scenario. Planning applications will ensure that development of the landscape design should be integral to the design process. The provision of stormwater attenuation should be considered in conjunction with landscape design.

13.9 Operational Environmental Objectives

- To achieve a diverse and high quality landscape in Trim.

13.10 Monitoring Proposals

Principal Objectives of the Dev Plan	Landscape Impact
Town centre expansion	Yes
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	Yes
Employment Generation	Yes
Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities	Yes
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth	Yes
Traffic and Transport proposals	Yes

Suitable monitoring by the Development Management process will ensure that a high quality landscape is achieved.

Section 14 Overall Findings from the Assessment

Overall Findings from the Assessment

The overall findings can be summarised as follows: -

The following alternatives were considered as part of this SEA report.

Do-nothing Scenario

Under the do-nothing scenario which would result in no zoning of additional lands aside from those currently zoned, the Trim Development Plan area would maintain its current physical and socio-economic characteristics. Development would be market dependent within the existing development boundary and parameters. Future investment by the Local Authority would be absent where not provided by the development plan and its role as a pro-active influence in the town would be lost. Adopting the do-nothing scenario would mean that parts of Trim would remain under-utilised with little physical, social or economic enhancement without proactive and positive direction from Planning Authority.

De zoning Scenario

The dezoning scenario relates to the removal of land use zoning objectives in the current Trim Development Plan on those lands on the perimeter of Trim. This may provide for protection of existing habitats within these land banks subject to farming practices. A further characteristic of this option would potentially be the adverse impact on market confidence in the town as a whole. Associated with a reduction in market confidence would be the stagnation of redevelopment within the town centre expansion area. This stagnation would impact on development levies (contributions) collected by the Local Authority. A reduction in levies will result in an associated reduction in improvement works to the area.

Re Zoning Scenario - urban sprawl

The term urban sprawl is associated with unplanned development sprawl to green field sites outside of the town centre. The impact of this development model would likely to be result in further neglect of the town centre expansion area and brownfield redevelopment opportunities which often present more of a challenge to redevelop than greenfield sites. Therefore redevelopment of brownfield/ infill opportunities are perhaps not the first sites to be selected if market forces only dictate. Urban sprawl would detract from the status of Trim as a heritage town and tourist destination. The core of the town may be lost with unplanned excessive new growth. This development model often results in greater growth than anticipated and at a faster rate than anticipated with social, transport and piped infrastructure requirements problematic to plan to likely pace of growth.

Re Zoning Scenario - compact and concentrated growth

This development model focuses on consolidation of the existing town centre by developing brownfield and, infill town centre sites in Trim such as the town centre extension are. As this option promotes development, development levies will be generated and Local Authority investment would follow. It facilitates the focusing of private and public sector investment limiting the geographic spread and often uneconomic demand for limited resources. This option should ensure that a renewed vibrancy is created within the core town centre area of Trim. This focus will assist in development of Trim as a tourist destination and reinforce its Heritage town status. The focus on Trim town centre encouraged by this scenario will be of community and public advantage and is not dictated by market forces which often focus on

cheaper development sites (on outskirts if development envelope) at a cost to the community, the environment and urban form. This scenario will have the lowest environmental impacts subject to adoption of mitigation measures. This is the scenario which has been selected as the development model.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment is concluded as follows:-

Significant beneficial impacts would affect:-

Population – through the creation of additional local employment, residential accommodation, community/ recreational facilities to serve Trim;

Built Environment- focus of plan is on town centre extension area

Residual adverse impacts would affect

Flora and Fauna - through the loss of the extent of undeveloped land [not significant]

Human Health - Noise and Air pollution – through the increase in emissions [not significant]

Material Assets – through the utilisation of traffic [not significant] and water service capacity [significant]

Soil and Water – through the excavation of top soils and sub soils and through the increase of surface water runoff to watercourses [not significant]

Thus the scenarios tested indicated that Trim can be developed as envisaged in the Development Plan without significant adverse environmental impacts occurring.

Appendix A Non Technical Summary

1.0 Introduction

This section provides the non-technical summary of the environmental report of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Trim Development Plan 2007-2013. SEA's are carried out in response to the requirements of the European Community Council Directive of 2001, Directive 2001/42/EC, which came into effect in Ireland on July 21st 2004. Legislation requires that SEA be undertaken on plans or programmes, which are likely to have significant environmental effects and which set the framework for future development consent of projects which are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Screening of the Development Plan

As per the Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2016 Trim is designated a Moderate Growth Town. Moderate Growth Towns can accommodate an ultimate population of 15,000 persons. The current population of Trim as per 2006 Census is 6870 persons. Section 13 A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) applies to development plans for an area where the population is less than 10,000 persons and outlines the requirements in respect of determination of need for an environmental assessment. Section 13 B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) applies to development plans for an area where the population more than 10,000 persons or where the Planning Authority determines that implementation of a new development plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment a planning authority shall carry out an environmental assessment as of part of the review of the existing development plan and preparation of a new development plan. Having regard to the ultimate population Trim could accommodate, an environmental assessment is statutorily required.

2.3 Scoping

A scoping report (July 2007) was prepared by Meath County Council and Trim Town Council to determine the scope and the level of detail to be included in the environmental report.

2.4 Consultation with Environmental Authorities

The SEA Directive specifies in Article 6(3) that “member states shall designate the authorities to be consulted”. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources have been designated as environmental authorities that must be consulted by competent authorities while screening for or conducting SEA in the Republic of Ireland. All were consulted in this case. The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government both responded to the scoping report issued.

3.0 Development Envisaged

The principal objectives of the Trim Development Plan are as follows:

- Town centre expansion with emphasis on brownfield and infill to a high design quality;
- Employment Generation;
- Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town;
- Accommodation & servicing of residential growth.
- Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities
- Transportation proposals

4.0 Consideration of Alternatives

Four alternatives were examined as follows:

Do-nothing Scenario

Under the do-nothing scenario which would result in no zoning of additional lands aside from those currently zoned, the Trim Development Plan area would maintain its current physical and socio-economic characteristics.

De zoning Scenario

The dezoning scenario relates to the removal of land use zoning objectives in the current Trim Development Plan on those lands on the perimeter of Trim.

Re Zoning Scenario - urban sprawl

The term urban sprawl is associated with unplanned development sprawl to green field sites outside of the town centre. The impact of this development model would likely to be result in further neglect of the town centre brownfield redevelopment opportunities which often present more of a challenge to redevelop than greenfield sites.

Re Zoning Scenario - compact and concentrated growth

This development model focuses on consolidation of the existing town centre by developing brownfield and infill sites in Trim such as the identified town centre extension are.

5.0 Local Environmental Baselines

This section of the report describes the current state of the environment in the Trim Development Plan area, adopting the environmental indicators included in the SEA Directive. Following this, in sections 6 to 14, each topic heading, as set out in the SEA guidelines (e.g. Population, Cultural Heritage, Material Assets etc) is fully assessed in accordance with the SEA guidelines.

The purpose of this section and the following sections is to identify the current state of the environment and relevant existing environmental objectives, against which the likely effects of implementing the Development Plan are assessed. This section provides a quantitative overview of the overall physical environment of the Development Plan area, the development related pressures, followed by estimate of overall change under the selected scenario, compact and concentrated development.

6.0 Biodiversity- Flora and Fauna

Consolidated and concentrated growth at appropriate densities will reduce urban sprawl and associated land take and therefore will minimise erosion of habitats on the outskirts of Trim. Redevelopment of existing infill and brown field sites within Trim including the town centre extension area will result in habitat loss, as some of these areas consist of greenfield areas which would be replaced with artificial surfaces. Habitats likely to be lost are not known to be of significant value and such lost is kept to a minimum in this scenario. In the planning of open space areas within new development the emphasis will be placed on the development of ecological corridors which permit the potential movement of wildlife and which include indigenous vegetation.

7.0 Population

Development will establish new residential communities and create employment.

8.0 Human Health (Air & Noise)

The construction and existence of developments will cause localised increases in noise levels and localised increases in emissions to air. However provided Best Practices in relation to site construction and building design are implemented for all aspect of the development, all potential noise and air emissions should be minimised to acceptable levels which would not compromise or have an unacceptable impact on the existing baseline environment.

9.0 Soil

The development management process should seek to minimise disturbance, compaction or removal of natural soil profile from areas not required for construction. All top soils removed during pre-construction ground preparation works should be temporarily stockpiled on-site and should be used for all subsequent post construction landscaping works. This should be done on a project to project basis which will ensure the orderly and efficient landscaping of individual developments.

10.0 Water

Additional demands will be placed on water services. Subject to environmental, ecological and water quality considerations and subject to scheduled upgrading works it will be possible to provide adequate water supply over the plan period and beyond. It is critical that this works are carried out during the lifetime of the plan.

11.1 Material Assets – Transportation

The general policy of the transportation policy is to reduce the number of car generated trips through integrating land use and transportation, facilitating infrastructure and encouraging alternative modes of transport such as walking and cycling. It also aims to improve general circulation and transport links to and from the town.

The strategy aims to maximise the development potential of existing material assets such as roads by concentrating development where these services exist.

11.2 Material Assets – Waste Water

Additional demands will be placed on waste water services. Minor works are required to upgrade the capacity of the Treatment Plant to meet this demand. Improvements are also required also for the pumping station at Newtown and the sewer network. However, the Water Services Investment Programme Assessment of Needs 2007 – 2013 includes the sewer network improvement scheme for Trim (ranked tenth). This will remove the threat of pollution from the River Boyne by replacing the Newtown Pumping Station and by upgrading / rehabilitating the associated sewers and rising main. Without an environmentally sound means of disposing of waste water, the principals of sustainable development cannot be met. Therefore it is necessary that the aforementioned works are carried out during the lifetime of the plan.

11.3 Material Assets – Gas Supply

Trim is currently served by the gas. New developments will generate increased demand on gas supply. There are no predicted significant environmental impacts associated.

11.4 Material Assets – Electricity Supply

All development will generate increased demand on electricity supply. There are no predicted significant environmental impacts associated.

11.5 Material Assets – Waste Collection and Disposal

Development will generate increased demand for domestic and commercial waste disposal and collection services. The construction phases of the development will also produce significant volumes of waste. Developers should be obliged to submit a construction and waste management plan prior to the commencement of any proposed construction activities.

11.6 Information and Communications Technology

Development will generate increased demand on local Information and Communications Technology infrastructure. There are no predicted significant environmental impacts associated.

12.0 Cultural Heritage

It is envisaged that the most significant effect will be the promotion of the archaeological and architectural heritage of Trim. Development will be carried out having regard to the adjacent established streetscapes. Consideration shall be given for the positive interaction of any new development with established streetscapes with respect to scale, design and form. Similarly, all development within the designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) will respect the integrity of all adjoining structures.

Archaeological assessment will be required to accompany planning applications.

13.0 Landscape

Planning applications will ensure that development of the landscape design should be integral to the design process. The provision of stormwater attenuation should be considered in conjunction with landscape design. Suitable monitoring by the Development Management process will ensure that a high quality landscape is achieved.

The result of the appraisal of the effects of implementing Development Plan policies is summarized in the matrix below. The numerical scores indicate the number of main policy objectives that have been assessed as being likely to have beneficial, negative, neutral or undetermined effects in relation to the Planning Aims. The appraisal indicates that the policy objectives set out in the Development Plan are generally positive or neutral in relation to the Environmental and Sustainability Criteria.

APPRAISAL OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	P1	P2	P3	P4	A1	A2	A3	A4	S1	S2	WI	W2	W3	W4	H1	L1	TI
Town centre expansion and redevelopment with emphasis on brownfield and infill to a high design quality	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓
Provision of social, cultural and educational facilities	0	0	0	0	0	✓	0	0	✓	0	0	0	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Employment Generation	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	0	0	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protection & Enhancement of Trim as a Heritage town	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	0
Accommodation & servicing of residential growth.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	0	0	✓	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transportation Proposals	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	0	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓

Key ✓ Beneficial Effect/Likely beneficial Effect
 0 No significant Effect
 ✗ Some deterioration in environmental quality
 ? Uncertainty of prediction or knowledge

Biodiversity – Flora/Fauna

SEOB1 Avoid damage by development to designated wildlife sites and protected species

SEOB2 Conserve the diversity of habitats avoiding irreversible losses

SEOB3 Ensure that any development promotes sustainable management of key wildlife sites

SEOB4 Provide opportunities for sustainable public access to wildlife and wild places

SEOB5 Protect the conservation value of the River Boyne and Blackwater candidate Special Area of Conservation.

Population

SEOP1 Improve people's quality of life based on high quality residential, working and recreational environment, on sustainable travel pattern at all stages of life.

SEOP2 Promote town centre expansion and infill/brown field development.

SEOP3 Promote employment generation.

SEOP4 Promotion of social, cultural and educational facilities.

Air Climate Noise

SEOA1 Air/Climate/Noise - Minimise Emissions

SEOA2 Reduce all waste of energy and maximise use of renewable energy sources.

SEOA3 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to air including greenhouse gases.

SEOA4 Reduce the need to travel.

SEOB1 Avoid damage by development to designated wildlife sites and **protected** species.

Soil

SEOS1 Maintain the quality of soil.

SEOS2 Maximise the sustainable re-use of brown field lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands.

Water

SEOW1 Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (including future capacity)

SEOW2 Protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems.

SEOW3 Reduce progressively discharges of polluting substances to waters

SEOW4 Mitigate the effects of floods.

Material Assets

SEOT1 To promote land use planning measures which facilitate transportation efficiency, economic returns on transport investment, minimization on environmental impacts and a general shift towards the use of public transportation in Trim;

Cultural Heritage

SEOCH1 Promote the identification, protection and conservation of the cultural, including architectural and archaeological, heritage.

Landscape

SEOL1 Conserve and enhance valued natural, historic and cultural landscapes and features within them.

