

Kildare County Council  
**Celbridge (including Castletown)**  
**Local Area Plan 2017-2023**  
**Strategic Environmental**  
**Assessment**  
Scoping Report

Date | 29 August 2016

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

250659-07

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# 1 Introduction

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Kildare County Council, as the competent authority, is currently preparing the Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan for the period 2017 – 2023 (the Plan).

Arup has been appointed by Kildare County Council to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the proposed plan which will set out the strategic land use and planning policy guidance for Celbridge Town (including Castletown).

This scoping document sets out the scope of the SEA and provides information to allow consultation with defined statutory bodies on the scope and level of detail to be considered in the assessment. Throughout the document a series of ‘scoping questions’ have been included to focus responses which will allow the SEA to address any issues or concerns that have been raised during the scoping process.

## 1.1 Background

Celbridge town is located in north county Kildare 20 km from Dublin (refer to **Figure 1**). The town is located on the River Liffey at the junction of the R403 and R405 roads. The M4 Motorway is accessible from the North of the Town at the Celbridge West Interchange.

The town of Celbridge has early Christian origins but later became an Anglo Norman borough. The town developed quite rapidly during the 18th century around Castletown Estate. As with many estate towns, development occurred along the Main Street at the principal entrance to the estate.

Celbridge retains much of the character of an estate town, with the Main Street still the focus of the town and Castletown gates, the mill complex and the bridge over the Liffey remaining important visual features. Notwithstanding this, Celbridge has experienced a considerable degree of urbanisation and outward growth in recent years.

The Celbridge Local Area Plan 2010 related only to Celbridge town. The boundary of the 2017-2023 Local Area Plan will be extended to incorporate the historic Castletown House and Demense to the north of Celbridge Town.

The current Local Area Plan is a statutory document, consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan, containing guidelines as to how the town and its environs should develop over the Plan period.

Specific goals of the plan which are translated into sectoral objectives in the plan are:

- To protect and further develop the role of the town centre as the focal point for economic, cultural and social activity;
- To ensure that an adequate supply of serviced, zoned land will be made available to accommodate future population and economic expansion; and

- To maximise the potential of the existing public transport infrastructure and make adequate provision of safe and convenient circulation around the town, by foot, bicycle and car.

Kildare County Council, as the competent authority, is currently preparing the Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan for the period 2016 – 2022. The Plan will set out the strategic land use and planning policy guidance for Celbridge Town, Castletown House and Demense.

### 1.1.1 Extent of the Plan

Please refer to **Figure 2** for the draft LAP Boundary Map. The Boundary Map will be subject to change during preparation of the Plan.

## 1.2 SEA Process

### 1.2.1 Legislative Background

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, (also known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive), was transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) as amended by S.I. No 200 of 2011. It provided a statutory basis for the making of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011. These Planning and Development Regulations, S.I. No. 436 of 2004 and S.I. No. 201 of 2011, amended articles and schedules to the Planning and Development Regulations, (S.I. 600 of 2001).

Under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) as amended by the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 201 of 2011) mandatory SEA is required in respect of the following plans:

- Regional Planning Guidelines;
- City and County Development Plans;
- Development Plans by Town Council where the population or target population is greater than 10,000 persons;
- Local Area Plans where the population or target population is 5,000 persons or more or the area covered by the plan is greater than 50 square kilometres;
- Planning Schemes in respect of Strategic Development Zones.

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is ‘to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans ... with a view to promoting sustainable development’ (Article 1 SEA Directive). It is a systematic, on-going process for evaluating, at the earliest possible stage, the environmental quality and consequences of implementing certain plans and programmes on the environment.

The SEA process is comprised of the following steps:

- Screening: Decision on whether or not SEA of a Plan or Programme is required. This stage has been completed.
- Scoping: Consultation with the defined statutory bodies on the scope and level of detail to be considered in the assessment. This is the current stage of the SEA process to which this report relates.
- Environmental Assessment: An assessment of the likely significant impacts on the environment as a result of the Plan or Programme.
- Preparation of an Environmental Report.
- Consultation on the draft Plan or Programme and associated Environmental Report.
- Evaluation of the submissions and observations made on the draft Plan or Programme and Environmental Report.
- Issuance of an SEA Statement identifying how environmental considerations and consultation have been integrated into the Final Plan or Programme.

SEA is intended to inform decision-making and needs to ‘test’ systematically the performance of the plan as a whole and its individual objectives and policies against SEA criteria.

It is noted that under EIA and Planning and Development legislation, certain projects taking place within the plan area arising during implementation of the Plan may require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

## 1.2.2 SEA Guidance

The SEA methodology for the proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) LAP 2017-2023 is based on legislative requirements and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance. The EPA’s SEA Pack (Version 18/04/2013) was also used as a source of information during the scoping process along with published EPA SEA Scoping Guidance.

## 1.2.3 SEA Screening

According to the 2011 Census the population of Celbridge was 19,537<sup>1</sup>. Preliminary figures for the 2016 census indicate a population of 21,857 for the two ED’s of Donaghcumper and Celbridge (this figure includes rural population also in addition to Celbridge town). Celbridge is identified as a “moderate growth

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/saveselections.asp>

town” in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. The draft Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 identifies Celbridge as a “moderate sustainable growth town”. Therefore it is likely that the target population will continue to be greater than 5,000 persons in the area to which the new Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan 2017-2023 relates and an SEA would be required.

## 1.2.4 SEA Scoping Stage

The main objective of the Scoping Stage is to identify the key environmental issues that may arise as a result of the proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) LAP 2017-2023 so that they may be addressed appropriately in the Environmental Report. There are a number of tasks at this stage:

- Determine the key elements of the proposed Plan to be assessed.
- Determine the environmental issues to be assessed.
- Collect and report on relevant international, national and local plans, objectives and environmental standards that may influence or impact on the proposed Development Plan.
- Develop draft environmental objectives, indicators and targets to allow the evaluation of impacts.
- Identify reasonable alternative means of achieving the strategic goals of the proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) LAP 2017-2023.

The output of this process is the Scoping Report which will inform statutory consultees and relevant stakeholders about the key environmental issues and the key elements of the proposed Development Plan. In addition, the Scoping Report can be used as a tool to generate comments from stakeholders on the scope of and approach to the SEA.

Similarly the Scoping Stage also allows input from the environmental authorities and relevant stakeholders on the AA process.

## 1.3 Appropriate Assessment

### 1.3.1 Introduction

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an assessment based on best scientific knowledge, by a person with ecological expertise, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site (including Natura 2000 sites not situated in the area encompassed by the draft plan or scheme) and the development where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects.

### 1.3.2 Legislative Context

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) and Special Protection Areas, designated under the Birds

Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds), form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000.

The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Directive set out key elements of the system of protection, including the requirement for AA of any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on an SAC or SPA.

A Habitats Directive Assessment can comprise of up to 4 Stages as outlined in the European Commission Guidance document (2001) and in Section 1.5 of this report.

Any draft land use plan (development plans, local area plans, regional planning guidelines, schemes for strategic development zones) must be screened (Stage 1) for any potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

Following screening, if it is found that the draft plan may have an impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site or that an impact cannot be ruled out then an AA of the plan must be undertaken (Stage 2).

Progression to Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment triggers a mandatory requirement for SEA as specified in Article 3 of the SEA Directive which states that an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes, “which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Directive 92/43/EEC” (the Habitats Directive).

### 1.3.3 Appropriate Assessment Process

The Appropriate Assessment (AA) is a requirement of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as transposed into Irish law through the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94 of 1997). The purpose of the AA is to determine whether the proposed Development Plan has implications for any Natura 2000 sites in the region and to ascertain whether there will be adverse impacts on the integrity of these sites. The AA will follow guidance from the European Commission and directions from the DoEHLG.

The standard series of stages of AA as laid out in the EU Guidance<sup>2</sup> are as follows:

- **Stage 1 Screening:** This stage examines the likely effects of a project, either alone or in combination with other projects, upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. If the effects will be significant the AA progresses to stages 2-4.
- **Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment:** In this stage, the impact of the project is considered on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and to its structure and function. Additionally, where adverse impacts are identified, this stage includes an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2001) Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

- Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions: This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.
- Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the Natura site will be necessary.

It is noted that Projects taking place over the plan area within the lifetime of the plan may also require Appropriate Assessment screening, as required by Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

### 1.3.4 AA Screening

AA screening will be undertaken as part of the plan preparation and should it be found that the draft plan may have an impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site or that an impact cannot be ruled out then an AA of the plan must be undertaken (Stage 2).

The Rye Water Valley/Carton Special Area of Conservation, (Site Code 002162) lies 2km north of Celbridge and is designated for petrifying spring habitat and two Vertigo snail species. Any impacts on relevant habitats, water quality and hydrology which might result from the plan's implementation will be assessed as part of AA Screening.

All necessary stages of AA will be undertaken on the Plan. This process will be carried out in parallel with the SEA process and will feed into the alternatives considered as part of the SEA.

## 1.4 Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is being carried out for the plan area and will also inform the SEA process. The DEHLG publication "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities" will be adhered to during the preparation of the Plan to ensure flood risk assessment is appropriately incorporated.

## 2 The Proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan 2017-2023

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### 2.1 Introduction

The proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan will provide the main public statement of planning policies and objectives for Celbridge Town and Castletown for the plan duration (2016 – 2022). The policies and objectives are critical in determining the appropriate location and form of different types of development as the local area plan is the primary statutory land use policy framework against which planning applications are assessed.

The objectives of the local area plan are also used by Kildare County Council to guide their activities and to indicate priority areas for action and investment by the Council such as focusing on attracting employment into the town or enhancing the town as a centre for tourism.

The proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan will be a key document for setting out a vision for how Celbridge and Castletown should develop over the years 2017-2023.

## 2.2 Policies of the Local Area Plan

The Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan will be prepared under the provisions of Section 18, 19 & 20 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended.

The Local Area Plan must be consistent with the objectives, Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan and any subsequent reviews or variations. Celbridge is identified as a “moderate growth town” in the Kildare Development Plan 2011-2017. The draft Kildare Development Plan 2017-2013 identifies Celbridge as a “moderate sustainable growth town”. The plan notes that the number of residential units in Celbridge was 6,911 in 2011 with a corresponding population of 19,537. The draft plan sets a target of 4,224 new residential units above the 2011 level by 2023 (NOTE: This is subject to change). In order to develop in a sustainable manner the town must accommodate the appropriate levels of residential, economic, recreational and community development in tandem with necessary improvements in physical infrastructure and public transport.

LAPs must include objectives relating to land use zoning and protection of the environment. They should also have regard to Ministerial Guidelines under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended and should accord with national planning legislation and relevant European legislation.

## 2.3 Pre-Draft Consultation Phase

Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, states that;

*“A planning authority shall take whatever steps it considers necessary to consult the minister and the public before preparing, amending or revoking a local area plan including consultations with any local residents, public sector agencies, non-governmental agencies, local community groups and commercial and business interests within the area.”*

A Background Issues Paper for Celbridge and Castletown identifying key planning issues was prepared and made available (from February 28th to 31st March 2015) at the following locations:

- Planning Section, Áras Cill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas;
- Celbridge Library, Main Street, Celbridge; and

- Leixlip Library, Captain's Hill, Leixlip.

The Strategic Issues Paper was also referred to the Statutory Authorities as set out in the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

A total of 33 valid submissions were received in response to the consultation which were summarised in June 2016 in the "*Chief Executive's Report - Submissions received on Strategic Issues Paper Celbridge & Castletown pre-draft Local Area Plan 2017-2023*". This report is published online at: <http://kildare.ie/CountyCouncil/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/LocalAreaPlans/CelbridgeinclCastletownIssuesPaper/Report%20on%20pre-draft%20submissions%20Celbridge%20June%202016.pdf>

The report also sets out the Chief Executives response to the issues raised and recommendations made. This response and the next steps set out in the report will be taken into account in the preparation of the Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan 2017-2023 and the accompanying SEA and AA.

## 2.4 Alternatives

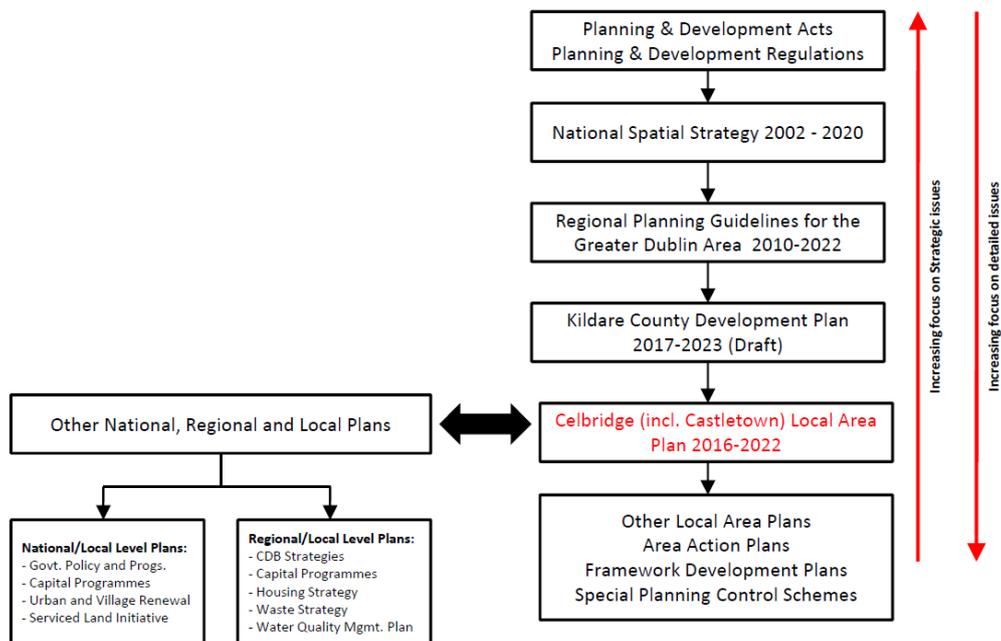
The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives be assessed in order to demonstrate how the preferred strategy performs against other forms of action. Alternatives must be developed, described and assessed within the SEA process, with the results presented in the Environmental Report.

Alternatives developed are likely to consider transit oriented development, town centre strengthening, school focused development and standard suburban expansion or combinations of these. Alternatives considered will be discussed in the Environmental Report.

## 3 Plan Context

### 3.1 Planning Hierarchy

The hierarchy of the planning process within Ireland is summarised in the flow chart depicted in **Figure 3.1**. This flow chart (adapted from the DoEHLG Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities) indicates where the Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan falls within that hierarchy.



**Figure 3.1: Planning Hierarchy**

### 3.2 Interaction with other Relevant Plans and Programmes

As part of the SEA process the context of the proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan must be established with regard to other plans and programmes that have been adopted at International, National, Regional and Local level. In particular the interaction of the Local Area Plan with the environmental protection objectives and standards included within these other plans and programmes must be considered.

A wide range of legislation, plans and programmes are of relevance to the proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan and are outlined in **Table 3.1**.

**Table 3.1: Hierarchy of Relevant Legislation, Plans and Programmes**

Level	Legislation, Plans and Programmes
<b>International/EU Level</b>	<p>Water Framework Directive &amp; associated Directives.  SEA Directive.  Floods Directive.  Groundwater Directive.  Habitats Directive.  Birds Directive.  Freshwater Fish Directive.  Shell fish Directive.  Drinking Water Directive.  Bathing Water Directive.  Environmental Impact Assessment Directive.  Seveso Directive.  Sewage Sludge Directive.  Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.  Waste Framework Directive.  Nitrates Directive.  Soils Directive.  Air Quality Directives including Framework Directive.  National Emissions Ceiling Directive.  Environmental Noise Directive.  Climate Change Programme (ECCP II).  Industrial Emissions Directive.  EU Reach Initiative.  European Landscape Convention.  UN Convention of Biological Diversity, 1992.  Kyoto Protocol.  Stockholm Convention.  Valetta Convention.  Ramsar Convention.  OSPAR Convention.  Granada Convention.  Gothenburg Strategy.</p>
<b>National Level</b>	<p>A Programme for Partnership Government 2016.  Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021.  Policy Position on Climate Action and Low-Carbon Development. National Policy Position Ireland (2014).  Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland - The Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020.  National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2013-2020.  National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020.  Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2015).  Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities. Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities (2007).</p>

Level	Legislation, Plans and Programmes
	<p>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management. Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).</p> <p>Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns &amp; Villages) (2009).</p> <p>Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Retail Planning (2012).</p> <p>Local Area Plans - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2013).</p> <p>Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Spatial Planning and National Roads (2012).</p> <p>Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland (2012).</p> <p>Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016 (2<sup>nd</sup> National Biodiversity Plan).</p> <p>Draft 3<sup>rd</sup> National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2016).</p> <p>Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidelines for Planning Authorities (revised 2010).</p> <p>Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004).</p> <p>Guidelines for Planning Authorities - Retail Planning (2012).</p> <p>Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015.</p> <p>National Policy on Town Defences (2008).</p> <p>Implementation of Regional Planning Guidelines Best Practice Guidance (2010).</p>
<b>Regional Level</b>	<p>Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022.</p> <p>Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016.</p> <p>Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area up to 2030.</p> <p>Eastern River Basin District River Basin Management Plan 2009 – 2013 (National River Basin Management Plans 2015-2021 currently in preparation).</p> <p>Eastern-Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021.</p> <p>Eastern Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management (CFRAM) Study.</p> <p>Flood Risk Management Plans.</p> <p>Groundwater Protection Schemes.</p>
<b>Local Level</b>	<p>Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.</p> <p>Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>South East Draft Flood Risk Management Plans (2016).</p> <p><i>Competing in a Globalised World. An Economic Development Strategy for Kildare to 2016.</i></p> <p>County Kildare Heritage Plan 2005-2011 (under review).</p> <p>County Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014.</p> <p>Town Development Plans.</p> <p>Other Local Area Plans.</p>
<b>SCOPING QUESTION NO. 1</b>	
Are there any other relevant International, National or Regional Plans, Programmes or legislation that should be considered?	

## 4 Environmental Baseline & Issues

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### 4.1 Introduction

A brief assessment of the current state of the environment and key environmental issues for Celbridge is summarised in this report. A full description will also be included in the Environmental Report. GIS will be used extensively to provide regional information.

Where data gaps are found for particular aspects of the environment, the significance of these data gaps will be evaluated and clearly stated. It will also be stated whether these gaps can be addressed during the SEA process.

The baseline environment will be assessed under the following headings:

- Biodiversity including Flora & Fauna;
- Population and Human Health;
- Soils and Geology;
- Water Resources;
- Air, Noise and Climate;
- Archaeological, Architectural & Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape & Visual;
- Material Assets.

In accordance with S.I. 436 of 2004 (as amended) consideration will be given to whether the environmental effects, both positive and negative, of the Plan are likely to be significant.

### 4.2 Biodiversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity defines biodiversity as “the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part.” This includes sites, habitats, species and networks of importance at the international, national or local level, and which may occur within or outside the Plan area. The term biodiversity refers to more than individual species. It includes the genes they contain, the habitats and ecosystems of which they form part, and also highlights the interdependence and interconnectedness of all living things.

The main elements of biodiversity are:

- European (Natura 2000) sites (SACs and SPAs, and candidate SACs and SPAs),
- NHAs, National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Refuges for Fauna or Flora or sites proposed for designation,
- Undesignated sites such as proposed NHAs (pNHAs), local biodiversity areas,

- Sites and habitats that can be considered to be corridors or stepping stones for the purpose of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive,
- ‘Natural habitats and protected species’ for the purposes of the Environmental Liability Directive, including habitats and species listed under the Habitats Directive (Annex I habitats, Annex II and Annex IV species and their habitats) and Birds Directives (Annex I species and their habitats, and regularly occurring migratory birds) wherever they occur,
- Legally protected species including protected flora under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and Wildlife Acts 1976-2000,
- Sites identified under the Bern, Ramsar and Bonn Conventions,
- Biodiversity in general including habitats important for birds, red listed and BoCCI listed species, natural and semi-natural habitat areas including wetlands, woodlands, waterbodies, etc.

A Biodiversity Action Plan was adopted by Kildare County Council for the 2009-2014 period. The purpose of this document was to provide a framework for the conservation of biodiversity and natural heritage at a local level by translating policies (national and international) and legislation into practical action which serve to raise awareness of and enhance the protection, conservation and management of County Kildare’s natural heritage. The plan was an action resulting from the County Kildare Heritage Plan 2005-2011 which is currently under review by Kildare County Council.

#### 4.2.1 Existing Conditions

Designated conservation sites in the vicinity of Celbridge are highlighted on **Figure 3**. These include the following which are in the vicinity of the study area and are of relevance to the proposed local area plan:

- Rye Water Valley/Carton Special Area of Conservation, (Site Code 002162);
- Grand Canal proposed Natural Heritage Area Site code: 002104; and
- Royal Canal proposed Natural Heritage Area (Site code: 002103).

Kildare County Council commissioned “*Habitat Survey and Mapping of Celbridge, Co. Kildare*” which was published in February 2012. The purpose of the project was to survey, map and assess habitats within Celbridge, to identify Green Infrastructure and to raise awareness about the natural heritage of the area. The study area for surveys and mapping were defined by the development boundaries of the *Celbridge Local Area Plan 2010*.

Buildings and gardens were the most abundant group of habitats in Celbridge covering nearly half (48.36%) of the study area. Agricultural land including agricultural grassland and tillage accounted for 24.49% of the Celbridge study area. Amenity grassland occupies 11.64% of the study area. This group of habitats does not include the lawns of private houses, but does include public grassy spaces within estates, playing pitches and larger lawns in institutions such as Celbridge Abbey, St. John of Gods and the various primary and secondary schools.

The remainder of the habitat groups each occupy less than 16% of the total study area. Cover of woodland and scrub accounts for 9.55% of the study area. This habitat type is represented by the woodland habitats associated with Castletown Demense, Killadoon Demense, Donaghcumper House and those woodland areas fringing the River Liffey.

The findings of the habitat survey are set out in **Table 4.1** below.

**Table 4.1: Abundances of habitat groups in Celbridge in hectares (ha) and as a percentage of the total area**

Habitat Group	Area (ha)	Percentage
Buildings and Gardens	371.95	48.36
Intensive Agriculture	188.38	24.49
Amenity Grassland	89.55	11.64
Woodland and Scrub	73.43	9.55
Disturbed Ground	14.95	1.94
Semi-natural Grassland	2.48	2.48
Rivers and Watercourses	11.00	1.43
Wetlands, lakes and ponds	0.88	0.11
	<b>796.20</b>	<b>100</b>

## 4.2.2 Key Issues

The following issues/potential impacts will require detailed consideration during the plan preparation:

- Impacts on Protected/Designated sites.
- Impacts on Protected Species.
- Consideration of protecting proposed NHAs in a similar way to fully designated NHAs.
- Impacts on sensitive habitats outside of protected areas.
- Consider maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity richness by protecting rivers, stream corridors and valleys by reserving riparian zones/ecological corridors, maintaining them free from inappropriate development, discouraging culverting or realignment, and promoting natural flood functions.
- Consideration of buffer zones between biodiversity features and areas zoned for development.

- Maintaining existing woodland.
- Potential for Habitat Loss and Fragmentation.
- Implementation of key Ecological Planning Guidance Measures set out in the report “*Habitat Survey and Mapping of Celbridge, Co. Kildare. February 2012*”.
- Implementation of measures to control and manage alien/invasive species (e.g. Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Zebra Mussel etc.) and noxious weeds (e.g. Ragwort, Thistle, Dock etc.) within the Plan area according to best practice (as per the new Birds and Habitats Regulations).

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening (Stage 1) is being carried out to examine potential impacts of the proposed Plan on Natura 2000 sites. The AA Screening will inform the SEA process. Should it be found that the draft plan may have an impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site or that an impact cannot be ruled out then an AA of the plan must be undertaken (Stage 2).

## 4.3 Population and Human Health

### 4.3.1 Baseline

#### 4.3.1.1 Population

According to Census 2011 the population of Celbridge is 19,537 persons. This represents an increase of 13.2% on 2006 numbers.

Census data from the 2002, 2006 and 2011 Census is presented in **Table 4.2**. Data for this table was extracted from Table 5 of the respective Census’ entitled “*Population of towns ordered by county and size*” and Table 6 entitled “*Population of each province, county, city, urban area, rural area and electoral division*”. Detailed data from the 2016 census is not yet available.

**Table 4.2: Census Population of Celbridge 2002-2011**

Population	Electoral Division	2002	2006	2011	% change 2006-2011
	ED 034 Celbridge (pt.)	14,333	14,528	14,914	2.7
	ED 037 Donaghcumper (pt.)	3,118	2,734	4,623	69.1
<b>TOTAL (Celbridge including Castletown)</b>		<b>17,451</b>	<b>17,262</b>	<b>19,537</b>	<b>13.2</b>

#### 4.3.1.2 Human Health

Availability of spatial data on human health is limited. A key area for consideration of human health will be the interaction between environmental aspects such as water, landscape, biodiversity, air, energy and human beings.

The assessment of impacts on human health will reference other sections of the SEA as relevant along with considering aspects such as the Industrial Emissions Directive, Seveso and Flood Risk Assessments.

This will ensure that all relevant vectors through which human health impacts could be caused as a result of the LAP are assessed.

### 4.3.2 Key Issues

The following issues will require detailed consideration during the plan preparation:

- Increase in demand for water supply, waste water treatment and other infrastructural and community services due to future predicted increases in population and economic growth.
- Impact of population growth on sensitive habitats and landscape in terms of development and recreational pressures.
- Impacts from noise and air pollution as a result of development and transport.
- Effects on water quality due to new/increased discharges to waters.
- Transport – promotion of walking and cycling via integrated land use and transport policy.
- Consideration of future SEVESO sites.

## 4.4 Soils and Geology

### 4.4.1 Baseline

Geologically the area around Celbridge and its environs is dominated by carboniferous dark grey to black limestone and shale (Calp). There is one bedrock type in the study area.

The subsoils in Celbridge consist mainly of limestone sands and gravels overlain by surface water gleys and grey brown podzolic soils. Developed areas are underlain by made ground.

Please refer to **Figures 4 and 5** for details of the soils and bedrock geology in the vicinity of the study area.

Please refer to Figure 6 for Geological Heritage in the vicinity of Celbridge. Two sites of Geological Heritage Importance have been identified in the Celbridge area. St. Patrick's Well (Site Code KE020) is located approximately 5km to the South West of Celbridge. The well is located in the townland of Ardraa Lower at the base of St. Patricks Hill. It is an example of the warm spring province in the Kildare-Meath border area and is in good condition. The Liffey Oxbow (Site Code KE013) is situated 3km southwest of Celbridge. The site displays both an existing oxbow lake as well as a remnant oxbow lake, which are within 300m of one another.

## 4.4.2 Key Issues

The following issues will require detailed consideration during the plan preparation:

- Impacts of pollution from construction work or from the operation of new developments.
- Extent of existing contaminated land.
- Disturbance to soils and geology during new development.
- Pressures on good quality agricultural land due to development.

## 4.5 Water Resources

### 4.5.1 Hydrology

The plan area is located in the Liffey Catchment in Hydrometric Area 09. Celbridge Town is located on the main Liffey Channel in the Lower Liffey Catchment. The river rises in the Wicklow Mountains and flows through the study area at Celbridge towards Leixlip from where it flows in an easterly direction to Islandbridge and discharges to Dublin Bay.

Based on water quality, ecology and morphology the EPA has determined that the Lower Liffey close to Celbridge is of “moderate” status. It was also classed as “1a – at risk” of not achieving “good status” by 2015 under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) risk score system in 2010.<sup>3</sup>

The Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas ([www.wfdireland.ie](http://www.wfdireland.ie)) categorises the River Liffey through Celbridge as a “Protected Area 4” or a “Nutrient Sensitive Water”. Nutrient Sensitive Waters comprise nitrate vulnerable zones designated under the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and areas designated as sensitive under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC).

Surface water features in the vicinity of Celbridge are shown on **Figure 7**. The Water Framework Directive Risk Status for waterbodies within the plan area is shown on **Figure 8**. The Water Framework Directive Status for Lakes and Rivers within the plan area are shown in **Figure 9** for 2010-2012. Rivers for drinking water in the region are shown in **Figure 10**.

### 4.5.2 Hydrogeology

The plan area is underlain by a bedrock aquifer which is classified by the GSI as a ‘Locally Important’ (LI) aquifer which is moderately productive only in local zones.

Groundwater vulnerability in Celbridge Town and the vicinity is predominantly high with pockets of extreme vulnerability and areas where rock is at or near the surface or is karst.

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<sup>3</sup>

[http://watermaps.wfdireland.ie/NsShare\\_Web/ReportViewer.aspx?reportName=rwb\\_all&layer=subbasin&eu\\_cd=IE\\_EA\\_09\\_1870\\_4](http://watermaps.wfdireland.ie/NsShare_Web/ReportViewer.aspx?reportName=rwb_all&layer=subbasin&eu_cd=IE_EA_09_1870_4) accessed 18 August 2016.

Groundwater features and source protection zones in the vicinity of the plan area are shown in **Figure 11**.

Groundwater vulnerability in the vicinity of the plan area is shown in **Figure 12**. WFD Groundwater risk and status in the vicinity of the plan area is shown in **Figure 13** and **Figure 14**.

### 4.5.3 Flooding

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is being carried out for the plan area and will inform the SEA process.

### 4.5.4 Key Issues

The following issues will require detailed consideration during the plan preparation:

- Impacts on surface water and groundwater quality due to development.
- Impacts on the Rye Water Valley/Carton Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- Compliance with the WFD and achieving the River Basin Management Objectives.
- Ensuring drinking water capacity for future predicted increases in population and economic growth.
- Maintenance of Water Services Infrastructure.
- Effects of flooding due to development.
- Effects of developments within floodplains.
- Climate Change Impacts on flood levels.
- Adhering to EPA Wastewater License discharge limits.

## 4.6 Air, Noise and Climate

### 4.6.1 Baseline

#### 4.6.1.1 Air Quality

The EPA measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants throughout Ireland in order to measure compliance with Air Quality Standards Regulations, 2011 (S.I. No. 180 of 2011). For the purposes of monitoring in Ireland, four zones are defined in the Regulations:

- **Zone A:** Dublin Conurbation.
- **Zone B:** Cork Conurbation.
- **Zone C:** 23 large towns in Ireland with a population greater than 15,000 including Celbridge town.
- **Zone D:** Rural Ireland which is the remainder of the State excluding Zones A, B and C.

The Air quality in Zone C as reported by the EPA report “*Air Quality in Ireland 2014*” is summarised in **Table 4.2** below for Ireland.

**Table 4.2: Air Quality Assessment Zone Classifications**

Parameter	Zone	Assessment Classification
NO <sub>2</sub>	Zone C	Below lower assessment threshold
SO <sub>2</sub>	Zone C	Below lower assessment threshold
CO	Zone C	Below lower assessment threshold
Ozone	Zone C	Above long term objective
PM <sub>10</sub>	Zone C	Above upper assessment threshold
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Zone C	Above lower assessment threshold
Benzene	Zone C	Below lower assessment threshold
Heavy Metals (As, Cd, Ni, Pb)	Zone C	Below lower assessment threshold
PAH	Zone C	Above lower assessment threshold

Ambient Air Monitoring was undertaken by the EPA at Celbridge from June 2010 to April 2011 for PM<sub>10</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, CO and SO<sub>2</sub>. No limit values were exceeded during the measurement period. Concentrations of CO, NO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> recorded were below their respective lower assessment thresholds. Concentrations of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) exceeded the upper threshold for the protection of human health during the study period.

There are currently no significant concerns with regard to air quality in the Celbridge area. Real time data reported on the EPA website notes that the Air Quality Index for Health in the Large Towns Region, including Celbridge, is “Good”. There are likely to be slightly elevated levels of vehicle emissions within the urban area, this is the same for all urban areas. Dust and PM<sub>10</sub> can be an issue locally during construction and operation.

The EPA report “*Air Quality in Ireland 2014*” compared nationwide air monitoring data from 33 stations in the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network against legislative limit and target values for protection of human health and vegetation. No levels above the EU limit values were recorded in Ireland in 2014. The EPA reported that Ireland’s air quality relative to our European counterparts is of good quality.

In addition the report compared air monitoring data to the much more stringent World Health Organisation (WHO) Guideline values and European Environment Agency (EEA) estimated reference level.

WHO guideline values were exceeded for ozone at 8 monitoring sites, for PM<sub>10</sub> at 2 monitoring sites and PM<sub>2.5</sub> at 2 monitoring sites. EEA reference levels were exceeded for PAH at 4 monitoring sites.

Current and future challenges to air quality in Ireland were identified as follows:

- Reduction of solid fuel use;
- Efficient traffic management and provision of choice in terms of public transport in towns; and
- Transboundary impacts of ozone, to which Ireland's air mass is subject.

#### 4.6.1.2 Noise

The Environmental Noise Directive (END) (2002/49/EC) requires that action is taken by each member state, with a view to preventing and reducing environmental noise where necessary (and particularly where exposure levels can induce harmful effects on human health) and to preserving environmental acoustic quality where it is good. The relevant local authorities have been designated by the Environmental Noise Regulations, S.I. Regulations No. 140 of 2006, as the bodies charged with development and making of 'Noise Action Plans'.

Kildare Local Authorities prepared the Second Noise Action Plan for Co. Kildare in July 2013. This Noise Action Plan primarily considers the long term environmental noise impact from road and rail traffic noise sources, and sets out an approach to review noise impact levels near to the major sources assessed during the strategic noise mapping in 2012 with a view to identifying locations where noise reduction is deemed necessary in the first instance. In County Kildare there are no major agglomerations or major airports subject to noise mapping or action planning.

The plan identified twelve main population centres within the area covered by strategic noise mapping and potentially exposed to noise from major roads, including the town of Celbridge. The action plan addressed a number of sections of major roadway which qualified for noise mapping and, as such, were subject to consideration for action planning. None of these sections of road were in the vicinity of Celbridge town.

The plan notes that a traffic management plan has been developed for the town of Celbridge. Traffic management plans have been designed to make best use of existing road space especially in existing town centres. In addition to promoting modal shift and encouraging sustainable modes, the Traffic Management Plans seek to improve the environment in general and the noise environment in particular by calming traffic and, where applicable, by diverting traffic away from town centres. The Traffic Management Plans are also designed to improve junction efficiency thereby reducing delays to motorised traffic.

### 4.6.1.3 Climate

In December 2008, the EU Climate Change and Renewable Energy Package set out a number of commitments.

This package commits to reduce the EU's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from non- Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) sectors (such as transport, agriculture, residential and waste) by 20% on 2005 levels by 2020 or by a more ambitious 30% in the event of a comprehensive global agreement.

As part of the effort-sharing proposal of this package, Ireland is one of the countries facing the highest target of a 20% reduction on 2005 levels for non-ETS sectors. This will result in a limit of approximately 38 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent for Ireland's non-ETS emissions in 2020, together with annual binding limits for each year from 2013 to 2020.

In October 2014, EU leaders agreed a 2030 policy framework to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% compared to a 1990 baseline. No agreement on the contribution of individual EU Member states has yet been reached.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act was published by government in January 2015. The Act sets out the national objective of transitioning to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy in the period up to 2050.

In March 2016, the EPA reported that Ireland is unlikely to meet 2020 EU greenhouse gas targets for all sectors including transport. Current projections indicate that Ireland will be 6-11% below 2005 levels by 2020 against the target of 20%.

The publication Ireland's Environment 2012 – An Assessment (EPA, 2012) provides a high-level summary on the status of greenhouse gases and climate change in an Irish context. It describes the key drivers and pressures and responses to climate change that may occur, providing an outlook of greenhouse gas projections to 2020, and also identifies future challenges to be addressed.

### 4.6.2 Key Issues

The following issues will require consideration during the plan preparation:

- Potential air and noise impacts associated with traffic, housing, industry and increased population as a result of development.
- Consideration will need to be given to development scenarios which bring people closer to noise through the zoning of land for new housing, schools etc. Scenarios which bring noise to people through the provision of new or altered roads, industrial sites or commercial developments which would alter the noise environment in the vicinity of noise sensitive locations will also need to be considered.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation, including effects of severe events including flooding.

- Changes in greenhouse gas emissions from increased transport, industry, energy efficiency, renewables, development etc.

## 4.7 Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage

### 4.7.1 Baseline

Built Heritage is addressed in this report under the following headings:

- Archaeological Heritage;
- Architectural Heritage; and
- Vernacular Heritage.

Kildare County Council published the County Kildare Heritage Plan 2005-2009 in 2005. The Heritage Plan outlined an action plan for the conservation, preservation and enhancement of Kildare's heritage including natural heritage. This was reviewed in 2011 and is currently under review again. The reviewed plan is due for publication in 2016/17.

#### 4.7.1.1 Archaeological Heritage

A record of archaeological heritage is maintained on the 'Record of Monuments and Places' which was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 (No. 17 of 1994). Structures, features, objects or sites listed in this Record are known as Recorded Monuments. The town of Celbridge itself is a Recorded Monument (Record Number KD011-012001-) within which there are a number of archaeological sites and monuments.

According to the database there are approximately 45 Recorded Monuments within and immediately adjacent to Celbridge Town. **Figure 15** depicts Recorded Monuments in the vicinity of Celbridge.

Any person intending to carry out works at or in relation to a Recorded Monument, or within the zone of Archaeological potential, must give the National Monuments Section of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht two months' notice in writing.

#### 4.7.1.2 Architectural Heritage

Celbridge and Castletown incorporates a rich and diverse architectural heritage that forms an integral part of the town, including the historic Castletown House and Demense. In 1999 the Government launched a package of measures aimed at protecting our built heritage. At the heart of the system is a statutory requirement<sup>4</sup> that the protection of buildings of artistic, architectural, historical, cultural, archaeological, scientific, technical or social interest be a mandatory objective of each local authority's Development Plan. These buildings and structures are compiled on a register known as the '*Record of Protected Structures*' (RPS).

<sup>4</sup> Planning and Development Act, 2000 (No 30 of 2000). Part II, Section 10.

There are approximately 85 protected structures within and immediately adjacent to Celbridge.

Owners and occupiers of protected buildings are required to ensure that buildings do not become endangered through harm, decay or damage. Please refer to **Figure 16** for the Protected Structures in the vicinity of Celbridge.

The Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, (Part II, Section 10 and Part IV, Section 81) places an obligation on Local Authorities to include an objective for the preservation of the character of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). While Celbridge is not designated an ACA in the current Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017, the draft Kildare Development Plan 2017-2023 includes a policy ACA1 to “*To investigate the designation of further ACAs at appropriate locations throughout the county including Celbridge*”.

### 4.7.1.3 Vernacular Heritage

Vernacular Architecture describes the local regional traditional building forms and types using indigenous materials, and without grand architectural pretensions’, i.e. the homes and workplaces of the ordinary people built by local people using local materials. This is in contrast to formal architecture, such as the grand estate houses of the gentry, churches and public buildings, which were often designed by architects or engineers.

The majority of vernacular buildings are domestic dwellings. Examples of other structures that may fall into this category include shops, outbuildings, mills, limekilns, farmsteads, forges, gates and gate piers.

### 4.7.1.4 Key Issues

The following issues will require consideration during the plan preparation:

- Impacts on sites of archaeological, architectural and vernacular heritage through development.
- Impacts on historic / heritage landscapes through development.
- Loss of vernacular heritage as a result of evolution of society and building use.
- Impacts on considerable built heritage due to continued high levels of vacancy/abandonment and potential dereliction unless addressed.

## 4.8 Landscape and Visual

The landscape of County Kildare comprises a central plain bounded to the east by the Kildare uplands, which lie at the foot-hills of the Wicklow and Dublin Mountains. The River Liffey, which flows through Celbridge, is one of the inland waters traversing the county providing an important landscape feature.

In 2004, a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of the county was undertaken and is contained in Volume II of the Kildare County Development Plan 2005-2011. The LCA focused on characterisation i.e. the discernment of the character of the landscape based on its land cover and landform, but also on its values, such

as historical, cultural, religious and other understandings of the landscape. The purpose of this document was to assist in the development of landscape objectives for the County Development Plan.

The County is divided into sixteen geographically specific Landscape Character Areas (LCA's). Those LCA's of interest to the proposed Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan 2017-2023 are the Northern Lowlands and the River Liffey.

Based on the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment a landscape sensitivity rating was developed for each of the LCA's. Landscape sensitivity is a measure of the ability of the landscape to accommodate change or intervention without suffering unacceptable effects to its character and values. The sensitivity of the Northern Lowlands is determined to be Class 1 or Low Sensitivity. Low sensitivity areas are those with the capacity to generally accommodate a wide range of uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the area. The sensitivity of the River Liffey Valley is determined to be Class 4 or Special Sensitivity. Special sensitivity areas have low capacity to accommodate uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to special sensitivity factors.

Please refer to **Figure 17** for CORINE Landcover Data in the vicinity of Celbridge.

#### 4.8.1.1 Visual

Scenic routes and protected views consist of important and valued views and prospects within the county. The following views and prospects have been identified as being worthy of protection in the Draft Kildare Development Plan 2017-2023:

- Views within Castletown - Donaghcumper Rural Area; Views to the South and North from Castletown House, including axial view to Obelisk;
- Views of the River Liffey from the main avenue of Castletown House; and
- View of the River Liffey from Celbridge Bridge, Celbridge.

#### 4.8.2 Key Issues

The following issues will require consideration during the plan preparation:

- Maintenance of existing landscape character.
- Impacts on designated protected landscapes as a result of development.
- Impacts due to development on the ecological components of the landscape.
- Impacts due to development on heritage landscapes.
- Impacts due to development on Scenic Routes, Protected Views and Prospects.

Please refer to **Figure 17** for protected views in the vicinity of Celbridge.

## 4.9 Material Assets

### 4.9.1 Baseline

The term ‘Material Assets’ refers to all infrastructure and local services including, transportation, water supply, waste-water treatment and discharge, waste management services, electricity supply, telecommunications etc. A summary of all material assets in Celbridge will be provided in the Environmental Report.

Celbridge is approximately 19 km from Dublin. It is connected to Dublin by the Irish Rail commuter rail services, mainline railway, provincial and Dublin bus services.

Means of commuting to work for Celbridge residents are presented in **Table 4.4**. Over 67% of residents commuting to work chose to drive. This data was obtained from the 2011 census.

**Table 4.4: Means of Commuting to Work for Celbridge Residents**

Means of Commuting to Work	Persons	%
On foot	349	4.2
Bicycle	103	1.2
Bus, minibus or coach	819	9.9
Train, DART or LUAS	346	4.2
Motorcycle or scooter	80	1.0
Motor car: Driver	5,562	67.2
Motor car: Passenger	295	3.6
Van	406	4.9
Other, incl. lorry	26	0.3
Work mainly at or from home	158	1.9
Not stated	133	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,277</b>	<b>100%</b>

Approximately 94% of the water supply to the County comes from outside Kildare – primarily from regional plants at Ballymore Eustace (Dublin City Council) and Leixlip (Fingal County Council). Celbridge’s water is currently supplied from Ballygoran Reservoirs by Fingal County Council.

In relation to wastewater Celbridge is served by the Lower Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme and foul wastewater from the area discharges into the wastewater treatment plant at Leixlip.

### 4.9.2 Key Issues

The following issues will require consideration during the plan preparation:

- Transportation:

- Achieve a sustainable balance between public and private transport modes.
- Protect lands planned for future public transport requirements from development.
- Integration of park and ride services with public transport provisions.
- Water & Waste Water Services:
  - Ongoing maintenance of water supply infrastructure.
  - Monitoring of waste water treatment discharges.
  - Provision of new infrastructure or expansion of existing.
- Waste Management:
  - Limited waste management infrastructure and impacts associated with over reliance on landfill.
- Energy Supply:
  - Over-reliance on non-renewable energy sources.
  - Energy efficiency and associated Greenhouse Gas emissions.
  - Visual impact of infrastructure on landscape.
- Telecommunications:
  - Lack of funding for investment in telecommunications infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

## 4.10 Sensitivity Mapping

In order to identify where most sensitivities within Celbridge and environs occur, a number of the environmental sensitivities described above were weighted and mapped overlapping each other. Please refer to **Figure 19** for draft Environmental Sensitivity Mapping for the Plan area and vicinity.

A weighting system was applied as follows:

- Ecological designations (SAC and SPAs- 10 points - and pNHAs - 5 points);
- Cultural heritage (Entries to the Record of Protected Structures and entries to the Record Monuments and Places – 10 points);
- Scenic Routes and Views (10 points);
- WFD Risk Status for Rivers and Lakes (At Risk of not achieving good status- 10 points, Possibly at risk of not achieving good status- 5 points); and
- Aquifers which are highly (5 points) or extremely (10 points) vulnerable to pollution.

The scores for each are added together in order to determine overall vulnerability as shown in **table 4.5** below.

**Table 4.5 Environmental Sensitivity Overlay Mapping Vulnerability Classes**

Overlay Results	Category
0-5	No sensitivity (i.e. areas without any environmentally sensitive features)
5-15	Low-sensitivity areas
20-25	Moderate-sensitivity areas
30-35	Elevated-sensitivity areas
40-45	High-sensitivity areas
50-60	Extreme-sensitivity areas
>65	Acute-sensitivity areas (i.e. severe sensitivity due to a significant number of overlapping environmental aspects and a clear likelihood of cumulative effects)

The outcome of sensitivity overlay mapping will be used to inform the Plan.

**SCOPING QUESTION NO. 2**

Are there any other significant environmental issues that should be considered?

**SCOPING QUESTION NO. 3**

Are there any environmental issues that should be scoped out of the SEA at this stage?

## 5 Environmental Objectives, Indicators and Targets

### 5.1.1 Introduction

The preceding sections have outlined the key environmental issues relating to the proposed Plan and outlined relevant plans and programmes which are likely to affect, or be affected by the Plan. Based on that information a series of draft SEA objectives, indicators and associated targets have been developed as set out below.

### 5.1.2 Draft Objectives and Targets

A range of draft environmental objectives have been established for the Celbridge (including Castletown) Local Area Plan 2017-2023 and accompanying SEA. The draft objectives take into account the findings of the “*Environmental Challenges and Priorities*” for Ireland as set out in Chapter 10 of EPA Ireland’s Environment 2012 (EPA, 2012). The draft objectives are outlined in **Table 5.1** along with a preliminary list of targets.

**Table 5.1: Draft Objectives and Targets**

Draft Objectives	Draft Targets
<b>Biodiversity including Flora and Fauna</b>	
Conserve and protect the diversity of habitats and species by limiting adverse impacts on habitats and species of conservation concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider siting of new development on non-sensitive sites.</li> <li>• Improve/conservate and protect all designated sites and species within and adjacent to the Plan area.</li> <li>• Deliver the requirement of the Habitats Directive (Article 4, Paragraph 4) for the maintenance or restoration of annexed habitats and species within SACs at a “favourable conservation status.</li> <li>• Promote the maintenance and, as appropriate, achievement of favourable conservation status of habitats and species, in association with the NPWS and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Protect SPAs, Annex I bird species, and regularly occurring migratory bird species and their habitats, and avoid pollution or deterioration of important bird habitats outside SPAs.</li> <li>• Improve the ecological coherence of Natura 2000 by encouraging the management of, maintaining, and where appropriate developing, features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. Such features are those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as</li> </ul>

Draft Objectives	Draft Targets
	<p>rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect NHAs, National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Refuges for Fauna or Flora and sites proposed for designation.</li> <li>● Improve/maintain protection for important wildlife sites, particularly urban wildlife corridors and linear and stepping stone features for migration, dispersal and exchange of wildlife.</li> <li>● Improve access for the appreciation and promotion of wildlife.</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	
<p>Improve people's quality of life based on high-quality residential, working and recreational environments and on sustainable travel patterns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minimise population exposure to high levels of noise, vibration and air pollution.</li> <li>● Increase modal shift to public transport.</li> <li>● Co-ordinate land use and transportation policies.</li> <li>● Improve access to recreation opportunities.</li> </ul>

<b>Soils &amp; Geology</b>	
Protect quality and quantity of existing soil and geology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevent pollution of soil through adoption of appropriate environmental protection procedures during construction and maintenance works on site.</li> <li>Ensure polluting substances are appropriately stored and bundled.</li> <li>Ensure appropriate management of existing contaminated soil in accordance with the requirements of current waste legislation.</li> <li>Re-use of brownfield lands, rather than developing Greenfield lands, where possible.</li> <li>Minimise the consumption of non-renewable sand, gravel and rock deposits.</li> </ul>
<b>Water Resources</b>	
Improve/maintain and protect water quality and the management of watercourses to comply with the standards of the Water Framework Directive and incorporate the objectives of the Floods Directive into sustainable planning and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the achievement of “good” ecological and chemical status/potential of waterbodies in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.</li> <li>Minimise flood risk through appropriate management of flood vulnerable zones.</li> <li>Promote sustainable drainage practices to improve water quality and flow.</li> </ul>
<b>Air, Noise &amp; Climate</b>	
Maintain and promote continuing environmental improvement where possible of emissions to air (including noise emissions).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimise air and noise emissions during construction and operation of new developments.</li> <li>Promote minimisation of greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere.</li> <li>Limiting climate change and adapting to climate change.</li> </ul>
<b>Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage</b>	
Promote the protection and conservation of the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regeneration of derelict and underutilised heritage sites.</li> <li>Improve appearance of areas with particular townscape character.</li> <li>Improve protection for protected archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, protected structures and conservation areas and areas of archaeological potential.</li> <li>Enhance access to sites of heritage interest.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape and Visual</b>	
Conserve and enhance valued natural and historic landscapes and features within them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve protection for landscapes of recognised quality.</li> <li>Maintain clear urban/rural distinctions.</li> <li>Enhance provision of, and access to, green</li> </ul>

	<p>space in urban areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure development is sensitive to its surroundings.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	
<p>Make best use of existing infrastructure, promote the sustainable development of new infrastructure and promote the sustainable efficient use of resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve availability and accessibility of commercially provided facilities and public services.</li> <li>• Increase local employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Improve efficiencies of transport, energy and communication infrastructure.</li> <li>• Promotion of sustainable transport infrastructure i.e. increased public transport.</li> <li>• Reduce the generation of waste and adopt a sustainable approach to waste management.</li> </ul>

### 5.1.3 Draft SEA Indicators

An array of SEA Indicators will be further developed during compilation of the environmental baseline. Preliminary draft indicators are highlighted in **Table 5.2**.

**Table 5.2: Draft SEA Indicators**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Draft SEA Indicator</b>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and extent of Protected Sites.</li> <li>• Areas actively managed for conservation.</li> <li>• Population and range of Protected Species.</li> <li>• Achievement of the Objectives of Biodiversity Plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Population &amp; Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Census population data.</li> <li>• Rates of Unemployment per area.</li> <li>• % increase in housing (number and type).</li> </ul>
<b>Soils &amp; Geology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rates of re-use / recycling of construction waste.</li> <li>• Rates of cement / concrete production.</li> <li>• Rates of brownfield site and contaminated land reuse and development.</li> <li>• Rates of greenfield development.</li> </ul>
<b>Water Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance of potable water sources with water quality regulations.</li> <li>• Compliance of surface waters with national and international standards.</li> <li>• Potable and wastewater treatment capacities versus population.</li> <li>• % of wastewater receiving tertiary treatment.</li> <li>• Achievement of the Objectives of the River Basin Management Plans.</li> <li>• Amount of new developments within flood plains.</li> <li>• Annual costs of damage related to flood events.</li> </ul>

Item	Draft SEA Indicator
<b>Air, Noise &amp; Climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic, Transport and Vehicular survey data.</li> <li>• National and region specific emission data.</li> <li>• Compliance with national standards.</li> <li>• Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>• Number and extent of emission licensed facilities.</li> <li>• Number of energy / renewable energy production facilities.</li> <li>• Rates of energy / renewable energy consumption.</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating of inventories to include new sites / features.</li> <li>• Achieving the objectives of development plans regarding heritage protection.</li> <li>• Range and extent of areas of heritage potential.</li> <li>• Range and extent of areas of special planning controls.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape &amp; Visual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range and extent of Amenity Landscapes.</li> <li>• Rates of development within designated landscapes.</li> <li>• Rates of urban expansion.</li> <li>• Rates of deforestation.</li> <li>• Rates of agricultural land re-development.</li> <li>• % change of land use from rural to urban.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location / level of Infrastructure.</li> <li>• Achievement of development plan objectives.</li> <li>• Rates of deprivation.</li> <li>• Rate of waste disposal to landfill statistics.</li> <li>• Range and extent of recycling facilities and services.</li> <li>• Rates of recycling.</li> </ul>

**SCOPING QUESTION NO. 4**

Do you have any comments regarding the draft SEA environmental objectives, targets or indicators?

## 6 What Happens Next?

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### 6.1 Introduction

Throughout this document, a range of questions have been posed for comment.

All responses to these questions will be assessed and will be used by the SEA team to refine and develop the Environmental Report and SEA Statement. Responding to these questions will allow the SEA team to address any issues or concerns that have been raised during the scoping process.

An Environmental Report will be produced incorporating the comments received and the input from all scoping responses. This report will identify all pertinent environmental objectives to comply with a range of legislation, plans and programmes that must be addressed by the SEA in order to contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development and protection of the environment of Celbridge and Castletown.

A copy of this scoping report will be made available for viewing on the Kildare County Council website: <http://kildare.ie/countycouncil/index.html>

### 6.2 Statutory Consultation

Article 13A(14)(a) of S.I. 201 of 2011 sets out the five government bodies which must be consulted in relation to scoping of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as follows:

*“Where, following consideration under sub-article (2), a determination under sub-article (3) has not been made by the planning authority, the authority shall give notice in accordance with paragraph (b) to the following environmental authorities and planning authorities: –*

- (i) the Environmental Protection Agency,*
- (ii) the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government,*
- (iii) where it appears to the planning authority that the plan or programme or modification of the plan or programme, might have significant effects on fisheries or the marine environment, the Minister for Agriculture, Marine and Food, and the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources,*
- (iv) where it appears to the competent authority that the plan or programme or amendment to a plan or programme, might have significant effects in relation to the architectural or archaeological heritage or to nature conservation, the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs, and*
- (v) any adjoining planning authority whose area is contiguous to the area of a planning authority which prepared a draft plan, proposed variation or local area plan.”*

A copy of this scoping document will be forwarded to the relevant environmental authorities and planning authorities and the responses will be incorporated into the Environmental Report.