



Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge  
Waterford City & County Council

# **Camping Site Policy**

**Proposed Variation No. 4 to;**

**Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017**

**Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019**

**Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment – Screening**

**June 2018**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Waterford City & County Council is proposing to make a variation to the Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019, the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018 to ensure policies and standards are supportive and up-to-date for a significantly more developed tourism offer in Waterford City and County, whilst also reflecting the requirement to protect and enhance existing towns and villages and safeguard the natural, built and cultural landscape of Waterford.

In order to ensure Planning Policy fully supports tourism and is up-to-date with new tourism innovation and requirements, it is considered timely that the development plan policy is now reviewed. The Proposed Variation No.4 therefore, proposes;

1. Amendments to policies in Volume One of the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 (no variation is proposed to policies in the Written Statement of the Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019 or the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018).

2. Amendments to Development Management Standards (Variation No.1) of the Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019, the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018.

No changes are proposed to any land use zoning objectives in the Waterford City Development Plan, Waterford County Development Plan or Dungarvan Town Development Plan under this variation process.

## **2. SCREENING STATEMENT**

The requirements for SEA in Ireland are set out in the national regulations, S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 and S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011) and S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011) respectively.

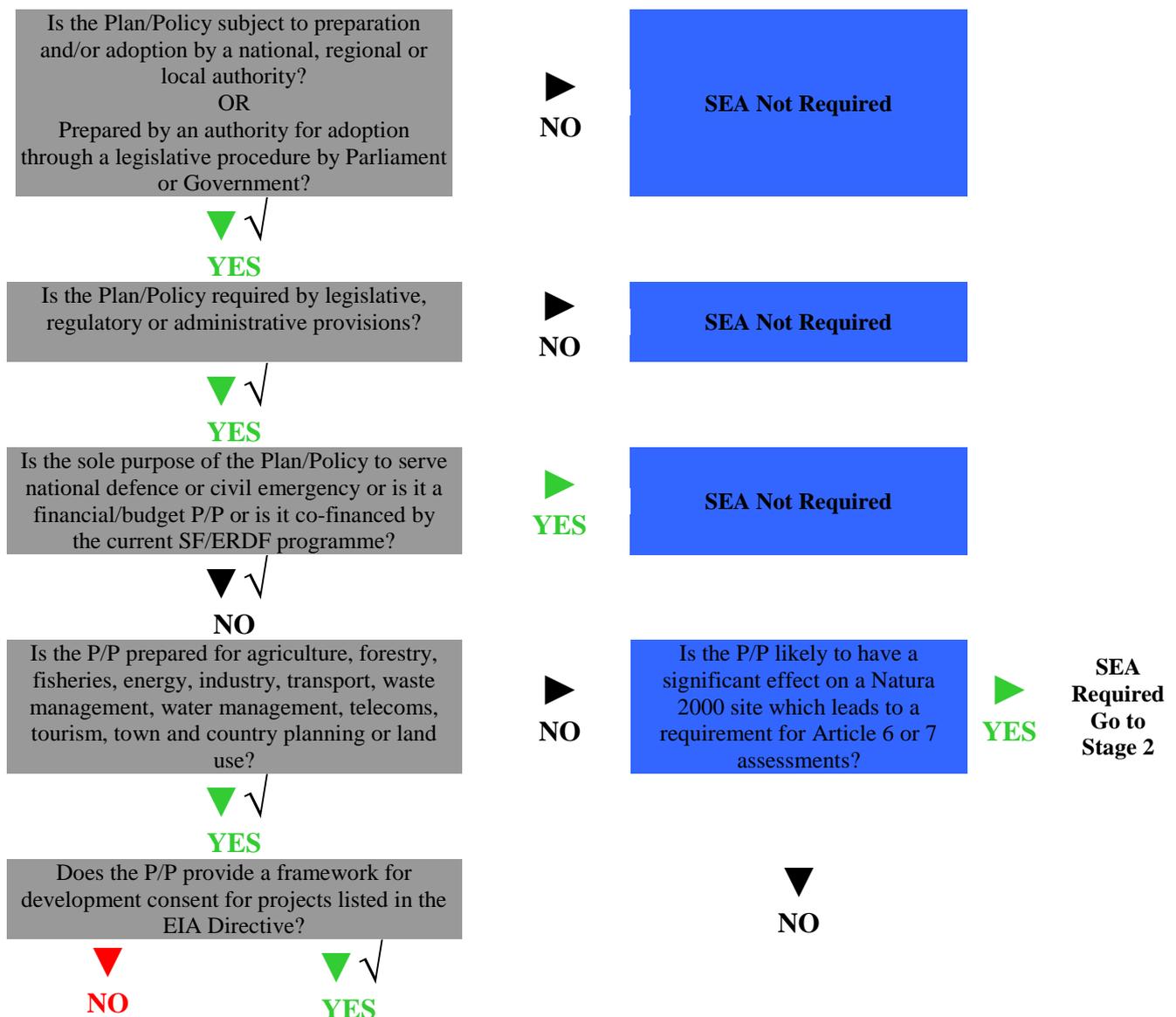
Under Section 13K (1) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, where a planning authority proposes to make a variation of a development plan under section 13 of the Act, it shall, before giving notice under section 13(2) of the Act, consider whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A.. These criteria must be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise.

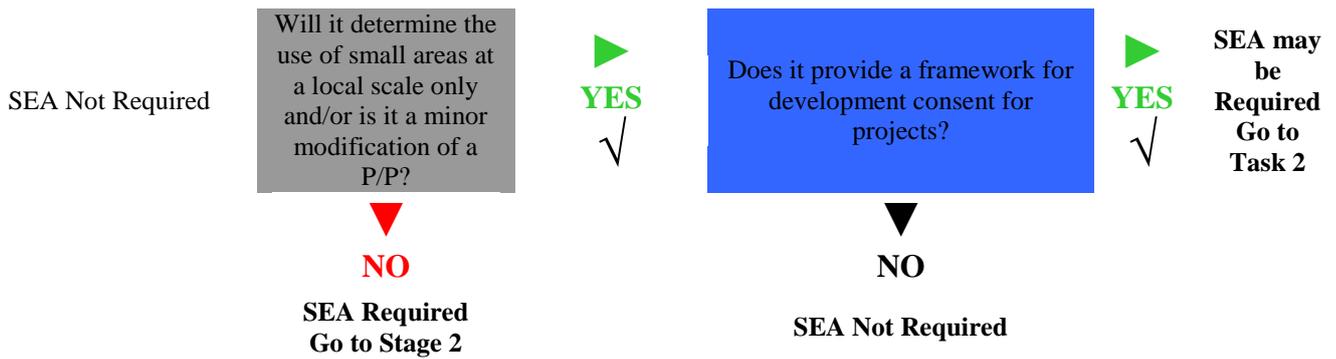
## Stage One - Pre-Screening

The first step in determining whether the proposed variations would require a SEA involved a pre-screening check. It allows rapid screening-out of plans and policies that are clearly not going to have any environmental impact and screening-in of those that definitely do require SEA.

Following the pre-screening exercise (Figure 1) it is apparent that it is necessary to conduct further screening to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the proposed variation will provide a framework for development therefore it was necessary to determine whether an SEA would be required by testing it against environmental significance screening criteria.

**Figure 1. Pre-Screening Decision Tree**





## Stage Two - Environmental Significance Screening

The application of environmental significance criteria is important in determining whether SEA is required for small Plans/Policies or modifications to Plans/Policies. Annex II (2) of Directive 2001/42/EC sets out the “statutory” criteria that should be addressed when undertaking this stage.

### Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Environmental Effects

#### *Characteristics of the Plan/Programme*

- i. *the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;*

The proposed variation of the existing tourism policies aims to ensure that all camping sites (taken to include static and touring caravans, campervan, glamping and tented sites) are of a standard which do not adversely impact on environmental and landscape quality and amenity and avoid adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Proposals for camping sites must comply with requirements for urban locations, high potential tourism attractors and for other rural locations that may be considered suitable for such developments. Development proposals will be appraised in the context of the proposed amended policy and development management standards and according to compliance with environmental policies and standards in these plans.

- ii. *the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;*

The variation proposes amendments to;

1. Policies in Volume One of the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 ( no variation to policies in the Written Statement of the Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019 or the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018).

2. Development Management Standards (Variation No.1) of the Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019, the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018.

*iii. the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;*

Policy ECD 29 states the policy is to ensure that all camping sites are of a standard which do not adversely impact on environmental and landscape quality and amenity and avoid adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites. The policy states that camping sites should be located at appropriate locations within or adjacent to existing settlements and in full compliance with the Development Management Standards of the Development Plan (s).

*iv. environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;*

No strategically significant environmental problems can be identified in relation to the proposed variations to Objective ECD7 and Policy ECD 29 or Development Management Standard 7.11 Camping Sites.

The SEA matrix for objective ECD 7 in the Environmental Report of the Waterford County Development Plan 2011 appraised the impacts on the Environmental Objectives as mainly neutral and positive with uncertain impacts on biodiversity. No impacts were appraised as negative. The proposed variation will not give rise to significant negative effects. Uncertain impacts can be appraised at the project level through screening for AA.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Negative</b>
ECD <sub>o7</sub>	P2 W1 W2 AC1 AC2 AC3 S1	P1 C1 L1 MA1	B1	

*v. the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).*

Policy ECD 29 states the policy is to ensure that all camping sites are of a standard which do not adversely impact on environmental and landscape quality and amenity and avoid adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Proposed amendment to Development Management Standard 7.11 Camping Sites requires utilisation of existing public sewers and public water supplies where feasible. In the absence of a public sewer the developer shall demonstrate full

compliance with relevant guidance/standards and legislation for waste water treatment and discharge.

### ***Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be Affected***

#### *i. the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects*

The proposed variation will provide for an expansion in camping sites. Given the requirements to be located in settlements and existing areas zoned for tourism and compliance with standards and legislation for water supply and wastewater. It is considered the probability that these effects will be environmentally significant in negative terms low.

#### *ii. the cumulative nature of the effects*

Expansion in camping sites could give rise to increase in vehicular emissions, traffic and recreational pressure on sites designated for nature conservation. Air quality in Waterford is generally of a high standard across the country. County Waterford lies in Zone C. Impacts on Natura 2000 sites shall be appraised at the project level through screening for AA. It is not considered that cumulative effects on the environment arising from the proposed variation will be significant.

#### *the transboundary nature of the effects*

It is considered that high tourism attractors such as the Waterford Greenway and Blackwater Blueway will increase the need for camper accommodation along with the proposed Waterford- New Ross Greenway in South Kilkenny. Given the proposal's requirements to be located in settlements and existing areas zoned for tourism and compliance with standards and legislation for water supply and wastewater it is not considered that cumulative effects on the environment arising from the proposed variation will be significant.

#### *iii. the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)*

It is not considered that there are negative risks to human health arising from the proposed variation. An expansion in camping sites (taken to include static and touring caravans, campervan, glamping and tented sites) will promote use of high tourism attractors such as the Waterford Greenway and promote access to outdoor amenities such as the Waterford Coast, Comeragh Mountains and Waterways which is a positive benefit to human health and quality of life.

#### *iv. the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)*

The population of Waterford City and County is approximately 115,000. Approximately 250,000 users were recorded from the Waterford Greenway in 2017 with anticipated increased use in 2018 and beyond.

v. *the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to*

- *special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;*

Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019, Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 and Dungarvan Town Plan 2012-2018 identify the following protected areas/elements of the natural/cultural heritage:

- Protected Structures
- Sites of Archaeological Significance
- Areas with natural heritage designations

A key objective of the County, City and Dungarvan Development Plans which provide the planning and development framework for implementation of the variation is to protect and enhance Waterford's heritage and key characteristics, both natural and man-made. Policy ECD 29 states the policy is to ensure that all camping sites are of a standard which do not adversely impact on environmental and landscape quality and amenity and avoid adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Development Management Standard 7.11 Camping Sites requires utilisation of existing public sewers and public water supplies where feasible. In the absence of a public sewer the developer shall demonstrate full compliance with relevant guidance/standards and legislation for waste water treatment and discharge.

- *exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;*

It is not expected that any environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas limited as a result of the proposed variation. Development proposals will be appraised in the context of the proposed amended policy and development management standards and according to compliance with environmental policies and standards in these plans.

- *intensive land-use;*

Any projects arising that require development consent under planning legislation will be required to comply with land use and environmental policy of the Waterford City, Waterford County and Dungarvan Town Development Plans. The policy promotes a hierarchy of locating these development types in settlements and existing areas zoned for tourism.

vi. *the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.*

Any projects that require development consent under planning legislation will be required to comply with land use and environmental policy of the Waterford City, Waterford County and Dungarvan Town Development Plans and will be assessed in the context of the Waterford Scenic Landscape Evaluation. Impacts on Natura 2000 sites shall be appraised at the project level through screening for AA. It is not anticipated that the proposed variation will have a significant environmental impact on sites, conforming as they will be required to do with polices protecting such sites in the City, County and Town Development Plans.

### **Stage Three - Conclusions & Recommendation**

Following the screening process, whereby the specific context of the proposed variation has been assessed against the environmental significance criteria as contained in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive, **it is concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the proposed variations No 4** to the Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019, the Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2012-2018.