

Department of Transport

Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This report contains the Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) on the adopted Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan (referred to hereinafter as the RLEVCNP or, the Plan) developed by Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI).

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that any plan or project, which is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a European site, but would be likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, should be subject to an Appropriate Assessment (AA).

This report assesses the potential for the Plan to result in likely significant effects on any European site¹.

1.2 Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan

The RLEVCNP is a national document which provides a roadmap to sustainably deliver EV charging infrastructure across Ireland at destination and residential areas, in line with both national and European ambitions for cleaner transportation from 2024-2030.

1.3 Requirement for Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) (the ‘Habitats Directive’ provides the legal protection for habitats and species, with Articles 3 to 9 providing legislative protection to the EU wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 site network. Natura 2000 is a network of protected sites which comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (referred to as European sites within this report). SACs are protected sites designated under the Habitats Directive. They are high quality sites that contribute significantly to the conservation of a large range of habitats and species. SPAs are protected for the conservation of wild birds under the Birds Directive and their habitats.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (as amended), and by Part 6 of the Planning and Development Act, 2024. Under the Birds & Natural Habitats Regulations, prior to submitting for approval a plan that is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of either a SPA or SAC, competent authorities or public authority are required to consider whether the plan may have a significant effect on such a site; and where this is the case, that an AA of the Plan must be carried out.

1.4 Relationship with the National EV Charging Infrastructure Plan

This Plan follows the publication of the National EV Charging Infrastructure Plan in 2023 and addresses the regional and local scale for EV charging infrastructure. An AA of the national plan was carried out in 2023 and within states *“It should also be noted that any project proposal relating to one of the proposals will be subject to a project level AA”*.

Due to the nature of this Plan and in accordance with the requirements of the relative legislation found in Section 1.3, the Plan is subject to Screening for AA.

1.5 Statement of Competency

The statement of competency can be found in Appendix A attached to this report.

¹ Appropriate Assessment comes from the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), which seeks to safeguard the long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats. The geographical areas of particular importance to these species and habitats have been selected as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) which are collectively referred to (in Ireland) as European Site (s). Together, these sites comprise the pan-European Natura 2000 network of protected areas.

1.6 Consultation

The draft RLEVCNP, its AA Screening and other environmental assessments, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) were put on wider display on the Government of Ireland website from 24 May 2024 to 19 July 2024. A total of eighty-three submissions were received as part of the consultation.

All the submissions related to the draft RLEVCNP; none of the submissions related to the AA Screening and SEA report.

ZEVI have prepared a Submission Response Report, the EV Public Consultation Report, which summarises the key issues raised as part of the consultation and how those issues were responded to. The Submission Response Report is a standalone report and has been published alongside the adopted RLEVCNP.

Following the submissions made by the public to the draft RLEVCNP, minor updates have been made to the adopted RLEVCNP that are not considered material. Minor changes to text have been made to AA Screening and are detailed below (Table 5.1). These changes have not changed the outcome of the AA Screening to the adopted Plan.

2. Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan (2025-2030)

2.1 Introduction

Ireland's RLEVCNP 2025-2030 is a national document which provides a pathway for delivery of public EV charging infrastructure at destination and residential areas, in line with both national and European ambitions for cleaner transportation. This plan ensures a cohesive and standardised approach, minimising confusion for the public. It will be supported by local authorities and regional strategies, promoting a unified and efficient rollout of charging infrastructure, facilitating nationwide integration of EVs.

2.2 The National Strategy

To support the delivery of these targets, in January 2023, ZEVI published the EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2025. This sets out the national approach to rolling out charging infrastructure across Ireland to drive EV adoption. The strategy focuses on how to deliver home, neighbourhood, destination, and en-route charging for different vehicle types through a mix of delivery groups involving both public and private sector stakeholders, private, and public-private delivery groups.

The National Strategy reflects the urgent need for action to address climate change and the need for a strategic and just transition to sustainable ways of travelling. It is based on a set of fundamental principles (Figure 2.1) underpinning the roll-out of EV charging infrastructure over the coming decade. These principles were developed against the backdrop of climate change, the urgent need to decarbonise the Irish transport system and the opportunity to maximise the benefits of the electric mobility transition for all.

The National Strategy was accompanied by an Implementation Plan that included an initial set of actions and deliverables to support the strategy's delivery. This included the development of this document and the complementary National Road Network EV Charging Plan, published in May 2024. Whereas the latter focuses on the national expansion of the high-powered charging network on the Motorway, Ten-T and National roads and also encompasses charging requirements for HDVs, this Plan focuses on delivering charging infrastructure for LDVs in neighbourhoods where people do not have access to private off-street parking, and at destinations. Together, these two plans make up the National EV Charging Network Plan.

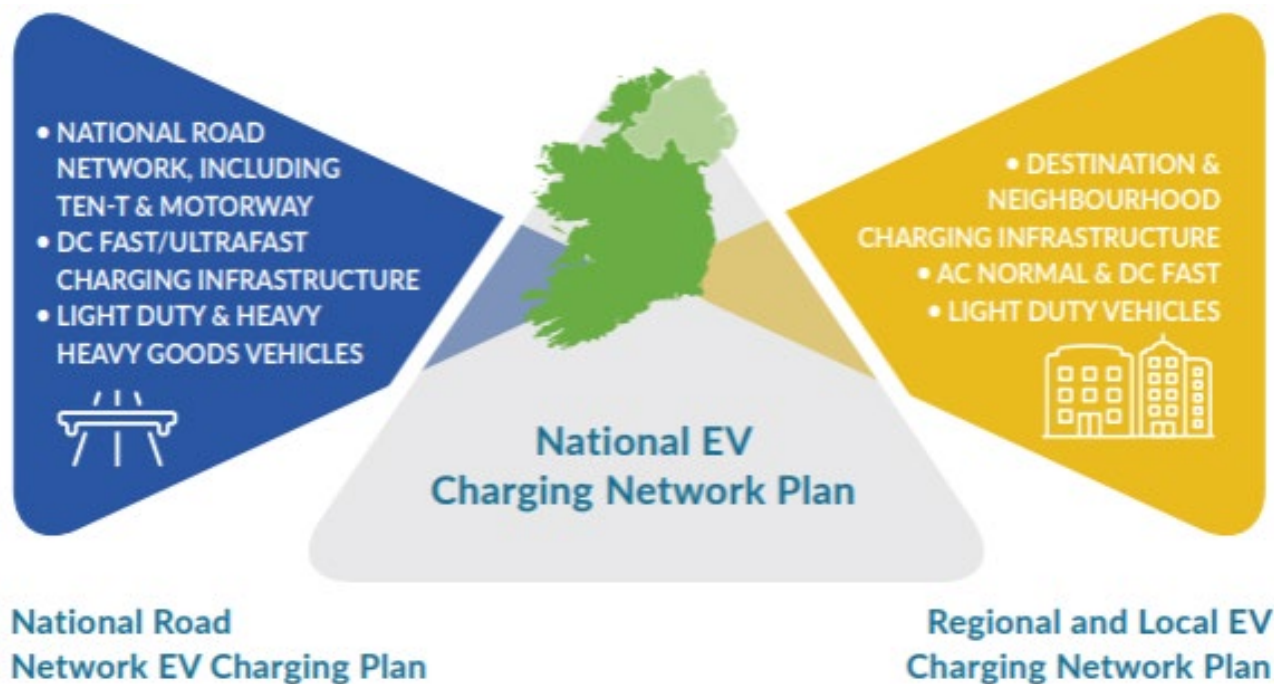


Figure 2.1 National EV Charging Plan

2.3 Scope of the RLEVCNP

The RLEVCNP provides a way forward for equitably delivering charging infrastructure at a national and local level to support the national and international efforts to reduce transport-related carbon emissions through the shift to zero emission vehicles for all users. The Plan lays out a pathway, adhering to the fundamental principles set out in the Infrastructure Strategy, to sustainably deliver public charging infrastructure for light duty vehicles at destination and neighbourhood locations.

With EV adoption rates growing and the planned phasing out of carbon-emitting vehicles, a demand for convenient public charging will increase. Particularly in neighbourhood and destination locations, deploying infrastructure is key to ensuring that users and residents without off-street parking have access to affordable and convenient public charging – most notably in areas where transport alternatives are scarce.

The objectives of this Plan are to:

- 1) Support the delivery of well-defined local and regional plans for a coordinated, resilient, self-sustaining, future-proofed network that minimises public funding supports and meets user needs.
- 2) In partnership with key stakeholders, support the coordinated and accelerated expansion of a publicly accessible destination and neighbourhood EV charging network that aligns with greater e-mobility policies.
- 3) Provide a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of both AFIR requirements and Climate Action Plan objectives.

The accelerated expansion of public destination and neighbourhood charging infrastructure will be led by local authorities with the support and in partnership with other public sector bodies, private sector groups and other stakeholders.

2.4 Extent of the Plan Area

The RLEVCNP is a national level plan which covers the entirety of the Republic of Ireland.

To deliver a cohesive charging network that meets user needs, local authorities will take a regional approach to developing a strategy for the delivery of local charging networks, with the exception of local authorities in Dublin, Cork City and Galway City who have completed or are in advanced stages in the development of their strategies.² The seven regions and three city areas (Figure 2.2) have been agreed with local authorities.

Given local authorities' access to suitable sites and knowledge of their jurisdictions and residents' needs, as well as complementary ongoing strategic efforts to promote sustainable mobility, they are in a unique position to design targeted strategies to expand access to publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure at a local level. Local authorities can identify areas where gaps in the charging network pose a barrier to EV adoption and inequitably hinder individuals or groups from shifting from ICE to electric vehicles. Due to their knowledge of their local context and opportunities, ownership of suitable sites, and project delivery and stakeholder engagement experience, local authorities can make efficient use of available funding, accelerating the deployment of charging stations where they are needed the most.

By coordinating across jurisdiction borders, local authorities can avoid the risks of insular, siloed planning and potential oversupply of infrastructure where demand does not warrant this while also ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure in rural and remote areas to meet future demand to ensure equitable access to charging infrastructure to promote widespread EV adoption.

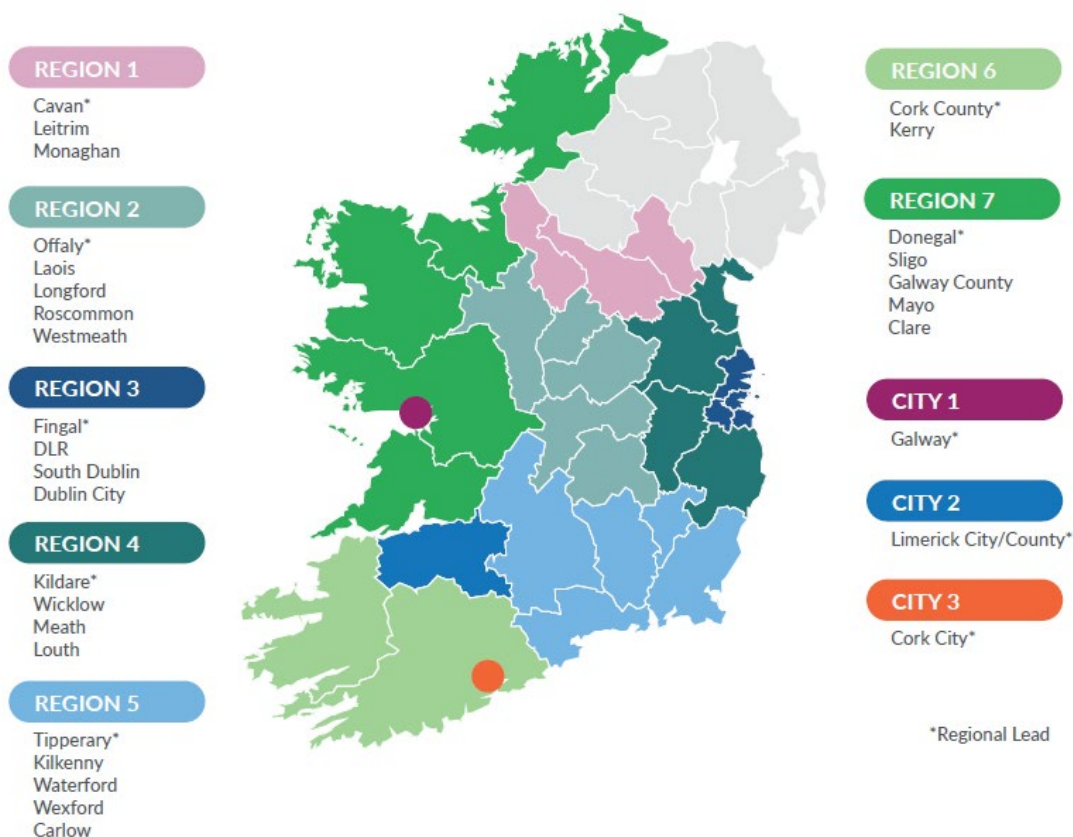


Figure 2.2 Regional approach for strategy development

2.5 Plan Period

The time horizon for the adopted RLEVCNP covers the period from 2025 to 2030.

² These regional groupings are agreed in principle, and subject to funding and resources.

3. Appropriate Assessment Process

3.1 Appropriate Assessment Stages

The AA process involves a number of steps and tests that need to be applied in sequential order.

An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. First of all, a plan or project must be screened to identify whether the potential for likely significant effects on a European site(s) exists. If that possibility cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment is to be undertaken prior to any consent being granted. Consent shall not be granted if it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. Article 6(4) allows for consent to be granted in particular and exceptional circumstances, even if adverse effects may arise.

Screening for AA, for which this report provides the relevant information, is the first step in this process. This is required to establish, on the basis of objective information, whether the Plan, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, has the potential for likely significant effect on a European site.

The Screening for AA must include a final determination by the public authority as to whether or not a proposed project would adversely affect the integrity of a European site. In order to reach a final determination, the public authority must undertake examination, analysis and evaluation, followed by findings, conclusions and a final determination.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 European Sites

European sites, as defined under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) (as amended) are part of the Natura 2000 network and include those designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), candidate SACs (cSACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or proposed SPAs (pSPAs). These are sometimes referred to as Natura 2000 sites.

SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats³ (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species⁴ (Annex II species do not include birds) as designated by the Habitats Directive.

SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and all migratory birds and their habitats as designated by the Birds Directive.

The Annex habitats and species, for which each site is selected, are termed the Qualifying Interests (QI) for SACs and termed Special Conservation Interests (SCI) for SPAs.

3.2.2 Conservation Objective

Conservation Objectives (COs) for the European sites are defined for the relevant QIs and SCIs. In its most general sense, a CO is the specification of the overall target for the species and/or habitat types for which a site is designated in order for it to contribute to maintaining or reaching favourable conservation status⁵.

3.2.3 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

The Source-Pathway-Receptor model is used to assess where a potential effect may result by examining the source, its pathway and the receptor. As per guidance from the OPR⁶ these can be defined as follows:

³ Annex I habitats are habitats whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation

⁴ Annex II species are animal and plant species whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation

⁵ Commission Note on Setting Conservation Objectives for Natura 2000 Sites (November 2012) European Commission, Doc. Hab.12-04/06. Accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/commission_note/commission_note2_EN.pdf

⁶ OPR (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01. Accessed at <https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/9729-Office-of-the-Planning-Regulator-Appropriate-Assessment-Screening-booklet-15.pdf> November 2023.

- **Source:** The origin of a potential effect which may include characteristics of a plan or project that have the potential to result in effects e.g. direct impacts such as loss of habitat;
- **Pathway:** How the potential effect may occur on the source. These are identifiable through linkages that may occur through the plan or project and European sites e.g. direct pathways such as physical proximity, hydrological connections or indirect pathways such as disturbance to migrating species; and
- **Receptor:** The European site network and respective QIs/SCIs, their ecological condition and sensitivities e.g. freshwater pearl mussel is sensitive to siltation in water.

3.2.4 Zone of Influence

A Zone of Influence (ZoI) within any assessment of projects and/or plans considers the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed plan/project and associated activities.

4. Appropriate Assessment Methodology

4.1 Relevant Guidance

The following guidance was used in preparing this AA Screening report:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision);
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) 1/10 and PSSP 2/10;
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 Sites: Methodical guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 20214);
- Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle. (European Commission 2000);
- Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2007);
- Guidance for Public Authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to development/works undertaken by or behalf of a Public Authority (National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2021);
- Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2019); and
- Office of the Planning Regulator Practice Note PN01 – Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021).

The requirements for Screening for AA, and AA, of plan effects on European sites, are set out in Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) with numerous relevant rulings and opinions issues in both Irish and EU courts. AA is a process required under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive as transposed by the aforementioned Regulations and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

4.2 Data Sources

The ecological data reviewed to inform this report comprises:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Map Viewer⁷;
- Birds Directive Article 12 web tool⁸;
- NPWS (2023) Conservation Objectives Series⁹;
- NPWS (2023) SAC and SPA Datasheets¹⁰;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Designations web viewer¹¹;
- NPWS Protected Sites in Ireland¹²;
- NPWS The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland Web Viewer¹³;
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 1: Summary Overview. Unpublished NPWS report¹⁴. NPWS (2019);
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 2: Habitat Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report¹⁵. Edited by: Deirdre Lynn and Fionnuala O’Neil. NPWS (2019); and
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 3: Species Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report¹⁶ (2019). Edited by: Deirdre Lynn and Fionnuala O’Neill (2020).

4.3 Methodology

In line with the relevant guidance and case law, the AA Screening consists of the following steps, which are iterative in nature:

1. **Impact Prediction:** Identify the aspects of the Plan likely to affect the COs of European Sites. The more general classification of impacts can include direct and indirect effects; short and long-term effects; construction, operational and decommissioning effects; and isolated, interactive and cumulative effects. A Source-Pathway-Receptor model has been used to identify the zone of influence.
2. **Assessment of Effects:** The actions of the Plan are assessed as to whether they are likely to result in a likely significant effect upon a European site(s). This requires understanding of relevant QIs/SCIs and associated COs.

⁷EPA Map Viewer accessed at <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> accessed January 2025

⁸ Article 12 of the Birds Directive Web tool accessed at <https://nature-art12.eionet.europa.eu/article12/> accessed January 2025

⁹NPWS Conservation objectives accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives> accessed January 2025

¹⁰NPWS SAC and SPA Datasheets accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/designated-site-data/sac-and-spa-datasheets-downloads> accessed January 2025

¹¹ NPWS Designations web viewer accessed at <https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8f7060450de3485fa1c1085536d477ba> accessed January 2025

¹² NPWS Protected sites accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites> accessed January 2025

¹³ NPWS The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland web viewer accessed at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/1a721520030d404f899d658d5b6e159a> accessed January 2025

¹⁴ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland: Volume 1 Summary Overview accessed at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2019_Vol1_Summary_Article17.pdf January 2025

¹⁵The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 2: Habitat Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2019_Vol2_Habitats_Article17.pdf January 2025

¹⁶ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 3: Species Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report accessed at https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2019_Vol3_Species_Article17.pdf January 2025

4.3.1 Impact Prediction: Identifying potential impacts and the Zone of Influence

The process for impact prediction is carried out through the analysis of the Plan proposals. In accordance with the guidance from the OPR⁶, the impact relates to the source within the source-pathways-receptor framework. Following identification of the impacts/source, the ZoI is then established using the source-pathway-receptor framework and takes into consideration the scale of the elements of the Plan. The principle for establishing ZoI, as outlined in the 2021 OPR Practice Note PN01, applies equally to a plan level AA and so the source-pathway-receptor model has been used in this report.

4.3.2 Assessment of Effects

4.3.2.1 Understanding the Conservation Objectives of European Sites

The COs of European sites are focused primarily on maintaining or restoring the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species of interest (i.e. the QIs and SCIs). European sites have Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs), which focus on the specific areas or populations of the qualifying habitat or species at a site by setting targets for appropriate attributes of each feature. The detailed SSCO are available from the NPWS website¹⁷ and outline the attributes and targets for QIs and SCIs of European sites. Where potential LSE have been determined in Section 5, the COs of European Sites will be assessed against the potential impacts of the Plan.

4.3.2.2 Assessment of Effects of the Plan

Guidance documents (see Section 4.1) provide proposed criteria to determine if a proposal is likely to have adverse effects. These criteria are particularly suited to AA Screening of individual projects, as detail on the receiving environment will be available for analysis when project locations are known.

4.3.2.3 In-Combination Assessment of Effects

The consideration of in-combination effects discusses the potential for other projects and/or plans that may spatially or temporally overlap with the Plan. The in-combination assessment occurs when the potential for LSE as a result of the Plan alone cannot be excluded, and these potential LSE are examined against other projects and/or plans. Where the Screening assessment concludes that there is no potential for likely significant effects as a result of the Plan alone then an in combination assessment is not required.

5. Screening for Appropriate Assessment

5.1 Overview

The process of screening for AA has focused on any interactions between the European site COs and the effects of implementing the Plan proposals. The Plan proposals have been assessed to determine the potential impacts that may occur upon European site(s). Where potential impacts have been identified, the S-P-R methodology was applied to determine the likely significant effects upon European site(s).

Table 5.1 below identifies the potential impacts arising from the implementation of the Plan.

¹⁷ NPWS Conservation Objectives. Accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives> January 2025.

Table 5.1 Screening assessment of the Proposals of the RLEVCNP

No.	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal	Identification of potential impacts	Potential for likely significant effects	Screening Outcome
1	The objectives of this plan are to: 1) Support the coordinated expansion of a destination and neighbourhood EV charging network. (Page 3)	In partnership with key stakeholders, support the coordinated and accelerated expansion of a publicly accessible destination and neighbourhood EV charging network that aligns with greater e-mobility policies.	No potential impacts identified. This Proposal is a strategic objective of the Plan, and the provision of support does not in itself suggest physical development or in-situ works.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out
2	The objectives of this plan are to: 2) Provide a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of the Climate Action Plan objectives. (Page 3)	Provide a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of both AFIR requirements and Climate Action Plan objectives.	No potential impacts identified. This Proposal is a strategic objective of the Plan that aims to address national infrastructure targets and does not in itself lead to development or in-situ works.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out
3	The objectives of this plan are to: 3) Support the delivery of well-defined local and regional plans for a resilient and future-proofed network that minimises public funding supports and encourages participation from private stakeholders to drive delivery. (Page 3)	Support the delivery of well-defined local and regional plans for a coordinated, resilient, self-sustaining, future-proofed network that minimises public funding supports and meets user needs.	No potential impacts identified. This Proposal is a strategic objective of the Plan that aims to direct funding approach to implementation. It does not in itself lead to development or in-situ works.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects identified exists.	Screened Out
4	Based on the priority areas and user groups identified in the local strategies, local authorities will need to identify the potential sites where the installation of an EV charging station supports strategic aims. (Page 21)	Based on the priority areas and user groups identified in their Infrastructure strategies, local authorities will need to identify the potential sites where the installation of an EV charging station supports strategic aims.	No potential impacts identified. This Proposal is a strategic objective that identifies the relevant authority that will have to identify sites for EV charging points. It does not in itself lead to development or in-situ works.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects identified exists.	Screened Out
5	In the initial phases, sites with low barriers to the installation of a charge point will be included to provide essential coverage to fill in immediate gaps where demand is unmet. This quick deployment approach encourages early electric vehicle adoption and familiarises the public with charging infrastructure. (Page 26)	Proposal removed	N/A	N/A	Proposal removed. Screening assessment no longer required.

No.	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal	Identification of potential impacts	Potential for likely significant effects	Screening Outcome
6	Interoperability Standards: Local authorities must enforce interoperability standards, ensuring that different charging networks can communicate seamlessly and that users can access various chargers with a single account or payment method. (Page 29)	Proposal removed	N/A	N/A	Proposal removed. Screening assessment no longer required
7	Monitoring and Maintenance: Continuous monitoring of charge points is vital to ensure that chargers remain operational and reliable. Local authorities should establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for tracking charger performance and prompt repair or replacement when necessary. (Page 29)	To ensure the charging network is operated and maintained to a high quality, with network gaps identified and addressed, key performance indicators will be established, embedded in contractual arrangements, and monitored. A consolidated map of charge points will support the monitoring, evaluation, and planning of projects. It is critical to monitor and track EV infrastructure planning and installation against actual and projected EV uptake. An oversupply of infrastructure could affect the commercial viability of charge points whereas undersupply result in queuing and insufficient charge points.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. Proposed monitoring of charging points is anticipated to be conducted remotely.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out
8	Infrastructure Expansion: Local authorities should continuously assess the need for additional charge points and plan for the expansion of charging infrastructure based on data and demand. (Page 29)	No change.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out

No.	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal	Identification of potential impacts	Potential for likely significant effects	Screening Outcome
9	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEV1 will take the following principles into account: Alignment with wider policy and other network goals. The interventions will support: the State's overall decarbonisation goals; the National Planning Framework and consider alignment with ESBN and EirGrid's electricity network strategies. (Page 30)	No change.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. This Proposal is a strategic objective of the Plan that aims to address national infrastructure targets and alignment with other policies and plans.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out
10	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEV1 will take the following principles into account: 1) Prioritise and enhance private sector participation: The important role of the existing private sector companies who are providing fuelling, charging and ancillary services is recognised. In this regard, interventions will be designed to ensure the continued vitality of the private sector and promote a self-sustainable destination and neighbourhood EV charging market. (Page 30)	Prioritise and enhance private sector participation: The important role of the existing private sector companies who are providing fuelling, charging and ancillary services is recognised as they have the technical expertise and resources required to successfully deliver charging infrastructure. In this regard, interventions will be designed to ensure the continued vitality of the private sector and promote a self-sustainable destination and neighbourhood EV charging market. Business models that facilitate the leveraging of private expertise and resources will be encouraged and prioritised for funding.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. This Proposal is a strategic objective of the Plan that aims to direct funding approach to implementation.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out

No.	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal	Identification of potential impacts	Potential for likely significant effects	Screening Outcome
11	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEV1 will take the following principles into account: 3) Prioritise the utilisation of existing parking spaces: Local authorities should make the best use of available infrastructure, to enhance convenience for users while significantly reducing the need for creating new bays, in turn, minimising planning challenges and costs. (Page 30)	Prioritise strategic locations that suit user needs: Local authorities should make the best use of available infrastructure, to enhance convenience for users while significantly reducing the need for additional infrastructure, in turn, minimising risks and costs. Local authorities should consider and prioritise sites that meet multiple user needs while also ensuring that there is adequate EV infrastructure installed to meet rural and urban charging needs.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. This Proposal is strategic in nature and is proposed to guide development through the use of existing infrastructure.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects identified	Screened Out
12	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEV1 will take the following principles into account: 4) Customer experience and equity: Interventions will seek to provide a best-in-class customer experience to all users to ensure a positive perception of EV charging infrastructure provision and further facilitate the EV transition. This includes coverage across Ireland to ensure equitable distribution ensuring connectivity across urban, rural and end of routes. (Page 31)	User experience and equity: Interventions will seek to provide a high-quality user experience to all users to ensure a positive perception of EV charging infrastructure provision and further facilitate the EV transition by adhering to principles of universal design. This includes the standardisation of design and information, and coverage across Ireland to ensure equitable distribution ensuring connectivity across urban, rural and end of routes.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. This Proposal is strategic in nature and is proposed to enhance customer experience.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out
13	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEV1 will take the following principles into account: 5) Enhance and facilitate innovation: New and innovative technologies that further accelerate the roll-out of appropriate EV charging infrastructure will be encouraged coupled with the use of data to inform decision making. (Page 31)	No change.	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. This Proposal is strategic in nature and is proposed to encourage technology development for EV charging infrastructure.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out

No.	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal	Identification of potential impacts	Potential for likely significant effects	Screening Outcome
14	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEV1 will take the following principles into account: 6) Resource efficiency: Interventions will seek to facilitate efficient use of private and public resources. (Page 31)	Resource efficiency: Interventions will seek to facilitate efficient use of private and public resources through approaches such as the bundling of high and low demand sites to improve the commercial viability overall of a package of sites and provide equitable access to charging infrastructure	No potential impacts identified. The Proposal does not in itself suggest development or in-situ works. This Proposal is strategic in nature and is proposed to ensure that efficiency measures are put in place to ensure the suitable usage of private and public resources.	No sources for impact identified. No potential for likely significant effects exists.	Screened Out

6. Conclusion & Recommendations

6.1 Overview

This AA Screening report provides the public authority with the relevant information regarding the potential for likely significant effects as a result of the implementation of the Plan. Whilst the Plan does not have a set list of proposals, there are paragraphs of text within the document which have been considered as such and therefore are considered as proposals for the purposes of this AA Screening report.

Following changes to the Plan post-consultation, twelve proposals were identified and assessed for potential to give rise to likely significant effects. No potential impacts were identified arising from their implementation and as a result the potential for likely significant effects on European sites does not exist. As the potential for likely significant effects does not exist, an in-combination assessment is not required.

6.2 Conclusion

In accordance with the relevant legislation, the Plan has been assessed for material which may be considered to have the potential to result in a likely significant effect on a European site.

Following an examination, analysis, and evaluation of the best available information, and applying the precautionary principle, it can be concluded that the possibility of any likely significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the Plan alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded, for the reasons set out in Section 5 above. In reaching this conclusion, the nature of the Plan and its potential relationship with all European sites within the ZoI, and their conservation objectives, have been fully considered.

Therefore, it is the professional opinion of the authors of this report that this Plan does not require an AA.

Appendix A

Statement of Competency

A.1 Statement of Competency

Donncha Madden has a BSc in Applied Ecology and a PGDip in Restoration Ecology and is a Chartered Ecologist and Full Member of CIEEM. Donncha has over 20 years' experience in the environment and ecology sector and has prepared numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening and full Appropriate Assessment reports for a variety of plans and projects in both Ireland and the UK.

Hannah Sheridan has a BSc (Hons) in Marine Science and an MSc in Marine Planning for Sustainable Development and is a Qualifying Member of CIEEM. Hannah has four years of experience working as an ecologist in public and private sectors and has prepared Screening for Appropriate Assessments, European Impact Statements/Reports and biodiversity chapters for EIARs across a number of projects and plans in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.