ARUP

Department of Transport

Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of the SEA Statement

This Statement forms part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Department of Transport (DoT) and Zero Emissions Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI)'s adopted Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan (referred to hereinafter as 'The Plan' or the 'RLEVCNP'). SEA is a systematic, on-going process for evaluating (at the earliest possible stage) the quantity and consequences of implementing certain plans and programmes on the environment. This SEA Statement is the final stage of the SEA process and is required under the European Communities Regulations 2004[1] (EU SEA Regulations) and national legislation[2] (SEA Regulations).

The purpose of the SEA Statement is to provide information on the decision-making process, and to document environmental considerations, the views of stakeholders and outline how recommendations arising from the SEA have been taken into account in the Plan. The four key requirements of this SEA Statement are to highlight:

- The incorporation of environmental considerations;
- Stakeholder involvement;
- Alterations considered; and
- Monitoring.

The SEA Statement is chronological in nature and includes the following:

- An outline of the methodology for undertaking a SEA;
- Scoping - an overview of the scoping process and summary of how the submissions received from stakeholders have been taken into account;
- Environmental Assessment- description of how environmental considerations have been integrated into the SEA;
- Alternatives - an outline of the reasons for choosing the plan to be adopted, in light of the other reasonable alternatives considered;
- Monitoring - an overview of the measures to monitor the plan going forward; and
- Final Appraisal - evaluation of the effectiveness of the SEA.

This SEA Statement will accompany the adopted RLEVCNP 2025-2030 and be made available to the public.

[1] European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, as amended by European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2004

[2] Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, as amended by the Planning and Development (strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations

1.2 The RLEVCNP 2025-2030

1.2.1 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.

1.2.2 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 1.1) 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.

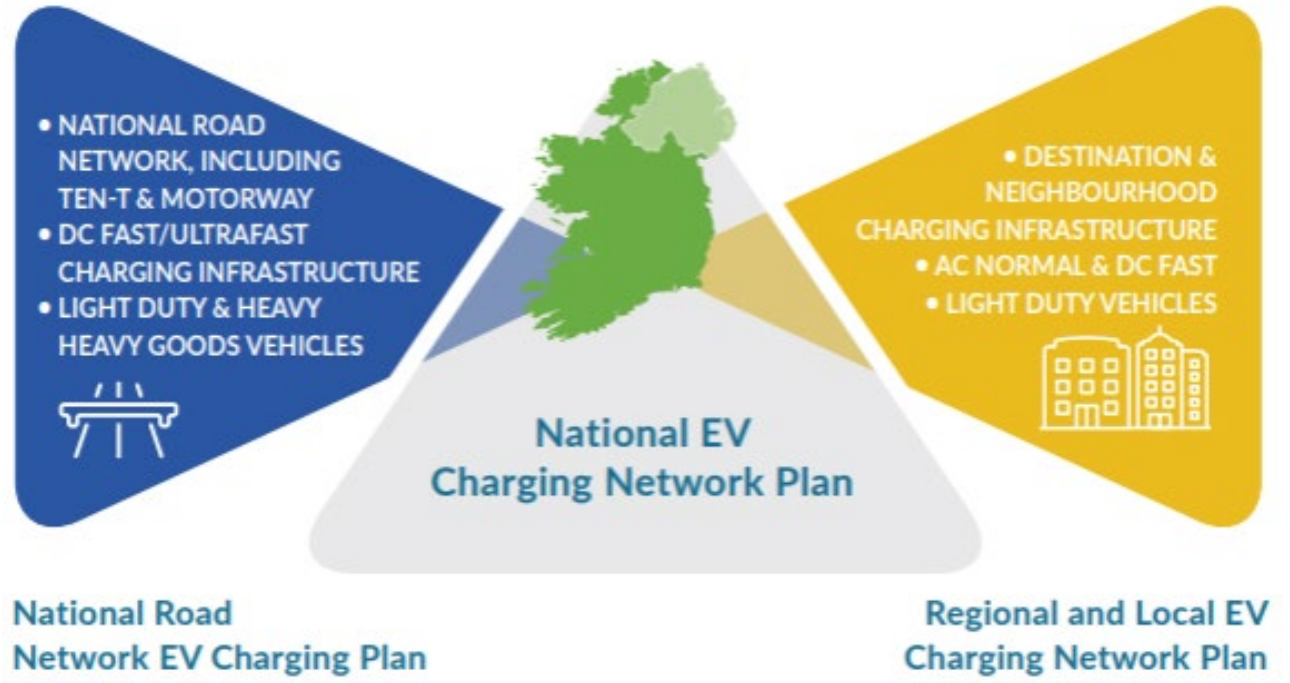

Figure 1.1 National EV Charging Plan

1.2.3 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 (Figure 1.2), to sustainably deliver public charging infrastructure for light duty vehicles at destination and neighbourhood locations.

Figure 1.2 Fundamental Principles

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 Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (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.

1.2.4 Extent of the Plan Area

The RLEVCNP is a national level plan which covers the covers the entirety 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 of the development of their strategies.[3] The seven regions and three city areas (Figure 1.3) have been agreed with local authorities.

[3] These regional groupings are agreed in principle, and subject to funding and resources.

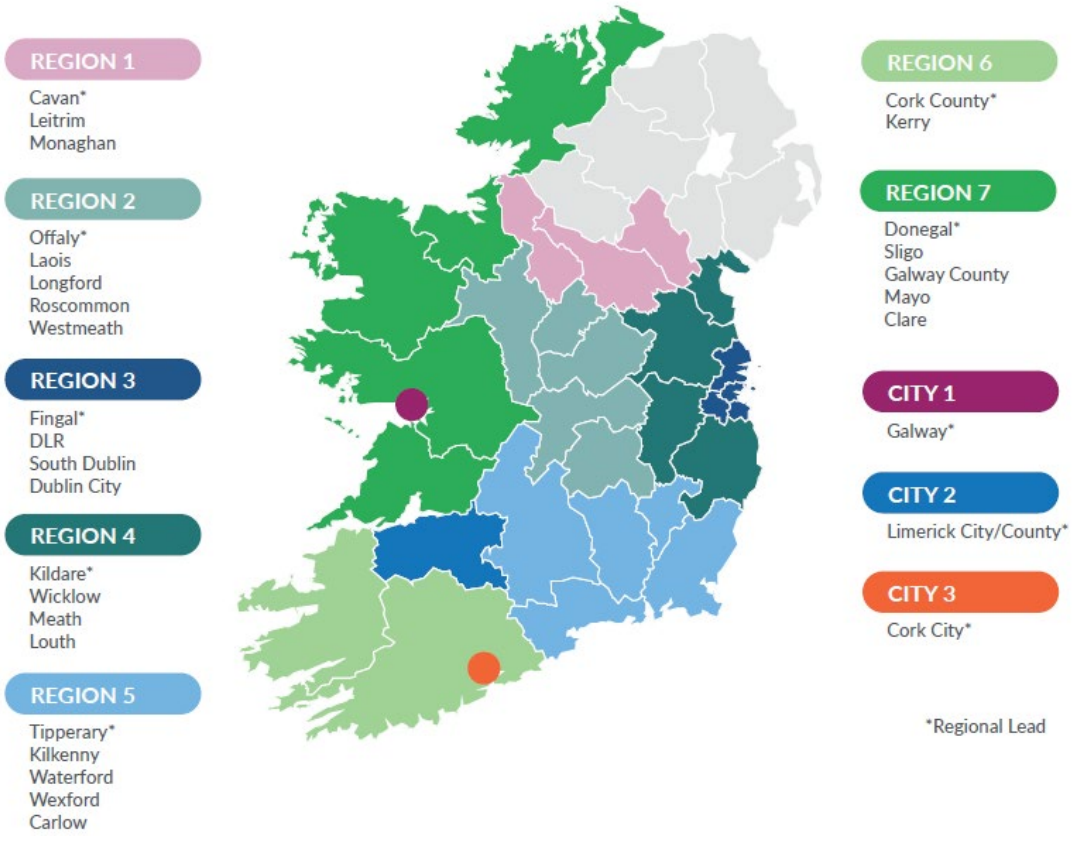

Figure 1.3 Regional approach for strategy development

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 Internal Combustion Engine (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.

1.3 Timing of the SEA

The preparation of the RLEVCNP and SEA process were carried out in parallel to ensure that environmental considerations were taken into account into the plan making process.

The timeline for these steps is set out in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Timeline of the RLEVCNP and SEA Iteration Process

The RLEVCNP 2025 - 2030	SEA
Preparation of the RLEVCNP	Commencement of SEA Scoping Consultation: 15th January 2024 for four weeks
Consultation on the RLEVCNP: **24th May 2024 – 19th July 2024 (public)** **24th May 2024 – 19th July 2024 (environmental authorities)**	Public consultation on SEA Environmental Report (ER) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening: 24th May 2024 – 19th July 2024 Consultation with environmental authorities on the SEA ER and AA Screening: 24th May 2024 – 19th July 2024
Publication of the RLEVCNP: **April 2025** Publication of the SEA Statement: **May 2025**	

Section 4 of this SEA Statement provides a description as to how environmental considerations were incorporated into the plan making process.

2. SEA Methodology

2.1 Overview

This section highlights how the SEA was undertaken for the RLEVCNP. The SEA methodology is based on legislative requirements and relevant Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance and will ensure compliance with the SEA Directive and associated legislation. The EPA's SEA Pack (Version 18/02/2020) was also used as a source of information during the scoping process.

The RLEVCNP (Arup and ZEVI and DoT), the SEA Environmental Report (ER) (Arup) and the Appropriate Assessment Screening (Arup) were prepared in an iterative manner whereby multiple revisions of each document were prepared, each informing subsequent iterations of the others. To facilitate this iterative approach, numerous discussions were held between ZEVI and the DoT, and Arup. The key stages outlined in Figure 2.1 were identified and are discussed in the following sections.

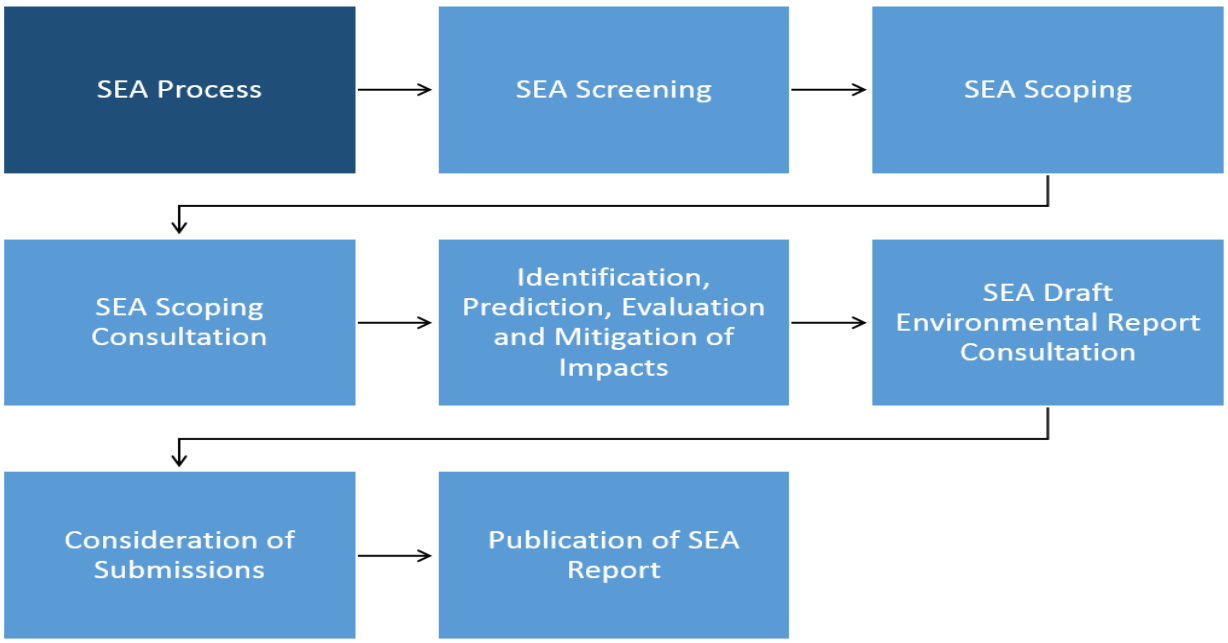

Figure 2.1 Key Stages of the SEA Process

2.2 Screening

Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular Plan would warrant SEA at the earliest possible opportunity, it also facilitates the assessment findings so that they can be factored into the Plan development process. A screening assessment was undertaken as part of this SEA process to determine if the RLEVCNP required a SEA.

The SEA screening assessment of the RLEVCNP concluded that the RLEVCNP is of a type of Plan/Programme (P/P) which falls within the remit of the SEA Directive/SEA Regulations. Further, the RLEVCNP is prepared by a national authority and is considered a P/P that is required by legislative provisions. The RLEVCNP is not considered to be exempt, and it is a P/P prepared for the transport sector to provide electric vehicles charging infrastructure across Ireland, that has the potential to set a framework for the development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive. Thus, the RLEVCNP required mandatory SEA.

Ultimately, it was determined that the RLEVCNP is considered a type of P/P which falls within the remit of the SEA Directive, and that it requires mandatory SEA, based on findings outlined within the Applicability Stage (Stage 1 of the SEA Screening process which determined the applicability of SEA to the P/P-maker and P/P and/or where relevant to confirm if mandatory SEA is required). The RLEVCNP was therefore taken forward to SEA Scoping.

2.3 Scoping

2.3.1 Scoping Process

Scoping is the process for establishing the range of environmental issues to be covered in the SEA and the level of detail that the assessment will investigate. Scoping also allows input from the environmental authorities and stakeholders to be incorporated. Essentially, responses submitted as part of the scoping process provide greater focus on the evolution of the adopted Scoping is the process for establishing the range of environmental issues to be covered in the SEA and the level of detail that the assessment will investigate. Scoping also allows input from the environmental authorities and stakeholders to be incorporated. Essentially, responses submitted as part of the scoping process provide greater focus on the evolution of the adopted RLEVCNP.

The considerations addressed during the scoping process for the RLEVCNP are as follows:

a. The key elements of the RLEVCNP to be assessed.

b. The environmental aspects to be assessed as part of the SEA.

c. Identification of relevant international, national and local plans, objectives and environmental standards that may influence or impact on the RLEVCNP.

d. Development of draft environmental objectives, indicators and targets to allow the evaluation of impacts as part of the SEA; and

e. Identification of any reasonable alternative means or scenarios for achieving the strategic goals of the RLEVCNP.

The SEA Scoping was a key part of the assessment process as it set out the extent of the SEA and provided information to allow consultation with defined statutory bodies and environmental authorities on the scope and level of detail to be considered and incorporated at an early stage in the assessment.

2.3.2 Scoping Consultation

The Scoping Report was issued for comment by defined environmental authorities on 15th January 2024. The statutory consultees were given a period of four weeks to respond with any observations or submissions on the content of the SEA Scoping Report.

The Scoping Report summarised the key environmental issues and outlined relevant plans and programmes that were likely to affect or be affected by the RLEVCNP.

This information was then used to set out a series of SEA Objectives, Indicators, and associated Targets. The Objectives and Targets established aims and thresholds which would be taken into consideration to effectively assess the impact of the RLEVCNP on the environment. Indicators are used to track the achievements of Objectives and Targets, describe the baseline situation, monitor the impact on the environment and predict impacts.

2.3.3 Scoping Response

Four submissions were received in response to the SEA Scoping Report, from the EPA, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) on behalf of Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), the Department for Communities – Historic Environment Division (HED), and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) – Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) – SEA Team. All comments, observations and submissions contained therein were considered and incorporated into the assessment process, as considered relevant. Appendix A.1 of this report contains a summary of the submissions received on the SEA Scoping Report and how they were responded to.

The SEA Directive requires that where the RLEVCNP has potential for transboundary environmental effects these must be addressed within the SEA. In accordance with SEA Directive and EPA Guidance, the relevant statutory consultee in Northern Ireland was also contacted during the Scoping consultation period.

2.4 Baseline Assessment

Gathering relevant information that describes the current environment within the plan area is an integral part of the SEA process. The SEA Directive requires that certain information on the existing environment is presented to help assess the implementation of the RLEVCNP, as well as helping establish how the environment would change if the RLEVCNP is not implemented.

Baseline information has been collected from readily available sources, and a Geographical Information System (GIS) was used to graphically present and analyse relevant information. The baseline of the plan area, i.e. the area to which the adopted RLEVCNP applies, is reported in Section 5 of the SEA ER ('Current State of the Environment'). The findings of EPA Ireland's National Inventory Report 2024 (EPA, 2024), EPA Water Quality in Ireland 2023 (EPA, 2023) and 2024 State of the Environment Report (EPA, 2024) which were integrated into the SEA ER, among other European and national regulations, including but not limited to, Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation (EC, 2023) and ZEVI's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2025 (ZEVI, 2022).

2.5 Environmental Assessment of Plan Provisions

2.5.1 Overview

The environmental assessment ran in parallel to the development of the RLEVCNP.

The environmental assessment comprised a review of the baseline data, identification of likely impacts and development of appropriate mitigation measures for the RLEVCNP.

An appraisal matrix was developed to facilitate the assessment of the objectives outlined in the RLEVCNP.

The matrix led assessment provided a holistic, integrated, and interactive approach to the formation of the objectives in the RLEVCNP. The assessment also considered the findings of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening report.

A number of iterations of this assessment matrix were undertaken, between the SEA/AA Team and ZEVI / DoT.

2.5.2 Assessment Stage 1

2.5.2.1 Environmental Assessment of Plan Provisions

The first stage of the SEA assessment process comprised the first draft of the appraisal matrix that was completed by the SEA team. This was based on the initial draft of the RLEVCNP and provided to ZEVI and DoT for their consideration.

This proposals-led assessment compared the likely impacts of each proposal in the initial draft RLEVCNP against the strategic environmental proposals (as described in Section 2.5.2) with respect to the baseline information. Particular reference was made to the potential for cumulative effects in association with other relevant plan and programmes.

The assessment process categorised environmental impacts using the ratings outlined in Table 2.1 which is based on the impact assessment criteria defined by the EPA for environmental impact assessment.

Table 2.1 Impact Ratings

Significance of Impact	
	Positive
	Neutral
	Negative
	Uncertain

The assessment also considered the potential for cumulative effects of policies on each other to determine if certain policies working in combination could have an environmental impact.

The assessment also took regard of transboundary effects of the RLEVCNP on Northern Ireland, particularly in relation to the air quality, climate, biodiversity, water and landscape and visual assessments, the potential for transboundary effects between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has been considered throughout the assessment process.

A generally positive effect on Population and Human Health, Air Quality, Noise and Climate, and Material Assets, is identified where proposals relate to the provision of new charging infrastructure at national and local levels. This is due to the increased availability of charging infrastructure and the potential reduction in transport emissions. While there is potential for an increased demand on Material Assets as a result of electricity requirements to deliver this energy, overall, this will likely have a positive impact on Material Assets with a potential shift towards the use of electric vehicles among HDV drivers and improvement of charging infrastructure. Neutral effects were identified on Biodiversity, Land & Soils; Water, Archaeology, Architecture & Cultural Heritage, and Landscape & Visual.

As some proposals included in the RLEVCNP relate to the roadmap for implementation and roll out of EV charging infrastructure across the regional and local network in Ireland, the environmental assessment outcomes are generally unknown or neutral as a result of the limited information of deployment sites at this time. Matrices were prepared to identify potential impacts across the Plan area.

The RLEVCNP contains a range of proposals relating to the implementation of EV charging infrastructure in Ireland. The deployment of this infrastructure across the regional and local network has largely been assessed as likely to result in overall positive effects on the environment, particularly on Population & Human Health and Air Quality, Noise & Climate environmental factors. While the provision of new charging infrastructure across Ireland is likely to have a positive impact on material assets, it is also likely to have an increased demand on electricity and consequently a negative, neutral or unknown impact on Material Assets is predicted.

A detailed assessment of each of the proposals of the RLEVCNP is set out in the SEA ER (Section 8.3 of SEA ER) and Appendix B.2 of this report. As previously discussed, the assessment of significant effects in the SEA ER also takes account of potential transboundary effects of the RLEVCNP on Northern Ireland, particularly where there is potential for any significant effects, such as transboundary impacts on climate and shared resources.

Upon completion of the first appraisal matrix, a number of recommendations were made which were then reviewed in detail by ZEVI and DoT and where appropriate, incorporated into the RLEVCNP, such as changes to wording of proposals.

2.5.2.2 Objectives, Indicators and Targets

The objectives, indicators and targets are the aspects for which the RLEVCNP is assessed against. The proposals within the RLEVCNP are assessed against a range of environmental objectives and targets established for the purpose of the SEA. Further, indicators that are recommended in the SEA are utilised over the lifetime of the RLEVCNP to quantify the level of impact that the proposed plan may have on the environment.

A range of SEA Objectives, Indicators and Targets were recorded in the SEA ER which went out for public consultation from 24th May 2024 until 19th July 2024. Following the review of submissions, there were no comments relating to the SEA ER.

A summary of the final Objectives, Indicators and Targets is included in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 SEA Objectives, Indicators and Targets

Environmental Component	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Targets	Indicators
Population & Human Health	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Protect, enhance, and improve human health and wellbeing.** • Protect and enhance human health and well-being. • Provide improved and increased charging infrastructure.	• No deterioration in human health as a result of environmental factors. • Increased supply of charging infrastructure across Ireland.	• Changes in trends in perceived health status. • Census population data. • Mode share of electrified public transport (passenger and freight) • Scale and location of charging infrastructure in Ireland.
Biodiversity	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Support achievement of the conservation objectives and requirements of the Birds and Habitat Directives, and other sites of nature conservation value.** • Protect, conserve, enhance where possible and avoid loss of diversity and integrity of the broad range of habitats, species, and wildlife corridors. • Conserve and protect other sites of nature conservation including NHAs, pNHAs, National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries as well as protected species outside these areas as covered by the Wildlife Act. • No net biodiversity loss.	• Siting of development of infrastructure installation on non-sensitive sites, where possible and appropriate. Any siting of infrastructure should result in non-significant impacts wherever they are located. • Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under the Habitats Directive. • No loss of protected habitats and species during the lifetime of the Plan. • Prevent the introduction of new invasive or alien species. Control/manage new invasive species.	• Conservation status/habitat quality for all sites and species located within the Zone of Influence. • Scale of charging infrastructure permitted in proximity/within European sites/sites of ecological importance. • Conservation status/habitat quality for all sites and species positively impacted by an improvement in air quality due to decarbonisation and the electrification of Ireland's vehicle fleet. • Level of biodiversity lost as a result of the implementation of the Plan.
Land & Soils	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Protect and enhance soil quality, function, and fertility.** • Protect soils against pollution. • Minimise the excavation and movement of soils within charging infrastructure works. • Minimise the amount of waste to landfill from the site. • Conserve, protect and avoid loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species, or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites.	• Prevent pollution of soil through adoption of appropriate environmental protection procedures during any construction or maintenance works. • No incidences of soil contamination • Ensure appropriate management of existing contaminated soil in accordance with the requirements of current waste legislation. • Limit the amount of excavation in sensitive locations. • Minimise the consumption of non-renewable sand, gravel, and rock deposits. • Preference for development on brownfield site over greenfield sites.	• Incidences of soil contamination near charging infrastructure works. • Number and condition of designated geological features. • Rates of re-use/recycling of construction waste related to implementation of Plan. • Rates of brownfield site and contaminated land re-use and development near charging infrastructure works. • Rates of greenfield development near and throughout charging infrastructure works.

Environmental Component	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Targets	Indicators
Water	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Support achievement of the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.** **Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, restored** and no deterioration will be seen. Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion	• All waters within the plan area to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and the relevant River Basin Management Plan by 2027. • Minimise flood risk through appropriate management of flood vulnerable zones. Support flood prevention measures, where appropriate.	• Status and quality of waterbodies near charging infrastructure. • Number of significant pollution events recorded as a result of the implementation of the Plan. • charging infrastructure.
Air Quality, Noise & Climate	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Continue to comply with air quality standards to prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment; and** **Seek to reduce Ireland's transport-related greenhouse gas emissions to help in achieving Ireland's net zero commitments by 2050.** • To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health resulting from the emissions to air as a result of fossil fuel-based transport fleets and construction vehicles. • Maintain and promote continuing improvement in Air Quality, Noise & Climate through the reduction of emissions and promotion of a decarbonised and electrified fleet. • Meet the relevant Air Quality Standards for the protection of human health and vegetation including nitrogen deposition. • Minimise the use of high-embodied carbon during any charging infrastructure works. • Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets.	• Improvement in Air Quality trends, particularly in relation to machinery related emissions of NOx and particulate matter. • Contribute towards transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy. • Meeting and improving Air Quality Standards for human health and vegetation, including nitrogen deposition. • Meet EU/ Irish carbon budgets and commitments. • Achievement of Paris Agreement GHG emission reduction targets. • Minimise air and noise emissions during construction and operation of new developments.	• General air quality results in the Republic of Ireland. • The changes and level of GHG emissions from the electrification of vehicular transport over the plan period. • Compliance with national Air Quality Standards (AQS). • Mode share of electrified public transport (passenger and freight). • Overall GHG emission reductions over the Plan period. • Noise and air quality monitoring data from any new developments arising as a result of the Plan.
Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Protect, conserve, and enhance the cultural heritage and historic environment.** • Protect and conserve the cultural heritage including the built environment and settings; archaeological recorded and unrecorded monuments, architectural (Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas, vernacular buildings, materials, and urban fabric) and manmade landscape features (e.g., field walls, footpaths, gate piers etc.).	Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the immediate setting of these entries including relationships with the surrounding landscape where relevant, from adverse effects resulting from potential development and or increased infrastructure resulting from the draft Plan.	• No deterioration of features of archaeological/ architectural/ cultural significance as a result of the implementation of the Plan. • Number of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the immediate setting of these entries including their relationships with charging infrastructure and the surrounding landscape.

Environmental Component	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Targets	Indicators
		• More generally ensure permitted developments and or increased infrastructure, where possible, avoid impacts on cultural heritage, including Protected Structures, Architectural Conservations Areas, and other significant landscape features; and protect the amenities of such structures, and features.	• Full or partial loss to entries to the RPSs/NIAHs near charging infrastructure. • Archaeological Impact Assessments related to increased infrastructure, and or the number and types of archaeological investigations undertaken.
Landscape & Visual	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Conserve, protect and enhance valued natural, cultural, and built landscapes, seascape, views of local value and features.** • To implement the identification, assessment, protection, management, and planning of landscapes.	• Any construction works and structures should be planned with cognisance of landscape sensitive areas and protected views/ prospects	• No deterioration of landscape or areas with scenic value e.g., Areas of High Amenity, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Protected Views as a result of the implementation of the Plan.
Material Assets	**Environmental Protection Objective (EPO):** **Support the development of Electric Vehicle infrastructure while making efforts to reduce the carbon emissions and waste produced by the transport industry.** • Provide improved and increased charging infrastructure in appropriate locations across Ireland. • Provide improved electrified public transport and freight transport infrastructure.	• Improve the number and scale of charging infrastructure across Ireland at appropriate locations. • Contribute towards transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.	• Scale and location of charging infrastructure in Ireland. • Statistics relating to the electrification of transport fleets in Ireland (including number of EVs, passengers and journey times). • Economic growth statistics – particularly those relating to EV. • Mode share of electrified public transport (passenger and freight).

2.5.2.3 *Consideration of Alternatives*

As described in the SEA ER, a number of alternative RLEVCNP scenarios were considered and assessed as part of the SEA.

The alternative Plan scenarios considered and assessed as part of the SEA ER are summarised as follows. Refer to in Section 7 of the SEA ER for full details of the assessment, evaluation and comparison of alternatives.

Three reasonable alternatives were considered in the preparation of the RLEVCNP, as summarised below:

Alternative 1 "Do Nothing": Under Alternative 1, no RLEVCNP is prepared. The National Enroute EV charging Network Plan 2023-2030 remains the primary overarching document pertaining to EV infrastructure charging in the country.

Under this Alternative, the private market will lead the rollout of the EV charging network. This rollout will be in response to market demand, resulting in charging infrastructure concentrated at high demand locations that are economically viable, but not necessarily publicly accessible. This rollout will also not contribute to the availability of charging infrastructure in locations that would support equitable access to public charging infrastructure.

Alternative 2 "Provide Targeted Capital Funding for Projects": Alternative 2 relates to the provision of targeted capital funding projects for EV charging infrastructure, with no strategic national plan to sustainably deliver charging infrastructure at a regional and local scale.

Lessons learned from international experience and from experience with funding already offered in Ireland demonstrate that public funding alone for public charging infrastructure projects does not suffice to foster a public charging network that meets diverse current and future EV user needs. Capital funding programmes, while valuable in accelerating the rollout of infrastructure at key locations, do not provide a coordinated, widespread charging network with the variety of charging types needed at different key locations.

Alternative 3 "RLEVCNP": In order to adequately facilitate the transition to EVs in accordance with the *EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy,* Alternative 3 relates to the preparation of a RLEVCNP to provide a coordinated and planned approach to implementing a charging network. The plan will:

1. Support the delivery of well-defined local and regional plans for a resilient, self-sustaining, future-proofed network that minimises public funding supports and encourages participation from public and private stakeholders to drive delivery.
2. Supports the coordinated and accelerated expansion of a destination and neighbourhood EV charging network that aligns with greater e-mobility policies.
3. Provides a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of both AFIR requirements and CAP objectives.

These regional and local strategies will be led by local authorities, with the support of public and private sector stakeholders, to facilitate charging infrastructure delivery that is financially sustainable and best ensures equitable access for all.

2.5.2.4 *Interaction and Interrelationships*

In accordance with the SEA Directive, the inter-relationship between environmental aspects must be taken into account. The interaction and inter-relationships of relevance for the environmental baseline aspects was an important consideration for the environmental assessment. As no negative environmental effects are likely to arise as a result of the proposed plan, no intra-plan cumulative effects are identified.

With regards Inter-Plan effects, the RLEVCNP has the potential to contribute positively and cumulatively towards a wide range of Irish Government policies, within the context in which it sits. For example, the Plan directly contributes towards the achievement of the AFIR (European Commission) 2023, which sets out legally binding national and EU-wide targets for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructures for road vehicles, vessels, and stationary aircraft. The Plan address key requirements of the AFIR.

Another example in which the RLEVCNP positively contributes towards, are the objectives of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and National Climate Action Plan (CAP 24) through the extensive suite of proposals for the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate the uptake of EV and contribute towards Ireland's target of having 30% EVs for private vehicles by 2030 and no new petrol or diesel cars being sold by 2035.

2.5.2.5 SEA Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged and designed to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment resulting from the implementation of the RLEVCNP. All mitigation measures have been developed and agreed with ZEVI and DoT as part of the SEA iterative process. The primary mitigation measure is the development of the Plan which ensures the sustainable and appropriate development of the Plan area without compromising the integrity of the natural and built environment.

However, potential impacts will be more adequately identified and mitigated at project and possible EIA level. In general terms, all proposals for development arising from the RLEVCNP will be required to have due regard to environmental considerations outlined in the SEA ER and the associated AA Screening.

The majority of proposals are predicted to have an overall positive environmental impact on Population & Human Health; Air Quality, Noise & Climate; and Material Assets. However, while the provision of new charging infrastructure across Ireland is likely to have a positive impact on material assets, it is also likely to have an increased demand on electricity and consequently a negative, neutral or unknown impact on Material Assets is predicted. A number of proposals were identified to have neutral impacts on Biodiversity; Land & Soils; Water; Archaeology, Architecture & Cultural Heritage; and Landscape & Visual.

- Under each environmental aspect in Table 2.3, specific mitigation measures are identified where relevant with additional focus on those aspects where potential significant adverse impacts are identified, as outlined earlier.

All mitigation measures have been developed and agreed with ZEVI and DoT as part of the SEA iterative process. The primary mitigation measure is to ensure the sustainable and appropriate development of the plan area without compromising the integrity of the natural and built environment.

In addition, many impacts will be more adequately identified and mitigated at project and EIA level. In general terms, all proposals for development will be required to have due regard to environmental considerations outlined in the SEA ER and associated AA Screening.

Refer to Appendix B.2 for the full list of proposals that were assessed as part of the SEA process.

Table 2.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures for RLEVCNP

Environmental Component	Relevant Mitigation Measures	Objectives to which this applies
Population & Human Health	No mitigation measures proposed	
Biodiversity	**Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network and National Site Network** Protect designated sites including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, UNESCO World Heritage and UNESCO biosphere sites, Ramsar Sites, Salmonid Waters, Shellfish Waters, Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments, Flora Protection Orders and Species, Wildlife sites (including Nature Reserves); the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas; Wildfowl Sanctuaries and Tree Preservation Orders. • Identify and afford appropriate protection to any new, proposed or modified designated sites (as listed above) should they arise during the lifetime of this Plan. • Any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP shall comply with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines.	2
	Biodiversity and Ecological Networks • Any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP will aim to protect, restore and enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features, natural lighting conditions, and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping-stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. • The design of any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP should aim to achieve no net biodiversity loss where practicable. • To ensure the protection and conservation of areas, sites, species, and ecological networks/corridors of biodiversity value outside of designated sites throughout the country and to require an ecological assessment to accompany development proposals likely to impact on such areas or species. • To protect and promote the sustainable management of the natural heritage, flora, and fauna of the county through the promotion of biodiversity, the conservation of natural habitats and the enhancement of new and existing habitats. • To promote the conservation of biodiversity through the protection of sites of biodiversity importance and wildlife corridors, both within and between the designated sites and the wider Plan area.	2
	Land-Take • The design of any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP will ensure that measures are explored to avoid unnecessary land-take, in line with the ecological mitigation hierarchy which prioritises avoidance, and seeks to reduce, mitigate, and then compensate and offset for adverse effects on biodiversity, in that order of preference. • If land-take cannot be avoided, an assessment of the type (and use) of habitat present is required to determine suitable mitigation and/or compensation measures. • Existing sites (where appropriate) and brownfield sites should be considered in the first instance for any infrastructural development or expansions.	2

Environmental Component	Relevant Mitigation Measures	Objectives to which this applies
	Hydrological Change • Where proposed work has the potential to result in hydrological change, and there is a European Site within the zone of influence, then design level modelling will be undertaken to determine any potential hydrological change as a result of any proposed construction works which may impact on the hydrology of sites within the zone of influence of the implementation of the RLEVCNP, including European Sites designated for their international nature conservation importance. This will also help to inform the overall design of any infrastructure requirements.	2
	Air Quality • Where there is potential for implementation of the RLEVCNP to result in significant increases in air pollution, and a European Site falls within the zone of influence of such implementation, then air quality modelling should be undertaken to determine potential air quality impacts of the implementation of the RLEVCNP on sites, including European Sites within the zone of influence. • Where increased air pollution may result in adverse effects on habitats, potential solutions to mitigate air pollution and resulting dust and nitrogen deposition may include tree planting to reduce deposition of pollutants on a site (this is site and habitat dependent); preparation and implementation of dust management plans, screening, and the provision of compensatory habitat (where practicable).	2
	Water Pollution • Where proposed work has the potential to result in water pollution, and there is hydrological connectivity to a European Site, Surface Water Management Plans (SWMPs) will be prepared for planning submission of development proposals and implemented during construction where impacts on sensitive waterbodies are likely to arise. SWMPs will include appropriate measures such as temporary silt fencing, cut off ditches, settlement ponds and bunds set up early in construction to capture runoff and prevent ingress of sediments and contaminants into existing drainage infrastructure where necessary. Integrated and innovative solutions require a partnering approach best managed through a SWMP. • Where implementation of the Proposals presents a challenge to existing drainage systems, and/or the operation of a local drainage system is known to be complicated by interactions between river, groundwater and sewer systems or river and canal systems, submission of a Water Protection Plan and detailed site drainage plans will be required with planning applications associated with developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP, if a European Site falls within the zone of influence.	2
	Invasive Species • Appropriate invasive species surveys shall be carried out in advance of any construction/reinstatement works, where deemed necessary. Invasive Species Management Plans shall be prepared and implemented where required, following the assessment of invasive species surveys.	2
Land & Soils	**Contamination** • Ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate on any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, particularly where brownfield development is proposed. • Ensure contaminated soil is disposed of in accordance with the Waste Management Regulations (S.I.821 of 2007).	2
	Geological Heritage Sites • To recognise the importance of Geological Heritage Sites and to protect the character and integrity of these sites.	2
	Land Use • Development proposals arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP should be cognisant of the target of the National Planning Framework's (2018) SEA to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%".	2

Environmental Component	Relevant Mitigation Measures	Objectives to which this applies
	• Existing sites (where appropriate) and brownfield sites should be considered in the first instance for any infrastructural development or expansions. • Avoid geologically unsuitable areas including karst where practicable, and areas susceptible to subsidence or landslides.	
Water	**Water Quality** • To ensure Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is applied to any new facility and that site-specific solutions to surface water drainage systems are developed taking account of the alternative fuel type(s) being deployed on the site, and which meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plans. • To ensure that developments likely to have an unacceptable impact on water resources, including surface water and groundwater quality and quantity, designated sources protection areas, estuarine, coastal transitional waters, river corridors and associated wetlands are not permitted. • To protect river habitats, species, and water quality, ensure that no infrastructure, including clearance and storage of materials, takes place within a minimum distance of 25m measured from each bank of any river, stream, or watercourse.	2
	Flood Risk Management • Avoid development of infrastructure in flood risk areas. Ensure that any new development does not present an inappropriate risk of flooding or does not cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations. • Reference should be made to the Planning System and Flood Risk Management for Planning Authorities (DECLG/OPW 2009) and the National Flood Hazard Mapping (OPW) while referring to the relevant Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP).	2
	Groundwater • To protect groundwater resources in accordance with the statutory requirements and specific measures as set out in the relevant River Basin Management Plan.	2
Air Quality, Noise & Climate	**Air** • Any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP should comply with air quality legislation and contribute to achieving greenhouse gas emission targets. • Ensure that developments do not give rise to negative effects on air quality, during both construction and operation. • Dust management plans shall be prepared and implemented for any major construction/reinstatement/upgrade works associated with the implementation of the RLEVCNP.	2
	Climate Adaptation and Resilience • Improve resilience and adaptation to climate change by taking into account issues including the following in the location and design of any developments/plans arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP; – Flood risk; – Susceptibility to major accidents/disasters; – Extreme temperature and associated implications including those relating to the operation of transport and ancillary infrastructure and services. • Promote the reduction of emissions of Greenhouse Gases and facilitate measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to ensure Ireland's compliance with our Emission Targets. • The development of any future refuelling and recharging infrastructure should assess the potential vulnerability of new infrastructure to the likely impacts of climate change.	2

Environmental Component	Relevant Mitigation Measures	Objectives to which this applies
	Noise • Consideration of existing noise policy in Ireland, for example noise mapping and noise action plans produced by the Local Authorities. • Consideration of likely noise impacts/effects associated with new developments. This includes being cognisant of proximity to sensitive receptors when siting new developments and consideration of existing noise sources when zoning lands for residential development. • Development proposals arising as a result of implementation of the RLEVCNP will have regard to the requirements of the Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and associated Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 ES 45 and European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 549/2018 (Ireland) (and any updated/superseding documents). • In constructing development proposals arising as a result of the RLEVCNP regard shall also be given to BS 5228 Part 1 (2014) and the European Communities (Noise Emission by Equipment for Use Outdoors) Regulations, 2001 ' Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites' (and any updated/superseding documents).	2
Archaeology, Architectural & Cultural Heritage	**Archaeological Heritage** • Where practicable, developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP should protect archaeological heritage by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended). • To have regard to archaeological concerns when considering proposed developments located in close proximity to Recorded Monuments and Places and the Zones of Archaeological Potential. • To secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional cases preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, and of sites, features, and objects of archaeological and historical interest generally.	2
	Architectural Heritage • Where possible developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP should contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage by adhering to the relevant legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). • Development arising from the RLEVCNP should ensure the protection of the architectural heritage through the identification of Protected Structures, the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas, the safeguarding historic gardens, and the recognition of structures and elements that contribute positively to vernacular and industrial heritage. • To protect, as set out in the Record of Protected Structures, all structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.	2
Landscape & Visual	• Developments and plans arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP should contribute, where possible, towards the protection of county and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments. Any developments which may arise from the implementation of the RLEVCNP that have the potential to result in negative effects on these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape and visual impacts of any such development. This will demonstrate that potential landscape effects have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation. • Existing sites (where appropriate) and brownfield sites should be considered in the first instance for any infrastructural development or expansions. • Avoid, as far as possible, siting infrastructure in areas protected for landscape and visual amenity, geological heritage and/or cultural heritage value. Where this is unavoidable, an impact assessment should be carried out by a suitably qualified practitioner and appropriate mitigation and/or alternatives must be provided. • Ensure that all new plans and programmes incorporate the findings of the County Landscape Character Assessments.	2

Environmental Component	Relevant Mitigation Measures	Objectives to which this applies
	• To require that all proposed developments in Heritage Landscapes demonstrate that every effort has been made to reduce visual impact. This must be demonstrated for all aspects of the proposal- from site selection through to details of siting and design. All other relevant provisions of the development plan must be complied with. • To protect sensitive areas from inappropriate development while providing for development and change that will benefit the rural community. • To ensure that proposed developments take into consideration their effects on views from the public road towards scenic features or areas and are designed and located to minimise their impact. • To ensure that appropriate standards of location, siting, design, finishing, and landscaping are achieved. • Any future plans/programmes arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP will have regard to existing and new landscape guidance documents.	
Material Assets	**Resources** • Phasing of infrastructure deployment to manage available resources. • Continued engagement with ESB Networks on the development of plans to ensure grid availability for EV charging infrastructure. • Distribution of maximum power output among charge points where more than one vehicle charges simultaneously at a charging station. • Use of battery technology to mitigate delays in grid connection. • Promote the development of sufficient energy resources to meet the needs of the Plan area and promote the use of renewable energies to meet those needs.	2
	Waste Management • Promote the implementation of the Waste Management Plan together with any future National or Regional Waste Management Plans. Additionally, ensure national policies and regulations regarding waste are adhered to. • Encourage waste prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling, and recovery as methods of managing waste during construction.	2
All	• Upgrading of existing and construction of new EV charging infrastructure shall be subject to feasibility, constraints, and route options selections assessments. • Any developments arising from the implementation of the RLEVCNP shall be subject to the relevant environmental assessments, as required (i.e. Environmental Impact Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, Appropriate Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment). • To require all planning applications for development that may have (or cannot rule out) likely significant effects on European Sites in view of the site's Conservation Objectives, either in isolation or in combination with other plans or projects, to submit a Natura Impact Statement in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).	2

2.5.2.6 SEA Monitoring Measures

Article 10 of the SEA Directive requires that monitoring should be carried out in order to identify at an early stage any unforeseen adverse impacts associated with the implementation of the Plan or Programme.

A monitoring programme is developed based on the indicators selected to track progress towards achieving strategic environmental objectives and reaching targets, enabling positive and negative impacts on the environment to be measured. As previously described, the environmental indicators have been developed to show changes that would be attributable to implementation of the RLEVCNP.

As outlined in the EPA guidance document '*Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring'* (EPA, 2023)[4], SEA monitoring should reflect the nature and level of detail of the Plan/Programme. Many national-level Plans/Programmes lack geographic specificity, contain only high-level strategic objectives and do not lend themselves to cause–effect models in terms of direct measuring of environmental effects. As such, SEA monitoring for these Plans should focus on national indicators to examine environmental trends.

Refer to Table 2.4 for the proposed monitoring measures. The proposed monitoring measures included are based on national indicators and informed by the content of the RLEVCNP.

The SEA carried out has ensured that any potential significant environmental impacts have been identified and given due consideration.

ZEVI is responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of preliminary and final monitoring evaluation reports, the publication of these reports where there is a potential impact likely to arise out of the implementation of an element of the Plan. Corrective measures will be carried out as required, based on the outcomes of this monitoring.

[4] EPA (2023) Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring. Available at: https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/06695-EPA-SEA-Statements-and-Monitoring-Report.pdf

Table 2.4 Proposed monitoring measures for the RLEVCNP

Environmental Component	SEA Indicators	Monitoring Sources	Frequency/Responsibility
Population & Human Health	Changes in trends in perceived health status. Census population data. Mode share of electrified public transport (passenger and freight) Scale and location of charging infrastructure in Ireland.	• CSO Census Reports – Health, Population, Employment and Transport Statistics. • EPA State of the Environment Report 2024.	• Central Statistics Office, every 6 years. • EPA, every 4 years.
Biodiversity	Conservation status/habitat quality for all sites and species located within the Zone of Influence. Scale of charging infrastructure permitted in proximity/within European sites/sites of ecological importance. Conservation status/habitat quality for all sites and species positively impacted by an improvement in air quality due to decarbonisation and the electrification of Ireland's vehicle fleet. Level of biodiversity lost as a result of the implementation of the Plan.	• The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland Article 17 Report (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage). • Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive. • EPA State of the Environment Report 2024. • Birds of Conservation Concern Ireland – Monitoring by Birdwatch Ireland on status, distribution, population etc. • EPA Air quality monitoring reports.	• DHLGH, every 6 years. • Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH). Every 6 years. • EPA, every 4 years. • Birdwatch Ireland, every 6 years. • EPA annual air quality monitoring.
Land & Soils	Incidences of soil contamination near charging infrastructure works. Number and condition of designated geological features. Rates of re-use/recycling of construction waste related to implementation of Plan. Rates of brownfield site and contaminated land re-use and development near charging infrastructure works. Rates of greenfield development near and throughout charging infrastructure works.	• EPA State of the Environment Report 2024. • Monitoring for Geological Survey Irelands (GSI) Database. • EPA National Waste Statistics Summary Report. • The annual report on the implementation of the Southern Regional and Eastern-Midlands Region Waste Management Plans.	• EPA, every 4 years. • GSI, varies. • EPA, annually. • The Regional Waste Office, annually.
Water	Status and quality of waterbodies near charging infrastructure. Number of significant pollution events recorded as a result of the implementation of the Plan. Past flood risk events in or around existing charging infrastructure.	• Ireland's National Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme, 2019-2021. • River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 -2021 & River Basin Management Plan for Ireland (2022 – 2027). • The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland Report (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage).	• EPA, continuously. • DHLGH, every 6 years. • DHLGH, every 6 years.

Environmental Component	SEA Indicators	Monitoring Sources	Frequency/Responsibility
		• EPA Water Quality of Ireland Report. • EPA State of the Environment Report 2024. • EPA Water Quality Status for surface and ground water. • EPA Risk Status for surface and ground water. • Monitoring in the Review of Flood Risk Management Plans 2021. • Monitoring for the EPA Catchments Unit and Local Authority Waters Programme.	• EPA, continuously. • EPA, every 4 years. • EPA, varies. • EPA, varies. • OPW, every 3 years. • EPA Catchment Unit, DHLGH and relevant local authorities, varies.
Air Quality, Noise & Climate	General air quality results in the Republic of Ireland. The changes and level of GHG emissions from the electrification of vehicular transport over the plan period. Compliance with national Air Quality Standards (AQS). Mode share of electrified public transport (passenger and freight). Overall GHG emission reductions over the Plan period.	• EPA Air Quality Monitoring. • EPA State of the Environment Report 2024. • Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) - Monitoring of Renewable Energy Sources in Ireland. • Monitoring related to Local Authority Climate Action Plans. • EPA Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report. • EPA Climate Change Projections. • CSO Census Reports. • Monitoring for Noise Action Plans across local authorities.	• EPA, annually. • EPA, every 4 years. • SEAI, varies. • Local Authorities, every 5 years. • EPA reports on each sector on an annual basis. • EPA, varies. • CSO, every 6 years. • Local Authorities, varies.
Archaeology, Architectural & Cultural Heritage	No deterioration of features of archaeological/ architectural/ cultural significance as a result of the implementation of the Plan. Number of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the immediate setting of these entries including their relationships with charging infrastructure and the surrounding landscape. Full or partial loss to entries to the RPSs/NIAHs near charging infrastructure. Archaeological Impact Assessments related to increased infrastructure, and or the number and types of archaeological investigations undertaken.	• Registers of nationally protected sites and structures. • The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. • Heritage Plan Ireland 2030. • Local Authority Heritage Plans.	• NPWS (National Parks and Wildlife Services), NMS (National Monuments Service), UNESCO, continually. • The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are responsible for monitoring the conditions of, recording the presence of, and conserving Ireland's protected sites on a routine basis. • The Heritage Council reviewed after 3 years. • Local Authorities, reviewed annually.
Landscape & Visual	No deterioration of landscape or areas with scenic value e.g., Areas of High Amenity, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Protected Views as a result of the implementation of the Plan.	• Corine / EPA mapping resurveys.	• EPA, varies.

Environmental Component	SEA Indicators	Monitoring Sources	Frequency/Responsibility
Material Assets	Scale and location of charging infrastructure in Ireland. Statistics relating to the electrification of transport fleets in Ireland (including number of EV's, passengers and journey times). Economic growth statistics – particularly those relating to EV. Mode share of electrified public transport (passenger and freight).	• CSO Population, Health, Economic and Employment statistics. • Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) – Monitoring of Renewable Energy in Ireland. • Monitoring related to Local Authority Climate Action Plans. • CSO Transport data. • EPA National Waste Statistics Summary Report. • EPA State of the Environment Report 2024. • The annual reports on the implementation of the Southern Region and Eastern-Midlands Region Waste Management Plans. • Monitoring for the EPA's Remedial Action List. • EPA Urban Wastewater Treatment Reports.	• CSO, every 6 years. • SEAI, varies. • Local Authority, every 5 years. • CSO, every 6 years. • EPA, annually. • EPA, every 4 years. • The Regional Waste Office, annually. • The EPA releases a Remedial Action List every Quarter which identifies problems with drinking water supply. Local Authorities should have regard to issues pertaining to Local Authorities water treatment plants. • The EPA publish an Urban Wastewater Treatment Report each year which identifies areas in Ireland where there are issues with treatment and effluent quality as well as capacity issues.

2.5.3 SEA ER– Consultation

A period of public and statutory consultation took place from 24th May 2024 to 19th July 2024 to gather feedback on the draft RLEVCNP and supporting SEA ER, in accordance with legislative requirements. The documents were issued to Environmental Authorities and made available for public viewing on the Government of Ireland website (www.gov.ie).

There were eighty-three submissions received related to the draft RLEVCNP; however, none of the submissions relate to the SEA ER and AA Screening. The content of submissions and comments received during this consultation period were considered by the plan preparation team. Amendments to the draft Plan were made in response to those consultation inputs, where considered appropriate.

2.5.4 Assessment Stage 2- Revised Plan

The next stage of the assessment involved revising the SEA ER to ensure alignment with the final version of the RLEVCNP, which had been updated following public consultation. Minor amendments to the wording of the Plan provisions were made during this revision. Consequently, an exercise was conducted to assess whether these updates constituted 'material changes' to the Plan provisions, and whether they necessitated screening for SEA.

This assessment, as detailed in Table 2.5, concluded that none of the changes to the Plan provisions were material; therefore, no SEA screening was required. However, the SEA ER was updated to reflect the revised wording. Importantly, there was no alteration to the outcome of the environmental assessment. Given the time elapsed between the preparation of the initial draft SEA ER and the updated version in January 2025, the remainder of the report was also revised to ensure it was current. This included the baseline environment information.

Table 2.5 Assessment of changes to Plan Provisions

Objective No.	Original Objectives	Revised Objectives	Material Change Identified that May require SEA?
1	Support the coordinated expansion of a destination and neighbourhood EV charging network.	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
2	Provide a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of the Climate Action Plan objectives.	Provide a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of both AFIR requirements and Climate Action Plan objectives.	No
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	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
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.	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
6	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)	Removed	No

Objective No.	Original Objectives	Revised Objectives	Material Change Identified that May require SEA?
7	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)	Removed	No
8	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
9	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)	Removed	
10	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	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
12	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

Objective No.	Original Objectives	Revised Objectives	Material Change Identified that May require SEA?
13	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
	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

2.6 Technical Difficulties Encountered

During the preparation of GIS mapping, it was considered at a national level, the EPA landcover dataset includes too much detail to accurately illustrate the baseline environmental status of the country in its entirety. It is considered that at a project specific or local area level the datasets will be largely beneficial. However, for the purposes of this SEA and the national scale of the Plan, this SEA ER incorporates the CORINE landcover dataset to accurately illustrate the baseline environment of the Plan area.

In addition, as noted above, although the baseline environment is illustrated in this report, it is considered of limited value due to the national scale of the Plan.

No further technical difficulties were encountered during the preparation of this SEA ER.

3. Appropriate Assessment

Stage 1 AA (Screening) was undertaken by ZEVI and DoT to identify if there are potential for effects of implementing the RLEVCNP on the conservation status of designated Natura 2000 sites within the sphere of influence of the Plan (or project). It was determined as part of this screening that there was no potential for significant effects and/or in-combination effects on European sites as a result of implementing the RLEVCNP. Therefore, an AA was not required.

Consultation on the AA screening was also carried out as part of the public consultation process and consultation with the Environmental Authorities from 24th May to 19th July 2024.

4. Final Appraisal: How Environmental Considerations were integrated into the RLEVCNP

This Section summarises how environmental considerations were integrated into the adopted RLEVCNP, throughout the SEA process.

The SEA process for the RLEVCNP ensured the integration of environmental considerations as follows:

- Undertaking the SEA in parallel with the RLEVCNP.
- Undertaking the SEA with close regular contact between the RLEVCNP team and the SEA team.
- Issuing the Scoping Report to the Environmental Authorities for comments on key environmental issues and the proposed scope of the SEA at the earliest possible stage of the RLEVCNP preparation; and
- Carrying out a full assessment of the environmental effects of the RLEVCNP and recommending and making changes to the RLEVCNP as a result.

4.1 Identification of Environmental Constraints

As described in Section 2.4, the SEA team undertook an assessment of baseline environmental conditions of the RLEVCNP area, with reference to biodiversity, population and human health, land and soil, water, air and climate, heritage, landscape, and material assets. This information was used to focus the SEA objectives, develop alternatives, and assess positive and negative impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed RLEVCNP. An Environmental Sensitivity Map was prepared to enable this assessment and to influence alternatives discussions and assessment of policies.

The RLEVCNP and SEA ER took into account the most up-to-date data available at the time of writing the ER. This included, but was not limited to, findings from the EPA Ireland's National Inventory Report 2024 (EPA, 2024), EPA Water Quality in Ireland 2023 (EPA, 2023) and 2024 State of the Environment Report (EPA, 2024) which were integrated into the SEA ER, among other European and national regulations, including but not limited to, AFIR (EC, 2023) and ZEVI's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2025 (ZEVI, 2022).

4.2 SEA Scoping

As described in Section 2.3, the SEA Scoping was a key part of the assessment process as it provided information to allow consultation with defined statutory bodies and environmental authorities on the scope and level of detail to be considered and incorporated at an early stage in the assessment.

Refer to Appendix A.1 for the submissions received during the scoping consultation and how they were responded to and incorporated into the SEA ER and the RLEVCNP.

4.3 Assessment of Alternatives

The SEA team worked with ZEVI from the outset to assist ZEVI in becoming familiar with the process. The SEA team issued ZEVI the EPA's *Guidance on Developing and Assessing Alternatives in SEA,* as well as some examples from similar plans in the public domain.

Both the SEA team and ZEVI acknowledged that the 'Do Nothing' scenario would not be a reasonable alternative to undertake and that ZEVI needed to develop a number of other scenarios related to the alternative levels of ambition with which would satisfy the ambitions of the overarching Strategic Vision. The alternatives were then subject to assessment by the SEA team and the assessment outcomes were considered by ZEVI in the identification of emerging preferred alternatives.

Refer to Section 2.5.2.3 for details on the consideration of alternatives.

4.4 Plan Objectives

The SEA/AA team worked closely with ZEVI to develop the RLEVCNP. Through workshops, multi-disciplinary discussions and land-use modelling scenarios, ZEVI and the SEA/AA team were able to identify the steps needed to make each ambition a reality within the lifetime of this Plan. Once these steps were understood, they were translated into a range of plan objectives, using the appropriate approaches relevant to each pillar.

4.5 Proposed Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures were proposed to address negative environmental impacts identified during the assessment process. The majority of proposals are predicted to have overall positive environmental impacts. However, while the provision of new charging infrastructure across Ireland is likely to have a positive impact on material assets, it is also likely to have an increased demand on electricity. Consequently, a negative, neutral or unknown impact on Material Assets is predicted.

The SEA team worked closely with ZEVI in the development of the mitigation measures outlined in the SEA ER in order to fully mitigate potential environmental effects. A full list of mitigation measures for the Plan is contained in the SEA ER (refer to Section 9.1 of the SEA ER).

4.6 Required Environmental Monitoring Programme

A monitoring programme has been developed based on the indicators (noted in Section 9 of the SEA ER) in order to track progress towards achieving strategic environmental objectives and reaching targets, enabling positive and negative impacts on the environment to be measured.

The indicators have been developed to illustrate changes that may be attributable to the implementation of the RLEVCNP.

ZEVI will ensure a mid-level review is carried out by a monitoring group to track the progress of the RLEVCNP monitoring programme over the lifetime of the Plan.

4.7 Consultation

Further to the SEA Scoping consultation, the SEA ER, the AA Screening and the RLEVCNP were put on wider display on the Government of Ireland website. A total of eighty-three submissions were received as part of the consultation.

All the submissions relate to the RLEVCNP; none of the submissions relate to the SEA ER and AA Screening.

ZEVI has prepared a Submission Response Report, which summarise the key issues raised as part of the consultation and how those issues were responded to. The Submission Response Report is standalone and has been published alongside the final RLEVCNP.

Following the submissions made by the public to the RLEVCNP, minor updates have been made to the RLEVCNP that are not considered material and do not change the outcome to the SEA ER.

Appendix A

Submission Responses

A.1 Scoping Responses from Environmental Authorities

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	EPA recommends including a schematic of the hierarchy of transport planning and key relevant stakeholders, and the Plan's position within that overall framework. This would clearly show how the key relevant plans and policies are interlinked. The aim is to provide for connected and coordinated transport planning on the island of Ireland.	Noted. A schematic of the Plan's position within that overall framework have been incorporated into the SEA ER.
	Below is a list of legislation, plans, programmes, and research resources that may be relevant for consideration. <u>International Plans, Programmes, Policies or Legislation</u> • ESPOO Convention and Kyiv (SEA) Protocol • OSPAR Convention • WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines 2021 • Healthy Cities Project (WHO) <u>European Plans, Programmes, Policies or Legislation</u> • National Emissions Ceiling Directive (2016/2284) • 8th Environmental Action Programme • The EU Zero Pollution Action Plan • Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on nature restoration <u>National, regional, and local level plans and programmes</u> • National Air Pollution Control Programme • State of Global Climate – Provisional Report 2021) • Ireland's Climate Change Assessment • Prioritised Action Framework 2021-2027 (NPWS) • Management plans for Natura 2000 and National Site Network sites • Just Transition First Progress Report • Regional Tourism Strategies (Fáilte Ireland) • National Clean Air Strategy • National Roads Plan • Dublin Action Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide (December 2021) • Local Authority Climate Action Plans • Urban Transport Related Air Pollution (UTRAP) Working Group gov.ie - Urban Transport-Related Air Pollution (UTRAP) Working Group (www.gov.ie) • Flood Risk Management plans (where relevant)	Appendix B of this report has been updated to include a summary of the relevance of these plans and programmes.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	National SEA Guidelines • Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2022) • Possible additional Data Sets and information sources • National Land Cover map • Ireland's Greenhouse Gas emissions 1990-2021 (https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/air-emissions/Ireland's-Final-Greenhouse-gas-report-1990-2021_April-2023.pdf) • Article 17 Habitats Directive Reports Ireland/Northern Ireland https://www.npws.ie/publications/article-17-reports/article-17-reports-2019 o https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/article-17-habitats-directive-report-2019/ • Spatial analysis of Ireland's greenhouse gas exists at https://projects.au.dk/mapeire/spatial-results/. • EPA national air pollutant inventory submissions, available at http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/air/airemissions/airpollutantemissions/ • Data on levels of atmospheric pollutants from the EPA's national ambient air quality monitoring network (http://www.epa.ie/air/quality/monitor/) • Climate Change Advisory Council annual review (https://www.climatecouncil.ie/councilpublications/annualreviewandreport/) • the latest GHG projections which can be found here https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/air-emissions/irelands-greenhouse-gas-emissions-projections-2022-2040.php. • The latest published EPA water quality report Water Quality in 2023- An Indicators Report (EPA, 2024).	
	There is merit in reviewing the EPA's SEA Spatial Information Sources Inventory to determine whether any additional information may be of relevant to the Plan and SEA. https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/sea-spatial-information-sources-inventory-.php	Use of this inventory has been noted and reviewed as a useful support to assist the SEA process
	The key aspects of the Plan identified as having potential for likely significant environmental effects should help identify which environmental criteria may be more potentially impacted. This should help inform what environmental sensitivities are considered and the weightings assigned to those sensitivities.	The potential for likely significant effects has informed the environmental sensitivities and weightings of associated with those sensitivities. The methodology and weighting system applied is adopted from the EPA report 'GISEA Manual Improving the Evidence Base in SEA' and based on feedback from the scoping consultation process.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	In Table 3, in relation to WFD High status waterbodies (River, Lakes, Transitional, Groundwater), a weighting of 10 may be more appropriate, to reflect their greater relative importance for supporting various ecosystems and associated biodiversity.	This comment is welcomed, although Arup is satisfied with a ranking of 5 for High status waterbodies.
	Given that the Plan is national in scale, it may be more appropriate to split the comprehensive objectives for the various environmental components set out in Table 5 into a smaller number of higher-level environmental protection objectives (EPOs) which seek to address the key environmental objectives. These can be supported by sub-objectives for more specific elements of the Plan. Where possible, the EPOs should also be made more specific to the Plan and assessment being carried out.	Noted. High level environmental protection objectives have been included in the SEA ER.
	Table 5 – Strategic Environmental Objectives, Targets, and Indicators. We note the objectives, targets and indicators as set out for the various environmental components. The assessment of the EPOs against the Plan objectives could be done, taking account of the higher-level EPOs. The assessment for each environmental theme, could also include summary text of any aspects identified requiring mitigation, further assessment, policy wording changes/additions etc.	Noted.
	In terms of selecting monitoring indicators, where possible these should consider the potential impacts of the Plan and which monitoring indicators may be best placed to take these into account, over the lifetime of the Plan. Using broader environmental monitoring, will make it more difficult to differentiate whether any changes in environmental quality relate to implementation of the Plan (needing to be mitigated) or relating to wider environmental changes not linked to the Plan.	Noted. This has been taken into consideration in this ER. Due to the nature and scale of the Plan, only broader environmental monitoring measures can be included at this time.
	<u>Alignment with other key plans and programmes</u> The Plan must consider the national sustainable mobility policy and outline investments for sustainable transport alternatives. It should demonstrate connectivity with other transport strategies, such as metropolitan area plans, and align with the National Planning Framework. Additionally, the Plan must incorporate County/City Development Plans, Local Authority Climate Action Plans, and relevant sectoral transport planning.	Noted.
	<u>Biodiversity</u> The Plan must incorporate habitat mapping, consider green/blue infrastructure and ecological corridors, and commit to protecting designated national and European sites during implementation. It should address the control of invasive species and integrate relevant elements from the National Biodiversity Action Plan and the All-Island Pollinator Plan.	Noted.
	<u>Scope of the SEA</u> The SEA must define the Plan's scope, remit, and implementation details, guiding the appropriate assessment level. If Plan measures are implemented through other SEA-reviewed plans, this should be explained in the Environmental Report and considered in the assessment.	Noted. Chapter 2 of the ER includes an introduction and overview of the Plan. Proposals included in the Plan have been assessed in this ER in terms of significant effects on the

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
		environment – refer to Chapter 8. It is stated in the SEA ER that any plans/projects arising from the implementation of the Plan will be subject to appropriate feasibility, options and environmental assessment where required.
	<u>SEA Alternatives</u> You should describe the alternatives considered and how the selection and assessment of these has led to the selection of the preferred alternative. You should assess the alternatives against the 'Strategic Environmental Objectives' identified in the SEA ER. The EPA's good practice guidance note on Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment (EPA, 2015) may be useful to consider in preparing and assessing alternatives.	Consideration of alternatives have been included in Chapter 7 of the ER. EPA Guidance documents have been referred to and incorporated into the SEA ER.
	<u>Range of Environmental effects</u> The SEA should refer to the full range of environmental effects and of the area likely to be affected. This assessment should consider the duration and frequency of effects as well as short, medium, and long-term and synergistic effects of the legislation. With regards the potential for cumulative effects, the EPA Guidance Practice Guidance Note on Cumulative Effects Assessment in Strategic Environmental Assessment (EPA, 2020) may be useful to consider in this context.	Assessment of potential environmental effects arising from the plan have been included in Chapter 8 of the ER. EPA Guidance documents have been referred to and incorporated into the SEA ER.
	<u>Data & Knowledge gaps</u> The SEA should identify any significant data and knowledge gaps and include commitments to help address these on a priority basis during the implementation phase of the Plan. This is with a view to strengthening the evidence base for future reviews and iterations of the Plan.	Due to the high-level nature of the Plan and non-specificity of geospatial locations for charging infrastructure at this time, data and knowledge gaps cannot be identified at this stage.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	We note the reference in Chapter 9 of the scoping report relating to the next steps to be taken in the SEA process. There is merit in noting that the scoping for the SEA is dynamic and should continue to feed into the preparation of the SEA environmental report and Plan.	Noted. Scoping responses have been incorporated into the SEA ER.
	Following the completion of the public consultation on the SEA and the Plan, while ongoing opportunities are presented for integration during the SEA process, the final stages of the SEA process are to integrate the environmental considerations of the SEA environmental report into the Plan, as appropriate. In accordance with Article 16 of the SEA Regulations, a SEA Statement should be published alongside the adopted Plan, summarising: • how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan. • how the environmental report and consultation comments on it have been considered. • the reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with (in the Environmental Report and the associated consultation). • the measures decided concerning monitoring. The EPA has published Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring, which should be considered in preparing the SEA statement.	Guidance on the SEA process been taken from EPA Guidance on GISEA.
	<u>Available guidance and resources</u> The EPA website contains various SEA guidance notes and SEA resources at: https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/sea-topic-and-sector-specific-guidance-/	Noted. EPA Guidance documents have been referred to and incorporated into the SEA ER.
	<u>Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool</u> The ESM Webtool is a decision support tool to assist SEA and planning processes in Ireland. The tool brings together over 100 datasets and allows users to explore environmental considerations within a particular area and create plan-specific environmental sensitivity maps. These maps can help planners anticipate potential land-use conflicts and help identify suitable development locations, while also protecting the environment. The ESM Webtool is available at www.enviromap.ie.	Use of this tool has been noted and reviewed as a useful support tool to assist the SEA process.
	<u>EPA SEA Search and Reporting Tool</u> Our SEA Search and Reporting Tool is publicly available at https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SEA. It allows public authorities to produce an indicative report on key aspects of the environment in a specific geographic area It is intended to assist public authorities in SEA screening and scoping exercises.	Use of this tool has been noted and reviewed as a useful support tool to assist the SEA process.
	<u>EPA Appropriate Assessment GeoTool</u> AA GeoTool application has been developed in partnership with the NPWS. It allows users to a select a location, specify a search area, and gather available information for each European Site within the area. It is available at: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool.	Use of this tool has been noted and reviewed as a useful support tool to assist the SEA process.
DAERA – Northern Ireland Environment Agency	NED notes within Chapter 6 a description of sensitivity mapping have been provided. NED has concerns with this approach. Within Section 6.2 it states that the weights are subjective in nature, NED would be more confident in an approach which is evidence based. It is unclear as to how each weighting point (column 4 within Table 3) has been allocated and within Table 4 how the overlay results are related to significance of impacts against the environment. NED is concerned that should a site for example contain only an SAC and therefore a weighting of 10 that as per Table 4 this would be categorised as "low-sensitivity areas". Areas such as priority habitats which are not within designated sites have also not been included.	The Environmental Sensitivity Mapping has been prepared in accordance with the EPA Guidance on GISEA.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	NED notes that within Chapter 5 that Flora and Fauna have not been listed, it is unclear if they are included within the biodiversity section or have been omitted. NED advise that this should be made clearer in the Environmental Report and advise that flora and fauna should be clearly included within biodiversity or have their own section. NED also note that within Section 5.3.1.2 that no details have been provided on designated sites within Northern Ireland, NED would also welcome more detail in relation to priority habitats and species within Northern Ireland, this should be included as part of the Environmental Report. NED also note that within Chapter 5 that no section on interrelationships have been provided, this should be included in the Environmental Report.	Section 5.3 (Biodiversity) of the SEA ER is inclusive of Flora and Fauna. Section 5.3.1 (Transboundary Baseline) refers to protected sites in Northern Ireland.
	NED also note that no mapping in relation to Northern Ireland has been provided within Appendix A as has been the case for Ireland, NED would recommend the inclusion of maps of Northern Ireland in relation to SEA topic areas. Furthermore, NED advise that should there be any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information this should be outlined within the Environmental Report.	Note that maps of protected sites in Northern Ireland have been included in the SEA ER.
	NED note within Table 5 that a number of the targets have not been provided with clear figures and thresholds. NED recommend that clear measurable figures and thresholds should be used for targets and indicators were appropriate to provide clear goals	Noted.
	NED also notes within Table 5 under biodiversity indicators it states that "Conservation status/habitat quality for all sites and species located near EVCI", "near" is a subjective term and a clearer measurable definition should be used, with perhaps a measurable Zone of Influence	Table 6.1 of the SEA ER has been updated to include the wording 'Zone of Influence'.
	NED also note in Table 5 it states that the "siting of development of infrastructure on non-sensitive sites, where possible and appropriate" NED welcomes this, however, advises that, any siting of infrastructure should result in non-significant impacts wherever they are located this must be made clear in the Environmental Report.	Table 6.1 of the SEA ER has been updated to include that any siting of infrastructure should result in non-significant impacts wherever they are located.
	NED advise that impacts can occur at a distance from the construction and operational phases of the project. As discussed above interrelationships should also be included. NED also advise that impacts may not just result from air quality and be positive in nature, therefore sites other than those related to air quality should be included and the potential impacts both positive and negative indicators included.	Noted. An assessment of inter-relationships is included in the ER.
	NED notes under biodiversity indicators that the "Scale of EVCI permitted in proximity/within European sites/sites of ecological importance" this should not be limited to European sites and should include other designated sites and priority habitats. The indicators should also focus on any biodiversity loss or gain as a result of the plan both within and adjacent to designated sites. Furthermore, NED advise that details of where the indicators data will be sourced from should be included at the Environmental Report stage.	Table 6.1 (biodiversity indicators) has been updated to include this statement. All sources to data are referenced within the ER.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	NED note the alternatives provided within Section 3. NED notes that a more detailed environmental assessment of alternatives will be included in the Environmental Report and welcome this NED looks forward to reviewing these as part of the Environmental Report.	More detailed environmental assessment of alternatives included in section 7 of the SEA ER.
	NED notes that an AA (Appropriate Assessment) screening is to be undertaken carried out. NED would welcome the opportunity to review the AA screening and if required the completed AA when they have been completed.	Noted.
	Please note following the decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, the collective term of "Natura 2000" sites the network of European protected sites is now known as "National Site Network" sites within the United Kingdom and is including Northern Ireland.	Noted. The SEA ER has been updated where appropriate.
	DAERA set out a range of guidance and data sources that may be useful in the preparation of the SEA	Noted and reviewed
	Air Quality Consideration should be given as to the potential impacts of the Plan on air pollutants at protected sites in Northern Ireland (transboundary impacts). Further information regarding the location of protected sites in Northern Ireland can be found at Natural Environment Map Viewer | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk).	Protected sites are now included in the assessment in section 6 of the ER.
	AQBU welcomes the consideration given to construction and traffic related activities associated with the delivery of projects within the Plan and if they might trigger a significant air quality effect on nearby sensitive habitats or species. Activities within 200m of sensitive habitats to air pollution should be assessed for potential effects from NOx and dust.	Noted.
	Ireland is now included in the Air Pollution Information System (APIS) which provides information on the impacts of air pollutants, such as NOx, ammonia emissions and the associated N deposition on sensitive habitats and species. The map feature within APIS enables detailed information to be provided on the Critical Levels/Loads for each qualifying feature and background levels of these pollutants: APIS app | Air Pollution Information System.	Noted
	DAERA Marine Plan Team comment: Having reviewed the documentation, it is recommended the environmental objectives from marine policy and legislation both from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and the way those objectives and considerations have been considered, should be included. The relevant Northern Ireland documents are listed below: • Marine Act (NI) 2013 • Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 • UK Marine Policy Statement 2011 • Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland 2018 • Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2026 • UK Marine Strategy [Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)] The report would benefit from stating if there are any likely effects or no likely effects on the marine environment and the transboundary marine environment.	Noted. Environmental objectives from marine policy and legislation have not been included as there will be no likely effects on marine environment.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	The section on transboundary baseline is welcomed. It would be helpful if any specific marine key issues and opportunities could be highlighted. For example, under Biodiversity, it is suggested the potential negative impacts due to run-off or dust deposition if construction works taken place in proximity to ecologically sensitive sites, should clearly state if this includes ecologically sensitive sites in the marine area. It is also recommended that consideration is given to MSFD, particularly those elements not covered by WFD within coastal waters. This includes issues such as impacts of noise, litter, and certain aspects of biodiversity. The SEOs should also clearly include appropriate reference to marine aspects where relevant. For example, within the Water and Biodiversity SEO consideration should be given to the requirements of MSFD, not covered by WFD in coastal waters. The reference to 'seascapes' within the Landscape and Visual SEO is welcomed. Inclusion will enable the subsequent Environmental Report to consider and assess likely effects on the marine environment, including the transboundary marine environment with Northern Ireland.	
HED – Historic Environment Division	HED welcome the consideration of transboundary issues in relation to Northern Irelands historic environment. In order to assist in identification of potential project specific transboundary impacts we advise that our full suite of currently recorded heritage assets (including architectural, historic parks and gardens, industrial and defence heritage, as well as archaeological) are available spatially via our downloadable Historic Environment Digital Datasets | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) and our Historic Environment Map Viewer | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk).	Noted.
	We would also clarify that in addition to protection for archaeological heritage, the Transboundary Baseline, Para 5.7.1.1, should also acknowledge the legislative protection for architectural heritage under the Planning Act (NI) 2011, including vires to designate Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.	Noted.
NPWS: Department of Housing, local Government and Heritage	We advise that you have regard to the following in preparing the SEA for this project. **Legislation and Policy Framework** The National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014 The specific national legislative code for protection of monuments, historic wrecks and archaeological objects is the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014. In summary, this provides legal protection for all archaeological objects, wrecks 100 or more years old and for a range of categories of monuments and places. Archaeological objects (which in broad terms includes all moveable objects of archaeological importance) are comprehensively protected under the National Monuments Acts. In terms of protection of monuments and related sites, the most widely applicable protective mechanism is the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. There are over 130,000 entries in the RMP, which takes the form of lists and maps for each county in the State. Copies of these lists and maps, as prepared in the 1990s, were circulated to all planning authorities and are now available in PDF format at www.archaeology.ie. The RMP includes the archaeological monuments which had been identified at the time it was issued. Of course, many more archaeological monuments have been identified since and, while these have not as yet been included in the RMP, an online database of known archaeological monuments, the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)—including current RMP entries and ones which will be included in a revised RMP—is available as the Historic Environment Viewer.	Noted. The SEA ER includes reference to this legislation and policy framework.
	The RMP requires notice to be given to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage of proposed work at or in relation to monuments and places included in it (generally referred to as "recorded monuments"). Similar protection is provided by the Register of Historic Monuments (established under section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act (1987) to historic monuments and archaeological areas included in it.	Noted.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	The strongest legal protection under the National Monuments Acts in respect of monuments is afforded to national monuments of which the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage or a local authority is owner or guardian or in respect of which a Preservation Order under the National Monuments Acts is in force. The consent of the Minister is required for interference with such national monuments or ground disturbance around or in proximity to them. A national monument is any monument the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the archaeological, architectural, historical, traditional, or artistic interest attaching to it	Noted.
	Under the National Monuments Acts the Minister and local authorities must maintain national monuments of which they are owners or guardians (the OPW has day to day responsibility in relation to national monuments owned by or in guardianship of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage) and, subject to such restrictions as are reasonably necessary, seek to provide public access to such national monuments. All wrecks over 100 years old (whether previously known or just discovered) and all archaeological objects situated underwater, are protected under section 3 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987. Wrecks of any date and the potential location of wrecks or archaeological objects may also be protected under Section 3 of the 1987 (Amendment) Act by the making of an underwater heritage order, if considered to be of sufficient historical, archaeological, or artistic importance to merit such protection.	Noted.
	The Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 The Planning and Development Acts and Regulations contain further provisions relating to the protection of archaeological heritage. These include provisions for the conservation and protection of archaeological heritage within Development Plans, provisions making clear that imposition of archaeological conditions on grants of planning permission does not ground claims for compensation and detailed provisions to ensure that planning applications for proposed development which would affect sites protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014 or archaeological sites in general are referred to the National Monuments Service.	Noted.
	Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 The recently signed Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (2023) will replace the National Monuments Acts (1930–2014). The Bill will provide for the protection of historic and archaeological heritage. A new 'Register of Monuments' will be established, replacing several overlapping designation and registration systems currently in operation. Newly discovered archaeological sites will be afforded immediate legal protection, mirroring the existing system for archaeological objects and historic wrecks that are automatically protected without a need for formal designation or registration. This will be reinforced by a statutory reporting scheme for finds of monuments. Subject to certain exceptions, archaeological objects with no known owner will automatically become the property of the State. A new civil enforcement procedure can be used as an alternative to, or to supplement, criminal proceedings. The bill makes explicit provision for the protection of World Heritage sites, including, for the first time, a definition in Irish law for "World Heritage Property". The new legislation enables the State to ratify or accede to certain international conventions, notably the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects. The Act gives further effect to the 1992 Council of Europe European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (the "Valletta Convention"). The Act introduces a new integrated licensing system whereby one licence can authorise a range of activities and, for the first time, a statutory appeals process will be established to review licensing decisions. Note while this new legislation has been signed into law, most of the provisions of the Act have not yet been commenced. However, it is expected that substantive implementation will occur within the lifetime of this DEDP.	Noted. This recent Act has been added to section 5.7.1 of the SEA ER.

Consultee/Stakeholder	SEA Scoping Response	SEA Actions
	The Environmental Impact Assessment Directive The EU Directive on EIA (which is given effect to in Irish law through a range of national legislation) clearly requires that EIA include consideration of impact on archaeological heritage.	Noted.
	International Conventions Ireland is a party to the 1992 Council of Europe European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (the "Valletta Convention"). It is important that all public bodies, play their part in ensuring Ireland is at all times in compliance with this binding international treaty, including through using domestic legislation such as the Planning and Development Act to give effect to the requirements of the Convention. A particular focus of the Valletta Convention is the requirement to ensure that archaeological considerations are integrated into the planning and development process. Ireland is also a party to the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Although not as yet a party to the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, Ireland supported its adoption and has through the recent Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (2023) directly facilitated its ratification. It is essential that full account is taken of the need to provide appropriate protection for the underwater cultural heritage	Noted.
	National policy on protection of the archaeological heritage in the course of development The Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Government of Ireland 1999) was published so as to promote a high level of compliance with the aims and requirements of the Valletta Convention. It sets out national policy on the protection of the archaeological heritage in the course of development. While not specifically directed at the planning system, as operating under the Planning and Development Acts, it speaks to all development control codes.	Noted. Section 5.7.1 of the ER now includes reference to the e Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Government of Ireland 1999).
	Core elements of the policies set out in the Framework and Principles document include emphasis on the non-renewable nature of the archaeological heritage and the need to always consider its preservation in-situ as the first option, and also the need to carry out appropriate levels and forms of archaeological assessment in advance of development.	Noted.
	Data/information sources The Department would draw attention to the following data sources about the archaeological and cultural heritage environment relevant to the Strategy and its associated environmental assessments.	Noted.

Appendix B

Updates to SEA ER

B.1 Relationship with Other Relevant Plans, Programme, Policy or Legislation

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
International Level		
ESPOO Convention and Kyiv (SEA) Protocol	The Espoo (EIA) Convention sets out the obligations of Parties to assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning. It also lays down the general obligation of States to notify and consult each other on all major projects under consideration that are likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact across boundaries. The Kyiv Protocol was the first legally binding international instrument on pollutant release and transfer registers. Its objective is *'to enhance public access to information through the establishment of coherent, nationwide pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs)'.*	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
OSPAR Convention	An international co-operation to protect the marine environment of the north-east Atlantic is achieved through the OSPAR Convention. It aims to provide a comprehensive and simplified approach to addressing all sources of pollution which might affect the maritime area, and all matters relating to the protection of the marine environment.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Air Quality Guidelines 2021	The World Health Organisation (WHO) periodically issues health-based air quality guidelines to assist governments and civil society to reduce human exposure to air pollution and its adverse effects. The updated guidelines include updated recommendations on Air Quality Guideline (AQG) levels and interim targets for PM2.5, PM10, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide. Thes guidelines provide insight on the impacts of air pollution for health / environmental impact assessment practitioners.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will incorporate all relevant environmental guidelines.
European Union Level		
Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) Policy – (European Parliament) 2013	A policy to address the implementation and development of a Europe-wide network of railway lines, roads, inland waterways, maritime shipping routes, ports, airports, and railroad terminals. Aim: *'To close gaps, remove bottlenecks and technical barriers, as well as to strengthen social, economic and territorial cohesion in the EU.'*	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
		The RLEVCNP is specifically focused on upgrading and developing new EV charging points at a local and neighbourhood scale in Ireland. The positioning of these charging points may overlap with locations along the TEN-T network (Core network and Comprehensive network), as well as all other national primary and secondary roads.
Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport 2021)	A strategy setting out a roadmap for a sustainable and smart transport future. It includes 10 focus areas and an action plan, aiming for a 90% reduction in the transport sector's emissions by 2050.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Green Deal (EGD) (European Commission) 2020	A strategy to oversee Europe's transformation to a climate-neutral, fair, and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy. The strategy will be supported by climate, energy, and transport-related legislation under the 'Fit for 55 Package' to meet the 2030 and 2050 ambitions. Target: *'Net-zero greenhouse gas emissions at EU level by 2050, and an emissions reduction target of at least 55% for 2030 to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and align with the goal of the Paris Agreement.'* Under the EGD, the European Commission has adopted a set of policy proposals with a view to realising its aim. These include, among others: The European Climate Law, making the EU's 2050 climate neutrality target legally binding; ensuring that all EU policies contribute to climate neutrality by mid-century and that all sectors play their part. To place the EU firmly on the pathway to climate neutrality by mid-century, it also establishes a legally binding, more ambitious intermediate emissions reductions target for 2030 of at least 55% relative to 1990 levels. The 'Fit for 55' Package, to deliver wide-ranging legislative and policy changes needed to support the achievement of the EU's emissions reductions targets for 2030 and 2050.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) (European Commission) 2023	The European Commission's new Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) is part of the 'Fit for 55' package. Agreed in March 2023, AFIR establishes mandatory deployment targets for EV and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure for the roads, shipping, and aviation sectors across the trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). AFIR sets locational/ distance-based charging infrastructure targets for member states to achieve by 2025 and 2027 with a view to deliver the following key requirements by 2030/2035: By 2030, 3,800 kW of EV charging infrastructure for HDVs (including buses) on every 60 km of the TEN-T Core Road network; and	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is specifically focused on the delivery of the AFIR targets.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
	By 2030, 1,500 kW of EV charging infrastructure for dedicated to HDVs on every 100 km of the TEN-T Comprehensive Road network; and By 2030, 1,800 kW of EV charging infrastructure for dedicated to HDVs at each Urban Node. In addition, AFIR sets a fleet-based target for EV charging infrastructure commensurate with the level of take up of EVs as follows: EV charging infrastructure capacity is proportionate to EV uptake; i.e., provision of charging infrastructure power output of 1.3 kW per battery EV, and 0.8 kW per plug-in hybrid vehicle, until battery EVs reach at least 15% market share of all passenger cars and LGVs.	
EU Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR) (European Commission) 2018, as amended 2023	The ESR establishes legally binding annual greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for EU Member States, including Ireland. The ESR targets emission reductions in most sectors not covered by the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), including transport. Under the ESR, Ireland is required to reduce its emissions from non-ETS sectors by 42% by 2030, relative to 2005 levels.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
National Emissions Ceiling Directive (2016/2284)	The National Emissions Ceilings Directive (NEC Directive) establishes emission ceilings for 2020 and 2030 for five specified pollutants: nitrogen oxides (NOx), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs), sulphur dioxide (SO2), ammonia (NH3) and fine particulate matter (PM2.5). The directive transposes the reduction commitments for 2020 agreed by the EU and its Member States under the 2012 revised Gothenburg Protocol under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP Convention). The more ambitious reduction commitments agreed for 2030 are designed to reduce the health impacts of air pollution by half compared with 2005. Further, the Directive requires that the Member States draw up National Air Pollution Control Programmes that should contribute to the successful implementation of air quality plans established under the EU's Air Quality Directive.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
8th Environmental Action Programme	8th Environmental Action Programme (EAP) to 2030 entered into force in May 2022 and guides European environmental policy until 2030, supporting the climate action objectives of the European Green Deal. The long-term priority objective is that, by 2050 at the latest, Europeans live well, within planetary boundaries, in a well-being economy where nothing is wasted. Growth will be regenerative, climate neutrality will be a reality, and inequalities will have been significantly reduced.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
	Its six priority objectives to 2030 include achieving the 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target and climate neutrality by 2050, enhancing adaptive capacity to climate change, accelerating transition to circular economy, pursing zero-pollution ambition, enhancing natural capital, and reducing environmental and climate pressures.	The RLEVCNP will help contribute towards the six priority objectives to 2030 through the deployment of EV charging infrastructure and transition towards EVs.
The EU Zero Pollution Action Plan	The action plan requires among other commitments, that by 2030, the EU should reduce: by 25% the EU ecosystems where air pollution threatens biodiversity; by 50% nutrient losses, the use and risk of chemical pesticides, the use of the more hazardous ones, and the sale of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture; by 50% plastic litter at sea and by 30% microplastics released into the environment	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on nature restoration	Under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, as part of the European Green Deal, the European Commission committed to put forward a proposal for legally binding EU nature restoration targets to restore degraded ecosystems. In June 2022, the European Commission tabled a proposal for a regulation on nature restoration, which sets multiple binding restoration targets and obligations across a broad range of ecosystems, from forests and agricultural land to urban areas, rivers, and marine habitats, complementing existing legislation. The nature restoration measures should cover at least 20 % of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050. To implement the proposed regulation, Member States are required to develop nature restoration plans, to be assessed by the Commission. The proposed nature restoration law also entails a specific objective to reverse the decline of pollinator populations by 2030.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Level		
National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040) – (Government of Ireland) 2019	A planning framework to guide growth, development, and investment over the period to 2040. Vision: A shared set of goals for every community across the country, expressed as the National Strategic Outcomes.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP will help contribute towards the Planning Framework's commitments to EVs and EV charging infrastructure.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
National Development Plan 2021- 2030 (Project Ireland 2040) (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2021)	The Irish Government's over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030, balancing the demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland, with a major focus on improving infrastructure projects.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP will help contribute towards the Plan's commitments to EVs and EV charging infrastructure.
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021	In July 2021, the Climate Action, and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 ('the Climate Act') was signed into Irish law. The Climate Act establishes a statutory national climate objective to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. It enshrines in Irish legislation a national target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, and an interim 2030 target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 51% relative to 2018 levels – the most ambitious legally binding emissions reduction target to which Ireland is bound. The Act also provides for the establishment of five-year carbon budgets, sectoral emissions ceilings and statutory Government and Local Authority Climate Action Plans, establishing national and regional roadmaps to ensure compliance with same.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
Climate Action Plan 2024	The Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP 2024) is the third annual update to the Republic of Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2019. This plan aligns with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and the economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The CAP 2024 implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government. The CAP 2024 also sets out how Ireland can accelerate the actions that are required to respond to the climate crisis, putting climate solutions at the centre of Ireland's social and economic development. In relation to the transport sector, the CAP details a 50% reduction in emissions by transforming how we travel. It aims to drive policies to reduce transport emissions by improving town, city, and rural planning, and by adopting the Avoid-Shift-Improve approach: reducing or avoiding the need for travel, shifting to public transport, walking, and cycling and improving the energy efficiency of vehicles.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Specifically, the Plan aims to achieve the CAP24 targets. At a national level, accelerating the transition to electric vehicles and vehicle technology improvements is a critical part of the transport decarbonisation pathway set out in Ireland's CAP24.
Connecting Ireland (National Transport Authority) 2021	A public transport plan to improve mobility in Ireland's rural areas, by providing better connections between villages and towns, and by linking these areas with an enhanced regional network connecting cities and regional centres. The plan was updated with feedback from the public consultation that occurred in late 2021.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
		The plan includes measures to accommodate both rural and urban areas across the Irish road network.
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (Department of Transport) 2021	The DoT prepared the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) as a high-level strategic framework to support the consideration and prioritisation of future investment in land transport. It represents the Department's contribution to Project Ireland 2040, Government's long-term, overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all and to build a more sustainable future. NIFTI has been developed to ensure sectoral investment is aligned with the National Planning Framework (NPF) and supports the delivery of the ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). NIFTI establishes a common lens through which to consider potential investment. In doing so, NIFTI sits alongside other Government priorities and policy objectives, such as the Programme for Government and Climate Action Plan.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP will contribute towards sustainable travel in the deployment of EV charging infrastructure across the Irish road network.
Sustainable Mobility Policy (Department of Transport) 2022	The Sustainable Mobility Policy (SMP) was published in April 2022 and includes 91 actions that support behavioural change through a wide range of interventions. These interventions include, among other things, public transport infrastructure and services, active travel promotion and supports, road safety initiatives, legislative measures, research, and public engagement.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP will contribute towards sustainable travel in the deployment of EV charging infrastructure across the Irish road network.
Urban Transport Related Air Pollution (UTRAP Working Group) Final Report (January 2023)	The UTRAP Working Group was formed in 2019 to address rising concerns about the transport-generated air pollution and includes representatives from government departments, agencies, and stakeholders. This report addresses the transport-related air pollution and consequent effects on human health. As part of their report, a review of traffic demand management studies across Ireland's five major cities was undertaken (Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, and Waterford), which identified that interactions between different traffic measures are complex, have a cumulative impact, and most importantly, there is no one measure that will address each issue with the cities.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, including reduction in traffic-related emissions.
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022 – 2025 and accompanying Implementation Plan (Department of Transport and ZEVI) 2023	In January 2023, the Department of Transport and ZEVI launched a national Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022 – 2025 and accompanying Implementation Plan. Together, they provide a strategy and practical action plan for the development of Ireland's EV charging network to 2025, in accordance with targets and requirements in the above-mentioned national and EU legislation and policies.	The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
National Air Pollution Control Programme	The National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP) is a technical document which outlines the pathway Ireland will follow to achieve compliance with its commitments under the National Emission Ceilings Directive (NEC Directive). The NAPCP includes: An overview of sectors and national policy frameworks in Ireland that impact on emissions of the five NEC pollutants (NOx, NMVOCs, SO_2, NH_3 and $PM_{2.5}$); An overview of the current outlook for compliance with NEC targets for each pollutant; Projections of relevant pollutant emissions to 2030; Policy options, measures, and actions across sectors but in particular in the residential, transport agricultural and energy sectors aimed at reducing emissions of the five specified air pollutants.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
Grid 25 Implementation Plan (Eirgrid)	EirGrid is the national electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) in Ireland and operates and maintains a safe, secure, reliable, economical, and efficient transmission system. The Plan defines three aspects: Onshore development of the grid network; Offshore development of the grid network; and Temporary emergency generation development. EirGrid is reviewing the existing Grid Implementation Plan (IP) 2017-2022 for the Electricity Transmission System in Ireland and will prepare a new Grid Implementation Plan for 2023-2028 (Draft IP).	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. Deployment works may include upgrades to the Grid network and will require access to the Grid network for charging EVs.
State of Global Climate 2022 (World Meteorological Society)	This report focuses on key climate indicators – greenhouse gases, temperatures, sea level rise, ocean heat and acidification, sea ice and glaciers. The State of the Global Climate 2022 shows the planetary scale changes on land, in the ocean and in the atmosphere caused by record levels of heat-trapping greenhouse gases. It does not include the development of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation.	On review of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include under the review of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation, as the report includes baseline elements. Due to the global nature of the of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include in the baseline assessment in Section 5.
Prioritised Action Framework 2021-2027 (NPWS)	This plan identifies the range of actions needed to help improve the status of Ireland's habitats and wildlife within the Natura 2000 site network.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
Management plans for Natura 2000 and National Site Network sites	Member States need to designate these sites as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and adopt conservation measures involving, if need be, appropriate management plans and other measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types and the species of Community interest. Special Protection Areas designated under the Birds Directive need to be managed in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats of birds. The Directives make it clear that conservation objectives should be met while taking account of economic, social, cultural, regional, and recreational requirements. It is for Member States to establish the most appropriate methods and instruments for implementing the Directives and for achieving the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 and National Site Network sites.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Just Transition First Progress Report (2021)	The report notes the importance of effective governance in the Midlands to deliver a just transition. The report makes recommendations across a number of areas including Electric Vehicle Charging. The eight Midlands counties are currently served by 98 public Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points provided by ESB. The report asks for an evaluation study on the potential to further expand the EV charging infrastructure nationally, including the enhancement of the charging network in the Midlands region, to commence immediately.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP will include a roadmap towards the implementation of EV charging infrastructure across the National Roads Network.
Healthy Cities Project (WHO)	A healthy city is one that continually creates and improves its physical and social environments and expands the community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential. The Healthy Cities Project begin in 1987 with eleven cities. The concept is based on the importance of local action and the key role of local governments and Local Authorities in health and sustainable development. In Ireland, 31 Local Authorities are committed to developing a structure to support Health Cities across Irish counties.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Clean Air Strategy for Ireland	The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The RLEVCNP is focused on the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to accommodate use of EVs in Ireland. This will contribute towards greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
Regional and Municipal Level		
Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly) 2019	A strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the Region to 2031 and beyond. Vision: *'To create a sustainable and competitive Region that supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all'*	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The plan includes measures to accommodate all regions across the Irish road network.
Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 - Northern and Western Regional Assembly 2020	A Strategy to support the implementation of Project Ireland 2040, including the economic and climate policies of the Government, by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the region. Vision: *'To play a leading role in the transformation of this region into a vibrant, connected, natural, inclusive and smart place to work and live.'*	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The plan includes measures to accommodate all regions across the Irish road network.
Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Southern Regional Assembly) 2020	A long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic, and social development of the region. Vision: Nurture all our places to realise their full potential; Protect and enhance our environment; Successfully combat climate change; Achieve economic prosperity & improved quality of life for all; Accommodate expanded growth & development in suitable locations; and Make the Southern Region one of Europe's most creative, innovative, greenest, and liveable regions.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The plan includes measures to accommodate all regions across the Irish road network.
Rural Development Policy (Department of Rural and Community Development) 2021	A policy framework for the development of rural Ireland over the next five years Vision: *'A thriving rural Ireland which is integral to our national economic, social, cultural, and environmental wellbeing and development. An Ireland which is built on the interdependence of urban and rural areas. An Ireland which recognises the centrality of people, the importance of vibrant and lived-in rural places, and the potential to create quality jobs and sustain our shared environment.'*	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The plan includes measures to accommodate rural areas across the Irish road network.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
Realising our Rural Potential – Action Plan for Rural – Development 2017 - 2019 (Department of Rural and Community Development)	An action plan to ensure that people who live in rural areas have increased opportunities for employment locally, and access to public services and social networks that support a high quality of life.	Implementation of the RLEVCNP will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and will align with, and cumulatively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The plan includes measures to accommodate rural areas across the Irish road network.
Regional Tourism Strategies (Fáilte Ireland)	Ireland has developed four regional development strategies for tourism across the country for the East Region, Heartlands Region, Wild Atlantic Way Region, and Dublin Region.	The RLEVCNP will be implemented across the National Road Network in Ireland. The deployment of EV charging infrastructure will consider coverage of tourist / seasonal spots adjacent to the national primary and secondary road network while designing the geographical reach of possible options.
Dublin Action Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide (December 2021) *Dublin Region Air Quality Plan 2021 -Air Quality Plan to improve Nitrogen Dioxide levels in Dublin Region.*	An exceedance of the EU limit value for nitrogen dioxide occurring in the Dublin region in 2019 necessitated the preparation of a *Dublin Region Air Quality Plan 2021 -Air Quality Plan to improve Nitrogen Dioxide levels in Dublin Region.* This air quality plan sets out 14 broad measures and a number of associated actions to address the exceedance of the nitrogen dioxide annual limit value. This includes an EV charging strategy, publication of national clean air strategy, introduction of clean air zones / low emission zones, and behavioural change campaigns. The Plan was prepared by the four Dublin Local Authorities (Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council and South Dublin County Council).	The RLEVCNP will be implemented across the National Road Network in Ireland and may assist with reductions in nitrogen dioxide levels and an EV charging strategy for the Dublin region.
Research Level		
Evaluating Ireland's Climate Policy Performance (Sabrina Dekker and Diarmuid Torney)	The central objectives of the Irish Climate Policy Evaluation project were to construct a policy evaluation framework that builds on a standard EU evaluation framework and to undertake evaluations of climate change policies across all sectors using the framework, with a specific focus on key policies.	On review of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include under the review of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation (Section 3), as the relates to research.
Synthesis of literature and preliminary modelling relevant to society-wide scenarios for effective climate change mitigation in Ireland (Barry McMullin and Paul Price)	This research assesses the international literature to inform climate mitigation policy in Ireland. It provides a preliminary tool for comparing policy within the Paris Agreement commitments.	On review of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include under the review of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation (Section 3), as the relates to research.

Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation	Relevant Aims and Objectives	Relevance of Plan, Programme, Policy, or Legislation to the RLEVCNP
TRANSLATE (Met Eireann)	The TRANSLATE project is a Met Éireann lead initiative to standardise future climate projections for Ireland and develop climate services that meet the climate information needs of decision makers. TRANSLATE focuses on reviewing existing climate models to produce a national set of standardised climate projections.	On review of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include under the review of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation (Section 3), as the relates to research.
FLARES (Fire, Land and Atmospheric Route Sensing of Emissions), University College Cork	Fires, Land and Atmospheric Remote Sensing of Emissions (FLARES) aims to develop systematic approaches to the acquisition and collation of a range of data on agricultural and uncontrolled wildland burning burn events from satellite datasets.	On review of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include under the review of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation (Section 3), as the relates to research.
Department of Transport - Demand Management Study, 2021	The Five Cities Demand Management Research Report, which was conducted by Systra LTD on behalf of the Department, helps us to better understand what drives transport demand and how we can encourage a greater shift to more sustainable and healthier forms of travel in Ireland's five largest urban centres—Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick, and Galway. The findings from this Study will constitute a valuable resource for National and Local Authorities as they work to implement complementary demand management policy measures at national and local level over the coming years.	On review of the report, it was not deemed relevant to include under the review of plans, policies, programmes, or legislation (Section 3), as the relates to research.

B.2 Environmental Assessment of the Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan Proposals

No.	Proposals	Population + Human Health	Biodiversity	Land & Soils	Water	Air Quality Noise & Climate	Archaeology Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual	Material Assets
1	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.								
SEA Comments This objective relates to supporting future local and regional plans and will not give rise to environmental effects in and of itself. All future plans should be subject to SEA and AA, as appropriate. An overall neutral environmental effect is identified for the purposes of this assessment.									
2	The objectives of this plan are to: 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.								
SEA Comments The coordinated and accelerated expansion of a publicly accessible destination and neighbourhood EV charging network, as outlined in this objective, is likely to result in a positive effect on population, air quality and climate and material assets through the provision of improved EV charging facilities and the enabling of greater uptake in EV usage. A potential negative effect is also identified however with regards to material assets as it is anticipated that to support this public charging network, a total power requirement of 169,253 kW and 562,244 kW is needed by 2025 and 2030 respectively at destination and neighbourhood locations alone. Thus, the potential effects of this objective on material assets are classified as 'uncertain' for the purposes of this assessment. An otherwise uncertain environmental effect is identified as the exact locations and scale of the infrastructure roll-out is not known at this stage. However, the best use of available infrastructure is likely to minimise any significant adverse environmental impacts.								
3	The objectives of this plan are to: 3) Provide a pathway to deliver on national infrastructure targets in support of both AFIR requirements and Climate Action Plan objectives.								
SEA Comments This objective relates to methods of delivery and governance and will not give rise to development in and of itself.									

No.	Proposals	Population + Human Health	Biodiversity	Land & Soils	Water	Air Quality Noise & Climate	Archaeology Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual	Material Assets
4	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.								
SEA Comments This objective provides instruction to local authorities relating to the identification of sites for the installation of EV charging stations. It does not give rise to environmental effects in and of itself.									
5	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.								
SEA Comment Measures to ensure the monitoring and maintenance and subsequent reliability of charge points is likely to result in a positive effect on population, air quality and climate and material assets through provision of a stable service. An otherwise neutral environmental effect is identified.									
6	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEVI 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 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.								
SEA Comments This objective relates to private company intervention and participation in the provision of charging services. An overall neutral environmental effect is identified.									
7	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEVI will take the following principles into account: 2) Alignment with wider policy and other network goals: The interventions will support: the State's overall decarbonisation goals; the National Planning Framework (and associated National Strategic Outcomes including sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility, transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society); and consider alignment with ESBN and EirGrid's electricity network strategies.								
SEA Comments A Positive effect on population, air quality and climate and material assets are identified through the provision of interventions that align with the state's overall decarbonization goals. An otherwise neutral environmental effect is identified.									

No.	Proposals	Population + Human Health	Biodiversity	Land & Soils	Water	Air Quality Noise & Climate	Archaeology Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual	Material Assets
8	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEVI will take the following principles into account: 3) 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.								
SEA Comments The prioritization of using available infrastructure in the roll-out of charging infrastructure is likely to result in an overall positive environmental effect. These spaces are already 'paved' or 'developed' land, and the use of same will therefore not likely require intrusive construction or installation requirements.									
9	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEVI will take the following principles into account: 4) 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.								
SEA Comments The implementation of high-quality user experience and universal design in charging infrastructure across Ireland is likely to encourage greater use and uptake of EVs and EV charging facilities. A positive effect on population, air quality and climate and material assets are therefore identified. An otherwise neutral environmental effect is noted.									
10	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEVI 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.								
SEA Comments This objective relates to the encouragement of innovative technologies and will not result in development in and of itself. Thus, an overall neutral environmental effect is identified.									
11	When considering avenues for public intervention ZEVI will take the following principles into account: 6) 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.	Proposals	Population + Human Health	Biodiversity	Land & Soils	Water	Air Quality Noise & Climate	Archaeology Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual	Material Assets
SEA Comments The efficient use of public and private resources is welcomed and will likely result in a positive effect on the population. However, an otherwise neutral environmental effect is identified									
12	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.								
SEA Comment Measures to ensure the monitoring and maintenance and subsequent reliability of charge points is likely to result in a positive effect on population, air quality and climate and material assets through provision of a stable service. An otherwise neutral environmental effect is identified.									