

STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT
SCREENING REPORT
OF THE LIMERICK
CITY AND COUNTY
COUNCIL LOCAL
ECONOMIC AND
COMUNITY PLAN
DRAFT SOCIO-
ECONOMIC
STATEMENT 2015-
2021 –PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS

Prepared for Limerick City and County Council

September 2015.

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SEA SCREENING OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO LIMERICK LECP DRAFT SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATEMENT FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION PERIOD.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the submissions made following publication of the Limerick Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) Draft Socio-economic Statement. The LECP Draft Socio-economic Statement was placed on public display inviting members of the public and interested parties to make submissions or observations from 04th June 2015 until 02nd July 2015 inclusive. A further period of consultation was held with stakeholders and elected members. A total of 18 written submissions were received within the statutory timeframe, three of which relate to the environment. Thereafter some further text has been added primarily a new text section that highlights fit and consistency of the socio-economic statement with higher level strategies (Section 1.4.2 new text). These are also considered in this assessment.

The purpose of this report is to consider whether the amendments to the LECP draft Socio Economic Statement will have any likely significant effects on the environment in accordance with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2011. The SEA process is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. The key indicator that will determine if an SEA is required is if they are likely to have significant environmental effects on the environment or not. Screening is the technique applied to determine whether a particular Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant a SEA.

The proposed amendments to the Limerick LECP Draft Socio Economic Statement are outlined and the likely significant environmental effects or potential impacts of the amendments are screened and assessed in Table 1. Where new text is proposed under high level goals, Area Actions and /Specific Actions, the text is presented in yellow highlighted font.

This screening report concludes that these amendments will not result in significant impacts on the environment, therefore the amendments to the Limerick LECP draft Socio-Economic Statement would not warrant a full SEA.

TABLE 1 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Reference	Text/new text	SEA Comment
Section 1.3.4	New text on Guiding Principles regarding consistency with development plans etc. Additional text reaffirming integration of sustainable development considerations including processes into the plan.	Positive, greater clarity and commitment to land use planning
Section 1.3.5	New section supporting public participation and reference to Public Participation Network	Positive, facilitates greater bottom up participatory approaches
Section 1.4.1	New diagrams showing spatial planning context	Positive, provides greater clarity as to how LECP functions within broader Spatial planning context
Figure 2	Inclusion of EU Targets for EU 2020 strategy	Provides greater clarity in relation to national and EU targets
Section 1.4.2	New text existing policy and guidance framework, and overview of existing strategies and plans. New text discussing fit and consistency with higher level strategies.	Provides greater clarity and context for local strategies and how they inform LECP progress. Additional discussion around consistency of statement with higher level strategies is positive as it affirms how the statement is being developed in compliance with various thematic strategies at national and EU level.
Figure 3	SWOT – strength renewable energy potential and threat – dependence on fossil fuel.	Acknowledgement of renewable energy potential and reliance on fossil fuel assists in raising awareness and integration of this issue more clearly into the LECP as it progresses.
Section 2.2. High Level Goals	(viii) <i>To ensure the protection of the receiving environment in implementing the LECP.</i> (ix) <i>Promote the transition of Limerick City and County towards a low carbon future by 2030.</i>	These new goals are inserted on foot of submissions during the consultation period and give rise to positive environmental impacts for goal (viii) and for air quality and climate in particular for goal (ix).
Section 2.2. Cross cutting priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy & Climate Change are important elements in every sector of society and economy. It is important that the severe weather effects of climate change together with changes to agriculture are addressed to ensure the needs of future generations are met. 	New cross cutting priority text – impacts as above.

Reference	Text/new text	SEA Comment
Section 2.4.8	<p><i>Energy Security and Supply</i></p> <p>(i) To Promote the development of indigenous energy sources and technologies, to secure Limericks low carbon transition.</p> <p>(ii) To promote energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy</p> <p>(iii) To reduce the carbon footprint associated with socio-economic activity within Limerick City & County, as a clear indicator of energy security and supply</p>	<p>New action area (Energy Security and Supply) and specific objectives included on foot of submissions.</p> <p>These will give rise to positive impacts in relation to climate change and air quality, indirect impacts on material assets and population and human health in particular.</p>
Section 2.5.3 Transport	<p>(i) Facilitate public investment to fill gaps in the strategic road infrastructures, improving connectivity within the local authority area, to other urban centres and international access transport infrastructures and services (including Shannon Airport and ports);</p> <p>(ii) Progress proposals relating to rail links and Colbert Station redevelopment / renewal, identified in Limerick 2030 in line with the investment programmes of the relevant agencies;</p> <p>(iii) Further develop SMARTER Travel in the urban environment including development of routes, local educational campaigns and other initiatives including car pooling / shared transport and reduction of car usage linked to promoting the low carbon agenda, quality of life, health and well-being; As a means of improving accessibility for all residents, workers and visitors to Limerick, further develop walking, cycling and public transport, particularly in urban areas, through the development of infrastructure in cooperation with other agencies, and through behavioural change programmes such as Smarter Travel Workplaces and Campuses, and Green Schools Travel.</p>	<p>Amendments to Action Area (Transport) and specific objectives.</p> <p>The amendment or new texts all promote accessible and public transport which give rise to positive effects on population and human health, material assets and air quality and climate in particular.</p>

Reference	Text/new text	SEA Comment
	<p>(iv) Support the National Transport Authority's Rural Transport Programme in order to improve access for the rural population to key services (health, education), employment and day-to-day activities (shopping), especially targeting those without own transport and vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly persons on low incomes).</p> <p>(v) Establish innovative rural transport initiatives to improve access of rural populations to key services (health, education), employment and day-to-day activities (shopping), especially targeting those without own transport and vulnerable groups (e.g., elderly persons on low incomes).</p> <p>(vi) Facilitate investment in public transport that is universally accessible.</p>	
<p>Section 2.5.4 Low carbon, improved energy efficiency and local responses to climate change</p>	<p>(i) In partnership with statutory, voluntary and community organisations, promote the low carbon agenda, improved energy efficiency, careful use of water resources and local action to mitigate effects of climate change through efficient resource management and reduced CO2 emissions;</p> <p>(ii) Promote and support local development of indigenous energy resources and technologies, particularly community based initiatives employment and community-based initiatives in these areas;</p> <p>(iii) Support access to wider networks of local initiatives to bring new knowledge, exchange of experience and joint action in these fields including international experience.</p> <p>(iv) Implement the actions set out for Limerick City and County in the Climate Change Strategy for the Mid West Region Establish</p>	<p>Amendments and/or additional text provide greater clarity and commitment including reference to Climate Change Strategy for the MidWest amongst others. Positive impacts identified for parameters as above.</p>

Reference	Text/new text	SEA Comment
	(v) Promote the development of energy and water infrastructure to support city, county and community based low carbon projects.	

3.2 CONCLUSION TO SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

The specified environmental authorities were consulted over the display period and comments and feedback from the 18 submissions received have further informed the LECP draft Socio-Economic Statement; as can be seen in Table 1 above, these amendments are not identified as giving rise to significant environmental effects, and several of the amendments have further strengthened environmental considerations in the Goals and Action Areas. The additional text in Section 1.3.4 and 1.4.2 is not identified as giving rise to significant environmental effects either.

Therefore, on the basis of the above assessment and consideration of the criteria as set out in Schedule 2a of the Regulations 2011 (as amended) it is considered the draft LECP Socio-economic Statement for Limerick is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects and does not require full SEA at this juncture. As the LECP progresses to the next stage, it will be screened against requirements under the SEA and Habitats Directive Assessments.