

Proposed Amendment to the West Cork Municipal
District Local Area Plan, 2017

Amendment No.1 Extension of Development of
Skibbereen

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

21st March 2019

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1.0 Introduction

In accordance with Section 20(d) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2006, notice is hereby given that Cork County Council is proposing an amendment to the **West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 - Amendment No. 1: Extension of Development Boundary of Skibbereen.**

The Proposed Amendment is to extend the development boundary of Skibbereen to include a parcel of land (0.5056 ha) and zone as 'Existing Built-up Area'. The Proposed Amendment has arisen as a result of an omission to include the land within the development boundary of Skibbereen as recommended in the Chief Executive's Opinion on the Issues Raised by Submissions & Recommended Amendments Report to Members on the Public Consultation Draft of the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.

The purpose of this report is to consider whether the material amendment to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan will have any likely significant environmental effects, and as such, would therefore require the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

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, of particular plans or amendments to plans, 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 or amendments to a plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant an SEA.

In accordance with Section 14A of the Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended, the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017 was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment for environmental impacts in 2016/17. These SEA Environmental Reports and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Reports are available for consideration on the Council's website <http://corklocalareaplans.com/west-cork-municipal-district/>.

In accordance with Section 14A and 14G of the Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004, as amended, the current proposed amendment to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017 requires to be screened for SEA in order to ensure that the analysis previously carried out remains valid.

The proposed material amendments to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017 is outlined in Section 2.2 and should be read in conjunction with the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017. The likely significant environmental effects or potential impacts of the amendments are screened and assessed in Section 2 below.

This screening report concludes that the material amendment to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017 would not warrant a full SEA including SFRA.

2.0 SEA Screening of Proposed Material Amendment

2.1 Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Environmental Effects

The effects of the Proposed Amendment has been determined having considered the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of SI 346 of 2004, as amended "Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004:

Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected in particular:

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - (a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - (b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - (c) intensive land-use,
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

In order to consider whether or not the proposed amendment would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A above consideration was also give to the fact that the proposed amendment;

- Does not change the population/housing targets for Skibbereen as set out the Cork County Development Plan, 2014, Core Strategy.
- Is in accordance with the policies set out in the Cork County Development Plan, 2014 and West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.
- Is in line with minor modifications to the boundary which were made to correspond with established field or property boundaries or to reflect a grant of a planning permission as part of the preparation of the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.
- The proposed extension was included as a recommendation in the Chief Executive's Opinion on the Issues Raised by Submissions & Recommended Amendments Report to Members on the Public Consultation Draft of the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.

2.2 Proposed Amendment to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017

This amendment proposes to extend the development boundary of Skibbereen to include a parcel of land (0.5056 ha) and zone as 'Existing Built-up Area'. The parcel of land is currently located within the Skibbereen Town Greenbelt GB1-1.

The Proposed Amendment has arisen as a result of an omission to include the land within the development boundary of Skibbereen as recommended in the Chief Executive's Opinion on the Issues Raised by Submissions & Recommended Amendments Report to Members on the Public Consultation Draft of the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.

3.0 Significance of effects

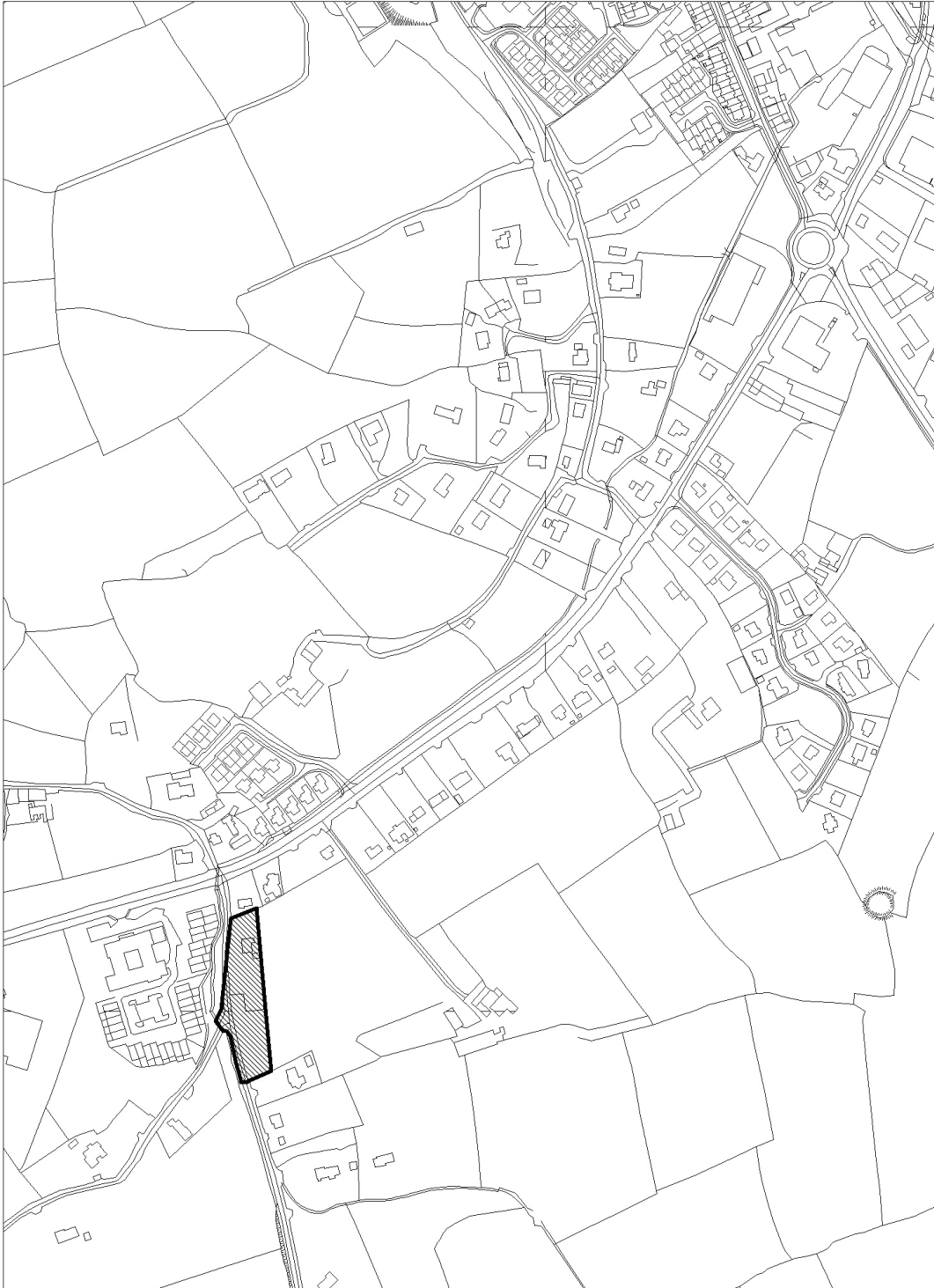
Assessment is the process of evaluating the importance or significance of a plan's impacts, be they adverse or beneficial in nature. In most cases, this is essentially a judgment grounded within a number of factors but it may also be made more objective with the use of a range of criteria and standards. The assessment of significance will be based upon the following main factors:

- The character and perceived value of the affected environment;
- The magnitude, spatial extent and duration of anticipated change;
- The resilience of the environment to cope with change;
- Confidence in the accuracy of predictions of change;
- The existence of policies, programmes, plans, etc. which can be used as criteria;
- The existence of environmental standards against which a proposal can be assessed (e.g. air quality standards, water quality standards);
- The degree of public interest and concern in the environmental resources concerned and the issues associated with a proposed project;
- Scope for mitigation, sustainability and reversibility.

Having regard to these factors and the identified likely impacts set out above, it is considered that given the value of the existing environment in the Plan area and the nature of surrounding areas is such that any development resulting from the material amendment to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan is unlikely to lead to any significant negative environmental effects.

4.0 Recommendation

Based on this screening process it is considered that an SEA will not be required for the proposed material amendment to the West Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan, 2017. As outlined in section 14A of the Planning & Development (Strategic environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004, subject to any submissions received during the consultation period, full SEA scoping and environmental reports shall not be necessary.



Proposed Amendment to MD Local Area Plan