



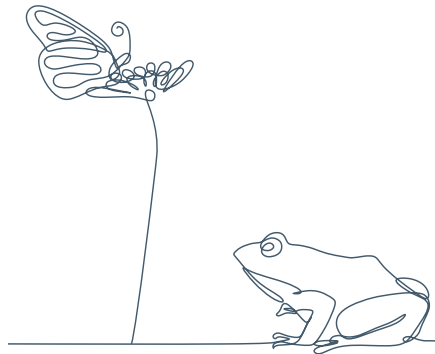
NATURAL HERITAGE & BIODIVERSITY

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How do we continue to develop the County while protecting and enhancing natural heritage and biodiversity?

The review of the current County Development Plan provides an **opportunity** to build strong foundations to incorporate actions for biodiversity across all sectors in our operations. The Plan must ensure that a **balance is achieved** in terms of land use and development and the protection of our environment. **Biodiversity** is the sheer variety of living organisms on the planet and how all of these interact with one another to form habitats and ecosystems. It **exists everywhere** even outside the boundaries of protected habitats. As we rely on biodiversity for so many of our own

basic needs, and as we are in an era of significant challenge for biodiversity, strong action is required. This needs to be **reflected** in our land use planning and development policies.





What is Green Infrastructure and how does it help us?

Green Infrastructure (GI) can be defined as an **interconnecting network** of natural and semi-natural green spaces like parks, gardens, rivers, woodlands, trees and hedgerows. A healthy green network not only **supports** species and habitats but supports a **wide range of Ecosystem Services** like water and air purification, pollination, flood management, climate adaptation, and space for non-damaging recreation. Implementing a **Green Infrastructure Strategy** in the Development Plan provides the means to undertake the recommended Ecosystem Services approach in the Plan preparation process. This will result in a planned green infrastructure network that provides for high quality residential, employment and other areas where biodiversity and Ecosystem Services can be promoted and protected.

The landscape of South Dublin is one of its **greatest resources**. The landscape setting comprising of the

urbanised lowlands; the hills and mountains provide **essential ecological** and **cultural functions** as well as offering extensive views across Dublin Bay and the Wicklow Mountains. A landscape Character Assessment will accompany the Plan.



- County Boundary
- Rivers
- Grand Canal
- Regional Parks
- Woodlands
- Dublin Mountains

Ecosystem Services Approach



So why does biodiversity matter to us?

We benefit from many of the **day to day actions** of the species and habitats in nature such as the provision of food, medicines and raw materials, clean air and water and the management of flood waters. These benefits from nature are sometimes called **'Ecosystem Services'** and can be negatively affected by poorly planned development and by the effects of climate change.

Research has shown that most of the Ecosystem Services in Europe are

judged to be 'degraded' — no longer able to deliver the optimal quality and quantity of basic services such as crop pollination, clean air and water, and control of floods or erosion. The Ecosystems Services approach recognises that a well-planned interaction between **humans**, the **economy** and the **environment** can aid in **protecting and managing** our environment, support our survival and promote a better quality of life for us all.



Environmental Assessments

Policy in the new Plan will be informed by these assessments and monitoring of environmental indicators will occur after the Plan is adopted.

The Development Plan must contain:



Appropriate Assessment

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to protect a number of habitats with flora and fauna of European importance by designing these sites as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas collectively known as Natura 2000 sites. All land/projects are assessed for impacts.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

(SFRA) The EU Floods Directive and the “Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DoEHLG/OPW, 2009) set out the requirement for a Development Plan to be accompanied by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Council is required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment on the Development Plan. This process ensures that environmental considerations are fully assessed and are integrated into the preparation and adoption of the Plan.



DELIVERY: Working together we can protect, restore and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity in order to contribute towards the development of sustainable communities.