

Variation to the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009

Variation No.1

Part A: Amend Chapter 2 and Chapter 8 of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan to address requirements relating to 'Core Strategies' introduced by the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2010.

Part B: Amend Chapters 2,3,5,6,8 and 14 of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan to take account of the obligations on planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'.

Amend Appendix 1, Map 3 to include areas at risk of Flooding

Part C: Amend Chapter 9 of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan, 2009, in order to meet the obligations on Planning Authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.



Skibbereen Town Council

September 2013

Document Verification

Page 1 of 1

Job Title						
Variation No. 1						
Document Title: Variation to the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009 September 2013 Variation No. 1						
Revision	Date September 2013	Filename: Variation No. 1				
		Description: Part A: Amendments to text in Chapters 2 and 8 to reflect changes resulting from the inclusion of a “core Strategy”. Part B: Amend Chapters 2,3,5,6,8 and 14 of the Plan to reflect changes required in response to the Guidelines on Flood Risk Management . Part C: Amend Policy ENV3 in order to meet the obligations on Planning Authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.				
			Prepared by	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
Rev		Name	PK		PG	PG

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1 Introduction

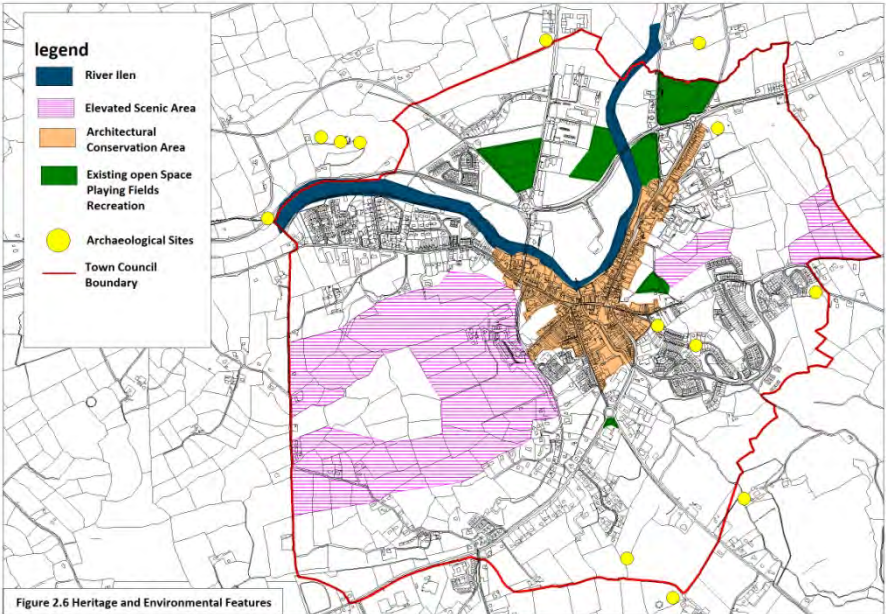
1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Variation

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this Variation of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009, which is dealt with in three parts is to introduce;
- a) a Core Strategy, as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010,
 - b) to include revised text arising from the obligations on planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and
 - c) to include revised text to comply with the obligations on planning authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.
- 1.1.2 **Part A** of this variation relates to the Core Strategy and involves changes to Chapters 2 and 8 of the Plan. The Plan is being varied to include updated population figures for Skibbereen and updated figures in relation to housing requirements and land supply. A Core Strategy diagrammatic map is also being included.
- 1.1.3 **Part B** of this variation deals with Flood Risk and includes changes to Chapters 2,3,5,6,8 and 14 of the Plan. New text has been included detailing the Councils approach to flood risk management and new objectives on flood risk management have been included to ensure flood risk assessment is integrated with development proposals. There have also been changes to the zoning objectives.
- 1.1.4 **Part C** of this Variation deals with issues arising in relation to the Habitats Directive and has resulted in changes to Chapter 9 of the Plan.
- 1.1.5 The Variation has been assessed under the Habitat's Directive 1992 and the Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Statement containing the findings of the assessment is also available for inspection.
- 1.1.6 Skibbereen Town Council has determined under Section 13K of the Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 that the variation is NOT likely to have significant effects on the environment and a copy of its decision including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment are detailed in the SEA Screening Statement which is also available for inspection.
- 1.1.7 The Variation is available for purchase from the Town Council Offices.

2 Part A: Core Strategy Variation

2.1 Variation to Chapter 2 and Chapter 8 of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009.

- 2.1.1 The following table details the Variation to the text of Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009 to address requirements relating to 'Core Strategies' introduced by the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2010.
- 2.1.2 Text to be removed has a line through it – ~~text to be removed~~.
- 2.1.3 New text to be inserted is underlined – new text to be inserted.

Variation Ref.	Variation – Core Strategy	Page No.
Chapter 2 Context Character and Landuse Appraisal - 2.1 : Core Strategy		
Part A 02.01	<p><i>Amend Figure 2.6 on page 14 of the to omit areas at risk of flooding</i></p>  <p><small>Figure 2.6 Heritage and Environmental Features</small></p>	14
Part A 02.02	<p><i>Include a new section 2.5 Core Strategy, after existing paragraph 2.4.2, deleting existing paragraphs 2.4.3 and 2.4.4 and existing section 2.5.</i></p> <p>2.4.3 Population According to the Census of population carried out in 2006 Skibbereen Urban District (plan area) has a population of 2,338, which accounts for a 16.9% population increase from the 2002 census of population figure of 2,000. The Skibbereen Rural District also experienced a 4.7% population increase in the last inter-census period increasing from a population 1,146 in 2002 to 1,200 in 2006. From a review of Census 2002 and 2006 it is evident that overall Skibbereen urban and rural district had a population growth of 16.4% which is significant and well above the national average.</p>	16

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	<p>What is interesting to note is that unlike other towns throughout the country, Skibbereen town experienced a greater level of growth than its surrounding hinterland which indicates one of two things. Either the town of Skibbereen is seen as an attractive and vibrant place to live or alternatively planning controls in the surrounding rural area are working effectively such that people are forced to live in the town. Either way, it is necessary that adequate land is made available to accommodate future population growth in the town.</p> <p>Key issues of relevance for this plan that emerge from this analysis include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Population in the town is anticipated to grow in excess of the national rate of population growth over the last inter census period. — The town displays a young, dynamic population structure with 32% of the population under twenty four years of age and 64% under the age of forty four. — The average household size in Skibbereen is smaller than the national average as 72% of all households in the town comprise of three people or less whereas the national average stands at 58%. <p>2.4.4 Future Population</p> <p>There are a number of strategic regional and local plans guiding future population growth in County Cork and Skibbereen town. The South East Regional Guidelines provides a broad framework guiding future development in the county whilst the North and West Cork Strategic Plan establishes a strategy to address declining trends in key demographic and economic sectors. The recently drafted Cork County Development Plan 2007 is perhaps the most relevant as it provides population projections for the West Strategic Planning Area and indicates a population target of 3,035 persons for 2020 in Skibbereen. In the interest of consistency and proper regional planning, this plan will have regard to population forecasts in the county and adopt the projected growth figure of 3,035 for 2020 as set out in the Cork County Development Plan, thereby resulting in a projected population increase of 2.3% per annum which is slightly above the current national average of 2.05%.</p> <p>2.5 OPPORTUNITIES and CONSTRAINTS</p> <p>Arising from the foregoing assessment it is very clear that the town of Skibbereen has many strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The emerging strategy for the town needs to ensure that the identified strengths and opportunities need to be encouraged, protected and developed, whilst the weaknesses and threats need to be addressed as an integral part of the overall strategy and detailed policies and objectives of the Plan.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="357 1906 1254 2027"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="357 1906 568 1957">Strengths</th> <th data-bbox="571 1906 775 1957">Weaknesses</th> <th data-bbox="778 1906 1002 1957">Opportunities</th> <th data-bbox="1005 1906 1254 1957">Threats</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="357 1962 568 2027">Attractive landscape setting</td> <td data-bbox="571 1962 775 2027">High traffic volumes through the town centre</td> <td data-bbox="778 1962 1002 2027">New town sewerage scheme</td> <td data-bbox="1005 1962 1254 2027">Potential flooding of the l...</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Attractive landscape setting	High traffic volumes through the town centre	New town sewerage scheme	Potential flooding of the l...	
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Variation Ref.	Variation – Core Strategy				Page No.
	Ilan River is a major natural feature	Haphazard on street car parking resulting in vehicular / pedestrian conflict	Significant brownfield sites within town centre capable of being developed	Increasing vacancy levels in the town centre	
	Excellent streetscape and built environment	Weak retail provision and high level of vacancy in the town centre.	Recreational potential of Ilan River	Loss of natural features that contribute to townscape character	
	A developing cultural and heritage base	Limited useable public open space	Traffic Management Study and town centre enhancement	Dispersal of development away from the town centre	
	Important economic and service function	Limited recreational provision	Motivated and interested community groups	Unsustainable land use patterns	
	Good range of community services		Increased protection of local heritage and natural resources	Deteriorating town centre environment from increased congestion	
	Strong community structure		Local employment provision		
	Good accessibility to Cork		Potential to promote and coordinate development in the town		
<p><u>Section 2.5 – Core Strategy</u></p>					
<p>The ‘Core Strategy’ for Skibbreen Town Council addresses the requirements relating to ‘Core Strategies’ introduced by the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and has a time horizon to the year 2020. It sets out the Core Strategy for the local implementation of the Cork County Development Plan 2009. It also draws on the National Spatial Strategy, the Atlantic Gateways Initiative, the South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and the sub regional Cork Area Strategic Plan CASP Update (2001-2020) and the North and West Cork Strategic Plan (2002-2020).</p>					
<p>In order to achieve these aims, this ‘Core Strategy’ has been prepared so that it is consistent with relevant national and regional strategies and its main elements are to:</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Identify the quantum, location and phasing of development considered necessary to provide for future population for the plan period</u> • <u>Demonstrate how future development supports public transport/existing services etc.</u> • <u>Ensure that the Town Council and key stakeholders assess the needs and priorities for the area on a plan led basis, and</u> • <u>Provide the framework for deciding on the scale, phasing and location of new development, having regard to existing services and planned investment over the coming years.</u> 					
<p><u>An analysis of the past growth and development in the town provides a trend for the future demand and supply of housing land and core strategy will ensure that there is sufficient land zoned for the anticipated growth in the town to 2020. The key planning and sustainable development goals will promote the economic development of the town, ensure the integration of development with the provision of strategic infrastructure, in particular transportation, water and wastewater and ensure that a balance is struck between the benefits of the economic development and the need to</u></p>					

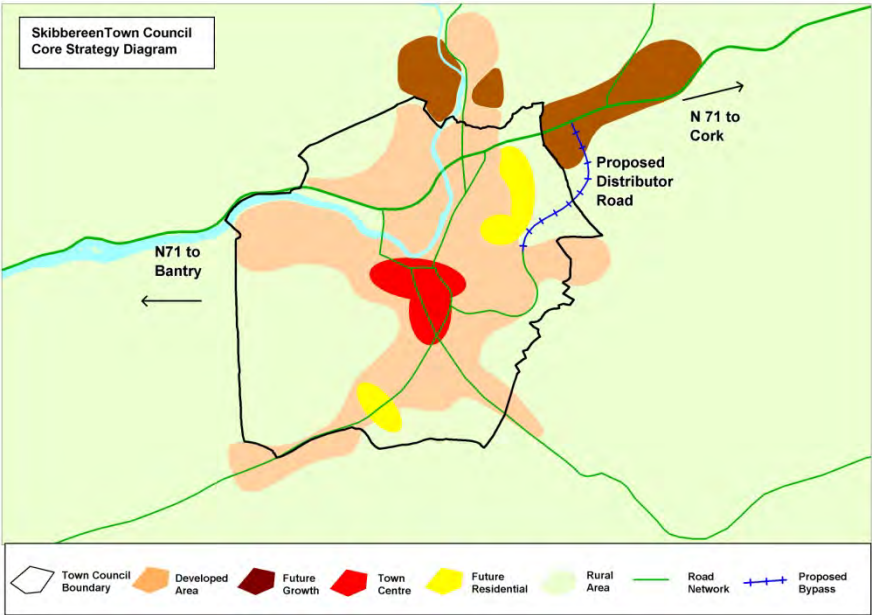
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	<p><u>protect the natural assets of the town and maintaining the environmental quality at all times.</u></p> <p><u>Growth and Development in Skibbereen</u></p> <p><u>All the national, regional and county levels plans have endorsed the national population targets for 2020, which indicates that Skibbereen could reach a total 2020 population of 3,035, an increase of 467 from 2011.</u></p> <p><u>Population and Households</u></p> <p><u>Given the extensive administrative area of the Skibbereen Town Council, it has been decided to facilitate future growth within that boundary as opposed to splitting it between the Town Council area and the County Environs area.</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="347 860 1238 1361"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5" data-bbox="347 860 1238 936">Table 2.1: Skibbereen - Population and Households 2006-2020</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="347 936 587 1025"></th> <th data-bbox="587 936 699 1025"><u>2006</u></th> <th data-bbox="699 936 831 1025"><u>2011</u></th> <th data-bbox="831 936 1023 1025"><u>Target 2020</u></th> <th data-bbox="1023 936 1238 1025"><u>Growth 2011-2020</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1025 587 1066"><u>Population</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1025 699 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="699 1025 831 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1025 1023 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1025 1238 1066"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1066 587 1106"><u>Town Council</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1066 699 1106"><u>2,338</u></td> <td data-bbox="699 1066 831 1106"><u>2,568</u></td> <td data-bbox="831 1066 1023 1106"><u>2,933*</u></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1066 1238 1106"><u>365</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1106 587 1146"><u>Environs</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1106 699 1146"><u>-</u></td> <td data-bbox="699 1106 831 1146"><u>102</u></td> <td data-bbox="831 1106 1023 1146"><u>102</u></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1106 1238 1146"><u>0</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1146 587 1187"><u>Total</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1146 699 1187"><u>2338</u></td> <td data-bbox="699 1146 831 1187"><u>2670</u></td> <td data-bbox="831 1146 1023 1187"><u>3,035</u></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1146 1238 1187"><u>365</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1187 587 1227"></td> <td data-bbox="587 1187 699 1227"></td> <td data-bbox="699 1187 831 1227"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1187 1023 1227"></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1187 1238 1227"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1227 587 1267"><u>Households</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1227 699 1267"></td> <td data-bbox="699 1227 831 1267"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1227 1023 1267"></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1227 1238 1267"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1267 587 1308"><u>Town Council</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1267 699 1308"><u>998</u></td> <td data-bbox="699 1267 831 1308"><u>1,129</u></td> <td data-bbox="831 1267 1023 1308"><u>1,217**</u></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1267 1238 1308"><u>88</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1308 587 1348"><u>Environs</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1308 699 1348"><u>-</u></td> <td data-bbox="699 1308 831 1348"><u>29</u></td> <td data-bbox="831 1308 1023 1348"><u>42**</u></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1308 1238 1348"><u>13</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1348 587 1388"><u>Total</u></td> <td data-bbox="587 1348 699 1388"></td> <td data-bbox="699 1348 831 1388"><u>1,158</u></td> <td data-bbox="831 1348 1023 1388"><u>1,259**</u></td> <td data-bbox="1023 1348 1238 1388"><u>101</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="347 1361 485 1388">Notes on table:</p> <p data-bbox="347 1388 1070 1415">*Source –Core Strategy Cork County Development Plan 2009 as varied, RPG 2010.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1415 1002 1442">** 2020 population divided by 2020 household occupancy of 2.41 persons.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1442 1251 1572">***Figures in the Cork County Development Plan Core Strategy 2011 are different as they are based on an estimate of the number of households in the town in 2006, rather than the actual census figure, and are also based on a multiple of 15% for vacancy, rather than the 30% used in the LAP. The County Council are preparing a new Draft Core Strategy as part of the review of their Development Plan. This will be published in early 2013 and is expected to resolve these anomalies.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1626 1267 1756"><u>In line with the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010, average household size is assumed to be 2.41 by 2020. In this context, a population within the town council area of 2,933 persons would equate to 1,217 households by 2020, an increase of 88 households over the 2011 level¹.</u></p> <p data-bbox="347 1778 1267 1845"><u>Allowing for a vacancy rates of 15% this level of household growth would require the provision of an additional 101 dwelling units².</u></p>	Table 2.1: Skibbereen - Population and Households 2006-2020						<u>2006</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Target 2020</u>	<u>Growth 2011-2020</u>	<u>Population</u>					<u>Town Council</u>	<u>2,338</u>	<u>2,568</u>	<u>2,933*</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>Environs</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>2338</u>	<u>2670</u>	<u>3,035</u>	<u>365</u>						<u>Households</u>					<u>Town Council</u>	<u>998</u>	<u>1,129</u>	<u>1,217**</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>Environs</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>42**</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>1,158</u>	<u>1,259**</u>	<u>101</u>	
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¹ Household size in the town had dropped to 2.3 by 2011. 2.41 is used to ensure consistency with the RPG.

² The National House Development Survey 2011 identifies 20 vacant housing units in the town.

Variation Ref.	Variation – Core Strategy			Page No.								
	<p style="text-align: center;">Table 2.2: Housing Demand 2011-20</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="359 331 1252 555"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="359 331 579 443"></th> <th data-bbox="582 331 777 443"><u>Population Growth 2011-2020</u></th> <th data-bbox="780 331 1016 443"><u>H/Hold Growth 2011-2020</u></th> <th data-bbox="1019 331 1252 443"><u>Housing Units 2011-2020</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="359 445 579 555"><u>Skibbereen Town</u></td> <td data-bbox="582 445 777 555" style="text-align: center;"><u>365</u></td> <td data-bbox="780 445 1016 555" style="text-align: center;"><u>88</u></td> <td data-bbox="1019 445 1252 555" style="text-align: center;"><u>101</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				<u>Population Growth 2011-2020</u>	<u>H/Hold Growth 2011-2020</u>	<u>Housing Units 2011-2020</u>	<u>Skibbereen Town</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>101</u>	
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	<p><u>In addition, the Skibbereen Electoral Area Local Area Plan 2011, adopted by Cork County Council, indicates that some additional growth will need to be accommodated within the town in the future, as the villages within the electoral area are unable, for a variety of reasons including the lack of infrastructure services, to accommodate the scale of growth originally envisaged for them. The scale of additional growth likely to take place in the town (in excess of the 3,035 population target), has not been quantified in the Local Area Plan.</u></p> <p><u>Residential Land Supply</u></p> <p><u>The 2009 Town Plan zoned approximately 55 hectares of land for medium and low density residential development. This land supply is divided into two phases. Phase one lands comprise 30 ha and is capable of accommodating approximately 590 units. Phase 2 lands comprises 25 hectares and can accommodate 510 units. In addition, there are other significant areas zoned for town centre development/ mixed uses which are expected to yield some residential development.</u></p> <p><u>While this total land supply is in excess of that required to meet the development needs of the town over the lifetime of the plan, it is considered appropriate, pending the full review of the Plan, to retain the zonings and phasing approach as adopted in 2009. While the capacity of the Phase 1 lands exceed the immediate requirements for the town council area, this is not a matter for concern. As signalled by the Skibbereen Local Area Plan, it is desirable that the town have some capacity to cater for additional growth, where this cannot be catered for within the villages of the electoral area.</u></p> <p><u>At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, the quantum of zoned lands required to meet the housing needs of the town can be fully assessed in line with the Core Strategy requirements of the 2000 Act and the Guidelines on preparing Development Plans.</u></p>											

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	<p data-bbox="360 320 801 349"><u>Table 3 Phasing of Residential Land</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="360 367 1134 629"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="360 367 635 432"><u>Zone</u></th> <th data-bbox="635 367 780 432"><u>Size</u></th> <th data-bbox="780 367 1134 432"><u>Estimated yield (units)</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="360 439 1134 470"><u>Phase 1</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 477 635 508">Town Centre</td> <td data-bbox="635 477 780 508">24</td> <td data-bbox="780 477 1134 508">50</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 515 635 546">Residential</td> <td data-bbox="635 515 780 546">30</td> <td data-bbox="780 515 1134 546">590</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="360 553 1134 584"><u>Phase 2</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 591 635 622">Residential</td> <td data-bbox="635 591 780 622">25</td> <td data-bbox="780 591 1134 622">510</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="360 701 948 730"><u>Land Availability within the Environs of the town</u></p> <p data-bbox="360 752 1262 1066">Approximately 25.6 hectares of land have been zoned for residential use in the environs of the town under the Skibbereen Electoral Area Local Area Plan 2011 (see Figure 5 which shows the zonings in the environs of the town as per the Local Area Plan). At a minimum density of 20 dwellings to the hectare this land supply could provide an additional 512 dwelling units. Future plans for Skibbereen can be prepared on a town and environs basis and this land supply can be rationalised in line with the Core Strategy requirements of the 2000 Act and the Guidelines on preparing Development Plans.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="360 1133 1195 1877"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="360 1149 1195 1193"><u>Table4: Core Strategy Table: Population and Housing 2011-2020</u></th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1200 759 1265"></td> <td data-bbox="759 1200 1195 1265"><u>Skibbereen Town Council</u></td> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1272 759 1361"><u>Population Allocation 2011-2020 (growth)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1272 1195 1361"><u>365</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1368 759 1413"><u>Housing Required</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1368 1195 1413"><u>101units (5 ha)</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1420 759 1464"><u>Existing Zoning (ha)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1420 1195 1464"><u>55</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1471 759 1516"><u>Proposed Zoning Phase 1 (ha)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1471 1195 1516"><u>30</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1523 759 1568"><u>Proposed Zoning Phase 2 (ha)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1523 1195 1568"><u>25</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1574 759 1664"><u>Housing yield Phase 1 (Residential lands.)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1574 1195 1664"><u>590</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1671 759 1760"><u>Housing yield Phase 2 (Residential lands.)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1671 1195 1760"><u>510</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1767 759 1812"><u>Housing Yield (Other lands ha)</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1767 1195 1812"><u>50 units (23.77 ha)</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1818 759 1863"><u>Excess</u></td> <td data-bbox="759 1818 1195 1863"><u>560 units/30 ha**</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="360 1906 1262 1962">** It is assumed that phase one lands will be absorbed by the additional demand from the wider Electoral Area.</p>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Estimated yield (units)</u>	<u>Phase 1</u>			Town Centre	24	50	Residential	30	590	<u>Phase 2</u>			Residential	25	510	<u>Table4: Core Strategy Table: Population and Housing 2011-2020</u>			<u>Skibbereen Town Council</u>	<u>Population Allocation 2011-2020 (growth)</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>Housing Required</u>	<u>101units (5 ha)</u>	<u>Existing Zoning (ha)</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>Proposed Zoning Phase 1 (ha)</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>Proposed Zoning Phase 2 (ha)</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>Housing yield Phase 1 (Residential lands.)</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>Housing yield Phase 2 (Residential lands.)</u>	<u>510</u>	<u>Housing Yield (Other lands ha)</u>	<u>50 units (23.77 ha)</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>560 units/30 ha**</u>	
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Variation Ref.	Variation – Core Strategy	Page No.
	<p><u>Retail Development</u></p> <p><u>The Town Council supports Cork County Council in its implementation of the Cork Local Authorities Joint Housing Strategy (2007) and Joint Retail Strategy (2007) and any successors to these current strategies (Cork County Development Plan 2009).</u></p>	
Part A 02.03	<p><i>Insert new Core strategy Diagram as follows after Section 2.5.</i></p>  <p>The diagram is titled 'Skibbereen Town Council Core Strategy Diagram'. It shows a map of the town area with various colored zones. A legend at the bottom identifies the symbols: a black outline for 'Town Council Boundary', orange for 'Developed Area', dark red for 'Future Growth', red for 'Town Centre', yellow for 'Future Residential', light green for 'Rural Area', green lines for 'Road Network', and a blue dashed line for 'Proposed Bypass'. The map shows a central red 'Town Centre' and a yellow 'Future Residential' area. Orange 'Developed Areas' are scattered around. A 'Proposed Distributor Road' is shown as a blue dashed line. Two main roads are labeled: 'N71 to Bantry' with an arrow pointing left, and 'N71 to Cork' with an arrow pointing right.</p>	
Chapter 8 – Residential Strategy and Neighbourhoods-Sections 8.3.1 and 8.3.2, 8.4 and Table 8.1		
Part A: 08.01	<p><i>Amend Section 8.3.1 of the Plan as follows:</i></p> <p>8.3.1 Private Housing Need and Supply</p> <p>Section 2.4.2 of this Plan provides an overview of the current population profile for Skibbereen and details why this plan adopts the projected growth figure of 3,035 for 2020 as set out in the Cork County Development Plan, thereby resulting in a projected population increase of 2.3% per annum. Having regard to the current average household size of 2.9 which is expected to decrease to 2.5 persons per household by 2011, an average of 2.7 is taken for all calculations. Therefore based on a population of 3,305 in 2020 there is a need for a total of 1,224 houses in Skibbereen up to 2020. Having regard to the current population of 2,338 in 2006, there will be a demand for 358 new additional households between 2006 and 2020. This simplistic household calculation does not provide for existing housing stock that may need to be replaced in the future so therefore it is estimated that</p>	53

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	<p>the demand could be slightly in excess of 358 houses. Assuming an average density of 30 units per hectare there is therefore a need for 12 hectares of land to accommodate projected housing need in the town up to 2020.</p> <p>The current situation with regard to the supply of undeveloped residential zoned land is detailed in Figure 8.1 below (See Appendix 1 Map 5 for large scale A3). A survey undertaken in June 2008 indicated that there was some 45.5 hectares of undeveloped zoned residential land within the Town Council boundary and a further 10 hectares outside of the town boundary within the functional area of Cork County Council. Of the 45.5 hectares of land located within the Town Council boundary some 18.71 hectares of land has extant permissions for residential development that is planning permission has been granted but development has not yet commenced. Thus, having regard to the extent of undeveloped zoned land within the functional area of Skibbereen Town Council, there is capacity for approximately 1,365 residential units in the town that is over three times that required to accommodate projected population growth until 2020.</p> <p>Thus, having regard to these calculations there is no need to zone additional land within the town based on population projections alone. However, regard must be had to that land where planning permission has been secured but yet construction has not commenced; that land which is zoned and which may not be released for development purposes over the lifetime of the plan; and that residential zoned land which may be better suited for other development purposes in the consideration of future residential land supply. There is also a need to accommodate locational choice in the supply of residential units. In addition, regard must be had to the strategic location of existing residential zoned land and the need to adopt a sequential approach having regard to services and facilities when considering the supply of residential zoned land.</p> <p><u>Section 2.5 of the Plan details the Core Strategy of the Plan which details a 2020 population target for Skibbereen Town Council of 2,933, representing growth of 365 persons over the population recorded in 2011. This level of population growth is expected to give rise to an additional 88 households within the town Council area, based on a house hold occupancy rate of 2.41 persons in line with the Regional Planning Guidelines. Allowing for a vacancy rate of 15 %, 101 houses would need to be provided to cater for this level of household growth.</u></p> <p><u>This approach to assessing future requirements does not provide for existing housing stock that may need to be replaced in the future. In addition, as outlined in Section 2.5, additional population and housing growth may need to be accommodated within the town in light of the capacity constraints affecting the villages of the electoral area. It is therefore likely that the demand will be in excess of 101 houses. On the supply site, not all the land zoned may come forward for development or it may be used for non housing purposes (such as the school permitted on</u></p>	

Variation Ref.	Variation – Core Strategy	Page No.
	<p><u>residential lands at Gortnaclohy). There is also a need to accommodate locational choice in the supply of residential units and the supply of zoned lands needs to be sufficient to cater for these factors.</u></p> <p><u>Assuming an average density of 20 units per hectare, the 30 hectares of zoned lands provided for phase one development in this plan could deliver approximately 590 units. A further 25 hectares of land is zoned for Phase Two development which could deliver an additional 510 units. An orderly, coordinated sequence to the development of the town is promoted, in order to maximise the utility of existing and future infrastructure provision and services and promote the achievement of sustainability, such that the town is developed from the inside out. Phase I land shall be developed prior to land in Phase II except in exceptional circumstances, which includes the provision of a one-off house on zoned serviced land. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, the quantum of zoned lands required to meet the housing needs of the town can be fully assessed in line with the Core Strategy requirements of the 2000 Act and the Guidelines on preparing Development Plans.</u></p>	
Part A: 08.02	<p><i>Delete section 8.4 as follows:</i></p> <p>8.4 LOCATION OF FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Section 8.3.1 of this Plan has highlighted how undeveloped residential zoned land in the Skibbereen Development Plan 2004 has capacity for approximately 1,365 residential units in the town that is over three times that required to accommodate projected population growth until 2020. Therefore there is no need to zone additional land to meet projected housing need. However, this land, as illustrated in Figure 8.1 is indiscriminately located throughout the Plan area at various locations and distances relative to the town centre and services. Furthermore, it is considered that existing residential zoned land would be better suited to other development uses including commercial and mixed use development.</p> <p>When one examines Map1 Existing Land Use Zoning Map, it is evident that there is a significant area of agricultural use land to the north east of the town between the N71 and High Street. This area of land is strategically located within walking distance of the town centre, adjoining existing community and educational facilities and can be accessed by a proposed new distributor road (see section 4.0, policy T3). Thus, having regard to the sequential approach in relation to the zoning of land as promoted in the Development Plan Guidelines published by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government it is considered that some of this land should be zoned for residential use, notwithstanding the supply of existing undeveloped zoned land in the town. Other than this substantial area of undeveloped land, it is considered that the zoning of additional residential land in this Plan is limited to that of infill or brownfield sites in accordance</p>	54

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	<p>with the overall plan strategy detailed in section 3.3.</p> <p>Having regard to the existing supply of residential zoned land and that additional land that is zoned to the north east of the town, an orderly, coordinated sequence to the development of the town is promoted, in order to maximise the utility of existing and future infrastructure provision and services and promote the achievement of sustainability, such that the town is developed from the inside out. The rationale for phasing is in keeping with government guidelines advocating the need to prevent leapfrogging. Thus, there are two phases to residential zoning proposed in this plan with land closest to the town centre allocated into Phase I zoning and land further removed from the town centre and existing services allocated a Phase II zoning.</p> <p>A total of 119.86 119.86 hectares of land is zoned as established residential, residential Phase I and residential Phase II use in this Plan. Of this 119.86 119.86 hectares some 54.31 54.31 hectares is undeveloped and is available to accommodate residential development during the lifetime of this Plan and beyond with 28.71 28.71 hectares of land allocated to residential Phase I zoning and 25.60 25.60 hectares of land allocated to residential Phase II. Phase I land shall be developed prior to land in Phase II except in exceptional circumstances, which includes the provision of a one-off house on zoned serviced land. Table 8.1 below details the changes to proposed residential zoned land in this Plan.</p> <p>Table 8.1 Changes to Residential Zoning</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="347 1227 1235 1639"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="347 1227 1011 1294">Existing and Proposed Uses</th> <th data-bbox="1015 1227 1235 1294">Area (hectares)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1299 1011 1366">Existing Undeveloped Zoned Residential Land in 2004 Development Plan</td> <td data-bbox="1015 1299 1235 1366"><u>45.5</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1370 1011 1482">Existing Undeveloped Zoned Residential Land in 2004 Development Plan changed to other development use including commercial and mixed use</td> <td data-bbox="1015 1370 1235 1482"><u>5.81</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1487 1011 1554">Existing Undeveloped Zoned Residential Land in 2004 Development Plan changed to Residential Phase II land</td> <td data-bbox="1015 1487 1235 1554"><u>9.0</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1559 1011 1592">New Residential Phase I land proposed in this Plan</td> <td data-bbox="1015 1559 1235 1592"><u>11.49</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1597 1011 1639">New Residential Phase II Zoned Land</td> <td data-bbox="1015 1597 1235 1639"><u>8.16</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Existing and Proposed Uses	Area (hectares)	Existing Undeveloped Zoned Residential Land in 2004 Development Plan	<u>45.5</u>	Existing Undeveloped Zoned Residential Land in 2004 Development Plan changed to other development use including commercial and mixed use	<u>5.81</u>	Existing Undeveloped Zoned Residential Land in 2004 Development Plan changed to Residential Phase II land	<u>9.0</u>	New Residential Phase I land proposed in this Plan	<u>11.49</u>	New Residential Phase II Zoned Land	<u>8.16</u>	
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3 Part B: Flooding Policy

3.1 Variation to Chapters 2,3,5,6,8 and 14 of the Plan – Flooding Policy

- 3.1.1 The following table details the variations to Chapters 2,3,5,6,8 and 14 of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan that address issues arising from the obligations on planning authorities under section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on “ The Planning System and Flood Risk Management”.

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy	Page No.
Chapter 2 Context, Character and Landscape Appraisal.		
Part B: 02.01	<p><i>Amend Section 2.3 of the Plan as follows and omit Figure 2.6:</i></p> <p>Section 2.3 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>In 1601 Skibbereen was only a little hamlet and far less important than the town of Baltimore. It grew in importance, however, in the seventeenth and in particular the eighteenth century. Figure 2.5. is based on the Ordnance Map of 1842 and shows the layout of the town as it began to grow. This nineteenth century layout is still evident today and provides a distinctive urban structure to the town. The settlement extends along the arterial route network and is physically defined by the Ilen River to the north, the elevated land surrounding Mardyke House to the west and the elevated area known as The Rock and identified as a Fair Green to the east.</p> <p>The traditional street pattern remains centred on North Street and Main Street, extending along Bridge Street as far as Kennedy Bridge. The importance of the Ilen River and quays is immediately obvious as the built form extended along the southern bank of the river before moving southwards. The court house and national school were located at the northern end of North Street and this pattern continues today where most of the civic buildings remain and operate. The Square still remains a focal point and information hub in the town today and accommodates the Town Hall. Perhaps the most significant change in the traditional street pattern has been the movement of the town in a southern direction along Townshend Street and Market Street, away from the river which was once the mainstay of life in the town.</p> <p>There are many fine buildings of note in the town and these buildings have been listed in the Record of Protected Structures for Skibbereen and are also protected by virtue of their location within the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) designation. In addition to architectural and social heritage, the town is also of archaeological note having regard to its partial inclusion within a Zone of Archaeological Potential and its archaeological sites which dominate the eastern side of the town.</p>	13

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	<p>SKIBBEREEN TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p> <p>The significance of the Ilen River has today come full circle and presently forms an integral part of the town’s environment. The townscape is reversing past trends and rather than turning its back on the river is beginning to recognise that it is this natural feature that contributes to the town’s enduring character. As well as the river corridor itself the associated floodplain is a natural feature which must be recognised. The town is surrounded by elevated land to the east and west, providing a sense of enclosure and backdrop to development in the town. As well as being elevated this land provides excellent scenic views over the townscape and the amenity/development potential of this land needs to be explored. The main heritage and environmental features of Skibbereen town are identified in Figure 2.6 (see Appendix 1 Map 2 for large scale A3) and need to be factored into any proposed plan strategy. The extent of functioning floodplain has been inherited from the Skibbereen Development Plan 2004 whilst the area subject to historical flooding has been sourced from the OPW National Flood Hazard Mapping and identifies those areas which have in the past experienced occasional flooding as far back as 1969. The areas at risk of flooding in the town are identified in Map 3B</p>	
	Chapter 3 Skibbereen: a Strategic Vision	
Part B: 03.01	<p><i>Amend Section 3.3.1 as follows:</i></p> <p>3.3.1 Environmental and Transport Considerations</p> <p>The future development of Skibbereen needs to be considered in terms of medium and long term growth. It is desirable that the town consolidates its existing structure in order to facilitate a compact and sustainable form of urban development. In this regard, a number of land use and transportation issues need to be jointly considered within the framework of existing environmental factors.</p> <p>The Environmental and Heritage Features Map (Figure 2.6) clearly illustrates <u>Various factors such as the elevated scenic lands around the town, architectural conservation areas, the Ilen River and its flood plain, archaeological sites and existing areas of open space influence the location, extent and shape of development in the town. with the</u> The floodplain and the elevated nature of land to the west and east of the town restricts ing and limits ing development. Whilst any one of these elements on their own would not necessarily prevent or prohibit development, their collective consideration in the context of other land availability and future population growth, does influence the overall direction of development.</p> <p><i>Etc. as per remainder of the section.</i></p>	20
Part B: 03.02	<p><i>Amend paragraph 3.4.1 Town Centre Use as follows</i></p> <p>3.4.1 Town Centre Use</p>	22

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	<p>Comprising the defined retail core and wider town centre activities the objective of this zoning is to retain and enhance existing retail use within the retail core and to provide for residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a developing town. There is a positive discrimination towards retail use within the retail core and retail uses shall only be permitted outside of the retail core on other town centre zoned land if it can be comprehensively demonstrated that there is no alternative site available within the retail core and that such uses shall not adversely impact on and diminish the vitality and viability of the town centre. A Retail Impact Statement shall be required of all retail proposals outside of the retail core.</p> <p><u>Parts of these lands are at risk of flooding. All proposals for development on these lands will normally be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan. .</u></p>	
Part B: 03.03	<p><i>Amend paragraph 3.4.2 Mixed Use as follows</i></p> <p>3.4.2 Mixed Use Outside of and adjoining the town centre the proposed mixed use zoning shall accommodate residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a developing town. Potential retail use will be strictly controlled in this area and whereas consideration may be given to possible convenience retailing where it can be comprehensively demonstrated that there is no other site available in the town centre, the provision of comparison retailing will be strictly controlled and only considered in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p><u>Parts of these lands are at risk of flooding. All proposals for development on these lands will normally be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p>	22
Part B: 03.04	<p><i>Amend paragraph 3.4.3 Commercial Use as follows</i></p> <p>3.4.3 Commercial Use Commercial use zoning is provided at key strategic locations around the town and shall accommodate those commercial, cultural and other uses which are land intensive and are inappropriate to a town centre location, including for example bulk retailing, car showrooms, other showrooms, builder’s providers and light industrial uses. Commercial uses that are considered appropriate to a town centre location shall not be favourably considered unless it can be demonstrated that there are no other alternative sites available. A single retail unit primarily trading in convenience goods may be considered on that commercial zoned land</p>	22

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy	Page No.
	<p>located to the north east and south west of the Tragumna Road (R596) only where it can be comprehensively demonstrated by means of sequential testing undertaken in accordance with the criteria set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines that no other alternative site exists or is capable of development/redevelopment on town centre or on mixed use zoned land. The size and scale of any proposed convenience store at this location shall be strictly controlled to ensure that the vitality and viability of the town centre is not compromised whilst the provision of comparison retailing shall only be considered in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p><u>Parts of these lands are at risk of flooding. All proposals for development on these lands will normally be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p>	
Part b: 03.05	<p><i>Amend paragraph 3.4.4 Industry/Enterprise Use as follows</i></p> <p>3.4.4 Industry/Enterprise Use Located in close proximity to strategic transport corridors, the industrial/enterprise zoning use shall facilitate employment generating uses but specifically excludes retail use and Class 2 office uses as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, where the services are provided principally to visiting members of the public.</p> <p><u>Parts of these lands are at risk of flooding. All proposals for development on these lands will normally be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p>	22
Part B: 03.06	<p><i>Amend paragraph 3.4.7 Residential Use as follows</i></p> <p>3.4.7 Residential Use Comprising established residential use, residential Phase I and residential Phase II uses, these zonings provide for new residential development and other services incidental to residential development. While housing is the primary use in this zone, recreation, education, crèche/playschool, clinic/surgery uses, home based economic activity, sheltered housing and small corner shops are also envisaged, subject to the preservation of neighbouring residential amenity and traffic considerations.</p> <p><u>Some of the land zoned for housing development is at risk of flooding. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, a comprehensive assessment of the zoned lands will be undertaken, relative to the provisions of the Guidelines, and the need to change the zoning of lands at risk of flooding will be fully assessed at that stage. In the interim, all development proposals within areas at risk of flooding will need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p>	23

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Part B: 03.07	<p><i>Amend paragraph 3.4.8 Residential Use as follows</i></p> <p>3.4.8 Open Space/Sports/Recreation/Amenity The areas included in this zoning objective cover both private and public open space and includes designations for both existing and planned new open spaces. Development that would result in a loss of open space within the town shall not be permitted except where specifically provided for in this Plan. Existing agricultural uses in open space areas shall continue to be permitted, and reasonable development proposals in relation to this use shall be considered on their merits. The provision of development for playgrounds, parks, other areas for outdoor activities, sports centres, sports pitches, outdoor recreation training centres and landscaped areas shall be acceptable in principle.</p> <p><u>Parts of these lands are at risk of flooding. All proposals for development on these lands will normally be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p>	23
Chapter 5 Town Centre Urban Renewal and Regeneration		
Part B: 05.01	<p><i>Amend Section 5.2 Urban Form and Function as follows:</i></p> <p>For the purpose of this plan the town has been effectively broken into four Quarters (identified in Figure 5.1) that best describe the function and form of each area, including the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Quarter Riverfront Quarter Civic/Cultural Quarter Community/Recreational Quarter <p>Each Quarter is unique in its own right and contributes individually and cohesively to the functioning of Skibbereen as a town. <u>Parts of each quarter are affected by flood risk and future development proposals will need to comply with the provisions of the Guidelines on The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u> There is <u>significant some</u> development potential in each of the Quarters to facilitate future development <u>/renewal and regeneration</u> within the town and to specifically achieve the aims of a healthy town centre. In this regard, Figure 5.2 identifies a number of opportunity sites in each of the Quarters, and which are examined in further detail below. Each of these sites are considered to have significant development potential and if developed could contribute significantly to the renewal and regeneration of the town centre.</p>	30
PartB:05.02	<i>Amend Section 5.2.1 as follows:</i>	31

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	<p>Opportunity Site 1 – Fair Field Comprising 1.29 hectares, this site is located south of Bridge Street and North West of Mardyke Street. Currently used as a public car park this land is predominantly in the ownership of the Town Council although an area of land to the rear (south west) adjoining Rossa Road is in private ownership. This site represents a significant development opportunity in the heart of the town and is an opportunity site that is unrivalled in terms of its size and location. Presently this site has access onto Bridge Street and Mardyke Street and has capacity to accommodate significant town centre uses including extensive retail development.</p> <p><u>The edges of the site along its boundary with Bridge Street have been identified as being at risk of flooding. All development proposals within areas at risk of flooding will need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Guidelines and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, a comprehensive assessment of the flood risk affecting this opportunity site will be undertaken, relative to the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines, ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’. The need to change or modify the zoning will be fully assessed at that stage.</u></p>	
Part B: 05.03.	<p><i>Amend Section 5.2.2 as follows:</i></p> <p>5.2.2 Riverfront Quarter</p> <p>The Riverfront represents that area to the rear of North Street, Main Street and Bridge Street which backs onto the Ilen River and which comprises the ‘backlands’ of the Historic Quarter. As a maritime town in the 1800’s the Ilen River was a significant transport corridor and this area of the town reflects its past with remnants of stores and mills fronting onto the river. Like all Irish towns, the town of Skibbereen turned its back to the river and it was not until recently that this area of the town began to experience some redevelopment. The Town Renewal Scheme 2000 – 2003 did regenerate the area somewhat with new development evident at Levi’s Quay and at Thornhills Yard. The Skibbereen Urban Study 2002 further sought to stimulate development along the riverfront and a pedestrian footbridge was constructed at Levi’s Quay.</p> <p>There is substantial local interest in the redevelopment of lands adjoining the River Ilen and the Caol Stream which runs in an east west direction through the town. The ‘River Ilen & Caol Stream Redevelopment Project Feasibility Study’, prepared by a local interest group, seeks to refocus the town on the river and to redevelop the waterways and the quaysides in the town. This study demonstrates how the river can once more be integrated into the heart of the town and used to further develop the tourism market.</p>	32

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	<p>Notwithstanding recent development and proposals along the Riverfront there still remains significant development opportunities at this location. A significant opportunity also exists to incorporate a riverside walkway and to redevelop the quaysides as lands are regenerated and redeveloped. <u>However the area is also at risk of flooding and all development proposals within areas at risk of flooding will need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Guidelines and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p> <p>Opportunity Site 2 – Yard to Rear of North Street (East Backlands) Comprising 0.3 hectares, this site is bound by an established terrace of buildings on North Street to the east and by the Ilan River to the north west. A block of recently constructed apartments can be viewed to the west of the site. The established terrace of buildings fronting onto North Street comprise two and three storey premises with single storey services extensions to the rear. Currently used as a yard to facilitate informal parking, the site contains a three storey out building with a lean to structure and some mature trees. Access to the site is via a single lane arch entrance with trusses. This site has capacity to accommodate sensitive town centre development with a possible opportunity of connecting with/linking to the recently developed residential/retail scheme to the west. <u>Development on site may also offer the opportunity to connect with/link to the recently developed residential/retail scheme to the west. The rear section of the site adjacent to the river has been identified as being at risk of flooding. Any development proposals on this site would need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Guidelines and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, a comprehensive assessment of the flood risk affecting the area will be undertaken, relative to the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines, ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’.</u> The need to change or modify the zoning will be fully assessed at that stage.</p> <p>Opportunity Site 3 – West Backlands This is an area of land comprising 0.35 hectares which has significant development opportunity fronting onto the Ilan River. Stretching from an old stone mill building which adjoins Thornhills Yard to the backland car parking areas of the Eldon and West Cork Hotels, this site comprises a mix of existing uses. and could be developed for mixed town centre use whilst providing for a riverfront walkway. The existing old stone building should be restored and the car parking areas developed to accommodate commercial use at ground floor level and residential use overhead. <u>The rear section of the site adjacent to the river has been identified as being at risk of flooding. Any development proposals on this site would need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Guidelines and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, a comprehensive</u></p>	

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	<p><u>assessment of the flood risk affecting the area will be undertaken, relative to the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines, ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’.</u> The need to change or modify the zoning will be <u>fully assessed at that stage.</u></p>	
Part B: 05.04.	<p><i>Amend section 5.2.4 as follows:</i></p> <p>5.2.4 Community/Recreational Quarter</p> <p>The Community/Recreational Quarter is that area of land located on the northern bank of the Ilen River extending from Mill Road to the east out the Schull Road to the west and to lands just north of the N71 by-pass. This area is subject to flooding from the Ilen River and therefore is unsuited for significant development purposes. Currently used for both passive and active recreational purposes, it is considered that this Quarter could be further enhanced upon completion of the new wastewater treatment plant for the town, to provide for significant recreation, community and amenity uses, whilst also functioning as a significant visual attraction and gateway into the town.</p> <p>The Skibbereen Urban Study 2002 examined the development potential of part of these lands and considered the community/recreational development of these lands as a reasonable objective as it would encourage the continued use of the Marsh and facilitate its integration with the town centre. The recently constructed footbridge over the river at this location also facilitates its integration with the Riverfront Quarter and the wider town centre.</p> <p>Opportunity Site 5 Marsh Lands</p> <p>Unsuited to commercial development due to the recommended flood relief measures contained in the Urban Study 2002, poor soil conditions and the availability of more suitable development space elsewhere within the development plan boundary, this land has been identified for the provision of a public car park. It is considered that this land would also be suitable to accommodate a drop off/pick up facility for Bus Eireann and to accommodate other tour buses visiting the region. The remaining land is suited to both active and passive open space uses, thereby visually enhancing a ‘gateway’ location into the town and physically connecting with the town centre. <u>This site is at risk of flooding. Any development proposals on this site would need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment that complies with the provisions of the Guidelines and objectives FP1-FP6 as detailed in Chapter 14 of this Plan. At the next review of the Town Plan, the appropriateness of existing objectives for the site will reviewed.</u></p>	33
Part B: 05.05.	<p><i>Insert new objective in section 5.5 as follows :</i></p> <p>5.5 OBJECTIVES</p>	37

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	<p>Strategic objective 1 and strategic objective 5 of the ‘Vision for Skibbereen’ (detailed in section 3.2 of this Plan) specifically seeks to develop a “strong local economy” and “strong local services and amenities”. Eight strategic objectives were listed to achieve these specific visions. These strategic objectives are now considered in a site specific context and provide detailed town centre, urban renewal and regeneration objectives/goals for the Town Council over the life-time of this Plan and beyond.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>Objective TC1: Reinforce the function of and use within each of the four Quarters identified in the town centre to provide for commercial synergy and critical mass.</p> <p>Objective TC2: <u>Subject to the findings of a site specific flood risk assessment and compliance with the Ministerial Guidelines, ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’,</u> promote and facilitate the development of the 5 no. opportunity sites identified in different Quarters throughout the town centre through the preparation of detailed site development briefs where appropriate.</p> <p>.....Etc as per the other existing objectives identified in the town centre to provide for commercial synergy</p>	
Part B: 05.06.	<p><i>Amend policy TC1 Opportunity Sites in section 5.6 of the Plan as follows:</i></p> <p>Policy TC1 Opportunity Sites</p> <p>TC1-1 <u>Subject to the findings of a site specific flood risk assessment and compliance with the Ministerial Guidelines, ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’,</u> the 5 no. opportunity sites identified in this Plan shall be developed for their specific uses prior to other alternative edge of centre or out of centre sites. Other alternative sites shall not be developed unless it can be comprehensively demonstrated that the opportunity sites are either unsuitable or unavailable for development purposes during the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>TC1-2 The opportunity sites shall be developed in consultation with Skibbereen Town Council and in strict accordance with detailed site development briefs and flood risk management requirements set out <u>in Section 14.2.3 of this plan under Policy WU4</u> where relevant.</p> <p>TC1-3 The opportunity sites shall be developed in an integrated and holistic manner. Where such sites fall into multiple ownership and it is proposed to partially develop a site, it will be necessary to demonstrate that the proposed development has regard to the future development potential of the remainder of the site such that future development is not compromised.</p>	37

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	Chapter 6 Shopping and Retail Planning	
Part B: 06.01	<p data-bbox="347 409 1134 443"><i>Amend Section 6.4 ‘Location of New Retail Floorspace’ as follows:</i></p> <p data-bbox="347 481 887 510">6.4 LOCATION OF NEW RETAIL FLOORSPACE</p> <p data-bbox="347 555 1257 1261">A need for limited floorspace provision in the town has been established and there is thus a need to identify an appropriate development strategy to facilitate provision of such retail space. Policy TC2-1 already identifies the retail core as the preferred location for retail development and this approach is very much in line with national guidance as outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005. In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2005), the sequential approach towards new retail development should be promoted. The preferred location for new retail development should be within a town or district centre (as defined in the development plan). Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development required then consideration should be given to edge of centre sites. An edge of centre site is commonly defined as one which is within an easy and convenient walking distance from the primary shopping area of a town centre. The distance considered to be convenient will vary according to local circumstances but typically is 300-400 metres. Out of centre sites should only be considered where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites that are suitable, viable and available. Retailers therefore should be prepared to make reasonable compromises and adapt their standard development formats to the Council’s preferred sites.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1305 1262 2007">There are many opportunities for the re-development of vacant and derelict sites in the retail core, and much of the new retail development should take place on such sites <u>subject to further assessment in relation to flood risk management</u>, rather than at edge or out of centre greenfield locations. In addition to vacant and derelict properties, Skibbereen is in the unique position of having a substantial town centre brownfield site that could readily accommodate retail use and would be most suitable for a national convenience retail operator. This site, known locally as the Fair Field and currently used as a surface car park has already been identified as Opportunity Site 1 in section 5.0 of this Plan. The Town Council owns a substantial area of this site and thus its development lies very firmly in the hands of the Council. <u>The extremities of the site, along its frontage with Bridge Street, has been identified as being at moderate risk of flooding (Zone B).</u> It is thus proposed to prepare a detailed site development and design brief to facilitate and stimulate development interest in the land and to ensure that its development for town centre retail use becomes a reality during the lifetime of this Plan. There are two other alternative sites within the town centre, Opportunity Site 2 and Opportunity Site 3 which although significantly smaller than the Fair Field, could <u>may also be able to readily accommodate small scale comparison retail development, subject to</u></p>	42

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	<p><u>further assessment in relation to flood risk management .</u></p> <p>Where it can be comprehensively demonstrated that neither of the three identified opportunity sites can be developed then other alternative sites outside of the retail core, within the mixed use zoned area or within the commercial zoned area to the north east and south west of the Tragumna Road (R596), will be considered. A detailed and comprehensive sequential assessment, <u>and site specific flood risk assessment as appropriate</u>, will influence such site selection.</p>	
Part B: 06.02	<p><i>Insert New Objective SR7 in Section 6.5 Objectives as follows:</i></p> <p><u>Objective SR7: Ensure all new development proposals in areas at risk of flooding comply with the requirements of the Ministerial Guidelines on <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management</i> and .</u></p>	45
Part B: 06.03	<p><i>Insert New Policy SR6 Flood Risk Management as follows:</i></p> <p><u>SR7 -1 All development proposals in areas at risk of flooding shall comply with Section 14.2.3 of this Plan and objectives FP1 to FP6 in Chapter 14 of this Plan.</u></p>	45
	Chapter 8 Residential Strategy and Neighbourhoods	
Part B: 08.01.	<p><i>Amend Section 8.2 of the Plan as follows :</i></p> <p>8.2 Existing housing</p> <p>The existing land use pattern in Skibbereen is characterised by a very low percentage of residential uses within the town centre and expanding residential developments of relatively low density housing estates and ribbon development on the fringes of the town. These developments are primarily concentrated to the south and south eastern side of the town on both sides of the Baltimore Road and between High Street and the Gortnaclohy Link. Established residential development can also be found on the northern side of Upper Bridge Street. Ribbon development is evident on the approach roads to the town, but is particularly prevalent on the Baltimore Road. Most of the residential development in Skibbereen is within the Town Council boundary but some housing developments have occurred on zoned residential land within the functional area of Cork County Council, well removed from the town centre.</p> <p>Most of the private housing estates built in recent years contain semi-detached single family two-storey houses. The quality of these estates varies, and a number of design issues have been highlighted, with some estates arguably being of poor quality, particularly in relation to the layout, in the provision of meaningful areas of open space, the lack of adequate landscaping, or poor linkages between adjoining residential areas and open</p>	52

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	<p>space. The local authority will encourage and support the enhancement of existing residential areas, through estate management and other means.</p> <p>Within the town centre, streets such as Townshend Street and the southern end of Market Street and Bridge Street have a strong residential character. The practice of ‘living over the shop’ is no longer common in the town centre. The protection and promotion of residential uses within the town centre is crucial to creating a vibrant and safe town centre. Additional accommodation in the town centre close to all facilities reduces the need to travel by car and thereby supports a sustainable land use pattern. <u>However parts of the town centre are at risk of flooding and new residential development needs to be protected from such risks in the future, in accordance with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines on flood risk management.</u></p>	
Part B: 08.02.	<p><i>Amend Section 8.5 as follows:</i></p> <p>8.5 NEW RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES</p> <p>The location of neighbourhood centres, identified on Map 3 Land Use Zoning Map seeks to ensure that all existing and future residential areas are adequately serviced by local facilities and services, including commercial and community centres. The provision of neighbourhood centres also seeks to provide a strong local focus for residential areas, creating a sense of place and community. The role of designated neighbourhood centres is to reinforce some existing areas which display emerging or existing neighbourhood characteristics (i.e Upper Bridge Street) or to designate new neighbourhood centres to serve existing or future residential areas. A total of two neighbourhood centres surrounding the town have been identified, as detailed on the Land Use Zoning Map 3. <u>One of these sites is in an area at risk of flooding and further development options are dependent on compliance with the Ministerial Guidelines on Flood Risk Management (see chapter 14)</u></p> <p><u>Subject to flood risk management considerations</u>, a range of uses will be encouraged at neighbourhood centres, namely local convenience shops (including fruit and vegetable market, local butchers, etc.), a pharmacy, video/DVD rental, laundry facilities, pub, take away, hairdresser, dental and medical surgery, crèche and childcare facilities. The scale, number and size of the units will be restricted to ensure that they serve local needs. The aim is to ensure that neighbourhood centres will serve catchment areas within approximately 400 metres and reduce the necessity to travel by car to avail of services. In practice, catchment areas of neighbourhood centres overlap and neighbourhood centres will not be ‘self-sufficient’ but rather will be dependent on adjacent or neighbouring centres for additional facilities. It is not the intention of this zoning to draw trade/services from the town centre, rather its intention is to complement the town centre and to</p>	56

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	<p>possibly facilitate late opening of services.</p> <p>In order to act as a focal point in a residential area, high urban design quality will be sought. Buildings comprising the neighbourhood centre or in the immediate vicinity will generally be permitted to increase their heights to three storeys to reflect their prominence. <u>Subject to flood risk management considerations</u>, a mix of uses will be encouraged at the centres, with residential and office uses promoted above first floor levels. This will also act as an incentive towards their construction and development. Local parks (emulating a ‘village green’ for example), civic spaces and community facilities (e.g. educational, sports and recreation) are encouraged in the immediate vicinity of neighbourhood centres. For a neighbourhood centre to be successful it needs to be strongly linked to surrounding residential developments, with good access for pedestrians and cyclists. It also requires a prominent location with good road frontage and access. Opportunities for passing trade also reinforce their role.</p>	
	Chapter 14 Engineering Infrastructure and Utilities	
Part B: 14.01	<p><i>Delete the existing text under the heading “Surface Water Drainage and Flood Risk Management on page 84/85 as follows;</i></p> <p>Surface water has not been considered as an inhibiting factor to development within the town. New governmental planning guidelines on Flood Risk Management recommend that new developments in urban areas employ sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) as an alternative measures to the disposal of surface water to watercourses. Options include consideration of permeable paving with gaps to allow flow of water, storage (attenuation) of surface water within developments to allow for the gradual release of water after heavy periods of rain and increasing use of detention basins designed as part of landscaped treatments within developments.</p> <p>In extreme weather conditions the town is at risk of flooding from the Ilen River and the Caol Stream. A number of relevant studies have been commissioned by Cork County Council and Skibbereen Town Council. These include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –1984, Road Traffic and Flooding Study. –1986, Road Traffic and Flooding Study – Review of Flooding Study. –1997, Skibbereen Road and Flood Relief – Environmental Impact Study. –2002, Skibbereen Urban Study. –2005, Assolas Stream Flood Study. <p>Remedial works in the form of river realignment works downstream of Kennedy Bridge have significantly improved the situation by reducing the frequency of flooding. Further alleviation measures are contained in the Skibbereen Urban Study 2002 which also contains specific proposals to offset any increase in flood water level caused by the potential development of the Marsh area for community and recreation purposes.</p>	84

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	<p>Any consideration of new land use opportunities within the urban area must have regard to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities regarding ‘<i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management</i>’ 2 (<i>flooding guidelines</i>). In terms of preparing objectives for zoning land in the development plan process, the <i>flooding guidelines</i> recommend a preferential and precautionary tiered strategy of flood management through; avoidance of flood hazard areas; using/substituting less vulnerable landuses; and finally mitigation and management of potential risks as a last resort. The <i>flooding guidelines</i> do suggest employing flood zone analysis (sequential testing) and a ‘justification test’ as a key tool in flood risk management which may identify development possibilities in areas at lower risk of flooding through good spatial planning.</p> <p>In terms of existing undeveloped zoned areas potentially at risk of flooding, the <i>flooding guidelines</i> suggest that zoning objectives should be reconsidered for any such lands where flood risk is assessed to be potentially significant and likely to increase in the future. Emphasis is placed on <i>inter alia</i>; removing high risk/vulnerable uses, revisions to the landuse zoning area/objectives for such areas, preparing a detailed local area plan informed by more detailed flood risk assessment addressing development issues prior to development; specification of pre-requisite flood risk measures.</p> <p>No detailed flood risk assessment/analysis has been undertaken as part of this Plan on the historic flood affected areas and thus the development strategy for this Plan will adopt a precautionary flood risk managed approach in accordance with the <i>flooding guidelines</i>.</p> <p>The Heritage and Environmental Features Map (Section 2, Figure 2.8) identifies those lands in the town that act as a floodplain (inherited from the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2004) and that area of land within the town which is subject to historical flooding and which has been sourced from the OPW National Flood Hazard Mapping. Having regard to the availability of undeveloped zoned land remaining within the town of Skibbereen and the potential to zone additional land in close proximity to services and facilities which is not identified as a floodplain, a precautionary approach will be taken and no development, save for recreational/sports use, shall be permitted on land identified as a floodplain. This approach is very much in line with that recommended in the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities’, 2008.</p> <p>and replace with the following text;</p>	

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	<p>14.2.3 Flood Risk Management</p> <p><u>Overall Approach</u></p> <p><u>National Guidelines entitled “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management” were issued jointly by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Minister of State at the Department of Finance with special responsibility for the OPW in November 2009 and in accordance with its obligations under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts, the Council, in preparing its strategy for the management of flood risks, must have regard to these guidelines.</u></p> <p><u>These Guidelines require planning authorities to introduce flood risk assessment as an integral and leading part of the development plan process. The Guidelines require Planning authorities to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, such as floodplains, unless there are wider sustainability grounds that justify appropriate development; and where the flood risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level without increasing flood risk elsewhere;</u> • <u>Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management when assessing the location for new development based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of flood risk, and</u> • <u>Incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.</u> <p><u>The main risk of flooding in Skibbereen arises from coastal, fluvial, pluvial or groundwater flooding. Coastal / Estuarial Flooding arises from tidal flows, i.e. interaction between rivers and the sea, with tidal levels being dominant in most cases. Fluvial flooding is flooding from a river or watercourse. Pluvial Flooding is flooding associated with periods of high intensity rainfall. The intensity of rainfall can be such that the run-off totally overwhelms surface water and underground drainage systems and flooding arises from a lack of capacity in the drainage network. Groundwater flooding is caused by groundwater escaping from the ground when the water table rises to or above ground level. Groundwater flooding tends to be very local while water levels may rise slowly, it may be in place for extended periods of time.</u></p> <p><u>As part of the review of all Electoral Area Local Area Plans in 2010, Cork County Council, in consultation with the OPW, the lead agency for flood risk management in Ireland, commissioned a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Cork and this assessment has informed the preparation of this variation to the Skibbereen Town Plan. With respect to Skibbereen the main information about flood risk has been collated from a number of</u></p>	

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	<p><u>sources including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>‘Floodmaps.ie’ – The national flood hazard mapping website operated by the Office of Public Works, where information about past flood events is recorded and made available to the public. ‘Flood point’ information available on this site has not been included for technical reasons.</u> • <u>‘Draft Flood Hazard Mapping’ for fluvial and tidal areas commissioned by Cork County Council from Consultants JBA Associates. These indicative flood extent maps provide flood extent information for river catchments where a more detailed CFRAMS study is not currently available.</u> <p><u>Indicative maps showing areas that could be at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding are included in this Plan and provide information on three main areas of flood risk:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Zone A – High probability of flooding. Here, most types of development would be considered inappropriate. Development in this zone should be avoided and/or only considered in exceptional circumstances, such as in major urban or town centres, or in the case of essential infrastructure that cannot be located elsewhere. A Justification Test set out in Ministerial Guidelines applies to proposals in this zone. Only water-compatible development, such as docks and marinas, dockside activities that require a waterside location, amenity open space, outdoor sports and recreation, would be considered appropriate in this zone.</u> • <u>Zone B - Moderate probability of flooding. Here, highly vulnerable development, such as hospitals, residential care homes, Garda, fire and ambulance stations, dwelling houses and primary strategic transport and utilities infrastructure, would generally be considered inappropriate. Less vulnerable development, such as retail, commercial and industrial uses, sites used for short-let for caravans and camping and secondary strategic transport and utilities infrastructure, and water-compatible development might be considered appropriate in this zone.</u> • <u>Elsewhere – Localised flooding from sources other than rivers and the coast can still occur and may need to be taken into account at the planning application stage.</u> <p><u>The Indicative Flood Extent map included in this Plan does not quantify the risk from pluvial flooding or ground water. However, pluvial flooding may be a significant issue for the town and the risk of flooding from these additional sources ,will need to be addressed at the project stage.</u></p> <p><u>River Ilfen (Skibbreen) Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study</u> <u>Cork County Council have commissioned RPS Consultants to prepare the</u></p>	1

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	<p><u>River Ilven (Skibbereen) Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. The study involves the completion of a hydrological feasibility study including the preparation of a flood risk management plan and the identification of the most appropriate flood relief scheme for the town, to reduce the impact of flooding in Skibbereen from the River Ilven and its tributaries. This study has yet to be finalised. Once the study is finalised it can inform the flood risk management strategy for the next review of the Skibbereen Town Plan (due to commence later this year).</u></p> <p><u>In the interim any differences between the areas identified as being at risk of flooding in the RPS study, the maps published as part of the National Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), and those identified in the Indicative Flood Extent Map included in this Variation, can be resolved at the project stage when a site specific flood risk assessment is being prepared.</u></p> <p><u>Flood Defences</u></p> <p><u>In line with the requirements of the Guidelines, flood defences in an area (either existing or planned) must be ignored in determining the areas at risk of flooding . This is because areas protected by flood defences still carry a residual risk of flooding. A flood defence may be overtopped by a flood that is higher than that for which it was designed, or be breached and allow flood water to rapidly inundate the area behind the defence. In addition, no guarantee can be given that flood defences will be maintained in perpetuity. As well as the actual risk, which may be reduced as a result of the flood defence, there will remain a residual risk that must be considered in determining the appropriateness of particular land uses and development.</u></p> <p><u>Flood Risks and ‘Zoning’</u></p> <p><u>The Guidelines for Planning Authorities ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ require planning authorities to ensure that development is not permitted in areas of flood risk, particularly floodplains, except where there are no suitable alternative sites available in areas at lower risk that are consistent with the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development. Where such development has to take place, in the case of urban regeneration for example, the type of development has to be carefully considered and the risks should be mitigated and managed through location, layout and design of the development to reduce flood risk to an acceptable level.</u></p> <p><u>Some of the zoned lands in Skibbereen are at risk of flooding. Pending the full review of the plan, additional safeguards have been introduced to deal with the issue of flood risk. Specifically, all development proposed within an area of flood risk must be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment demonstrating compliance with the Guidelines on ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’, including the development</u></p>	

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	<p><u>plan justification test. In these cases, planning permission will only be considered where the findings of the site specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that the proposal complies with the requirements of the Guidelines.</u></p> <p><u>At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, a comprehensive assessment of the zoned lands will be undertaken, relative to the provisions of the Guidelines, and the need to change the zoning of lands at risk of flooding will be fully assessed at that stage.</u></p> <p><i><u>Applications for Planning Permission in Areas at Risk of Flooding</u></i></p> <p><u>Development proposals in areas which are identified as being at risk of flooding on the 'Indicative Flood Extent Map' will need to comply with provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and, in particular, a site-specific flood risk assessment will be required. In recognition of the fact that there may be some localised anomalies in the Indicative flood extent map, which are inevitable given the board scale modelling used to compile the map, the site specific flood risk assessment can be undertake in two stages.</u></p> <p><u>The initial stage in the process is intended to be capable of being carried out relatively quickly and at modest expense involving a desk-top review of relevant flood risk information (including as appropriate, the availability of more up to date CFRAM studies (Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management), the preparation of site levels or cross sections, the preparation of a commentary on site specific issues including the nature of any localised uncertainty in existing sources of information and, finally, a recommendation on the appropriate course of future action.</u></p> <p><u>It is recommended that intending applicants for planning permission should carry out this first stage of the site-specific flood risk assessment process well in advance of the submission of their application for planning permission and that its recommendations should be brought to the attention of Council staff as part of a pre-planning meeting.</u></p> <p><u>Where the Town Council have indicated in writing that they are in agreement with the findings of the Stage One initial assessment that shows that the site is not at risk of flooding or with any proposals for avoidance, then, subject to other proper planning considerations, an application for planning permission may be favourably considered.</u></p> <p><u>Where the completion of the Stage One assessment indicates that further study is required then only development proposals that can satisfy the 'Development Plan Justification Test' should proceed to a more detailed site specific flood risk assessment. Formal confirmation that a proposal meets the requirements of the 'Development Plan Justification Test' should be sought from the Planning Authority at the pre planning stage.</u></p>	

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy	Page No.
	<p>The first stage in the assessment process will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>An examination of all sources of flooding that may affect a particular location – in addition to the fluvial and tidal risk represented in the indicative flood risk maps.</u> • <u>A review of all available flood related information, including the flood zone maps and historical flood records (from www.floodmaps.ie, and through wider internet / newspaper / library search/local knowledge of flooding in the area).</u> • <u>An appraisal of the relevance and likely accuracy / adequacy of the existing information. For example, if the outline is from a CFRAM or other detailed study they can be relied on to a greater extent than if they are from other sources.</u> • <u>Site cross sections or spot levels, including the river and surrounding lands.</u> • <u>Description of the site and surrounding area, including ground conditions, levels and land use.</u> • <u>Commentary on any localised uncertainty in the existing flood mapping and other sources of flood risk information and the site area.</u> • <u>Proposal as to the appropriate course of action which could be either:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>Further study;</u> b) <u>Revision of proposals to avoid area shown at risk of flooding; or</u> c) <u>Continue with development as proposed (if the site is clearly demonstrated to be outside flood zones A or B and has been shown to be not at flood risk).</u> <p><u>If a proposal passes the ‘Development Plan Justification Test’ and a detailed site specific assessment is prepared which demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed development, and its infrastructure, will avoid significant risks of flooding in line with the principles set out in the Ministerial Guidelines, then, subject to other relevant proper planning considerations, permission may be granted for the development.</u></p> <p><u>Where there are significant residual flood risks associated with the proposed development, conflicting with the approach recommended in the Ministerial Guidelines, it is unlikely that permission will be granted unless all of the following are satisfied:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The development of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and, in particular:</u> • <u>Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of Skibbereen;</u> • <u>Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands;</u> 	

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy	Page No.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Is within or adjoining the core of the town.</u> • <u>Will be essential in achieving compact and sustainable urban growth; and</u> • <u>There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement.</u> <p><u>Minor Developments in areas of Flood Risk</u></p> <p><u>Applications for minor development, such as small extensions to houses, and most changes of use of existing buildings and or extensions and additions to existing commercial and industrial enterprises, are unlikely to raise significant flooding issues, unless they obstruct important flow paths, introduce a significant additional number of people into flood risk areas or entail the storage of hazardous substances. However, a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding still needs to be undertaken and should accompany such applications for development in order to demonstrate that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities. These proposals should follow best practice in the management of health and safety for users and residents of the proposal.</u></p> <p><u>Any proposal in an area at risk of flooding that is considered acceptable in principle must demonstrate that appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place and that residual risks can be managed to acceptable levels. Additional guidance on addressing flood risk management in the design of development is given in Appendix B of the Guidelines.</u></p> <p><u>Review of Flood Risk Mapping</u></p> <p><u>Information in relation to flood risk will be monitored and reviewed by the Council. Once the River Ilen (Skibbereen) Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study is completed, it can inform the next review of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan .</u></p> <p><u>Protecting Biodiversity in areas at Risk of Flooding:</u></p> <p><u>Inappropriate development in flood plains which results in increased river flows, increased erosion, and alteration of river channel morphology or flooding of property or lands may have a significant adverse impact on fisheries leading to habitat modification and degradation. This Plan seeks to protect river environments, fisheries and wildlife habitats and will seek to protect water courses, banks and bankside vegetation from interference by inappropriate bridging, draining, culverting or other works which could be detrimental to fisheries and biodiversity. Flood Risk Assessments and in particular, any proposals for mitigation measures, need to be mindful of the need to protect fisheries and biodiversity.</u></p>	

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy	Page No.												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="344 421 507 510"><u>Objective No.</u></th> <th data-bbox="507 421 1212 510"><u>Development Plan Objectives Flood Risks – Overall Approach</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="344 510 507 981">FP1</td> <td data-bbox="507 510 1212 981"> <p>It is an objective of this plan to ensure that all proposals for development falling within the areas identified as being at risk of flooding are consistent with the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ and to take the following approach in order to reduce the risk of new development being affected by possible future flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding; and</u> • <u>Where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, to take a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of risk.</u> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="344 981 507 1272">FP2</td> <td data-bbox="507 981 1212 1272"> <p>In areas where there is a high probability of flooding - ‘Zone A’ - it is an objective of this plan to avoid development other than ‘water compatible development’ as described in section 3 of the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG, unless otherwise provided for by objectives of this Plan and objective FP6 below.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="344 1272 507 1563">FP3</td> <td data-bbox="507 1272 1212 1563"> <p>In areas where there is a moderate probability of flooding - ‘Zone B’ - it is an objective of this plan to avoid ‘highly vulnerable development’ described in section 3 of the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG, unless otherwise provided for by objectives of this Plan and objective FP6 below.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="344 1563 507 1881">FP4</td> <td data-bbox="507 1563 1212 1881"> <p>It is an objective of this plan to ensure that all proposals for development falling within the areas identified as being at risk of flooding will need to comply with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management. In order to achieve this, proposals for development identified as being at risk from flooding will need to be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment prepared in line with the guidance given above.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="344 1881 507 2020">FP5</td> <td data-bbox="507 1881 1212 2020"> <p>Where the planning authority is satisfied that it can be satisfactorily shown in the site-specific flood risk assessment required under objective FP4 that the proposed development, and its infrastructure, will avoid</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Objective No.</u>	<u>Development Plan Objectives Flood Risks – Overall Approach</u>	FP1	<p>It is an objective of this plan to ensure that all proposals for development falling within the areas identified as being at risk of flooding are consistent with the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ and to take the following approach in order to reduce the risk of new development being affected by possible future flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding; and</u> • <u>Where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, to take a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of risk.</u> 	FP2	<p>In areas where there is a high probability of flooding - ‘Zone A’ - it is an objective of this plan to avoid development other than ‘water compatible development’ as described in section 3 of the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG, unless otherwise provided for by objectives of this Plan and objective FP6 below.</p>	FP3	<p>In areas where there is a moderate probability of flooding - ‘Zone B’ - it is an objective of this plan to avoid ‘highly vulnerable development’ described in section 3 of the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG, unless otherwise provided for by objectives of this Plan and objective FP6 below.</p>	FP4	<p>It is an objective of this plan to ensure that all proposals for development falling within the areas identified as being at risk of flooding will need to comply with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management. In order to achieve this, proposals for development identified as being at risk from flooding will need to be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment prepared in line with the guidance given above.</p>	FP5	<p>Where the planning authority is satisfied that it can be satisfactorily shown in the site-specific flood risk assessment required under objective FP4 that the proposed development, and its infrastructure, will avoid</p>	
<u>Objective No.</u>	<u>Development Plan Objectives Flood Risks – Overall Approach</u>													
FP1	<p>It is an objective of this plan to ensure that all proposals for development falling within the areas identified as being at risk of flooding are consistent with the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ and to take the following approach in order to reduce the risk of new development being affected by possible future flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding; and</u> • <u>Where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, to take a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of risk.</u> 													
FP2	<p>In areas where there is a high probability of flooding - ‘Zone A’ - it is an objective of this plan to avoid development other than ‘water compatible development’ as described in section 3 of the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG, unless otherwise provided for by objectives of this Plan and objective FP6 below.</p>													
FP3	<p>In areas where there is a moderate probability of flooding - ‘Zone B’ - it is an objective of this plan to avoid ‘highly vulnerable development’ described in section 3 of the ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG, unless otherwise provided for by objectives of this Plan and objective FP6 below.</p>													
FP4	<p>It is an objective of this plan to ensure that all proposals for development falling within the areas identified as being at risk of flooding will need to comply with the provisions of the Ministerial Guidelines – ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management. In order to achieve this, proposals for development identified as being at risk from flooding will need to be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment prepared in line with the guidance given above.</p>													
FP5	<p>Where the planning authority is satisfied that it can be satisfactorily shown in the site-specific flood risk assessment required under objective FP4 that the proposed development, and its infrastructure, will avoid</p>													

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy		Page No.
		<p><u>significant risks of flooding in line with the principles set out in the Ministerial Guidelines, then, subject to other relevant proper planning considerations, permission may be granted for the development.</u></p>	
	<p><u>FP6</u></p>	<p><u>Notwithstanding the zoning objective of a site, where the site specific flood risk assessment required under FP4 shows that there are significant residual flood risks associated with a development, conflicting with the approach recommended in the Ministerial Guidelines, it is an objective of this plan to, normally, avoid development vulnerable to flooding unless all of the following are satisfied:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>The development of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and, in particular:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the town;</u> ➤ <u>Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands;</u> ➤ <u>Is within or adjoining the core of the town;</u> ➤ <u>Will be essential in achieving compact and sustainable urban growth; and</u> ➤ <u>There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the town or within a reasonable distance thereof.</u> 	
<p>Part B: 14.02</p>	<p><i>Amend Policy WU 4 “Surface Water Drainage and Flood Risk Management” as follows;</i></p> <p>Policy WU4_ Surface Water Drainage and Flood Risk Management</p> <p>WU4-1 Proposals for development, including the infilling of land, in floodplains shall not normally be permitted.</p> <p>WU4-2– <u>Development proposals in areas at risk of flooding shall comply with the provisions of Section 14.2.3 of this Plan and objectives FP1- FP6. Development proposals within the defined flood risk area shall be subject to a ‘justification test’ and demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that;</u></p> <p>a) The proposal is within or adjoining the town centre; and</p> <p>b) Includes a sequential assessment demonstrating that there are no reasonable or available alternative development sites that meet the requirements of the development within an area at lower risk from</p>		<p>89</p>

Variation Ref.	Variation – Flooding Policy	Page No.
	<p>flooding; and c) The land comprises significant previous development and/or underutilised lands within the urban envelope; and d) The development of the area is essential to facilitate regeneration or town centre expansion; and e) Environmental/hydrological assessment has been undertaken to identify the potential of flood risk as a result of development and that the development would not result in increased or new flood risk elsewhere and if possible will reduce the overall flood risk; and f) The proposal includes measures to minimise flood risk to people, property and the economy and the environment as far as reasonable possible; and g) Residual risk to the area and/or the development can be managed to an acceptable level by design, incorporated flood risk measures; and h) Complies with other policies and development control standards of this Plan.</p> <p>WU4-3 Proposals within the defined flood risk area shall seek to exclude high vulnerability uses such as residential care homes, hospitals, emergency services, residential use, primary and strategic transport and utilities infrastructure.</p>	
Part B: 14.03	<p><i>Remove “Areas subject to historical flooding (OPW National Flood Hazard Mapping)” from “Map 2 Heritage and Environmental Features” and revise “Map 3 Land Use Zoning Map” to show extent of “Areas Susceptible to Flooding: Zone A and Areas Susceptible to Flooding: Zone B”</i></p>	

4 Part C : Habitats Directive Compliance

4.1 Variation to Chapter 9 Natural Environment Open Space and Public Amenity

- 4.1.1 The table below sets out the changes to Chapter 9 of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan, 2009 arising from the obligations on Planning Authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

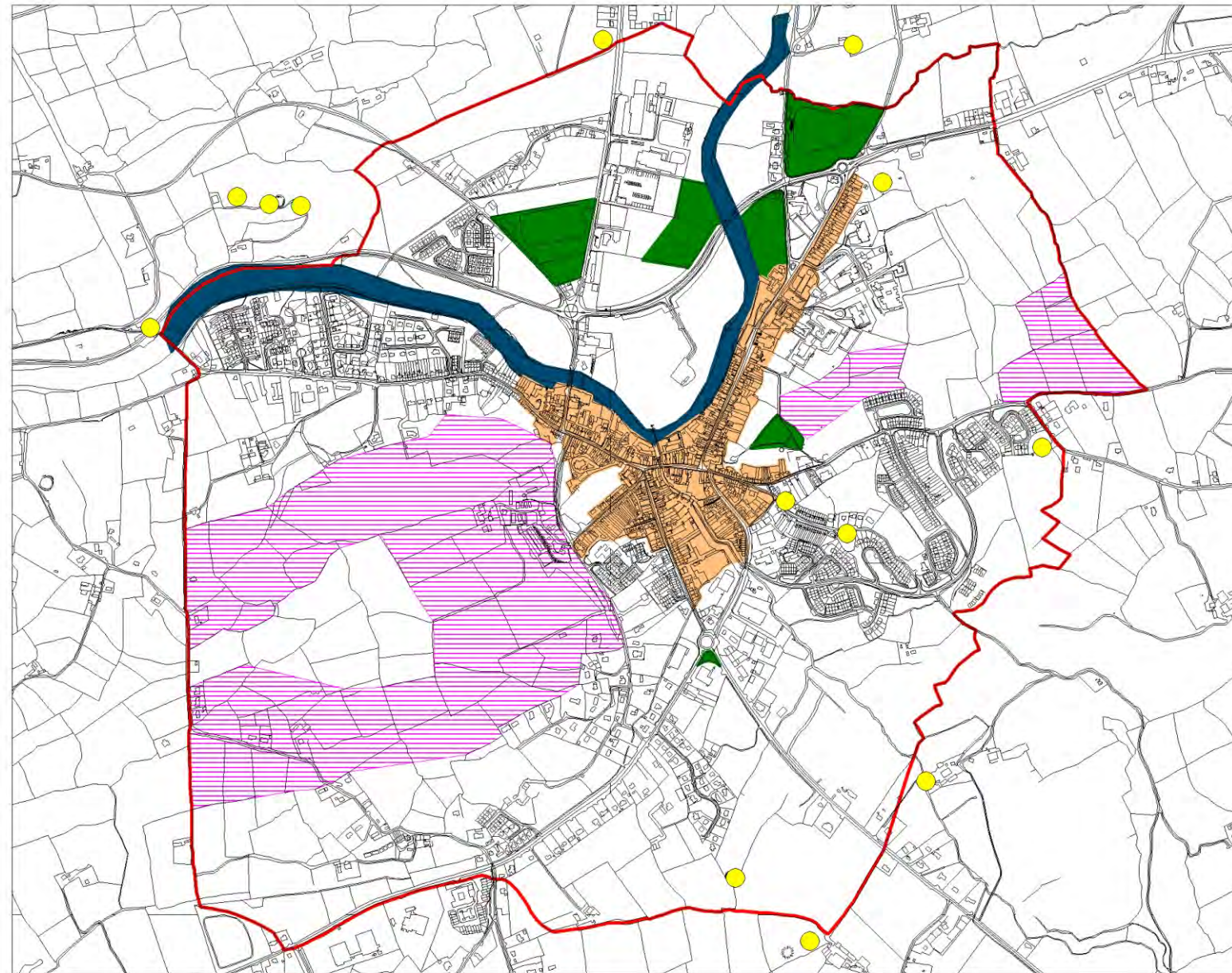
Variation Ref.	Variation – Habitat and Birds Directive	Page No.
Chapter 9 Natural Environment Open Space and Public Amenity :		
Part C: 09.01	<p><i>Delete the following objectives in Policy ENV 3 Natural Environment</i></p> <p>ENV 3-1 The natural environment, biodiversity and waterways of Skibbereen shall be protected, conserved and enhanced and shall be specifically protected from invasive species.</p> <p>ENV 3-4 Features of the landscape that serves as refuges for wild plants shall be maintained in all development proposals as far as possible, including hedgerows, trees, rivers, lakes, parklands, stonewalls, ponds and roadside verges.</p> <p>ENV 3-5 Proposals not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the SAC but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the sites conservation objectives in accordance with and to the satisfaction of the Town Council and relevant bodies.</p> <p><i>And replace with the following:</i></p> <p><u>ENV 3-1 It is the policy of Skibbereen Town Council to protect the ecological integrity of all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation under National and European legislation. This includes Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Biogenetic Reserves and Ramsar Sites.</u></p> <p><u>ENV 3-4 It is the policy of Skibbereen Town Council to carry out an appropriate level of assessment of all proposals for development (residential, industrial, community, recreational and amenity) facilitated by this plan and, to determine the potential for effects of same, on sites designated for nature conservation or proposed to be designated for nature conservation.</u></p> <p><u>ENV 3-5 It is the policy of Skibbereen Town Council not to authorise projects which would be likely to give rise to significant or adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects), having regard to their conservation objectives, unless imperative reasons of overriding public interest can be established and there are no feasible alternative solutions.</u></p>	66

Variation Ref.	Variation – Habitat and Birds Directive	Page No.
	<p><u>ENV 3-6 It is the policy of Skibbereen Town Council to provide protection to all legally protected plant and animal species.</u></p> <p><u>ENV 3-7 It is the policy of Skibbereen Town Council to maintain habitats and features of natural value outside designated sites, that are components of the towns ecological network. This includes treelines, groups of trees and veteran trees, old walls and banks, parkland, hedgerows, rivers, ponds, lakes and streams.</u></p>	







Appendix 1 Mapping Changes

Figure 1maps: Amend Heritage and Environment Features to remove historical flood risks

Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009 - 2015



legend

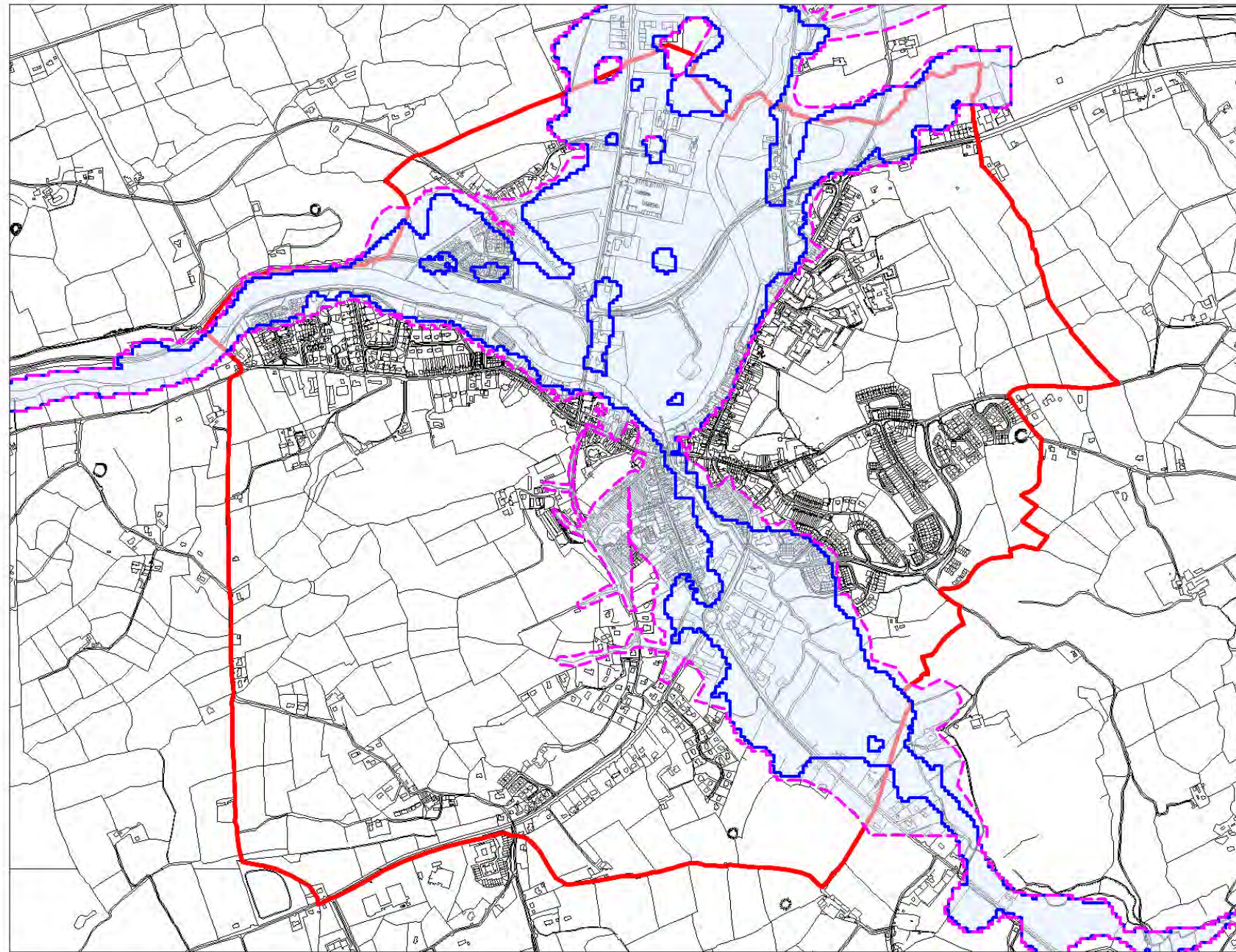
-  River Ilen
-  Elevated Scenic Area
-  Architectural Conservation Area
-  Existing open Space
Playing Fields
Recreation
-  Archaeological Sites
-  Town Council Boundary

Map 2

Heritage & Environmental Features




Figure 2: Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009-2015 Map 3a – Flood Extent Mapping

Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009-2015



N

legend

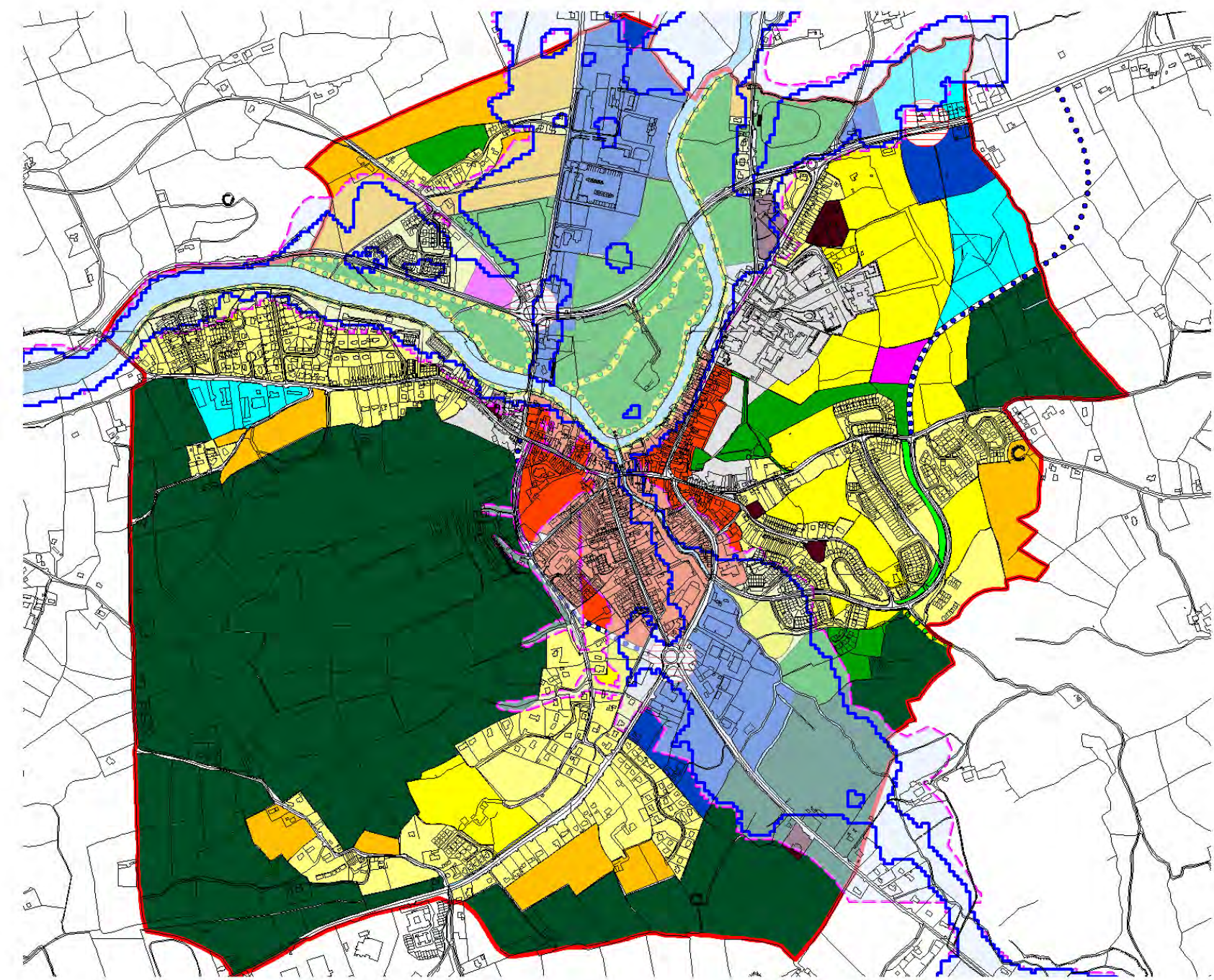
-  Town Council Boundary
-  Area Susceptible to Flooding Flood Zone A
-  Area Susceptible to Flooding Flood Zone B

Map 3a

Flood Extent Mapping

Figure 3: Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009-2015 Map 3b – Land use zoning and Flood Extent Mapping

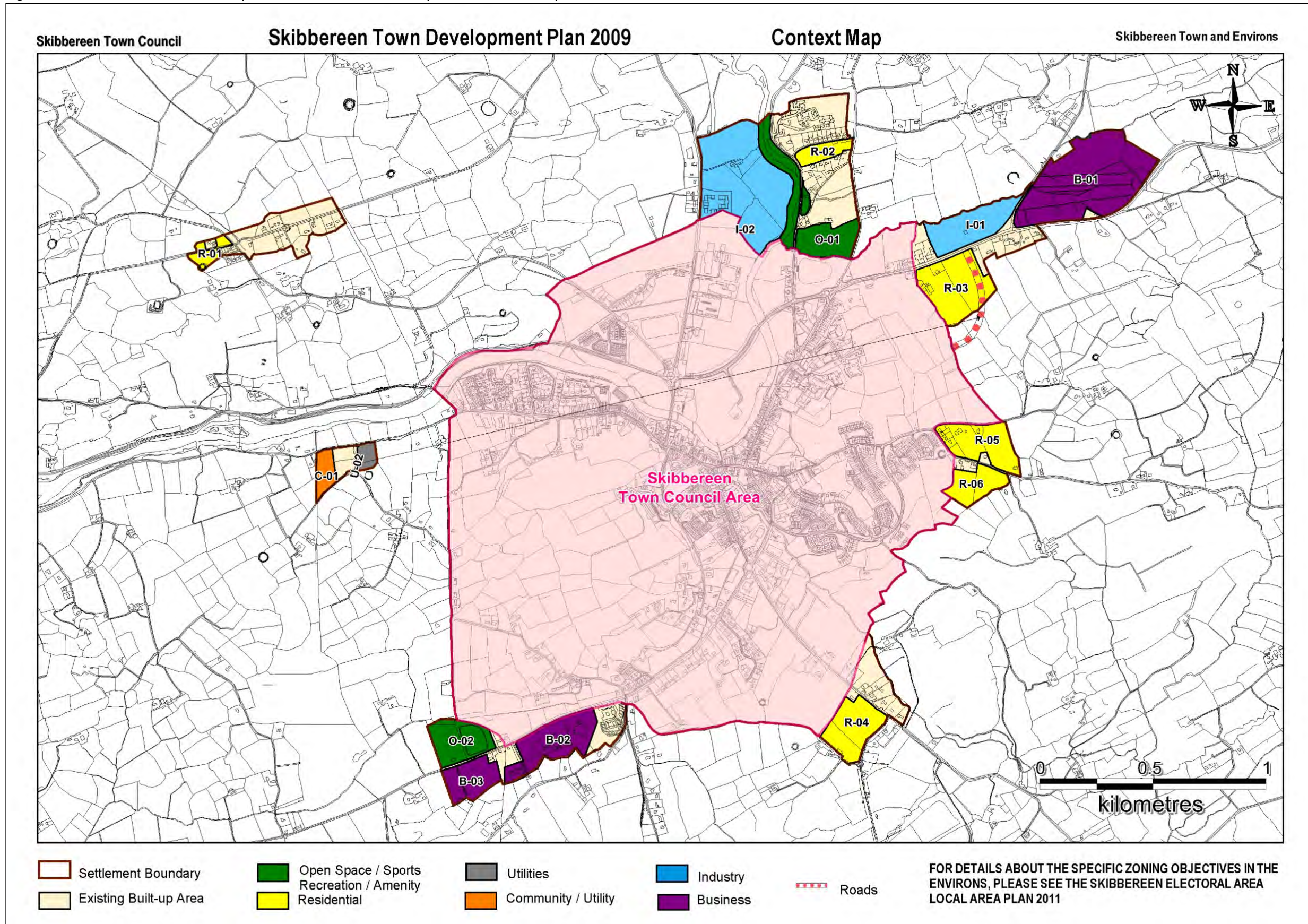
Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009-2015



- N
- ### legend
- Established Residential
 - Residential
 - Residential phase II
 - Neighbourhood centre
 - Town centre
 - Commercial
 - Mixed Use
 - Industry / Enterprise
 - Educational/institutional Civic
 - Landmark Sites/ Nodal Gateway
 - Open Space / Sports Recreation/ Amenity
 - Amenity Walk
 - Agriculture
 - Town Council Boundary
 - Indicative route of Future Distributor Road
 - River
 - Area Susceptible to Flooding Flood Zone A
 - Area Susceptible to Flooding Flood Zone B

Map 3 b
Land Use Zoning Map

Figure 4: Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009-2015 Map 3d – Context Map





Skibbereen Town Council

**Skibbereen Town Council Development Plan 2009
Variation No 1**

SEA Screening Statement



Skibbereen Town Council

Date: September 2013

Document Verification
Page 1 of 1

Job Title						
Variation No. 1						
Document Title:						
Variation to the Skibbereen Town Council Development Plan 2009 SEA Screening Statement						
Revision 1.1	Date Sept 2013	Filename: Variation No 1 – SEA Screening Statement				
			Prepared by	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
Rev		Name	PK		PG	PG

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September 2013

**Skibbereen Town Council
SEA Screening Statement**

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Skibbereen Town Council Town Development Plan 2009-2015, adopted by Skibbereen Town Council, is the statutory development plan for the town of Skibbereen and came into effect in August 2009. The Plan contains a range of policies and objectives designed to achieve the stated core aims including specific policies in relation to housing, economic development and employment, recreation and amenity, environment and heritage etc., and provides a framework for the development of the Town for the period 2009-2015. During the review process the plan underwent environmental assessment in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EEC), Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 and the Habitats Assessment Directive (92/43/EEC).
- 1.1.2 This Variation is the first Variation to the Plan since it was adopted and is in accordance with Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The purpose of this variation, which is dealt with in three parts, is to;
- a) introduce a 'core strategy' section to the Plan as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010,
 - b) update the Plan to reflect the provisions of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management', which were published in November 2009, including revised text and objectives detailing the approach of the Planning Authority to development in areas at risk of flooding.
 - c) Update the text of the plan to comply with the obligations on planning authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

1.2 Legal Context and Purpose of this Screening Report

- 1.2.1 The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) require a Strategic Environmental Assessment in the case of variations to Development Plans where they are likely to give rise to significant environmental effects.
- 1.2.2 "Screening" is defined as "the process for deciding whether a particular plan, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA" (Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, 2004, Guidelines for Regional & Planning Authorities, pg 12).
- 1.2.3 The purpose of this screening report is to determine whether the variation to the Skibbereen Town Development Plan will or will not have any likely significant environmental effects in terms of the SEA requirements and thus whether the Variation requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The criteria for determining whether an SEA is required are set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004.
- 1.2.4 SEA Screening involves formal consideration of:
- a) the characteristics of the Plan; and
 - b) the characteristics of the environmental effects of the Plan and the area likely to be affected.

- 1.2.5 An assessment of the variation in terms of the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations is set out in Section 3 of this report.

2 Variation to the Plan

2.1 Background Information

2.1.1 The purpose of this Variation of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009, which is dealt with in three parts is to;

- a) introduce a Core Strategy, as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010,
- b) to include revised text arising from the obligations on planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and
- c) to include revised text to comply with the obligations on planning authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

2.2 Part A The Core Strategy

2.2.1 Part A of the variation to the Skibbereen Town Council Development Plan deals with the inclusion of the 'Core Strategy' for Skibbereen, which addresses the requirements relating to 'Core Strategies' introduced by the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and has a time horizon to the year 2020. The 'Core Strategy' has been prepared so that it is consistent with relevant national, regional and local strategies and in this context it draws on the Core Strategy of the Cork County Development Plan 2009, the South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010, the sub regional Cork Area Strategic Plan /CASP Update (2001-2020), the North and West Cork Strategic Plan (2002-2020) and the National Spatial Strategy.

2.2.2 All the national, regional and county levels plans have endorsed the national population targets for 2020, which indicates that Skibbereen could reach a total 2020 population of 3035, an increase of 365 from 2011.

Population and Households

2.2.3 Given the extensive administrative area of the Skibbereen Town Council, it has been decided to facilitate future growth within that boundary as opposed to splitting it between the Town Council area and the County Environs area.

Table 1: Skibbereen - Population and Households 2006-2020				
	2006	2011	Target 2020	Growth 2011-2020
Population				
Town Council	2,338	2,568	2,933*	365
Environs	-	102	102	0
Total	2338	2670	3,035	365
Households				
Town Council	998	1,129	1,217**	88
Environs	-	29	42**	13
Total		1,158	1,259**	101

Notes on table:

*Source –Cork County Development Plan 2009 as varied, RPG 2010.

** 2020 population divided by 2020 household occupancy of 2.41 persons.

***Figures in the Cork County Development Plan Core Strategy 2011 are different as they are based on an estimate of the number of households in the town in 2006, rather than the actual census figure, and are also based on a multiple of 15% for vacancy, rather than the 30% used in the LAP. The County Council are preparing a new Draft Core Strategy as part of the review of their Development Plan. This will be published in early 2013 and is expected to resolve these anomalies.

- 2.2.4 In line with the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010, average household size is assumed to be 2.41 by 2020. In this context, a population within the town council area of 2,933 persons would equate to 1,217 households by 2020, an increase of 88 households over the 2011 level.
- 2.2.5 Allowing for a vacancy rates of 15% this level of household growth would require the provision of an additional 101 dwelling units.

Table 2: Housing Demand 2011-20			
	Population Growth 2011-2020	H/Hold Growth 2011-2020	Housing Units 2011-2020
Skibbereen Town	365	88	101

Land Availability within the Town Boundary

- 2.2.6 The 2009 Town Plan zoned 55 hectares of land for medium and low density residential development, capable of providing between 1,100 and 1,933 housing units, depending on the final density to which it is developed. Pending the substantive review of the plan, it is proposed to retain the zonings as adopted in 2009 and to use phasing to manage the land supply within the town. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan (the review is due to commence in 2013), the quantum of zoned lands required to meet the housing needs of the town can be fully assessed in line with the Core Strategy requirements of the 2000 Act, and the Guidelines on preparing Development Plans.

Phasing

- 2.2.7 In terms of the development of the current stock of residential lands, the priority over the remaining life of the plan is to ensure a more sustainable pattern of residential growth which helps consolidate the town around its existing core and brings unfinished development to a satisfactory level of completion.
- 2.2.8 Residential lands identified for inclusion within Phase 1 comprise 30 hectares (as identified in Appendix 1 Map 1)). In addition there are other significant areas zoned for town centre development which are expected to yield some residential development.
- 2.2.9 Once this land supply is exhausted, development can proceed in a sequential manner on the lands identified for phase 2 (25 hectares).
- 2.2.10 This phasing approach aims to give priority to completing developments which help consolidate the town by developing the more central sites ahead of those which are further out.
- 2.2.11 The following lands are retained for residential development (both Phase 1 and Phase 2) over the remaining life of the Plan. In addition to the phase one residential land there are the lands zoned for town centre mixed uses which will also yield some residential units in Phase 1.

<u>Table 3 Phasing of Residential Land</u>		
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Estimated yield</u>
<u>Phase 1</u>		
Town Centre	24	50
Residential	30	590
<u>Phase 2</u>		
Residential	25	510

<u>Table4: Core Strategy Table: Population and Housing 2011-2020</u>	
	<u>Skibbereen Town Council</u>
<u>Population Allocation 2011-2020 (growth)</u>	<u>365</u>
<u>Housing Required</u>	<u>101units (5 ha)</u>
<u>Existing Zoning (ha)</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>Proposed Zoning Phase 1 (ha)</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Proposed Zoning Phase 2 (ha)</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>Housing yield Phase 1 (Residential lands.)</u>	<u>590</u>
<u>Housing yield Phase 2 (Residential lands.)</u>	<u>510</u>
<u>Housing Yield (Other lands ha)</u>	<u>50 units (23.77 ha)</u>
<u>Excess</u>	<u>560 units/30 ha**</u>

2.3 Flood Risk Management

2.3.1 Part B of the Variation updates the Plan to reflect the requirements of the Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'. The changes proposed to chapters 2,3,5,6,8 and 14 include additional policies and objectives detailing the Councils approach to development in areas at risk of flooding and changes to particular objectives to ensure flood risk assessment are integrated with development proposals. The scope of the changes reflects the approach to flood risk assessment outlined below.

Background Context.

2.3.2 European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks requires Member States to carry out a preliminary assessment by 2011 in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding. For such

zones, flood risk maps are required to be drawn up by 2013. Flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness must be established by 2015. In August 2011 the OPW published a Draft National Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report covering the whole country for public consultation.

- 2.3.3 In November 2009, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and the Office of Public Works, published the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines. These are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach which will fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system. Local authorities are required to have regard to flood risk identification, assessment and management processes when preparing or varying development plans and local area plans and in consideration of applications for planning permission.

Variation to the Skibbereen Town Development Plan

- 2.3.4 In response to the requirements of the Guidelines, and in order to provide information about possible flood risks to the public generally and to those contemplating development, Cork County Council, in close association with the OPW, has compiled a series of indicative maps flood maps for all of County Cork showing areas that could be at risk from flooding. This information has been used in the preparation of this Variation to the Skibbereen Town Development Plan 2009.
- 2.3.5 The information about flood risks in County Cork has been collated from a number of sources including:
- a) Draft River Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (Lee CFRAMS) commissioned and published by the Office of Public Works.
 - b) 'Floodmaps.ie' – The national flood hazard mapping website operated by the Office of Public Works, where information about past flood events is recorded and made available to the public. 'Flood point' information is available on this site and has been noted.
 - c) 'Draft Flood Hazard Mapping' for fluvial and tidal areas commissioned by Cork County Council from Consultants JBA Associates. These indicative flood extent maps provide flood extent information for river catchments where a more detailed CFRAMS study is not currently available.
- 2.3.6 In line with advice from the OPW this information has been amalgamated into a single 'Indicative Flood Extent Map' for Skibbereen. The map shows areas within the town with a High probability (Zone A) and a Moderate probability (Zone B) of fluvial flooding.
- 2.3.7 The inclusion of an Indicative Flood Extent map for Skibbereen is the first step in managing flood risk in the future. The map is indicative in nature and is intended to primarily function as a screening tool. The areas at risk may be more or less extensive in practice than indicated in the flood mapping. The mapping will be refined where possible over time as more detailed flood risk assessments are completed, such as that presently underway as part of the River Ilven (Skibbereen) Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study.
- 2.3.8 Cork County Council have commissioned RPS Consultants to prepare the River Ilven (Skibbereen) Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. The study involves the completion of a hydrological feasibility study including the preparation of a flood risk management plan and the identification of the most appropriate flood relief scheme for the town, to reduce the impact of flooding in Skibbereen from the River Ilven and

its tributaries. This study has yet to be finalised. Once the study is finalised it can inform the flood risk management strategy for the next review of the Skibbereen Town Plan (due to commence later this year).

- 2.3.9 In the interim any differences between the areas identified as being at risk of flooding in the RPS study, the maps published as part of the National Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), and those identified in the Indicative Flood Extent Map included in this Variation, can be resolved at the project stage when a site specific flood risk assessment is being prepared.

Approach to Managing Flood Risk

- 2.3.10 The Guidelines for Planning Authorities 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' require planning authorities to ensure that development is not permitted in areas of flood risk, particularly floodplains, except where there are no suitable alternative sites available in areas at lower risk that are consistent with the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development. Where such development has to take place, in the case of urban regeneration for example, the type of development has to be carefully considered and the risks should be mitigated and managed through location, layout and design of the development to reduce flood risk to an acceptable level.
- 2.3.11 Some of the zoned lands in Skibbereen are at risk of flooding. Pending the full review of the plan (due to commence in 2013), additional safeguards have been introduced to deal with the issue of flood risk. Specifically, all development proposed within an area of flood risk must be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment demonstrating compliance with the Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management', including the development plan justification test. In these cases planning permission will only be considered where the findings of the site specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that the proposal complies with the requirements of the Guidelines.
- 2.3.12 At the next full review of the Town Development Plan, a comprehensive assessment of the zoned lands will be undertaken, relative to the provisions of the Guidelines, and the need to change the zoning of lands at risk of flooding will be fully assessed at that stage.
- 2.3.13 It is considered that the approach outlined above will allow for the sustainable development of Skibbereen while managing flood risk in an appropriate manner as required by the Guidelines, pending a full review of the Town Development Plan which is due to commence in 2013.

2.4 Habitats Directive Compliance

- 2.4.1 Part C of the variation refers to changes arising from the obligations on Planning Authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.
- 2.4.2 The changes in this part of the Variation include the insertion of more new that will ensure the planning authority complies with its obligations under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

3 SEA Screening**3.1 Evaluation of effects.**

3.1.1 This section evaluates the need to SEA having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulation 2004 and the findings of the Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Statement.

3.2 Determination for Appropriate Assessment

3.2.1 The DoEHLG Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 relates to the requirement to screen Land Use Plans for any potential impacts on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites (normally called Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas).

3.2.2 The circular states that an appropriate assessment means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, by a person with ecological expertise, of the potential impacts of the plan or programme on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site (including Natura 2000 sites not situated in the area encompassed by the plan or scheme) and the development, where necessary, or mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The potential impacts of policies outside Natura 2000 sites, but potentially impacting upon them (known as 'ex site' impacts) must also be included in the assessment.

3.2.3 An Appropriate Assessment of the Variation has been completed and is available for consideration (Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Statement). The finding of this assessment have also informed the SEA Screening detailed below.

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
(1) The characteristics of plans or programme having regard, in particular, to		
The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,	No.	<p>It is not considered that there is any particular significant resource allocation issues associated with the proposed variation to the Plan:</p> <p>Part A: The core strategy identifies the target population and household growth rates for Skibbereen over the next 10 years which are consistent with the targets set out in the Plan adopted in 2009. The proposed variation seeks to manage the available land supply through phasing, pending a full review of the Development Plan next year.</p> <p>Part B. The Variation provides for a robust approach to Flood Risk management including a requirement for a more detailed assessment of flood risk, and the suitability of the land for development, at the project stage, which will lessen the potential impact of development on the environment. The plan also commits to a comprehensive assessment of zoned lands affected by flood risk during the review of the</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
	No.	Town Plan which is due to commence in 2013. Part C. New policies have been included that afford more protection to all natural heritage sites which are designated or proposed for designation under National and European Legislation which will lessen the potential impact of development on the environment.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,	No. No. No.	Part A: One of the main functions of the Core Strategy element of the Variation is to ensure that the Skibbereen Town Plan complies with the population targets as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for South West Region 2010. The Skibbereen Town Council Development Plan is at the lower end of the hierarchy of land use plans in the county. It is not considered that the proposed variation to the Plan would have a significant influence on other plans. Part B. The new approach to flood risk management will impact directly on specific development projects within the areas at risk but will lessen the potential impact of development on the environment. Part C. It is not considered that the proposed variation to the Plan will have a significant influence on other plans. The strengthened approach to the protection of natural heritage sites will impact directly on some development projects but will lessen the potential impact of development on the environment.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	No. No.	It is considered that the proposed variation would have a positive effect on other environmental considerations and promote sustainable development: Part A: The Plan adopted in 2009 was subject to a full Strategic Environmental Assessment Process. This variation brings further clarity to the population and household targets for the town for the period to 2020. The Plan has been changed to include objectives re the phasing of the available land supply, pending a review of the development plan in 2013. A new WWTP providing secondary treatment has been constructed in Skibbereen. This will ensure sufficient capacity is available to cater for future growth. Part B. The Variation provides for a robust approach to Flood Risk management including a requirement for a more detailed assessment of flood risk, and the suitability of the land for

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
	No.	<p>development, at the project stage, which will lessen the potential impact of development on the environment. The plan also commits to a comprehensive assessment of zoned lands affected by flood risk during the review of the Town Plan which is due to commence in 2013. It is therefore considered that the proposed variation will have a positive effect on environmental considerations and promote sustainable development.</p> <p>Part C. The Variation proposes new policies be included to strengthen the protection afforded to all natural heritage sites and non designated areas of ecological importance. It is therefore considered that the proposed variation would have a positive effect on environmental considerations and promote sustainable development.</p>
Environmental problems relevant to the Plan or Programme.	<p>No.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>No.</p>	<p>Part A: Following the recent upgrade of the wastewater treatment facilities in Skibbereen, sufficient capacity is available in the WWTP in order to treat wastewater in accordance with Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations. The Variation has also strengthened the provisions of the plan to ensure that the WWTP capacity is available and operational in advance of the commencement of any discharges from development.</p> <p>Part B. The Variation introduces additional policy and objectives in relation to managing development in areas at risk of flooding. Provided these elements of the plan are fully implemented, they should not give rise to any adverse environmental issues. Zonings in areas at risk of flooding will be reassessed when the Plan is reviewed. Provided these elements of the plan are fully implemented, new development should not give rise to any adverse environmental issues.</p> <p>Part C. New policies have been included that strengthen the protection afforded to all natural heritage sites and non designated areas of ecological importance. Provided these elements of the plan are fully implemented, new development should not give rise to any adverse environmental issues.</p>
the relevance of the	No.	Part A : Once the Variation is adopted and

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
<p>plan or programme for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).</p>		<p>integrated with the main plan adopted in 2009 the Plan will be compliant with the Planning and Development Act 2010 and will be consistent with higher level higher-level plans and integrate other national planning policy guidance issued under Section 28 of the Act such as the Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (June 2007) and relevant EU Directive-related considerations that development plans must comply, with such as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC), the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC), the EU Floods Directive and the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). Final compliance is dependent on the full implementation and monitoring of the relevant objectives of the Plan and this Variation through the development management process.</p> <p>Part B . Once the Variation is adopted the plan will assist in the assessment and management of flood risks as required by the European Directive.</p> <p>Part c . Once the Variation is adopted the plan will assist in the protection of natural heritage sites and non designated areas of ecological importance.</p>
<p>2. Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area likely to be affected, having regard in particular to:</p>		
<p>the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Part A: The core strategy identifies the target population and household growth rates for Skibbereen over the next 10 years which are consistent with the targets set out in the Plan adopted in 2009.</p> <p>The proposed variation seeks to manage the available land supply through phasing, pending a full review of the Development Plan in 2013 and objectives of the plan will ensure that future development can only take place where the necessary waste water infrastructure is in place.</p> <p>The Strategy is likely to have a positive contribution to the environmental development of the town as it will ensure a moderate pace of development, in tandem with infrastructure provision. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the potential positive or</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
	No.	negative effects will be managed through the development management process Part B and C: It is considered that proposed variation would have a positive effect on environmental considerations and promote sustainable development. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the potential positive or negative effects will be managed through the development management process. Positive effects are likely to be permanent.
the cumulative nature of the effects,	No.	Parts A-C. It is considered that the cumulative effect on the environment will be positive.
the transboundary nature of the effects,	No.	Parts A-C. No significant trans boundary effects are likely to arise.
the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	No.	Parts A-C. The environmental benefits arising from the avoidance of inappropriate development arising from the provisions of the Core Strategy, objectives in relation to Flood Risk Management and the better protection of natural heritage will have a positive impact on human health, quality of life and the environment generally.
the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	No.	Parts A-C. The area that will be directly affected by the proposed variation is that which lies within the administrative boundary of Skibbereen Town Council. The population of this area is approximately 2,670 (CSO, 2011), a 14% increase of population levels in 2006. The Town Council Development plan also covers an area of approximately 414 hectares.
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.	No.	Part A a) The proposed variation includes a number of revisions to the Plan, which will ensure greater protection for Natura 2000 sites and ensure that that Plan will not give rise to potentially significant impacts for any Natura 2000 site. In particular revised objectives in relation to water services seek to ensure that adequate water and water services infrastructure is provided in tandem with development and is operational before any discharges arise.

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
	No.	<p>Revised flooding policy and requirement for site specific flood risk assessment, appropriate assessment and SuDS, will enhance protection for natural and cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>b) It is not anticipated that this Variation will give rise to any environmental quality standards being exceeded. On the contrary it is anticipated that there will be positive impacts on environmental quality standards.</p> <p>c) This variation does not propose the intensification of any land uses.</p> <p>Part B</p> <p>(a) The flood risk policy requires development proposals in areas at risk to pass the justification tests set out in the guidelines and be supported by a site specific flood risk assessment. The policy makes it less likely that development which would give rise to increased flooding downstream, which could have an impact on Natura 2000 sites and their habitats and species, will occur. The insertion of new flood risk policies coupled with the insertion of new stricter policy relating the protection of Natura 2000 sites (see section C below), setting out requirements for screening and appropriate assessment, and the insertion of new policy requiring the incorporation of SuDS and / or storm water attenuation measures as appropriate into new development will enhance the level of protection for Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>(b) It is not anticipated that this Variation will give rise to any environmental quality standards being exceeded. On the contrary it is anticipated that there will be positive impacts on environmental quality standards.</p> <p>(c) This variation does not propose the intensification of any land uses.</p> <p>Part C</p> <p>The variation will strengthen the protection of the natural / cultural heritage and the environment generally. This variation does</p>
	No.	<p>Revised flooding policy and requirement for site specific flood risk assessment, appropriate assessment and SuDS, will enhance protection for natural and cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>b) It is not anticipated that this Variation will give rise to any environmental quality standards being exceeded. On the contrary it is anticipated that there will be positive impacts on environmental quality standards.</p> <p>c) This variation does not propose the intensification of any land uses.</p> <p>Part B</p> <p>(a) The flood risk policy requires development proposals in areas at risk to pass the justification tests set out in the guidelines and be supported by a site specific flood risk assessment. The policy makes it less likely that development which would give rise to increased flooding downstream, which could have an impact on Natura 2000 sites and their habitats and species, will occur. The insertion of new flood risk policies coupled with the insertion of new stricter policy relating the protection of Natura 2000 sites (see section C below), setting out requirements for screening and appropriate assessment, and the insertion of new policy requiring the incorporation of SuDS and / or storm water attenuation measures as appropriate into new development will enhance the level of protection for Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>(b) It is not anticipated that this Variation will give rise to any environmental quality standards being exceeded. On the contrary it is anticipated that there will be positive impacts on environmental quality standards.</p> <p>(c) This variation does not propose the intensification of any land uses.</p> <p>Part C</p> <p>The variation will strengthen the protection of the natural / cultural heritage and the environment generally. This variation does</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects in the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Negative)	Comment/Summary of significant environmental effects
		not propose the intensification of any land uses.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, European Union or international protection status.	No.	Parts A-C. This variation strengthens the position in relation to the protection of natural heritage and supports the sustainable development of the town which will in turn indirectly enhance landscape protection. Any potential visual impacts to the streetscape from development(s) will be considered through the standard development planning and management processes.

3.3 Issues to be considered by Skibbereen Town Council.

Development in areas at risk of Flooding:

- 3.3.1 For the purposes of the proposed Variation, the Town Council has decided to retain, pending the substantive review of the Plan, the broad land use zoning objectives of the 2009 Plan as adopted. At the next full review of the Town Development Plan (the review is due to commence in 2013), the quantum and location of zoned lands required to meet the housing needs of the town can be fully assessed in line with the Core Strategy requirements of the 2000 Act, and the Guidelines on preparing Development Plans and the Guidelines on Flood Risk Management.
- 3.3.2 In recognition of the fact that some of the zoned lands are at risk of flooding, it is proposed to mitigate this risk, pending the review of the plan, by ensuring that all proposals for development within the area at risk are accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment. In these cases planning permission will only be considered where the findings of the site specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that the proposal complies with the requirements of the Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management', including the requirements of the Development Plan/ Development Management Justification Tests as outlined in the Guidelines.
- 3.3.3 This approach ensures that development will only proceed in situations where it complies with the requirements of the Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management', thus managing the risks at the project level and ensuring there will be no significant adverse environmental effect. In this context, it is considered that the Variation will have a positive impact on the environment by ensuring that all development proposals comply with these requirements.

4 Statutory Consultation

4.1 Consultation with Environmental Authorities.

- 4.1.1 On the basis of the initial assessment outlined in Section 3 and following consultation with the Environmental Authorities, Skibbereen Town Council formed the view that the Variation did not have the potential to cause significant effects on the environment on the basis that adequate safeguards have been included in the Variation to militate against such effects. It was therefore considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required in respect of the variation.
- 4.1.2 On completion of the initial assessment in relation to SEA, Skibbereen Town Council consulted with specified environmental authorities as required under Article 13A (4) of the Regulations, namely :
- a) The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
 - b) The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG);
 - c) The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
 - d) The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 - e) Cork County Council (as an adjoining Planning Authority)
- 4.1.3 In response, a number of submissions were received and the main issues raised are detailed below.

Department of the Art, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

- 4.1.4 The submission relates to the protection of Archaeological Heritage and recommends that new policies and objectives be included in the Variation to further strengthen the protection of the cultural built heritage and in particular the coastal, riverine and maritime heritage, including the protection of underwater cultural heritage areas. Additional policy is also recommended in relation to Archaeological Assessment.
- 4.1.5 *Response:* These issues are beyond the scope of the current Variation which deals with 3 very specific issues – core strategy, flooding and habitat protection. Chapter 7 of the existing plan deals with ‘*Townscape Management, Architectural and Archaeological Heritage*’ and specifically acknowledges the importance of the River Illen to the town and potential for underwater archaeology. Existing policy TM3-1 includes a requirement for Archaeological Assessment. The substantive review of the Skibbereen Town Plan is due to commence in the short term and it is considered appropriate and reasonable to defer further consideration of these issues pending the full review of the Plan.

Environmental Protection Agency

- 4.1.6 The submission queries the scale of housing capacity provided for within phase 1 lands relative to the amount of new houses required and recommends reviewing the phasing strategy to reduce the amount of land available for phase 1. Submission also queries the approach to flood risk management and whether the zonings being retained within areas at risk of flooding have been subject to the Justification Test as set out in the Guidelines. Where water services infrastructure is located within areas at risk of flooding, the Plan should ensure that suitable adaption measures are provided to mitigate against the risk of flooding. Consideration should be given to retaining original policy ENV 3-1 .

4.1.7 *Response:* Variation acknowledges the extent of the land supply available within phase 1 exceeds the immediate requirements of the town but additional capacity is required to balancer the development restrictions affecting the wider electoral area due to infrastructural constraints. The lands supply will be comprehensively assessed as part of the full review of the plan, due to commence in the coming months. With respect the flooding, the retention of the zonings within areas at risk is an interim measures pending the substantive review of the plan and the variations includes safeguards to ensure that development within such areas will only be permitted where it complies with the guidelines. With regard to the provisions of ENV3-1, these are been retained and integrated into the new text.

4.2 Recommendation:

4.2.1 Based on the above assessment, and the findings of the Natura Impact Assessment , the Council has determined, in accordance with Section 13k (4) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004), as amended by the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, (SI No. 201 of 2011), that the likely effects on the environment of the variation are not such as to require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment. The variation will enhance the protection afforded to the environment and does not make provision for any additional development, policies or objectives which could have a negative impact on the environment.



Skibbereen Town Council

**Skibbereen Town Development
Variation No.1**

Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Statement



**Skibbereen Town Council
September 2013**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context

1.1.1 The Skibbereen Town Plan was adopted in 2009, and sets out landuse policy for the town for a period of six years from 2009 to 2015. It is now proposed to make a variation to the plan in order to bring it into compliance with recent changes in legislation and Government policy. The purpose of the variation is to introduce a core strategy, as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, to include revised text arising from the obligations on planning authorities under section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, and to make some changes to the plan to ensure compliance with the obligations on planning authorities under the Birds and Habitats Directives.

1.1.2 In accordance with requirements under the EU Habitats Directive (43/92/EEC) and EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), the impacts of the policies and objectives of all statutory land use plans and proposed variations to these, on certain sites that are designated for the protection of nature (Natura 2000¹ sites), must be assessed as an integral part of the process of drafting, amending or varying a landuse plan. This is to determine whether or not the implementation of plan policies could have negative consequences for the habitats or plant and animal species for which these sites are designated, and to avoid such consequences. This assessment process is called a Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) and must be carried out for all stages of the process of making a variation to a landuse plan.

1.1.3 The proposed variation has been assessed in accordance with this requirement and the results of that assessment are presented in this report. The proposed variation is set out in 'Proposed Variation to the Skibbereen Town Plan 2009, Variation No. 1'.

1.2 Legislative Background Habitats Directive Assessment

1.2.1 Habitats Directive Assessment is a process which involves the evaluation of the potential impacts of plans and projects on Natura 2000 sites and the habitats and species that they support and, where necessary, the development of mitigation measures to avoid any such impacts. It is an iterative process which runs parallel to and informs the plan making process, involving analysis and review of draft policies, or amendments/variations, as they emerge during each stage of plan making. Within this process, regard must also be had to the potential for policies or amendments to policies, to contribute to impacts which on their own may be acceptable, but which could be significant when considered in combination with the impacts arising from the implementation of other plans or policies.

1.2.2 Articles 6(3) of the Directive sets out the requirement for the assessment of plans and projects affecting Natura 2000 sites as follows:

¹ Natura 2000 sites include Special Areas of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas designated under the Birds Directive. Special Areas of Conservation are sites that are protected because they support particular habitats and/or plant and animal species that have been identified to be threatened at EU community level. Special Protection Areas are sites that are protected for the conservation of species of birds that are in danger of extinction, or are rare or vulnerable. Special Protection Areas may also be sites that are particularly important for migratory birds. Such sites include internationally important wetlands.

6(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site and subject to the provision of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

1.2.3 Article 6(4) of the Directive deals with derogation procedures, where it is decided to proceed with a plan/project despite a finding that negative impacts are likely.

*6(4) If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of **alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.***

Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment, or further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

1.2.4 Where a variation is proposed to a plan, the process of Habitats Directive Assessment may result in a recommendation to modify the wording of the proposed variation, or, if significant issues arise, a recommendation not to proceed with the variation.

1.2.5 The European Union has provided guidance as to how to complete a Habitats Directive Assessment for land use plans which identifies four main stages in the process as follows:

Stage One: Screening

The process which identifies what might be likely impacts arising from a plan on a Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. No further assessment is required if potentially significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites are ruled out at this stage.

Stage Two: Appropriate assessment

Where the possibility of significant impacts has not been discounted by the screening process, a more detailed assessment is required. This is called an appropriate assessment and involves the consideration of the impact of the plan on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, having regard to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, it involves an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts. No further assessment is required, if it can be concluded that the plan will not give rise to adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to mitigation which is proposed.

Stage Three: Assessment of alternative solutions

Should the conclusion of the appropriate assessment be that there are likely to be impacts which will affect the overall integrity of the Natura 2000 site, then it is required to examine alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the plan that avoids such impacts. Stage three of a Habitats Directive Assessment involves the assessment of alternative solutions. To proceed any further, it must be proven that no viable alternatives exist.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.

Should it be found there are no viable alternative solutions to avoid adverse impacts on the Natura 2000 site, and should it be agreed that the plan can proceed despite such impacts (which can only be for overriding reasons of public interest), then compensatory measures must be put in place in advance of the implementation of the plan/project. The fourth stage of the habitats directive assessment process involves the assessment of the proposed compensatory measures.

1.2.6 The process may result in the development of new policy areas and/or the modification or removal of certain policies to be presented in the final plan. The results of this analysis and review may be presented in a Habitats Directive Screening Report, or in a Natura Impact Report which must be produced for each iteration of the plan (draft plan, post consultation amendments, final amendments, final plan). At the end of the plan making process, a Habitats Directive Conclusion Statement is produced which contains a summary of how ecological considerations in relation to Natura 2000 sites have been integrated into the plan.

1.2.7 The requirement to carry out Habitats Directive Assessments on development plans and proposed variations to these, and the process by which this must be completed, is set out in part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2010. Development plans including County Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Town Plans and variations to these may only be adopted where it has been shown through this process that impacts affecting the integrity of Natura 2000 sites have been ruled out. Where these have not been ruled out, the plan / variation may only proceed where it has been demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternative solutions, that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest to proceed with the plan, and that compensatory measures have been designed, assessed, and approved by the Minister and have been put in place in advance of the adoption of the plan. In every case in which a local authority envisages approving or proceeding with a plan or project on the grounds of overriding public interest, the Minister must be consulted.

1.2.8 This report presents the first phase of the Habitats Directive Assessment process, being the screening of the proposed variation. All of the proposed additions and modifications have been reviewed to determine whether they give rise to a potential for significant impacts to occur on qualifying features of any Natura 2000 sites.

2 Methodology

2.1 Data Sources

2.1.1 The appropriate assessment of potential impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites in this study is based on a desktop review of information relating to these sites and to the habitats and species that they support, and personal knowledge of many of the sites. References and data used are cited in the back of this report.

2.2 Consultation

2.2.1 This report will go on public display and be referred to Government Departments and other statutory consultees for further consideration during the consultation process. Submissions on same will be taken into consideration in the drafting of the final variation.

2.3 Approach

2.3.1 The approach taken in the making of this assessment follows European Communities, Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, 2002, and on Local Government and Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009.

3 Screening of Variation

3.1 Description of the Variation to Skibbereen Town Plan

3.1.1 The variation to the Skibbereen Town Plan has been prepared in order to include a core strategy (Part A), as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010, to include revised text arising from the obligations on planning authorities under section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (Part B), and to make some changes to the plan to ensure compliance with the obligations on planning authorities under the Birds and Habitats Directives. A summary of the proposed changes to the plan is set out below.

3.1.2 **Part A** of the variation relates to variations to the Skibbereen Town Council Development Plan which have resulted from the introduction of a Core Strategy. This has resulted in changes to **Chapter 2** and **Chapter 8**.

- **Chapter 2** is being updated to include a new section 2.5 Core Strategy as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and thereafter omit sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4 of existing text related to population. It is also proposed to modify Figure 2.6 and to include a new Core Strategy diagram after section 2.5.
- Section 8.3.1 in **Chapter 8** is being amended to reflect changes to reflect changes to the population and housing growth figures referred to in the Core Strategy.

3.1.3 **Part B** of the variation deals with Flood Risk and includes changes to Chapter 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 14 of the Plan.

- There is a minor amendment proposed to **Chapter 2** to refer to newly available flood risk maps.
- Amendments are proposed to **Chapter 3** in sections 3.3.1, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.3, 3.4.7 and 3.4.8 which identifies parcels of zoned land which are at risk of flooding, where proposals for development will require site specific flood risk assessments and must comply with the provisions of the Ministerial Guideline on Flood Risk Management, and where zonings will be subject to revision at the next review of the Town Plan.
- Changes are proposed to **Chapter 5** sections 5.2 and 5.2.1 of the plan to highlight requirements relating to flood risk in some of the town quarters and development opportunity sites 1, 2, 3 and 5. It is proposed to modify objectives TC2, TC1-1 and TC1-2 in section 5.5 for the same reasons.
- It is proposed to amend section 6.4 of **Chapter 6**, and to include two new objectives at SR6 and SR7 to highlight flood sensitive zones and incorporate requirements in relation to flood risk assessment and management in relation to new shopping and retail proposals.
- It is proposed to amend sections 8.2 and 8.5 of **Chapter 8** to incorporate requirements in relation to flood risk assessment and management in relation to areas zoned as residential and neighbourhood centres.
- It is proposed to replace the existing flood risk policy with a new flood risk assessment and management policy in **Chapter 14** of the plan
- It is proposed to remove Map 2 from the plan and to incorporate flood risk areas into the Land Use Zoning Map for the plan (Map 3).

3.1.4 Part C of this variation deals with issues arising in relation to the Habitats Directive.

- It is proposed to amend objective env 3-1 to env 3-7 in **Chapter 9** of the plan, so as to clarify the Town Councils obligations in relation to the protection of European Designated Sites.

3.2 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites to be Screened for Impacts

3.2.1 All Natura 2000 sites within the plan boundary area, within 15km of the plan boundary, and any Natura 2000 sites >15km from Skibbereen Town whose qualifying features include water dependant habitats or species, where these are downstream and hydrologically connected to the plan boundary area have been screened to determine whether the proposed variation would be likely to give rise to negative impacts on habitats or species for which these sites are selected. These sites are listed in Table 1 below. The habitats and/or species for which these sites are selected are also listed in the table, as are the principle threats which could affect these.

Table 1 Natura 2000 sites selected for screening in relation to the proposed variation to the Skibbereen Town Plan

Site Name	Habitats for which site is designated	Species for site is designated	Other species and habitats of note occurring within the site
Lough Hyne Nature Reserve & Environs SAC 0097	Large Shallow Inlets and Bays; Reefs; Submerged sea caves	n/a	Habitats: Freshwater Marsh; Mixed woodland; Heath. Species: Raven; Peregrine; Chough; Rare sea urchins, sponges and other sea creatures.
Roaringwater Bay & Islands SAC 0010	Large Shallow Inlets and Bays; Reefs; Vegetated sea cliffs of the atlantic and baltic coasts; European dry heath; Submerged or partially submerged sea caves.	Harbour Porpoise; Otter; Grey Seal	Habitats: Exposed rocky shores; sheltered, rock, sand and mud communities; largest maerl community in country; seagrass beds; Freshwater Marsh; Species: Hairy Birdsfoot Trefoil; Common Birdsfoot; Spotted Rockrose; Pale Hath Violet and Lanceolate Spleenwort; Deptford Pink; Little Robin; Sea Pea; Sea birds incl. Terns; Chough; Gulls and Peregrine Falcon.
Myross Wood SAC 1070	n/a	Killarney Fern	Habitats: Mixed woodland.
Castletownshend SAC 1547	n/a	Killarney Fern	Habitats: Semi-natural woodland and conifer woodland.
Sheeps Head to Toe SPA 4156	n/a	Chough	Species: Fulmar; Gull spp; Cormorant; Peregrine Falcon. Habitats: Sea cliffs; Heath; Improved, semi-improved and unimproved grassland.

3.3 Analysis of Proposed Variation

3.3.1 Preliminary screening was carried out to identify the physical or hydrological linkages between these sites and the Town. On the basis of this screening, just one Natura 2000 site (Roaringwater Bay and Islands), was identified for further consideration of potential for adverse impacts arising from the proposed variation (see Table 2).

Table 2 Preliminary Screening Matrix

Natura 2000 sites	Distance from Town Boundary	Habitat Loss	Habitat Fragmentation	Disturbance to Key Species	Reduction in Species Richness and Density	Changes in key indicators of conservation value
Lough Hyne Nature Reserve & Environs SAC 0097	3km from town, no hydrological or physical linkage	x	x	x	x	x
Roaringwater Bay & Islands SAC 0101	9km from town, linked by Ilan River which flows through town and into Bay at Baltimore.	x	x	x	x	possible
Myross Wood SAC 1070	7km from town, no hydrological or physical linkage	x	x	x	x	x
Castletownshend SAC 1547	6km from town, no hydrological or physical linkage	x	x	x	x	x
Sheeps Head to Toe Head SPA 4156	5km, no hydrological or physical linkage	x	x	x	x	x

3.3.2 Following preliminary screening, each element of the proposed variation was examined to identify whether any additions to be made to the plan or modifications being made to policies, zonings or text would be likely to cause significant impacts on Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC, having regard to its qualifying features and conservation objectives. This analysis is set out in **Table 3** below:

Table 3 Detailed Screening Of Potential For Proposed Variation to Impact on Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC

Chapter	Proposed Change	Potential for Adverse Impacts
<p>Part A Core Strategy Changes proposed to: Fig 2.6 pg 14, chapter 8 section 8.3.1, Include: new section 2.5 Core Strategy new Core Strategy diagram</p> <p>Delete: paragraphs 2.4.3, 2.4.4, section 8.4</p>	<p>The proposed changes are being made to include a new Core Strategy for the Town Plan. The strategy sets a population target of 3,035 people for the town to 2020, which represents an increase of 365 people from the 2011 population. It is calculated in the strategy that these people would be accommodated in 88 new households, requiring an additional 101 housing units to be provided. The Core Strategy establishes that there is sufficient zoned land to provide for these housing units, and therefore no additional land is proposed to be zoned within the town.</p> <p>Summary: No change to the population target for the town, no change in the area of zoned land arising from the core strategy.</p>	<p>The inclusion of the core strategy will not increase pressure on wastewater infrastructure. There are no new threats to water quality, or increased pressures on water services for the town arising from the introduction of the core strategy. No potential for adverse impacts on Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC identified.</p>
<p>Part B Flooding Policy Volume 2 Policies and Objectives Chapter 3 Social, Economic & Landuse Objectives.</p>	<p>Changes are proposed to be made to the plan to set out the Councils approach to flood risk management and to include new objectives on flood risk management. While no changes have been made to zonings, new text has been introduced to zones that have been identified to be particularly sensitive to flood risk, to emphasise the need for flood risk assessment to reflect the provisions of the Flood Risk Guidelines, and the need to protect the ecological integrity of sites designated for natural heritage.</p>	<p>The inclusion of policies relating to flood risk assessment and flood management are likely to have neutral to positive impacts on the Roaring Water Bay and Islands Special Area of Conservation. No adverse impacts identified.</p>
<p>Part C Changes to Skibbereen Town Plan arising From Natura Impact Statement</p>	<p>Changes are proposed to be made to the plan to clarify the Town Councils obligations in relation to the protection of biodiversity generally, and to designated sites in particular.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts have been identified.</p>

4. Summary of Findings

4.1 There are no Natura 2000 sites within Skibbereen Town Council Area. The only Natura 2000 site which is hydrologically linked to the Town, is Roaringwater Bay and Islands is approximately 10km downstream from the Town. Any changes arising from the plan which could cause a decline in water quality in the River Ilen, could potentially have negative impacts on this SAC. However no increase in the population target for the town is proposed and no new zoning is proposed. In addition, development proposals in flood risk areas within the town must comply with flood management guidelines. On this basis, it is concluded that there is no potential for the draft variation to give rise to adverse impacts on any Natura 2000 site, either when considered in its own right, or when considered in relation to potential to contribute to cumulative impacts. The conclusion is summarised in the Finding of No Significant Impacts Table below.

Table 4 Finding Of No Significant Impacts Matrix

Proposed Variation	Proposed Variation to the Skibbereen Town Development Plan, 2009, Variation No. 1.
Natura 2000 sites subject to screening	Special Areas of Conservation: Lough Hyne Nature Reserve & Environs SAC 000097; Castletownsend SAC 001547; Myross Wood SAC 001070; Roaringwater Bay & Islands SAC 000101; Special Protection Areas; Sheeps Head SPA 004156
Description of the proposed variation	The purpose of this variation of the Skibbereen Town Development Plan, 2009 is to introduce a Core Strategy, as prescribed by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, to include revised text arising from the obligations on planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts in relation to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management and to include revised text to comply with the obligations on planning authorities under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.
Is the proposed variation directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites identified above	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with the plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)	Skibbereen Local Area Plan 2011, Cork County Development Plan, 2009.
Assessment of Significant Effects	
Describe how the plan (alone or in combination is likely to affect Natura 2000 sites)	No potential for impacts identified – see Table x.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	n/a
List of agencies consulted:	This screening report will be referred to statutory authorities and to the general public during the public consultation process for the proposed variation.
Response to consultation	Submissions relating to the proposed variation, and to the Screening Report will be considered during the final drafting of the variation.

Data Collected To Carry Out The Assessment	
Who carried out the assessment	Planning Policy Unit, Cork County Council
Sources of data	National Parks and Wildlife Service Site Synopses and other data relating to Natura 2000 sites.
Level of assessment completed	Screening
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed	This report

5 References and Data Used

Environment, Heritage and Local Government, National Parks and Wildlife Service. 2008. The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland.

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South Western River Basin District. 2009. Water Matters Our Plan, South Western River Basin Management Plan (2009-2015).

