

## SEA METHODOLOGY

**2.1 Screening**

**2.2 Scoping**

**2.3 Baseline Data**

**2.4 Setting Environmental Protection Objectives**

**2.5 Consideration of the Master Plan Alternatives**

**2.6 Assessment of the Impact of the Master Plan  
on the Environment**

**2.7 Mitigation**

**2.8 Monitoring**



The methodology adopted for the SEA process was based upon the SEA Directive and experience gained since the introduction of the Directive in July 2004. The DoEHLG guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities, EPA guidelines, current literature in the subject area and various national and international published reports were consulted during the preparation of this Environmental Report.

Weekly meetings were held with the SEA team, the Master Plan team and other relevant consultants to progress both the Master Plan Review and the SEA.

The following is a summary of the steps taken during the preparation of the Environmental Report.

## 2.1 SCREENING

SEA of the Dublin Docklands Master Plan is mandatory under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, S. I. No. 435 of 2004. Art 9 (8) (c) of the Regulations requires that an environmental assessment shall be carried out of a review of the master plan for the Dublin Docklands Area under section 20 (1) (a) of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority Act 1997, in accordance with the Regulations.

## 2.2 SCOPING

The scoping stage of SEA determines the level of detail to be considered during the preparation of the Environmental Report. Under Article 5.2 of the SEA Directive the level of detail should be related to current knowledge and methods of assessment and the content and level of detail in the plan. Consultation with designated environmental authorities at the scoping stage also highlights areas of focus.

As required under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, S.I. No. 435 of 2004, a scoping letter was sent to the designated Environmental Authorities i.e. the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) and the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

In addition, a meeting was held with Mr Tadhg O'Mahony from the EPA who suggested a scoping letter be sent to a number of additional authorities/organisations. Similarly the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources suggested contacting a number of other bodies. The list of further consultees to which a scoping letter was sent was as follows: Dublin City Council, Dublin Port, the Dublin Transportation Office, Waterways Ireland and the Dublin Regional Authority.

Responses to the scoping letter were received from the designated authorities. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government required that an appropriate assessment be carried out of the environmental implications, in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/42/EEC), of the Master Plan on Natura 2000 sites adjacent to the Docklands Area. The Department also stressed the opportunity available to give increased recognition to the value of the architectural heritage of the built environment of the Docklands Area.

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources detailed possible actions with the potential for significant negative impacts. The Eastern Regional Fisheries Board made a number of observations in relation to biodiversity and water quality. The EPA also referred the Authority to EPA data sources.

### 2.3 BASELINE DATA

Baseline data was gathered to establish the current state of the environment in the Docklands Area. The data was collected on the basis of the environmental receptors (biodiversity, population and human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage and landscape) listed in Annex 1(f) of the Directive which fulfils the information requirements referred to in Article 5. The data used was currently available relevant environmental information. Important information that was unavailable or not in existence was highlighted and appropriate data gaps were identified. The primary sources of data used were existing monitoring programmes established on foot of other EU Directives (air and water), national and local data bases and existing environmental impact statements. Baseline data on material assets and transportation infrastructure were supplied by Mott MacDonald Pettit and MVA Consultancy respectively. Baseline data on population was obtained from Tom Phillips and Associates, Town Planning Consultants. Additional baseline data collected for forthcoming EISs to accompany new Planning Schemes were also useful sources of information.

## 2.4 SETTING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OBJECTIVES

Environmental protection objectives were established for each environmental receptor listed above which express a desired direction of change with the aim of improving the environment. The objectives were used to evaluate the plan alternatives and assess the preferred plan alternative. In addition, associated environmental protection targets and indicators were established for the monitoring programme. The environmental protection objectives identified were also informed by the SEA process carried out in respect of the 2003 Master Plan and the subsequent annual monitoring of the Master Plan by the Authority.

## 2.5 CONSIDERATION OF THE MASTER PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Environmental Report is required to identify, describe and evaluate reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan. Three plan alternatives were examined in the course of the preparation of the Master Plan 2008. The alternatives were developed by the Master Plan team in the course of the preparation of the plan and were assessed against the environmental protection objectives already identified.

## 2.6 ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE MASTER PLAN ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The Environmental Report is required to include the likely significant effects of the Master Plan 2008 on the environment. This assessment was carried out again using the environmental protection objectives already identified. Proposed policies devised by the Master Plan team were assessed against the objectives. Positive, negative, neutral and uncertain impacts were recorded.

## 2.7 MITIGATION

Mitigation measures were devised in the course of the SEA and Master Plan process. A mitigation workshop was held with the SEA team and the Master Plan team following the assessment of policies above. Mitigation measures aimed at preventing, reducing and remedying any anticipated or potential negative environmental impacts were devised. Mitigation measures took the form of new, replacement or amended Master Plan policies and following adoption by the Authority, were subsequently included in the Master Plan, thus formalising mitigation.

## 2.8 MONITORING

A monitoring programme was devised which reflected the SEA process. The programme was able to draw upon the experience of the Authority in the carrying out of on-going annual monitoring of the impacts of the Master Plan 2003 on the environment.