

Variation No.2 – Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

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Assessment
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Environment**

Client:

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted on 22 September 2021 and came into effect on the 03 November 2021 (hereafter the Meath CDP). The CDP is divided into four volumes. Volume 1 of the CDP sets out the policies and objectives and the overall strategy for the development of the County over the plan period 2021-2027. Volume 2 of the CDP includes written statements and accompanying maps for all settlements within the county and sets out development and land use zoning objectives for each area. Volume 3 of the CDP includes a book of maps for the county, which includes the UNESCO heritage site of Brú na Bóinne. Volume 4 includes Environmental Assessments.

In accordance with Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Meath County Council is proposing a variation of the County Development Plan 2021-2027. Proposed Variation No.2 comprises the second variation to the Meath CDP 2021-2027.

Brady Shipman Martin has been appointed by MCC to undertake a screening exercise for Appropriate Assessment (AA). This will determine the effects, if any, on European sites, of the implementation of the *Draft Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027* (hereafter the ‘Variation No.2’).

This document constitutes an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared for this purpose. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)) and are designated for nature conservation. The requirements for an Appropriate Assessment are set out under *Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)*, transposed into Irish law through the *European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)* and the *Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)*.

A comprehensive study has been undertaken and the potential impacts on European sites, both as a result of the implementation of the Draft Variation and in-combination with other plans and projects, are appraised in this report.

This AA Screening Report should be read in conjunction with the Draft Variation No. 2 of Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (MCC, March 2024) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report (prepared by Brady Shipman Martin, 2024).

Meath County Council is also proposing *Draft Variation No. 1 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027*. Draft Variation No.1 is subject to a separate screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA).

1.2 Expertise and Qualifications

This report has been prepared by Namrata Kaile, Ecologist and Environmental Consultant at Brady Shipman Martin. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree (BSc) in Life Sciences from University of Delhi and a Master’s Degree (MSc) with distinction in Environmental Sciences from Trinity College Dublin. She is an associate member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (ACIEEM) and has been working professionally in the field of environmental consultancy for the last four years. Namrata is experienced in drafting and reviewing AA Screening Reports, Natura Impact Statements, EIA Screening Reports as well as in coordination of EIARs. She is also experienced in undertaking baseline ecological surveys and preparing Ecological Impact Assessments Reports (EclA).

This report has been technically reviewed by Ecologist Matthew Hague BSc MSc Adv. Dip. Plan. & Env. Law CEnv MCIEEM. Matthew is an Associate with Brady Shipman Martin and is a highly experienced and qualified

ecologist, with a master's degree in Ecosystem Conservation and Landscape Management. He has over 20 years of experience in ecological and environmental consultancy, across a wide range of sectors. He has prepared numerous reports for AA Screening as well as Natura Impact Statements, for projects of all scales, from small residential developments to nationally important infrastructure projects. Matthew is a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM). Matthew has also completed an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law, at King's Inns and is a member of the Irish Environmental Law Association (IELA).

1.3 Legal requirement for Appropriate Assessment

European sites make up a network of sites designated for nature conservation under Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the "Habitats Directive") and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (the "Birds Directive"). The requirements for Appropriate Assessment are set out under *Article 6 of the Habitats Directive*, transposed into Irish law by the *European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)*¹ (the "Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations") and the *Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)* (the "Planning Acts").

European sites are also known as Natura 2000 Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)). As defined in section 177R of the Planning Acts "European site" means:

- (a) a candidate site of Community importance,
- (b) a site of Community importance,
- (ba) a candidate special area of conservation,
- (c) a special area of conservation,
- (d) a candidate special protection area and
- (e) a special protection area.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that:

(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have 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 site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions 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.

The first test is to establish whether, in relation to a particular plan or project, appropriate assessment is required. Sections 177U of the Planning Acts requires that the AA screening test must be applied to the Variation, as follows:

- To assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site;
- An appropriate assessment is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the development (plan or project), individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

¹ SI No. 477 of 2011, SI No. 293 of 2021

This AA Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Birds Directive, the Habitats Directive, the Planning Acts and the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations.

2 Methodology

2.1 Baseline data collection

This assessment focused on habitats and species that are listed as Qualifying Interests (QI) (in the case of SACs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCI) (in the case of SPAs) in the designations for European sites. During the assessment the potential for *ex-situ* effects on European sites was also appraised.

This report takes the following guidance documents into account:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision);
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10;
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites- Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2021);
- Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Guidance issued by the European Commission (21st November 2018);
- Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community Interest under the Habitats Directive (Directorate – General for Environment (European Commission, 2021);
- Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (Office of the Planning Regulator, March 2021);
- Guidance for Public authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to development/works undertaken by or on behalf of a Public authority (National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) (2021)).

Information was collated from the organisations and websites listed below:

- Data on European sites and rare and protected plant and animal species contained in the following databases:
 - The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (www.NPWS.ie);
 - The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NDBC) (www.biodiversityireland.ie);
 - BirdWatch Ireland (www.birdwatchireland.ie);
 - Bat Conservation Ireland (www.batconservationireland.org).
- Information on land-use zoning from the online mapping of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (<http://www.myplan.ie/en/index.html>);
- Recent and historical OSi mapping and aerial photography, including www.geohive.ie;
- Information on local watercourses from www.catchments.ie;
- Information on water quality in the area (www.epa.ie);
- Information on soils, geology and hydrogeology in the area (www.gsi.ie);
- Information on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (Article 17 report) (NPWS, August 2019);
- 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2024);
- Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the accompanying reports.

The report has regard to the following legislative instruments:

- Planning and Development, Act 2000, as amended;
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended;
- European Commission (EC) Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- European Commission (EC) Birds Directive 2009/147/EC;
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

The report takes full account of the details of the Variation No.2 and a detailed examination of all relevant elements was undertaken. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (Brady Shipman Martin, 2024) was also reviewed in the preparation of this report.

3 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

3.1 Background

The first part of the Appropriate Assessment process is the Screening phase. Screening identifies the likely effects of the implementation of the Variation No.2 on European sites that could arise, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and considers whether these impacts are likely to have a significant effect on the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

In accordance with sections 177U and 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the AA screening must be carried out:

- To assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the Variation No.2, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site;
- An appropriate assessment is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Variation No.2, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Screening must be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation and it is in this context that this AA Screening Report is prepared.

Following screening therefore, if there is a possibility of there being a significant effect on a European site, this will generate the need for an appropriate assessment for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. This means that if the conclusions at the end of the screening exercise are that significant effects on any European sites, as a result of the implementation of the Draft Variation, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, are likely, uncertain or unknown, then an Appropriate Assessment must be carried out. This is in accordance with established precedent and case law.

3.2 Potential zone of influence

This assessment is based on the source-pathway-receptor model, which dictates that, for an effect to occur, there must be a 'source' (such as a construction site); a 'receptor' (such as a designated site for nature conservation); and a 'pathway' between the two (such as a watercourse that links the construction site to the designated site). A construction site or completed development may also create a barrier to movement, for example, by preventing the migration of fauna along a river corridor, or by obstructing the migration of birds.

Identification of a potential effect means that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the potential effect and the characteristics of the receptor. Although there may be a risk of an impact, it may not necessarily occur, and if it does occur, it may not be significant.

There are no set recommended distances for projects to consider European sites as being relevant for assessment. In 2010, DoEHLG stated that (pp. 31 – 32):

“The approach to screening is likely to differ somewhat for plans and projects, depending on scale and on the likely effects, but the following should be included:

1. *Any Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the plan or project area*
2. *Any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of impact of the plan or project. A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans, and derives from UK guidance (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). For projects, the distance could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects*
3. *Natura 2000 sites that are more than 15km from the plan or project area depending on the likely impacts of the plan or project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, bearing in mind the precautionary principle. In the cases of sites with water dependent habitats or species, and a plan or project that could affect water quality or quantity, for example, it may be necessary to consider the full extent of the upstream and/or downstream catchment.”*

The 2021 Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) guidelines, *Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*, state that the Zone of Influence “*should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km)*” (p. 8).

Therefore, considering the nature of the Variation and in accordance with the source-pathway-receptor model, the potential Zone of Influence (Zol) for the Variation has been defined as follows:

- Any site to which there is a pathway from the proposed area under Variation No.2, regardless of distance, upon which significant effects could arise, resulting from the implementation of any element of the Variation. See Section 4.2.

Throughout the preparation of the Variation the strategic objectives and actions were reviewed in the context of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, in order to ensure that no elements of the Variation would have a significant impact on any European site.

4 Description of the Proposed Variation No.2 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

4.1 Overview

The purpose of Variation No. 2 is to give effect to a range of land use zoning amendments. These amendments are necessary to reflect the existing and current land use that has come to the attention of the Meath County Council since the adoption of the CDP. These are not additional zonings for new development proposals but are being brought forward to reflect the current land use (or approved land use by way of a planning permission) and to avoid any non-conforming land use on a zoning.

Other zoning changes being brought forward relate to feedback from community consultations and redefining the land use boundary in line with the natural field boundary to ensure appropriate roll-out of development.

A total of 9 no. Landuse Zoning Maps will be changed and 1no. new land zoning map will be introduced to reflect the zoning amendment to lands at Killeen Castle. It is also proposed to omit the reference to ‘a

maximum of 500 residential units from Section 7.0 Masterplan in the Dunboyne, Clonee and Pace Written Statement in Volume 2 on lands at Dunboyne North adjoining Pace Rail Station. Digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary also forms part of Variation No. 2.

Draft Variation No.2 proposes to change the zoning objective of the following land parcels to reflect revised and new circumstances that have emerged since the adoption of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027:

- **Dunshaughlin Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning of 6.7 ha. of RA Rural Area and A2 New Residential lands to A1 Existing Residential. The proposed A1 Existing Residential zoning will reflect the permitted and commenced residential development for 212 residential units permitted under Strategic Housing Development SH307244 to Loughglynn Development Limited.
- **Dunboyne Land Use Zoning Map:** Rezoning of 23.6 ha. of RA Rural Area to A1 Existing Residential to reflect the existing residential use for the 99 dwelling units which exist/under construction on this site.
- **Longwood Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning of approx. 1.37 ha of land from RA Rural Area to A1 Existing Residential to reflect the existing permitted and commenced residential development as per Planning Reference No. TA/190892 for 36 dwelling units.
- **Trim Land Use Zoning Map:** Relocation of Specific Spot Objective "TRM OBJ 16" included in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 from G1 Community Infrastructure zoned lands at Iffernock to G1 zoned land South of the R160 at Commons, recently acquired by the Department of Education for the development of a school campus.
- **Navan Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning from A1 Existing Residential to C1 Mixed Use at Flowerhill in Navan to provide for a greater mix of uses at this location.
- **Killeen Castle** in a new Land Use Zoning Map: Re-zoning to change from RA Rural Area to D1 Tourism with an update to ED POL 59 to facilitate the completion of residential units as permitted.
- **Ratoath Land Use Zoning Map** to extend the A2 New Residential land use zoning out to the permitted, partly constructed, and the preferred route for the remaining section of the Ratoath Outer Relief Road (RORR) design boundary.
- **Ratoath Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning from A1 Existing Residential and B1 Commercial Town and Village Centre to G1 Community Infrastructure to provide for the development of community uses at this location.
- **Athboy Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning of a triangular wedge of lands measuring approx. 0.08 hectares from G1 Community Infrastructure to A2 New Residential to delineate the land use zonings to align with the natural field boundaries in the area and to ensure the land use zoning appropriately reflects the optimal use for the lands.
- Proposed text amendment to Section 7.0 of **Dunboyne, Clonee and Pace Written Statement**, Vol. 2 of the Meath CDP (proposed text in blue and deleted text in ~~strikethrough~~).
- *“Employment, education (including third level), residential, commercial, and open space /amenity. In regard to the residential element of the Master Plan, it shall be a requirement that proposals will include for the provision of a maximum of 500 residential units with in a range of typologies densities to support the delivery of a sustainable “live work” community-based model.”*
- **Volume 3 Map 8.1 Brú na Bóinne:** Pursuant to the UNESCO requirement, the National Monument Service (NMS) recently carried out a GIS digitisation exercise of plotting the boundary of the inscribed World Heritage Property. This GIS plotting exercise has clarified the boundary of the Core and Buffer areas as inscribed and the proposed variation includes a map of Brú na Bóinne with this digitised boundary layer.

For further details refer to the accompanying Draft Variation No.2 of Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (MCC, March 2024).

4.2 Description of the receiving environment

The description of the receiving environment presented in this section has been based on a desktop study of relevant available information, as cited in the text.

The natural heritage of County Meath is an important asset and a unique resource. Habitat biodiversity in County Meath includes the Boyne and Blackwater Rivers as well as the short coastline which supports a wide range of rare or threatened flora and fauna species. Protecting and conserving these habitats is critically important, not just to the residents of the County but also in a national and international context.

The County contains significant stretches of both operational and derelict waterways including the River Boyne, River Blackwater, River Nanny, River Inny, River Delvin, River Tolka, River Broadmeadow and the Royal Canal.

There are 8 No. lakes in the County Meath which are designated WFD operational monitoring lakes. They are Lough Sheelin, Lough Doo, Lough Ben, Lough Glass, Lough Ervey, Lough Bracken, Lough Bane, and Annagh - White Lake. The *Water Quality in Ireland report 2016-2021* reports that the water quality in Annagh / White lake was classified as ‘high’ status, Lough Bane, Lough Ben, Lough Glass and Lough Doo were classified as being of ‘good’ status, Lough Sheelin and Lough Bracken were both classified with a ‘moderate’ status and Lough Ervey was classified as ‘Poor’.

The Meath coastline extends for a distance of c.10km and stretches from the mouth of the River Boyne at Mornington, bordering County Louth, to Gormanston at the mouth of the River Delvin, bordering County Dublin. The coastal waterbody of County Meath is the Northwestern Irish Sea (IE_EA_020_0000) waterbody and has a ‘good’² water quality status, while the Boyne Estuary transitional waterbody and Nanny Estuary both have a ‘moderate’ status.

The status of the river waterbodies in County Meath range from ‘poor’ to ‘high’, however the majority of the major river waterbodies range from ‘poor’ to ‘moderate’. EPA data, on the biological quality of watercourses, based on monitoring up to 2021, indicates that one river achieved ‘high’ status, 21 of the monitored river waterbodies in County Meath achieved a ‘good’ status, 29 achieved a ‘moderate’ status and 33 were categorized as ‘poor’. **Table 4.1** below has a list of the WFD Catchments and WFD Sub-Catchments in County Meath.

Table 4.1 WFD Catchments and Sub-Catchments in Meath

Catchment (WFD Catchment Code)	Sub-catchment Name (WFD Sub-catchment Code)
Newry, Fane, Glyde and Dee Catchment (06)	Glyde_SC_010 (06_7)
	Dee_SC_010 (06_3)
	Dee_SC_020 (06_1)
	Dee_SC_030 (06_4)
Boyne Catchment (07)	Moynalty_SC_010 (07_14)
	Blackwater[Kells]_SC_020 (07_10)
	Blackwater[Kells]_SC_030 (07_8)
	Boyne_SC_070 (07_13)
	Boyne_SC_050 (07_12)
	Boyne_SC_100 (07_18)
	Boyne_SC_120 (07_15)

² EPA 2019, Coastal Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/default>

Catchment (WFD Catchment Code)	Sub-catchment Name (WFD Sub-catchment Code)
	Boyne_SC_130 (07_17)
	Boyne_SC_110 (07_1)
	Boyne_SC_080 (07_3)
	Boyne_SC_060 (07_20)
	Boyne_SC_090 (07_19)
	Boyne_SC_040 (07_9)
	Boyne_SC_030 (07_2)
	Boyne_SC_010 (07_4)
	Boyne_SC_020 (07_16)
	Blackwater[Longwood]_SC_10 (07_6)
	Deel[Raharney]_SC_010 (07_7)
	Yellow[Castlejordan]_SC_010 (07_11)
Upper Shannon Catchment (26F)	Inny[Shannon]_SC_010 (26F_6)
	Mountnugent_SC_010 (26F_3)
	Inny[Shannon]_SC_020 (26F_7)
Nanny-Delvin (08)	Nanny[Meath]_SC_020 (08_5)
	Nanny[Meath]_SC_010 (08_4)
	Delvin_SC_010 (08_1)
	Broadmeadow_SC_010 (08_3)
Liffey and Dublin Bay (09)	Tolka_SC_010 (09_10)
	Liffey_SC_080 (09_5)
	Liffey_SC_100 (09_1)
	RyeWater_SC_010 (09_3)

4.2.1 Designated European Sites

Within County Meath, there are a total of 14 sites designated for protection under the Natura 2000 network (there are nine SACs and five SPAs). All designated European Sites located within County Meath are listed in **Table 4.2** and shown in **Figure 4.1** below. The land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed as part of Variation No.2 are presented as blue dots in **Figure 4.1** below. None of these land parcels are within the Natura 2000 network.

There are a further 13 SPAs and 19 SACs within the potential ZoI (ZoI) of the MCC area listed in **Table 4.2**. These sites (a total of 46) are the sites located within the potential zone of influence of the county boundary.

Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs have been set for the habitats and species for which the sites have been selected. Site specific detailed conservation objectives are available on the NPWS website³.

Table 4.2 European sites located in County Meath and within the potential Zone of Influence of the County Boundary

³ NPWS website 2019: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives>

European Sites in County Meath			
Site Code	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Site Code	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC
004065	Lough Sheelin SPA	002342	Mount Hevey Bog SAC
004080	Boyne Estuary SPA	000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC
004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	002340	Moneybeg & Clareisland Bogs SAC
004236	North-West Irish Sea SPA	002120	Lough Bane and Lough Glass SAC
		002203	Girley (Drewstown) Bog SAC
		001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC
		001398	Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC
		001810	White Lough, Ben Loughs & Lough Doo SAC
European Sites within a zone of influence (15km) of the County Boundary			
Site Code	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Site Code	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
004061	Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA	002201	Derragh Bog SAC
004043	Lough Derravarragh SPA	002121	Lough Lene SAC
004102	Garriskill Bog SPA	000679	Garriskil Bog SAC
004044	Lough Ennell SPA	002341	Ardagullion Bog SAC
004006	North Bull Island SPA	002205	Wooddown Bog SAC
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	000582	Raheenmore Bog SAC
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	000685	Lough Ennell SAC
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	000925	The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC
004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	000391	Ballynafagh Bog SAC
004122	Skerries Islands SPA	001387	Ballynafagh Lake SAC
004014	Rockabill SPA	001831	Split Hills and Long Hill Esker SAC
004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	000206	North Dublin Bay SAC
004026	Dundalk Bay SPA	000210	South Dublin Bay SAC
		000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC
		000205	Malahide Estuary SAC
		000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC
		003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC
		001459	Clogher Head SAC
		000455	Dundalk Bay SAC

4.2.2 Nationally Designated Sites

Nationally Designated Sites include Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) which are legally protected areas that are considered important for their habitats, or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) are also of significance for wildlife and habitats but have not yet been statutorily designated. However, under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000) NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation⁴.

Refer to **Table 4.3** and **Figure 4.2** below for the NHAs and pNHAs located in County Meath and within the zone of influence of the county boundary.

Table 4.3 Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) located in County Meath and within the zone of influence of the County Boundary

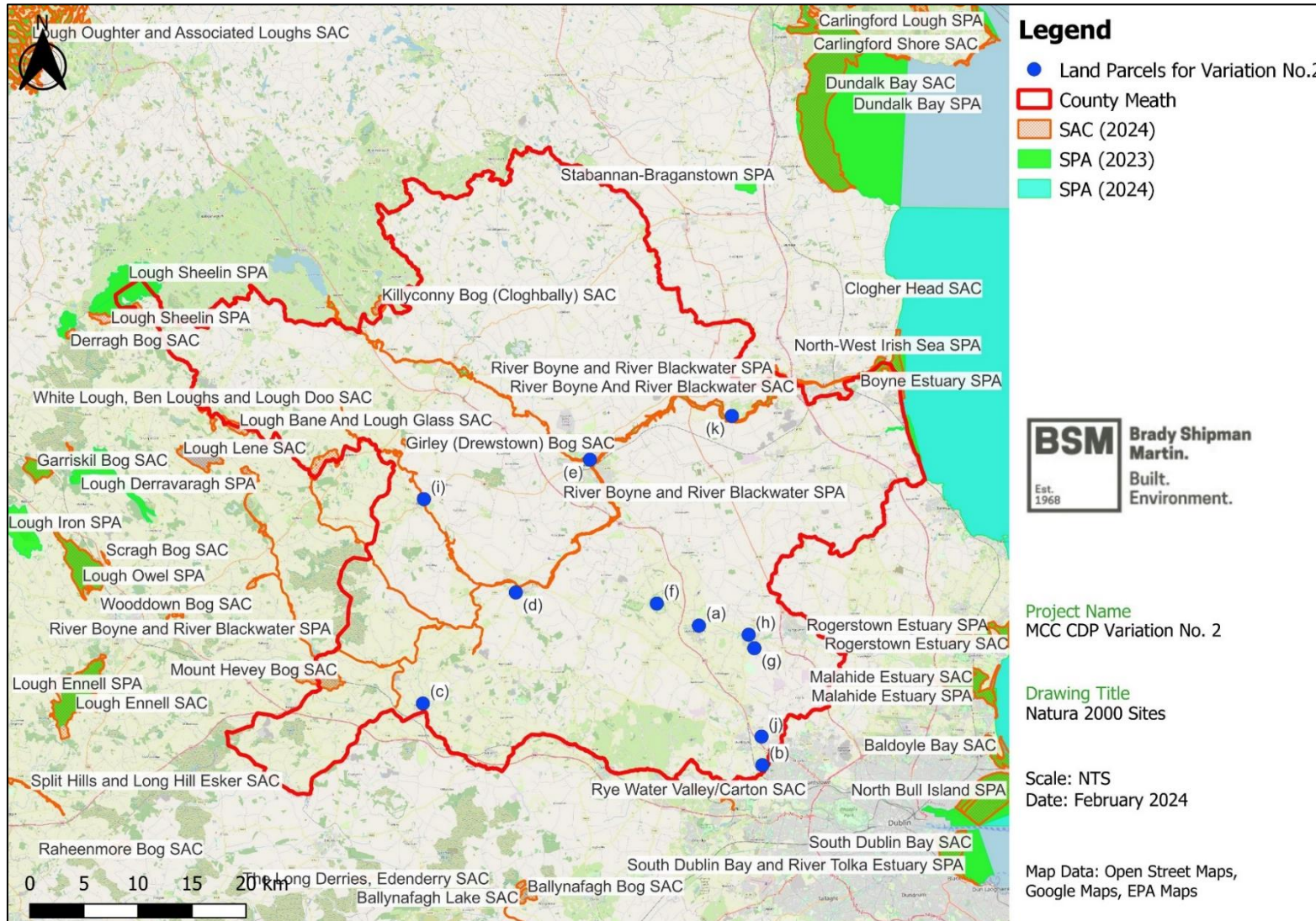
Natural Heritage Areas in County Meath			
Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)	Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
001324	Jamestown Bog NHA	000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally)
001580	Girley Bog NHA	000987	Lough Sheelin
001582	Molerick Bog NHA	001814	Lough Naneagh
		001810	White Lough, Ben Loughs And Lough Doo
		000556	Lough Shesk
		002103	Royal Canal
		001398	Rye Water Valley/Carlton
		001584	Mount Hevey Bog
		001357	Trim
		000557	Rathmoylan Esker
		001592	Boyne Woods
		000553	Crewbane Marsh
		001591	Slane Riverbank
		001589	Rossnaree Riverbank
		001593	Thomastown Bog
		001578	Duleek Commons
		001579	Balrath Woods
		001576	Cromwell's Bush Fen
		000554	Laytown Dunes / Nanny Estuary
		001957	Boyne Coast And Estuary
		001861	Dowth Wetland
		001862	Boyne River Islands
		001587	Mentrim Lough
		000552	Corstown Loughs

⁴ NPWS website 2019: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/nha>

		001594	Ballyhoe Lough
		001558	Breakey Loughs
		001573	Ballynabarny Fen
Natural Heritage Areas within the zone of influence (15km) of the County Boundary			
Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)	Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
000985	Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough	001203	Knock Lake
000684	Lough Derravaragh	001204	Bog of the Ring
000694	Wooddown Bog	002000	Loughshinny Coast
002323	Milltownpass Bog	000207	Rockabill Island
000677	Cloncrow Bog (New Forest)	001616	Louth Hall and Ardee Woods
001725	Nure Bog	001856	Dunany Point
000570	Black Castle Bog	001801	Barmeath Woods
001388	Carbury Bog	001454	Ardee Cutaway Bog
001393	Hodgestown Bog	001464	Melifont Abbey Woods
001218	Skerries Islands NHA	001293	Blackhall Woods
		000208	Rogerstown Estuary
		000205	Malahide Estuary
		001215	Portraine Shore
		001208	Feltrim Hill
		000199	Baldoyle Bay
		001763	Sluice River Marsh
		000178	Santry Demesne
		000206	North Dublin Bay
		000128	Liffey Valley
		000390	Ballina Bog
		001391	Donadea Wood
		001387	Ballynafagh Lake
		000391	Ballynafagh Bog
		002104	Grand Canal
		000925	The Long Derries, Edenderry
		000582	Raheenmore Bog
		000685	Lough Ennell
		000690	Lough Sheever Fen/ Slevin's Lough Complex
		002069	Ardagullion Bog
		000679	Garriskil Bog
		000672	Aghalasty Fen

	000686	Lough Glore
	000681	Hill of Mael and the Rock of Curry
	000992	Lough Gowna
	000008	Lough Ramor
	001608	Monalty Lough
	001671	Spring and Corcrin Lough
	001828	Reaghstown Marsh
	000560	Lough Fea Demesne
	000561	Lough Naglack
	002077	Nafarty Fen
	000456	Stabannan-Braganstown
	001806	Kildemock Marsh
	001464	Mellifont Abbey Woods
	001804	King William's Glen
	001721	Lough Bane
	001459	Clogher Head
	001458	Castlecoo Hill
	000692	Scragh Bog
	000978	Cordonaghy Bog
	000690	Lough Sheever Fen / Slevin's Lough Complex
	001599	Creevy Lough
	001461	Darver Castle Woods
	001462	Drumacg, Toprass and Cortial Lough
	000455	Dundalk Bay
	001803	Stephenstown Pond
	000991	Dodder Valley
	000211	Slade of Saggart and Crooksling Glen
	001212	Lugmore Glen

Figure 4.1 European Sites in County Meath and in the surrounding zone of influence



5 Potential impacts due to Variation No. 2 of the Meath CDP 2021-2027

5.1 Description of any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the Variation on European sites by virtue of:

5.1.1 Size and Scale

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (adopted on 22 September 2021 and came into effect on the 03 November 2021) sets a framework for projects and other activities within County Meath and was subject to Natura Impact Report and Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the plan making and adoption process.

The proposed Draft Variation No. 2 to the County Development Plan proposes a number of land use zoning amendments that reflect revised and new circumstances that have emerged since the adoption of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, as follows:

- A. **Dunshaughlin Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning of 6.7 ha of RA Rural Area and A2 New Residential lands to A1 Existing Residential. The proposed A1 Existing Residential zoning will reflect the permitted and commenced residential development for 212 residential units permitted under Strategic Housing Development SH307244 to Loughglynn Development Limited.
- B. **Dunboyne Land Use Zoning Map:** Rezoning of 23.6 ha of RA Rural Area to A1 Existing Residential to reflect the existing residential use for the 99 dwelling units which exist/under construction on this site.
- C. **Longwood Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning of approx. 1.37 ha of land from RA Rural Area to A1 Existing Residential to reflect the existing permitted and commenced residential development as per Planning Reference No. TA/190892 for 36 dwelling units.
- D. **Trim Land Use Zoning Map:** Relocation of Specific Spot Objective "TRM OBJ 16" included in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 from G1 Community Infrastructure zoned lands at Iffernock to G1 zoned land South of the R160 at Commons, recently acquired by the Department of Education for the development of a school campus.
- E. **Navan Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning from A1 Existing Residential to C1 Mixed Use at Flowerhill in Navan to provide for a greater mix of uses at this location.
- F. **Killeen Castle in a new Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning to change from RA Rural Area to D1 Tourism with an update to ED POL 59 to facilitate the completion of residential units as permitted.
- G. **Ratoath Land Use Zoning Map** to extend the A2 New Residential land use zoning out to the permitted, partly constructed, and the preferred route for the remaining section of the Ratoath Outer Relief Road (RORR) design boundary.
- H. **Ratoath Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning from A1 Existing Residential and B1 Commercial Town and Village Centre to G1 Community Infrastructure to provide for the development of community uses at this location.
- I. **Athboy Land Use Zoning Map:** Re-zoning of a triangular wedge of lands measuring approx. 0.08 hectares from G1 Community Infrastructure to A2 New Residential to delineate the land use zonings to align with the natural field boundaries in the area and to ensure the land use zoning appropriately reflects the optimal use for the lands.
- J. Proposed text amendment to Section 7.0 of **Dunboyne, Clonee and Pace Written Statement**, Vol. 2 of the Meath CDP (proposed text in blue and deleted text in ~~strikethrough~~).

“Employment, education (including third level), residential, commercial, and open space /amenity. In regard to the residential element of the Master Plan, it shall be a requirement that proposals will include for the provision of a maximum of 500 residential units with in a range of typologies densities to support the delivery of a sustainable “live work” community-based model.”

- K. Volume 3 Map 8.1 Brú na Bóinne:** Pursuant to the UNESCO requirement, the National Monument Service (NMS) recently carried out a GIS digitisation exercise of plotting the boundary of the inscribed World Heritage Property. This GIS plotting exercise has clarified the boundary of the Core and Buffer areas as inscribed and the proposed variation includes a map of Brú na Bóinne with this digitised boundary layer.

All the amendments, which refer to small, localised situations, are necessary to correct and reflect the existing and current land uses that has come to the attention of the Meath County Council since the adoption of the CDP. These are not additional zonings for new development proposals but are being brought forward to reflect the current land use (or approved land use by way of a planning permission) and to avoid any non-conforming land use on a zoning. As such:

Amendments No. A, B & C are brought forward to correct / reflect current and permitted land use.

Amendment No. D is brought forward to relocate a school site objective from one zoned area in Trim to another nearby area, which is already zoned for development.

Amendments No. E, H & I are brought forward to change the existing zoning on small discrete areas from one development land use to another development land use.

Amendment No. F is brought forward to reflect completion of permitted development and to reflect the character and nature of previously permitted development on the lands.

Amendment No. G is brought forward to reflect the part permitted and part planned development for delivery of road infrastructure.

Amendment No. J is brought forward to remove a stated maximum cap for the residential element within an area for which a masterplan is required and has been prepared.

Amendment No. K is brought forward to clarify / correct a mapping boundary.

With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies within the adopted Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. Taking into account the existing land use zonings, the permitted development pertaining to the lands and the limited nature of the proposed amendments, it is assessed that there will be no significant effect on the environment arising from the variation.

The size and scale of the Variation No.2 will not result in any impacts that have the potential, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

5.1.2 Land take

There is no requirement for land take from any European site under Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027.

5.1.3 Distance from European Site

There are no European (Natura 2000) sites within the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed as part of Variation No.2, refer to **Figure 4.1**.

Within County Meath, there are a total of 14 sites designated for protection under the Natura 2000 network (there are nine SACs and five SPAs). There are a further 13 SPAs and 19 SACs within the potential Zol (Zol) of the MCC area listed in **Table 4.2**. These sites (a total of 46) are the sites located within the potential zone of influence of the county boundary.

The Variation No. 2 to the County Development Plan proposes a range of land use zoning amendments, minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle) and to the written statement of Dunboyne Clonee and Pace and digitisation of the boundary for Brú na Bóinne that differs from the adopted County Development Plan.

These amendments are necessary to reflect the existing and current land use that has come to the attention of Meath County Council since the adoption of the CDP. These are not additional zonings for new development proposals but are being brought forward to correct and reflect the current land use (or approved land use by way of a planning permission) and to avoid any non-conforming land use on a zoning. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the Draft Variation does not include changes to any objective or policy of the CDP.

The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.

5.1.4 Resource requirement

There are no resource requirements from any European site as a result of the Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027.

5.1.5 Emissions (to land, water or air)

With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), there are no changes to the existing policies or objectives within the adopted Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 which were subject to Appropriate Assessment. Taking into account the existing land use zonings, the permitted development pertaining to the lands and the limited nature of the proposed amendments, it is assessed that there will be no significant effect on the environment arising from the variation. All development arising as a result of Variation No.2 will be guided by the development management policies and objectives of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

5.1.6 Excavation requirements

There are no excavation requirements from any European site as a result of Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027

5.1.7 Transport requirements

There are no transport requirements related to any European site as a result of Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027.

5.2 Description of any likely changes arising as a result of:

5.2.1 Reduction in habitat area

The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 proposes no reductions in habitat area in any European site.

5.2.2 Disturbance to key species

The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 will not result in any disturbance to key species, in designated sites and elsewhere. No habitat or species disturbance will arise.

5.2.3 Habitat or species fragmentation

There will be no loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance or other change to any element of any European site as a result of the implementation of the Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027, and no interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of any European site.

5.2.4 Reduction in species density

The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 will not result in any effects that have the potential to result in reduction in the extent of the qualifying habitats of European Sites, disturb qualifying species of European Sites in the wider surrounding area or affect species population.

5.2.5 Changes in key indicators of conservation value

The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 will not result in any changes to key indicators of conservation value. The Variation will not result in any interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of any European site.

5.2.6 Climate change

All development arising as a result of Variation No.2 will be guided by the development management policies and objectives of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and Meath County Council (MCC) Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029. The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 will not result in any impacts on or due to climate change.

5.3 Description of any likely impacts on European sites in terms of:

5.3.1 Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site

The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 will result in no interference with the key relationships that define the structure of any European site.

5.3.2 Interference with the key relationships that define the function of the site

The Variation No. 2 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 will result in no interference with the key relationships that define the function of any European site.

Potential pathways for impacts to European sites are presented in [Table 5.1](#).

Table 5.1 Potential impacts on designated sites in the potential Zone of Influence

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
European sites <i>within</i> Co. Meath			
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (site code 004232), within County Meath	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A229 Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) <p>According to the first order site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 12 October 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition of the bird species listed.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No
Lough Sheelin SPA (site code 004065), within County Meath	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A005 Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) ■ A059 Pochard (<i>Aythya farina</i>) ■ A061 Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) ■ A067 Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>According to the first order site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 12 October 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition of the bird species listed.</p>	<p>result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Boyne Estuary SPA (site code 004080), within County Meath</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) ■ A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ■ A142 Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ■ A144 Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) ■ A156 Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) ■ A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) ■ A169 Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) ■ A195 Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 26 February, 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.		
River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (site code 004158), within County Meath	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) (wintering) ■ A137 Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) (wintering) ■ A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) (wintering) ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) (wintering) ■ A144 Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) (wintering) ■ A184 Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) (wintering) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 21 September 2012), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No
North-West Irish Sea SPA (site code 004236), within County Meath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A065 Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) ■ A001 Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) ■ A003 Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) 	The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A009 Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) ■ A013 Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) ■ A018 Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) ■ A017 Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) ■ A177 Little Gull (<i>Larus minutus</i>) ■ A188 Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) ■ A179 Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) ■ A182 Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) ■ A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) ■ A184 Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) ■ A187 Great Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>) ■ A195 Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) ■ A192 Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) ■ A193 Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) ■ A194 Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) ■ A204 Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) ■ A200 Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) ■ A199 Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1 - dated 19 September 2023), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective maintain or restore the favourable conservation</p>	<p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	condition of the species for which the SPA has been selected.		
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (site code 002299), within County Meath	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1099 River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) ■ 1106 Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ■ 1355 Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) ■ 7230 Alkaline fens ■ 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)* <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 03 December, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No
Mount Hevey Bog SAC (site code 002342), within County Meath	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 21 March, 2016), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC (site code 000006), within County Meath</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 02 November, 2015), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Moneybeg & Clareisland Bogs SAC (site code</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
002340), within County Meath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 25 February, 2016), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
Lough Bane and Lough Glass SAC (site code 002120), within County Meath	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1092 White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) ■ 3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 21 October, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
		<p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Girley (Drewstown) Bog SAC (site code 002203), within County Meath</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 19 July, 2023), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC (site code 001957), within County Meath</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1130 Estuaries ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) ■ 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes ■ 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ('white dunes') ■ 2130 *Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes') <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 31 October, 2012), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC (site code 001398), within County Meath</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1014 Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail <i>Vertigo angustior</i> ■ 1016 Desmoulin's Whorl Snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> ■ 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 22 December, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.	include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment. There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.	
White Lough, Ben Loughs & Lough Doo SAC (site code 001810), within County Meath	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1092 White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> ■ 3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 21 October, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No
European sites <i>outside</i> Co. Meath but potentially within the Zone of Influence of the County Boundary			
Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA (site code 004061), c. 4km north-	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A059 Pochard (<i>Aythya farina</i>) 	The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
west of the County boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A061 Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) <p>According to the First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 12 October, 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition.</p>	<p>land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
Lough Derravarragh SPA (site code 004043), c. 11km to the west of the County boundary	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A038 Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) ■ A059 Pochard (<i>Aythya farina</i>) ■ A061 Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) ■ A125 Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) <p>According to the First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 12 October, 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
		<p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Garriskill Bog SPA (site code 004102), c. 15.6km to the west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A395 Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) <p>According to the First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 12 October, 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Lough Ennell SPA (site code 004044), c. 12km to the south-west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A059 Pochard (<i>Aythya farina</i>) ■ A061 Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) ■ A125 Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) <p>According to the First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>12 October, 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition.</p>	<p>World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>North Bull Island SPA (site code 004006), c. 13km to the south-east of the County boundary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) ■ A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ■ A052 Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) ■ A054 Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) ■ A056 Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) ■ A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ■ A144 Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) ■ A149 Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) ■ A156 Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) ■ A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) ■ A160 Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) ■ A169 Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) ■ A179 Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) ■ A999 Wetland <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 9 March 2015), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.</p>		
<p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (site code 004024), c. 17km south-east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A144 Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) ■ A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) ■ A149 Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) ■ A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) ■ A179 Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ■ A192 Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) ■ A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A194 Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) ■ A193 Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) ■ A137 Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 9 March 2015), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.</p>	<p>to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Baldoyle Bay SPA (site code 004016), c. 14.7km to the east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A046 Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) ■ A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ■ A137 Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) ■ A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ■ A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1 - dated 27 February 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.</p>	<p>to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Malahide Estuary SPA (site code 004025), c. 9.5km to the east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A005 Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) ■ A046 Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) ■ A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ■ A054 Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) ■ A067 Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) ■ A069 Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) ■ A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ■ A149 Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>) ■ A156 Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) ■ A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) ■ A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 16</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>August 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.</p>		
<p>Rogerstown Estuary SPA (site code 004015), c. 10km to the east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A043 Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) ■ A046 Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) ■ A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ■ A056 Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) ■ A137 Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ■ A149 Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>) ■ A156 Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) ■ A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1 - dated 20 May 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.		
Skerries Islands SPA (site code 004122), c. 11.7km to the east of the County boundary	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A017 Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) ■ A018 Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) ■ A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) ■ A148 Purple Sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>) ■ A169 Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) ■ A184 Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) <p>According to the First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 12 October, 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No
Rockabill SPA (site code 004014), c. 13.7km to the east of the County boundary	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A148 Purple Sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>) ■ A192 Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) ■ A193 Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) ■ A194 Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1 - dated 08</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>May 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.</p>	<p>result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Stabannan-Braganstown SPA (site code 004091), c.11km to the north-east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A043 Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) <p>According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 15 November 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Dundalk Bay SPA (site code 004026), c. 14.8km</p>	<p>The Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of this site are:</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
to the north-east of the County boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A005 Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) (wintering) ■ A043 Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) (wintering) ■ A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) (wintering) ■ A048 Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) (wintering) ■ A052 Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) (wintering) ■ A053 Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) (wintering) ■ A054 Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) (wintering) ■ A065 Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) (wintering) ■ A069 Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) (winterin) ■ A130 Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) (wintering) ■ A137 Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) (wintering) ■ A140 Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) (wintering) ■ A141 Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) (wintering) ■ A142 Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) (wintering) 	<p>land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A143 Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) (wintering) ■ A149 Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) (wintering) ■ A156 Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) (wintering) ■ A157 Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) (wintering) ■ A160 Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) (wintering) ■ A162 Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) (wintering) ■ A179 Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) (wintering) ■ A182 Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) (wintering) ■ A184 Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) (wintering) ■ A999 Wetlands & Waterbirds <p>According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SPA (dated 19 July, 2011), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>		
Derragh Bog SAC (site code 002201), c. 7km to	The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:	The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
the north-west of the County boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 19 July 2023), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
Lough Lene SAC (site code 002121), c. 3km to the west of the County boundary	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1092 White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) ■ 3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 21 October, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
		<p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Garriskil Bog SAC (site code 000679), c. 15.3km to the east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 02 November, 2015), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Ardagullion Bog SAC (site code 002341), c. 16.5km to the north-east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 06 November, 2015), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
Wooddown Bog SAC (site code 002205), c. 16.2km to the east of the County boundary	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 19 July 2023), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
<p>Raheenmore Bog SAC (site code 000582), c. 13km to the south-east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 02 November, 2015), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Lough Ennell SAC (site code 000685), c. 13km to the south-east of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7230 Alkaline fens <p>The following habitat is listed as Qualifying Interests on the NPWS website, but are not included in the Conservation Objectives document: 3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp.</p> <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 12 January,</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>2018), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC (site code 000925), c. 9.6km to the south of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (*important orchid sites) <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 11 November, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Ballynafagh Bog SAC (site code 000391), c. 11km to the south of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs* ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 10 November, 2015), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Ballynafagh Lake SAC (site code 001387), c. 10.4km to the south of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1016 Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) ■ 1065 Marsh Fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>) ■ 7230 Alkaline fens <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 10 december, 2021), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
		to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.	
Split Hills and Long Hill Esker SAC (site code 001831), c. 16.8km to the south-east of the County boundary	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 20 June, 2018), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	No
North Dublin Bay SAC (site code 000206), c. 17.8km to the south-west of the County boundary	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines ■ 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) 	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a</p>	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1395 Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) ■ 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes ■ 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) ■ 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* ■ 2190 Humid dune slacks <p><i>*indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive</i></p> <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 06 November 2013), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>South Dublin Bay SAC (site code 000210), c. 17km to the south-west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide <p>The following habitats are listed as Qualifying Interests on the NPWS website,</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>but are not included in the Conservation Objectives document:</p> <p>(1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes)</p> <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 22 August 2013), for the listed QI, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Baldoyle Bay SAC (site code 000199), c. 14.7km to the west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 19 November 2012), for each of the listed QIs,</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Malahide Estuary SAC (site code 000205), c. 9.5km to the west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand ■ 1320 Spartina swards (Spartinion maritimae) ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) ■ 2120 Shifting dunnes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) ■ 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* <p><i>*indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive</i></p> <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 27 May 2013), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>		
<p>Rogerstown Estuary SAC (site code 000208), c. 10km to the west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1130 Estuaries ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) ■ 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) ■ 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)* <p>*indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive</p> <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 14 August 2013), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>		
<p>Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (site code 003000), c. 17.3km to the west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1170 Reefs ■ 1351 Harbour Porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>) <p>According to this SAC’s site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 07 May 2013), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Clogher Head SAC (site code 001459), c. 7.5km to the north-west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts ■ 4030 European dry heaths <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 27 January, 2017), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a</p>	<p>No</p>

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of March 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	<p>condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	
<p>Dundalk Bay SAC (site code 000455), c. 14.8km to the north-west of the County boundary</p>	<p>The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of this site are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1130 Estuaries ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks ■ 1310 <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) <p>According to the site specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 19 July 2011), for the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable condition, as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.</p>	<p>The Variation No.2 would not give rise to any potential impacts on European sites owing to the limited scale, nature and character of the proposed re-zoning in relation to the existing land use zonings and the permitted development pertaining to the lands.</p> <p>This Natura 2000 Site is outside the land parcels where re-zoning, changes to written statement Volume 2 and digitisation of the World Heritage Site boundary are proposed and there is therefore no potential for significant effects on this site as a result of Variation No.2. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the proposed amendments do not include changes to any objectives or policies of the CDP as adopted and which underwent Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the Variation.</p>	<p>No</p>

5.4 Summary of potential impacts of the implementation of the Variation No.2

There will be no loss of any habitat or species listed as a QI or SCI of any designated site as a consequence of the implementation of the Variation. There is, therefore, no potential for the effects of habitat loss or fragmentation to occur.

There will also be no significant effects on any European sites as a result of:

- Habitat loss and/or fragmentation;
- Land-take;
- Resource requirements such as water abstraction;
- Impacts to habitat structure;
- Mortality to species (such as roadkill);
- Noise pollution / vibration impacts;
- Light pollution;
- Emissions to air (including dust);
- Emissions to water.

Additionally, for the reasons outlined in this report for the European sites, no impacts on any other designated sites including proposed Natural Heritage Areas, will occur.

6 Mitigation specific to European sites

This screening assessment is consistent with the judgment of the European Court in Case C-323/17, People Over Wind & Sweetman v Coillte (Judgment of the Court (Seventh Chamber) of 12 April 2018) and the recent case-law of the High Court, including Heather Hill Management Company CLG v An Bord Pleanála [2019] IEHC 450 and Sweetman v An Bord Pleanála [2020] IEHC 39.

It is also consistent with the judgment in Eco Advocacy CLG v An Bord Pleanála [2021] IEHC 265. In that case, Humphreys J confirmed the core legal principle, being that regard should not be had to mitigation measures at AA screening stage. Humphreys J decided in that case that clarification was required from the CJEU on the matter (as it related to the consideration of SUDs and whether these represented mitigation measures).

The CJEU, in its ruling on this case dated 15 June 2023 clarified issues defining mitigation in the context of European sites⁵. It confirmed that Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 *must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications of a plan or project for a site, account may be taken of the features of that plan or project which involve the removal of contaminants and which therefore may have the effect of reducing the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site, where those features have been incorporated into that plan or project as standard features, inherent in such a plan or project, irrespective of any effect on the site.*

In relation to European sites, there will be no impacts capable of giving rise to any likely significant effects as a result of the Variation.

No mitigation is necessary or proposed for the protection of European sites.

7 In-combination effects

It is a requirement of Section 177U of the Planning Acts that, when considering whether a plan or project will have a significant effect on a European site, the assessment must take into account in-combination effects

⁵<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62021CC0721>

with other plans and projects. The assessment should consider plans and projects that are completed, approved but uncompleted, or proposed (but not yet approved)⁶. If there are identified effects arising from the plan or project, even if they are perceived as minor and not likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a European site alone, then these effects must be considered in combination with the effects arising from other plans and projects.

The content of the Development Plan has been informed by SEA, AA and SFRA undertaken as parallel processes in tandem with each stage of the Development Plan, thereby ensuring full integration and consideration of environmental issues. Draft Variation No. 2 is compatible and complementary with the strategies, policies and objectives of the Development Plan relating to compact growth, population distribution, settlement strategy, urban regeneration, mixed-use development and with environmental protection. The re-zoned lands are compliant with the National Policy Objective contained within the National Planning Framework.

The Variation No. 2 to the County Development Plan proposes a range of land use zoning amendments, minor amendment to the written statement of Dunboyne Clonee and Pace and digitisation of the boundary for Brú na Bóinne that differs from the adopted County Development Plan. These amendments are necessary to reflect the existing and current land use that has come to the attention of the Meath County Council since the adoption of the CDP. These are not additional zonings for new development proposals but are being brought forward to correct and reflect the current land use (or approved land use by way of a planning permission) and to avoid any non-conforming land use on a zoning. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), the Draft Variation does not include changes to any objective or policy of the CDP.

The proposed Variation does not alter or change in any way findings of the SEA for the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. With the exception of a minor update to ED POL 59 (Killeen Castle), there are no changes to the existing policies or objectives within the adopted Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. Taking into account the existing land use zonings, the permitted development pertaining to the lands and the limited nature of the proposed amendments, it is assessed that there will be no cumulative effect on the environment arising from the variation.

On the basis of objective information, it can be excluded that the implementation of the Draft Variation No. 2, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

8 Screening conclusion

Following review of the Draft Variation No.2 against the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European sites, it is concluded that there is no possibility that the implementation of the Draft Variation No.2 could result in any likely significant effects on European sites on its own or in combination with other plans and programmes. This conclusion was reached without considering or taking into account mitigation measures or measures intended to avoid or reduce any impact on European sites.

In view of best scientific knowledge therefore, this report concludes that the Draft Variation No.2 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, individually or in combination with another plan or project, is not likely to have a significant effect on European sites under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) in light of their conservation objectives. The Draft Variation does not require an Appropriate Assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Report.

⁶ Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting European sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001)

9 References

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- European Commission (2021). Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites- Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
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- European Commission Environment Directorate-General (2021). Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community Interest under the Habitats Directive.
- NBDC (2024). Biodiversity Maps.
- NPWS (2021). Guidance for Public authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to development/works undertaken by or on behalf of a Public authority.
- NPWS (2024). Boundary data – Special Area of Conservation (SAC). [Update date 11/01/2024].
- NPWS (2024). Boundary data – Special Protection Area (SPA). [Update date 11/01/2024].
- NPWS (2015). Boundary data – proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). [Update date 01/11/2015].
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- NRA7 (2009). Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes.
- OPR (2021). Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management.
- Wyse Jackson, M., FitzPatrick, Ú., Cole, E., Jebb, M., McFerran, D., Sheehy Skeffington, M. & Wright, M. (2016). Ireland Red List No. 10: Vascular Plants. Dublin Ireland: NPWS, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

⁷ Now Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Appendix I: Background

The European⁸ network is a Europe-wide network of ecologically important sites (SPAs and cSACs – also known as ‘European Sites’ or ‘Natura 2000 sites’) that have been designated for protection under either the EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) or the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna).

The main aim of the Habitats Directive is “to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States to which the treaty applies”. Any actions taken must be designed to “maintain or restore, at a favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest”. Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, an assessment is required where a plan or project may give rise to significant effects upon a European site.

In addition, it is a matter of law that candidate SACs (cSACs) and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) are considered in this process;

Article 6 (paragraphs (3) and (4)) of the Habitats Directive states that:

(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have 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 site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions 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.

(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 for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest”

The requirements of the Habitats Directive are transposed into Irish law by means of the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)* (hereafter referred to as the *Birds and Habitats Regulations*) and by the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended.

In Ireland, the statutory agency responsible for the designated areas is NPWS.

Stages in the assessment

European Commission guidance (2001)⁹ sets out the principles on how to undertake decision making in applying the Habitats Directive. The requirements of the Habitats Directive comprise four distinct stages:

⁸ The EU Habitats Directive, Article 3.1, states “A Coherent European ecological network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC shall be set up under the title European”

⁹ European Commission (2001) *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting European Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*

Stage 1: Screening is the process which initially identifies the likely significant effects upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts may be significant. It is important to note that the burden of evidence is to show, on the basis of objective information, that there will be no significant effect; if the effect may be significant, or is not known, that would trigger the need for an Appropriate Assessment. There is European Court of Justice case law to the effect that unless the likelihood of a significant effect can be ruled out on the basis of objective information, then an Appropriate Assessment must be made.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment is the detailed consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's conservation objectives and its structure and function. This is to determine with scientific certainty whether or not there will be adverse effects on the integrity of the site in light of its conservation objectives. This stage also includes the development of mitigation measures to avoid or reduce any possible impacts.

Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions is the process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that would avoid impacts on the integrity of the European site, should avoidance or mitigation measures be unable to cancel out adverse effects.

Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain. At Stage 4 an assessment is made with regard to whether or not the development is necessary for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) and, if so, of the compensatory measures needed to maintain the overall coherence of the European network.

Conservation Objectives of European sites

The conservation objectives for a European Site are intended to represent the aims of the Habitats and Birds Directives in relation to that site. To this end, habitats and species of European Community importance should be maintained or restored to 'favourable conservation status' (FCS), as defined in Article 1 of the Habitats Directive below:

The conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- Its natural range and the area it covers within that range are stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future;
- Conservation status of typical species is favourable as defined in Article 1(i).

The conservation status of a species will be taken as favourable when:

- Population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Guidance from the European Commission¹⁰ indicates that the Habitats Directive intends FCS to be applied at the level of an individual site, as well as to habitats and species across their European range. Therefore, in

¹⁰ Managing European sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. (European Commission 2000)

order to properly express the aims of the Habitats Directive for an individual site, the conservation objectives for a site are essentially to maintain (or restore) the habitats and species of the site at (or to) FCS.

The European Commission guidance recommends that screening should fulfil the following steps:

1. Determine whether the plan (or policy) is directly connected with or necessary for the management of European sites;
2. Describe the plan and describe and characterise any other plans or projects which, in combination, have the potential for having significant effects on European sites;
3. Identify the potential effects on European sites;
4. Assess the likely significance of any effects on European sites.

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