

Meath County Council

Draft Variation No. 4 of Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report

Reference:

Issue | 6 May 2025





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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening has been prepared by Ove Arup and Partners Ltd (Arup) on behalf of Meath County Council (MCC) with respect to the Proposed Variation No. 4 of Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (hereafter referred to as ‘the Proposed Variation’).

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that any plan or project, which is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a European site, but would be likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, should be subject to an Appropriate Assessment (AA).

1.2 Report Aim

This AA Screening Report has been prepared to provide information for the ‘competent authority¹’ regarding the potential for ‘Likely Significant Effects’ (LSE) of the Proposed Variation, on European sites within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Proposed Variation.

1.3 Background to the Proposed Variation

Meath County Council (MCC) published the Meath County Development Plan (CDP) 2021-2027 on the 22nd of September 2021. The Meath CDP has been varied three times since its original publication- Variation No. 1 and Variation No. 2 to the CDP were published on the 13th of May 2024, and Variation No. 3 to the CDP was published on the 27th of January 2025.

The Meath CDP (as varied) sets out the policies and objectives and the overall strategy for the development of the County over the plan period 2021-2027. It provides a positive vision for Meath which will enable the county to continue to make a significant contribution to national economic recovery by promoting sustainable development and facilitating stable economic growth thus delivering long term benefits for the citizens of the county. The Meath CDP (as varied) consists of four volumes:

- Volume 1 - Written Statement
- Volume 2 - Written Statement and Maps for Settlements
- Volume 3 – Book of Maps; and
- Volume 4 – Environmental Assessments.

Volume 2 of the current Meath CDP (as varied) contains a Written Statement for the Maynooth Environs. This Written Statement provides a brief description and development strategy for Maynooth Environs in County Meath. It should be noted that the Written Statement for the Maynooth Environs notes the intention of MCC to prepare a joint Local Area Plan, in conjunction with Kildare County Council (KCC), for the town during the life of the CDP.

In April 2025, MCC and KCC adopted a new Joint Local Area Plan (LAP) for the Maynooth and Environs area. The Joint LAP incorporates a framework for guiding the future development of transportation, housing, retail, heritage, employment, and social and community infrastructure in Maynooth. It should be noted that the Joint LAP was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA).

¹ Per the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) the competent authority is defined as “A competent authority, in performing the functions conferred on it by or under this Part, shall take appropriate steps to avoid in a European site the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as the disturbance of the species for which the site has been designated, insofar as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats Directive”

To ensure consistency of the Maynooth and Environs Joint LAP with the Meath CDP (as varied), MCC are preparing Variation No. 4 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Variation) which would see the replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025-2031.

1.4 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) (the ‘Habitats Directive’ provides the legal protection for habitats and species, with Articles 3 to 9 providing legislation protection to the EU wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 site network. Natura 2000 is a network of protected sites which comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (referred to as European sites within this report). SACs are protected sites designated under the Habitats Directive whilst SPAs are protected sites designated under the Birds Directive. They are high quality sites that contribute significantly to the conservation of a large range of habitats and species.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA whilst Article 6(4) sets out the Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) and compensatory measures where Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European sites cannot be excluded.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (as amended), and by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). In the context of the Proposed Variation, the governing legislation is principally Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

1.5 Relationship with the SEA Directive

In the preparation of this AA Screening report, the approach has been conducted in parallel with the requirements of the SEA process (2001/42/EC as transposed into Irish law). Article 3.2(b) of the SEA Directive expressly links to AA.

1.6 Report Structure

The report is structured below:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the Proposed Variation.
- Section 3 outlines the AA process guidance, data and methodology used to inform the assessment and provides important definitions.
- Section 4 sets out the screening assessment; and
- Section 5 provides a summary and conclusion.

2. The Proposed Variation

As previously outlined, MCC are preparing Variation No. 4 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 which would see the replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025-2031. The Proposed Variation consists of the following:

- Proposed text update to Chapter 1 Introduction
- Proposed text update to Chapter 2 Core Strategy
- Proposed text update to Chapter 4 – Economic and Employment Strategy; and
- Replacement of Maynooth Written Statement in Volume 2.

Variation No. 4 consists of minor text changes and deletions to the CDP (as varied), including the removal of the Maynooth Written Statement. Variation No. 4 in and of itself does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new development

3. Appropriate Assessment Process

3.1 Appropriate Assessment Stages

The AA process involves a number of steps and tests that need to be applied in sequential order.

An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. First of all, a plan or project must be screened to identify whether the potential for likely significant effects on a European site(s) exists. If that possibility cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment is to be undertaken prior to any consent being granted. Consent shall not be granted if it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site. Article 6(4) allows for consent to be granted in particular and exceptional circumstances, even if adverse effects may arise.

The AA Screening must include a final determination by the competent authority as to whether or not a proposed project would adversely affect the integrity of a European site. In order to reach a final determination, the public authority must undertake examination, analysis and evaluation, followed by findings, conclusions and a final determination.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 European Sites

European sites, as defined under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) (as amended) are part of the Natura 2000 network and include those designated as SACs, candidate SACs (cSACs), SPAs or proposed SPAs (pSPAs). These are sometimes referred to as Natura 2000 sites.

SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I² habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II³ species (other than birds).

SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and all migratory birds and their habitats.

² Annex I habitats are habitats whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation

³ Annex II species are animal and plant species whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation

The Annex habitats and species, for which each site is selected, are termed the Qualifying Interests (QI) for SACs and termed Special Conservation Interests (SCI) for SPAs of each site.

3.2.2 Conservation Objective

Conservation Objectives (COs) for the European sites are defined for the relevant QIs and SCIs. In its most general sense, a CO is the specification of the overall target for the species and/or habitat types for which a site is designated in order for it to contribute to maintaining or reaching favourable conservation status⁴.

3.2.3 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

The Source-Pathway-Receptor model is used to assess where a potential effect may result by examining the source, its pathway and the receptor. As per guidance from the OPR⁵ these can be defined as follows:

- **Source:** The origin of a potential effect which may include characteristics of a plan or project that have the potential to result in effects e.g. direct impacts such as loss of habitat.
- **Pathway:** How the potential effect may occur on the source. These are identifiable through linkages that may occur through the plan or project and European sites e.g. direct pathways such as physical proximity, hydrological connections or indirect pathways such as disturbance to migrating species; and
- **Receptor:** The European site network and respective QIs/SCIs, their ecological condition and sensitivities e.g. freshwater pearl mussel is sensitive to siltation in water.

3.2.4 Zone of Influence

A Zone of Influence (ZoI) within any assessment of projects and/or plans considers the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed plan/project and associated activities.

3.3 Guidance

The following guidance was used in carrying out the assessment:

- 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 National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) 1/10 and PSSP 2/10.
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 Sites: Methodical guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2014).
- Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle. European Commission (2000).
- Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2007).
- Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011).
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2019).
- Office of the Planning Regulator Practice Note PN01 - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021); and

⁴ Commission Note on Setting Conservation Objectives for Natura 2000 Sites (November 2012) European Commission, Doc. Hab.12-04/06. Accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/commission_note/commission_note2_EN.pdf

⁵ OPR (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01

- Strict Protection of Animal Species 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 2021).

The requirements for Screening for AA, and AA, for European sites, are set out in Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) with numerous relevant rulings and opinions issued in both Irish and EU courts. AA is a process required under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive as transposed by the aforementioned legislation as stated within Section 1.4.

3.4 Data Sources

The ecological data reviewed to inform this report comprises:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Map Viewer⁶
- Meath County Council (2021) Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027⁷
- Kildare County Council and Meath County Council (2025) Joint Local Area Plan for the Maynooth and Environs Area 2025 – 2031⁸

3.5 Methodology

In line with the relevant guidance and case law, this Screening for AA consists of the below steps:

1. **Impact Prediction:** Identify the aspects of the Proposed Variation likely to affect the COs of European sites. The more general classification of impacts can include direct and indirect effects; short and long-term effects; construction, operational and decommissioning effects; and isolated, interactive and cumulative effects. A Source-Pathway-Receptor model has been used to identify the zone of influence. This also includes transboundary considerations.
2. **Assessment of Effects:** The actions of the Proposed Variation are assessed as to whether they are likely to result in likely significant effects upon the integrity of European sites. This requires understanding of relevant QIs/SCIs and associated COs.

3.5.1 Impact Prediction: Identifying the Zone of Influence

The ZoI is established using the SPR method and takes into consideration the scale of the elements of the Proposed Variation. There is no recommended ZoI, and guidance from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) recommends that the distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the plan/project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in-combination effects (cumulative).

For an effect to occur there must be a risk enabled by having a source (e.g. construction works at a proposed development site), a ‘receptor’ (e.g. QI or SCI of a European site), and a pathway between the source and the receptor (e.g. a watercourse which connects a plan area to an SAC, ex situ foraging habitat for SCI birds). The principle for establishing ZoI, as outlined in the 2021 OPR Practice Note PN01 applies equally to a plan level AA and so the SPR method has been used in this report.

The identification of the European sites within the ZoI has been carried out by utilising GIS datasets from NPWS and of the European site network. The sites have been determined through the identification of the potential sources of the impacts of the Proposed Variation and their pathways for effect to European sites.

⁶ EPA Map Viewer accessed at <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

⁷ Meath County Council (2021) Meath County Council Development Plan 2021-2027. Accessed at [Consolidated Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 \(incl. Variations 1, 2 & 3\) | Meath County Council Online Consultation Portal](#).

⁸ KCC and MCC (2025) KCC and MCC Joint Local Area Plan for the Maynooth and Environs Area. Accessed at: [Draft Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031 | Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan Consultation Portal/](#)

3.5.2 Assessment of Effects

Where a plan or project is likely to undermine the conservation objectives, it must be considered as a likely significant effect upon that EU site. The assessment of effects stages determines whether the potential impacts identified using the SPR could result in a likely significant effect.

From establishing the ZoI using the SPR method, focusing on the relevant QIs and SCIs of European sites which may be at risk of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Variation. The potential impacts of the Proposed Variation are assessed against the conservation objectives of the relevant QIs and SCIs to determine if a likely significant effect may occur as a result of implementation. Within this assessment, factors such as type, extent, duration, intensity, timing, probability and in-combination effects of the potential impact, as well as the vulnerability of the QIs and/or SCIs concerned⁵.

4. Screening Assessment

4.1 Overview

The scope of the proposed Variation has a scale of application across the boundary of County Meath.

As outlined in the Natura Impact Statement for the County Meath CDP 2021-2027⁹, there are a total of 14 sites designated for protection under the Natura 2000 network (including nine SACs and five SPAs). All designated European Sites located within County Meath. There are a further 13 SPAs and 19 SACs within the potential Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Meath CDP area. All of these sites (a total of 46) are the sites located within the potential zone of influence of the county boundary.

Conservation objectives of relevant European sites can be accessed on www.npws.ie and have been considered as part of the screening process, but for the purposes of brevity, these have not been reproduced.

4.2 Source – Pathway – Receptor

Potential connectivity between the provisions of the Proposed Variation and European sites and their respective QIs/SCIs is identified via the S-P-R model which highlights the potential impact pathways such as land, air, hydrological pathways etc which may support direct or indirect connectivity. Where connectivity exists between the proposed Variation and receptors, these receptors are taken forward to the assessment of likely significant effects.

4.2.1 Identification of Potential Sources of Impacts

The Proposed Variation comprises a Variation No. 4 to the Meath CDP 2021-2027 which would see the replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025-2031. Variation No. 4 consists of minor text changes and deletions to the CDP (as varied), including the removal of the Maynooth Written Statement. Variation No. 4 in and of itself does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new development

Table 1 provides a high-level summary of the amendments to the Meath CDP 2021 – 2027 (as varied) included as part of the Proposed Variation, an assessment for likely significant effects using the Source - Pathway- Receptor method and a screening assessment outcome. As illustrated in Table 1, no source of impact exists with respect to the proposed amendments, and none of the proposed amendments require further assessment.

⁹ BSM (2024) AA Screening Report for the Proposed Variation No. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. Available at: <https://consult.meath.ie/en/consultation/draft-variation-no-3-meath-county-development-plan-2021%E2%80%932027>

Table 1 Summary of Screening for AA of the Proposed Variation

MCDP Chapter	MCDP Section / Table / Policy Objective / Figure	Amendment	Proposed variation to the Meath CDP (as varied):	Source of Impact	Pathway for Effect	Receptor	Assessment for Likely Significant Effects	Screening Assessment Outcome						
Chapter 1 Introduction	Section 1.5 Table of Contents of the MCDP 2021- 2027	Update reference to Maynooth Environs Written Statement being replaced by Maynooth Joint LAP 2025-2031.	RATOATH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT <table><tr><td>Dunboyne (& Clonee)</td></tr><tr><td>Dunshaughlin</td></tr><tr><td>Kilcock Environs</td></tr><tr><td>Kilmessan</td></tr><tr><td>Maynooth-Environs</td></tr><tr><td>Ratoath</td></tr></table>	Dunboyne (& Clonee)	Dunshaughlin	Kilcock Environs	Kilmessan	Maynooth-Environs	Ratoath	The replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025 – 2031 is a desk-based activity relating to minor text removal and alteration. The Proposed Variation does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new developments. The Proposed Variation will not have the potential to interact with European sites. No sources of impact are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Variation.	Given no source of impact exists, there is no pathway for effect.	Given no source of impact nor pathway for effect exists, no receptor can be identified.	On the basis that the SPR method has determined that no source of impact occurs, no pathway for effect nor receptor can be identified. As a result, the potential for likely significant effects is ruled out.	Screened out
	Dunboyne (& Clonee)													
Dunshaughlin														
Kilcock Environs														
Kilmessan														
Maynooth-Environs														
Ratoath														
	Section 1.5.1 Written Statements for Settlements in Meath	Remove reference to Maynooth Joint LAP 2025-2031.	A Written Statement and land use zoning objectives map to establish a framework for <i>inter alia</i> the future LAP’s, to support economic development and to provide a basis for continued operation of the development management process pending the completion of the LAP’s (in the case of Drogheda the UAP) has been included in Volume 2 for each settlement.	The replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025 – 2031 is a desk-based activity relating to minor text removal and alteration. The	Given no source of impact exists, there is no pathway for effect.	Given no source of impact nor pathway for effect exists, no receptor can be identified.	On the basis that the SPR method has determined that no source of impact occurs, no pathway for effect nor receptor can be identified.	Screened out						

MCDP Chapter	MCDP Section / Table / Policy Objective / Figure	Amendment	Proposed variation to the Meath CDP (as varied):	Source of Impact	Pathway for Effect	Receptor	Assessment for Likely Significant Effects	Screening Assessment Outcome
			These Written Statements will continue to have effect unless they are replaced and superseded by their respective Local Area Plan, Joint Local Area Plan or Joint Urban Area Plan. On adoption, the Local Area Plan, Joint Maynooth Local Area Plan or Joint Drogheda Urban / Local Area Plan will replace the respective Written Statement in Volume 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 by way of a variation to the Plan. During the intervening period, the Written Statement contained in the Meath County Development Plan will continue to have effect.	Proposed Variation does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new developments. The Proposed Variation will not have the potential to interact with European sites. No sources of impact are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Variation.			As a result, the potential for likely significant effects is ruled out.	
Chapter 2 Core Strategy	Section 2.10.1 Focus of Growth in the Metropolitan Area	Update text to clarify that a Joint Local Area Plan for Maynooth has been prepared by Meath and Kildare County Councils.	Maynooth is identified as a Key Town in the Metropolitan area in the RSES. The RSES recognises the northern environs of Maynooth, which are located in Meath, as an important location for economic and residential development that will support the future development of the town and the delivery of the Maynooth Outer Relief Road, which is a key piece of infrastructure in the sustainable growth of the town. A Joint Local Area Plan for Maynooth is to be has been prepared by Meath and Kildare County Councils. This Plan will provide a co-ordinated framework for the future development of Maynooth.	The replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025 – 2031 is a desk-based activity relating to minor text removal and alteration. The Proposed Variation does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new developments. The Proposed Variation will not have the potential to interact with European sites.	Given no source of impact exists, there is no pathway for effect.	Given no source of impact nor pathway for effect exists, no receptor can be identified.	On the basis that the SPR method has determined that no source of impact occurs, no pathway for effect nor receptor can be identified. As a result, the potential for likely significant effects is ruled out.	Screened out

MCDP Chapter	MCDP Section / Table / Policy Objective / Figure	Amendment	Proposed variation to the Meath CDP (as varied):	Source of Impact	Pathway for Effect	Receptor	Assessment for Likely Significant Effects	Screening Assessment Outcome
				No sources of impact are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Variation.				
Chapter 3 - Settlement and Housing Strategy	Section 3.4.7 Key Towns	Update text to clarify that Meath and Kildare County Councils have prepared a Joint Local Area Plan for Maynooth.	<p>‘.....In order to ensure a co-ordinated approach is undertaken to the future development of Maynooth Regional Policy Objective 4.35 of the RSES, requires that a Joint Local Area Plan is has been prepared by Meath and Kildare County Council.</p> <p>The Maynooth Environs lands is will be a focal point for employment and complementary residential uses. The development of these lands will facilitate the delivery of the Maynooth Outer Relief Road (MOOR) which is strongly supported in the RSES. This is a critical piece of infrastructure in the future growth and development of Maynooth.</p>	The replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025 – 2031 is a desk-based activity relating to minor text removal and alteration. The Proposed Variation does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new developments. The Proposed Variation will not have the potential to interact with European sites. No sources of impact are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Variation.	Given no source of impact exists, there is no pathway for effect.	Given no source of impact nor pathway for effect exists, no receptor can be identified.	On the basis that the SPR method has determined that no source of impact occurs, no pathway for effect nor receptor can be identified. As a result, the potential for likely significant effects is ruled out.	Screened out

MCDP Chapter	MCDP Section / Table / Policy Objective / Figure	Amendment	Proposed variation to the Meath CDP (as varied):	Source of Impact	Pathway for Effect	Receptor	Assessment for Likely Significant Effects	Screening Assessment Outcome
Chapter 4 Economic and Employment Strategy	Section 4.7.1.2 Maynooth	Update ED OBJ 14 to align with Objective MEO 1.1 and 1.2 in the Maynooth Joint LAP.	ED OBJ 14: It is a priority for the Council to deliver on the significant potential of the lands in the Maynooth Environs, a designated strategic employment site to create a unique employment hub centred on a high tech/bio tech campus within the lands, supported by a 'live work' community with a mixture of employment, residential, community, medical and tourism uses to be progressed following the preparation of Master Plans. Said Master Plans shall be agreed in writing with the Executive of Meath County Council in advance of the lodgement any future p lanning application. This area can accommodate increased building height which shall be addressed as part of the Master Plans. (Please refer to Volume Maynooth Environs Written Statement for detailed requirements in respect of Master Plans).	The replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025 – 2031 is a desk-based activity relating to minor text removal and alteration. The Proposed Variation does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new developments. The Proposed Variation will not have the potential to interact with European sites. No sources of impact are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Variation.	Given no source of impact exists, there is no pathway for effect.	Given no source of impact nor pathway for effect exists, no receptor can be identified.	On the basis that the SPR method has determined that no source of impact occurs, no pathway for effect nor receptor can be identified. As a result, the potential for likely significant effects is ruled out.	Screened out
Volume 2 – Written Statement and Maps for Settlements	Maynooth Environs	Removal of Maynooth Environs Written Statement and Maynooth Environs Combined Land Use Zoning Map. Replacement with link to newly adopted Maynooth and	Removal and Replacement of Maynooth Written Statement in Volume 2 with the following text: <i>Revoked and Replaced by Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-3031.</i>	The replacement of the Maynooth Written Statement with reference to the newly adopted Maynooth Joint LAP 2025 – 2031 is a desk-based activity relating to minor text removal and alteration.	Given no source of impact exists, there is no pathway for effect.	Given no source of impact nor pathway for effect exists, no receptor can be identified.	On the basis that the SPR method has determined that no source of impact occurs, no pathway for effect nor receptor can be identified.	Screened out

MCDP Chapter	MCDP Section / Table / Policy Objective / Figure	Amendment	Proposed variation to the Meath CDP (as varied):	Source of Impact	Pathway for Effect	Receptor	Assessment for Likely Significant Effects	Screening Assessment Outcome
		Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031. Maynooth and Environs Land Use Map and Maynooth Environs Cultural and Natural Heritage Map will remain in place.		<p>The Proposed Variation does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new developments.</p> <p>The Proposed Variation will not have the potential to interact with European sites. No sources of impact are anticipated to arise from the Proposed Variation.</p>			As a result, the potential for likely significant effects is ruled out.	

4.2.2 Identification of Potential Pathways

Given that no viable sources of impact exist, no potential pathways can be identified within this S-P-R assessment.

4.2.3 Identification of Potential Receptors

Given that no viable sources of impact or pathways for impacts exist, no potential receptors can be identified within this S-P-R assessment.

4.3 In-Combination Assessment

Following the assessment of the Proposed Variation, through the application of the SPR method, it has been determined that no effects will occur from the implementation of the Proposed Variation in and of itself. This has been determined as no sources of impact have been determined from the amendments included within the Proposed Variation. Therefore, the requirement for an in-combination assessment is not warranted as no effects of the Proposed Variation will occur alone.

4.4 Summary of Screening Assessment

The S-P-R model was used to identify any potential connectivity between the provisions of the Proposed Variation and European sites and their respective QIs/SCIs within County Meath and its ZoI.

The screening assessment found that no source of impact exists with respect to the proposed amendments, and none of the proposed amendments require further assessment. The Proposed Variation consists of minor text changes and deletions to the CDP (as varied), including the removal of the Maynooth Written Statement. Variation No. 4 in and of itself does not include any new provisions and will not result in any new development

Given that no viable sources of impact or pathways for impacts exist, no potential receptors can be identified within this S-P-R assessment. Following examination of the Proposed Variation it was determined that the potential for likely significant effects, arising either alone or in-combination, does not exist.

5. Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The amendments included as part of the Proposed Variation were assessed for the potential for likely significant effects on the European site network.

Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the best available information, and applying the precautionary principle and the S-P-R model, it can be concluded that the possibility of any significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the plan alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded, for the reasons set out in Section 4 above. In reaching this conclusion, the nature of the Proposed Variation and its potential relationship with all European sites within the ZoI, and their conservation objectives, have been fully considered.

Therefore, it is the professional opinion of the authors of this report that this Proposed Variation does not require an AA.