

Navan Development Plan 2009-2015, as varied
Proposed Variation No. 3

Strategic Employment Land on the Trim Road

Strategic Environmental Assessment
Screening Statement
June 2019

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1.0 Introduction

As part of the preparation of Variation 3 to the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015 the planning authority must consider whether the proposed Variation requires SEA. The Planning Authority has had regard to the requirements of the following in the preparation of the SEA Screening Assessment and in the preparation of the proposed Variation:

- S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (amending S.I. No. 435 of 2004)
- S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (amending S.I. No. 436 of 2004)
- DoECLG Circular PSSP6/2011 re '*Further Transposition of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*'
- DoEHLG Circular (Circular PL 9 of 2013) '*Article 8 (Decision Making) of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as amended*'.
- Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 201 of 2011), amending the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulation 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).

The assessment is based on the criteria set down in the SEA Guidelines and Annex II of the SEA Directive for determining the likely significance of environmental effects. The Planning and Development Strategic Environmental Assessment (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 201 of 2011) Article 13k requires that where a planning authority proposes to make a variation to a development plan it shall consider whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A.

2.0 Site Location

The site which is the subject of this Variation comprises approximately 60 hectares of land to the south of Navan. The site adjoins the Trim road to the west, the former Navan – Dublin Rail Alignment to the east and the Borallion road to the south. To the north land is zoned for residential development (Phase II). Access to the subject lands will be provided via the recently approved local distributor road LDR 1(b)¹; this road will be approx. 1.4 km of single carriageway distributor road, with signalised junctions, roundabout junctions, cycling and walking facilities and street lighting.

The land is currently zoned WL - 'to protect strategic lands from inappropriate forms of development which would impede the orderly expansion of a strategic urban centre'.

There are a number of build structures within the site:

- Individual dwellings
- O' Mahonys sports facility

There is a Local Objective on the lands- MP 10 – This relates to the preparation of a Masterplan for the land.

3.0 Proposed Variation

This variation is to allow for the change in zoning of land from '**WL**' 'to protect strategic lands from inappropriate forms of development which would impede the orderly expansion of a strategic urban centre' to

¹ This road was approved by the Part VIII procedure (reference P818015) in 2018 and links the Trim road to Navan South.

‘E1/E2’ ‘to facilitate opportunities for high end technology/manufacturing and major campus style office based employment within high quality and accessible locations. To provide for the creation of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment through industrial, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing and other general employment/enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment’.

It is also intended to reflect the existing residential use of existing residences within the lands with an **A1** ‘Existing Residential’ land use zoning objective and an existing sports facility to **G1** ‘Community Facilities’.

4.0 Criteria for Determining the Likely Significant Environmental Impacts:

Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance environmental effects of the Plan. The following section of the report will assess Variation 3 of the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015, as varied against the criteria set out in Schedule 2A.

SCREENING ASSESSMENT USING CRITERIA IN SCHEDULE 2A

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSED VARIATION 3 OF THE NAVAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2009-2015, AS VARIED HAVING REGARD TO:
The degree to which the Variation sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions, or by allocating resources: The proposed variation relates to the provisions of the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015, as varied. The objective of the Navan Development Plan is to set out the legal framework for the development of the town. Development plans provide the strategic framework and policy context for all local planning decisions over the specified period of the plan. It is considered that the proposed variation in having regard to the site’s location would set a more sustainable framework for high end employment projects in Navan.
The degree to which the Variation influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy: The Development Plan is part of the National Framework/hierarchy of land use and spatial plans, including the National Planning Framework and the Regional Planning Guidelines (or soon to be Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies). Development plans influence lower level land use plans and planning applications. The variation as proposed is positioned at the lower end of the hierarchy and will influence positively any future planning applications on site. Such applications will have due regard to the robust objectives and policies contained within the Development Plan. As such the variation will contribute to the positive development of the area.
The relevance of the Variation for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development: The adopted statutory Plan is the guiding document for development within the area and it underwent a detailed SEA in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EEC). This process allowed for consideration at length of the environmental implications of the Plan’s implementation. The land is zoned ‘WL’ – ‘to protect strategic lands from inappropriate forms of

development which would impede the orderly expansion of a strategic urban centre'. The purpose of this variation is to establish a land-use framework for the sustainable development of the area in a co-ordinated and coherent manner prior to the lands being developed. The variation sought, which seeks to rezone the land to a 'E1/E2' Strategic Employment Zones (High Technology Uses)/General Enterprise & Employment land use, will conform to the principles, objectives and policies of the Development Plan in relation to environmental considerations and therefore will have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area.

Environmental problems relevant to the Variation:

The land comprises a mixture of residential dwellings, a sports facility and agricultural land. The site does not form part of a proposed Natural Heritage Area, Special Area of Conservation or other similar designated area. There are no recorded monuments or Zone of Archaeological Importance located within the site. There are no protected views or prospects listed on site in the Development Plan. There are no protected structures on site. It is considered that there will be no significant environmental problems caused by the Variation. It should be noted that the Development Management process will assess any potential environmental problems in assessing any future applications for development on site.

The relevance of the Variation for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection):

These plans and programmes are dealt with appropriately under the Navan Development Plan 2009 – 2015, as varied. This Variation will comply with the principles, objectives and policies contained within the existing Development Plan which in turn comply with all Community legislation on the environment.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EFFECTS AND OF THE AREA LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED VARIATION:

The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects:

It is considered that the characteristics of the effects will increase the likelihood of Navan developing in a sustainable manner over the lifetime of the plan. The probability frequency of effects will be dependent on the extent of development likely to be undertaken during the lifetime of the plan. Development by its nature often has a long duration and the effects can be difficult to reverse.

The development of the land for a 'Strategic Employment Zones (High Technology Uses)/General Enterprise & Employment' land use will result in the creation of additional traffic levels in the area with increased noise and air quality issues. However, substantial expenditure has gone into the surrounding road network and the development of this site would result in the provision of a direct link to the existing M3 and an improvement to the local road network. In this regard, Meath County Council is confident that the traffic generated by the development both construction and during normal operation can be accommodated on the existing and planned (within the site) road network. The Development Management process will ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are provided to mitigate for any adverse noise and air quality effects identified.

It is considered therefore that there will be no significant negative effects of a strategic nature upon the implementation of the variation.

The cumulative nature of the effects:

No notable cumulative negative effects are anticipated as a result of this variation.

It is considered that the proposed variation given the site's location would set a more sustainable framework for high end employment projects in the County. Any cumulative effects will increase the likelihood of the county developing in a sustainable manner over the lifetime of the plan.

The transboundary nature of the effects:

It is not anticipated the Plan will have any transboundary effects.

The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents):

The implementation of the variation is not likely to result in any risks to human health or the environment. The development management process will ensure that any development on the land adheres to legislation and has a neutral or positive effect to human health and the environment.

The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected):

The effects are considered localised only i.e. the site lands and immediate environs. Existing residences within the site will be zoned A1, 'Existing Residential' and through the development management process any development will be assessed in terms of its potential impact on existing residences.

The value, and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:**(a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage:**

The site does not form part of a proposed Natural Heritage Area, Special Area of Conservation or other similar designated area. There are no recorded monuments or Zone of Archaeological Importance located within the site. There are no protected views or prospects listed on site in the Development Plan. There are no protected structures on site. The site comprises primarily of open fields with hedging and contains no special designation.

(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values:

It is anticipated that environmental quality standards will not be exceeded and that the value of the area will not be limited as a result of the proposed variation. The Development Management process will ensure this.

(c) intensive land use:

As noted the site does not form part of any proposed Natural Heritage Area, Special Area of Conservation or other similar designated area. The site comprises primarily open fields with hedging. The Variation provides for uses permissible under the E1/E2 zoning objectives, and in accordance with all other relevant development plan standards.

The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status:

As noted above, there are no features within the site boundary which have a recognised European and/or international protection status. Nevertheless the Development Management process will have regard for the protection of the interconnected networks of green infrastructure in the County by adhering to the following Green Infrastructure Objective contained in the Navan Development Plan:

HER POL 21B: To encourage and facilitate the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:

- Provision of open space amenities
- Sustainable management of water
- Protection and management of biodiversity
- Protection of cultural heritage
- Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

5.0 Preliminary Screening Conclusion (prior to consultation):

The Planning Authority concluded that the development would not have a strategic environmental effect on the area and considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required in respect of the variation to change the zoning of this area from 'WL' to 'E1/E2', 'A1' and 'G1'.

6.0 Submissions from Environmental Authorities

Notice was provided to the following specified Environmental Authorities in accordance with Article 13K(3) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended:

- (i) The Environmental Protection Agency;
- (ii) The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government;
- (iii) The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht;
- (iv) The Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment;
- (v) The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and
- (vi) Planning authorities adjoining the area of Meath County Council i.e. the County Councils of Louth, Fingal, South Dublin, Dublin City, Wicklow, Kildare, Offaly, Westmeath, Cavan and Monaghan.

Submissions or observations were received from the EPA and Louth County Council. Louth County Council responded with no specific comments. The EPA provided a detailed response including the following:

- The role of the Agency in relation to SEA;
- The appropriate criteria to be used in SEA Screening;
- Available guidance and background information for SEA; and
- Information on relevant environmental authorities and public consultation.

A copy of the EPA submission and the Louth County Council submission are attached in Appendix 1 to this Report. These points raised by the EPA have been taken into account in the Screening for SEA.

7.0 Recommendation

It has been assessed that the implementation of Draft Variation No. 3 to the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015 will not give rise to any adverse environmental effect and therefore, the Draft Variation does not require strategic environmental assessment (SEA).

This conclusion has been drawn through consideration of the following factors:

- The Draft Variation is limited to the town of Navan;
- There is no change to the extent of existing lands zoned for development in Navan;
- The principle change arising from the Draft Variation is a change in zoning from 'WL' to 'E1/E2', 'A1' and 'G1'.
- The environmental effects of development on the subject lands, which are already zoned for development, have been assessed under the preparation of the Navan Development Plan 2009 as varied.
- The Draft Variation does not require Appropriate Assessment.

8.0 Determination under Article 13K(4)

Taking account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and having regard to the submissions received from the environmental authorities, it can be determined in accordance with Article 13K(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that Draft Variation No. 3 of the Navan Development Plan 2009 as varied will not result in any significant adverse environmental effects and therefore the Draft Variation does not require environmental assessment through the strategic environmental assessment process.

Appendix 1: Submissions received from Environmental Authorities



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

Forward Planning
Meath County Council
Planning Dept
Buvinda House
Dublin Road
Navan
Co Meath

22nd May 2019

Re: Proposed Draft Variation No. 3 of the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 13th May 2019 concerning the variation process and the determination as to whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Louth County Council thanks you for the notification and welcomes the opportunity to comment, however I wish to advise that Louth County Council has no observations to make on this occasion.

Yours sincerely,


Anthony Abbott King
Senior Planner
Louth County Council

Planning Department
Meath County Council
Abbey Mall
Abbey Road
Navan
Co. Meath

23rd May 2019

Our Ref: 190504.1

Re. Proposed Variation No. 3 to Navan Development Plan 2009-2015

Dear Sir / Madam,

We acknowledge your notice, dated the 13th of May 2019, in relation to the Proposed Variation No. 3 to Navan Development Plan 2009-2015 (the 'Variation') and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening.

The EPA is one of five statutory environmental authorities under the SEA Regulations. In our role as an SEA environmental authority, we focus on promoting the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Variation and advocating that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are addressed as relevant and appropriate to the plan. Our functions as an SEA environmental authority do not include approving or enforcing SEAs or plans.

As a priority, we focus our efforts on reviewing and commenting on key sector plans. For land use plans at county and local level, we provide a 'self-service approach' via our guidance document '[SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources](#)'. This document is updated regularly and sets out our key recommendations for integrating environmental considerations into Local Authority land use plans. In finalising your SEA screening determination, we suggest that you take this guidance document into account and incorporate the relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the Variation.

Meath County Council should determine whether implementing the proposed Variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

We refer you to Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations (S.I. No. 436 of 2004 as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011) which sets out the '*Criteria for determining whether a Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*', to use to determine whether the Variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Sustainable Development

In proposing and in implementing the Variation, Meath County Council should ensure that the Variation is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development. Adequate and appropriate critical service infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Variation.

In considering the Variation, Meath County Council should take into account the need to align with national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as incorporating any relevant recommendations in sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans.

Meath County Council should also ensure that the Variation is consistent with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes.

State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2016

In preparing the Variation and associated SEA screening, the recommendations, key issues and challenges described in our most recent State of the Environment Report [Ireland's Environment – An Assessment 2016](#) (EPA, 2016) should be considered, as relevant and appropriate to the Variation.

Available Guidance & Resources

Our website contains SEA resources and guidance, including:

- SEA process guidance and checklists
- list of relevant spatial datasets
- topic specific SEA guidance, such as how to integrate climate change into SEA.

You can access these resources at: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/>

EPA SEA Search and Reporting Tool

This tool allows public authorities to explore, interrogate and produce high level environmental summary reports. It is intended to assist in screening and scoping exercises. The tool is available through EDEN www.edenireland.ie

EPA WFD Application

Our WFD Application provides access to water quality and catchment data from the national WFD monitoring programme. The Application is accessed through EDEN <https://wfd.edenireland.ie/> and is available to public agencies. Publicly available data can be accessed via the www.catchments.ie website.

Future amendments to the Variation

Where changes to the Variation are made prior to finalisation, or where modifications to the Plan are proposed following its adoption, these should be screened for potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations (S.I. No. 436 of 2004)

Appropriate Assessment

You should ensure that the Variation complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where Appropriate Assessment is required, the key findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the Variation.

Environmental Authorities

Under the SEA Regulations, you should also consult with:

- The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, where it appears that the plan or programme, or modification of the plan or programme, might have significant effects on fisheries or the marine environment
- where it appears to the competent authority that the plan or programme, or amendment to a plan or programme, might have significant effects in relation to the architectural or archaeological heritage or to nature conservation, the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and
- any adjoining planning authority whose area is contiguous to the area of a planning authority which prepared a draft plan, proposed variation or local area plan.

As soon as practicable after making your determination as to whether SEA is required or not, you should make a copy of your decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection in your offices and on your website. You should also send a copy of your determination to the relevant environmental authorities consulted.

If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.

Yours sincerely,



Cian O'Mahony
SEA Section
Office of Evidence and Assessment