

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Determination**

under the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004), as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 501 of 2011)

**for** **Proposed Variation No. 5 to the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021**

An SEA Screening determination as to whether Proposed Variation No. 5 to the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021, as varied, is likely to have significant effects on the environment is being made under the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004), as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 501 of 2011).

In making the determination, the information contained in the accompanying SEA Screening Report (including information provided by environmental authorities and an examination of the need to undertake SEA against relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A *‘Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment’* of the above Regulations) is being taken into account. That information has been carefully considered and its reasoning and conclusion agreed with and adopted – allowing a determination to be made that Proposed Variation No. 5 would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

The Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021, as varied, provides for sustainable development and proper planning within the administrative area of Longford County Council. The Proposed Variation will further contribute towards sustainable development and proper planning by updating the current policy set out in the County Development Plan. The Variation, when made, will be one relatively minor part of this wider framework.

The Proposed Variation does not change:

* The overall objectives of the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021, as varied;
* Land use zoning provided for by the Plan; or
* The amount or type of developments that would can permitted under the Plan.

The Proposed Variation would amend current Policy CS2 in the Plan, as varied, to incorporate provision for the wider application of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (Vacant Sites Levy) to already zoned lands within towns in County Longford where public infrastructure and facilities are provided to facilitate development. This would further promote the activation of strategic sites in these areas and regeneration of town cores that is already contributed towards by the Plan.

Potential adverse effects that would arise from the existing Plan in combination with this change are present already and were envisaged and mitigated by the original SEA of the existing Plan. Any future development under the Variation would have to be subject to the various provisions of the existing Plan that relate to sustainable development and the protection and management of the environment (as well as other provisions from higher level plans/strategies). Considering these provisions, any residual adverse environmental effects occurring would not be significant.

Positive effects that would arise from the existing Plan in combination with this change (such as a reduced need to develop greenfield sites in sensitive, less well-serviced, less well-connected locations as a result of the regeneration of existing town centres) are present already, were envisaged by the original SEA of the existing Plan and would be further contributed towards. In this way, the Variation would further contribute towards the environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development that is already provided for by the existing Plan.

Taking into account all of the above, the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects and **SEA is not required** to be undertaken on the Proposed Variation.

**Signatory:** 

**Date:** October 2020