

# Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

## Proposed Variation of Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 - 2021



Planning & Environmental Consultants

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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Proposed Variation of Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 ...</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Purpose of the Proposed Variation.....	3
2.2	Relationship with other Relevant Plans and Programmes .....	3
<b>3</b>	<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Legislation.....	6
3.2	Screening Exercise .....	7
<b>4</b>	<b>Consultation with Statutory Environmental Authorities.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Conclusion and Next Steps .....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1	Final Determination .....	15
5.2	Next Steps.....	15

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 was adopted by Leitrim County Council on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The Development Plan sets out the Council’s policies and objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County from 2015 to 2021. The Plan seeks to develop and improve, in a sustainable manner, the social, economic, cultural and environmental assets of the County. The making of the County Development Plan was informed by the Housing Strategy, the Retail Strategy and the Strategic Environmental Report.

Strategic Environmental Assessment is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it. Under the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC), transposed onto Irish legislation by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 – 2011, certain plans or programmes are subject to SEA prior to their adoption and implementation. The Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 was subject to SEA prior to its adoption, the results of which are documented in the Environmental Report on the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Leitrim County Council intends to vary the County Development Plan 2015 – 2021, to make provision for a policy framework for implementation of the Vacant Site Levy, introduced under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. Under the requirements of the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, a Proposed Variation to a Development Plan is required to be screened for SEA. Screening is the process for determining whether a particular plan or programme, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and therefore warrants SEA.

McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan (MKO) has been appointed by Leitrim County Council to conduct a screening exercise for the Proposed Variation, to determine if SEA is required prior to its adoption. This report presents the results of the SEA Screening exercise carried out in relation to the Proposed Variation of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021.

## **2 PROPOSED VARIATION OF LEITRIM COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015 – 2021**

### **2.1 Purpose of the Proposed Variation**

The Proposed Variation of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 is intended to provide a policy framework for implementation of the Vacant Site Levy. The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 introduced the Vacant Site Levy as a site activation measure, to ensure that vacant or underutilised land in urban areas is brought into beneficial use, while also ensuring that a more efficient return on State-provided enabling infrastructure and helping to counter unsustainable urban sprawl. The Levy is intended to incentivise the development of vacant or idle sites in urban areas identified by planning authorities as “regeneration land” or “residential land”, with a view to bringing such sites into beneficial use.

The Vacant Site Levy makes provision for the active and efficient use of unused or underused zoned lands served by existing public infrastructure and facilities. The Levy can be imposed by Leitrim County Council under certain conditions in designated areas i.e. where sites remain vacant and site owners / developers fail to bring forward reasonable proposals without good reason for the development / reuse of such property in line with the provisions of the relevant Local Area Plan or County Development Plan. Leitrim County Council will implement the Vacant Site Levy as provided for in the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and in accordance with the requirements set out in the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government’s Circular Letter PL7/2016 (*‘Re: Implementation of the Vacant Site Levy as provided for in the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015’*, July 2016).

The Proposed Variation will make the following policy changes to the County Development Plan:

- Include new Objective 5b (after Policy 6a) in relation to implementation of the Vacant Site Levy under the heading of *‘Reinforcement of Existing Towns and Villages’*.
- Insert additional text at the end of Policy 12 to include reference to implementation of the Vacant Site Levy.
- Insert additional text at the end of Policy 40 to include reference to implementation of the Vacant Site Levy.
- Amend Policy 41 to reflect the changes to legislation brought about by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, with reference to the updated provisions of Part V.
- Amend Objective 56 to include reference to the reuse of derelict land and vacant buildings with town centres for enterprises and mix of retail and residential uses, in addition to retail uses.

### **2.2 Relationship with other Relevant Plans and Programmes**

The Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 sits within a hierarchy of legislation, plans, programmes and strategies, which include international, EU, national, regional and local levels. The principle requirements in relation to international Plans and Programmes have been incorporated into the national and regional Plans and Programmes.

The County Development Plan must comply with relevant higher-level legislation, plans and strategic actions and may, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions. The SEA Environmental Report for the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 provides an overview of the plans and programmes with which the plan interacts, including the following:

**International and European Plans/Programmes:**

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EEC
- Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance 1971 (amended 1982 and 1987) (Ramsar Convention)
- Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds
- UN Convention on Biological Diversity
- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)
- Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (1995)
- European Biodiversity Strategy (1998)
- Freshwater Fish Directive (78/659/EEC)
- EU Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection
- Directive 2000/60/EC Water Framework Directive
- Directive 2007/60/EC Flood Risk Management Assessment and Management of Flood Risk
- EU Drinking Water directive (98/83/EC)
- EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)
- EU Groundwater Directive (1980/68/EEC)
- EU Surface Water Directive (75/440/EEC)
- EU Urban Wastewater Directive (91/271/EEC)
- EU bathing Water Directive (76/160/EEC)
- EU Dangerous Substances in Water Directive (79/464/EEC)
- European Climate Change Programme Aims to reduce emissions;
- Kyoto Protocol (1997)
- Directive 200192/92/EC Energy performance of buildings
- Air Framework Directive, Directive on Air Quality
- Assessment and Management (Framework Directive) (1996/62/EC)
- Directive on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants (2001/81/EC)
- Directive 99/31/EC Landfill Directive
- Directive 2002/96/EC, The WEEE Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment
- Granada Convention for Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe 1985
- European Convention for Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe 1992
- European Landscape Convention (2000)
- European Strategy for Sustainable Development (2006)
- 6th Environmental Action Plan of the European Community (2002)
- The EU Environment and Health Strategy 2004- 2010
- Agenda 21 (1992). Action for Sustainable Development
- 'The Gothenburg Strategy' Communication from the Commission on Sustainable Europe for a Better World 2001
- EU 'Air Framework Directive' Directive on Air Quality Assessment and Management (Framework Directive) (1996/62/EC)

- EU Directive on National Emission Ceilings for Certain Atmospheric Pollutants WHO Air Quality Guidelines (1999).

**National Plans/Programmes:**

- National Development Plan 2007 – 2013
- Our Sustainable Future - A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland (DECLG, 2012)
- National Biodiversity Plan: Action for Biodiversity 2011 – 2016
- National Climate Change Strategy 2007 – 2012
- National Renewable Energy Action Plan National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 – 2016
- National Heritage Plan 2002
- National Landscape Strategy
- Food Harvest 2020– A Vision for Irish Agri-food and fisheries
- Putting People First – An action programme for Effective Local Government
- Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally
- Regional Plans/Programmes
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2010-2022
- River Basin District Management Plan 2009 – 2015
- Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Connacht Region 2006 – 2011
- Draft Regional Strategic Framework for the Central Border Region:

**Other Relevant Documents include:**

- Leitrim County Council Corporate Plan 2014 - 2019
- Leitrim Local Economic and Community Plan 2015 - 2021
- County Development Plan 2009 – 2015
- Carrick on Shannon Local Area Plan 2010 - 2019
- Urban Framework Plans for Ballinamore, Drumshanbo, Manorhamilton and Mohill.
- Social, Economic and Cultural Strategy for Co. Leitrim 2002 – 2012
- Carrick on Shannon Vision 2020.

## 3 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

### 3.1 Legislation

The European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires an environmental assessment be carried out for all plans/programmes, or amendments to plans/programmes, which are prepared for certain specified sectors. For other plans/programmes that do not meet the requirement for mandatory SEA, the screening procedure is carried out to determine whether the plan/programme, or amendment to same, is likely to have significant environmental effects. If significant effects are identified, an SEA of the plan/programme or amendment to the plan/programme is required.

The SEA Directive is transposed onto Irish legislation by 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. 201 of 2011) ('the Regulations'). In determining the need for environmental assessment of a variation to a Development Plan, Article 7 (13K) (1) of the Regulations states:

*"Where a planning authority proposes to make a variation of a development plan under section 13 of the Act, it shall, before giving notice under section 13(2) of the Act, consider whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A."*

The relevant Schedule 2A criteria are presented in Section 3.1.1 below. Under the provisions of Article 13, and following the appropriate consultation period, Leitrim County Council is required to determine whether implementation of the Proposed Variation would be likely to having significant effects on the environment.

This final determination takes into account the Schedule 2A criteria and the submissions received from the prescribed environmental authorities (see Section 4 of this document for details of this consultation).

#### 3.1.1 Screening Criteria

The SEA screening procedure is based on criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as presented below:

1. The characteristics of the plan, having regard, in particular, to:
  - the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
  - the degree to which the plan influences other plans including those in a hierarchy,
  - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
  - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,

- the relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
  - the cumulative nature of the effects,
  - the transboundary nature of the effects,
  - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
  - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
  - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
    - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
    - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
    - intensive land-use,
  - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

### 3.2 Screening Exercise

The Proposed Variation of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 is screened against the Schedule 2A criteria in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 Assessment of the Proposed Variation against Schedule 2A Criteria**

Criteria	Assessment
<b>1. Characteristics of the Plan</b>	
Degree to which the plan sets the framework for projects and other activities with regard to location, nature, size, operating conditions or by allocating resources	The Leitrim County Development Plan (CDP) 2015 – 2021 sets a framework for projects with regard to location, nature, size, operating conditions or by allocated resources. The CDP was subject to SEA during its preparation to ensure the integration of environmental considerations into the Plan and to ensure that it contributes to environmental protection and the sustainable development of the County. The proposed Variation of the CDP will further contribute to the sustainable development of Co. Leitrim, as it strengthens the policy context for the reuse and regeneration of existing vacant sites and properties on lands which have already been identified as suitable for such use. It is considered therefore that the proposed Variation will not give rise to any significant environmental effects; rather it will strengthen the existing mechanisms in place to ensure and promote sustainable development.
Degree of influence on other plans	The County Development Plan is influenced by a hierarchy of international, national and regional plans, strategies and legislation, and in turn influences plans and programmes at a local level. With regard to the degree of influence on other plans, the Proposed Variation to the CDP will be reflected in an Amendment to the Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area

Criteria	Assessment
	<p>Plan 2010 – 2019. The Proposed Variation also specifies the areas to which the new or updated policies can apply, including those within Tier 1 (Carrick-on-Shannon), Tier 2 towns (Ballinamore, Manorhamilton, Dromahair, Drumshambo, Kinelough and Mohill) and the Tier 3 villages (Carrigallen, Cloone, Dromod, Drumkeeran, Leitrim Village and Tullaghan).</p> <p>The Proposed Variation will apply to lands within these areas with the appropriate land-use zoning, i.e. Mixed Use, Commercial Town Expansion, Enterprise and Employment or Residential. These lands have been subject to SEA during the preparation of the Plan, and have been deemed suitable for such uses. In this regard therefore, the Proposed Variation will not give rise to any environmental effects not already assessed and mitigated for (where required).</p>
<p>Relevance for integration of environmental considerations (promoting sustainable development)</p>	<p>The Proposed Variation is intended to promote and encourage sustainable development on lands in need of regeneration and renewal, where the relevant land-use (Mixed Use, Commercial Town Expansion, Enterprise and Employment or Residential) has already been assessed and determined suitable. The County Development Plan was subject to SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) during its preparation to ensure that environmental considerations were fully integrated into the Plan.</p> <p>The Proposed Variation is consistent with the existing policies and objectives which are in place to ensure environmental protection and the promotion of sustainable development, and is intended to further strengthen this policy context for such development within the areas that have been identified as appropriate for this use.</p>
<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan</p>	<p>The Proposed Variation is intended to encourage development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration, in order to prevent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land,</li> <li>b) Urban blight and decay,</li> <li>c) Anti-social behaviour, or</li> <li>d) A shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.</li> </ul> <p>Such development will take place on lands that have been zoned for the appropriate use by the CDP. The Plan was subject to SEA and AA during its preparation, to ensure that the relevant environmental protection objectives have been integrated into the Plan. In terms of environmental</p>

Criteria	Assessment
	<p>problems, the focus of the Proposed Variation is on the encouragement of sustainable development and preventing the issues listed above. The Variation will therefore not give rise to significant environmental effects in this regard, but will have a positive outcome in the promotion of sustainable development.</p>
<p>Relevance for implementation of EU legislation on the environment</p>	<p>The Leitrim CDP sits within a hierarchy of legislation, plans and programmes, as described above. The Plan is required to comply with EU environmental legislation and where relevant sets out policies and objectives which implement this legislation, for example that relating to waste management, Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), EIA Directive (2014/52/EU), and the SEA Directive. The CDP was also subject to Appropriate Assessment under the requirements of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora), which determined that implementation of the Plan will not affect the integrity of any European Site. The Proposed Variation will not affect the implementation of EU legislation on the environment. The policies and objectives of the CDP which seek to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas will not be altered or affected by the Proposed Variation.</p>
<p><b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected</b></p>	
<p>Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</p>	<p>The Proposed Variation is intended to allow for implementation of the Vacant Site Levy, as an additional mechanism to promote appropriate development in the relevant areas. The use of these areas for such development has already been assessed as part of the SEA during the Plan-making process, as reflected in the land-use zoning. The SEA identified the likely effects of implementing the Plan, in terms of their probability, duration, frequency and reversibility. Where the potential for any negative effects was identified, the appropriate measure or change was integrated into the Plan to avoid such an effect.</p> <p>The Proposed Variation will further encourage sustainable development, thereby having a positive effect on the environment. It will not give rise to additional effects which have not already been taken account of during preparation of the County Development Plan.</p>
<p>Cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>The Proposed Variation has been prepared so as to be consistent with the policies and objectives of the Leitrim CDP, and will not give rise to any adverse</p>

Criteria	Assessment
	<p>environmental effects. The Variation to the Plan will also be reflected in an amendment to the Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area Plan (LAP) 2010 – 2019, both of which are intended to promote the reuse and regeneration of vacant and derelict sites. The proposed Variation in conjunction with the amendment to the LAP will therefore have an overall positive cumulative effect.</p>
<p>Transboundary nature of the effects</p>	<p>The assessment of potential transboundary effects was carried out during the SEA of the Leitrim CDP 2015 – 2021. The Proposed Variation is intended to strengthen the existing framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Co. Leitrim. It will not give rise to any effects, transboundary or otherwise, which were not considered and provided for during the Plan-making process. Implementation of the Proposed Variation will be subject to the environmental protection policies and objectives set out in the CDP, which has been subject to SEA and AA to ensure that negative transboundary effects do not occur.</p>
<p>Risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)</p>	<p>Implementation of the Proposed Variation will not create any risks to human health or the environment. The Proposed Variation is intended to prevent adverse effects on existing amenities due to the ruinous or neglected condition of any land, and to prevent urban blight/decay, anti-social behaviour and a shortage of habitable houses. The Variation will therefore contribute to reducing risks to human health and the environment.</p>
<p>Magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The Proposed Variation will allow for the implementation of the Vacant Site Levy within specific zoned lands in Carrick-on-Shannon, the Tier 2 towns and Tier 3 villages. The amendment to Policy 41 also provides for an update to the provisions of Part V, as required by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. As described above however, the Proposed Variation is intended to give effect to sustainable urban development as prescribed by the existing CDP, and will not give rise to any adverse effects not assessed and mitigated for as part of the Plan-making process. The Proposed Variation does not zone additional lands, and the new or amended objectives or policy which refer to particular areas will be subject to the statutory planning and environmental framework and existing policies and objectives set out in the CDP.</p>

Criteria	Assessment
<p>Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,</li> <li>▪ Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,</li> <li>▪ Intensive land-use</li> </ul>	<p>Co. Leitrim contains areas of special natural characteristics and cultural heritage. These areas were considered throughout the SEA and preparation of the Leitrim CDP and are protected by the relevant policies and objectives. The Proposed Variation relates to the reuse and regeneration of neglected or derelict sites within urban environments and to preventing a shortage of habitable houses or undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. Implementation of the Variation will therefore not give rise to adverse effects on areas of special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The Proposed Variation does not zone any additional land for development; rather it aims to promote the sustainable use of existing resources and sites, on lands already deemed suitable for such use. Any development that takes place on these sites will be carried out in accordance with the relevant zoning and the existing policy framework within the CDP. The CDP has been subject to SEA and AA to ensure the integration of environmental considerations into its preparation.</p>
<p>Effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, EU or international protection status</p>	<p>Implementation of the Proposed Variation will have no effect on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, EU or international protection status. The Proposed Variation relates to development on lands in towns and villages, in areas already zoned for Mixed Use, Commercial Town Expansion, Enterprise and Employment or Residential.</p> <p>The Appropriate Assessment screening of the Proposed Variation concludes that its implementation does not have the potential to result in impacts on any European sites or to influence other plans or projects in a manner that could potentially impact thereon.</p>

In assessing the Proposed Variation of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 against the required environmental criteria, it is determined therefore that the Proposed Variation will not give rise to significant environmental effects and does not require full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

## 4 CONSULTATION WITH STATUTORY ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES

Under the requirements of Article 13(A)(4)(a) of the Regulations 2004 (as amended), the SEA Screening Report was forwarded to the relevant statutory environmental authorities for consultation. The statutory consultees, as listed below, were invited to make a submission or observation in relation to whether implementation of the Proposed Variation to the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 would be likely to have significant effects on the environment:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment
- Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- All adjoining Planning Authorities

Two submissions were received; from the EPA and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. The key points raised in these submissions are presented below in Table 4.1, along with a comment on how these points have been addressed. Copies of the submissions received are presented in Appendix 1 of this document.

**Table 4.1 Review of Submissions**

No.	Key Submission Points	Comment / Response
<b>1</b>	<b>Submission from Environmental Protection Agency</b>	
	Any brownfield lands proposed for reuse / regeneration should be appropriately remediated to avoid or minimise any potential significant environmental or human health impacts that may arise. Development should be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the County Core Strategy and the principles of sustainable development.	Any development proposed on brownfield sites will be required to be carried out in line with the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 and in a manner consistent with the County Core Strategy and the principles of sustainable development, which ensure that potential significant environmental or human health impacts are avoided or minimised. This includes the appropriate remediation of sites where required.
	The assessments should consider and provide information on aspects such as contaminated soil removal / remediation, noise and air quality, waste management, possible service infrastructure provision issues, possible presence of invasive species and ensuring appropriate management / control, implications for biodiversity etc. Where these aspects are already provided for in the County Development Plan, a table showing the key policies/objectives would be	As described above, the proposed Variation will be implemented in accordance with the existing policies and objectives of the County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 and in a manner consistent with the County Core Strategy and the principles of sustainable development, which ensures that potential environmental sensitivities are taken into account throughout the development management process. The Strategic Goals of the County Development Plan set the framework for

<p>useful to include. This would clearly show the how the proposed re-use/re-development of these lands/vacant sites would take account of the any environmental sensitivities identified.</p>	<p>the formulation and evaluation of the policies, objectives and development control standards of the Plan. The Strategic Goals set out in Section 2.2.2 on Environment and Heritage include, <i>inter alia</i>, the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the built and natural environment, and minimising environmental pollution to air, water or land.</p> <p>The purpose of the proposed Variation is to bring identified vacant sites into beneficial use. This will require the assessment of individual planning applications, including the items outlined in this submission. However, the subject lands are already identified with a land-use zoning objective which allows their development, which was considered in the SEA and AA assessments undertaken as part of the Plan preparation.</p>
<p>The following plans should be considered in implementing the Variation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft National Planning Framework</li> <li>▪ Draft National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland</li> </ul>	<p>The Draft National Planning Framework requires a greater proportion of development (residential) to be facilitated on brownfield sites. The proposed policy frameworks are therefore consistent with this approach. With regard to the Draft National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland, the assessment of development or redevelopment proposals through the development management process (section 34 applications) will consider any impact which a development could have on water quality or capacity of existing water service infrastructure to cater for such development.</p> <p>Any changes to the Variation prior to finalisation, or modifications proposed to the Plan following its adoption, will take into account the final adopted National Planning Framework and National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland, and other relevant Plans/Programmes.</p>
<p>Future Modification to the Variation: Any changes to the Variation prior to finalisation, or modifications proposed to the Plan following its adoption, should be screened for the potential for likely significant effects.</p>	<p>Noted. Any further modifications will be screened against the relevant SEA Regulations Schedule 2A Criteria.</p>

	<p>Infrastructure Planning: Adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	<p>Noted. Adequate and appropriate infrastructure will be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any developments permitted during the lifetime of the Plan.</p>
	<p>Environmental Authorities: notice should also be given to the following bodies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government</li> <li>▪ Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine</li> <li>▪ Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment</li> <li>▪ Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht</li> <li>▪ Any adjoining planning authority</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. The bodies listed, including all adjoining Planning Authorities, were consulted as part of the Screening process.</p>
	<p>A copy of the Screening determination should be made available for public inspection at the Leitrim County Council offices and website, and should be notified to any Environmental Authority already consulted.</p>	<p>Noted. The final SEA Screening determination will be available for public inspection in the Leitrim County Council offices and on its website, and will be notified to the Environmental Authorities already consulted.</p>
<b>2</b>	<b>Submission from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council</b>	
	<p>Given the nature of the Variation and Amendment and the previous assessment of the plans, the conclusions reached by Leitrim County Council are justified and reasonable in the context of European sites.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>It is recommended that the Council consults the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) in its capacity as the statutory nature conservation body in Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>Given the nature of the proposed Variation, which will give effect to the requirements to introduce the Vacant Site Levy under the provisions of the Urban Regeneration &amp; Housing Act 2015, and taking into account the comment above from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, it was considered that further consultation with the NIEA was not required as part of the screening process.</p>

## **5 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

### **5.1 Final Determination**

The Proposed Variation to the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 has been screened against the relevant environmental criteria, as set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (as amended), as required by Article 7 (13K) (1) of the Regulations.

Based on this screening exercise and taking into account the submissions received from the statutory environmental authorities, it is considered that the Proposed Variation will not give rise to any significant environmental effects, in terms of the characteristics of the Variation or the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, and therefore SEA is not required.

### **5.2 Next Steps**

The Proposed Variation will be made available for public display at the offices of Leitrim County Council and on the Council's website. A copy of the final screening determination will also be notified to the Environmental Authorities consulted as part of this screening exercise.

# Appendix 1

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## Submissions Received from Statutory Environmental Authorities



Regional Inspectorate,  
Inniscarra,  
County Cork, Ireland  
Cigireacht Réigiúnach, Inis Cara

Chontae Chorcaí, Éire  
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Senior Planner  
Leitrim County Council  
Aras an Chontae  
Carrick on Shannon  
Co. Leitrim

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018

Our Ref: 171206.1

## **Re. Proposed Variation No.1 to the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021**

Dear Mr Greene,

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) acknowledges your notice, dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017, regarding the above and notes its contents.

### **SEA Determination**

We note your position with regards to the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Proposed Variation No.1 to the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021, implementing the requirements of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2105 with respect to the introduction of the Vacant Site Levy.

### **Comments on the Variation**

- Where any brownfield lands are proposed for reuse / regeneration, these should be appropriately remediated to avoid or minimise any potential significant environmental impacts or human health impacts that may arise. The development of these areas, should be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the County Core Strategy and with the principles of sustainable development.
- The assessments should consider and provide information on aspects such as contaminated soil removal / remediation, noise and air quality, waste management, possible service infrastructure provision issues, possible presence of invasive species and ensuring appropriate management / control, implications for biodiversity etc.
- Where the above aspects are already provided for in the County Development Plan, a table showing the key policies/objectives would be useful to include. This would clearly show the how the proposed re-use/re-development of these lands/vacant sites would take account of the any environmental sensitivities identified.
- There a few key significant plans currently (and undergoing SEA), which should be considered in implementing the Variation which include the following:
  - Draft National Planning Framework (DHPLG)

### **Future Modifications 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 the potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria as set out in *SEA Regulations Schedule 2A Criteria (S.I. No. 436 of 2004)*.

### **Infrastructure Planning**

In proposing the Variation, and any related amendments, variations etc. of the Plan, and in implementing the Variation, adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Plan.

### **Environmental Authorities**

Under the SEA Regulations (*S.I. No. 436 of 2004*), as amended by *S.I. No. 201 of 2011*, notice should also be given to the following:

- 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 to the planning authority 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.

A copy of your decision regarding the determination, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, should be made available for public inspection at your offices, local authority website and should also be notified to any Environmental Authorities already consulted.

Should you have any queries or require further information in relation to the above please contact the undersigned. I would be grateful if an acknowledgement of receipt of this submission could be sent electronically to the following address: [sea@epa.ie](mailto:sea@epa.ie).

Yours sincerely,



**David Galvin**  
*Scientific Officer*  
*SEA Section*  
*Office of Evidence and Assessment*  
*Environmental Protection Agency*  
*Regional Inspectorate*  
*Inniscarra, County Cork*

Your Ref  
Our Ref  
Date 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018  
Being dealt with by  
Email



Fermanagh & Omagh  
District Council  
Comhairle Ceantair  
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

**Brendan Hegarty**  
Chief Executive

Planning Department  
Leitrim County Council  
Aras an Chontae  
Carrick-on-Shannon  
Co Leitrim.

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: SEA and AA Screening of Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021 and Amendment No. 2 of the Carrick on Shannon Local Area Plan 2010-2019**

I refer to the above notification received on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017.

Given the nature of the Variation and Amendment and the previous assessment of the plans, the conclusions reached by Leitrim County Council are justified and reasonable in the context of European sites.

However, it is recommended that Leitrim County Council consult the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in its capacity as the statutory nature conservation body in Northern Ireland.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Clements', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hilda Clements  
Principal Planning Officer