

## Appendix 2 Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan

### Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports

# Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

of the

Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015

Prepared in conformance with Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992  
on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as amended

March 2009

## 1.0 Introduction

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive, compels competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site, the competent authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

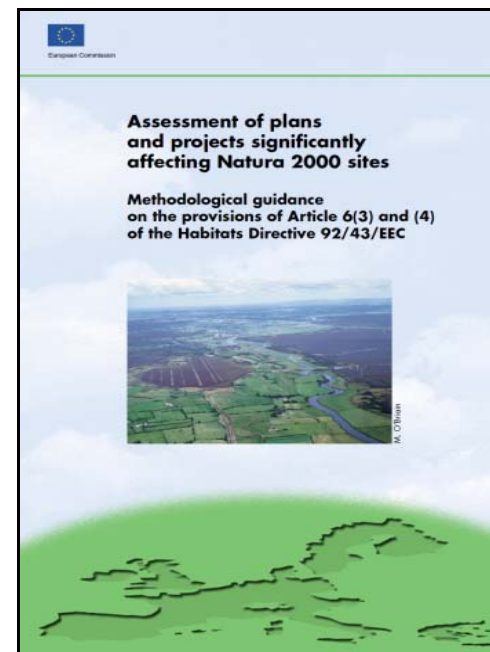
If the assessment concludes that the plan or project will have a negative impact on the site, it may only proceed and be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest as outlined in the Directive and the member state concerned shall take all compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 site is protected. The European Commission must be informed where this occurs.

Meath County Council are preparing a Local Area Plan for the Kilcock Environs as required by the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the parent policy document to the Local Area Plan.

The Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009-2015 has been screened to ascertain if the Plan should be subject to an

appropriate assessment as outlined in the Habitats Directive. The screening has had regard to the European Commission's guidance document entitled "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC". In line with the suggested assessment methodology put forward by the Commission, a screening matrix and a finding of no significant effects matrix have been completed.

The screening process has found that the Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009-2015 does not require an appropriate assessment as the implementation of the Plan would not be likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site.



## 2.0 Overview of Proposed Local Area Plan

The environs of Kilcock which are located in County Meath are designated in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 as being a Moderate Growth Town. It is an objective of the County Development Plan to prepare a local area plan for the Kilcock Environs.

The draft Local Area Plan has been prepared in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Kilcock Environs over the period of 2009 to 2015.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the requirements for the preparation of a Local Area Plan. Section 19(2)(as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2002) states that “*a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan.*” The Local Area Plan is therefore a subsidiary document to the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 and compliance with the policies and objectives in the County Development Plan is required for development in the Kilcock Environs.

The draft LAP envisages that the Kilcock Environs area will accommodate regional and local population growth, complemented by necessary localised community, education and commercial supports, through a Plan led approach that will also integrate with and complement the current and future expansion of Kilcock Town.

In accordance with Settlement Strategy Strategic Objective 1 of the County Development Plan, Variation No 2 was adopted on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008. This variation relates to the criteria for the release of residential zoned lands and indicates the number of

residential units to be catered for during the Development Plan period and post 2013. The Planning Authority have projected the number of additional households that could be accommodated in each urban centre up to and including 2019, primarily for infrastructural planning needs. The last three columns in Table 6 (as per table below) indicate the extent of remaining residential zoned lands in each urban centre, the appropriate minimum density being pursued in each centre and the potential yield per hectare of this land bank, if serviced and released for development. This is not to infer that all of these lands will be serviced and released for development over the course of the Development Plan or that the indicative minimum densities units per hectare will be applied to all lands in each development centres

Urban Centre	Planning Permission Granted – No Construct. Started	Houses Under Construct	Committed No. of Units	Projected Number of H'holds 2006 - 2009	Projected Number of H'holds 2010 - 2013	Total 2006 - 2013	No. of Units to Meet H'hold Targets	Remain. Undev. Resid. Zoned Land (Ha)	Density per hectare	Yield of Remaining Undev. Resid. Zoned Land
<b>LARGE GROWTH TOWNS</b>										
Navan	1,064	432	1,496	2,000	2,750	4,750	3,254	386	35	13,510
Drogheda Environs	1,111	227	1,338	1,100	2,400	3,500	2,162	56	35	1,963
<b>METROPOLITAN AREA – MODERATE GROWTH TOWNS</b>										
Dunboyne / Clonee / Pace	473	190	663	1,150	2,400	3,550	2,887	78	50	3,920
Kilcock	0	0	0	150	1,000	1,150	1,150	59	35	2,070
Maynooth	0	0	0	0	500	500	500	0	35	0

**Table 1:** Extract from Table 6: MCC County Development Plan

Variation No 2 indicates that in order to ensure the delivery of the distributor road in the study area, all lands immediately abutting this road need to be released for development. The phasing map for Kilcock has been revised and now excludes all those lands identified as open space and community facilities and also excludes the permitted distributor road. On that basis, and having regard to the permissible number of units in Kilcock

it is proposed that Phase One (2007-2013) release 56 hectares. The release of these lands will be linked to the availability of potable water and waste water capacity which in the case of Kilcock is sourced from Kildare County Council.

Table 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 identifies the provision of 1,150 residential units for the Kilcock Environs LAP area, which could result in a population increase of approximately 4,500 persons, calculated using a current average of 3.0 persons per household (based on 2006 Census average for County Meath). Therefore, based on these figures, population capacity of the LAP area is estimated to be a maximum of 4,500 persons, within the life of the LAP (subject to availability of infrastructure).

The Local Area Plan is comprised of a written statement which is divided into 6 sections, namely:

1. Background
2. Planning Context
3. Study Area Context
4. Strategy
5. Urban Design Concepts
6. Implementation and Monitoring

The Plan is also accompanied by land use zoning and objectives maps.

The draft Local Area Plan contains general policies relating to the protection of natural heritage and the need for adequate proposals for infrastructure and services to support development. These include:

KI POL 1 To promote and facilitate the provision of the necessary infrastructure to fully accommodate the demand for future population increases and economic development and in an environmentally sustainable manner.

KI POL 2: To secure the provision of water, wastewater treatment and waste management initiatives to accommodate the future sustainable economic and residential growth of Kilcock Environs, where necessary, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Kildare County Council.

KI POL 3: To facilitate the provision of adequate wastewater collection and treatment systems to Kilcock Environs to serve existing and future populations in accordance with the Settlement Strategy identified in this Plan, the Water Framework Directive 2000 , the Water Services Investment Programme and as finances permit, thus improving the quality of Meath's surface and ground waters.

KI POL 4: To protect and develop, in a sustainable manner, the existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the county and to control development in a manner consistent with the proper management of these resources.

KI POL 5: To implement the Water Conservation Programme, in order to conserve valuable resources by reducing wastage.

KI POL 6: To protect, maintain, improve and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses and rivers in the County, and promote access, walkways and other recreational uses of their associated public open spaces, subject to a defined strategy of nature conservation and flood protection.

KI POL 7: To restrict, where feasible, the use of culverts on watercourses in the County.

KI POL 8: To pilot the development and implementation of Integrated Water Management Plans in priority catchments in co-operation with the adjoining Local Authorities, in order to facilitate the development of policy relating to integrated water management across the Region.

KI POL 9: To ensure that “all large-scale developments incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) as part of the development proposals.

KI OBJ 1: To require that a Water Services Provision Strategic Framework Plan (Water /Wastewater /Surface Water Management) is provided, with details to service the entire County Meath lands in the Kilcock Environs and submitted for approval to Meath County Council Infrastructure Water Services at pre- application stage. The Plan shall include, inter alia:

- That the optimum solutions are provided for water supply, wastewater conveyance and surface water management for the entire lands
- The locations, sizes and design capacities of strategic mains serving the entire lands with spurs off for serving individual landholdings.
- Identify how water supply will be brought from this scheme to serve the development lands and the actual installation of the infrastructure necessary to provide water supply to serve the development lands
- How the waste water will be conveyed from the development lands to discharge into the Lower Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme

- How the surface water from the entire County Meath lands in the Kilcock Environs will be managed

KFR POL 2: To control development in the natural flood plain of rivers and develop guidelines, in cooperation with the adjoining Local Authorities, for permitted development in different flood risk category areas.

KFR POL 5: To control development in the natural floodplains of all rivers and streams where such development may have a negative impact on flood control, access for channel maintenance or future flood control works or might contribute to environmental degradation were flooding to occur.

KH POL 1: To protect, conserve and enhance the biodiversity and natural heritage within the Kilcock LAP study area, including wildlife flora and fauna, habitats, landscapes and/ or landscape features of importance to wildlife or which play a key role in the conservation and management of natural resources such as water.

KH POL 2: To promote the protection and preservation of existing hedgerows and to encourage planting of native hedgerow species of local provenance

KH POL 3: To protect and conserve ecological networks and prevent loss and fragmentation of ecological corridors where possible.

KH POL 4: To protect rivers and stream corridors and valleys by reserving land along their banks for ecological corridors and maintain them free from inappropriate development, and discourage culverting or realignment.

KH POL 5: To require that runoff from a developed area will not result in the deterioration of the quality of downstream watercourses or habitats.

KH POL 6: To promote best practice guidance for integrating biodiversity into new development such as the 'Green City Guidelines- Advice for the Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity in Medium to High Density Urban Developments. 2008'.

KH OBJ 1 To require any planning application that proposes development within or adjacent to the area designated as a NHA or pNHA to be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment, assessing the impact of the proposal on these areas with conservation designations. The Ecological Impact Assessment will be forwarded to the National Parks & Wildlife Section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government for their comments prior to the making of a decision by the Planning Authority.

KH OBJ 2 To require that all planning applications within Kilcock LAP are accompanied by a 'basic habitat assessment' in relation to large sites, carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist, including biodiversity management proposals and enhancing measures.

KH OBJ 3 To ensure that the Rye River corridor and its banks are maintained free from inappropriate development and promote that measures to enhance this river and its banks as an ecological corridor.

There are no policies in the draft Local Area Plan which directly relate to Natura 2000 sites as the plan does not concern the management of any Natura 2000 site and there are no such sites

within or abutting the plan area. The policies of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 in relation to Natura 2000 sites include:

HER POL 3: To require any planning application that proposes development within or adjacent to the area designated as a cSAC, SPA or pNHA illustrated on Map 8.3 to be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment, assessing the impact of the proposal on these areas with conservation designations. The Ecological Impact Assessment will be forwarded to the National Parks & Wildlife Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government for their comments prior to the making of a decision by the Planning Authority.

HER POL 8: To maintain, and where possible enhance, the conservation value of the cSACs, as identified by the Minister for the DoEHLG, and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this Plan.

HER POL 9: To have regard to the views and guidance of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG in respect of proposed development where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on candidate or designated Special Areas of Conservation.

HER POL 10: To permit development on a designated SAC or those proposed to be designated over the period of this plan, only where an assessment carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and National Parks & Wildlife Service of DoEHLG, indicates that it will have no significant adverse effect (such as disturbance, pollution or deterioration of habitat quality) on the protected area.

HER POL 11: To prohibit any development that would be harmful or that would result in a significant deterioration of habitats and/or disturbance of species.

HER POL 12: To have regard to the views and guidance of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG in respect of proposed developments where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on candidate or designated Special Areas of Conservation.

HER POL 13: To permit development on a designated SPA or those proposed to be designated over the period of this plan, only where an assessment carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and National Parks & Wildlife Service of DoEHLG, indicates that it will have no significant adverse effect (such as disturbance, pollution or deterioration of habitat quality) on the protected area.

The County Development Plan is the primary planning policy document for this area and its policies are also applicable within the Kilcock Environs.

It should be noted that Kildare County Council has prepared a Development Plan for Kilcock (the 2002 Development Plan). This is now under review. A draft Kilcock Local Area Plan has been produced and at the time of writing, public consultation on proposed amendments to this Draft Plan has been completed.

## 2.0 Overview of Applicable Natura 2000 Site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the boundary of the Local Area Plan.

The closest Natura 2000 site to the Kilcock Environs LAP area is the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC, located north of Maynooth and approximately 7 kilometers away (measured directly from point to point). Its location is shown in Figure 1. The following summary of the site is taken from the National Parks and Wildlife Service website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)).

**Site Name:** Rye Water Valley/Carton

**Site Code:** 001398

**Description:** This site is located between Leixlip and Maynooth. It extends along the Rye Water, a tributary of the River Liffey. The main importance of the site lies in the presence of several rare and threatened plant and animal species, and of a rare habitat, thermal, mineral, petrifying spring. The woods found on Carton Estate and their birdlife are of additional interest.

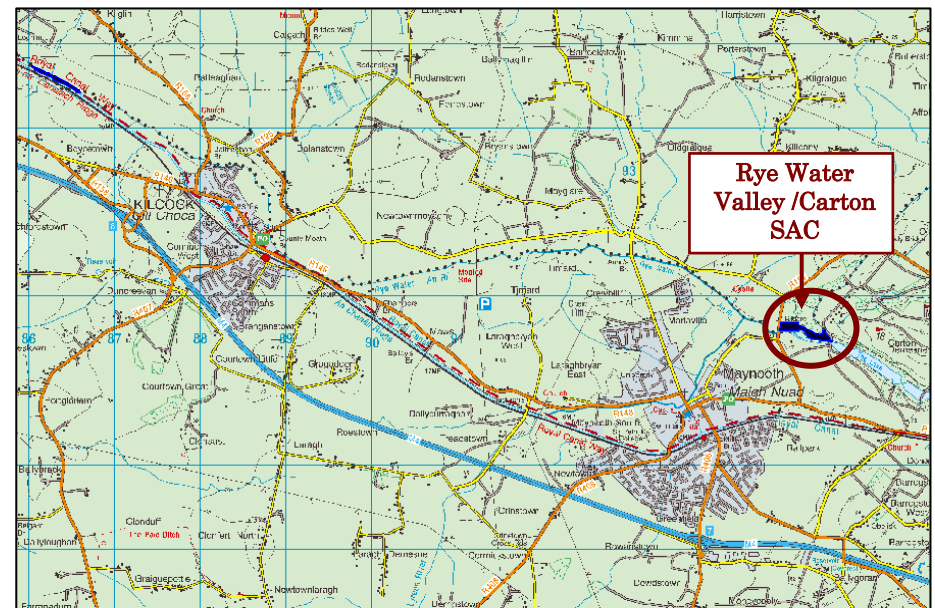


Figure 1: Location of Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC



The report 'The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland' (National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2008) assesses the current conservation status of protected species and habitats. With regard to the habitats and species recorded within the Rye Water Valley/Cartron Special Area of Conservation, it found that in a national context, the overall conservation status for petrifying spring habitat is bad (see details below). The overall national conservation status for the semi-aquatic snail, *Vertigo angustior*, which occurs in marsh vegetation near Louisa Bridge in the SAC is listed as poor. The overall national conservation status of the semi-aquatic snail, *Vertigo moulinsiana*, which also occurs near Louisa Bridge is rated as bad. The Rye Water is a spawning ground for salmon which has an overall national conservation status of bad. The White Clawed Crayfish, which has been recorded at Leixlip, has an overall national conservation status of poor.

PETRIFYING SPRINGS with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) (7220)	
Range	Good
Area	Good
Structure & Function	Bad
Future prospects	Bad
OVERALL	BAD

NARROW-MOUTHED WHORL SNAIL <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (1014)	
Range	Good
Population	Poor
Habitat	Poor
Future prospects	Poor
OVERALL	POOR

DEMOULIN'S WHORL SNAIL <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (1016)	
Range	Bad
Population	Bad
Habitat	Poor
Future prospects	Bad
OVERALL	BAD

ATLANTIC SALMON <i>Salmo salar</i> (1106)	
Range	Good
Population	Bad
Habitat	Poor
Future prospects	Poor
OVERALL	BAD

WHITE-CLAWED CRAYFISH <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (1092)	
Range	Poor
Population	Poor
Habitat	Poor
Future prospects	Poor
OVERALL	POOR

The Environmental Protection Agency manages a spatial data service called EPA ENVision. This is an internet based map viewer which gives state authorities and the public at large access to environmental data for the whole of Ireland. According to this, water quality in the Rye Water River was recorded as 'moderate status' north of Kilcock and 'poor status' east of Kilcock. Water quality varies from 'good' to 'poor' status around Maynooth.

Water supply for the Kilcock Environs is taken from the Kildare County Council water supply. This originates in Dublin City Council's Water Treatment Plant at Ballymore Eustace, via the Castlewarden Reservoir, the Ballycaghan Reservoir and interconnecting pipework. The Ballymore Eustace treatment plant sources water from the Poulaphouca Reservoir which is an SPA. A summary of this site, which has been taken from the National Parks and Wildlife Service website, is provided below.

**Site Name:** Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA

**Site Code:** 004063

**Description:** Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, located in the western foothills of the Wicklow Mountains, was created in 1944 by damming of the River Liffey for the purpose of generating

electricity from hydropower. The reservoir covers an area of approximately 20 square kilometres and is the largest inland water body in the Mideast and south-east regions. The principal interest of the site is the Greylag Goose population, which is of international importance. A range of other wildfowl species also occurs, including Whooper Swan, a species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. The site is also notable as a winter roost for gulls, especially Lesser Black-backed Gull.

According to the 'Water Quality in Ireland 2001-2003' report (EPA, 2005), water quality in the Poulaphouca Reservoir was measured as mesotrophic.

BirdWatch Ireland and the RSPB NI have agreed a list of priority bird species for conservation action on the island of Ireland. Greylag Goose and Whooper Swan are categorised on the list of amber species, i.e. of medium conservation concern (source [www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie)). According to BirdLife International (Birds in the European Union: a status assessment 2004), Greylag Goose and Whooper Swan have favourable conservation status.

### 3.0 Screening Matrix

#### Assessment criteria

*Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.*

The Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009-2015 has been drafted to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of this area over the lifetime of the plan. The Plan provides for the future growth of the Environs

area in a coherent and integrated manner taking into account the need to provide adequate infrastructural arrangements for all new development. It is therefore considered unlikely to generate significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:*

*- size and scale:*

No projects which would give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, arising from the size or scale of the project, shall be permitted on the basis of this Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- land-take:*

The draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan encompasses an area of approximately 95 hectares. The Plan area will accommodate regional and local population growth, complemented by necessary localised community, education and commercial supports. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from land take shall be permitted on the basis of this Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site:*

The closest Natura 2000 site is approximately 7 kilometres from the Kilcock Environs. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of

any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from distance to the sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects)

*- resource requirements (water abstraction etc.):*

Kilcock's water supply is taken from Dublin City Council's Water Treatment Plant at Ballymore Eustace, via the Castlewarden Reservoir, the Ballycaghan Reservoir and interconnecting pipework. Kildare County Council have completed the North East Kildare Water Supply Scheme and currently, Meath County Council have an agreement for an allocation of 8,000 p.e. which is capable of serving the entire LAP Study area. In terms of waste water treatment, Kilcock forms part of the Lower Liffey Valley Catchment area, which serves the towns of Leixlip, Celbridge, Straffan and Maynooth. The Waste Water Treatment Plant at Leixlip which serves Kilcock, is due to be upgraded to provide a treatment capacity of c. 150,000PE.

The draft Local Area Plan does not propose to make alterations to the water supply or waste water treatment systems serving Kilcock. Any such development would be subject to an appropriate assessment in the form of an Environmental Impact Assessment. The allocation of capacity in water services to serve the Kilcock Environs will be as per agreement with Kildare County Council.

*- emissions (disposal to land, water or air):*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from their emissions (disposal to land, water or air), shall be permitted on

the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- excavation requirements:*

The policy provisions included in the Plan and the parent Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 ensure that no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- transportation requirements:*

The transportation policies of the draft Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan.

*- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.:*

The Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan shall be adopted in mid 2009 and will remain in effect until 2015. The duration of the plan is irrelevant and not applicable to the ongoing protection of any Natura 2000 site. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc., shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- other:*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from other considerations, shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:*

*- reduction of habitat area:*

No projects giving rise to a reduction of habitat areas in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- disturbance to key species:*

No projects giving rise to significant disturbance of key species in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- habitat or species fragmentation:*

No projects giving rise to habitat or species fragmentation in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- reduction in species density:*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in species density in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.):*

No projects giving rise to significant changes in key indicators of conservation value in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- climate change.*

No projects likely to give rise to significant change in the climatological conditions experienced in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:*

*- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:*

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the structure of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.*

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the function of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:*

*- loss:*

N/A

*- fragmentation:*

N/A

*- disruption:*

N/A

*- disturbance:*

N/A

*- change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.):*

N/A

*Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known:*

N/A

#### **4.0 Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix**

##### Name of project or plan

Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009-2015

##### Name and location of Natura 2000 site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or adjoining the Local Area Plan boundary. The closest Natura 2000 site is Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC, which is situated approximately 7 kilometres from the Local Area Plan lands.

Description of the project or plan

The draft Local Area Plan has been prepared in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Kilcock Environs over the period of 2009 to 2015. The environs of Kilcock which are located in County Meath are designated in the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 as being a Moderate Growth Town. It is an objective of the County Development Plan to prepare a local area plan for the Kilcock Environs.

The draft Local Area Plan is based on the household projections contained in the Meath County Development Plan and allows for additional supporting community, amenity and local commercial development.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?

The Draft Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 site but rather the future planning and development of Kilcock Environs. The Plan does however contain robust and thorough provisions to protect and enhance the natural heritage of the plan area.

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?

There is a currently Development Plan for Kilcock town which has been prepared by Kildare County Council. A draft Local Area Plan for the town, to supersede the Development Plan, is in the process of being adopted by Kildare County Council.

The Local Area Plan for Kilcock Environs has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall

not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

The assessment of significance of effects

*Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.*

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant.*

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

In addition, it should be noted that any developments permitted in accordance with this plan also have a legal duty to conform with the relevant statutory and regulatory provisions enacted for the prevention of environmental pollution and degradation or other effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives.

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.

At the time of writing Irish legislation does not prescribe statutory consultees for the purpose of consultation on the appropriate assessment of land use development plans. However Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government states the Department should be consulted.

As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009–2015, consultation occurred with the following prescribed bodies - stating that a submission or observation in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process could be made to the Planning Authorities:

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2.  
Tel: 01 833 3190

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 678 3084

Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork.  
Tel: 021 487 5540

*Response to consultation.*

The response from the Coordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009) states that in terms of the protection of water quality and fishery status of the receiving waters, the status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive should

not be compromised as a result of this Local Area Plan. It is the view of the Department that any future development proposed on foot of the Local Area Plan should be considered premature until suitable sanitary services infrastructure, including treatment plant infrastructure, is in place to take and treat satisfactorily the anticipated increased loadings (both organic and hydraulic) that are expected as a result of the population increases projected in the Local Area Plan.

The response from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 recommends that the Local Area Plan should include a natural heritage section, should ensure that the Local Area Plan does not adversely impact on designated sites or protected species and should ensure that the Local Area Plan and any resulting development proposals take into account the need to protect, retain and enhance biodiversity generally as per the National Biodiversity Plan. The Local Area Plan should be screened for appropriate assessment. Reference is made to other designated sites such as natural Heritage Areas and protected species. The response details the importance of habitats such as hedgerows, trees, wetland areas for biodiversity and the need to ensure that development on foot of the Local Area Plan will protect these. Ground and surface waters should be protected from pollution. The Local Authority should ensure that adequate sewage treatment facilities and water supplies are in place prior to any development and the impact that any proposed water abstraction scheme would have on the natural heritage should be fully assessed.

*Data collected to carry out the assessment*

Who carried out the assessment?  
Meath County Council.

Sources of data

Existing records and information published by the NPWS and EPA.

Level of assessment completed

A desktop study was completed utilizing existing information from the relevant state authorities.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?

The full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed in this document which is available for public inspection at the offices of Meath County Council's Planning Department, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath.



# Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

of the

Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015

Prepared in conformance with Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as amended

June 2009



comhairle chontae na mí  
*meath county council*

## 1.0 Introduction

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive, compels competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site, the competent authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

If the assessment concludes that the plan or project will have a negative impact on the site, it may only proceed and be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest as outlined in the Directive and the member state concerned shall take all compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 site is protected. The European Commission must be informed where this occurs.

Meath County Council are preparing a Local Area Plan for the Kilcock Environs. As part of this process, the Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan and proposed amendments to the Draft Plan have been screened to ascertain if the Plan should be subject to an appropriate assessment as outlined in the Habitats Directive. The screening has had regard to the European Commission's guidance document entitled "Assessment of plans

and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC".

## 2.0 Overview of Proposed Local Area Plan

The Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan has been prepared to in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Kilcock Environs over the period of 2009 to 2015. The draft LAP envisages that the Kilcock Environs area will accommodate regional and local population growth, complemented by necessary localised community, education and commercial supports, through a planned approach that will also integrate with and complement the current and future expansion of Kilcock Town.

The Local Area Plan is comprised of a written statement which is divided into 6 sections, namely:

1. Background.
2. Planning Context.
3. Study Area Context.
4. Strategy.
5. Urban Design Concepts.
6. Implementation and Monitoring.

The Plan is also accompanied by land use zoning and objectives maps.

A number of amendments have been proposed to the draft LAP. These include minor mapping alterations which revise the scale and location of some zonings. The changes to the document include the addition of text and policies that relate to the need to acknowledge the location of the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC downstream of Kilcock and to ensure that proposals in the Environs LAP area do not impact on the SAC site, an additional

policy in respect of provision of educational facilities, clarification on open space requirements for residential developments and an updating of progress made in completing a flood risk assessment management study for the wider area of which the Environs are part.

### 2.1 Overview of Other Relevant Plans

A local area plan has been prepared for Kilcock town by Kildare County Council (plan adopted on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009). This provides for the full range of land uses appropriate to consolidate Kilcock as a self sustaining town. The zoning map for the proposed Kilcock Environs LAP (included in Appendix 1) illustrates the full zoned extent of Kilcock town and the Environs area.

## 3.0 Overview of Applicable Natura 2000 Site

### 3.1 Consideration of Potential Natura 2000 Sites

Mapping data has been consulted to ascertain the location of Natura 2000 sites geographically close to the plan area. Meath County Council GIS information was used to check for sites within the County. There are no Natura 2000 sites within or adjoining the Kilcock Environs area. The following are the closest sites to the LAP area (see Figure 1 below for location of sites):

- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (site code 001398): This site is located between Leixlip and Maynooth, approximately 7 kilometres from the LAP lands. It extends along the Rye Water, a tributary of the River Liffey. According to the site synopsis published on [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie), the main importance of the site lies in the presence of several rare and threatened plant and animal species, and of a rare habitat, thermal, mineral,

petrifying spring. The woods found on Carton Estate and their birdlife are of additional interest. The Rye Water River flows along the southern boundary of the Kilcock Environs LAP area upstream of this SAC site.

- River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (site code 002299): According to the site synopsis published on [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie), this site comprises the freshwater element of the River Boyne as far as the Boyne Aqueduct, the Blackwater as far as Lough Ramor and the Boyne tributaries including the Deel, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers. The site is a candidate SAC selected for alkaline fen and alluvial woodlands, both habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive – Atlantic Salmon, Otter and River Lamprey. Neither the River Boyne nor the River Blackwater is used as a water supply source or for disposal of treated wastewater for the Kilcock Environs area. The Environs area is also not linked to either of these rivers by any other water body or drainage patterns. In light of this and given the distance involved between the LAP lands and this site, it is not considered that this site requires any further study.

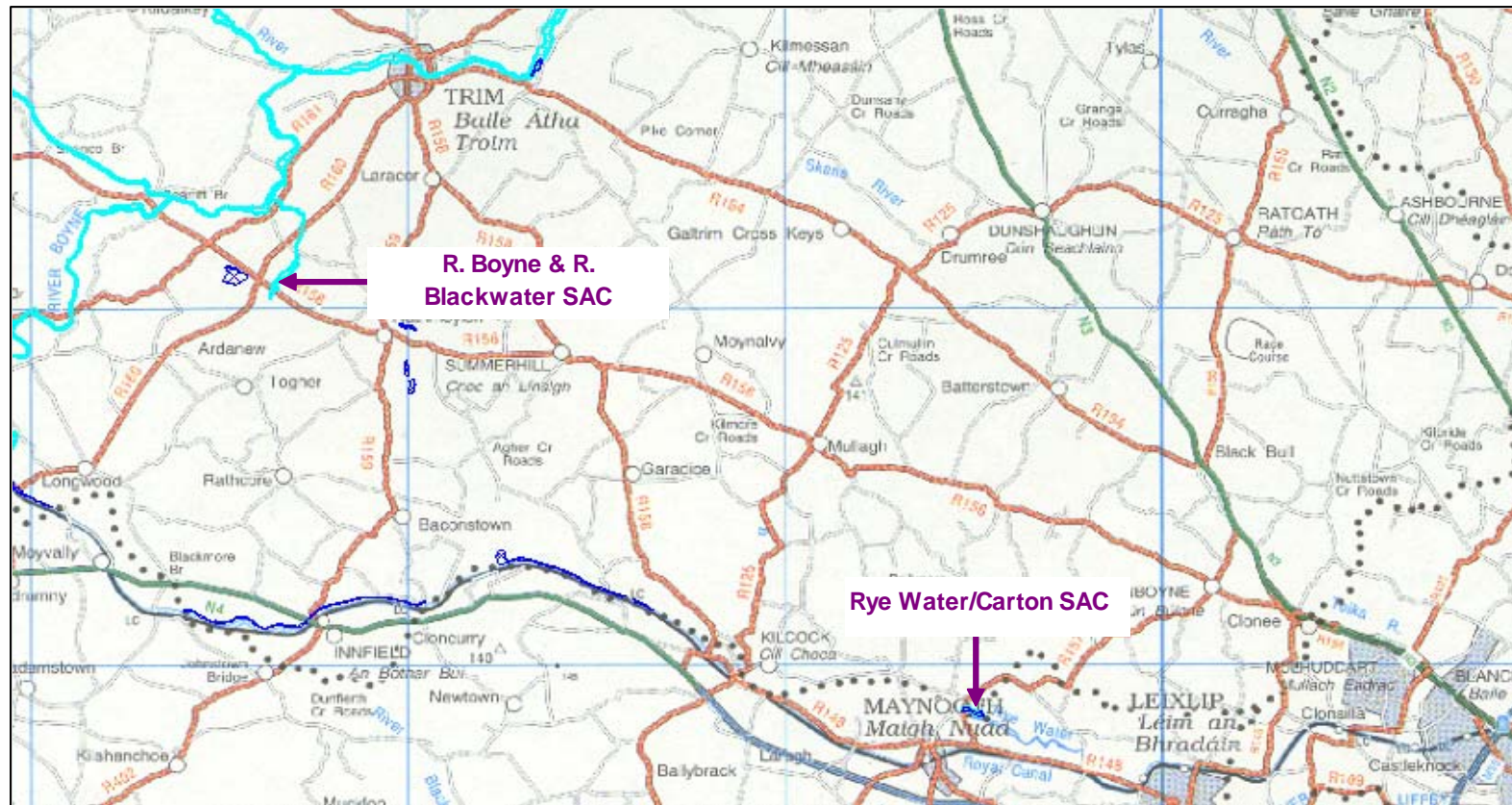
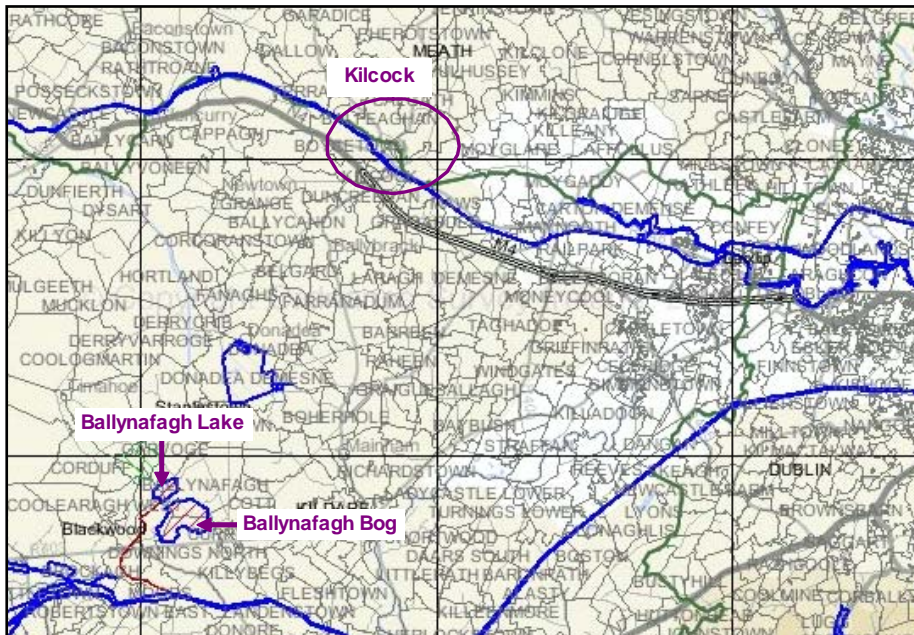


Figure 1: Location of Natura 2000 Sites within County Meath (note that other sites illustrated in dark blue on the map refer to Natural Heritage Areas).



Map information on the National Parks and Wildlife Service website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)) was used to check for sites in adjoining counties. The following are the sites in closest proximity to Kilcock Environs (illustrated in Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Location of Natura 2000 sites in proximity to Kilcock Environs**

- Ballynafagh Lake SAC (site code 001387): According to the site synopsis published on [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie), Ballynafagh Lake is located about 2 km north-west of Prosperous in Co. Kildare. It is a shallow alkaline lake with patches of emergent vegetation in the middle as well as around the shore. Although originally a reservoir, Ballynafagh Lake has developed a very natural vegetation with some

interesting plant communities, including alkaline fen, a habitat that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site supports a high diversity of molluscan species, with some rare species recorded, including *Vertigo moulinsiana*, a species that is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also of ornithological importance. Given the nature of the site and that there is no direct or indirect link between it and the Kilcock Environs area, it is not considered that this site requires any further study.

- Ballynafagh Bog SAC (site code 000391): According to the site synopsis published on [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie), this site is a raised bog situated about 1 km west of Prosperous in County Kildare. The area is directly underlain by muddy, fossiliferous limestones, interbedded with calcareous shales. The subsoils are predominantly clay-rich tills. All are of low permeability. The site is within the territory of a breeding pair of Merlin, a species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. Several pairs of Curlew and Snipe breed on the bog. Scrub species such as Stonechat, Redpoll and Long-tailed Tit occur on the cutaway. Raised bogs are a rare habitat in Europe, and in Ireland continue to be under threat. Ballynafagh Bog, although damaged, is of added interest as the most easterly site with a high proportion of intact raised bog habitat remaining in Ireland. Given the nature of the site and that there is no direct or indirect link between it and the Kilcock Environs area, it is not considered that this site requires any further study.

Natura 2000 sites can also be affected by virtue of the resources requirements demanded by land use plans. The water services requirements of the Kilcock Environs LAP area were examined

on this basis. Water supply for the Kilcock Environs is taken from the Kildare County Council water supply network. The North East Kildare Regional water supply scheme was commissioned in 2007. This scheme included the construction of a new 4.5 ml (4,500 m<sup>3</sup>) reservoir at Ballycaghan near Kilcock. The water supply for Kilcock Environs originates from the water treatment plant at Ballymore Eustace, via the Castlewarden Reservoir, the Ballycaghan Reservoir and interconnecting pipework. At present, Meath County Council have an agreement for an allocation of approximately 8,000 P.E. which is capable of serving the entire LAP area. The Kilcock Environs area does not therefore have an independent water supply source with capacity in water services provided through an agreement with Kildare County Council. Development as per this LAP must be in accordance with the capacity agreement and would not lead to augmentation works to the supply system.

In respect of wastewater treatment, Kilcock forms part of the Lower Liffey Valley Catchment area, which also serves the towns of Leixlip, Celbridge, Straffan and Maynooth. The waste water treatment plant at Leixlip, which serves Kilcock, currently has capacity to serve 80,000 population equivalent (p.e). The plant is currently being expanded to serve a total p.e of 150,000 with this expansion due to be completed in 2011.<sup>1</sup> There will be capacity in the Lower Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme, when complete, to service the entire County Meath lands in the Kilcock Environs.

The development of the Kilcock Environs LAP lands can be catered for within through agreed capacity limits in water supply and waste water treatment facilities. The issue of water

services for the LAP lands is not considered to be a factor which would impact upon any Natura 2000 sites.

### 3.2 Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC Site

As mentioned previously, the Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC site is located downstream of the Kilcock Environs area. The full site synopsis as available on the National Parks and Wildlife Service website is included in Appendix 2 to this document. A conservation management plan has not been finalised as yet for the site. A draft conservation plan was prepared to cover the period 1998-2003. This specified a number of management objectives for the site including:

- To maintain, and where possible, enhance the ecological value of the Priority Habitat, Petrifying Springs with Tufa formation (Cratoneurion)(<1%).
- To maintain, and where possible, increase the ecological value of other semi-natural habitats within the site, namely Dry Mixed Woodland (50%), Rivers and Streams (5%), Lakes and Ponds (5%), Scrub (5%), Lowland Dry Grassland (5%), Reedbeds and other swamps (3%), Freshwater Marsh (2%), Wet Mixed Woodland (<1%), Amenity Woodland (>1%) and Canals (<1%).
- To maintain, and where possible increase, the populations of the Annex I Bird species, the Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and other importance bird species within the site, namely Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) and Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*).
- To maintain, and where possible increase, the populations of the Annex II species found within the site, namely the Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*), White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius*

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan (2009) Kildare County Council

*pallipes*), Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*) and the Snail species *Veritgo angustior* and *Vertigo moulinsiana*.

- To maintain, and where possible increase, the populations of the Annex II plant species Shining Sicklemoss (*Drepanocladus vernicosus*), the legally protected plant, Hairy St. John's-wort (*Hypericum hirsutum*) and the Red Data Book species, Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*) and Green Figwort (*Scrophularia umbrosa*).
- To alter the site boundary to exclude the relevant areas from the cSAC.
- To initiate effective liaison between NPW and relevant authorities and interested parties (e.g. Landowners, Kildare and Meath County Councils, Carton estate, Intel, ERFB, Iarnrod Éireann, Dúchas – Waterways, Environmental Protection Agency, Leixlip and District Angling Club, REPS planners, the public etc.) on the management of the site.

Contact was also made with the National Parks and Wildlife Service to ascertain if any up to date conservation objectives are available. The following general objectives were supplied:

**Objective 1:** To maintain the Annex I habitat for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion).

**Objective 2:** To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: *Vertigo angustior*; *Vertigo moulinsiana*.

**Objective 3:** To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.

**Objective 4:** To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.

## 4.0 Screening Matrix

### Assessment criteria

1. Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.
  - The Rye Water River passes along the southern boundary of the LAP area, upstream of the SAC site. The quantity and quality of surface water flows from the Environs lands into the Rye Water must remain satisfactory and at a level which does not impact on the Natura 2000 site downstream.
  - The plan includes proposals for amenity walkways and recreational space along the Rye Water. The Kilcock Town LAP also includes for similar proposals along the Rye and Royal Canal. These works must not lead to impacts downstream at the SAC site.
2. Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

- size and scale:	The LAP encompasses approximately 95 hectares. The size and scale of the LAP lands alone is not considered likely to give rise to impacts on the SAC site.
- land-take:	The SAC site is not within the LAP area and therefore the overall land take of the site is unaffected.
- distance from the	The site is approximately 7 kilometres

## Appropriate Assessment Screening Draft Kilcock Environs LAP

Natura 2000 site or key features of the site:	away from the LAP area. There would not be any impacts expected by virtue of distance.
- resource requirements (water abstraction etc.):	The SAC site is not the source of resources such as water supply to the Environs area and therefore there would not be any impacts on the site associated with resource requirements in the LAP area.
- emissions (disposal to land, water or air):	Surface water from the Environs area flows into the Rye Water River upstream of the SAC site. The LAP requires that all developments incorporate SuDS proposals which would reduce surface water run-off to greenfield rates. In addition, the LAP requires that a Water Services Provision Strategic Framework Plan be prepared for the entire LAP area to ensure that the optimum solutions are provided for water supply, wastewater conveyance and surface water management for the entire lands. The proposed amendments (Policy KRF OBJ1) note that a Flood Risk Assessment Management Study (FRAMS) has been carried out in conjunction with the OPW and Kildare County Council with regard to flood management issues and alleviation measures for the area. As per this policy, development in the Environs area will be required to

	<p>adhere to the recommendations of this study.</p> <p>The proposed amendments to the draft LAP contain an additional policy (policy KH POL 7) which states “To ensure that development within the Kilcock Environs area will not negatively impact upon the Rye Water Valley/Cartron Special Area of Conservation.” The proposed amendments to the draft LAP require that surface water management proposals take due cognisance of the presence of the Rye Water Valley/Cartron Special Area of Conservation down stream of the Environs Area and demonstrate that the proposals would not have any undue impact on the site (policy KI POL 10 and objective KI OBJ 1).</p> <p>As a result, it is not considered that significant impacts will occur on the site as a result of emissions from the LAP lands.</p>
- excavation requirements:	The SAC site is not within the LAP area so would not be subject to excavation works on foot of this LAP.
- transportation requirements:	No impacts likely.
- duration of construction, operation,	No impacts likely.



decommissioning, etc.:	
- other:	The LAP proposes that lands alongside the Rye Water River be used for amenity purposes. The proposed amendments require that plans for the amenity walkway be subject to appropriate assessment screening and be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment to safeguard against any impacts of this nature (objective KH OBJ 5). It is not therefore considered that any significant impacts will be generated.

3. Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:

- reduction of habitat area:	The SAC site is not situated within the LAP area and therefore the extent of the habitat area will not be reduced.
- disturbance to key species:	Potential disturbance could arise from works for amenity features alongside the river or alteration in river flow owing to surface water management. However the policies of the plan and amendments control for this (e.g. objective KH OBJ5 requires appropriate assessment screening for the amenity walkway, policy KH

	OBJ 6 prohibits development that would result in a significant deterioration of habitats and/or disturbance of species, policy KI POL 10 requires that the provision of water services and surface water management in the Environs area shall not have any undue impact on the SAC site). Consequently no significant impacts are considered likely.
- habitat or species fragmentation:	None considered likely.
- reduction in species density:	None considered likely.
- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.):	The policies of the plan and amendments (e.g. KFR POL2, KFR POL3, KRF POL4, KRF POL5) are clear in the need to protect floodplains along the river and require definite proposals for surface water management for development in the Environs area. Similarly, lands adjacent to the Rye Water are designated for open space with limited development permissible as a result. KFR POL 8 states that, in general, a 10 metre strip will be kept on either side of the river. Proposed policy KH

	POL 7 requires that development within the Kilcock Environs area will not negatively impact upon the Rye Water Valley/Carlton Special Area of Conservation and proposed Policy KH OBJ 5 requires the submission of ecological impact assessments to demonstrate this. It is therefore not considered that impacts will result relating to water quality issues.
- climate change.	None considered likely.

4. Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:	The main potential risk from the development of the LAP lands for the site is considered to be related to the water quality of the Rye Water River as it flows through the Environs. Owing to the pattern of uses proposed alongside the river (open space) and consequently limited development opportunities and the policies in place in respect of surface water management, it is not considered that
- interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.	

	development as per the Environs LAP would significantly impact on the SAC site.
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5. Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

- loss:	It is not considered that the LAP would give rise to loss of habitat area in the SAC site.
- fragmentation:	No significant fragmentation considered likely.
- disruption:	No significant disruption.
- disturbance:	No significant disturbance likely.
- change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.):	Water quality has been identified as a key issue. Significant impacts are not envisaged owing to the distribution of land uses and specific policies of the LAP with proposed amendments.

6. Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known:

Taking into account all of the above, it is not considered that there are likely to be significant impacts on the SAC site as a result of the Kilcock Environs LAP with proposed amendments.

## Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix

### Name of project or plan

Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan.

### Name and location of Natura 2000 site

Rye Water/Carton Special Area of Conservation.

### Description of the project or plan

The Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan is a land use plan relating to the Environs area of Kilcock situated in County Meath. In tandem with the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, it will provide the local level planning context for development in the area. The plan consists of written text and a number of maps illustrating land use zoning, transport, urban design and other objectives.

### Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?

No.

### Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?

A Local Area Plan for Kilcock Town has recently been adopted by Kildare County Council.

### The assessment of significance of effects

*Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.*

The main potential for impacts on the site arising from this area is considered to be the water quality and flow of the Rye Water River which passes through Kilcock upstream of the site. This river forms the southern boundary of the Environs LAP area and is demarcated by open space zoning in the plan with the

objective of providing an amenity walkway along the lands. Controlling surface water run off from development sites to the river and impacts on the flood plain of the river and ensuring that any construction of the amenity walkway does not lead to any pollution are identified as the principal related factors. A Local Area Plan has been prepared for Kilcock Town Council by Kildare County Council. The plan contains objectives to develop the riverside and Royal Canal to include linear parks, seating arrangements, pedestrian and cycle routes and pedestrian crossings.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant.*

There are policies and objectives in the Kilcock Environs LAP which safeguard water quality and flow. These relate to specific issues such as surface water management and flood risk; the requirement for the submission of ecological impact assessments to demonstrate that water services and the provision of the amenity walkway and other related works will not have any impact on the SAC site; the requirement to screen proposals for the amenity walkway for appropriate assessment; and more general policies which are to ensure that development in the Environs area will not negatively impact upon the SAC site. In respect of the Kilcock Town LAP, the plan notes that pedestrian crossings over the Rye Water River and Royal Canal shall be designed so that there is minimum impact on either the river or the canal. The plan also contains a specific objective (Ref. NH 1) to protect all designated wildlife sites, including any additions or amendments to these, from any development that would adversely affect their conservation value, general policies to protect natural heritage and policies to protect riparian corridors.

Taking into account the above, it is not considered that any significant impacts will result on the site taking.

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.

At the time of writing Irish legislation does not prescribe statutory consultees for the purpose of consultation on the appropriate assessment of land use development plans. However Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government states the Department should be consulted.

As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft Kilcock Environs Local Area Plan 2009–2015, consultation occurred with the following prescribed bodies - stating that a submission or observation in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process could be made to the Planning Authorities:

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2.  
Tel: 01 833 3190

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 678 3084  
Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork.  
Tel: 021 487 5540

*Response to consultation.*

The response from the Coordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009) states that in terms of the protection of water quality and fishery status of the receiving waters, the status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive should

not be compromised as a result of this Local Area Plan. It is the view of the Department that any future development proposed on foot of the Local Area Plan should be considered premature until suitable sanitary services infrastructure, including treatment plant infrastructure, is in place to take and treat satisfactorily the anticipated increased loadings (both organic and hydraulic) that are expected as a result of the population increases projected in the Local Area Plan.

The response from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 recommends that the Local Area Plan should include a natural heritage section, should ensure that the Local Area Plan does not adversely impact on designated sites or protected species and should ensure that the Local Area Plan and any resulting development proposals take into account the need to protect, retain and enhance biodiversity generally as per the National Biodiversity Plan. The Local Area Plan should be screened for appropriate assessment. Reference is made to other designated sites such as natural Heritage Areas and protected species. The response details the importance of habitats such as hedgerows, trees, wetland areas for biodiversity and the need to ensure that development on foot of the Local Area Plan will protect these. Ground and surface waters should be protected from pollution. The Local Authority should ensure that adequate sewage treatment facilities and water supplies are in place prior to any development and the impact that any proposed water abstraction scheme would have on the natural heritage should be fully assessed.

Two further submissions were received from the Department following display of the draft LAP. The first of these was from the spatial planning unit. It addressed spatial planning issues and the SEA and AA screening. It advised that further

explanatory statements should be provided to illustrate how there would be no effects on the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC downstream from these lands. The Department advise that when constructing amenity walkways etc. along the Rye Water river, they should be subject to appropriate assessment screening and if necessary a stage 2 AA. It also queried whether the Kildare LAP has been taken into account in considering cumulative or in combination impacts.

The second submission addressed conservation and architectural heritage issues. General advice was provided on incorporating a suitable approach and policies for architectural heritage in the LAP. The submission outlined the opinion of the Department that the draft LAP has the potential to impact downstream on the Rye Water Valley Carton SAC and should therefore be subject to appropriate assessment. The combination or cumulative impact should also be assessed particularly in combination with the Kildare County Council LAP for Kilcock. It is stated that there is also potential to impact negatively on the hedgerow and watercourse biodiversity. If bat species or otters are present, the LAP could impact negatively on these species which are strictly protected by the Habitats Directive.

A submission was received from the Environmental Protection Agency following display of the draft LAP. The submission:

- Noted Meath County Council's position in respect of the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Local Area Plan.
- Advised of the criteria which should be taken into account in determining whether or not the plan would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment and that a copy of the decision regarding SEA screening should be made available for public inspection at Meath

County Council offices and referred to the environmental authorities already consulted.

- Outlined a number of issues which should be considered during the preparation of the plan.
- Detailed previous correspondence from the EPA regarding other LAPs. The Authority noted their view that there exists the possibility for significant cumulative environmental effects due to the proximity of, and interaction between, the many LAPs being prepared in Meath. Previous correspondence on this matter was also highlighted.
- Advised of the EPA's online interactive GIS map viewer, ENVision, as a source of environmental information and data.
- Listed a number of documents to which account should be taken where appropriate.
- Advised that in proposing and amending the Plan, and any related amendments or variations thereof, 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. The submission refers to the responsibilities and obligations of Meath County Council in relation to national and EU environmental legislation and states that the Plan should provide for the inclusion, where appropriate, of the policies and recommendations of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 (and associated SEA and Appropriate Assessment) and the Regional Planning Guidelines.
- Advised of the requirement to give notice to other statutory bodies.

*Data collected to carry out the assessment*

Who carried out the assessment?

Meath County Council.

Sources of data

Existing records and information published by the NPWS and EPA.

Level of assessment completed

A desktop study was completed utilizing existing information from the relevant state authorities.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?

The full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed in this document which is available for public inspection at the offices of Meath County Council's Planning Department, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath.





## APPENDIX 2 – RYE WATER VALLEY/CARTON SAC SITE SYNOPSIS

### SITE SYNOPSIS

**SITE CODE: RYE WATER VALLEY/CARTON**

**SITE CODE: 001398**

This site is located between Leixlip and Maynooth. It extends along the Rye Water, a tributary of the R. Liffey.

The Rye Water in Carton Estate is dammed at intervals, creating a series of lakes. Reed Grass (*Glyceria maxima*) is frequent around the lakes, along with Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) and Starwort (*Callitriche* spp.). Along the remainder of the site the river has recently been dredged and much of the Reed fringe removed.

To the north-west of Carton Bridge a small clump of Willows (*Salix* spp.), with Dogwood (*Cornus* sp.) some Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) occurs. The ground flora found here includes Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Common Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), Wavy Bittercress (*Cardamine flexuosa*) and Bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*).

The woods on Carton Estate are mostly old demesne woods with both deciduous and coniferous species. Conifers, including some Yew (*Taxus baccata*) are dominant, with Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Oak (*Quercus* sp.), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Ash and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) also occurring. The ground

flora is dominated by Ivy (*Hedera helix*) with such species as Hedge Woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*), Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*), Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*), Common Dog-violet (*Viola riviniana*), Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), Ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) and Ivy Broomrape (*Orobanche hederæ*) also occurring.

Hairy St. John's-wort (*Hypericum hirsutum*), a species legally protected under the Flora Protection Order (1987), occurs in Carton Estate; there is an old record from the estate for the similarly protected, Hairy Violet (*Viola hirta*), but this has not been recorded from here in recent years. Another species listed in the Red Data Book, Green Figwort (*Scrophularia umbrosa*), occurs on the site in several locations by the Rye Water. The woods at Carton Demesne are the site of a rare Myxomycete fungus, *Diderma deplanatum*.

Within the woods, Blackcap, Woodcock and Long-eared Owl have been recorded. Little Grebe, Coot, Moorhen, Tufted Duck, Teal and Kingfisher, the latter a species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, occur on and about the lake.

The marsh, mineral spring and seepage area found at Louisa Bridge supports a good diversity of plant species, including Stoneworts, Arrowgrass (*Triglochin palustris*), Purple Moorgrass (*Molinea caerulea*), Sedges (*Carex* spp.), Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), Marsh Lousewort (*Pedicularis palustris*), Grass-of-parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*) and Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*). The mineral spring found at the site is of a type considered to be rare in Europe and is a habitat listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. The Red Data Book species Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*) is found



growing on a wall at Louisa Bridge. The Rye Water is a spawning ground for Trout and Salmon, and the rare, White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) has been recorded at Leixlip. The latter two species are listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. The semi-aquatic snails *Vertigo angustior* and *V. moulinsiana* occur in marsh vegetation near Louisa Bridge; both are rare in Ireland and Europe and are listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. The scarce Dragonfly, *Orthetrum coerulescens*, has been recorded at Louisa Bridge.

The main importance of the site lies in the presence of several rare and threatened plant and animal species, and of a rare habitat, thermal, mineral, petrifying spring. The woods found on Carton Estate and their birdlife are of additional interest.