

Draft Variation No.2 to Navan  
Development Plan 2009-2015  
SEA Screening Report of Material Alterations

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## 1 Introduction

Material Alterations to Variation No. 2 to the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015 have been proposed by the Elected Members of Meath County Council. These alterations have arisen following a review of the Chief Executive's Report on submissions received during the public display period of Draft Variation No.2 by the Elected Members of the Council.

A total of 18 submissions were received on Draft Variation No. 2 of the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015, 9 of which were received during the public consultation period with a further 10 from government bodies. The issues raised by the submissions were summarised and the response and recommendation of the Chief Executive was provided in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Following consideration of the Chief Executive's Report on the submissions, the Elected Members decided to make a number of changes which are considered to be Material Alterations in response to a number of issues raised in the submissions.

As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, all land use plans, and their variations, must undergo a formal 'test' or be screened to see if they would have likely significant effects on the environment. In order to comply with Section 13(6)(aa) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to make a determination that a SEA is required *"to be carried out as respects one or more than one proposed material alteration of the draft development"*, this report has been prepared and considers whether the material alterations to Draft Variation No.2 will have any likely significant environmental effects, and as such, would therefore require the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

In order to assess whether the Material Alterations proposed by the Elected Members of Meath County Council of Variation No.2 require full Strategic Environmental Assessment, Meath County Council carried out this SEA screening exercise which identified if any of the proposed material alterations, as outlined in the public consultation document entitled 'Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Variation No.2 of the Navan Development Plan, would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment.

## 2 Appropriate Assessment Screening

Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening has been undertaken on the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Variation No.2 of the Navan Development Plan. AA is an assessment process relating to Natura 2000, or European, sites - these sites have been designated or proposed for designation by virtue of their ecological importance.

The Habitats Directive, its transposing Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provide the requirement to screen the alterations for effects on European Sites. If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant or if the potential for impact cannot be ruled out, then the alterations must undergo Stage 2 AA.

The AA Screening process has determined that the Proposed Material Alterations would not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network of sites and, therefore, Stage 2 AA is not necessary.

### 3 SEA Screening Analysis

Table 1 examines whether each part of the Proposed Material Alterations would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus would warrant the undertaking of Strategic Environmental Assessment). The text of Draft Variation No.2 is shown in its normal font. Proposed deletions are shown in **Red** strikethrough text. Proposed additions are shown as **blue** text.

In the event, that one or more alterations would be likely to hold significant environmental impacts, Table 1 will which will provide details on:

- The likely significant effects, if unmitigated, of implementing the Proposed Material Alterations in combination with the Draft Plan;
- Key mitigation measure(s) that are already contained within the Draft Plan; and Residual non-significant adverse effects.

Effects encompass the full range of effects, including those arising cumulatively – such as those potentially arising as a result of interactions with other Proposed Material Alterations, the provisions of the Draft Plan and other plans and programmes.

The examination takes account relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A ‘Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment’ of the SEA Regulations, as amended, (see Section 2.5) and will be updated to take account of any submissions or observations received from environmental authorities.

Table 1: Screening of Proposed Amendments to Draft Variation No.2 to the Navan Town Development Plan 2009-2015

Alteration No.	Proposed Material Alteration	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening
Amendments No.1	<p>Replace ECON DEV OBJ 8 as proposed in the Draft Variation with the following spot objective in relation to the proposed strategic employment zone at Farganstown:</p> <p><del>ECON DEV OBJ 8</del></p> <p><del>To Support the delivery of the Boyne Valley Food Hub on lands at Farganstown.</del></p> <p>ECON DEV OBJ 8</p> <p>To facilitate the development of lands at Farganstown identified as E1/E2 “Strategic Employment Zone” solely for the development of major employment proposals including the ‘Boyne Valley Food Hub’.</p>	<p>The proposed alteration supports the delivery of the Boyne Valley Food Hub and expands its commitment to facilitate other major employment proposals making Objective 8 compatible with its E1/E2 zoning. The proposed alterations will not result in environmental effects</p> <p>Further SEA is not required.</p>
Amendments No.2	<p>Amend the references to Master Plans 9 and 10 on page 54 as follows:</p> <p><del>Master Plan 9-10</del></p> <p><del>Master Plan 10-9</del></p>	<p>The proposed alteration entails a correction to the Draft Variation text where Masterplan 9 reflected the requirements of Masterplan 10.</p> <p>Further SEA not required.</p>
Amendments No.3	<p>Amend section 7.6 of the Draft Variation as follows:</p> <p>The NTA <del>Draft</del> Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035 supports the provision of Phase II of the Rail Line to Navan. It highlights that ‘Navan is the only Designated Town in the Hinterland that does not currently have a rail service to Dublin city centre. A new rail line linking Navan to Dublin city centre would support regional planning objectives and facilitate Navan’s sustainable development.’ Furthermore, it is noted that Navan is the only administrative capital in the mid-east region which currently does not enjoy rail access. <del>The Transport Strategy states that Phase II of the rail line will not be developed pending the next review of the Strategy (2022). Pending that review, the Strategy</del> requires that the corridor previously identified for a rail link to Navan should be protected from development intrusion. In particular, Measure RAIL 4 (see NTA’s draft Transport Strategy) is of relevance which is to seek 'the provision of a new</p>	<p>The proposed alteration clarifies that the development adjacent to and within the vicinity the rail corridor can proceed in advance of development of the rail corridor provided the corridor is preserved for the development of a new rail line.</p> <p>Development of the area surrounding the rail corridor in advance of completion of the rail link has potential to increase traffic in the short term until such time as the rail link becomes operational.</p> <p>Potentially short term negative impacts on traffic will be mitigated by polices contained within the Navan Development Plan as follows:</p>

Alteration No.	Proposed Material Alteration	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening
	<p>rail line from Navan to join the recently constructed spur to Dunboyne and Pace, for onward travel to Dublin city centre. The timing of this line construction and the roll out of services will be subject to economic assessment and the timing and scale of development in the Navan area.’ <i>That is not to suggest that development cannot proceed adjacent to and in the vicinity of the corridor subject to no physical encroachment of the rail corridor reservation.</i></p>	<p>ECON DEV Pol 9 of the Navan development Plan: <i>‘To encourage the integration of employment locations with other land uses and the transportation network, and in particular, ensure that the location of employment intensive land uses are located in proximity to existing and planned strategic routes, where public transport is viable.</i></p> <p>And</p> <p>INF POL 25 which states: <i>To extend, re-route and create new bus routes to meet travel demands and reduce trip times within the development boundary of Navan and Environs.</i></p> <p>Therefore, further SEA is not required.</p>
<p><b>Amendments No.4</b></p>	<p><b>Section 2A2 Strategic Planning Approach</b>, 3.2 Master Plans, 3.9 Neighbourhood Strategy, and 4.5.3 Meath County Retail Strategy</p> <p>Omit the reference to the MP6 lands as a ‘Secondary Commercial Quarter’ and replace with ‘Town Centre Expansion Area’ throughout the Draft Variation as follows:</p> <p><b>2A2 Strategic Planning Approach</b></p> <p>To facilitate the consolidation of commercial, retail, employment and residential uses in central areas of the town and identified opportunity sites <b>including Meath County Council’s Railway Street Offices</b> thus reinforcing the primacy of the town centre <del>and secondary commercial quarter;</del> <b>and town centre expansion area;</b></p> <p><b>Section 3.3</b></p> <p>The County Council Offices are located adjacent to the <del>secondary commercial quarter (previously town centre expansion lands);</del> <b>town centre expansion area</b></p>	<p>The proposed alteration comprises renaming of the secondary commercial quarter to the town centre expansion area and will not result in environmental effects.</p>

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	<p><b>2.11 Movement</b></p> <p>To facilitate the consolidation of commercial, retail, employment and residential uses in central areas of the town and identified opportunity sites including Meath County Council’s Railway Street offices thus reinforcing the primacy of the town centre and <del>secondary commercial quarter</del>; town centre expansion area</p> <p><b>3.2 Master Plans</b></p> <p>Master Plan 6 relates to land adjoining the core retail area and identified as a <del>secondary commercial Quarter</del> town centre expansion area located to the north of the former rail line <del>adjoining the existing town centre which provides primarily for the area designated for town centre expansion</del></p> <p><b>3.9 Neighbourhood Strategy</b></p> <p>The development strategy proposed in this plan is designed to reinforce the town centre as a place for work, shopping, services and living. The development strategy also provides for the <del>expansion of the town centre</del> provision of a <del>secondary commercial quarter</del> town centre expansion area</p> <p>Definition of Navan’s Core Retail Area, <del>Secondary Commercial Quarter</del> Town Centre expansion area &amp; Town Centre Figure 4, above identifies the Core Retail Frontage Area of Navan. The Core Retail Area consists of the Navan Shopping Centre and Kennedy Road, Trim gate Street, Market Square, the south-western end of Watergate Street and the northern end of Ludlow Street. 1 The Core Retail Area is normally defined as the area including and immediate to the ‘prime pitch’. That is the area that achieves the highest rentals, best yields, is highest in demand from operators, is overwhelmingly retail floorspace and has the highest footfall of shoppers. The Navan Development Plan includes for the provision of a <del>secondary commercial quarter to include Railway Street and the previously identified Town Expansion lands along Carriage Road</del> Town Centre expansion area on lands along Carriage Road</p>	



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	<p>Where retail development in an edge-of-centre site is being proposed, other than the lands identified with a B1 “Town Centre” land use zoning objective, only where the applicant can demonstrate and the Planning Authority is satisfied that there are no sites or potential sites including vacant units within a town centre/  <del>identified town centre expansion area</del> <del>town centre expansion area</del> <del>secondary commercial quarter area</del></p>	
	<p><b>Strategic Guidance on the Location of Retail Development</b></p> <p>The ‘County Meath Retail Strategy’ provides a strategic policy framework for the spatial distribution of new retail development in Navan. Navan has potential for expansion of the town centre on sites and areas adjacent or close to the existing centre including the identified <del>secondary commercial quarter</del> <del>town centre expansion area</del> <del>town centre expansion area</del></p> <p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>In terms of retail, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:</p> <p><b>RET DEV POL 1</b> To promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and town centre functions in Navan on lands identified with a B1 “Town Centre” land use zoning objective to include the identified area for <del>town centre expansion</del> <del>secondary commercial quarter</del> <del>town centre expansion</del> in order to sustain its competitiveness and importance as a designated County Town Centre and ‘Level 2 Centre’ in the Greater Dublin Area.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <p>In terms of retail, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:</p> <p><b>RET DEV OBJ 1</b> To assess the provision of new retail development outside the designated retail core area and the <del>secondary commercial quarter</del> <del>identified town centre expansion area</del> <del>town centre expansion area</del> (both areas located on lands</p>	

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	<p>identified with a B1 “Town Centre” land use zoning objective), in accordance with the sequential test as outlined in the County Meath Retail Strategy.</p> <p>Amend section 1.4.10 as follows:</p> <p><del>1.5.9</del> <u>1.4.10</u> Integrated Development Framework Plan</p> <p>The Navan Integrated Development Framework Plan was prepared in December 2002 (and updated in 2009) and has a time frame up to 2016 <del>which covers the current Navan Development Plan</del>. The overall <del>Master</del>plan for Navan seeks to make the town a more accessible and attractive town that could accommodate an ultimate population horizon of 60,000 persons. Central to the overall strategy is the objective of making Navan a self-sustaining community in both economic and environmental terms and to provide a quality urban environment for its citizens.</p> <p>The <del>Master</del>plan shows the overall consolidation of development largely within the existing zoned lands. The more intensive redevelopment is focused around the proposed new <del>central</del> rail station.</p> <p>The <del>delay in absence of a timeframe in which</del> the delivery of a direct rail link to Dublin <del>can be expected has direct implications in permitting continued development of existing zoned lands without compromising or diminishing the development options which the rail link would facilitate requires that the corridor previously identified for a rail link to Navan should continue to be protected from development intrusion. That is not to suggest that development cannot proceed adjacent to and in the vicinity of the corridor subject to no physical encroachment of the rail corridor reservation. The nature, extent and timing of development is not contingent on or related in any way to the delivery of the rail line.</del></p>	<p>The proposed alteration allows for development adjacent to the rail link in advance of the delivery of the rail line. As development is subject to no physical encroachment of the rail corridor reservation, this will not result in environmental effects.</p>

## 4 Schedule 2A Assessment

### PART 1

**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 changes proposed by the Material Alterations relate to the provisions of the Draft Variation No.2 which incorporates the aims and measures of the Meath Economic Development Strategy into the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015. Proposed Material Alterations encompass changes to the text of the Draft Plan.

Taking the above and the examination of the Proposed Alterations provided under Section 4 into account, arising from the degree to which the Proposed Material Alterations comprise of a rewording and clarification of existing text in the Draft Variation, there are no proposed Material Alterations that would be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**2. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy.**

The proposed Material Alterations are being made to Variation No.2 which is directly influenced by the local frameworks such as the Integrated Development Framework Plan, the Meath Economic Development Strategy, Navan Town Development Plan, Meath County Development Plan and higher tier land use plans.

On examination of the various proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4, arising from the degree to which the proposed Material Alterations and associated Draft Variation influence other plans, there are no proposed Material Alterations that would be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**3. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.**

The Draft Variation No.2, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, has undergone SEA. This process integrated environmental considerations into the Draft Variation and found that the Draft Variation No.2 would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

Taking the above and the examination of the various proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4 into account, arising from the degree to which the proposed Material Alterations and associated Draft Variation No.2 are relevant for the integration of an economic strategy with a view to promoting sustainable development, there are no Proposed Material Alterations that would be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

Therefore, no further SEA is required.

**4. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: environmental problems relevant to the plan.**

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and legislative targets. Through its provisions relating to environmental protection and management, the Draft Variation contributes towards ensuring environmental conditions do not worsen and, where possible, contributes towards their amelioration.

Taking the above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4 into account, arising from environmental problems relevant to the Proposed Material Alterations and associated Draft Variation No.2, there are no Proposed Material Alterations the would be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

Therefore, no further SEA is required.

**5. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: 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)**

Draft Variation No.2 relates to the incorporation of an economic strategy and has undergone SEA. This process integrated considerations with regard to EU and national legislation on the environment into the Plan, including those relating to European designated sites and the Water Framework Directive.

Taking the above and the examination of the Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4 into account, arising from the relevance of the Proposed Material Alterations for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment, there are no proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

Therefore, no further SEA is required.

## **PART 2**

### **1. 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 Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

### **2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the cumulative nature of the effects**

Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects or cumulative impacts (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

### **3. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the transboundary nature of the effects**

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

### **4. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)**

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant human health effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

### **5. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)**

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

### **6. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:**

a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, and;

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

c) intensive land-use.

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

**7. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.**

The Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 4).

## 5 Conclusion

This screening takes into account relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A 'Criteria for determining whether a plan or variation is likely to have significant effects on the environment' of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (as amended). Taking into account the content of the Proposed Material Alterations and the text that already exists within the Draft Variation No.2 that contributes towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is determined that potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations will not result in significant environmental impacts.

Therefore, it is determined that Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the Proposed Material Alterations.

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