

# **APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING**

IN LINE WITH THE REQUIRMENTS OF

**ARTICLE 6(3)**

OF THE

**EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE**

SOUTHERN ENVIRONS OF DROGHEDA LOCAL AREA PLAN 2008-  
2014

FOR: MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

BY: KSA





## **Table of Contents**

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Introduction and Terms of Reference</b>
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Screening Matrix</b>
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Finding of no significant effects report matrix</b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>



## Section 1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

### 1.1 Introduction

This is an appropriate assessment screening of the Southern Environs of Drogheda Local Area Plan (LAP) 2008-2014 in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC). The relevant provisions of the Directive are set out in Section 1.2 of this report.

This report evaluates the Southern Environs of Drogheda LAP to see if it needs to be subject to an appropriate assessment. In accordance with the relevant EU Guidance – Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites (Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC), a 'Screening matrix' and a 'Finding of no significant effects matrix' have been completed. These can be found in Sections 2 and 3 of this report. The conclusions of this evaluation are set out in Section 4 of this report.

### 1.2 Terms of Reference

Appropriate assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

*'any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national 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.'*

Article 6(4) states:

*'if, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of economic or social nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.'*



## Section 2 Screening Matrix

### Brief Description of the Project or Plan

The Local Area Plan sets out the context, goals, objectives and structure for future development of the South Drogheda Environs area. The Local Area Plan constitutes the logical realisation of the objectives and policies contained within the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013 and the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area.

The Local Area Plan will seek to facilitate existing demand and to direct future development in an orderly, economic, sustainable and coherent manner. It will also define the southern development boundary to maintain a clear physical break between the edge of the urban settlement with the surrounding open countryside and rural villages. The Local Area Plan, once adopted, will remain in force for a period of six years, unless amended by the Planning Authority.

It is an objective of this Local Area Plan that all new housing development and residential extension areas form an integral part of the built up area of Drogheda. These areas should be integrated with the town by providing clear and legible linkages, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists and by ensuring that new built up areas integrate with the existing and established built fabric of the town.

The overall development principles for the Local Area Plan lands should strictly adhere to the objectives and policies set out in the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area; in particular as follows

- *New expansion areas to north and south to provide for primarily residential: use, local employment and district scale recreation and amenity facilities.*
- *Promote the street as the basic element of the urban area;*
- *Ensure that road infrastructure is related to, appropriate to and subservient to the roll out of development land;*
- *Ensure key services are in place before development of an area begins; avoid temporary solutions introduced by developers;*
- *Promote urban expansion in a managed, sequential manner.*



### Brief Description of the Natura 2000 sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) within and surrounding the Southern Environs of Drogheda area are listed in the table below. The attached map shows the location of these areas in context to the LAP lands. Site synopses may be accessed on the National Parks and Wildlife Service's website at [www.npws.ie/ConservationSites/](http://www.npws.ie/ConservationSites/). Individual site maps are also available on this website.

Site Code	Site Name
004050	River Boyne cSAC
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SPA

**Table 2.1: Natura 2000 Sites**



### Assessment Criteria

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

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon 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 sites.

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 sites by virtue of:

- **size and scale;**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **land take;**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their land take shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites or their key features arising from their proximity shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **resource requirements (water abstraction etc.)**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their resource requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **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 arising from their emissions (disposal to land, water or air) shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **excavation requirements;**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **transportation requirements;**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).



- **duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.;**  
No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their 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 arising from any other effects 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 sites arising as a result of:**

- **reduction of habitat area;**  
No projects giving rise to reduction of habitat areas for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **disturbance to key species;**  
No projects giving rise to significant disturbance to key species in Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **habitat or species fragmentation;**  
No projects giving rise to significant habitat or species fragmentation of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **reduction in species density;**  
No projects giving rise to significant reduction of species density on Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis 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 adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- **climate change;**  
No project giving rise to significant adverse changes in climatological conditions affecting Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).



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

- **interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;**  
No projects giving rise to significant, adverse interference with the key relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites 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, adverse interference with key relationships that define the function of Natura 2000 sites 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;**  
Not applicable.
  
- **fragmentation;**  
Not applicable.
  
- **disruption;**  
Not applicable.
  
- **disturbance;**  
Not applicable.
  
- **change to key elements of the sites (e.g. water quality etc.);**  
Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable.





### Section 3 Finding of no significant effects report matrix

#### Name of project or plan

Southern Environs of Drogheda Local Area Plan 2008-2014

#### Name and Location of Natura 2000 sites

Site Code	Site Name
004050	River Boyne cSAC
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SPA

See location map attached.

#### Description of the project or plan

As given in Screening Matrix above p4.

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

The Plan includes policies and objectives to protect, conserve and manage in a prudent and sustainable manner the Southern Environs of Drogheda's natural and built heritage including its Natura 2000 sites and to seek the enhancement of this resource where appropriate.

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

The plan has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.

### ***The assessment of significance of effects***

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

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon 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.

#### Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

The policies and provisions of the Plan have been devised to anticipate and avoid the need for developments that would be likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. Furthermore, such developments as will be permitted on foot of the provisions of this Plan shall be required to conform to the relevant regulatory provisions for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

#### List of agencies consulted.

SEA Screening letters were sent to the following:

- The Manager, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), Dun Sceine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2. 01 833 3190



- Frank O'Brien, Co-ordination Unit, Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, (DCMNR), Lesson Lane, Dublin 2. 01 6783051
- Tadhg O'Mahony, Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork. 021 4875540

#### Response to consultation.

Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping letters were sent to the DEHLG, DCMNR, and the EPA. No response was received from either of the statutory authorities at this stage.

The DEHLG, DCMNR and EPA were notified that the Draft Plan and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report were being placed on public display and that submissions could be made by third parties on both the Draft Plan and the Environmental Report. Written responses were received from the 3 statutory bodies and these points have been considered in the preparation of this Appropriate Assessment Screening.

### ***Data collected to carry out the assessment***

#### Who carried out this assessment?

KSA

#### Sources of data

Existing data

Environmental Report on the Strategic Environmental Assessment

#### Level of assessment completed

Desktop study

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

This screening report is to be displayed along with the Environmental Report and Local Area Plan.



## **Section 4 Conclusions**

Following the review of the draft plan in accordance with the 'Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43', a Screening Matrix and Findings of No Significant Effects Matrix have been completed.

This screening process was carried out to ascertain if the Plan were likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites. If this were the case then it would be necessary to carry out Appropriate Assessment. The draft Plan has been formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this draft 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 sites.

This screening report finds that the draft Plan does not require further appropriate assessment.