

Kildare County Council (KCC)

Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as amended)

Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report

Reference: 312816-00_AA Screening

Issue | 28 October 2025

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 312816-00

Ove Arup & Partners Ireland Limited
50 Ringsend Road
Dublin 4
D04 T6X0
Ireland
arup.com

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
1.1	Overview	1
1.2	Report Aim	1
1.3	Background to the Proposed Variation	1
1.4	Legislative Context	2
1.5	Relationship with the SEA Directive	2
1.6	Statement of Competency	2
1.7	Report Structure	2
2.	The Proposed Variation	3
2.1	Overview	3
2.2	Proposed Variation Draft New and Revised Objectives	3
2.3	Geographic Area	5
2.4	Embedded Protective Policies and Draft New or Amended Policies and Objectives as Included in the Kildare CDP (as varied)	5
3.	Data, Guidance and Methodology	6
3.1	Appropriate Assessment Stages	6
3.2	Definitions	6
3.3	Guidance	7
3.4	Data Sources	8
3.5	Methodology	8
4.	Screening Assessment	9
4.1	Overview	9
4.2	Source – Pathway – Receptor	9
4.3	In-Combination Effects	10
4.4	Summary	11

Tables

Table 1	Summary of the draft revised or new policies and objectives within the Proposed Variation	4
---------	---	---

Figures

Figure 1	Geographic areas relevant to the Proposed Variation	5
----------	---	---

Appendices

Appendix A		A-1
A.1	Assessment of LSE of the Proposed Variation	A-2
A.2	Mitigation Measures based on the policies and objectives of the Kildare CDP (as varied)	A-8

A.3	Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites included in the Kildare CDP (as varied) (as taken from the NIR of the Kildare CDP)	A-11
A.4	Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment	A-28

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening has been prepared by Ove Arup and Partners Ltd (Arup) on behalf of Kildare County Council (KCC) with respect to Proposed Variation No. 3 of Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) 2023-2029 (as varied) (hereafter referred to as ‘the Proposed Variation’).

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that any plan or project, which is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a European site, but would be likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, should be subject to Appropriate Assessment (AA).

1.2 Report Aim

This AA Screening Report has been prepared to provide information for the ‘competent authority’¹ regarding the potential for ‘Likely Significant Effects’ (LSE) of the Proposed Variation, on European sites within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Proposed Variation.

1.3 Background to the Proposed Variation

KCC published the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 in January 2023 which is the key strategy document which structures the proper planning and sustainable development of land-use across County Kildare over the six-year statutory time period of the plan. The CDP (as varied) consists of two volumes:

- **Volume 1 Written Statement** - The Written Statement constitutes the main body of the document which comprises the Vision, Core Strategy, development management standards and the overarching policies and objectives of the Plan.
- **Volume 2 Part 1: Small Towns and Environs Plans and Part 2: Villages Plans and Rural Settlements** provides a coherent planning framework for the small towns, environs of Ladytown and Blessington, villages, and rural settlements across the county. The Strategy includes policies and specific objectives which are underpinned by the strategic vision and the overarching guiding principles of the Kildare CDP (as varied). This Volume also includes land use zoning maps for small towns, villages and the environs of Ladytown and Blessington.

It is a requirement of Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that planning authorities shall have regard to Ministerial Guidelines in the performance of their functions and comply with any specific planning policy requirements contained in such Ministerial Guidelines. In addition, Section 10(1A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that County Development Plans are consistent with *inter alia* planning policy requirements specified in Ministerial Guidelines. The Proposed Variation has been prepared to align the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied) (hereafter referred to as ‘the Plan’) with certain Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines published after the adoption of the Plan, namely:

1. NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025), which were published to implement the National Planning Framework - First Revision (2025). It is noted that the National Planning Framework – First Revision was subject to SEA and AA.
2. Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024). It is noted that these Guidelines were subject to SEA and AA.

¹ Per the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the competent authority is defined as “A competent authority, in performing the functions conferred on it by or under this Part, shall take appropriate steps to avoid in a European site the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as the disturbance of the species for which the site has been designated, insofar as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the draft objectives of the Habitats Directive”

The Proposed Variation also includes updated references to the National Planning Framework First Revision (2025) and the complete Census 2022 results published between May-December 2023.

1.4 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) (the ‘Habitats Directive’) provides the legal protection for habitats and species, with Articles 3 to 9 providing legislation protection to the EU wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 site network.

Natura 2000 is a network of protected sites which comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (referred to as European sites within this report). SACs are protected sites designated under the Habitats Directive, whilst SPAs are protected sites designated under the Birds Directive. They are high quality sites that contribute significantly to the conservation of a large range of habitats and species.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA whilst Article 6(4) sets out the Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) and compensatory measures where LSE on European sites cannot be excluded.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (as amended), and by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). In the context of the Proposed Variation, the governing legislation is principally Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

1.5 Relationship with the SEA Directive

In the preparation of this AA Screening report, the approach has been conducted in parallel with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process (2001/42/EC as transposed into Irish law). Article 3.2(b) of the SEA Directive expressly links to AA.

1.6 Statement of Competency

The statements of competencies for the contributing authors to this Screening for AA report are provided below:

Sinead Whyte holds a BSc and MSc from UCD. She has over 25 years’ experience in the field of environmental assessment. She is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Water and Environmental Management for 20 years.

Maeve Riley has a BSc in Zoology from University College Cork, an MSc in Environmental Consultancy from Newcastle University and is a full member of CIEEM. Maeve is an ecologist with over 10 years of working in private ecological consultancy. She has worked across a range of projects preparing AA from renewable energy to LRD and water projects.

Scott Bastow holds a B.A. (Hons) in Zoology from Trinity College Dublin and is an associate member of CIEEM. Scott is an ecologist with approximately 2 and a half years’ experience working in private ecological consulting and is experienced with the AA process.

1.7 Report Structure

The report is structured below:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the Proposed Variation
- Section 3 outlines the AA process, provides important definitions and outlines the guidance, data and methodology used to inform the assessment
- Section 4 sets out the screening assessment using the Source-Pathway-Receptor-model and details the assessment for effects and screening

- Section 5 provides a summary and conclusion.

2. The Proposed Variation

2.1 Overview

The CDP consists of two volumes, of which the Written Statement (Volume 1) sets out the strategic framework, policies, and objectives which guide sustainable development, land use, urban design, infrastructure, and environmental management across County Kildare. The Proposed Variation comprises amendments to Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 15 of the Written Statement (Volume 1) of the Plan, to include the following overarching amendments to the Plan:

- Updated Chapter 1 (Introduction and Strategic Context) and Chapter 2 (Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy) to include an increased housing growth requirement for the remaining 3 years of the Plan to align with the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025). The Proposed Variation provides a targeted approach to accommodate the housing growth requirements by identifying settlements and sites within settlements for housing growth. The Proposed Variation also identifies the plan-led mechanisms to enable the sustainable growth of such settlements and sites, subject to local and environmental considerations.
- Updated Chapter 2 (Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy) and Chapter 3 (Housing) to include revised density ranges, considerations and criteria for new residential developments to promote compact and sustainable residential growth, aligned with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).
- Updated Chapter 15 (Development Management Standards) to revise the standards and considerations for residential developments to align with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).

The proposed variation is accompanied by a Settlement and Site Capacity Audit and is also supported by a SEA Screening Report pursuant to the Planning and Development SEA Regulations 2004 - 2011.

The Proposed Variation is presented to follow the format and layout of the County Development Plan in the following order:

- Chapter 1 Introduction and Strategic Context
- Chapter 2 Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy
- Chapter 3 Housing
- Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.

Each amendment is preceded by an explanatory table which includes the amendment number, the reason for the amendment and the Plan chapter / section / page number for the amendment. There are 31 no. amendments included in the Variation.

2.2 Proposed Variation Draft New and Revised Objectives

There are six sectors for which draft new and revised policies and objectives have been set within the Proposed Variation. The full list of draft new and revised policies and objectives can be found within the Proposed Variation. The six sectors are provided in Table 1 below with a summary of the draft amendments adjoining it. The changes to policies and objectives in the Plan are described as:

- Revisions to CS O1, CS O19 and the introduction of CS O25, CS O26, CS O27, CS O28, CS O29, CS O30, CS O31 and CS O32 to Chapter 2 (Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy).
- Revisions to HO P1, HO P2, HO O4, HO O7 and HO O56 in Chapter 3 (Housing).

Table 1 Summary of the draft revised or new policies and objectives within the Proposed Variation

Objective Sectors	Summary of Draft Objectives
Compliance with the Core Strategy	Draft revisions and new draft objectives to ensure that new guidance is accounted for in the carrying out of the functions of the planning authority.
Housing Growth and Urban Development Zones	<p>Draft objectives aim to facilitate the development of urban areas specified in Table 2.8A specific to areas outlined in the objective.</p> <p>Draft revisions to an objective to ensure that applicants for development on ‘Serviced Sites’ comply with the criteria contained in Table 3.4 (a).</p> <p>Draft objective aims to initiate the process for the designation of candidate Urban Development Zones, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (once commenced) at locations outlined in Table 2.8B.</p>
Urban Regeneration / Renewal, Consolidation and Categorisation	<p>Draft objective aims to ensure that urban regeneration is a fundamental consideration in the preparation of all settlement plans and identify / map Settlement Consolidation Sites and other brownfield / infill sites that have regeneration and development potential with outputs identified in the Settlement Capacity Audit.</p> <p>Draft objective ensures that future settlement plans include maps to identify areas categorised as urban, central, suburban, urban extension and edge areas where applicable to align with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024.</p>
Settlement Plans	<p>Draft objective ensures that future settlement plans incorporate Census 2022 data</p> <p>Draft objective ensures that future settlement plans include maps to identify areas categorised as central, urban, suburban, urban extension and edge areas where applicable to align with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024.</p> <p>Draft objective to ensure that new settlement plans for Celbridge and Athy integrate relevant sites (Table 2.8A of the CDP) into the development strategy for the town, subject to appropriate flood risk assessment at Settlement Plan stage.</p> <p>Draft objective to prepare settlement plans for Monasterevin, Kilcock and Sallins to include the additional housing growth requirement included in Table 2.8 and Table 2.8A on serviced lands to be informed by infrastructural and environmental assessments</p>
Economic Development	Draft objective to actively promote and facilitate the sensitive expansion of existing, and the development of new, Foreign Direct Investment sites and industries as strategic contributors to the county's long-term economic development by fostering a conducive environment that promotes job creation, drives innovation, and strengthens the capacity of local enterprises.
Education	Draft objective to work in close partnership with the Department of Education to support the timely planning and delivery of new schools across the county, so that educational infrastructure meets the needs of a growing population and contributes to the long term social and economic wellbeing of the community. It is a priority of the Council that the triple school campus at Ballyoulster, Celbridge is delivered during the life of this plan.

2.3 Geographic Area

The geographic areas pertinent to Variation No. 3 of the Kildare CDP are illustrated in Figure 1.

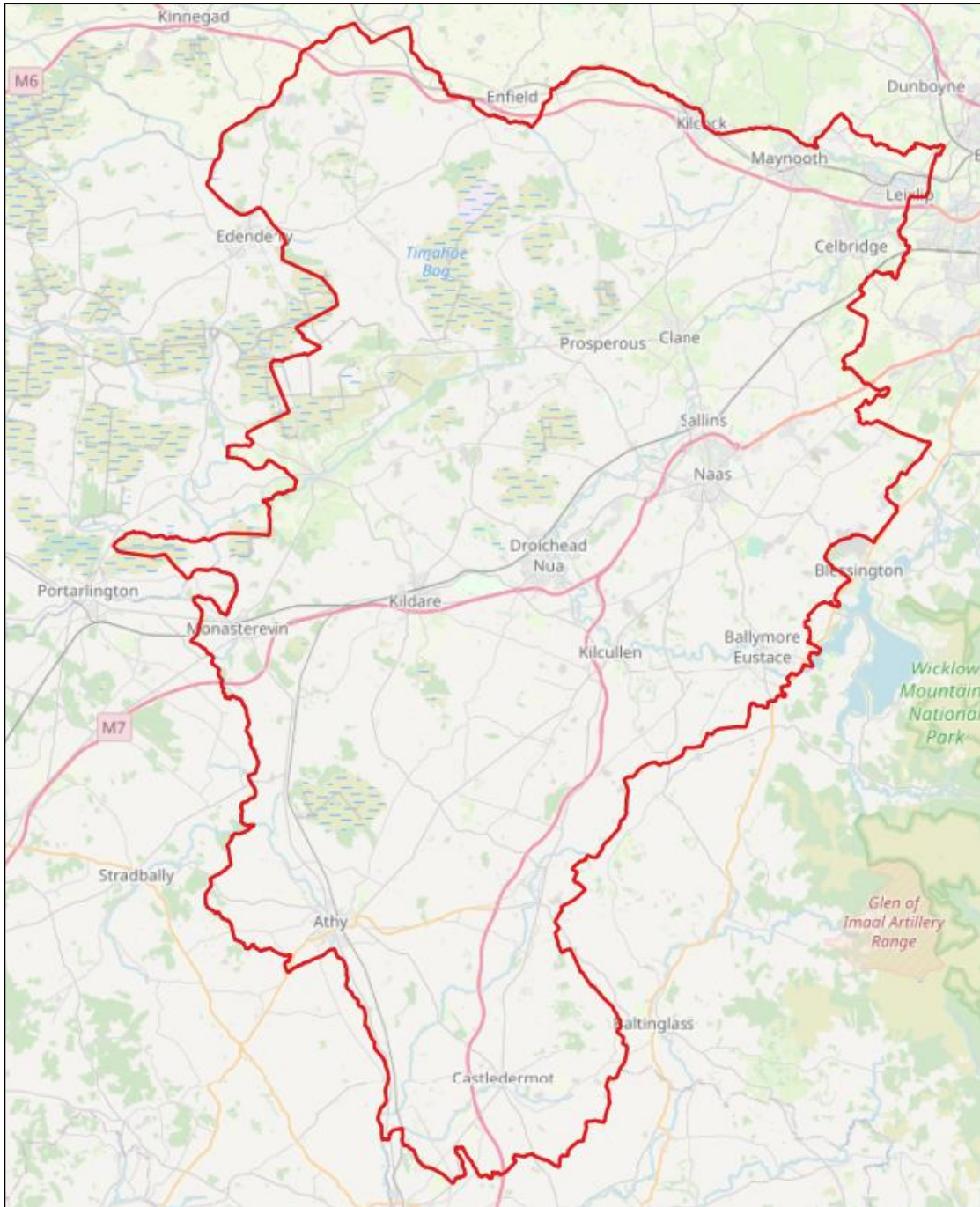


Figure 1 Geographic areas relevant to the Proposed Variation

2.4 Embedded Protective Policies and Draft New or Amended Policies and Objectives as Included in the Kildare CDP (as varied)

Kildare CDP (as varied) was subject to Stage 1 AA Screening and Stage 2 Natura Impact Report (NIR) in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. The NIR recommended a suite of mitigation measures following the assessment of the draft CDP. These measures were built into the published Kildare CDP (as varied) as a suite of embedded protective policies and objectives to avoid the potential for LSE on the integrity of European sites within the scope of the Kildare CDP (as varied) (Appendix A.3).

As the Proposed Variation constitutes a variation of the Kildare CDP (as varied), accordingly, the embedded protective policies arising from the AA of the CDP are applicable in this context and are treated as such for the purposes of assessing the Proposed Variation. While the Proposed Variation is independently assessed

for the potential for LSE, any embedded protective policies that apply are considered part of the baseline policy framework and not as mitigation measures specific to the Proposed Variation.

The following embedded protective policies and objectives are considered to be of particular importance with regards to European sites and are applicable to the Proposed Variation:

- BI O9: *‘Avoid development that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site and promote favourable conservation status of habitats and protected species including those listed under the Birds Directive, the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats Directive, to support the conservation and enhancement of Natura 2000 Sites including any additional sites that may be proposed for designation during the period of this Plan and protect the Natura 2000 network from any plans and projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the coherence or integrity of a Natura 2000 Site.’*
- BI O10: *‘Ensure an Appropriate Assessment Screening, in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, Section 177A of the Planning and Development Act (2001-2022) or any superseding legislation and with DEHLG guidance (2009), is carried out in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site to determine the likelihood of the plan or project having a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects and to ensure that projects which may give rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites will not be permitted (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) unless for reasons of overriding public interest.’*

3. Data, Guidance and Methodology

3.1 Appropriate Assessment Stages

The AA process involves a number of steps and tests that need to be applied in sequential order.

An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. First of all, a plan or project must be screened to identify whether the potential for LSE on a European site(s) exists. If that possibility cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment is to be undertaken prior to any consent being granted. Consent shall not be granted if it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site. Article 6(4) allows for consent to be granted in particular and exceptional circumstances, even if adverse effects may arise.

The AA Screening must include a final determination by the competent authority as to whether or not a proposed project or plan would adversely affect the integrity of a European site. In order to reach a final determination, the public authority must undertake examination, analysis and evaluation, followed by findings, conclusions and a final determination.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 European sites

European sites, as defined under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) (as amended) are part of the Natura 2000 network and include those designated as SACs, candidate SACs (cSACs), SPAs or proposed SPAs (pSPAs). These are sometimes referred to as Natura 2000 sites.

SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I² habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II³ species (other than birds).

SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and all migratory birds and their habitats.

² Annex I habitats are habitats whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation

³ Annex II species are animal and plant species whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation

The Annex habitats and species, for which each site is selected, are termed the Qualifying Interests (QI) for SACs and termed Special Conservation Interests (SCI) for SPAs of each site.

3.2.2 Conservation Objective

Conservation objectives (COs) for the European sites are defined for the relevant QIs and SCIs. In its most general sense, a CO is the specification of the overall target for the species and/or habitat types for which a site is designated in order for it to contribute to maintaining or reaching favourable conservation status.⁴

3.2.3 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

The Source-Pathway-Receptor (S-P-R) model is used to assess where a potential effect may result by examining the source, its pathway and the receptor. As per guidance from the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)⁵ these can be defined as follows:

- **Source:** The origin of a potential effect which may include characteristics of a plan or project that have the potential to result in effects e.g. direct impacts such as loss of habitat
- **Pathway:** How the potential effect may occur on the source. These are identifiable through linkages that may occur through the plan or project and European sites e.g. direct pathways such as physical proximity, hydrological connections or indirect pathways such as disturbance to migrating species; and
- **Receptor:** The European site network and respective QIs/SCIs, their ecological condition and sensitivities e.g. freshwater pearl mussel is sensitive to siltation in water.

3.2.4 Zone of Influence

A Zone of Influence (ZoI) within any assessment of projects and/or plans considers the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed plan/project and associated activities.

3.3 Guidance

The following guidance was used in carrying out the assessment:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision)
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) 1/10 and PSSP 2/10
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 Sites: Methodical guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2021)
- Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle. European Commission (2000)
- Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2007)
- Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011)
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2019)
- Office of the Planning Regulator Practice Note PN01 - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021); and

⁴ Commission Note on Setting Conservation Draft objectives for Natura 2000 Sites (November 2012) European Commission, Doc. Hab.12-04/06. Accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/commission_note/commission_note2_EN.pdf

⁵ OPR (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01

- Strict Protection of Animal Species Guidance for Public authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to development/works undertaken by or on behalf of a Public authority (NPWS 2021).

The requirements for Screening for AA for European sites, are set out in Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) with numerous relevant rulings and opinions issued in both Irish and EU courts. AA is a process required under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive as transposed by the aforementioned legislation as stated within Section 0.

3.4 Data Sources

The ecological data reviewed to inform this report comprises:

- Article 12 Birds Directive - Article 12 web tool;⁶
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Map Viewer;⁷
- Kildare County Council (2023) Kildare County Development 2023-2029;⁸
- NPWS (2023) Conservation Draft objectives Series;⁹
- NPWS (2023) SAC and SPA Datasheets;¹⁰
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Designations web viewer;¹¹
- NPWS Protected Sites in Ireland;¹²
- NPWS The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland Web Viewer;¹³
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 1: Summary Overview. Unpublished NPWS report. NPWS (2019);¹⁴
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 2: Habitat Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report. Edited by: Deirdre Lynn and Fionnuala O’Neil. NPWS (2019); and¹⁵
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 3: Species Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report (2019). Edited by: Deirdre Lynn and Fionnuala O’Neill (2020).¹⁶

3.5 Methodology

In line with the relevant guidance and case law, this Screening for AA consists of the below steps:

1. **Impact Prediction:** Identify the aspects of the Proposed Variation likely to affect the COs of European sites. The more general classification of impacts can include direct and indirect effects; short and long-term effects; construction, operational and decommissioning effects; and isolated, interactive and

⁶ Article 12 of the Birds Directive Web tool accessed at <https://nature-art12.eionet.europa.eu/article12/> accessed November 2023

⁷ EPA Map Viewer accessed at <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> accessed September 2025

⁸ Kildare County Council (2023) Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 Accessed at

<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/KildareCountyDevelopmentPlan2023-2029/> September 2025.

⁹ NPWS Conservation draft objectives accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-draft-objectives> Accessed September 2025

¹⁰ NPWS SAC and SPA Datasheets accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/designated-site-data/sac-and-spa-datasheets-downloads> accessed September 2025

¹¹ NPWS Designations web viewer accessed at

<https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8f7060450de3485fa1c1085536d477ba> accessed September 2025

¹² NPWS Protected sites accessed at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites> accessed September 2025

¹³ NPWS The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland web viewer accessed at

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/1a721520030d404f899d658d5b6e159a> accessed September 2025

¹⁴ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland: Volume 1 Summary Overview accessed at

https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2019_Vol1_Summary_Article17.pdf Accessed September 2025

¹⁵ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 2: Habitat Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report

https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2019_Vol2_Habitats_Article17.pdf Accessed September 2025

¹⁶ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 3: Species Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report accessed at

https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2019_Vol3_Species_Article17.pdf Accessed September 2025

cumulative effects. A Source-Pathway-Receptor model has been used to identify the zone of influence. This also includes transboundary considerations.

- 2. Assessment of Effects:** The actions of the Proposed Variation are assessed as to whether they are likely to result in LSE upon the integrity of European sites. This requires understanding of relevant QIs/SCIs and associated COs.

3.5.1 Impact Prediction: Identifying the Zone of Influence

The ZoI is established using the S-P-R method and takes into consideration the scale of the elements of the Proposed Variation. There is no recommended ZoI, and guidance from the NPWS recommends that the distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the plan/project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in-combination effects (cumulative).

For an effect to occur there must be a risk enabled by having a source (e.g. construction works at a proposed development site), a ‘receptor’ (e.g. QI or SCI of a European site), and a pathway between the source and the receptor (e.g. a watercourse which connects a plan area to an SAC, ex situ foraging habitat for SCI birds). The principle for establishing ZoI, as outlined in the 2021 OPR Practice Note PN01⁵ applies equally to a plan level AA and so the S-P-R method has been used in this report.

The identification of the European sites within the ZoI has been carried out by utilising GIS datasets from NPWS and of the European site network. The sites have been determined through the identification of the potential sources of the impacts of the Proposed Variation and their pathways for effect to European sites.

3.5.2 Assessment of Effects

Where a plan or project is likely to undermine the COs, it must be considered as a LSE upon that European site. The assessment of effects stages determines whether the potential impacts identified using the S-P-R could result in a LSE.

From establishing the ZoI using the S-P-R method, focusing on the relevant QIs and SCIs of European sites which may be at risk of LSE arising from the Proposed Variation. The potential impacts of the Proposed Variation are assessed against the COs of the relevant QIs and SCIs to determine in a LSE may occur as a result of implementation. Within this assessment, factors such as type, extent, duration, intensity, timing, probability and in-combination effects of the potential impact, as well as the vulnerability of the QIs and/or SCIs concerned.¹⁷

4. Screening Assessment

4.1 Overview

The scope of the Proposed Variation has a scale of application across County Kildare.

4.2 Source – Pathway – Receptor

Potential connectivity between the implementation of the Proposed Variation to the CDP and European sites and their respective QIs/SCIs is identified via the S-P-R model which highlights the potential impact pathways such as land, air, hydrological pathways etc which may support direct or indirect connectivity. Where connectivity exists between the Proposed Variation and receptors, these receptors are taken forward to the assessment of LSE.

4.2.1 Identification of Potential Sources of Impacts

In identifying the potential impacts of the implementation of the Proposed Variation, it is important to note that this risk is an estimation based on scientific evidence and best practice. It does not constitute that an

¹⁷ OPR (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01.

impact will occur or that it will result in ecological or environmental damage resulting in significant effects on European sites within the ZoI. The significance of the effect is dependent upon factors such as duration, magnitude and intensity of the project/plan in question and the existence of a credible S-P-R link. It is also determined by the extent of the exposure to the risk and the characteristics of the receptor.

By establishing a credible source and pathway, the receptors i.e. the QI and SCI habitats and species are only considered where links are identified to be credible. Factors include the distance between receptors and sources and the means by which the pathway travels through air, water, ground etc., occurs.

Typical activities which can result in impacts include construction activities which may result in impacts including air pollution from dust and other pollutants, water contamination due to improper handling of materials and waste, and soil erosion from ground disturbance. Noise pollution from construction sites can result in disturbance and/or displacement of species and construction can potentially result in the destruction of important habitats. The generation of significant amounts of waste, often not properly disposed of or recycled, is another concern. Operational activities of wastewater treatment plants, recreation, transport, residential and industrial sectors can also contribute to similar inputs to the environment as construction.

All draft new and revised policies and objectives of the Proposed Variation have undergone a review for potential sources of impacts. Draft revised or draft new policies and objectives relating to updated National guidance, which has been previously subject to SEA and AA, are not a potential source of impacts as they include for desk-based studies only and these are not considered further.

Where draft objectives include provisions relating to economic development, educational infrastructure, the need criteria for 'Serviced Sites', the inclusion of certain lands in updated settlement plans, the development of certain urban areas and the initiation of the process to designate candidate Urban Development Zones, these additional objectives relate to lands already zoned or identified for development in statutory land use plans and therefore already been assessed for AA. No additional sources of impacts are predicted to arise from the implementation of these draft objectives, and therefore are not brought forward for further assessment.

After examining all the draft new and revised policies and objectives in the Proposed Variation it was concluded that there are no potential sources of impacts.

4.2.2 Identification of Potential Pathways and Receptors

Appendix A.4 outlines full details of Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment undertaken. Given that there is no likely source of impacts from implementation of the draft new and draft revised policies and objectives, based on information outlined in Section 4.2.1, there is no potential pathways to any receptors to be considered.

4.2.3 Assessment of LSE

The Proposed Variation has been assessed for the potential to give rise to LSE on European sites. Appendix A.1 considers the potential for LSE from implementation of the draft new and revised policies and objectives. The S-P-R model described in Appendix A.4 concludes that there are no potential sources of impacts, therefore, no potential pathways to any receptors need to be considered. Additionally, the majority of draft policies and objectives are either changes to policies and objectives which will result in desk-based activities or have been assessed with the CDP which includes embedded mitigation and protective policies for European Sites (Section 2.4 and Appendix A.2 and A.3). With that in mind, there is no potential for LSE on any European Site from implementation of the draft revised and new policies and objectives in the Proposed Variation.

4.3 In-Combination Effects

The purpose of the in-combination assessment is to ascertain whether the Proposed Variation may give rise to effects in-combination with other plans and/or projects. This report has found that no LSE exists for the Proposed Variation due to the nature of the proposed draft revised and new policies and objectives, and due to the embedded mitigation and protective policies in place for European sites (refer to Section 2.4, and Appendix A.2 and A.3).

Arising from this, the consideration of in-combination effects is not required given that the Proposed Variation alone, shall not result in LSE.

4.4 Summary

As stated in Section 4.2 and Appendix A.4, there are no potential sources of impacts arising from implementation of the draft revised and new policies and objectives in the Proposed Variation and therefore, no potential pathway to any receptor exists.

Appendix A.1 considers the potential for LSE on European Sites from the implementation of the draft revised and draft new policies and objectives. Policies and objectives which include for desk-based activities and the integration of National guidance, which have been previously subject to AA and SEA, negate the potential for LSE on European Sites. Additionally, there is embedded mitigation and protection policies for European Sites in the CDP that provide sufficient safeguards for the implementation of the proposed draft revised and draft new policies and objectives in the Proposed Variation.

Furthermore, it is embedded within the CDP that any projects or plans must be subject to an AA prior to their implementation of relevant objectives. As such, this embedded protective policy and objectives would negate the risk of LSE from occurring. Thus, overall, the potential for LSE to European sites, alone or in-combination, does not exist.

Appendix A

A.1 Assessment of LSE of the Proposed Variation

Proposed Updates to Policies and Objectives as part of Third Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029	Are similar provisions included in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)?	Potential Source of Impacts	Potential for LSE
<p>CS O1: Ensure that the future growth and spatial development of County Kildare is in accordance with the population and housing allocations contained in the Core Strategy which aligns with the regional growth strategy as set out in the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region, and further specified in the ‘Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning’, <i>as replaced in 2025 by the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities.</i></p>	<p>This provision updates reference to the new guidance in existing objective CS O1 of the CDP.</p>	<p>No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP.</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>
<p>CS O19: Align the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, with the up-to-date population from Census 2022 where there are verified material population differentials at settlement level to those in Table 2.8 of the Plan, by way of a statutory variation/ review pursuant to Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).</p> <p><i>Ensure that future settlement plans incorporate Census 2022 and housing completions data published by the Central Statistics Office, to establish an up-to-date baseline population estimate for each settlement.</i></p>	<p>This provision updates reference to the complete Census 2022 results in existing objective CS O19 of the CDP.</p>	<p>No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP.</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>
<p>CS O25: <i>Ensure that future settlement plans include maps to identify areas categorised as central, urban, suburban, urban extension and edge areas, where applicable, to align with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).</i></p>	<p>This objective does not align directly with any existing provision of the CDP. However, this objective supports, and is consistent, with related, existing provisions of the CDP.</p>	<p>No – While this objective does not align directly with any existing provisions, it does not materially alter the content of future settlement plans and only requires maps identifying key areas within to align with updated guidance for compact and sustainable growth in urban areas. In this manner, the potential effects of any maps included in future settlement plans as part of this provision are considered to have been assessed and mitigated by the CDP and associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA). Additionally, any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to SEA and AA</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>
<p>CS O26: <i>Require urban regeneration to be a fundamental consideration in the preparation of all settlement plans and identify / map Settlement Consolidation Sites¹⁸ and other brownfield / infill sites that have</i></p>	<p>This objective does not align directly with any existing provision of the CDP. However, this objective supports, and is consistent, with</p>	<p>No – This objective supports and is consistent with related, existing provisions of the CDP and it does not directly relate to the development of sites. Therefore, there are no predicted impacts on any European Site as a result of the</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>

¹⁸ See Section 6.4.2 of the Development Plans - Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2022

Proposed Updates to Policies and Objectives as part of Third Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029	Are similar provisions included in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)?	Potential Source of Impacts	Potential for LSE
<i>regeneration and development potential, with outputs¹⁹ identified in the Settlement Capacity Audit.</i>	related, existing provisions of the CDP.	introduction of this objective. Any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to AA.	
CS 027: <i>Work in close partnership with the Department of Education to support the timely planning and delivery of new schools across the county, so that educational infrastructure meets the needs of a growing population and contributes to the long term social and economic wellbeing of the community. It is a priority of the Council that the triple school campus at Ballyoulster, Celbridge is delivered during the life of this plan.</i>	This objective does not align directly with any existing provision of the CDP. However, this objective supports, and is consistent, with related, existing provisions of the CDP.	No – This objective supports and is consistent with related, existing provisions of the CDP and it does not directly relate to the development of sites. Therefore, there are no predicted impacts on any European Site as a result of the introduction of this objective. Any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to AA.	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective
CS 028: <i>Actively promote and facilitate the sensitive expansion of existing, and the development of new, Foreign Direct Investment sites and industries as strategic contributors to the county's long-term economic development by fostering a conducive environment that promotes job creation, drives innovation, and strengthens the capacity of local enterprises.</i>	This objective does not align directly with any existing provision of the CDP. However, this objective supports, and is consistent, with related, existing provisions of the CDP.	No – This objective supports and is consistent with related, existing provisions of the CDP and it does not directly relate to the development of sites. Therefore, there are no predicted impacts on any European Site as a result of the introduction of this objective. Any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to AA.	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective
CS 029: <i>Facilitate the sequential development of urban areas by releasing the lands zoned 'Phase 2' specified in Table 2.8A so that appropriate residential developments and ancillary uses may be progressed. The lands to which this objective refers to are:</i> <i>(i) Land zoned 'Phase 2' in the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027 on the Kilcullen Road and the Blessington / Tipper Road as identified in Map V3 2.1,</i> <i>(ii) Land zoned 'Phase 2' in the Newbridge Settlement Plan, and</i> <i>(iii) Land zoned 'Phase 2' in the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2023-2029 at Southgreen, Ruanbeg, Dunmurray Road, Green Road South and An Talamh Ban identified in Map V3 2.2.</i> <i>For development management purposes, the uses which are permitted in principle, open for consideration and not normally permitted shall be taken to be those as listed under the 'New Residential' zoning objective contained in the Land Use Zoning Matrix of the relevant Local Area</i>	This objective aligns with the existing land zoning maps of the Naas Local Area Plan (LAP) 2021 – 2027, Newbridge Settlement Plan and Kildare Town LAP 2023 – 2029.	No – This objective aligns with existing land zoning in settlement plans associated with the Naas Local Area Plan (LAP) 2021 – 2027, Newbridge Settlement Plan and Kildare Town LAP 2023 – 2029. This objective does not alter the amount of lands allocated for new residential development, rather it facilitates earlier delivery of this Phase 2 development land. The predicted impacts of reserving this land for future residential development is considered to have been assessed and mitigated by the CDP. Any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to AA.	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective

¹⁹ Outputs may include residential units and/or jobs where appropriate.

Proposed Updates to Policies and Objectives as part of Third Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029	Are similar provisions included in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)?	Potential Source of Impacts	Potential for LSE
<p><i>Plan. This objective does not relate to land identified as 'Phase 2' or 'Strategic Reserve' in any other settlement.</i></p>			
<p>CS O30: <i>Ensure that the new Settlement Plans for Celbridge and Athy integrate the sites identified in Table 2.8A into the development strategy for the town to facilitate the delivery of housing, i.e.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) Lands zoned 'Strategic Reserve' in the Athy Local Area Plan 2021-2027 at Chanterlands as identified in Map V3 2.3, and</i> <i>(ii) Lands zoned in the Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023 as 'New Residential' at Simmonstown and Ballyoulster as identified in Map V3 2.4.</i> <p><i>The full extent of residential land to be zoned will be subject to appropriate flood risk assessment at Settlement Plan stage.</i></p>	<p>This objective aligns with the existing land zoning maps of the Athy LAP 2021 – 2027 and Celbridge LAP 2017 – 2023.</p>	<p>No – This objective aligns with the Celbridge and Athy LAPs and any potential impacts will have been assessed and mitigated by assessments for the LAPs. Therefore, there are no predicted impacts on any European Site as a result of the introduction of this objective. Any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to AA.</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>
<p>CS O31: <i>Prepare settlement plans for Monasterevin, Kilcock and Sallins to include the additional housing growth requirement included in Table 2.8 and Table 2.8A on serviced lands to be informed by infrastructural and environmental assessments.</i></p>	<p>This objective does not align directly with any existing provision of the CDP. However, this objective supports, and is consistent, with related, existing provisions of the CDP.</p>	<p>No – This objective supports and is consistent with related, existing provisions of the CDP and it does not directly relate to the development of sites. Therefore, there are no predicted impacts on any European Site as a result of the introduction of this objective. Any subsequent updates to settlement plans will require variations and be subject to AA.</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>
<p>CS O32: <i>Initiate the process for the designation of candidate Urban Development Zones, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (once commenced), at the following locations as included in Table 2.8B:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Northwest Quadrant, Naas as identified in Map V3 2.5, and</i> <i>• Confey, Leixlip as identified in Map V3 2.6</i> <p><i>A subsequent CDP Variation will be brought forward to integrate the Confey Masterplan into Volume 2 of the CDP to safeguard the planning framework for Confey providing continuity between the current Local Area Plan and the future UDZ process.</i></p> <p><i>On completion of the Northwest Quadrant Masterplan, a County Development Plan Variation may be brought forward to integrate the Masterplan into Volume 2 the County Development Plan prior to the commencement of the UDZ process.</i></p>	<p>This objective does not align directly with any existing provision of the CDP. However, this objective supports, and is consistent with, related, existing provisions of the CDP.</p>	<p>No – This objective supports and is consistent with related, existing provisions of the CDP to identify and designate areas for significant urban growth and regeneration. This objective relates to the initial stages of designation and does not directly relate to land development itself. Any subsequent variations to the CDP will be subject to an independent AA. Therefore, there are no predicted impacts on any European Site as a result of the introduction of this objective.</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>
<p>HO PI: Have regard to the DHLGH Guidelines on:</p>	<p>This provision updates reference to the new guidance</p>	<p>No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP. Potential impacts of this draft objective are considered to have been assessed</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are</p>

Proposed Updates to Policies and Objectives as part of Third Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029	Are similar provisions included in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)?	Potential Source of Impacts	Potential for LSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities (2007); Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020); Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009); Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009); Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and accompanying Design Manual (when published); Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) Housing Options for our Aging Population (2020) and Age Friendly Principles and Guidelines for the Planning Authority (2021); Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019).	in existing objective HO P1 of the CDP.	and mitigated by the CDP and associated environmental assessments (i.e. AA). No further impacts on any European Site are anticipated to arise as a result of this update.	anticipated to arise from this objective
HO P2: Accord with the provisions of the National Planning Framework 2018 as reviewed , the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019 (including the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan) and the Ministerial Circular relating to Structural Housing Demand in Ireland and Housing Supply Targets, and the associated Section 28 Guidelines: Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (2020) the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025) , and make provision for the scale of population growth and housing supply targets outlined in these plans and guidelines.	This provision updates reference to the new guidance in existing objective HO P2 of the CDP.	No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP. Potential impacts of this draft objective are considered to have been assessed and mitigated by the CDP and associated environmental assessments (i.e. AA). No further impacts on any European Site are anticipated to arise as a result of this update.	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective
HO O4: Ensure appropriate densities are achieved in accordance with the Core Strategy in Chapter 2 of this Plan, and in accordance with the principles set out in Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Development (Cities, Towns and Villages), DEHLG, 2009, Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG, 2009; the Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018); and with reference to Circular Letter NRUP 02/2021 (April 2021).	This provision updates reference to the new guidance in existing objective HO O4 of the CDP.	No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP. Potential impacts of this draft objective are considered to have been assessed and mitigated by the CDP and associated environmental assessments (i.e. AA). No further impacts on any European Site are anticipated to arise as a result of this update.	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective
HO O7: Promote, where appropriate and sensitive to the characteristics of the receiving environment, increased residential density as part of the Council’s development management function and in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for	This provision updates reference to the new guidance in existing objective HO O7 of the CDP.	No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP. Potential impacts of this draft objective are considered to have been assessed and mitigated by the CDP and associated	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective

Proposed Updates to Policies and Objectives as part of Third Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029	Are similar provisions included in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)?	Potential Source of Impacts	Potential for LSE
<p>Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, DEHLG, May 2009 Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and the accompanying Design Manual (when published).</p>		<p>environmental assessments (i.e. AA). No further impacts on any European Site are anticipated to arise as a result of this update.</p>	
<p>HO O56: Ensure that any applicant for the provision of a dwelling unit on lands designated “Serviced Sites” complies in full with the <i>Serviced Sites</i> local need criteria as set out in Table 3.4(a) which must be satisfactorily demonstrated through the submission of documentary evidence to illustrate compliance with all <i>Serviced Sites local housing</i> need requirements.</p>	<p>This provision updates existing objective HO O56 of the CDP.</p>	<p>No – Aligns with provisions already in place as part of the CDP. Potential impacts of this draft objective are considered to have been assessed and mitigated by the CDP and associated environmental assessments (i.e. AA). No further impacts on any European Site are anticipated to arise as a result of this update.</p>	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective</p>

A.2 Mitigation Measures based on the policies and objectives of the Kildare CDP (as varied)

Mitigation

Mitigation to prevent LSE and avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of any European sites is presented below. The table is based on a suite of embedded mitigation measures from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) which will contribute to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of any European sites.

Mitigation against the potential effects associated with provisions of the CDP

Element of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)	Potential Impact	Mitigation including:
<p>Chapter 3 Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New housing development throughout the county • Transformation of brownfield sites & regeneration of urban centres • New student accommodation • Implementation of LAPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 3 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 Housing • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 4 Resilient Economy & Job Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions relating to mixed use settlements and sustainable centres • Working with statutory bodies (TII & Irish Water) to provide support for services to accommodate future economic growth. • Enhancement of broadband and installation of fibre network. • Acquisition of land for entrepreneurial initiatives & clustered incubator units • Provision of new postal facilities including postal infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 4 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 Resilient Economy & Job Creation • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 5 Sustainable Mobility Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions relating to existing and new road infrastructure, walking, cycling, rail and aviation. • Provisions to public transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 5 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 Sustainable Mobility Transport • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure

Element of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)	Potential Impact	Mitigation including:
<p>Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services</p> <p>Provisions relating to the infrastructure of water, utilities, flood risk management and pollution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 6 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 7 Energy & Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions relating to energy supply, renewable energy development, electricity supply and telecommunications. • Provisions relating to electrification of transportation methods • Provisions relating to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions • Provisions relating to ‘after use’ of industrial peatlands, sites, amenities and power stations • Provisions relating to data centre development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 7 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 7 Energy & Communications • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 8 Urban Centres & Retail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions relating to the development and enhancement of urban centres and retail areas • Provisions relating to the promotion and encouragement of tourism retail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 8 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 9 Our Rural Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions relating to rural infrastructure development • Provisions relating to former extractive industries and related sites (peatlands, quarries) • Provisions relating to forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 9 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 9 Our Rural Economy • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 10 Community Infrastructure & Creative Places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions relating to residential care for the elderly inclusive of amenities • Provisions relating to the enhancement and promotion of arts and cultural facilities • Provisions relating to educational, childcare, library, health, burial and fire services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 10 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure

Element of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied)	Potential Impact	Mitigation including:
<p>Chapter 11 Built & Cultural Heritage</p> <p>Provisions relating to Kildare’s heritage resource including archaeology, heritage sites and the preservation of built and cultural heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance to key species • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 12 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure
<p>Chapter 13 Landscape & Amenity</p> <p>Includes the development and enhancement of recreational areas and amenities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 13 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure • Chapter 13 Landscape & Amenity
<p>Chapter 14 Urban Design, Placemaking and Regeneration</p> <p>Provisions relating to town and village settlements, design, renewal and regeneration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Loss • Disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation • Changes to key indicators of environmental quality 	<p>The following chapters from the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) include relevant policies and objectives which will mitigate against those provisions within Chapter 14 that may potentially lead to adverse impacts on European sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services • Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure

A.3 Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites included in the Kildare CDP (as varied) (as taken from the NIR of the Kildare CDP)

This assessment has considered the potential to impact on the achievement of the Conservation Objectives of the European sites, as required by Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. The assessment has been developed in the context of the full policy base contained within the Plan which includes environmental protection policies, introduced with a view of avoiding adverse effects in line with recognised mitigation hierarchy.

Of specific relevance to the potential for impact on European sites, the following environmental commitments and objectives as set out in Table 4 of the NIR, are contained within the Plan and underpin the assessment which follows. Note that there may be recommendations for further strengthening of the wording of these embedded mitigation measures by way of the SEA and NIR recommendations.

There is a lack of clarity around whether embedded mitigation measures included within a plan could be construed as being mitigation as explored further for projects in the People Over Wind case. Therefore, the decision has been made in this NIR to include the suite of embedded mitigation within the Plan and listed in Table 4 of the NIR as part of mitigation to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of any European site.

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the Draft CDP

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP	
Chapter 3 – Housing	<p>HO P11 Facilitate, subject to all appropriate environmental assessments proposals for dwellings in the countryside outside of settlements in accordance with NPF Policy NPO 19 for new Housing in the Open Countryside in conjunction with the rural housing policy zone map (Map 3.1) and accompanying Schedule of Category of Applicant and Local Need Criteria set out in Table 3.4 and in accordance with the objectives set out below. Documentary evidence of compliance with the rural housing policy must be submitted as part of the planning application</p> <p>HO O52 Recognise the biodiversity and ecosystem services value of established hedgerows within rural and urban settings and where hedgerow must be moved to achieve minimum sight lines, a corresponding length of hedgerow of similar species composition (native and of local provenance) shall be planted along the new boundary, while allowing occasional hedgerow trees to develop</p> <p>HO P21 Consider the presence of bat species, all of which are listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive in the restoration/refurbishment of traditional structures and to ensure applications relating to the restoration and reuse of vernacular structures and houses in the countryside are accompanied by a bat survey report, as required and appropriate.</p>
Chapter 4 Resilient Economy & Job Creation	<p>RE P11 Support the accommodation of Data Centres at appropriate locations in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and the principles for Sustainable Data Centre Development of the Government Statement on the Role of Data Centres in Ireland’s Enterprise Strategy (July 2022) subject to appropriate Transport, Energy and Environmental Assessments and all relevant planning conditions. The location of data centres shall be situated where they will not have a potential likely significant effect on a European Site. Such developments shall be subject to an AA Screening Report, and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. They shall have regard for any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and shall account for any potential likely significant effects and provide mitigation and monitoring where appropriate.</p> <p>RE 071 Require that any application for a data centre will be subject to all relevant and cumulative environmental assessments and planning conditions and shall take account of the cumulative visual impact of the proposed connections of the data centre with electricity transmission, renewable energy and broadband infra- structure in the area.</p> <p>RE P12</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

Ensure that economic and enterprise related development is provided in a manner which facilitates a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and accelerates the transition towards a sustainable, low carbon and circular economy. The following measures shall be supported:

- An increase in employment densities within walkable distances of communities and on public transport routes.
- Promotion of walking and cycling and use of public transport through increased permeability and mobility management measures within and outside employment areas.
- The sourcing of power from district heating and renewables including wind and solar.

Additional native tree planting and landscaping on existing and proposed enterprise zones and development sites to aid with carbon sequestration, contributing to the green infrastructure network of the County and promoting quality placemaking

RE P13

Support and facilitate sustainable agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other rural enterprises at suitable locations in the County where there will be no potential for likely significant effects on a European Site or on a site that shares a hydrological connection to a European Site.

RE O99

Support the expansion and development of tourism in Kildare, investigating the feasibility of key opportunities such as those centred on the racing industry, motorsports, retail, heritage, historical heritage (both persons and places), geology, peatlands, golf and eco-tourism to include: Arthur's Way, the Dublin – Galway Greenway, the Barrow Blueway, the Shackleton Trail, Shackleton Museum, Mondello the Gordon Bennett Route, the Grand Canal Greenway, Brigid 1500, a Fitzgerald Family Trail, the Made of Athy Trail, Castledermot Town Wall, the Columbian Way and other opportunities. Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

RE O109

Support the development of sustainable forest-based tourism facilities and accommodation at appropriate locations within the Coillte estate. Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

RE P16

Support and promote environmental sustainability, which will be central to the development and protection of a viable tourism sector within the county

RE O118

Ensure the highest standards of design are used in the development of tourism related facilities to ensure that there are no significant adverse impacts on the landscape, including Natura 2000 sites and historic archaeological sites. Such facilities must be integrated into the landscape to take advantage of natural screening and topography.

RE O121

Require the preparation of 'Attraction Management Plans' for new developments/projects which may impact on areas of ecological or heritage sensitivity in County Kildare. These plans should consider (but not limited to) potential for loss of habitat and disturbance by increased visitor numbers. Applications or proposals will be accompanied by a management plan indicating projected numbers of users, hours of operation, seasons of operation, and an undertaking to protect the natural environment in the form of a risk assessment with proposed amelioration measures in respect of flora, fauna, hydrology, geology and soils. The Attraction Management Plans should have regard to any mitigation as detailed within a Stage 2 AA or EcIA.

RE O122

Ensure the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals and should have regard to any mitigation as detailed within a Stage 2 AA or EcIA.

RE P19

Promote the tourist development potential of 'after use' peatlands, subject to proper planning, environmental protection and sustainable development whilst having regard to any mitigation as detailed within a Stage 2 AA or EcIA.

RE O135

(a) Support and facilitate the development of Umeras Bog into a Peatlands Park.

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

(b) Develop the tourism potential of peatlands and in particular support the proposed Umeras Peatlands Park and existing Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park as tourist and ecological amenities subject to proper planning, environmental protection and sustainable development.

(c) Explore what linkages could be created between raised boglands and fens and nearby blueways and greenways, whilst ensuring that the environment and nearby properties would not be negatively affected or where there will be no potential for likely significant effects on a European Site or on a site that shares a hydrological connection with a European Site.

(d) Look at the feasibility of creating linkages between the proposed Umeras Peatlands Park and Monasterevin train station. (e) Look at the feasibility of creating linkages between Mouds Bog and the nearby town of Newbridge.

Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA, and should have regard to any mitigation as detailed within a Stage 2 AA or EcIA.

RE O136

Facilitate the development of a tourism resource using cutaway peatlands in conjunction with Bord na Móna and Fáilte Ireland, subject to environmental considerations and nature designations, for example, recreational forestry, outdoor pursuits, peat ways on the network of bogs and industrial railways and a designation of a National Peatlands Park. Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

RE O139

Require applicants to prepare a peatland stability assessment, carbon emissions balance assessment and hydrological and ecological impact assessments, as required, when developing project proposals for development on peatlands.

RE P20

Continue to work closely with key stakeholders in the tourism industry including Fáilte Ireland, INTO Kildare, Waterways Ireland, County Kildare Leader Partnership and the National Parks and Wildlife Services, in order to develop the Barrow Blueway for tourism and recreation and ensure ease of access to this amenity and that the Council works with Wicklow County Council, INTO Kildare, Fáilte Ireland and business stakeholders to promote the area both nationally and internationally as an area with a considerable number of tourist attractions and marketing potential.

RE O140

Support the development and marketing of the Barrow Blueway, including the Barrow Blueway Economic Plan, and facilitate related commercial opportunities throughout the county, subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive. Considering the River Barrow is a designated European Site, all developments within and adjacent to the Barrow Blueway should be subject to AA screening and where applicable Stage 2 AA.

RE P21

Work with the National Transport Authority (in conjunction with relevant objectives in Chapter 5), INTO Kildare, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland and all stakeholders to develop a co-ordinated approach to the selection, delivery and servicing of future greenways, blueways, trails and routes throughout the county and region, subject to all relevant and cumulative environmental assessments and planning conditions. New trails and routes should first be subject to the undertaking of feasibility assessment. Where feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new infrastructure in two stages”, Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.

RE O145

Promote the development of existing and new walking and cycling routes throughout the county as an activity for both international visitors and local tourists, in a manner that is compatible with road safety, nature conservation and other environmental policies. Where developments of new and existing walking and cycling routes exist within 15km of a European Site, the project should be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

RE P26

Support the development of tourism activities on and adjacent to waterways, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria and in accordance with the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant European Directives.

TM O11

Facilitate and secure the delivery/implementation of the public transport regional corridor proposals that relate to County Kildare and the County Kildare local route proposals as identified within the NTA’s ‘The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan’ (November 2021), specifically prioritising the proposed new local route from Naas to Newbridge. Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

TM O13

Promote and facilitate the implementation of public transport projects (bus and rail) and encourage transport providers and other agencies (e.g. NTA, developers etc.) to improve public transport (bus and rail) and to have regard to and support recently implemented and/or planned routes under NTA’s Bus Connects and proposed / planned routes under NTA’s Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan; Including: 1. Kilcock, Maynooth and Leixlip into Dublin; 2. Celbridge into Dublin; 3. Maynooth to Naas; 4. Leixlip to Naas; 5. Celbridge to Naas; 6. Naas to Caragh. in addition to a range of rural transport routes. Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

TM A19

Provide new or upgraded lighting for all footpath and cycle track schemes subject to the consideration of ecology and impacts on wildlife. Appropriate environmental assessments will be required and may result in unlit sections which may include some parts of the county’s Greenways. Where applicable, all species-specific mitigation will be included within the relevant sections of the Appropriate Assessment.

TM O88

Improve connectivity between the local road network and the national/regional road network. The Council will ensure that any future development in this regard complies with the guidance to safeguard the overall operational function of the national road network as set out in the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines, DECLG (2012). Such developments shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections

TM O96

Improve and re-align where necessary and as funds allow, the regional roads subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections

TM O97

Improve connectivity across the railways and canals in County Kildare, in conjunction with relevant stakeholders including Irish Rail and Waterways Ireland, to ensure new crossings do not impede the safe passage of boats navigating waterways. Subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections.

TM O102

Minimise the extent of hedgerow removal in order to achieve adequate sightlines. However, where it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that there is no other suitable development site (for planning reasons) any removed hedgerow shall be replaced with native hedgerow species. Opportunities should be sought to translocate existing species rich hedgerows, where possible, and subject to proper biosecurity protocols.

TM O119

Ensure car parking particularly parking associated with retail areas is designed in such a manner as to reduce visual impact and promote carbon sequestration, green infrastructure, and nature-based surface water drainage solutions by requiring:

- The landscape design to include planting of trees and pollinator species to be undertaken by an appropriately qualified Landscape Architect and in collaboration with an appropriately qualified ecologist to ensure the biodiversity in the general area will support European Sites;
- The construction details for the root zones of the proposed trees in accordance with best practice and to specify which locations utilise systems such as ‘root barriers’ to avoid future conflict between roots, roads, footpath surfaces and underground utility services;
- The provision of not more than two parallel or five perpendicular spaces between trees/planting bays;
- and • The use of permeable paving, where appropriate.

TM O124

Expand the existing public lighting network and ensure that all new developments are provided with adequate public lighting for the safety of all pedestrians, cyclists and minority groups. Such lighting networks shall have regard for protected species such as bats which can potentially be affected by lighting systems. The Lux, wavelength and TTC28 (Total Transfer Capability) will be considered in the selection of appropriate lighting.

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

	<p>TM O125 Ensure that landscape proposals detail public lighting locations and that proposed street lighting is not compromised by tree planting. The landscape proposals should ensure that the trees are planted a sufficient distance from public lighting so that when the canopy matures it does not cover the light standard.</p> <p>TM O126 Remove all inappropriate and unnecessary street lighting and cabling and ensure future street lighting installations do not adversely impact sensitive physical, environmental, natural and heritage resources within the county.</p> <p>TM O130 Ensure that the design of external lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution in the immediate surrounding environment and has due regard to the residential amenity of surrounding areas and the need to mitigate adverse impacts on sensitive fauna and protected species.</p>
<p>Chapter 6 Infrastructure and Environmental Services</p>	<p>IN P2 Ensure the protection and enhancement of water quality throughout Kildare in accordance with the EU WFD and facilitate the implementation of the associated programme of measures in the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 (and subsequent updates).</p> <p>IN O3 Promote water conservation and best practice water conservation in all developments, including rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling.</p> <p>IN O6 Require an undisturbed edge or buffer zone to be maintained, where appropriate, between new developments and riparian zones of water bodies to maintain the natural function of existing ecosystems associated with water courses and their riparian zones, and to enable sustainable public access. The width of the edge or buffer zone shall be determined during the appropriate environmental assessment such as EcIA or AA.</p> <p>IN O7 Protect recognised salmonid water courses in conjunction with Inland Fisheries Ireland such as the Liffey catchment, which are recognised to be exceptional in supporting salmonid fish species.</p> <p>IN P4 Ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place which meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan in order to promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.</p> <p>IN O21 Facilitate the development of nature based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, including the retrofitting of SuDS in established urban areas. Culverting entire drains and streams will generally be prohibited; interference with natural drainage systems is to be minimised and the Council will explore opportunities to remove culverted drainage systems in favour of open, natural drainage systems.</p> <p>IN O22 Require the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other nature-based surface water drainage as an integral part of all new development proposals.</p> <p>IN O25 Promote the use of green infrastructure (e.g., green roofs, green walls, planting, and green spaces) as natural water retention measures.</p> <p>IN O34 Recognise the important role of natural boglands and other wetland areas in flooding patterns. Development in these areas shall therefore be subject to a Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the relevant guidelines.</p> <p>IN O36 Require that development along urban watercourses comply with the Inland Fisheries Ireland Guidance: Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment (2020), including the maintenance of a minimum riparian zone of 35 metres for river channels greater than 10 meters in width, and 20 meters for river channels less than 10 metres in width. Development within this zone will only be considered for water compatible developments as defined in the OPW Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

	<p>IN O38 Support Inland Fisheries Irelands’ pilot projects to investigate the incorporation of habitat restoration measures into flood management schemes on the upper Barrow and its tributaries for native species such as salmon and to address invasive fish species, subject to all necessary planning and environmental assessments.</p> <p>IN P7 Support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan, and the Local Authority Waters Programme in achieving and maintaining at least good environmental status for all water bodies in the county.</p> <p>IN P8 Implement the provisions of EU and National legislation on air, noise, and light pollution and other relevant legislative requirements, as appropriate.</p> <p>IN O56 Protect water quality from pollution by agricultural sources and to promote the use of good farming practices in accordance with the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and Ireland’s Nitrates Action Programme 2017- 2021 (including any subsequent update).</p> <p>IN O57 Assess applications for developments, having regard to the impact on the quality of surface waters and any targets and measures set out in the River Basin Management Plan and any subsequent local or regional plans. Where developments have the potential to impact the water quality of surface waters and/or any of the targets and measures set out in the RBMP, such a project should be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.</p> <p>IN O58 Require development proposals which may have an impact on water quality to undertake site specific assessments to determine localised pressure</p> <p>IN O68 Require the design of external lighting schemes to minimise the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment having regard to the residential amenity of surrounding areas and the need to mitigate adverse impacts on biodiversity, particularly on river corridors.</p> <p>IN O69 Investigate measures to improve the approach to street lighting and ensure new developments are lit appropriately protecting environmentally sensitive areas.</p>
<p>Chapter 7 Energy and Communications</p>	<p>EC O2 Adopt a positive approach to renewable energy proposals, having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, including community, environmental and landscape impacts and impacts on protected or designated heritage areas / structures.</p> <p>EC O4 Support infrastructural renewal and development of electricity and gas networks in the county, subject to safety and amenity requirements, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable</p> <p>EC O5 Support and encourage the sustainable development of renewable energy auto production units (the production of energy primarily for on-site usage) for existing and proposed developments in line with relevant design criteria, amenity and heritage considerations and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status 224 of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.</p> <p>EC O11 Encourage wind energy developments in suitable locations in an environmentally sustainable manner whilst having regard to Government policy and the County Wind Energy Strategy, while being sensitive to the EU and national target of 30% of land for biodiversity. Subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.</p> <p>EC O12 Support small to medium scale wind energy developments within agricultural, industrial or business areas and support small community based proposals in urban and rural areas where they do not</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

negatively impact upon the environmental quality (i.e. the habitats, species, hydrological connections and air quality of the area) and visual or residential amenities of the area, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation where applicable

EC O13

Support the repowering (by replacing existing wind turbines) of existing windfarm development and the extension of existing and permitted wind farms on a case-by-case basis subject to further appropriate public consultation and proper planning considerations and environmental considerations such as the movement of qualifying interest species of European Sites. Projects shall provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.

EC O16

Require comprehensive winter and summer bird and wildlife surveys for all proposed wind farms sites, so that impacts on wildlife can be fully assessed and evaluated and so that appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures can be considered, to include for example removal or repositioning of turbines, introducing one black painted rotor blade (to reduce motion smear and reduce incident of collision) or the provision of technologies that help minimize harm to birds and other wildlife.

EC O17

Support the building of integrated and commercial-scale solar projects at appropriate locations subject to a viability assessment and environmental safeguards including the protection of natural or built heritage features, biodiversity and views and prospects.

EC O21

Support the provision of solar farms in appropriate locations in accordance with the criteria as set out in Section 7.6 of the CDP and environmental considerations such as the movement of qualifying interest species of European Sites. Projects shall provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.

EC O26

Only permit the removal of hedgerow where the removal of same has been clearly demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, to be necessary for the development of a solar farm(s)

EC P6

Facilitate the development of new river-based hydro energy plants subject to all necessary environmental considerations. River based hydro energy developments shall not be permitted within Natura 2000 sites or within designated and proposed Natural Heritage Areas or, ex situ of these ecologically sensitive areas where proposals will adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites; impact on the ecological integrity of NHA/pNHAs, or the habitats of protected species (without appropriate licence) as designated under National and European legislation

EC O27

Support proposals for hydro energy installations, including small-scale hydroelectric projects on the rivers, watercourses, freshwater dams and weirs across the County, where projects do not negatively impact on freshwater species, biodiversity and natural or built heritage features. Many of the rivers and tributaries in the county are protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives or other heritage designations, which will require consideration during the investigation of any possible suitable site.

EC O28

Require, appropriate buffer zones around dams, reservoirs and embankments constructed for the purpose of electricity generation.

EC O30

Support the development of small-scale hydro-electricity projects in the county, in particular for on-site consumption to meet the electricity requirements of proposed new buildings, or refurbishment of existing buildings appropriate to their riverside location and setting. Such developments shall be subject to an AA Screening Report, and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. They shall have a regard for any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and shall account for any potential likely significant effects and provide mitigation and monitoring where appropriate.

EC P7

Facilitate large and smaller scale geothermal energy generating developments both standalone and in conjunction with other renewable energy projects, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and consideration of environmental and ecological sensitivities in particular the sensitivities of protected surface water or groundwater bodies and groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems and to have regard to the Draft Policy Statement on Geothermal Energy for a Circular Economy (2021) published by the Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications (or any subsequent updates).

EC P8

Facilitate and support the development of projects that convert biomass to gas or electricity subject to national and regional policy. Such projects shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA

EC P10

Facilitate micro-renewable energy installations and auto-generator installations where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that they will not result in a significant adverse impact on residential, visual or environmental amenity. Such projects shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.

EC P17

Support the preparation of a comprehensive “after use” framework plan for the industrial peatlands and associated workshops, office buildings, industrial sites and power stations in Kildare, acknowledging the significant contribution that these expansive lands make towards the special landscape of the Bog of Allen and its potential to further the growth of tourism to and within the County including the creation of a National Peatlands Park, being a focal point for the environmental landscape, conservation and amenity.

EC O53

Support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the National Peatlands Strategy 2015 and any subsequent revisions.

EC O54

Require an Ecological Impact Assessment to be carried out and submitted with any planning application for energy infrastructure projects (e.g., wind and solar developments) on bog / peatlands (including former cut-away bogs).

EC A8

Support in conjunction with Offaly County Council and Laois County Council any proposal for a new National Peatlands Park on Bord Na Mona cutaway bogs in Kildare, Laois and Offaly.

EC P18

Support the accommodation of Data Centres at appropriate locations in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and the principles for Sustainable Data Centre Development of the Government Statement on the Role of Data Centres in Ireland’s Enterprise Strategy (July 2022) subject to appropriate Transport, Energy and Environmental Assessments and all relevant planning conditions. The location of data centres shall be situated where they will not have a potential likely significant effect on a European Site. Such developments shall be subject to an AA Screening Report, and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. They shall have regard for any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and shall account for any potential likely significant effects and provide mitigation and monitoring where appropriate.

EC O59

Consider applications for data centres having regard to the following criteria:

- Accessibility/ease of connection to power
- Availability of renewable energy to power any proposed data centre.
- Availability of high-powered fibre optic infrastructure
- Transport/road accessibility
- Compatibility of surrounding land uses/zoning
- Avoidance of designated sites including specifically avoidance of development of data centres where they would adversely affect the integrity of a European Site
- Availability of significant landbanks
- Noise
- Visual impact
- Flood risk

Such developments shall be subject to an AA Screening Report, and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. They shall have a regard for any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and shall account for any potential likely significant effects and provide mitigation and monitoring where appropriate

EC P19

Support the development, reinforcement, renewal and expansion of the electricity transmission and distribution grid to provide for the future physical and economic development of Kildare Such projects shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. The developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

	<p>EC O67 Require that developments involving the siting of overhead cables shall minimise visual impact by avoiding areas of high landscape sensitivity, sites and areas important for biodiversity and/or archaeological, cultural or heritage interest.</p> <p>EC O70 Facilitate the development of grid reinforcements including grid connections and a trans-boundary network into and through the county and between all adjacent counties. Such projects shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. The developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.</p> <p>EC O73 Consider the removal of trees (singular or in stands) and hedgerows (in part or in whole) only in circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that the removal of hedgerow material and or tree(s) is essential for the provision of energy and cannot be designed out. Where proven, the vegetation is to be replaced with equivalent number, species, variety and size as was in situ. Where non-native species are removed, they will be required to be replaced with native species. In all cases, plants of local provenance are to be planted within 1 year of removal and maintained to establishment to negate the habitat and biodiversity loss within 3 years. Existing vegetative or 'stepping-stone' linkages are to be maintained and improved upon to increase wildlife corridors. Opportunities should be sought to translocate existing species rich hedgerows, where possible, and subject to proper biosecurity protocols.</p> <p>EC O75 Promote and facilitate the provision of appropriate telecommunications infrastructure, including broadband connectivity and other technologies within the county. Such projects shall be subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. The developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation and monitoring where applicable.</p> <p>EC O80 Ensure that the location of telecommunications structures minimises and/or mitigates any adverse impacts on communities, public rights of way, historical sites, or amenities, and the built or natural environment. Innovative design solutions will be encouraged</p> <p>EC O82 Minimise the provision of overground masts and antennae within the following areas: • Areas of high amenity/sensitive landscape areas. • Areas within or adjoining the curtilage of protected structures. • On or within the setting of archaeological sites.</p> <p>EC P21 Support the infrastructural renewal and development of the gas networks in the county, subject to proper planning, heritage, environmental and amenity requirements.</p> <p>EC O85 Support and facilitate the production of low carbon renewable biogases such as hydrogen and biomethane, produced largely from agricultural organic matter, that can be exported to the National Grid, subject to appropriate environmental assessments.</p>
<p>Chapter 9 Our Rural Economy</p>	<p>RD O6 Encourage the conservation and promotion of biodiversity in all rural development activities whilst supporting the restoration, preservation, and enhancement of ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry.</p> <p>RD O10 Encourage the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural practices, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside and that the quality of the natural environment (watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance) is maintained and protected from the threat of pollution to support the achievement of climate targets.</p> <p>RD O12 Support the implementation of the draft objectives identified in the County Biodiversity Plan 2009-2014 and any relevant local action plan.</p> <p>RD O20 Support and encourage the work of the horticultural sector and third level institutions in the development of peat free media/compost to assist growers, producers, garden centres and homeowners with a sustainable alternative to peat-based compost and the negative environmental impacts associated with peat extraction.</p> <p>RD O21</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

Encourage the development of environmentally sustainable horticultural practices, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside and that watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.

RD P6

Increase forest cover in the county at appropriate locations while protecting sensitive landscapes, water bodies, all sites, habitats, and species of ecological importance including European sites and amenity areas

RD O26

Support new forestry plantation and works related to forestry, subject to protection of visually sensitive areas, ecology, water resources and abstractions, and compliance with national regulations with respect to protection of the environment.

RD O27

Support the development of forestry resources with several functions including, flood retention, biodiversity, water quality/catchment management, tourism and recreation in conjunction with Coillte and other relevant stakeholders.

RD O28

Discourage monocultural forestry and encourage a greater range of tree species in forestry plantations and promote, in particular, more native, deciduous hardwood woodlands. Such forestry plantations shall be subject to best practice and appropriate biosecurity measures and protocols.

RD O30

Ensure that development is appropriate in scale and character and does not have a negative visual impact on the countryside including public access, rights of way, walking routes and recreational facilities or cause degradation of wildlife habitats, nature conservation areas or areas of ecological importance.

RD P7

Support the appropriate and sensitive diversification of former cutaway peatlands, whilst ensuring the protection of their ecological, archaeological, cultural, and educational significance in line with the National Peatlands Strategy (DAHG 2015) the National Raised Bog Special Area of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022 and the Peatlands & Climate Change Action Plan 2030.

RD O32

Encourage the re-wetting, restoring and/or re-wilding of former cutaway bogs and peatlands with an emphasis on maximising biodiversity and carbon sequestration to account for approximately 70% of cutaway bogs. Such projects shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment; shall have regard to any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and their qualifying interest species; shall not adversely affect drainage of surrounding lands; and shall account for any potential likely significant effects and provide mitigation and monitoring where appropriate.

RD O33

Work with all relevant stakeholders including Bord na Móna to support the sustainable re-use and sustainable development of up to approximately 30% of cutaway boglands (within County Kildare) for economic purposes, including inter alia renewable energy (wind and solar) in appropriate locations, subject to relevant environmental assessments. Such projects shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment; shall have regard to any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and their qualifying interest species; shall not adversely affect drainage of surrounding lands; and shall account for any potential likely significant, cumulative and in combination effects

RD O34

Proposals brought forward for any development on the county's cutaway peatlands shall be accompanied by an independent biodiversity profile of the landholding, setting out how the proposed development was formulated having regard to the following step by step, biodiversity-led process: 1. Identification of areas of greatest ecological value and how the proposal is compatible with peatland restoration. 2. Identification of areas of greatest carbon sequestration value. 3. Identification of areas of amenity value and potential, and incorporation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy (see Section 12.14.5). 4. Identification of the subject site as a percentage of the overall landholding and justification for the proposed use having regard to Objective RD O33.

RD O37

Recognise the importance of cutover and cutaway bogs in providing some critical ecosystem services such as potential carbon sinks. Cutover bogs should be identified for immediate management interventions to prevent further degradation, particularly the ongoing loss of their carbon store.

RD O38

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

Encourage, where possible, the return to a natural functioning peatland ecosystem in the first instance.

RD O39

Protect peatlands from inappropriate development having regard to the Wind Energy Strategy for County Kildare (see Appendix 2 of CDP).

RD O40

Ensure that peatland areas which are designated (or proposed for designation) as NHAs, SACs or SPAs are conserved for their ecological and archaeological significance

RD O41

When developing project proposals for development on peatlands, undertake a peatland stability assessment, carbon emissions balance assessment and hydrological and ecological impact assessments, as required.

RD A1

Promote and support the development and operation of a number of long distance peatways that traverse the Bog of Allen utilising former industrial peat railway tracks and lines at the following locations:

- From Ticknevin Bridge (Grand Canal) to Rathangan
- Enfield (Royal Canal)/Kilshancoe (Raven's Cross)/Killyon/Doogary through Timahoe Bog to Allenwood Community Development Association Ltd. and onto the Grand Canal and from there through Lullymore East and onto the Rathangan.

These routes would also provide a loop walk comprising elements of the above two routes.

RD P8

Support and manage the appropriate future development of Kildare's natural aggregate resources in appropriate locations to ensure adequate supplies are available to meet the future needs of the county and the region in line with the principles of sustainable development and environmental management and to require operators to appropriately manage extraction sites when extraction has ceased

RD O32

Ensure that development for aggregate extraction, processing and associated concrete production does not significantly impact the following:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)
- Other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna.
- Zones of Archaeological Potential.
- The vicinity of a recorded monument.
- Sensitive landscape areas as identified in Chapter 13 of the CDP.
- Scenic views and prospects.
- Protected Structures.
- Established rights of way and walking routes.
- Potential World Heritage Sites in Kildare on the UNESCO Tentative List, Ireland.

RD O44

Require applications for mineral or other extraction to include (but not limited to):

- An Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive where any quarry / sand and gravel extraction are likely to have an impact on a Natura 2000 site (see Chapter 12);
- An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR);
- An Ecological Impact Assessment may also be required for sub-threshold developments to evaluate the existence of any protected species/habitats on site
- A detailed landscaping plan to be submitted indicating proposed screening for the operational life of the site. The predominant use of native plant species in the proposed landscaping plan will be expected;
- Detailed landscaping and quarry restoration plans. Habitats and species surveying shall be carried out and shall influence the restoration plan for the site.

Comprehensive Site Restoration Plan and./or After-Use Strategy having regard to the principles of 'Rehabilitation Ecology'

RD O49

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

	<p>Have regard to the following guidance documents (as may be amended, replaced, or supplemented) in the assessment of planning applications for quarries, ancillary services, restoration and after-use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2004). • Environmental Management Guidelines – Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non-Scheduled Minerals), EPA (2006). • Archaeological Code of Practice between the DEHLG and ICF (2009). • Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry (2008). • Wildlife, Habitats, and the Extractive Industry – Guidelines for the protection of biodiversity within the extractive industry, NPWS (2009). <p>RD O50</p> <p>Ensure the satisfactory and sensitive re-instatement and/or re-use of disused quarries and extraction facilities, where active extraction use has ceased. Future uses should include amenity, recreation and biodiversity areas shall be informed by an assessment of the specific site/lands and shall be subject to an ecological impact assessment or other environmental assessments as appropriate. Where it is proposed to reclaim, regenerate, or rehabilitate old quarries by filling or re-grading with inert soil or similar material, or to use worked-out quarries as disposal locations for inert materials, the acceptability of the proposal shall be evaluated against the criteria set out in Section 15.9.6 of this Plan. The Council will resist development that would significantly or unnecessarily alter the natural landscape and topography, including land infilling/ reclamation projects or projects involving significant landscape remodelling, unless it can be demonstrated that the development would enhance the landscape and / or not give rise to adverse impacts.</p> <p>RD O51</p> <p>Require that quarry remediation plans provide for environmental benefit, biodiversity and re-wilding in all instances. The 80% requirement for environmental/biodiversity may be waived at sites closer to urban areas where a significant portion of the site is being provided for sports, recreation, and amenity.</p>
<p>Chapter 10 – Community Infrastructure and Creative Places</p>	<p>SC O2</p> <p>Make provision, through appropriate land use zoning in the CDP settlement plans and Local Area Plans to deliver community infrastructure, supports and services in a planned and co-ordinated manner within the county, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.</p> <p>SC O25</p> <p>Increase the quantity and improve the quality of children’s play facilities across the county particularly in areas where a lack of provision has been identified (e.g., play areas should be within a 10-minute walk of new and existing residential areas), subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA</p> <p>SC O28</p> <p>Support the provision of multi-purpose sports (to include minority sports, and arts / drama activities) halls, outdoor playing pitches, all-weather playing pitches, tennis courts, basketball courts, swimming pools, and associated facilities in appropriate locations and to particularly encourage flexibility in the design of sports facilities in order to accommodate a range of sporting activities, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA</p> <p>SC A8</p> <p>Continue to develop open spaces throughout the county which encourage a range of recreational and amenity activities that will cater for both active and passive recreation, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA</p> <p>SC O36</p> <p>Provide for nursing homes in urban and appropriately located rural settings in the county and to site residential care facilities for older persons close to community and social facilities (e.g., shops, health services etc.) ensuring older persons can remain part of and contribute to existing communities, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA</p> <p>SC O46</p> <p>Facilitate the development of new facilities in built up areas close to walking/cycling infrastructure and public transport links, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA.</p> <p>SC O47</p> <p>Facilitate the expansion of existing facilities to cater for the needs of community groups and the growing population in Kildare, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA</p> <p>SC P10</p> <p>Develop and improve the physical infrastructure of arts and cultural facilities throughout the county particularly in areas where there is a deficiency in such provision, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

<p>Chapter 11 Built and Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>AH O49 Preserve, protect and where necessary encourage the use of heritage/traditional varieties of plants and trees that form part of the local/ regional biodiversity resource and that contribute to local identity.</p> <p>AH O51 Require that planning applications take into consideration the impacts of the development on their landscapes and demonstrate that the development proposal has been designed to take account of the heritage resource of the landscape.</p>
<p>Chapter 12 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure</p>	<p>BI P1 Integrate in the development management process the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape features by applying the mitigation hierarchy to potential adverse impacts on important ecological features (whether designated or not), i.e. avoiding impacts where possible, minimising adverse impacts, and if significant effects are unavoidable by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate. Opportunities for biodiversity net gain are encouraged.</p> <p>BI O1 Require, as part of the Development Management Process, the preparation of Ecological Impact Assessments that adequately assess the biodiversity resource within proposed development sites, to avoid habitat loss and fragmentation and to integrate this biodiversity resource into the design and layout of new development and to increase biodiversity within the proposed development. Such assessments shall be carried out in line with the CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.</p> <p>BI O6 Apply the precautionary principle in relation to proposed developments in environmentally sensitive areas to ensure that all potential adverse impacts on a designated NHA or Natura 2000 Site arising from any proposed development or land use activity are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.</p> <p>BI P2 Seek to contribute to maintaining or restoring the conservation status of all sites designated for nature conservation or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and agreements. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Ramsar Sites and Statutory Nature Reserves.</p> <p>BI O8 Support the implementation of the National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022.</p> <p>BI O9 Avoid development that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site and promote favourable conservation status of habitats and protected species including those listed under the Birds Directive, the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats Directive, to support the conservation and enhancement of Natura 2000 Sites including any additional sites that may be proposed for designation during the period of this Plan and protect the Natura 2000 network from any plans and projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the coherence or integrity of a Natura 2000 Site.</p> <p>BI O10 Ensure an Appropriate Assessment Screening, in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, Section 177A of the Planning and Development Act (2001-2022) or any superseding legislation and with DEHLG guidance (2009), is carried out in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site to determine the likelihood of the plan or project having a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects and to ensure that projects which may give rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites will not be permitted (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) unless for reasons of overriding public interest.</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

BI O11 Support the establishment of conservation measures and the preparation and implementation of management plans for the conservation of Natura 2000 sites by NPWS, as required by Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive.

BI P3

Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to a Natural Heritage Area (NHA), Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the site, particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats and Birds Directive including their habitats

BI O12

Require the preparation of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) by a suitably qualified professional for proposals for development within or adjacent to a Natural Heritage Area (NHA)/proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), to ensure the development is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the site, particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts. Such assessments shall be carried out in line with the CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.

BI O13

Support the establishment of conservation measures and preparation and implementation of management plans for the conservation of NHA sites by NPWS.

BI O14

Conserve, preserve and protect the integrity of and maintain the favourable conservation value/status within or adjacent to Ramsar Sites, Statutory Nature Reserves, Biogenetic Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, all existing and proposed NHAs. They should be designed and sited so as to minimise their impact on the ecological and landscape values of these sites under National and European legislation and International Agreements.

BI O22

Identify and protect areas of high nature conservation value (including but not limited to SAC / SPA / pNHA) and support the landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping-stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows, and road verges so as to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

BI A9

Undertake surveys and collect data to provide an evidence-base to assist the Council in meeting its obligations under Article 6 of the Habitats Directives (

BI P4

Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation on plant, animal or bird species which are protected by law.

BI O15

Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact on rare and threatened species, including those protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2012, the Birds Directive 1979 the Habitats Directive 1992 and the Flora Protection Order species and any species listed under the national red lists or that could be listed on a national red list.

BI O16

Ensure appropriate species and habitat avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into all new development proposals.

BI O17

Require a derogation licence, where necessary, issued by the DHLGH, in the event of a proposed development impacting on a site known to be a breeding or resting site of species listed in the Habitats Directive (Annex IV species).

BI O18

Require all applications for new developments to identify, protect and sensitively enhance the most important ecological features and habitats, and incorporate these into the overall open space network, keeping free from development and to provide links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process and by making provision for local biodiversity (e.g. through provision of swift boxes or towers, bat roost sites, hedgehog highways , green roofs, etc.).

BI O19

Require that all biodiversity data gathered in the preparation of planning applications will be made available to the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NDBC).

BI O20

Conserve and protect habitats and species listed in the Annexes of the EU Habitats Directive (92/143/EEC) (as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), Directive Annex 2, the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2000, The Wildlife Acts 1976 (as amended) and the Flora Protection Order No 94 of 1999.

BI O21

Work with bodies such as the NPWS and National Biodiversity Data Centre to ensure that species for which Kildare is a national stronghold such as Green-Flowered Helleborine Orchid, Yellowhammer and Linnet, which are nationally rare or declining, are supported to flourish and seek to ensure the habitat conditions favourable to such species are retained in the county.

BI O22

Identify and protect areas of high nature conservation value (including but not limited to SAC/SPA/pNHA) and support the landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping-stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows, and road verges so as to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

BI A9

Undertake surveys and collect data to provide an evidence-base to assist the Council in meeting its obligations under Article 6 of the Habitats Directives (92/43/EEC) as transposed into Irish Law, subject to available resources.

BI P7

Recognise and promote inland waters, natural environmental assets and to protect rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitats for fauna and flora while discouraging culverting or realignment.

BI O37

Ensure the protection of rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitats for fauna and flora while discouraging culverting or realignment. Endeavour to re-open previously culverted streams and watercourses through any future development/redevelopment proposals.

BI O38

Require the preparation and submission of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) including bat and otter surveys for developments along river or canal corridors.

BI O39

Consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) in relation to any development (greenfield development or redevelopment of brownfield sites) that could potentially impact on the aquatic ecosystems and associated riparian habitats while taking account of ‘Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites’ (IFI, 2004) and ‘Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment’ (IFI, 2020) and as identified in Table 12.4.

BI O40

Support Inland Fisheries Ireland’s pilot projects to investigate the incorporation of habitat restoration measures on waters draining the Bog of Allen into flood management schemes.

BI O41

Maintain riparian buffer zones and potential uses as identified in Table 12.4 when considering potential development and proposed development layouts within or adjacent to waterways.

BI O42

Ensure that any proposals for a National Peatlands Park will consider the important rivers and populations of native fish and other species, when draining the Bog of Allen area.

BI O43

Consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and Waterways Ireland in relation to any structures designed for crossing fisheries waters. In this regard consideration must be given to the following biological criteria:

- species of fish required to safely pass
- size of fish required to pass (life stage)
- time of year in which fish passage is required
- high and low design passage flows etc.

BI O44

Require that expert advice is sought from a suitably qualified bat expert, in developing lighting proposals along river and stream corridors or other important locations or corridors for wildlife, to mitigate impacts of lighting on bats and other species. The use of artificial lighting shall be avoided

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

	<p>in streamside zones (see Figure 12.2) and artificial lighting should be restricted unless absolutely necessary in the middle zone (See Table 12.4). LEDs should, where permitted, be warm white to minimise disturbance to wildlife.</p> <p>BI O45 Ensure that any runoff from developed areas does not result in any deterioration of downstream watercourses or habitats and require that pollution generated by a development is treated within the development area prior to discharge to local watercourses.</p> <p>BI O47 Ensure the protection, improvement or restoration of riverine floodplains and to promote strategic measures to accommodate flooding at appropriate locations including nature-based solutions, in order to protect ground and surface water quality and build resilience to climate change.</p> <p>BI O48 Avoid developing walking/cycling trails through sensitive ecological habitats. A multi-disciplinary team including an ecologist and flood risk expert shall review all riverine sites to determine the appropriate zonation (ref Table 12.4 of CDP) and permissible uses.</p> <p>BI P8 Ensure that Kildare’s wetlands and watercourses are retained for their biodiversity, climate change mitigation properties and flood protection values and at a minimum to achieve and maintain at least good ecological status for all wetlands and watercourses in the county by, at the latest, 2027 in line with the Water Framework Directive and Ramsar Convention.</p> <p>BI O49 Protect wetland sites that have been rated A (International), B (National) C+ (County) and C (Local) importance as identified in the County Kildare Wetlands Survey 2012-2014, (See Tables 12.5 & 12.6 of CDP).</p> <p>BI O58 Require all development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on proposed development sites and (if necessary) require applicants to prepare and submit an Invasive Species Management Plan where such species exist, in order to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.</p> <p>BI A27 Determine, as a priority, whether there is a potential threat of invasive species to the protected sites within the County, and to begin a dedicated programme of eradication, beginning with the Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>BI O74 Strengthen ecological networks between urban areas to create greater linkages to Natura 2000 sites, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, parks and open spaces and the wider regional Green Infrastructure network.</p>
<p>Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual Amenity</p>	<p>LR O43 Normally only permit development proposals associated with water sports adjacent to waterways (including lakes) where the proposed facilities are compatible with the existing use of water including nonrecreational uses, which will not result in damage to important features of archaeological heritage or Natura 2000 sites and where they can be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape so that they will not have an unacceptable impact on visual or environmental amenities especially in areas of high amenity or scenic importance.</p> <p>LR O45 Support the proposed Umeras Peatlands Park development of Umeras Community Development and explore links between the bog and nearby blueways and greenways, whilst ensuring nearby properties would not be negatively affected, in consultation with Offaly County Council, Waterways Ireland and all other relevant stakeholders. The proposed development shall be subject to an AA Screening Report, and where applicable, Stage 2 AA. They shall have regard for any hydrological connection shared with a European Site and their qualifying interest species. The project shall account for any potential likely significant effects and provide mitigation and monitoring where appropriate.</p> <p>LR O46 Lead and support the extension and interconnection of Greenways, Blueways, Peatways and trails within and outside County Kildare in consultation with Coillte, Bord na Móna and all other relevant stakeholders, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation where applicable.</p> <p>LR O51</p>

Embedded protective policies and objectives relevant to European sites in the CDP

Facilitate the development of a walking route between Ballymore Eustace, Golden Falls, Poulaphouca/Blessington Greenway, Russborough and Barretstown, in cooperation with landowners and government agencies, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation where applicable.

LR O69

Preserve, protect, promote and improve for the common good, existing rights of way which contribute to general amenity, particularly those which provide access to archaeological sites and National Monuments and amenities, including upland areas and water corridors, and to create new ones or extend existing ones where appropriate either by agreement with landowners or through the use of compulsory powers, without adversely affecting landscape conservation interests, subject to AA screening and where applicable, Stage 2 AA so as to ensure and protect the favourable status of European sites and their hydrological connections. Such developments will have regard for protected species and provide mitigation where applicable

A.4 Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment

Proposed Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029; Variation 03	Potential Source of Impacts	Pathway	Receptor	Potential for LSE
CS O1: Ensure that the future growth and spatial development of County Kildare is in accordance with the population and housing allocations contained in the Core Strategy which aligns with the regional growth strategy as set out in the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region, and further specified in the ‘Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning’, <i>as replaced in 2025 by the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities.</i>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
CS O19: Align the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, with the up-to-date population from Census 2022 where there are verified material population differentials at settlement level to those in Table 2.8 of the Plan, by way of a statutory variation/ review pursuant to Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). <i>Ensure that future settlement plans incorporate Census 2022 and housing completions data published by the Central Statistics Office, to establish an up-to-date baseline population estimate for each settlement.</i>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
CS O25: <i>Ensure that future settlement plans include maps to identify areas categorised as central, urban, suburban, urban extension and edge areas, where applicable, to align with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024.</i>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
CS O26: <i>Require urban regeneration to be a fundamental consideration in the preparation of all settlement plans and identify / map Settlement Consolidation Sites²⁰ and other brownfield / infill sites that have regeneration and development potential, with outputs²¹ identified in the Settlement Capacity Audit.</i>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
CS O27: <i>Work in close partnership with the Department of Education to support the timely planning and delivery of new schools across the county, so that educational infrastructure meets the needs of a growing population and contributes to the long term social and economic wellbeing of the community. It is a priority of the Council that the triple school campus at Ballyoulster, Celbridge is delivered during the life of this plan.</i>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
CS O28: <i>Actively promote and facilitate the sensitive expansion of existing, and the development of new, Foreign Direct Investment sites and industries as strategic contributors to the county's long-term economic development by</i>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are

²⁰ See Section 6.4.2 of the Development Plans - Guidelines for Planning Authorities

2022 ²¹ Outputs may include residential units and/or jobs where appropriate.

Proposed Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029; Variation 03	Potential Source of Impacts	Pathway	Receptor	Potential for LSE
<i>fostering a conducive environment that promotes job creation, drives innovation, and strengthens the capacity of local enterprises.</i>				anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>CS 029: <i>Facilitate the sequential development of urban areas by releasing the lands zoned 'Phase 2' specified in Table 2.8A so that appropriate residential developments and ancillary uses may be progressed. The lands to which this objective refers to are:</i></p> <p>(i.) <i>Land zoned 'Phase 2' in the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027 on the Kilcullen Road and the Blessington / Tipper Road as identified in Map V3 2.1,</i></p> <p>(ii.) <i>Land zoned 'Phase 2' in the Newbridge Settlement Plan, and</i></p> <p>(iii.) <i>Land zoned 'Phase 2' in the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2023-2029 at Southgreen, Ruanbeg, Dunmurray Road, Green Road South and An Talamh Ban identified in Map V3 2.2.</i></p> <p><i>For development management purposes, the uses which are permitted in principle, open for consideration and not normally permitted shall be taken to be those as listed under the 'New Residential' zoning objective contained in the Land Use Zoning Matrix of the relevant Local Area Plan. This objective does not relate to land identified as 'Phase 2' or 'Strategic Reserve' in any other settlement.</i></p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>CS 030: <i>Ensure that the new Settlement Plans for Celbridge and Athy integrate the sites identified in Table 2.8A into the development strategy for the town to facilitate the delivery of housing, i.e.</i></p> <p>(i.) <i>Lands zoned 'Strategic Reserve' in the Athy Local Area Plan 2021-2027 at Chanterlands as identified in Map V3 2.3, and</i></p> <p>(ii.) <i>Lands zoned in the Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023 as 'New Residential' at Simmonstown and Ballyoulster as identified in Map V3 2.4.</i></p> <p><i>The full extent of residential land to be brought forward will be subject to appropriate flood risk assessment at Settlement Plan stage.</i></p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>CS 031: <i>Prepare settlement plans for Monasterevin, Kilcock and Sallins to include the additional housing growth requirement included in Table 2.8 and Table 2.8A on serviced lands to be informed by infrastructural and environmental assessments.</i></p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>CS 032: <i>Initiate the process for the designation of candidate Urban Development Zones, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (once commenced), at the following locations as included in Table 2.8B:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Northwest Quadrant, Naas as identified in Map V3 2.5, and</i> 	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.

Proposed Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029; Variation 03	Potential Source of Impacts	Pathway	Receptor	Potential for LSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confey, Leixlip as identified in Map V3 2.6 <p>A subsequent CDP Variation will be brought forward to integrate the Confey Masterplan into Volume 2 of the CDP to safeguard the planning framework for Confey providing continuity between the current Local Area Plan and the future UDZ process.</p>				
<p>HO P1: Have regard to the DHLGH Guidelines on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities (2007); Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020); <i>Planning Design Standards for Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025);</i> Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009); Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009); <i>Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and accompanying Design Manual (when published);</i> Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) Housing Options for our Aging Population (2020) and Age Friendly Principles and Guidelines for the Planning Authority (2021); <p>Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (<i>Updated 2019</i>) and <i>accompanying Advice Notes.</i></p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>HO P2: Accord with the provisions of the National Planning Framework 2018 as reviewed, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019 (including the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan) and the Ministerial Circular relating to Structural Housing Demand in Ireland and Housing Supply Targets, and the associated Section 28 Guidelines: Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (2020) the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025), and make provision for the scale of population growth and housing supply targets outlined in these plans and guidelines.</p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>HO O4: Ensure appropriate densities are achieved in accordance with the Core Strategy in Chapter 2 of this Plan, and in accordance with the principles set out in Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Development (Cities, Towns and Villages), DEHLG, 2009, Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG, 2009; the Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018); and with reference to Circular Letter NRUP 02/2021 (April 2021).</p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.

Proposed Variation to the Kildare CDP 2023-2029; Variation 03	Potential Source of Impacts	Pathway	Receptor	Potential for LSE
<p>HO 07: Promote, where appropriate and sensitive to the characteristics of the receiving environment, increased residential density as part of the Council’s development management function and in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas— Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, DEHLG, May 2009 <i>Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and the accompanying Design Manual (when published).</i></p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.
<p>HO 056: Ensure that any applicant for the provision of a dwelling unit on lands designated “Serviced Sites” complies in full with the <i>Serviced Sites</i> local need criteria as set out in Table 3.4(a) which must be satisfactorily demonstrated through the submission of documentary evidence to illustrate compliance with all <i>Serviced Sites local housing</i> need requirements.</p>	No potential source of impacts anticipated arising from this objective.	No connectivity.	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential source of impacts are anticipated to arise from this objective.



**Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029
(as varied)**

**Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Determination in accordance with
the EU's Habitats Directive Article 6(3) and Section 177U of the Planning and
Development Act 2000 (as amended).**

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening determination has been made by Kildare County Council regarding the Proposed Variation No.3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended).

Having regard to the contents of the Proposed Variation No.3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended), following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the best available information, and applying the precautionary principle, it can be concluded that the possibility of any significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the Proposed Variation No.3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded. In reaching this conclusion, the nature of Variation (No. 3) and its potential relationship with all European sites within the Zone of Influence (Zol), and their Conservation Objectives, have been fully considered.

This decision has been informed by an analysis by Arup, in addition to the Proposed Variation No.3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) provided by Kildare County Council and other material pertinent to the European Sites held by the Council.

In conclusion, in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and Section 177U of the Planning and Development 2000 (as amended), taking into account all matters relevant it has been determined that Proposed Variation No.3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have likely significant effects on a European site.

Signed: *Ger Maher* 24/10/2025 | 2:49 PM BST

Signatory (Approved Officer): Ger Maher, Acting Director of Service – Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services.

Date: 24th October 2024

Kildare County Council

Proposed Material Amendments to Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied)

Appropriate Assessment Screening Addendum

Reference: 312816-00

Issue | 4 February 2026

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 312816-00

Ove Arup & Partners Ireland Limited
50 Ringsend Road
Dublin 4
D04 T6X0
Ireland
arup.com

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	AA Screening of the Proposed Material Alterations	2
3.	Conclusion	10

1. Introduction

Kildare County Council (KCC) published the Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) 2023-2029 in January 2023. The CDP is the key strategy document which structures the proper planning and sustainable development of land-use across County Kildare over the six-year statutory time period of the plan. The CDP consists of two volumes:

- Volume 1 Written Statement - The Written Statement constitutes the main body of the document which comprises the Vision, Core Strategy, development management standards and the overarching policies and objectives of the Plan.
- Volume 2 Part 1: Small Towns and Environs Plans and Part 2: Villages Plans and Rural Settlements provides a coherent planning framework for the small towns, environs of Ladytown and Blessington, villages, and rural settlements across the county. The Strategy includes land use zoning maps and specific objectives which are underpinned by the strategic vision and the overarching guiding principles of the Kildare CDP.

In March 2025, Variation No. 1 of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 was adopted, the purpose of which was to incorporate a land use plan for the town of Kilcullen into the Kildare CDP 2023-2029. The first variation set out a planning framework for Kilcullen, in the form of a ‘Settlement Plan.’

In September 2025, Proposed Variation No. 2 of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 was placed on public display for consultation, the purpose of which was to incorporate a land use plan for the town of Newbridge into Volume 2 of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The second variation set out a planning framework for Newbridge in the form of a ‘Settlement Plan.’ The Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No. 2 were placed on public display for consultation in January 2026.

In October 2025, Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) was placed on public display for consultation. The purpose of the proposed third Variation is to give effect to Ministerial Guidelines published in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). At a Special Meeting of Kildare County Council on Monday 26th January 2026, it was resolved to alter the Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029 (as varied) and that these alterations constitute a material alteration to the Proposed Variation.

Arup was commissioned by KCC to prepare a report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening with regards to Proposed Variation No. 3. AA Screening is the process for determining the potential adverse effects of a plan or project (in combination with other plans or projects) on Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. These sites are protected by National and European Law and are called ‘Natura 2000 Sites’. The AA Screening undertaken on the Proposed Variation No. 3 likewise determined that no AA is required in relation to the Variation.

Pursuant to Planning & Development Act 2024, Part 6 Chapter 2 Appropriate Assessment of Plans, KCC has prepared the Proposed Material Alterations to the Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended). Thus, further consideration is required to determine whether any of the Proposed Material Alterations are likely to give rise to Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) on Natura 2000 sites.

The assessment of the proposed Material Alterations is set out in this Addendum to the AA Screening Report. This Addendum should be read in conjunction with the SEA Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended), as well as the SEA and AA Screening of the Proposed Variation No. 3. All mitigation measures proposed as part of the SEA Environmental Report and NIS of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied) (CDP) will be applied to all Proposed Material Alterations, to minimize any potential for environmental impacts

2. AA Screening of the Proposed Material Alterations

The Proposed Material Alterations (PMAs) to the Proposed Variation No.3 provides new objectives, text amendments and text removal in addition to amendments to maps contained within the proposed Variation No. 3 (Newbridge Settlement Plan). The PMAs have been assessed below in **Table 2.1** in line with the methodologies applied in the Screening for AA submitted on the Proposed Variation No. 3. The PMAs have been reviewed for sources of impact and pathways for effect.

Table 2.1 AA Screening of PMAs

Material Alteration Reference	Proposed Material Alteration Summary (Refer to Chief Executives Report for full detail on each PMA)	Potential Source of Impacts	Pathway	Receptor	Potential for LSE (Likely Significant Effects?)
PMA 5	<p>Text Amendment: Revise Proposed Amendment No. 16 to amend proposed objectives CS O27, CS O29, CS O31 and CS O32 and to insert new proposed objectives CS O33 and CS O34 as follows:</p> <p>CS O33 “Ensure continuity and facilitate housing delivery across all settlements through the favourable consideration of proposals for housing on lands which have the benefit of a residential zoning (“B” or “C” in relevant land use zoning maps and Settlement Expansion lands), where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the lands are readily serviced or serviceable through existing infrastructure or upgrades to infrastructure as part of any application on the lands and where the proposal addresses the delivery of affordable housing and any identified social infrastructure deficit in the</p>	<p>No- PMA primarily relates to minor modifications made to proposed objectives that do not alter the overall meaning or context of that objective.</p> <p>New objectives SC O33 and CS O34 reinforce the existing policies and objectives of the CDP regarding the consideration of applications for residential development on appropriately zoned and serviced lands, together with the delivery of associated enabling physical and social / community infrastructure. These objectives align with provisions SC O15 and SC O17 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.</p>	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.

	<p>respective settlement in accordance with Objectives SC O15 and SC O17 of this Plan.”</p> <p>CS O34 “Where planning applications are received for housing developments on appropriately zoned lands the Planning Authority will, in accordance with SC O15, and SC O17 of this Plan and the provisions of Section 86(7) of the Planning and Development Act, 2024 require in all instances that a Social Infrastructure Audit is prepared to accompany the planning application and that commensurate and pro-rata social infrastructure is proposed and delivered in tandem with the provision of new housing (Note: This will supersede SC O16 of the Plan as it relates to schemes of 20 units or greater)”</p>				
PMA 10	<p>Policy Amendment: insert to HO P26 – “For the purposes of the application of this toolkit, “built-up” areas will be taken as the defined settlement boundary as per maps in Volume 2 of the KCDP and any relevant LAPs for the time being of their existence.”</p>	<p>No - No potential impacts anticipated arising from this PMA.</p>	N/A	N/A	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.</p>
PMA 11	<p>Objective Amendment: Revise Objective BI O26 to state as follows –</p> <p>“Avoid, in the first instance, the removal of hedgerows to facilitate development. Where their removal is unavoidable, there shall be a requirement for mitigation planting comprising a hedge of similar length, established as close as is practicable to the original and where possible linking to existing adjacent hedges.</p>	<p>No potential impacts anticipated arising from this PMA - relates to rewording of prior text.</p>	N/A	N/A	<p>Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.</p>

	Ideally, native plants should be used for such planting. Removal of hedgerows and trees prior to submitting a planning application will be viewed negatively by the planning authority.”				
PMA 12	<p>Objective Insert: under Section V2 2.2.6 Surface Water for Castledermot to state as follows:</p> <p>ST CX “Ensure that development proposals for lands identified as C* and F* in Castledermot on Map V2-1.1A shall be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the type and scale of development being proposed.”</p> <p>Objective Insert: under Section V2 2.2.7 Site Specific Objective for Castledermot to state as follows:</p> <p>ST CY “It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development proposals for lands identified as ‘C*’ in Castledermot on Map V2-1.1A shall incorporate access to the lands zoned F: Open Space and Amenity directly adjacent to the northeast boundary of the site. This access shall be fully integrated into the design and landscaping scheme of any new residential development on the site.”</p>	<p>No - This objective aligns with provision IN O33 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.</p> <p>This objective aligns with provisions in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied) relating to the creation of sustainable communities and the integration of connectivity to surrounding lands in new developments (including TM O20, TM O21 and TM O101 of Volume 1 and V2 1.5 of Volume 2 of the CDP 2023 – 2029 (as varied)). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.</p>	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA

PMA 14	<p>Objective Amendment: Amend objective ST A10 of the Athgarvan Village Plan as follows:</p> <p>ST A10 “Provide for the delivery of a children’s playground, subject to the availability of appropriate sites and funding and Playing Pitches on the lands zoned F: Open Space and Amenity to the east of the BlackRath Vale housing development to the south of the L2032 (Curragh Road) in tandem with the development of lands adjoining lands zoned “C”. Require the development of a children’s playground, subject to the availability of appropriate sites and funding and Playing Pitches on the lands zoned F: Open Space and Amenity to the east of the BlackRath Vale housing development to the south of the L2032 (Curragh Road) in tandem with the development of lands adjoining lands zoned “C”.</p> <p>To ensure a coherent and comprehensive approach to the future development of these lands, any application for development on the “C” zoned lands to the east of the BlackRath Vale housing development to the south of the L2032 (Curragh Road) must be accompanied by a “development framework” which encompasses the “F” zoned lands and both adjoining “C” zoned lands. This “development framework” will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensure that the proposed development will not prejudice the delivery of development on the other “F” or “C” zoned lands, o Impact on existing residential amenity. o Seek to facilitate the activation of the entire “development framework” area, with arrangements or otherwise detailed to the Planning Authority for agreement.” 	No- PMA relates to minor modifications made to an existing objective that do not alter the overall meaning or context of that objective to facilitate the delivery of appropriate social / community and play infrastructure in tandem with residential development.	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA
--------	---	--	-----	-----	---

PMA 15	<p>Objective Amendment:</p> <p>V BE12 The development of the 1.8ha 'C*' New Residential site shall include the integration of the existing 5km looped walk in Ballymore Eustace, in particular the delivery of a car park for the looped walk together with a site-specific archaeological impact assessment and the retention and integration of existing trees into any proposed development.</p>	No- PMA relates to minor modifications made to an existing objective that do not alter the overall meaning or context of that objective.	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.
PMA 16	<p>Objective Insert: under Section V2 3.10.1 Village Centre / Regeneration in the Village Plan for Ballymore Eustace to state as follows:</p> <p>V BEX "It is an objective to deliver age friendly and right-sizing housing on the Council lands identified as A* and outlined in black on Map V2-3.4a."</p>	No- This objective provides detail on land-use already zoned for development in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.
PMA 17	<p>Objective Insert: Insert a new objective in Section V2 3.10.6 Surface Water as follows:</p> <p>V BEY "It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development proposals for lands identified as F* shall be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the type and scale of development being proposed."</p> <p>Objective Insert: Insert a new Section and objective to the Village Plan for Ballymore Eustace as follows:</p> <p>V2 3.10.7 "Western Framework Plan - V BEZ "To ensure a coherent and</p>	<p>No - This objective aligns with provision IN O33 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.</p> <p>No - This objective provides for the planned delivery of a sustainable community on land-uses proposed to be zoned / rezoned in Ballymore Eustace in accordance with existing provisions of the CDP regarding the creation of sustainable communities and the</p>	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.

	comprehensive approach to the future development of these lands, any application with respect to the lands outlined in dashed yellow on Map V2-3.4a must be accompanied by a “development framework” which ensures that the development does not prejudice the delivery of remaining parts or impact on existing residential amenity and shall include the provision of a community centre and playground.”	provision of residential developments with appropriate community / social infrastructure (SC O15 of Volume 1 and V2 1.5 of Volume 2 of the CDP 2023 – 2029 (as varied) refers). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.			
PMA 19	Objective Insert: under Section V2 3.9.6 Surface Water in the Village Plan for Johnstown to state as follows: V JTX “It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development proposals for lands identified as C* and F* to the north of Johnstown on Map V2-3.8 shall be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the type and scale of development being proposed. Such site-specific flood risk assessment(s) are to include consideration of climate change, including available data showing climate change flood extents in the vicinity of the lands.”	No - This objective aligns with provision IN O33 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.
PMA 20	Objective Insert: under Section V2 3.9.6 Surface Water in the Village Plan for Johnstown to state as follows: V JTY “It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development proposals for lands identified as SS* and F* to the south of Johnstown on Map V2-3.8 shall be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the type and scale of development being proposed. Such	No - This objective aligns with provision IN O33 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.

	site-specific flood risk assessment(s) are to include consideration of climate change, including available data showing climate change flood extents in the vicinity of the lands. ”				
--	--	--	--	--	--

PMA 21	<p>Objective Amendment:</p> <p>V KD2 Investigate the feasibility of providing a public park/amenity area and playground at an appropriate location within the village, including on lands zoned F* on Map V2-3.10.</p> <p>Objective Insert: to Section V2 3.16.6 Surface Water of the Kildangan Village Plan to state as follows: V</p> <p>V KDX “It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development proposals for lands identified by C* on Map V2-3.10 shall be subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the type and scale of development being proposed. Such site-specific flood risk assessment(s) are to include consideration of the potential effects of climate change and indicatively modelled watercourse(s) in the vicinity of the lands.”</p>	<p>No - PMA relates to minor modifications made to an existing objective that does not alter the overall meaning or context of that objective.</p> <p>No - This objective aligns with provision IN O33 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.</p>	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.
PMA 23	<p>Insert a new Section and objective to the Robertstown Village Plan as follows:</p> <p>V2 3.20.7 Surface Water V RX “It is an objective of the Council to ensure that development proposals for C zoned lands to the south of the Grand Canal shall be subject to a site-specific flood risk</p>	<p>No - This objective aligns with provision IN O33 in the Kildare CDP 2023-2029 (as varied). The potential effects of this provision were assessed and mitigated by the existing CDP and assessed as part of the associated SEA and AA.</p>	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.

	assessment appropriate to the type and scale of development being proposed, with consideration given to the Canal in the vicinity of the lands.”				
PMA 29	Objective Amendment: Amend point (iv) of Objective ST KL81 of the Kilcullen Settlement Plan – minor text amendments and insert “and Site C(X) Nicholastown (East)”	No - PMA relates to minor modifications made to an existing objective that do not alter the overall meaning or context of that objective	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.
PMA 30	Objective Amendment: Amend point (iv) of Objective ST KL81 of the Kilcullen Settlement Plan – insert “It is a requirement that development on site C(Y) Brownstown also provide a new street corridor through the lands.”	No - PMA relates to minor modifications made to an existing objective that do not alter the overall meaning or context of that objective	N/A	N/A	Potential for LSE does not exist as no potential impacts are anticipated to arise from this PMA.

3. Conclusion

A series of Proposed Material Alterations has been put forward to the Proposed Variation No.3 of Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied). A screening for AA has been carried out in line with Part 6 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 in line with the methodology carried out in the Screening for AA of the Proposed Variation No 3. It is recommended that this report is read in conjunction with the Screening for AA of the Proposed Variation No.3. Following review of the PMAs it has been determined the potential for likely significant effects on European sites arising from the implementation of the PMAs, alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would not arise.

In reaching this conclusion, the nature of the proposed PMAs and their potential relationship with all European sites within the ZoI, and their conservation objectives, have been fully considered. Therefore, it is the professional opinion of the authors of this report that the Proposed Material Alterations to the Proposed Variation No.3 of Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied) do not require an Appropriate Assessment.



Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as varied)

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Determination in accordance with the EU's Habitats Directive Article 6(3) and Section 202 of the Planning and Development Act 2024.

At a Special Meeting of Kildare County Council on Monday 26th January 2026, it was resolved to alter the Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as varied) and that these alterations constitute a material alteration to the Proposed Variation. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening determination has been made by Kildare County Council regarding the Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No.3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended).

Having regard to the contents of the Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No.3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended), following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the best available information, and applying the precautionary principle, it can be concluded that the possibility of any significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No.3 to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded. In reaching this conclusion, the nature of the Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No. 3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) and its potential relationship with all European sites within the Zone of Influence (Zol), and their Conservation Objectives, have been fully considered.

This decision has been informed by analysis prepared by Arup (Appropriate Assessment Screening Addendum Report), in addition to the Proposed Material Alterations to Variation No.3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) report provided by Kildare County Council and other material pertinent to the European Sites held by the Council.

In conclusion, in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and Section 202 of the Planning and Development Act 2024, taking into account all matters relevant it has been determined that the Proposed Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No.3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as amended) individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have likely significant effects on a European site and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Signed:  _____

Alan Dunney

Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development

Date 6th February 2026