

COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS
South Dublin County Council

Record of Executive Business and Chief Executive's Orders

Planning & Transport

**Proposed Variation (NPF Implementation and Compact Settlement Guidelines) to the
South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination**

Background

South Dublin County Council is preparing a Proposed Variation (No. 2 - NPF Implementation and Compact Settlement Guidelines) to the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 which will reflect and implement the National Planning Framework First Revision, 2025, the Section 28 Guidelines: NPF Implementation – Housing Growth Requirements (2025) and the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines (2024). The Proposed Variation will amend the County Development Plan by, *inter alia*, zoning/re-zoning additional lands for residential development purposes to achieve the revised national housing growth requirements.

The EU Habitats Directive Article 6(3) Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a land use plan or project on one or more European Sites. The Habitats Directive and the requirements of Article 6(3) have been transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (as amended).

A Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment was prepared in November 2025 by Doherty Environmental Consultants (DEC Ltd.) on behalf of South Dublin County Council in accordance with relevant national and European legislation and guidance. The Screening carried out indicates that the emerging proposed Variation will result in land use activities that could have the potential to result in negative impacts to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites within and/or surrounding the Plan area and could have the potential to compromise the achievement of the conservation objectives of these European Sites. In the absence of further detailed information regarding the emerging proposed Variation and in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures, it cannot be ruled out that the proposed Variation and the future developments facilitated by it, will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

As such, a Natura Impact Report (NIR) is required to inform an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 Variation No. 2 (NPF Implementation and Compact Settlement Guidelines). The requirement for a Stage II Appropriate Assessment (and associated NIR) is one of the criteria to trigger full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and as such, this will also be undertaken.

The required public consultation and consultation with prescribed bodies will be carried out during the Variation process.

Recommendation:

Having considered the AA Screening Report prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultancy Ltd., the requirements outlined in the relevant legislation and guidance and the level of detailed information regarding the emerging proposed Variation, it is recommended that South Dublin County Council, as the Competent Authority, makes a determination that it cannot be excluded at the screening stage that the emerging proposed Variation and the future developments facilitated by it will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites within and/or surrounding the Plan area. As such, a Natura Impact Report (NIR) is required to inform an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 Variation No. 2 (NPF Implementation and Compact Settlement Guidelines).

Senior Planner

ORDER:

Having considered the AA Screening Report prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultancy Ltd., the requirements outlined in the relevant legislation and guidance and the level of detailed information regarding the emerging proposed Variation, that South Dublin County Council, as the Competent Authority, makes a determination that it cannot be excluded at the screening stage that the emerging proposed Variation and the future developments facilitated by it will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites within and/or surrounding the Plan area. As such, a Natura Impact Report (NIR) is required to inform an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 Variation No. 2 (NPF Implementation and Compact Settlement Guidelines).

Director of Services

Date:

8/12/2025

To whom the appropriate powers have been delegated by order number DELG 2825 of the Chief Executive of South Dublin County Council.