

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Final Report  
For the 4<sup>th</sup> Variation to the Tralee Town Development Plan  
2009-2015**



**Environmental Assessment Unit  
Kerry County Council  
Nollaig 2016**

## Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Purpose and outline of the variation	3
3.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening	4
3.4 Conclusion	7
4.0 Recommendation	8
5.0 Determination under Article 13 K	9

## **1.0 Introduction**

Kerry County Council (the Planning Authority) varied the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009-2015 at the December 2016 Council meeting, in order to facilitate the development of a continuous through road from Cloonmore to Cloonbeg, Tralee, Co. Kerry. As part of this an 'indicative' continuous route is included on Map 2 of the Plan (Transport Objectives). Provision is also being made to allow for the consideration of public infrastructure proposals (listed in development objective RDP03) generally within the plan, notwithstanding land use zonings. In order to achieve this, the Planning Authority made a variation to the Plan under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

Article 13K of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 outlines the process by which determination of the need for environmental assessment of variations to development plans are made. The preliminary SEA screening assessment carried out (September 2016) was also informed by a screening exercise of the proposed variation against the Environmental Protection Objectives contained in the Environmental Report prepared as part of the Town Development Plan 2009-2015 review.

This report constitutes a final screening report of the variation following the consultation period and Council meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 on whether or not the variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

## **2.0 Purpose and outline of the variation**

There are objectives in the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009-2015 to support and facilitate the construction of roads and other public infrastructure. Objective RDP03 supports the construction of service roads in Cloonmore and Cloonbeg. It is now proposed to construct a through road from Cloonmore to Cloonbeg. The purpose of the road is to open up lands in Cloonmore for development, part of which is the proposed site for the new second level school for 600 students. The proposed road will also facilitate ambulance only entrance to the Kerry University Hospital and provide an

improved access to the Hawley Park Family Resource Centre. At times zoning may be in conflict with public infrastructure provision as listed in the Plan. It is therefore intended to include a new section in the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009-2015 which would allow public infrastructure projects to be considered on a case by case basis. The variation is therefore briefly outlined as follows:

- Amendment to Map 2 (Transport Objectives) to show a continuous 'New Road (Indicative only) from Cloonmore to Cloonbeg.
- Amendment of objective to support and facilitate the construction of a continuous road from Cloonmore to Cloonbeg.
- Amendment to landuse zoning policies/objectives so as to allow consideration of public infrastructure proposals listed in Development Objective RDP03 (Chp 11) on their own merits on a case by case basis in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development practices, notwithstanding land use zonings.

### **3.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening**

#### **3.1 Preliminary determination and recommendation under Article 13K of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended.**

The initial 'SEA Screening Report' associated with this variation, concluded that significant environmental implications were not likely to arise as a result of the proposed variation and that a SEA was not required.

#### **3.2 Consultation with Environmental Authorities/Public Consultation**

The SEA Screening Report (together with the Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Report) was forwarded to the Environmental Authorities specified in Article 13A (4) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and submissions and observations were invited.

A public consultation phase was also undertaken as part of this process. In accordance with Section 13(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) notice of the proposed variation was published in the local newspaper, 'The Kerryman' inviting observations and submissions. Copies of

variation no. 4 were put on display from 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016 to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Seven submissions were received from the following:

- I. Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
- II. Clare County Council
- III. Dublin Airport Authority
- IV. Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- V. Environmental Protection Agency
- VI. Southern Regional Assembly
- VII. Department of Education and Skills

The submissions received are detailed and responded to in the Chief Executive's Report. Most responses received have noted no observations on the proposed variation while the Southern Regional Assembly has observed that the proposed variation no. 4 is consistent with the RPGs 2010-2022.

No amendments are proposed following the consultation period to the variation as initially outlined.

### **3.3 Consideration of whether or not variation no.4 of the Tralee Town Development Plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.**

The submissions / observations received do not suggest that an SEA is warranted in this instance. It is noted that the variation in itself will not lead to development but rather will support and facilitate the construction of a through road from Cloonmore to Cloonbeg and other public infrastructure and facilitate the making of future planning applications i.e. for a second level school in Cloonmore. This new road will open up lands for development and will enhance ambulance access to the Kerry University Hospital. Further the inclusion of a new section in the Town Development Plan to allow for the consideration of public infrastructure proposals on their own merits on a case by case basis in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development practices, (notwithstanding land use zonings) will allow for the timely planning and delivery of public infrastructure as required.

No environmental effects were found as a consequence of the implementation of this variation. Further the Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Report prepared for variation no. 4 has concluded that the plan individually and in combination with other plans and projects shall not adversely affect the integrity of a European Site.

The Elected Members have not modified the variation from that which was preliminarily screened for SEA. Therefore a new screening exercise is not required in this instance.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The variation supports sustainable principles already contained in the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009-2015.

Following careful review and consideration of the issues concerning the variation, it is concluded that the variation will not result in a significant adverse environmental effect and would not therefore require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This conclusion has been based on consideration of the following factors:

- o The variation as presented identifies a continuous road from Cloonmore to Cloonbeg in place of the two non-linking service roads originally outlined in the Town Plan. This is proposed in order to facilitate enhanced traffic circulation as well as pedestrian and cyclist permeability from these locations; in addition to facilitating environmental improvements along Mitchell's Avenue. The variation will also facilitate the release and development potential of strategically located underutilised zoned lands that are currently landlocked. There is also an inclusion of a new section in the Town Plan which will allow public infrastructure projects to be considered on a case by case basis, notwithstanding land use zonings. The variation therefore supports the principles of co-ordinated and plan led sustainable development.
- o The existing safeguarding policies on environmental protection set out in the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009-2015.

In considering the above, the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 as amended and the submissions or observations received in response to the notice issued under sub-article (3) of the said regulations, were taken into account.

## **4.0 Recommendation**

Significant effects on the environment are not considered likely from the implementation of variation no. 4 to the Tralee Town Development Plan 2009-2015. The reasons are detailed in this screening report. A SEA is not required.



## 5.0 Determination under Article 13 K

It is recommended that the following determination be made by the Planning Authority:-

Having had regard to the requirements of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 as amended and having consulted with the Environmental Authorities and considered their submissions, it is the determination of the Planning Authority under Article 13K(4) of the Regulations that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required in respect of variation no. 4 to the Tralee Town Development Plan 2015-2021.

Signed: Michelle O'Connor  
**Michelle O'Connor**  
**Planner Officer**

Date: 13/12/2016

Approved: Michael Scannell  
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**Director of Services (Actg.) / Stúirthóir Seirbhísí,**  
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Date: 14/12/2016

