

**Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) Determination
under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) for:
Proposed Material Alterations to the Portarlington Draft Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031**

Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) Determinations are been made regarding Proposed Material Alterations to the Portarlington Draft Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031.

Section 20 (3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, requires, inter alia, a determination to be made as to whether Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan warrant the undertaking of AA.

The existing Draft Plan has already been informed by a Stage 2 AA and a Natura Impact Report has been prepared. As part of that AA, it was identified that the Plan may, if unmitigated, have likely significant effects on 1 (no.) European site. Plan elements that could potentially affect the integrity of European sites include:

- Provisions, including those relating to housing, town centre revitalisation, placemaking and sustainable communities, climate change, economic development, sustainable travel and transportation, infrastructure and environmental services, built heritage and biodiversity and natural heritage, which introduce sources for potential effects through construction phase such as habitat loss, light pollution, disturbance effects and hydrological interactions through surface hydrological connectivity and/or shared groundwater sources;
- Loading pressures from the operational phase of developments – these sources could result in habitat loss/fragmentation, light pollution, disturbance effects and interactions with water quality (surface and/or groundwater); and
- Increases in visitor numbers to ecologically sensitive areas during the operational phase of developments which have potential to introduce sources for significant effects, such as recreational and tourism developments.

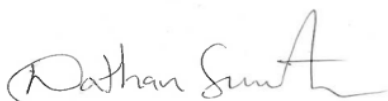
Mitigation was integrated into the Draft Plan that allowed the Natura Impact Report for the Draft Plan to demonstrate that, upon the inclusion of suitable mitigation measures, the Draft Plan will not result in any adverse effects to the ecological integrity of any European site¹.

Taking into the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan, the AA process for the Proposed Material Alterations has demonstrated that the implementation of Proposed Material Alterations will not result in any likely significant effect on any European site.

The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusion presented above. The undersigned hereby determines pursuant to Section 20 (3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that Stage 2 AA is not required for any Proposed Material Alteration.

This Screening for AA determination and the associated Screening for AA Report will accompany the Proposed Material Alterations on display. The documents are part of the ongoing and overall AA process that is being undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan. All Plan and AA related documentation will be considered by the planning authority in advance of the adoption of the Plan and a final AA Determination will be undertaken by the planning authority at adoption.

Signatory:



Laois County Council
April 2025



Offaly County Council

¹ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.