



Ms Tracy Davis
 Senior Executive Planner
 Roscommon County Council
 Aras an Chontae
 Roscommon
 F42 VR98

07 February 2019

Our Ref: 181203.2

Re. SEA Screening Report for Variation No. 2 to Monksland/Bellanamullia (Athlone West) Local Area Plan 2016-2022.

Dear Ms Davis,

We acknowledge your notice, dated 1st February 2019, in relation to SEA Screening Report for Variation No. 2 to Monksland/Bellanamullia (Athlone West) Local Area Plan 2016-2022 (the Variation).

The EPA is one of five statutory environmental authorities under the SEA Regulations. In our role as an SEA environmental authority, we focus on promoting the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Variation and advocating that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are addressed as relevant and appropriate to the Plan. Our functions as an SEA environmental authority do not include approving or enforcing SEAs or plans.

As a priority, we focus our efforts on reviewing and commenting on key sector plans. For land use plans at county and local level, we provide a 'self-service approach' via our guidance document '[SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources](#)'. This document is updated regularly and sets out our key recommendations for integrating environmental considerations into Local Authority land use plans. In finalising your SEA screening determination, we suggest that you take this guidance document into account and incorporate the relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the Variation.

Proposed SEA Determination

We note your proposed determination regarding the need for SEA of the Variation.



We refer you to our previous submission, dated 17th December 2018, which should be taken into account at this time.

Sustainable Development

In proposing and in implementing the Variation Roscommon County Council should ensure that the Variation is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development. Adequate and appropriate critical service infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Variation.

In considering the Variation Roscommon County Council should take into account the need to align with national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as incorporating any relevant recommendations in sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans.

Roscommon County Council should also ensure that the Variation is consistent with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes, including the National Planning Framework and the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western region.

The Plan should also align with and support national commitments on implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

State of the Environment Report – Ireland’s Environment 2016

In preparing the Variation and associated SEA screening, the recommendations, key issues and challenges described in our most recent State of the Environment Report [Ireland’s Environment – An Assessment 2016](#) (EPA, 2016) should be considered, as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.

Available Guidance & Resources

Our website contains SEA resources and guidance, including:

- SEA process guidance and checklists
- list of relevant spatial datasets
- topic specific SEA guidance, such as how to integrate climate change into SEA.

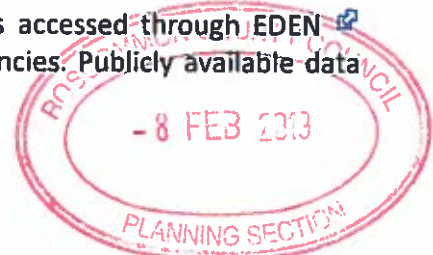
You can access these resources at: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/>

EPA SEA Search and Reporting Tool

This tool allows public authorities to explore, interrogate and produce high level environmental summary reports. It is intended to assist in screening and scoping exercises. The tool is available through EDEN www.edenireland.ie

EPA WFD Application

Our WFD Application provides access to water quality and catchment data from the national WFD monitoring programme. The Application is accessed through EDEN <https://wfd.edenireland.ie/> and is available to public agencies. Publicly available data can be accessed via the www.catchments.ie website.



Future Amendments to the Variation

Where changes to the Variation are made prior to finalisation, or where modifications to the Variation are proposed following its adoption, these should be screened for potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations (S.I. No. 436 of 2004)

Appropriate Assessment

You should ensure that the Variation complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where Appropriate Assessment is required, the key findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the Plan.

Environmental Authorities

Under the SEA Regulations, you should also consult with:

- The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, where it appears that the plan or programme, or modification of the plan or programme, might have significant effects on fisheries or the marine environment
- where it appears to the competent authority that the plan or programme, or amendment to a plan or programme, might have significant effects in relation to the architectural or archaeological heritage or to nature conservation, the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and
- any adjoining planning authority whose area is contiguous to the area of a planning authority which prepared a draft plan, proposed variation or local area plan.

As soon as practicable after making your determination as to whether SEA is required or not, you should make a copy of your decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection in your offices and on your website. You should also send a copy of your determination to the relevant environmental authorities consulted.

If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.

Yours sincerely,



David Galvin
SEA Section
Office of Evidence and Assessment

