

### 3 Schedule 2a Assessment

#### 1. Criteria for determining whether the Material Amendments to the draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment

The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to:

*the degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,*

The Material Alterations relate to the provisions of the draft LAP that in itself will provide the framework for landuse planning and projects in the plan area.

To strengthen and highlight environmental provisions a number of measures from the SEA and AA of the plan are now included in the Togher Masterplan (MA1) and one other MA is recommended for mitigation measures to avoid potential adverse effects associated with the River Triogue and downstream with the River Barrow and Nore SAC (MA 8)

*the degree to which the Plan influence other plans, including those in a hierarchy,*

The Material Alterations relate to the draft LAP which will operate as the landuse framework for the plan area once adopted. It sits within a hierarchy of landuse plans, of which the Laois County Development Plan (CDP) 2017-2023 is the primary county plan.

The LAP has been prepared having regard to the policies and objectives outlined within the CDP 2017-2023 and in turn higher tier plans.

*the relevance of the Plan in the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,*

The existing draft LAP provides for a suit of environmental considerations and these measures contribute to the promotion of sustainable development in light of the LAP objectives.

*Environmental problems relevant to the Plan*

The assessment in the material alterations report shows that conflicts with SEOs are identified for two material alterations, and therefore mitigation measures are recommended.

*the relevance of the Plan to the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection).*

The Draft Plan provides a landuse framework for the plan area and has been subject to SEA to date. The SEA, and other environmental assessments including Appropriate Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment considered and integrated European Union legislation on the environment including those relating to topics such as Waste Management and Water protection.

#### 2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

*the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,*

Subject to implementation of the mitigation measures as recommended, the proposed material alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects. As stated above, these material alterations are

recommended to include mitigation measures to strengthen environmental protection and avoid likely significant effects.

***the cumulative nature of the effects,***

The proposed material alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

***the transboundary nature of the effects***

The proposed material alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects in this regard.

***the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),***

The proposed material alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects as detailed in the individual assessment of material alterations in the material amendment report.

***the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).***

The proposed material alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects as detailed in the individual assessment of material alterations in the material amendment report

***the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:***

***(a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage***

additional mitigation measures are included for two material alterations

***(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,***

It is anticipated that environmental quality standards will not be exceeded by the draft LAP nor the material alterations.

***(c) intensive land-use,***

The Togher Masterplan provides for a potential significant intensification of land use and mitigation measures from the SEA and AA are recommended for inclusion in the masterplan to highlight these provisions. No significant environmental effects are identified subject to implementation of same.

***(d) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.***

The appropriate assessment has recommended mitigation measures in relation to two material alterations and subject to the implementation of same, likely significant effects arise in relation to conservation management objectives of European Sites are not identified.