

PROPOSED VARIATION NO. 1 (I) TO THE WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010-2016

AVOCA SETTLEMENT PLAN

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT (AA) SCREENING DETERMINATION

1. INTRODUCTION

This statement sets out the planning authority's determination under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) on whether or not an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required for the proposed variation (Avoca Settlement Plan) of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016.

2. THE AA SCREENING PROCESS

The screening process has been carried out in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and has involved the following:

- (i) a consideration of whether or not the proposed variation (Avoca Settlement Plan), in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives. It was the consideration of the planning authority that the proposed variation would not have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives and that an Appropriate Assessment was not required for the plan. This consideration is set out in Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report, and has taken account of the following documents:
 - *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Project in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2009)*
 - Circular Letter SEA1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government;
 - European Commission publication – *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/42/EEC.*
- (ii) consultation with the following environmental authorities on whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Development Applications Unit and Spatial Policy Section), and the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

The planning authority sent notice to the three environmental authorities on 13 April 2011. The authorities were invited to make a submission to the planning authority between the period 13th April 2011 to 4th May 2011. The responses of the environmental authorities are summarised below:

2.1 The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

No specific submission received in respect of AA screen.

2.2 Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government

No specific submission received in respect of AA screen.

2.3 Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

No comments/observations in respect of AA screen.

3. DETERMINATION

Having considered the criteria set out the relevant guidance documents and any submissions received from the environmental authorities in response to the notice issued under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the planning authority determines that the proposed variation (Avoca Settlement Plan) to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 will not have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objects, and appropriate assessment is not required.