

Blessington Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019 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 a stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required for the proposed Blessington Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019.

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 plan (Blessington Local Area 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 plan would not have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives and that a stage 2 Appropriate Assessment was not required for the plan. This consideration is set out in the 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 Prescribed Bodies: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR), the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Department of the Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Kildare County Council

Only one submission was received which raised issues in relation to the Environmental Reports prepared as part of the Draft Blessington Local Area Plan Process. The issues raised in this submission are summarised in addendum 1 of the Managers Report on the Draft Plan. No significant issues were raised in this submission in regard to the Appropriate Assessment Screening assessment

Minor amendments were made to the proposed Blessington Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019 at the Council meeting held on the 3rd of December 2012. Following assessment it was not considered that these amendments would have any significant effect on a Natura 2000 site.

3. DETERMINATION

Having considered the criteria set out in 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 Blessington Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019 will not have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives, and therefore a stage 2 appropriate assessment is not required.