



VARIATION NO. 1

LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015-2021

Adopted 20th May 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 was adopted on 28th September 2015 and came into effect on 26th October 2015. This variation prepared by Louth County Council is the first variation of the Plan.

This document sets out the detail of Variation No. 1 of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 which was prepared in accordance with Section 13 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (amended).

This variation has been prepared by Louth County Council in conjunction with Environmental Consultants (CAAS).

2.0 PURPOSE OF PROPOSED VARIATION NO.1 OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The purpose of Variation No. 1 of the Louth County Development 2015-2021 is to provide for additional and more wide ranging uses at Carrickcarnon on lands identified as an Economic Business Zone. Currently the uses permitted at Carrickcarnon relate to small scale commercial development linked to leisure, recreation and tourism, agricultural diversifications and extensions to authorised developments. The lands in question are identified on Map No. 1 below and extend to an area of 4.75ha.

Map No. 1: Lands at Carrickcarnon identified as Economic Business Zone



3.0 CONTENT OF VARIATION NO.1 OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Variation No. 1 of the Louth County Development Plan provides for an amendment to Policy RD39 (Chapter 3 Rural Development and Natural Resources) replacing existing text with new text broadening the types of development compatible with the economic business zone and that will be considered on the lands, subject to the preparation of a Masterplan. The reason for the variation is to provide for additional and more wide ranging uses on the subject lands which are identified as an Economic Business Zone. The reason for requiring the preparation of a Masterplan is to ensure that development occurs in a co-ordinated, integrated, and sustainable manner.

Replace Current Text:

~~.....and Economic Business Zone at Carrickcarnon (for small scale commercial development linked to leisure, recreation and tourism, agricultural diversification and extensions to authorized developments)”~~

With New Text:

RD 39

..... and Economic Business Zone at Carrickcarnon (for commercial development including Off line Motorway Services area, truck stop, service, repair and parking area and associated ancillary infrastructure to include motel/hotel, ancillary retail shop and dining facility, light industrial, storage and logistics facilities, retail warehousing (bulky goods only) and motor sales. To ensure co-ordinated and integrated development, this area will be subject to the preparation of a Masterplan.)

4.0 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before the decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. The purpose is to “provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”. (European Directive 2001/42/EC). The Planning Authority has continued to use the Strategic Environmental Objectives from the County Development Plan SEA to assess this variation and this is considered both practical and pragmatic.

A SEA Screening Report was prepared as part of the proposed Variation No. 1. Consultation with the specified Environmental Authorities and adjoining authorities was carried out in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

A submission was received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA in its response referenced the following:

- Reference to Guidance documents
- Appropriate criteria to be used in screening
- Sustainable development
- Guidance & Resources for SEA
- Environmental Authorities

All of the issues raised by the EPA were taken into account during the Screening for SEA.

Determination

The Proposed Variation would contribute towards the already existing framework for future development consent of projects under the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021, which provides for development within County Louth. The Variation, when made, will be one relatively minor part of this wider framework.

Any future development of the lands that are subject to the Variation would have to comply with the various provisions of the existing Plan that relate to sustainable development and the protection and management of the environment. Considering these mitigating provisions together with the relatively minor change to what is already provided by the Plan – and considered by the SEA for the Plan – and the small extent of lands involved, residual adverse effects occurring would not be significant. The Proposed Variation would not provide positive environmental effects beyond those already provided for by the County Development Plan.

Taking into account these issues, together with the detailed examination of the Proposed Variation provided in the SEA Screening Report (that accompanies and has informed this determination), into account, it is determined that the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects. Consequently, SEA is not required to be undertaken on Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021.

5.0 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Article 6(3) of European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) requires competent authorities, in this case Louth County Council, to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of the sites conservation objectives.

Determination

Any development considered under the Proposed Variation, if adopted as part of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021, must comply with the existing policies and objectives which are contained in the existing Plan. The Plan was subject to a Stage 2 AA (including preparation of a Natura Impact Report) that resulted in the integration of robust measures to ensure the protection of the ecological integrity of European Sites. The characteristics of the Proposed Variation do not introduce any additional sources for effects that were not already considered, therefore they are not foreseen to give rise to any significant effects on any designated European sites, alone, or in combination with other plans or projects.

It is concluded that Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on designated European sites¹, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated. Consequently, a Stage 2 AA is not required for the Proposed Variation.

6.0 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

The zoning of lands subject to the Proposed Variation No. 1 was considered as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) that was undertaken to assess and inform the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021. The SFRA found that the plan, including the Economic Business Zone at Carrickcannon, complies with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). The relatively minor nature of the Proposed Variation No. 1 would not change the findings of the SFRA and the Variation has been found to be compliant with the Flood Guidelines.

7.0 MAKING A SUBMISSION

A copy of the proposed Variation (No.1) of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021, together with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, Natura Impact Screening Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Management Plan pursuant to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC was available for inspection during normal working hours from 19/2/2019 and 20/3/2019 (inclusive) at Louth County Council Planning Department, Town Hall, Crowe Street, Dundalk, and at the Services Desks of County Hall, Millennium Centre, Dundalk, Fair Street, Drogheda and Mid Louth Civic Service centre, Fairgreen, Ardee.

¹ Except as provided for in Section 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.

Copies were also available, during normal opening hours. Copies were also available for public inspection during their respective opening hours at the libraries in Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee, Dunleer and Carlingford. The proposed Variation (No. 1) of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 was also available for inspection on Louth County Council's website at www.louthcoco.ie

Making a Submission

Written submissions or observations were required to be addressed and marked "Proposed draft Variation (No. 1) of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021" and submitted to Frank Pentony, Louth County Council, Forward Planning Department, Town Hall, Crowe Street, Dundalk, Co Louth. Submissions/observations could be made in writing or by e-mail but not both between 19/2/2019 and 20/3/2019 (inclusive). Written submissions/observations with respect to the proposed Variation No. 1 of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 within the above said period were taken into account before the making of the proposed Variation No. 1.