



Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála
Office of the
Planning Regulator

31st July 2026

Planning and Development Department,
Fingal County Council,
County Hall,
Main St.,
Swords,
Co. Dublin,
K67X8Y2.

Re: Proposed Variation No. 3 to the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing the Proposed Variation No. 3 (proposed Variation) to the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (Development Plan).

As Fingal County Council (Planning Authority) is aware, a key function of the Office of the Planning Regulator (Office) is to evaluate and assess statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative requirements and national and regional planning policy. The Office has undertaken this evaluation and assessment pursuant to Part 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (Act) and its functions under section 546, and this submission sets out the outcome.

In this context, submissions may include recommendations and observations. Recommendations arise where the Office identifies clear inconsistencies with legislative provisions or policy frameworks and are intended to be addressed to ensure compliance. Observations highlight areas where further clarification, justification, or refinement would strengthen the plan. The submission may also include advice to support the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Following adoption of the Variation, the Office will carry out a further assessment under section 63 of the Act.

Overview

The proposed Variation seeks to delete local objectives 101 and 102 from the Development Plan, including its associated maps, in response to the publication of the draft Dunsink Urban Area Plan (Urban Area Plan).

The local objectives in question relate to Dunsink Observatory House requiring that future development on lands within identified radii of the Observatory House demonstrate conformity with best lighting practices and that light intensity Zone Designations E1 and E2 be implemented. The proposed Variation seeks to rationalise the policy framework for the area in light of the publication of the draft Urban Area Plan. It is considered and accepted by the Office that matters relating to lighting, landscape, and design are more appropriately addressed through the detailed and spatially specific provisions of the Urban Area Plan, thereby ensuring a comprehensive and integrated approach to these considerations.

The continued inclusion of other local objectives within the Development Plan ensures that robust protection of Dunsink Observatory House and its operational requirements are maintained, with no diminution arising from the proposed Variation.

Summary

Having reviewed the proposed Variation, the Office accepts the rationale for it and is of the view that the proposed deletion of local objectives 101 and 102 does not raise any concerns in relation to consistency with the legislative and policy requirements.

As part of this process, the Chief Executive's report to the elected members, prepared under section 58(11) of the Act should summarise the Office's recommendations and outline how it is proposed to address them.

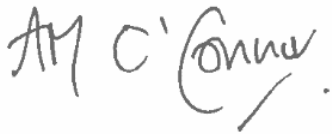
Following adoption of the Variation, the Planning Authority is required to:

- provide the Office with a copy of the adopted Variation, together with any submissions received from the Minister, regional assemblies, and the National Transport Authority during the plan preparation process, within **one week** of adoption;
- inform the Office, **as soon as practicable**, where it decides not to comply with a recommendation, including the reasons for this decision;

- publish notice of the Variation within **one week** of adoption, confirming that the Development Plan as varied will be available for inspection (online and at a specified location) no later than **five weeks** after adoption.

The Office looks forward to continued constructive engagement with the Planning Authority. If further clarification or discussion would be helpful, the Office would be pleased to assist and can be contacted at plans@opr.ie.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'AM O'Connor' with a flourish at the end.

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Planning Policy Implementation

Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015