

15th April 2025

Meath County Council,
Buvinda House,
Dublin Road,
Navan,
Co. Meath,
C15 Y291.

Re: Adopted Variation No. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) acknowledges the adoption of Variation No. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (the Variation) by the members of Meath County Council (Planning Authority) on 27th January 2025. The Office also acknowledges receipt of the letter dated 30th January 2025, further to section 31(AM)(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the Act). The Office has reviewed the Variation in accordance with the legislative requirements set out in section 31(AM) of the Act.

The Office welcomes the transposing of national and statutory planning policy into the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (County Development Plan) as part of the Variation, including the taking into account of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and section 6.4, Age Friendly Communities, of the National Planning Framework.

The Office also welcomes the new wording to define the exceptions associated with the percentage of residential uses permitted on the B1 Commercial / Town or Village Centre zoned lands which will assist in assessing specific proposals at development management stage on these land use zonings.

The submission letter issued by the Office recommended that the Planning Authority make the proposed Variation without the proposed amendments to the C1 Mixed Use lands. Although the Planning Authority retained this element in the adopted Variation, the

Office does acknowledge the inclusion of wording to define the exceptions associated with the percentage of residential uses within C1 zoned land, and notes the comments in the Chief Executive's Report (CE's Report) regarding the limited granting of residential units.

The Planning Authority is however reminded of the policy and objective of section 6.2.3 of the Development Plans, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022) with respect to adopting a sequential approach in zoning lands for development when preparing the next development plan.

In terms of the future rail station at Navan, the Office acknowledges the commitment to the Navan Rail Line within the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042. The Office notes the Chief Executive's response regarding the identification of the town centre expansion site in Navan, known as the MP 6 Masterplan lands in the County Development Plan (to the south of the train line and south-west of the former Navan Train Station), and the designation of these lands as a potential future Transit Oriented Development.

The CE's Report also details the appointment of consultants to prepare this Masterplan. As the location of the proposed Navan rail station is still not yet known, the Office strongly encourages the Planning Authority to consult with the National Transport Authority in preparing this Masterplan, ensuring the height objectives of the Variation are coherently considered in the Masterplan while simultaneously delivering this important piece of infrastructure for the town.

In conclusion, the Office welcomes the adoption of the Variation and looks forward to continued engagement with Meath County Council in the implementation of national policy at the local level.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "AM C'Connor." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluation
Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015
