

**SEA SCREENING REPORT**  
**Proposed Variation No. 8B to the**  
**Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021**

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## Section 1 Introduction and Background

### 1. Introduction

Kilkenny County Council is preparing to vary the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan (KCCDP) 2021 under Section 58 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended).

The proposed Variation is a response to the Ministerial Guidelines on NPF Implementation (the Guidelines), published on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025. The Guidelines place a statutory obligation on planning authorities to reflect the requirements of the NPF in respect of housing. This variation relates to the District towns of Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh. The District Towns each have an extant Local Area Plan.

The proposed Variation will involve;

- (1) Incorporation of a zoning map for each of the settlements listed above into the City & County Development Plan 2021 - 2027.
- (2) Incorporation of a suitable text in Chapter 4 of the City and County Development Plan to apply the provisions of the extant LAP for each settlement into the Plan until the making of a new City and County Development Plan.

As Kilkenny County Council has not determined whether the Proposed Variation would be likely to have significant environmental effects, the Proposed Variation must be screened for the need to undertake formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular plan - or variation to a plan, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant formal SEA. The purpose of this report is to evaluate the requirement for SEA of the Proposed Variation to the KCCDP.

The Local Area Plans for the settlements of Callan and Graiguenamanagh were subject to full SEA, and preparation of environmental reports. The appropriate environmental authorities were consulted throughout that SEA process.

The status of the current plan regime is set out in the table below for ease of reference.

Plan	Plan period	SEA Process Undertaken
Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021	2021-2027	Environmental Report <a href="#">Kilkenny City &amp; County Development Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement 2021-2027</a>
Callan Local Area Plan 2019	2019-2028	Environmental Report <a href="#">Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report Callan Local Area Plan 2019</a>

Callan Amendment 1	To 2028	<a href="#">Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report 2024</a>
Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch Joint Local Area Plan	2021-2027	Environmental Report <a href="#">Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement for Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Joint Local Area Plan 2021</a>
Thomastown Local Area Plan	2019 – 2028	<a href="#">Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report 2018</a>

## 2. Legislative Context

In Ireland, the SEA Directive has been transposed into national legislation through:

- S.I. No. 435 of 2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 and S.I. No. 463 of 2025 European Union (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2005.
- S.I. No. 456 of 2025 European Union (Land Use Planning-Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2025.

Under Section 58(5) of the Planning and Development Act, 2024, a screening for strategic environmental assessment and, where required, a strategic environmental assessment of a variation, shall be carried out in accordance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations.

## 3. Content of the Proposed Variation

This Proposed Variation is a response to the Ministerial Guidelines on NPF Implementation (the Guidelines), published on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025. The provisions will reflect the requirements of the Guidelines in the District towns of Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh.

All the areas proposed for changes of zoning are within the established development boundary for each town.

Variation 8B will incorporate the land use zoning maps for;

- a) Callan Local Area Plan 2019 extended to March 2028
- b) Thomastown Local Area Plan 2019 extended to March 2028
- c) Graiguenamanagh – From the Graiguenamanagh/ Tinnahinch Joint Local Area Plan 2021-2027.

The Variation will provide appropriate text in order to ensure that provisions of each LAP are part of the KCCDP. Where a conflict arises between the provisions of the LAP and the Development Plan then the provisions of the Development Plan will take precedence<sup>1</sup>.

This variation will comprise an uplift to the housing growth requirements for these towns to accommodate growth to 2034. This requires rezoning of land in each settlement, to allow for additional residential development within the plan period. The uplift for each town is as follows;

<sup>1</sup> For example, following this variation the zoning map in the variation will take precedence over the zoning map in the extant Local Area Plan for each town

Ref.	Location	Current zoning	Proposed zoning	Site area (hectares)
<b>Callan</b>				
A	Clonmel Road, Callan	Agriculture	New Residential	2.296
B	Coolagh Road, Callan	Agriculture	New Residential	1.1
C	Bolton, Callan	Low Density Residential	New Residential	2.8
D	Clashacollare, Callan	Agriculture	New Residential	5.82
<b>Thomastown</b>				
A	Dublin Road, Thomastown	Low Density Residential	New Residential	.85
B	Rear of Dúnán, Thomastown	Agriculture	New Residential	5
C	Rear of Maudlin Court, Thomastown	Low Density Residential	New Residential	1.8
D	Rear of Lidl, Thomastown	Mixed Use	New Residential	.87
E	The Greens, Thomastown	Outside development boundary	New Residential	2.4
<b>Graiguenamanagh</b>				
A	Brandondale, Graiguenamanagh	Agriculture/Low Density Residential	New Residential	4.3
B	Brandondale, Graiguenamanagh	Agriculture	New Residential	1.699

The sections of the KKCDP subject to changes are set out below:

- a) Incorporation of the updated land use zoning maps for Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown into Chapter 4 Core Strategy (refer to maps included in **Appendix 2**).
- b) Statement to be included in Chapter 4 Core Strategy that the Local Area Plans for Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh (as relating to the administrative area of Graiguenamanagh within County Kilkenny) shall be read in tandem with the Kilkenny County Development Plan. This includes that the Land Use Zoning Objectives in each of the Local Area Plans, together with the specific policies and objectives as appropriate contained in the Local Area Plans will be amended in accordance with the maps provided in Appendix 2, and shall remain applicable to each settlement pending review of the Settlement Plan as part of the County Development Plan review process.

## 1.4 Consultation

As part of the screening process, the environmental authorities were notified that a submission or observation, in relation to whether or not implementation of the Proposed Variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, could be made (a period of 4 weeks was allowed for the reply).

The comments made by the EPA (submission dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026) have been taken into account in the determination of this screening report.

## **1.5 Appropriate Assessment**

An Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive was undertaken on the Proposed Variation. This determined that Proposed Variation 8B to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their conservation objectives, and it is not considered necessary to undertake any further stages of the Appropriate Assessment process.

## Section 2 Determining whether SEA is required

### 2.1 Introduction

The following pages contain a reproduction of Schedule 2 ‘Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment’ of the SEA Regulations.

These criteria have been taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise.

It is only changes to the Plan which are considered; the existing Plan (2021) has undergone full SEA already<sup>2</sup>.

### 2.2 Schedule 2: Part 1

**1. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources**

The making of the LAPs for Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown were subject to the SEA process. All the areas proposed for changes of zoning are within the established development boundary for each of the settlements, with the exception of The Greens, Site E in Thomastown.

Potential adverse effects arising from implementation of the Plan as varied (see table below) would be consistent with those considered by the environmental assessments already undertaken on the Plan; Proposed Variation 8B does not propose anything that would exceed the previously considered environmental envelope of effects. There are various provisions that have been integrated into the City and County Development Plan that will ensure that any potential adverse effects arising from this Proposed Variation, alone or in-combination with the other parts of the Plan or in-combination with other plans and programmes, will be mitigated – these are detailed on the table below and include many measures requiring the protection of surface waters and implementation of appropriate systems. All lower-tier projects are required to comply with the measures specified below.

Environmental/ Component	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated, of implementing the Plan as varied by Proposed Variation	Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 Provision (Existing, already in force policy/objective/development management standard)
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<sup>2</sup> SEA Directive Article 4.3: Where plans and programmes form part of a hierarchy, Member States shall, with a view to avoiding duplication of the assessment, take into account the fact that the assessment will be carried out, in accordance with this Directive, at different levels of the hierarchy.

<p><b>Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna</b></p>	<p>Loss of/disturbance to biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites, including the River Barrow and River Nore candidate Special Area of Conservation and the River Nore Special Protection Area</p> <p>Loss of/disturbance to biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity and non-designated biodiversity</p> <p>Loss of/disturbance to biodiversity with regard to listed species</p>	<p><i>See also measures on this table under Soil, Water, Flood Risk Management and Drainage and Water Services</i></p> <p>Obj. 1A To implement the provisions of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive and ensure that any plan or project within the functional area of the Planning Authority is subject to appropriate assessment in accordance with the Guidance Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009, or any subsequent version, and is assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in order to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity and conservation objectives of the site.</p> <p>Section 9.2.1.5 The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance the natural heritage sites designated under EU legislation and national legislation (Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and Wildlife Acts). This protection will extend to any additions or alterations to sites that may arise during the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>Section 9.2.2 To ensure that development proposals, where relevant, improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>Section 9.2.1.5 Ensure that an ecological impact assessment is carried out, by suitably qualified professional(s), for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on rare and threatened species including those species protected by law and their habitats. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.</p> <p>Section 9.2.2 To protect and where possible enhance wildlife habitats and landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows and road verges, and to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside (such as ponds, wetlands, trees) which are not within designated sites.</p> <p>Section 9.2.2 To ensure that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation measures to conserve biodiversity, landscape character and green infrastructure networks are required in developments where habitats are at risk or lost as part of a development.</p> <p>Section 9.2.1.5 The Council will also protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under European legislation (Habitats and Birds Directive) and protected under national Legislation (European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011), Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 and the Flora Protection Order (SI94 of 1999).</p> <p>9.3.9 Floodlighting: To ensure the protection of the special character and setting of protected structures, ACAs and Recorded Monuments, and protected species when considering proposals for floodlighting.</p>
<p><b>Population and Human Health</b></p>	<p>Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health</p>	<p><i>See also measures on this table under Soil, Water, Water Services, Air and Climatic Factors and Flood Risk Management</i></p> <p>5.2.4 Agriculture &amp; Food: The Plan will facilitate and support the development of agriculture and food while ensuring the highest standards of environmental protection in the assessment of planning applications for all development proposals.</p> <p>6.14 Social Capital: The Council will promote and advance social inclusion and development in the county by ensuring the co-ordinated delivery of services and facilities and will seek to build social capital by integrating the social, community and cultural requirements of the county in the future planning and sustainable development of the County in accordance with the Settlement and Core Strategies.</p>
<p><b>Soil</b></p>	<p>Damage to the hydrogeological</p>	<p><i>See also measures on this table under Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Water, Water Services and Flood Risk Management</i></p>

	and ecological function of soil	9.2.4 Geological Heritage: The Council will consult the Geological Survey of Ireland when considering undertaking, approving or authorising developments which are likely to affect County Geological Sites. In some locations, in consultation with landowners, it may be possible to access geological and geomorphological features of interest, and the Council will support and facilitate this where appropriate.
<b>Water</b>	Potential interactions with the status of water bodies (River Dinin and River Nore and groundwater) and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas <sup>[1]</sup> , arising from: - Changes in quality, flow and/or morphology; and - Increases in outflow at waste water treatment plant as a result of increases in population.	<i>See also measures on this table under Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Soil, Water Services and Flood Risk Management</i> Objective 10B: To implement the measures of the River Basin Management Plan, including continuing to work with communities through the Local Authority Waters Programme to restore and improve water quality in the identified areas of action. 10.1.8.5 Water Quality Development Management Requirements: To have regard to the Groundwater Protection Scheme and to comply with the Water Services Acts 2007 as amended in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater. 10.1.8.4 Water Quality: The Council will promote compliance with environmental standards and objectives established for bodies of surface water, by the European Communities (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009; • for groundwater, and groundwater by European Union Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
<b>Flood Risk</b>	Increase in flood risk	<i>See also measures on this table under Human Health</i> 10.2.6.1 Flood Management: To adopt a comprehensive risk-based planning approach to flood management to prevent or minimise future flood risk. 10.2.6.1 Flood Management: The Council will ensure that new developments do not reduce the effectiveness or integrity of any existing or new flood defence infrastructure, and will facilitate the provision of new, or the reinforcement of existing, flood defences and protection measures where necessary. 10.2.6.2 Development Management Requirements: Where flood risk may be an issue for any proposed development, a detailed flood risk assessment should be carried out appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising. In particular, any area within or adjoining flood zone A or B, or flood risk area, shall be the subject of a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the type and scale of the development being proposed. This shall be undertaken in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment accompanying this Plan.
<b>Water Services</b>	The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Uisce Eireann to provide for such needs)	<i>See also measures on this table under Human Health</i> 10.1.4 Water Supply and Treatment: The Council will work with Uisce Éireann to protect existing water and wastewater infrastructure in the City and County and facilitate the development of new infrastructure aligned with the Core strategies.
<b>Air and Climatic Factors and Sustainable Transport</b>	Failure to contribute towards sustainable transport and associated impacts (energy usage and	<i>See also measures on this table under Human Health</i> 1.6.1.2 The Climate Action Plan 2019: The Council have integrated and will continue to integrate both mitigation and adaptation measures into the City & County Development Plan as required by National and Regional policies and objectives. Strategic Objective 2A: To support and encourage sustainable compact growth and settlement patterns, integrate land use and transportation, and maximise opportunities through development form, layout and design to secure climate

<sup>[1]</sup> The River Nore is a designated Salmonid water under SI 293 of 1988 and groundwater under the area is listed on the Register for groundwater that is used for drinking water.

	emissions to air including noise and greenhouse gases)	<p>resilience and reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>Objective 12A: To plan for and progressively implement a sustainable, integrated and low carbon transport system by enhancing the existing transport infrastructure in terms of road, bus , rail, cycling and pedestrian facilities and interfacing difference modes as the opportunity arises.</p> <p>Objective 12B: To plan for a transition towards sustainable and low carbon transport modes, through the promotion of alternative modes of transport, and ‘walkable communities’ together with promotion of compact urban forms close to public transport corridors to encourage more sustainable patterns of movement in all settlements.</p>
<b>Waste Management</b>	Increases in waste levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 10G: To implement the Southern Region Waste Management Plan.</li> </ul> <p>10.2.9.1 Waste Management Development Management Requirements: To have regard to the waste produced by proposed developments including the nature and amount of waste produced and proposed method of disposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed apartment and housing developments in urban areas must be appropriately laid out to enable the implementation of three bin collection systems.</li> <li>Proposed apartment, housing and commercial developments must be either serviced by existing infrastructure or make appropriate provision for bring sites in their layout. The sites shall be made available to the Council at the developer’s own expense and will be maintained by the Council or its agents. Adequate access must be provided in developments to service proposed bring sites.</li> </ul> <p>10.2.9.1 Waste Management Development Management Requirements: For all significant construction/demolition projects, the developer shall include an Environmental Management Plan. These plans should seek to focus on waste minimisation in general and optimise waste prevention, re-use and recycling opportunities, and shall provide for the segregation of all construction wastes into recyclable, biodegradable and residual wastes.</p>
<b>Archaeological and Architectural Heritage</b>	Effects on archaeological heritage and architectural heritage.	<p><i>See also measures on this table under Landscape</i></p> <p>9.3.1.4 Industrial Heritage: To endeavour to preserve in situ all archaeological monuments, whether on land or underwater, listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and any newly discovered archaeological sites, features, or objects by requiring that archaeological remains are identified and fully considered at the very earliest stages of the development process and that schemes are designed to avoid impacting on archaeological heritage.</p> <p>To require archaeological assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring for planning applications in areas of archaeological importance if a development proposal is likely to impact upon in-situ archaeological monuments, their setting and archaeological remains.</p> <p>To ensure that development within the vicinity of a Recorded Monument is sited and designed appropriately so that it does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature or its zone of archaeological potential. Where upstanding remains of a Recorded Monument exist a visual impact assessment may be required to fully determine the effect of any proposed development.</p> <p>To require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns and to facilitate the recording of evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc. in the course of development.</p> <p>To safeguard the importance of significant archaeological landscapes from developments that would unduly sever or disrupt the relationship, connectivity and/or inter-visibility between sites.</p> <p>Objective 9F: To provide assistance to owners of protected structures in undertaking essential repairs and maintenance by the provision of relevant information.</p> <p>Objective 9I: To ensure all digital mapping for the Record of Protected Structures is up to date and current, and readily accessible to the public.</p> <p>9.3.2.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines when assessing</p>

		<p>proposals for development affecting a protected structure and buildings listed in the NIAH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•To encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their setting, while ensuring the involvement of suitably qualified professionals</li> <li>•To ensure proposed service upgrades undertake an initial assessment of current services, to ensure the internal environment and fabric is not impacted on by such works. Energy assessments and Architectural Heritage Impact Assessments may be required where energy and service upgrades are proposed.</li> <li>•To ensure proposed development within the curtilage or attendant grounds of a protected structure respects the protected structure and its setting,</li> <li>•To require an architectural impact assessment where appropriate for developments within the grounds of country house estates which are Protected Structures.</li> <li>•To promote principles of best practice in conservation in terms of use of appropriate materials, repair techniques, and thermal upgrades by adhering to the guidelines as set out in Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’s Advice Series publications</li> <li>•To promote best conservation principles and practice when assessing proposals for Kilkenny’s architectural heritage</li> <li>•To ensure that energy upgrades for buildings constructed from traditional materials are respectful of architectural features, form, and environmental requirements necessary to maintain breathability in the structure.</li> </ul> <p>Objective 9J: To ensure the preservation of the special character of each ACA listed in this Plan (See Table 9.2 and Volume 2 Heritage Strategy) with particular regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, fenestration, signage, and other appendages such as electrical wiring, building materials, historic street furniture, paving and shopfronts.</p> <p>Objective 9K: To designate ACAs where appropriate and provide a local policy framework for the preservation of the character of these areas.</p> <p>Objective 9L: To prepare and introduce a set of Shopfront Guidelines.</p>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p>	<p>Occurrence of adverse visual impacts especially with respect to protected views and prospects</p>	<p><i>See also measures on this table under Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Archaeological Heritage and Architectural Heritage</i></p> <p>9.2.12.6 Views and Prospects: The Council will preserve and support the improvement of places or areas from which views or prospects of special amenity value exist, as identified in Appendix H and on Figure 9.2.</p> <p>9.3.1.7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes: To seek the protection and sustainable management of historic gardens, parklands and designed landscapes in Kilkenny County and City, their setting and their visual amenity.</p>
<p><b>See also the policies and objectives contained within each LAP, which are carried forward in this Variation.</b></p>		

Arising from the degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities the variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**2. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy**

The Proposed Variation will incorporate the provisions of each LAP for Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown into the CCDP. The proposed variation will not impact on plans within the hierarchy.

Arising from the degree to which the KCCDP influences other plans, the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**3. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development**

The Plan as varied has integration of environmental considerations and promotes sustainable development through its overarching policies and objectives. The LAPs for Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown which are being incorporated as part of the proposed variation have each undergone the legislative provisions in relation to their SEA. This process integrated environmental considerations into the Plans and concluded that the Plans are based on the broad principles of sustainable development.

Arising from the relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development, the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

#### **4. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: environmental problems relevant to the plan**

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and legislative targets.

Through its provisions relating to environmental protection and management, the Plan, and the 3 no. LAPs for the District Towns being incorporated into the Plan by way of this variation, contribute towards ensuring that environmental problems are not exacerbated and, where possible, the policies and objectives contribute towards amelioration and improvement.

Taking the above into account, arising from environmental problems relevant to the Plan and Proposed Variation, the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

#### **5. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection)**

The SEA process for the KCCDP and the 3 no. LAPs have integrated considerations with regard to EU and national legislation on the environment into the Plan, including those relating to the waste management and the Water Framework Directive.

Taking the above into account, arising from the relevance of the Plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment, the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

## **2.3 Schedule 2: Part 2**

### **1. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects**

The Plan involves incorporation of the updated land use zoning maps for the District Towns of Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh.

No area is subject to zoning, outside of the development boundaries identified in the extant Local Area

Plans for the district towns, with the exception of The Greens, Site E in Thomastown. The characteristics of the area have not altered. The Plan would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

**2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the cumulative nature of the effects**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see Section 2.2 above).

**3. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the transboundary nature of the effects**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects, and there are no transboundary effects given the location of the relevant settlements (see Section 2.2).

**4. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects. There is no Seveso site within the settlements to which this variation applies.

**5. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects as there has been no significant changes over that included in the previous zoning frameworks (see Section 2.2). The population for Callan, as enumerated in the 2022 Census, was 2,678. The population for Thomastown was 2,305. The population for Graiguenamanagh was 1,506.

**6. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:**

**a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. A separate AA process was carried out on this Proposed Variation, to ensure no effect on European sites. There are Architectural Conservation Areas contained within each of the 3 no. District Towns, and a number of recorded monuments, and policies and objectives in the Development Plan, and LAPs, will provide for their protection.

It should be noted in relation to Site B in Thomastown, that there is an Enclosure KK 028:042 mapped and visible as a forested area in the middle of the site.

Previous permission 03/491 for 151 houses and neighbourhood centre on the site was assessed by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The extract from the Planning Report is outlined below;

*The Archaeological site KK 028:042 enclosure is located at the centre of the development. The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government has reviewed the application and made*

the following recommendations:

- A 90m buffer Zone around the monument shall be maintained and no development shall take place within this zone.
- All topsoil stripping is to be monitored by an Archaeologist under license.
- The development is to proceed in accordance with the recommendations outlined in accordance with those outlined in 'proposals for conservation and management of recorded monument KK 028:042' as prepared by Colm Moloney of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

The policies and objectives in the Development Plan, and the Thomastown LAP, will provide for the protection of this monument.

**b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, and;**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects with respect to exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values (see also Section 2.2).

**c) intensive land-use.**

The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see also Section 2.2).

**7. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status**

The River Barrow and River Nore SAC runs along the River Barrow and the River Duiske, in the Graiguenamanagh Plan area.

The River Barrow and River Nore SAC runs along the King's River, in the Callan Plan area.

The River Barrow and River Nore SAC runs along the River Nore, in the Thomastown Plan area.

A separate AA process was carried out on this Proposed Variation, to ensure no effect on European sites. The Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status (see also Section 2.2).

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This Variation to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 has been examined against Schedule 2 'Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment' of the SEA Regulations, and it is the view of the Planning authority that the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

In terms of the provisions of Article (4)(6) of the Regulations, following the appropriate consultation period the Planning Authority shall determine whether or not implementation of the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking account of the

relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations and any submission or observation received from the environmental authorities and any adjoining planning authority.

**In this regard, a decision was taken on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2026 to not carry out an SEA and in accordance with Article 4(7)(b) the environmental authorities were notified of this decision on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026.**

## APPENDIX 1 - SEA Screening Determination



**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Determination under the  
Planning and Development Act 2024, as amended for:  
Proposed Variation 8B to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021**

A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening determination has been made by Kilkenny County Council regarding Proposed Variation 8B. Article 4 (6) of the European Union (Land Use Planning – Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2025 requires, inter alia, a determination to be made as to whether the Proposed Variation warrants the undertaking of environmental assessment.

Variation No. 8B to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan is intended to reflect the requirements of the Government's National Planning Framework Implementation Guidelines, in relation to the District towns of Callan, Graigueenamanagh and Thomastown.

In accordance with the requirements of Article 4(6), a 'screening' of the proposed Variation was undertaken in respect of SEA. A Draft Screening report, setting out the Council's considerations with regard to the relevant criteria for determining whether the Variation was likely to have significant impacts on the environment as set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, was submitted to the environmental authorities in line with Article (4)(5) of the Regulations.

None of the authorities advised that a Strategic Environmental Assessment should be carried out; the information contained in the response received from the EPA has been taken into account.

The SEA screening, which had regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2, did not indicate that the proposed Variation was likely to have significant impacts on the environment.

Taking into account the findings of the SEA process that are detailed in an SEA Screening Report that accompanies this Determination, Kilkenny County Council have determined that the Proposed Variation to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, therefore an environmental assessment is not required.

Signed   
Denis Malone, Senior Planner

Date 29/04/2026

## APPENDIX 2

### District Towns Zoning Maps

Figure 3.2 Location of Callan sites subject to Variation 8B

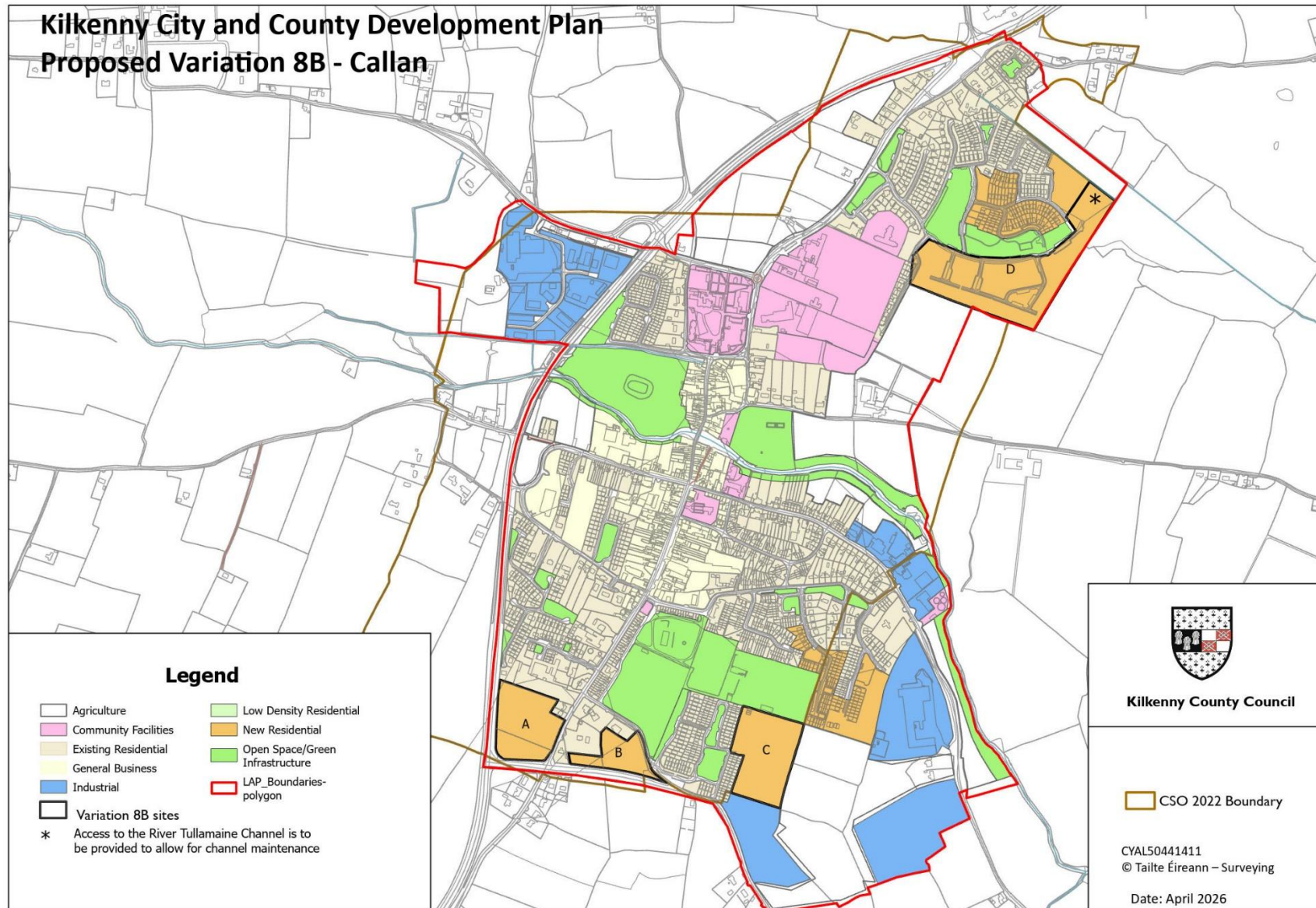


Figure 3.3 Location of Graiguenamanagh sites subject to Variation 8B

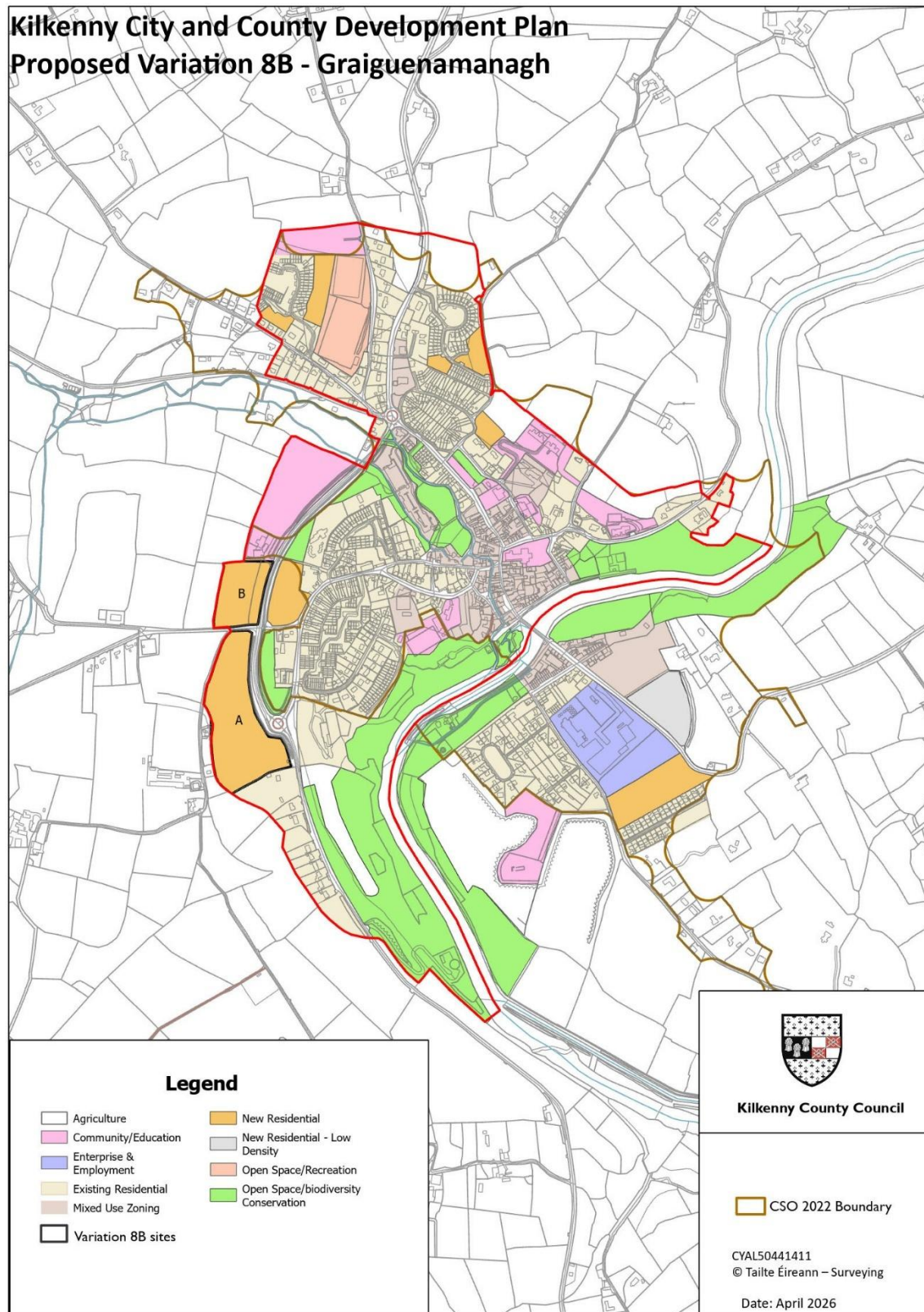


Figure 3.4 Location of Thomastown sites subject to Variation 8B

