



## **Determination of the Need for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft Variation to the Buncrana & Environs Development Plan 2008-2014**

Buncrana Town Council and Donegal County Council propose to vary the Buncrana and Environs Development Plan 2008-2014 so as to introduce an evidence-based Core Strategy into the Plan, as required by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 so as to show that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. In addition, the draft Variation also provides for a number of other amendments in the areas of flood risk, technical standards, and amendments to ensure compliance of the Plan with the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive.

In accordance with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended), the potential for likely significant effects on the environment, of implementing the draft Variation, have been assessed and, having consulted the prescribed Environmental Authorities, the Planning Authority has determined that the proposed Variation is not likely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment of it, is not required.

A detailed report entitled, 'Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment- March 2013,' resulting in this Determination is available for inspection upon request. In summary, the reasons for the Determination are as follows:

- i. The Core Strategy provides for facilitation of a reduced quantum of future residential development within the plan area from that which is provided for in the current Buncrana & Environs Development Plan 2008- 2014. The spatial distribution of the quantum of residential land is identified in the draft variation, having regard to a range of environmental designations and considerations so as to avoid likely significant effects on the environment. The type of considerations taken account of in the identification of the quantum of lands and that inform this Determination include availability of wastewater and water infrastructure, the need for mechanical/ electrical equipment, Natura 2000 Sites and Networks and their conservation objectives, conservation designations, flood risk, water quality, accessibility and consideration of the objectives of the North Western River Basin Management Plan.
- ii. The draft Variation provides for a reduction of land zoning for immediate uptake thereby demonstrating consistency with the RPG's and in doing so focuses on lands that are evidenced as having the capacity to accommodate identified need for new housing units in a sustainable manner.
- iii. Appropriate protection and mitigation, where relevant, is provided for through other policies in the Development Plan.

END  
13th March 2013