Our Case Number: ACP-324637-26

An Coimisiún Pleanála

Meath County Council
c/o Chris Rourke, Planning Department
Buvinda House
Dublin Road
Navan,
Co. Meath
C15 Y291

Date: 29 September 2026

Re: Minister for Transport EIAR scoping request in relation to the Dublin Airport passenger cap, Swords, County Dublin

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above-mentioned case. The contents of your submission have been noted.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter, please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission at laps@pleanala.ie.

Please quote the above-mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,

Muirin Gowen
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8049323

CH08

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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
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64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
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Muirin Gowen

From: Chris Rourke <chris.rourke@meathcoco.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 29 September 2026 15:51
To: LAPS
Cc: Avril Young; John McGearty; Sandra McCormack
Subject: RE: Updated with Appendix - EIAR Scoping Request Submission on Dublin Airport Passenger Cap - Ref: ACP-324637-26

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Hi Muirín,

Yes this submission is to replace the earlier one.

Regards,
Chris

From: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 29 September 2026 15:39
To: Chris Rourke <chris.rourke@meathcoco.ie>
Cc: Avril Young <avril.young@meathcoco.ie>; John McGearty <John.McGearty@meathcoco.ie>; Sandra McCormack <sandra.carrie@meathcoco.ie>
Subject: RE: Updated with Appendix - EIAR Scoping Request Submission on Dublin Airport Passenger Cap - Ref: ACP-324637-26

Thanks Chris,

Please advise if this is to replace the earlier submission?

Kind regards,
Muirín

From: Chris Rourke <chris.rourke@meathcoco.ie>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 3:31 PM
To: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Cc: Avril Young <avril.young@meathcoco.ie>; John McGearty <John.McGearty@meathcoco.ie>; Sandra McCormack <sandra.carrie@meathcoco.ie>
Subject: Updated with Appendix - EIAR Scoping Request Submission on Dublin Airport Passenger Cap - Ref: ACP-324637-26

You don't often get email from chris.rourke@meathcoco.ie. Learn why this is important

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Hi All,

Please find attached **updated** submission from Meath CoCo.

Regards,
Chris

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Comhairle Chontae na Mí
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Uimhir Chláraithe: 0017277O

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Registration No.: 0017277O

Planning Department
29th September 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Re: EIAR Scoping Request submitted by the Minister for Transport in relation to the proposed increase in the Dublin Airport Passenger Cap – ACP Ref: ACP-324637-26

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission in relation to the EIAR scoping request submitted by the Minister for Transport to An Coimisiún Pleanála concerning the proposed increase in the passenger cap at Dublin Airport. Meath County Council understands that the purpose of this consultation is to inform the scope and level of detail of the information to be contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report. Accordingly, the Council's comments are made having regard to the potential environmental effects of the proposed increase, insofar as they may affect County Meath and communities within its administrative area.

The Council considers that the EIAR should clearly identify the baseline environment, assessment methodology, assumptions, modelling inputs and any limitations in the assessment, particularly where impacts may extend beyond the administrative area of Fingal County Council.

Aircraft Noise Zone Contours and Noise Modelling

The proposal to increase the passenger cap at Dublin Airport has significant relevance for County Meath, having regard to the proximity of parts of the county to Dublin Airport flight paths, the shared road network between Dublin and County Meath, and the potential implications for existing and future communities.

From a planning perspective, any increase in the passenger cap at Dublin Airport has the potential to give rise to wider land use, amenity, transport and environmental considerations for County Meath. In particular, the EIAR should clearly assess the implications of increased passenger numbers and associated aircraft activity for communities within the county,

including in relation to aircraft noise, changes in flight patterns, night-time disturbance, residential amenity, transport movements and future noise-sensitive development.

Meath County Council notes that flight path information and associated airport noise data have historically informed planning policy and development management assessments within the County. The EIAR should therefore be underpinned by robust, transparent and up-to-date noise modelling which accurately reflects current operational conditions, approved flight paths, existing aircraft activity and reasonably foreseeable future operational scenarios arising from the proposed increase in the passenger cap.

Impact on Communities in County Meath

As previously outlined, aircraft operations and increased passenger activity associated with Dublin Airport have the potential to affect communities within County Meath, particularly in relation to residential amenity, noise exposure, quality of life, movement patterns and the operation of the surrounding road network.

The Council wishes to highlight that concerns relating to aircraft noise have been raised by Elected Members and residents in parts of South Meath, particularly within and around the settlements of Ratoath, Ashbourne and Dunshaughlin, following the commencement of operations on the North Runway. These concerns have generally related to perceived increases in aircraft noise, changes in flight patterns and the potential effects of aircraft activity on local communities, residential amenity and quality of life.

For the purposes of EIAR scoping, the Council considers that the assessment should identify the existing noise environment, the likely changes arising from increased passenger numbers and associated aircraft movements, and the potential effects on communities in County Meath, including during day, evening and night-time periods.

Given that aircraft noise is not constrained by administrative boundaries, Meath County Council considers it important that the EIAR includes a clear assessment of potential aircraft noise impacts on communities outside the Fingal County Council area, including communities within County Meath. This should include assessment of existing and forecast noise exposure, changes in flight patterns, night-time noise, residential amenity impacts and any mitigation or monitoring measures required to address significant effects.

Land Use Planning and Noise-Sensitive Development

The EIAR should consider the implications of the proposed increase in the passenger cap for land use planning and noise-sensitive development within the wider area of influence of Dublin Airport, including within County Meath. Aircraft noise impacts are not confined to the administrative boundary of Fingal County Council and may have implications for existing and future residential development, schools, childcare facilities, healthcare uses and other sensitive receptors.

The EIAR should include clear noise contour mapping, affected population data and an assessment of potential impacts on noise-sensitive receptors within County Meath where relevant. The methodology, assumptions and input data used to generate noise contours should be clearly explained so that the implications for development management and forward planning can be properly understood.

Having regard to the cross-boundary nature of aircraft noise impacts, the Council requests that the EIAR provide sufficient information to assist neighbouring planning authorities in understanding the potential implications of the proposed increase for land use planning, residential amenity and future noise-sensitive development. This should include appropriate engagement with Meath County Council in relation to noise modelling outputs, contour mapping and any mitigation or monitoring measures relevant to the county.

Traffic and Transport

The EIAR should include a comprehensive assessment of the traffic and transport impacts arising from any increase in the passenger cap, including the implications for surface access to Dublin Airport from County Meath and the wider region. The assessment should clearly set out the anticipated changes in passenger numbers, staff movements, vehicular trips, public transport demand, modal split and parking requirements associated with the proposed increase.

In particular, the EIAR should assess potential impacts on the strategic and regional road network serving the airport, including routes used by residents and workers travelling from Meath. The assessment should also examine the capacity and reliability of existing and proposed public transport services, including bus and rail-based access options, and should identify any mitigation measures necessary to support sustainable travel to and from the airport.

The assessment should also consider peak period impacts, cumulative traffic effects, airport-related parking demand, staff travel patterns and the potential for increased pressure on routes serving South Meath communities.

Air Quality

The EIAR should include a detailed assessment of potential air quality impacts associated with the proposed increase in the passenger cap. This should include emissions arising from aircraft operations, ground operations, airport-related activity and increased surface access movements to and from Dublin Airport.

The assessment should clearly distinguish between emissions associated with airport operations and those arising from increased road-based travel, including traffic movements from County Meath and the wider region. It should identify relevant sensitive receptors, baseline air quality conditions, modelling assumptions, pollutant parameters assessed and any mitigation measures required to avoid or reduce significant effects.

The EIAR should also consider cumulative air quality effects arising from existing airport operations, permitted airport-related development, traffic growth and other planned infrastructure or development in the wider area.

Climate

The EIAR should include a clear assessment of the climate impacts associated with the proposed increase in the passenger cap, including greenhouse gas emissions arising from increased aircraft operations, airport-related activities and surface access movements to and from Dublin Airport.

The assessment should identify the baseline emissions position, the likely change in emissions arising from the proposed increase, and the assumptions used in calculating aircraft, operational and surface access-related emissions. It should also consider the relationship between the proposed increase, national climate obligations, transport emissions, modal split and measures to reduce or manage greenhouse gas emissions.

The EIAR should also assess climate resilience and adaptation considerations, including the resilience of airport and surface access infrastructure to extreme weather events, flooding, disruption to transport networks and other climate-related risks where relevant.

Population and Human Health

The EIAR should include a specific assessment of potential effects on population and human health arising from the proposed increase in the passenger cap. This should include consideration of aircraft noise, night-time disturbance, sleep disruption, air quality impacts, traffic-related effects, residential amenity and the overall quality of life of communities potentially affected by changes in airport activity.

The assessment should identify relevant sensitive receptors, including residential areas, schools, childcare facilities, healthcare facilities and other community facilities, including those located outside the immediate administrative area of Fingal County Council where potential effects may arise. Particular regard should be had to communities within County Meath that may be affected by aircraft activity, surface access movements or cumulative environmental effects.

The EIAR should also consider vulnerable groups, cumulative exposure to environmental effects, and the interaction between noise, air quality, transport impacts, amenity and human health. Where significant effects are identified, the EIAR should set out appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures.

Water, Hydrology and Water Quality

The EIAR should assess any potential impacts on water, hydrology and water quality arising from the proposed increase in the passenger cap, including indirect effects associated with increased airport activity, surface access movements, drainage demands, surface water runoff and cumulative effects with existing and permitted airport-related development.

The assessment should consider whether increased airport operations and associated traffic movements have the potential to give rise to effects on surface water, groundwater, drainage infrastructure, receiving waters and downstream water quality. Where relevant, the EIAR should clearly identify the receiving water environment, existing water quality status, potential pathways for pollutants, and any mitigation measures required to avoid deterioration in water quality.

The EIAR should also have regard to cumulative impacts on water quality and hydrology arising from existing airport operations, permitted infrastructure, future airport-related development and wider growth in the surrounding area. Sufficient information should be provided to demonstrate how surface water management, drainage capacity and pollution prevention measures will be addressed as part of the proposed increase in passenger numbers.

Material Assets and Infrastructure

The EIAR should assess the potential impacts of the proposed increase in the passenger cap on material assets and infrastructure, including airport infrastructure, surface access infrastructure, public transport services, parking provision, drainage infrastructure, utilities and the wider strategic and regional road network.

The assessment should identify whether existing infrastructure has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed increase in passenger numbers and associated staff, servicing and operational movements. Particular consideration should be given to the potential implications for infrastructure serving County Meath residents, workers and airport users, including road access, public transport capacity and any cumulative pressure on existing transport and utility networks.

Where capacity constraints or significant effects are identified, the EIAR should set out the mitigation, phasing or infrastructure improvements required to support the proposed increase in a planned and sustainable manner.

Major Accidents and Disasters

The EIAR should address, where relevant, the vulnerability of the proposed increase in the passenger cap to risks of major accidents and disasters, having regard to the nature and scale of airport operations. This should include consideration of airport safety, emergency

planning, resilience of critical infrastructure, fuel storage and handling, transport network disruption and any other operational risks associated with increased passenger numbers and aircraft activity.

The assessment should clearly set out whether the proposed increase would materially alter existing risk profiles or emergency response requirements and should identify any mitigation or management measures required to ensure that risks to human health, communities, infrastructure and the environment are appropriately addressed.

The Council considers that this assessment should also have regard to potential cross-boundary effects, including any implications for transport routes, emergency access, evacuation planning or wider regional infrastructure serving County Meath.

Biodiversity

The EIAR should include an assessment of potential impacts on biodiversity arising from the proposed increase in the passenger cap, including any indirect or cumulative effects associated with increased airport activity, aircraft movements, surface access traffic, emissions, lighting, noise and disturbance. The assessment should identify relevant ecological receptors and set out any mitigation measures required to avoid, reduce or offset significant effects.

Reasonable Alternatives

The EIAR should include a clear assessment of the reasonable alternatives considered in relation to the proposed increase in the passenger cap. This should include consideration of alternative passenger growth scenarios, operational assumptions, phasing arrangements, surface access options, public transport and modal split scenarios, and mitigation-led alternatives.

The assessment should clearly explain the reasons for selecting the preferred approach, having regard to the potential environmental effects identified. In particular, the EIAR should demonstrate whether alternative approaches could avoid, reduce or better manage impacts on communities, residential amenity, aircraft noise exposure, traffic and transport, air quality, climate, biodiversity, water quality and human health.

The consideration of alternatives should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal, but should provide sufficient information to allow An Coimisiún Pleanála to understand how environmental considerations informed the proposed approach to increasing the passenger cap.

Cumulative and In-Combination Effects

The EIAR should assess cumulative and in-combination effects having regard to existing airport operations, permitted airport-related infrastructure, proposed airport development, planned transport infrastructure, population growth and wider development in the region. The assessment should consider whether the increase in the passenger cap, when taken together with other existing or reasonably foreseeable projects, could give rise to additional environmental effects on communities in County Meath.

This should include consideration of cumulative noise exposure, changes in aircraft frequency and route concentration, traffic impacts, air quality, climate effects and potential impacts on residential amenity and quality of life. The assumptions and baseline data used in the cumulative assessment should be clearly explained and should reflect current and reasonably foreseeable airport operations.

Interactions Between Environmental Factors

The EIAR should include a clear assessment of the interactions between environmental factors, including population and human health, aircraft noise, traffic and transport, air quality, climate, biodiversity, water, hydrology, material assets, land use planning and cumulative effects.

In particular, the assessment should consider how increased passenger numbers, aircraft movements and surface access movements may interact to give rise to combined environmental effects on communities within County Meath. This should include consideration of the relationship between aircraft noise, night-time disturbance, residential amenity, human health, traffic generation, air quality and climate impacts.

The EIAR should avoid assessing each environmental topic in isolation where combined or indirect effects may arise. The interaction of impacts should be clearly identified, assessed and, where necessary, addressed through appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures.

Mitigation, Monitoring and Cross-Boundary Engagement

Where significant environmental effects are identified, the EIAR should set out clear and enforceable mitigation measures, together with a monitoring framework capable of identifying changes in environmental conditions over time. In relation to aircraft noise, the Council considers that monitoring should include locations in County Meath where communities may be affected by existing or future aircraft operations, including areas where concerns have previously been raised by residents and Elected Members.

The Council requests that Meath-specific mapping, modelling and monitoring information be provided where relevant, particularly in relation to noise contours, flight paths, affected populations, noise-sensitive receptors and transport impacts. Continued engagement with Meath County Council will be important to ensure that cross-boundary environmental effects

are properly understood and that any mitigation or land use planning measures are informed by accurate and up-to-date information.

Monitoring proposals should also address, where relevant, air quality, water quality, ecological receptors, traffic movements and the effectiveness of any mitigation measures identified through the EIAR and Appropriate Assessment processes.

Appropriate Assessment

While Appropriate Assessment is a separate statutory process from EIA, the Council considers that the application documentation should clearly address the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the Appropriate Assessment process. Any European sites which may be affected, either directly or indirectly, should be identified, and the assessment should consider potential pathways for effects having regard to increased aircraft operations, surface access movements, air quality, water quality, disturbance and cumulative impacts with other plans and projects. The Council therefore requests that the application documentation separately address the requirements of the Appropriate Assessment process under the Habitats Directive.

Conclusion

Meath County Council recognises the strategic national importance of Dublin Airport as a key component of Ireland's transport infrastructure, international connectivity and economic development. The Council also considers it important that the EIAR prepared in respect of the proposed increase in the passenger cap fully assesses the potential environmental effects on communities within County Meath.

In summary, the Council requests that the EIAR include a detailed and transparent assessment of aircraft noise, flight paths, affected communities, land use planning implications, traffic and transport, air quality, climate, population and human health, water, hydrology and water quality, material assets and infrastructure, major accidents and disasters, biodiversity, reasonable alternatives, cumulative and in-combination effects, interactions between environmental factors, mitigation and monitoring, insofar as these matters may affect County Meath. The Council also requests that the application documentation separately address the requirements of the Appropriate Assessment process under the Habitats Directive.

Meath County Council would welcome continued engagement with An Coimisiún Pleanála, the Minister for Transport, Fingal County Council, ANCA and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that cross-boundary environmental effects are properly identified, assessed and addressed within the EIAR process. The comments of the Council's Environment Department are included at Appendix 1.

Yours Sincerely,

Alan Russell

Alan Russell

Senior Planner

Appendix 1 – Comments of Environment Department, Meath County Council

MEMORANDUM

To: Shane Carroll, Senior Executive Engineer
From: Helen Smith, Executive Scientist
Date: 28th Sept-2026
Subject: ACP- 324-637-26 Dublin Airport Passenger CAP

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1. Background

In response to An Coimisiún Pleanála's letter dated 16 September 2026 regarding the Dublin Airport Passenger Cap, Meath County Council has been invited to provide submissions or observations regarding the information to be contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).
The consultation relates to the scoping process provided for under Section 12 of the Dublin Airport (Passenger Capacity) Act 2026. Section 12 forms part of Part 3, Chapter 2 of the Act concerning Environmental Impact Assessment, with the subsequent application for Environmental Impact Assessment and submission of the EIAR provided for under Section 13.
The proposal relates to a request by DAA to amend the existing passenger capacity planning condition at Dublin Airport from 32 million passengers per annum to 40 million passengers per annum.
It is noted that the proposed Order relates to the amendment of the existing passenger capacity condition and does not comprise of physical development or alterations to the layout of Dublin Airport.
I note that the proposed increase in passenger numbers and associated airport activity facilitated by the proposed Order "would be accommodated within the existing airport infrastructure, including the runway system, terminal buildings, aircraft operational areas, landside transport infrastructure and supporting operational facilities".
However, the proposed increase in passenger capacity has the potential to result in increased airport-related activity and associated environmental pressures which should be appropriately considered in the EIAR.
The Meath County Development Plan 2021–2027 recognises the strategic importance of Dublin Airport.
MOV POL 37 of Meath CDP states
"To support aviation policy as set out in 'A National Aviation Policy for Ireland 2015'. In particular, through supporting the role of Dublin Airport as a key tourism and business gateway to the County and the wider Eastern and Midland Region"

The EIAR should consider the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed increase in passenger capacity, including any relevant direct, indirect and cumulative effects.

2. Recommendation

Meath County Council Environment Section recommends that the environmental assessment (EIAR) gives appropriate consideration to any potential direct, indirect and cumulative environmental effects arising from the proposed increase in passenger capacity, with particular regard to waste management, noise and the environment impacts.

- **Waste**

  In relation to waste, the assessment should confirm that adequate authorised regional treatment/recovery capacity exists for any additional waste generated and should have regard to the relevant waste-management and circular-economy planning framework.
  Identify appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures where significant effects are identified.

- **Air quality**

The air quality assessment should consider increased surface-access traffic associated with the proposed capacity increase and determine whether there is potential for significant effects on sensitive receptors outside the immediate airport area, including relevant transport corridors extending toward County Meath.
The geographical study area and modelling assumptions should be clearly justified having regard to the potential extent of the effects identified.

- **Noise**

The EIAR should assess potential changes in aircraft noise exposure resulting from the additional airport activity facilitated by the proposed increase in passenger capacity. In particular, the assessment should consider:

- changes in aircraft movement numbers and frequency;
- the distribution of daytime and night-time aircraft movements;
- existing background/baseline noise conditions;
- cumulative noise effects; and
- whether potentially significant noise effects could extend beyond the immediate airport environs, including to communities within County Meath.
- ***Cumulative and Cross-Boundary Effects***

Given the proximity of County Meath to Dublin Airport, the EIAR should consider potential cumulative and cross-boundary environmental effects, including those associated with increased aircraft movements, surface-access traffic, waste generation and water/wastewater demand.

The geographical scope of the assessment should be sufficient to identify any potential significant effects within County Meath, with appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures identified where required.

Conclusion
MCC Waste Section recommends that the matters identified above be taken into consideration by An Coimisiún Pleanála in determining the appropriate scope and level of detail of the EIAR.

Helen Smith
Executive Scientist
Meath County Council