

# **Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**

in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) And 6(4) of the Eu Habitats Directive

of the

## **Proposed Core Strategy Variation**

of the Sligo And Environs Development Plan 2010-2016

June 2011



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The Habitats Directive

This is the report on the Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening of the proposed Core Strategy variation of the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016. The report has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and should be read in conjunction with the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report which was originally prepared in December 2009 as part of the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016.

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that:

*Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

Furthermore, Article 6(4) states:

*If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.*

In Ireland, Natura 2000 comprises sites that are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and/or Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) –referred to as the Habitats Directive – by the DEHLG due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The sites are candidate sites because they are currently under consideration by the Commission of the European Union.

Special Protection Areas have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) – referred to as the Birds Directive – by the DEHLG due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the European Union.

## 1.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Appropriate Assessment process comprises up to four stages:

**Stage One: Screening.** The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

**Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment.** The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts.

**Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions.** The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

**Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.** An assessment of compensatory measures where, in light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. First, the plan should aim to avoid any impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan-making process and writing the plan in order to avoid such impacts. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the plan is still likely to result in impacts on European sites, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, then it must be rejected. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

## 2. The proposed variation

### 2.1 Description of the proposed Core Strategy Variation

Under Section 7 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, each Planning Authority is required to introduce a Core Strategy as part of its development plan. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to articulate a medium- to longer-term quantitatively-based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the planning authority.

The Core Strategy must demonstrate that the development plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs), especially with regard to the settlement hierarchy and the role of Gateways.

The Strategy must give effect to the hierarchy by setting population targets in accordance with regional targets along with associated requirements for housing land. In the case of existing development plans, the planning authorities are required to incorporate the Core Strategy through the variation procedure set out in Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The deadline for planning authorities in the Border Region is 29 September 2011 and this is the reason for the proposed Core Strategy Variation of the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016.

The Border RPGs outlines the potential housing demand and residential land requirements for key settlements in the Region (see Table 1 below). It should be noted that the housing figures outlined mark the **upper end** of any demand likely to arise during the period 2010-2016. Details for the Sligo and Environs area are as follows:

**Table 1: Housing and residential land requirements as outlined in the Border RPGs**

| Settlement | Population increase 2010 - 2016 | Potential no. of residential units required over period 2010-2016                                     | Total zoned housing land required over period 2010-2016<br>(incorporating 50% over-zoning in accordance with DEHLG Development Plan Guidelines) |
|------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Sligo      | 2,000                           | 1,000<br><br>(based on average household size of 2.0 persons as per Sligo Housing Strategy 2010-2017) | 40 ha<br><br>(based on average housing density of 35 units per hectare)   |

However, it would appear that the figure of 40 hectares in the final column is a miscalculation, as 1000 housing units at an average density of 35 units per hectare would actually require 42.85 hectares (i.e. 1000 units divided by 35 units/ha = 28.5 ha, plus 50% over-zoning = 42.85 ha).

**Therefore a total allocation of 43 hectares is assumed for the purposes of this variation.**

On assessment of the zoned land in the SEDP 2010-2016, it has been calculated that there is a total of 582 hectares of greenfield land capable of accommodating residential development – this includes land zoned for mixed uses, commercial/mixed-uses and neighbourhood centres.

In order to reduce the extent of land zoned for residential uses (or a mix of residential and other uses) to a level that is consistent with the RPGs allocations, it is proposed to adopt a **prioritising/phasing approach**, whereby the lands surplus to requirements in the short term will be regarded as a **strategic reserve**. Any proposals for housing developments on such lands will not be considered during the remaining lifetime of the current SEDP.

Consistent with the RPGs allocations, a total of **43 hectares** of these lands will be retained as suitable for development during the plan period. The breakdown of these lands within various zoning objectives and the assumptions regarding residential development on mixed use lands are outlined in the Table 2 overleaf.

**Table 2: Breakdown of lands that can be developed by 2016**

| Zoning objective  | Gross extent of land | Assumed proportion of lands that would be used for housing | Extent of housing land including the 50% overhead | Nett extent of housing land excluding the 50% overhead | Estimated housing yield (at circa 35 units per hectare) |
|---|----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Residential (R2 & R3)   | 23.9 ha              | 100%   | 23.9 ha   | 15.9 ha  | 557 units   |
| Mixed uses (Mix-1)  | 31.6 ha              | 50%  | 15.8 ha   | 10.53 ha   | 369 units   |
| Commercial and mixed uses (C2), and Neighbourhood centre (NC) | 12.4 ha              | 25%  | 3.1 ha  | 2.06 ha  | 74 units  |
| <b>Totals</b>   | <b>68 ha</b>         |  | <b>43 ha</b>                                      | <b>28.6 ha</b>   | <b>1000 units</b>                                       |

The remaining **514 hectares** of residential and mixed-use lands will be included in the Strategic Land Reserve and will be reviewed for housing development suitability in the next plan period.

**Therefore, the proposed variation does not involve the zoning of any additional land for development. Conversely, it proposes to decrease the potential for residential development over a significant extent of the Plan area.**

The proposed variation also involves the introduction of five new policies in the Plan which outlines the operation of Strategic Land Reserve. They are as follows:

- P-SLR-1** Designate and maintain as Strategic Land Reserve (SLR) the lands marked accordingly on the (Amended) Zoning Map pertaining to the SEDP.
- P-SLR-2** Restrict residential development on lands included in the SLR during the lifetime of the SEDP 2010-2016, except for one-off rural housing in cases of genuine rural-generated housing need which comply with the criteria set out in section 7.2.5 of the Plan.
- P-SLR-3** On lands included in the SLR, permit the development of community facilities and other non-residential developments compatible with residential uses insofar as they do not adversely impact on the potential for comprehensive and co-ordinated development of surrounding lands.
- P-SLR-4** Release lands from the Strategic Land Reserve only in exceptional circumstances, i.e. if the supply of residential land proves insufficient during the lifetime of the SEDP. Any land release shall be supported by factual evidence and shall conform with the strategic zoning policies outlined in Section 5.2.2 of the SEDP. The land release shall be done using the development plan variation procedure.
- P-SLR-5** Notwithstanding the policies, objectives and any other provisions contained in Chapters 6 to 16 of the SEDP, no development will be permitted if it conflicts with the Core Strategy.



### 3. Stage 1 screening

#### 3.1 Natura 2000 sites in and within 15 km of the Plan area

Following guidance from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, all Natura 2000 sites within both the Plan area and an area extending 15km around it are considered.

The relevant sites are listed in Table 3 below. In addition to this, Cummeen Strand (Ramsar Site Code: 3IE034) is the only Ramsar site within 15 km of the Plan area. The boundaries of this Ramsar site correspond with those of Cummeen Strand SPA.

**Table 3: Natura 2000 Sites within the Plan area and within 15 km of the Plan area**

| Natura 2000 sites within Plan area              |           | Natura 2000 sites within 15km of Plan area      |           |
|---|-----------|---|-----------|
| Special Protection Areas (SPAs)                 | Site Code | Special Protection Areas (SPAs)                 | Site Code |
| Cummeen Strand                                  | 004035    | Ballysadare Bay                                 | 004129    |
|   |           | Ardboline Island and Horse Island               | 004135    |
| Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) | Code      | Sligo/Leitrim Uplands                           | 004187    |
| Lough Gill                                      | 001976    | Drumcliff Bay                                   | 004013    |
| Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay)        | 000627    |   |           |
|   |           | Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) | Code      |
|   |           | Temple House and Cloonacleigha Loughs           | 000636    |
|   |           | Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex         | 000623    |
|   |           | Bunduff Lough and Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore  | 000625    |
|   |           | Cummeen Strand / Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay)      | 000627    |
|   |           | Union Wood                                      | 000638    |
|   |           | Arroo Mountains                                 | 001403    |
|   |           | Streedagh Point Dunes                           | 001680    |
|   |           | Unshin River                                    | 001898    |
|   |           | Ballysadare Bay                                 | 000622    |

See **Appendix 1** for detailed description of each of the above sites.

### 3.2 Natura 2000 conservation measures in the SEDP 2010-2016

The existing SEDP 2010-2016 contains numerous measures which will directly and/or indirectly contribute to the conservation of Natura 2000 sites. These will assist in the implementation of the requirements of the Habitats Directive. Section 2.4 of the SEDP 2010-2016 AA Screening Report sets out all of the relevant policies, objectives and other measures in detail.

At the time of preparing the SEDP 2010-2016, the AA Screening Report concluded that the Plan has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) shall not give rise to significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. Accordingly it was concluded that the Plan did not require any further assessment to demonstrate compliance with the Directive.

### 3.3 Is the proposed variation necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites?

The proposed variation is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites. However, taken together with the existing SEDP 2010-2016 as outlined above, it does include, inter alia, measures to protect, conserve and manage the area's natural heritage in a prudent and sustainable manner, including Natura 2000 sites, and to seek its enhancement where appropriate and feasible.

### 3.4 Cumulative effects

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022, Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 itself set the planning framework for the proposed Core Strategy Variation of the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016. The effects of the higher level Plans are considered insofar as they inform the SEDP. Subsidiary plans and projects will be subject to separate assessment procedures in accordance with all applicable Directives and Regulations.

### 3.5 Assessment of likely effects (direct, indirect or secondary) on Natura 2000 sites

An assessment of each of the five individual policies incorporated into the proposed variation is summarised in Table 4 as follows:

**Table 4. Summary of the likely effects of individual policies**

| Policy  | Natura 2000 sites that may be affected | Potential impact of policy (Y/N/?) | Risk of significant impact (Y/N/?) | Possible in-combination effects (Y/N/?) | Risk of significant effect conclusion (Y/N/?) | Mitigation needed (Yes/No)   |
|---------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| P-SLR-1 | All sites                              | Y                                  | N                                  | N                                       | N   | Yes. The existing SEDP includes a number of policies and objectives which are specifically related to the management of Natura 2000 sites. These policies and objectives already ensure that satisfactory mitigation measures will be provided for the proposed variation. |
| P-SLR-2 | All sites                              | Y                                  | N                                  | N                                       | N   |  |
| P-SLR-3 | All sites                              | Y                                  | N                                  | N                                       | N   |  |
| P-SLR-4 | All sites                              | Y                                  | N                                  | N                                       | N   |  |
| P-SLR-5 | All sites                              | Y                                  | N                                  | N                                       | N   |  |

In relation to the composite effect of the proposed variation as a whole, the following provides an assessment of the likely effects on Natura 2000 sites by reason of:

**a) size and scale, area and land-take**

The proposed variation does not include the zoning of any additional land for development and therefore does not involve any additional land take within Natura 2000 sites. It merely identifies portions of already-zoned lands (a total of 43 hectares) which should be prioritised for residential development during the plan period. It should be noted that these lands are already identified as suitable for residential development and therefore there is no potential for additional development in this regard.

The remainder of the residential-zoned lands (514 hectares) is proposed to be included within the Strategic Land Reserve and is considered unsuitable for large-scale residential development within the Plan period. The resultant effect of the proposed variation is therefore to decrease the potential for residential development over a significant portion of the Plan area.

**b) distance from Natura 2000 sites**

The proposed variation does not relate to a specific location as it involves various lands throughout the Plan area.

As outlined above, no additional land has been zoned for development and therefore there will be no further encroachment upon Natura 2000 sites.

A significant extent of land (514 hectares) is proposed to be included within the Strategic Land Reserve and is considered unsuitable for large-scale residential development within the plan period. The resultant effect of the proposed variation is therefore to decrease the potential for residential development over a significant area covered by the Plan.

It should be noted that the Strategic Land Reserve includes lands that are close to or adjoin Natura 2000 sites. Therefore the proposed variation decreases the likelihood of impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

**c) resource requirements, emissions and waste**

The proposed variation would significantly reduce the extent of land zoned for residential development within the Plan period and would therefore reduce the number of housing units to be permitted. Therefore the proposed variation would actually decrease resource requirements, emissions and waste disposal demands.

Furthermore, the existing policies of the SEDP ensure that resource requirements, emissions and waste issues will be appropriately mitigated with regard to any impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

**d) transportation requirements**

The proposed variation would significantly reduce the extent of land zoned for residential development within the Plan period and the corresponding number of housing units to be permitted. Therefore the proposed variation would actually decrease transportation requirements, particularly given that most of the Strategic Land Reserve is removed from the City centre. A key reason for including lands within the Strategic Land Reserve was the longer distance of the lands from the city centre and associated transportation requirements.

Furthermore, Chapter 10 of the existing SEDP 2010-2016 provides a sustainable framework for transportation and ensures that transportation requirements will be appropriately mitigated with regard to any impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

**e) duration, operation etc.**

The SEDP 2010-2016 came into force on 30 November 2009 and will remain in force for a period of six years. The proposed variation will not extend beyond the expiration of this period.

**3.6 Describe any likely changes to the sites arising as a result of:**

**a) reduction of habitat area**

The proposed variation does not involve any additional land take within Natura 2000 sites. It proposes to significantly decrease the potential for development over a large extent of the Plan area (514 hectares), which includes land close to/adjoining Natura 2000 sites.

Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authorities will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of Natura 2000 sites in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the SEDP 2010-2016.

**b) disturbance to key species**

The Planning Authorities will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid the disturbance of key species in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the SEDP 2010-2016.

**c) habitat or species fragmentation**

The Planning Authorities will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid habitat or species fragmentation in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the SEDP 2010-2016.

**d) reduction in species density**

The Planning Authorities will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid reduction in species density in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the SEDP 2010-2016.

**e) changes in key indicators of conservation value**

The proposed variation will not result in any changes to key indicators of conservation value. Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authorities will continue to take appropriate steps to maintain conservation value in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the SEDP 2010-2016.

**f) climate change**

The proposed variation will significantly reduce the potential for development over a significant extent of the Plan area by including 514 hectares within the Strategic Land Reserve. The principle of sustainable development was a key factor in the selection of lands for inclusion within the Strategic Land Reserve, particularly in relation to transportation requirements and flood risk. The proposed variation should have a positive impact in this regard. The Planning Authorities will continue to take appropriate steps to address climate change in accordance with national policy.

### **3.7 Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 sites in terms of:**

#### **a) interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site**

The proposed variation will not impact on the relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites.

#### **b) interference with the key relationships that define the function of the site**

The proposed variation will not impact on the relationships that define the function of Natura 2000 sites.

### **3.8 Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects in terms of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance and changes to key elements of the site**

As outlined above, it is considered that, taken together with the existing SEDP, the proposed variation will not affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

### **3.9 Describe those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known**

As outlined above, it is considered that, taken together with the existing SEDP, the proposed variation will not affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

## 4. Conclusion

**Table 5: Finding of no significant effects report matrix**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Name of project/plan</b>   | Proposed <b>Core Strategy Variation</b> of the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016   |
| <b>Name and location of Natura 2000 site(s)</b>   | The proposed variation does not relate to any one specific site. Natura 2000 sites within the Plan area and within 15 km of the Plan area are listed in Table 3.   |
| <b>Description of the project/plan</b>  | See section 2.1 above.   |
| <b>Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?</b>                       | The proposed variation is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites. However, taken together with the existing SEDP 2010-2016 as outlined above, it does include, inter alia, measures to protect, conserve and manage the area's natural heritage in a prudent and sustainable manner, including Natura 2000 sites, and to seek its enhancement where appropriate and feasible.   |
| <b>Are there other projects/plans that together with the project/plan being assessed could affect the site?</b> | The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022, Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 itself set the planning framework within which the proposed Core Strategy Variation to the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 has been prepared. The effects of the higher level Plans are considered insofar as they inform the Plan. Subsidiary plans and projects will be subject to separate assessment procedures in accordance with all applicable Directives and Regulations. |

### The assessment of significance of the effects

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Describe how the project or plan (along or in combination) is likely to affect Natura 2000 sites</b> | The effect of the proposed variation is to significantly decrease the potential for residential development over a large extent of the Plan area. It will therefore have the effect of strengthening the management and enhancement of Natura 2000 site protection.  |
| <b>Explain why these effects are not considered significant</b>   | Specific statements, policies and objectives have been formulated within the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 to allow the Councils to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of Natura 2000 sites. The proposed variation will not alter the core principles of the SEDP in this regard.<br><br>The variation does not propose any additional land-take within Natura 2000 sites. |
| <b>List of Agencies consulted</b>   | A pre-draft consultation meeting was held with Mr William Cormacan of the NPWS. This Screening Report will be sent to the prescribed bodies as part of the consultation process relating to the proposed Core Strategy Variation of the SEDP 2010-2016.  |
| <b>Response to consultation</b>   | N/A  |

## Data collection to carry out the assessment

| Who carried out the assessment?  | Sources of data  | Level of assessment completed | Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?   |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Stephen Ward, A/SEP<br>Sligo County Council<br>Tel. 071 9111201<br>sward AT sligococo.ie | National Parks and Wildlife Services<br>Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017<br>Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016<br>Proposed Core Strategy Variation to SEDP 2010-2016 | Stage 1 - Screening           | The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report will be placed on public display and will be accessible on the SCC website alongside the proposed Core Strategy Variation of the SEDP 2010-2016. |

As outlined above, the AA Screening Report relating to the SEDP 2010-2016 concluded that the Plan has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from the Plan will not give rise to significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. The measures included in the SEDP 2010-2016 that informed this conclusion have been retained and are not affected by the proposed variation.

Therefore, having regard to the mitigation measures contained in the SEDP 2010-2016, and consistent with the AA Screening Report for the SEDP 2010-2016, it is considered that the proposed Core Strategy Variation will not give rise to significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.

The trigger for a Stage Two AA (see section 1.2 above) would be a finding that the proposed variation was likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. This screening report evaluates the proposed variation to determine if it needs to be the subject of a Stage Two AA. It finds that, taken together with the existing SEDP, the proposed variation has been formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon the proposed variation (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, it is concluded that the Plan does not require any further assessment to demonstrate compliance with the Habitats Directive.

## Appendix. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Table 6: Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

| Site code<br>Site name   | Qualifying interests   | Conservation objectives  | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>IE 000622</b><br><b>Ballysadare Bay</b>                         | 1130 Estuaries<br>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide<br>2110 Embryonic shifting dunes<br>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)<br>2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)<br>2190 Humid dune slacks<br>1365 <i>Phoca Vitulina</i> Common Seal<br>1014 <i>Vertigo angustior</i> Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail | To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Estuaries; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Embryonic shifting dunes; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes); Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes); Humid dune slacks.<br><br>To maintain the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Vertigo angustior</i> , <i>Phoca vitulina</i> . | Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution<br>Development of marinas and ports<br>Disturbance to marine mammals<br>Dumping at sea<br>Direct loss of habitat to development<br>Recreational/amenity use<br>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation<br>Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction<br>Erosion (natural and anthropogenic)<br>Agricultural abandonment<br>Overgrazing/under grazing<br>Bracken and scrub encroachment<br>Tourism related development<br>Introduction of alien invasive species<br>Illegal Dumping<br>Burning<br>Quarrying/removal of sand<br>Aquaculture |
| <b>IE 000623</b><br><b>Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex</b> | 4030 European dry heaths<br>4060 Alpine and Boreal heaths<br>8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation<br>8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels ( <i>Thlaspietea</i>  | To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation; European dry heaths; Alpine and Boreal heaths; <i>Juniperus</i>   | Changes in local hydrology including drainage<br>Peat Extraction<br>Overgrazing<br>Forestry<br>Burning<br>Direct loss of habitat to development  |



| Site code<br>Site name   | Qualifying interests  | Conservation objectives   | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)   |
|--|---|---|--|
|  | <p><i>rotundifolii</i>)</p> <p>5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> <p>7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)</p> <p>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation</p> <p>1355 <i>Lutra Lutra</i> European Otter</p> <p>1013 <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> Geyer's Whorl Snail</p>  | <p><i>communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion); Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>); Calcareous rocky slopes with chasomphytic vegetation.</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Vertigo geyeri</i>; <i>Lutra lutra</i>.</p>   | <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table</p> <p>Agricultural reclamation</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Burning</p>  |
| <p><b>IE 000625</b></p> <p><b>Bunduff</b></p> <p><b>Lough and</b></p> <p><b>Machair/</b></p> <p><b>Trawalua/</b></p> <p><b>Mullaghmore</b></p> | <p>7230 Alkaline fens</p> <p>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</p> <p>21A0 Machairs (*in Ireland)</p> <p>6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>) ('important orchid sites)</p> <p>1160 Large shallow inlets and bays</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p> <p>1170 Reefs</p> <p>5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Large shallow inlets and bays; Reefs; Machairs; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes); Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes); <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>); Alkaline fens</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>.</p> | <p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Development of marinas and ports</p> <p>Disturbance to marine mammals</p> <p>Dumping at sea</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation</p> <p>Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction</p> <p>Erosion (natural and anthropogenic)</p> <p>Agricultural abandonment</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> <p>Bracken and scrub encroachment</p> <p>Tourism related development</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> |

| Site code<br>Site name  | Qualifying interests   | Conservation objectives  | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)  |
|---|--|--|---|
|   | 1395 <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> Petalwort  |  | Illegal Dumping<br><br>Burning<br><br>Quarrying/removal of sand<br><br>Aquaculture  |
| <b>IE 000627</b><br><b>Cumeen</b><br><b>Strand/</b><br><b>Drumcliff Bay</b><br><b>(Sligo Bay)</b> | 1130 Estuaries<br>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide<br>2110 Embryonic shifting dunes<br>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)<br>2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)<br>7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)<br>5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands<br>1365 <i>Phoca vitulina</i> Common Seal<br>1014 <i>Vertigo angustior</i> Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Estuaries; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Embryonic shifting dunes; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes); Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes); Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Vertigo angustior</i>; <i>Phoca vitulina</i></p> | Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution<br>Development of marinas and ports<br>Disturbance to marine mammals<br>Dumping at sea<br>Direct loss of habitat to development<br>Recreational/amenity use<br>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation<br>Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction<br>Erosion (natural and anthropogenic)<br>Agricultural abandonment<br>Overgrazing/undergrazing<br>Bracken and scrub encroachment<br>Tourism related development<br><br>Introduction of alien invasive species<br><br>Illegal Dumping<br><br>Burning<br><br>Quarrying/removal of sand<br><br>Aquaculture |

| Site code<br>Site name                | Qualifying interests   | Conservation objectives  | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)   |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>IE 001976</b><br><b>Lough Gill</b> | <p>3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i>-type vegetation</p> <p>91e0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p> <p>91a0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles</p> <p>1095 <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> Sea Lamprey</p> <p>1096 <i>Lampetra planeri</i> Brook Lamprey</p> <p>1099 <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> River Lamprey</p> <p>1106 <i>Salmo salar</i> Atlantic Salmon</p> <p>1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i> European Otter</p> <p>1092 <i>Autropotamobius pallipes</i> Freshwater White-clawed Crayfish</p> | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i>-type vegetation, Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles, Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>, <i>Lampetra planeri</i>, <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>, <i>Salmo salar</i>, <i>Autropotamobius pallipes</i>, <i>Lutra lutra</i>.</p> | <p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Changes in water flow rates</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table</p> <p>Siltation</p> <p>Loss of fringe vegetation</p> <p>Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Loading from effluents(WWTP)</p> <p>Recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Developments – marinas</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Crayfish Fishing</p> |

| Site code<br>Site name                           | Qualifying interests   | Conservation objectives  | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>IE 001680</b><br><b>Streedagh Point Dunes</b> | <p>2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p> <p>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>)</p> | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>); Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>); Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes); Fixed</p> | <p>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation</p> <p>Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction</p> <p>Erosion (natural and anthropogenic)</p> <p>Agricultural abandonment</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> |

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
|   | <p>1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>1014 <i>Vertigo angustior</i> Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail</p>  | <p>coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Vertigo angustior</i>.</p>  | <p>Bracken and scrub encroachment</p> <p>Tourism related development</p> <p>Decrease in water quality/increased pollution</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Tourism related development</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Quarrying/removal of sand</p> <p>Aquaculture</p>  |
| <p><b>IE 000636</b></p> <p><b>Templehouse and Cloonacleigh a Loughs</b></p> | <p>3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp.</p> <p>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation</p> <p>7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration</p> <p>6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>)</p> <p>91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p> | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp.; Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation.</p> | <p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Changes in water flow rates</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table</p> <p>Siltation</p> <p>Loss of fringe vegetation</p> <p>Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Loading from effluents(WWTP)</p> <p>Recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Developments – marinas</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> |

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p><b>IE 000638</b><br/><b>Union Wood</b></p>      | <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles</p>  | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitat for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles.</p>   | <p>Direct loss of habitat to development<br/>Amenity/recreational use<br/>Invasive species<br/>Lack of/inappropriate woodland management<br/>Overgrazing (deer)<br/><br/>Introduction of alien invasive species<br/><br/>Illegal Dumping<br/><br/>Felling/Removal of Trees</p>  |
| <p><b>IE 001898</b><br/><b>Unshin River</b></p>    | <p>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation<br/>91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)<br/>1106 <i>Salmo salar</i> Atlantic Salmon<br/>1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i> European Otter</p> | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation; Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>).<br/>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Salmo salar</i>; <i>Lutra lutra</i>.</p> | <p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution<br/>Changes in water flow rates<br/>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table<br/>Siltation<br/>Loss of fringe vegetation<br/>Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations<br/>Direct loss of habitat to development<br/>Loading from effluents(WWTP)<br/>Recreation/amenity use<br/>Developments – marinas<br/>Introduction of alien invasive species<br/>Illegal Dumping</p> |
| <p><b>IE 001403</b><br/><b>Arroo Mountains</b></p> | <p>7130 Blanket Bog (Active)<br/>7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (cratoneurion)<br/>4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i></p>   | <p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status; Blanket bogs (active) (18% area of site), Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) (&lt;1% area of the site), Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> (40% area of site),<br/><br/>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation (1% area</p>  | <p>Changes in local hydrology including drainage, peat extraction, overgrazing, forestry, burning, direct loss of habitat to development, arterial drainage/ water abstraction/ lowering of the regional water table, agricultural reclamation.<br/><br/>Introduction of alien invasive species</p>   |

|  |  |   |                        |
|--|--|---|------------------------|
|  | <p>8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>)</p> <p>8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation</p> | <p>of the site) and Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>) (&lt;1% area of site).</p> <p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal</p> | <p>Illegal dumping</p> |
|--|--|---|------------------------|

**Table 7: Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

| Site code<br>Site name                    | Qualifying interests   | Conservation objectives   | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)  |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>IE 004013</b><br><b>Drumcliff Bay</b>  | <p>Site is selected for: barnacle goose, sanderling</p> <p>Additional Special Conservation Interests: wetland &amp; waterbirds</p>                         | <p>To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: barnacle goose, sanderling, wetland &amp; waterbirds.</p>                         | <p>Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat)</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Water quality/pollution</p> <p>Disturbance including recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Inappropriate land management</p> |
| <b>IE 004035</b><br><b>Cummeen Strand</b> | <p>Site is selected for: Light-bellied brent goose</p> <p>Additional Special Conservation Interests: oystercatcher, redshank, wetland &amp; waterbirds</p> | <p>To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Light-bellied brent goose, oystercatcher, redshank, wetland &amp; waterbirds.</p> | <p>Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat)</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Water quality/pollution</p> <p>Disturbance including recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p>  |

| Site code<br>Site name   | Qualifying interests  | Conservation objectives  | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)  |
|--|---|--|---|
|  |   |  | <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Persecution (Poisoning)</p> <p>Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Inappropriate land management</p>   |
| <p><b>IE 004129</b><br/><b>Ballysadare Bay</b></p>                   | <p>Site is selected for: Light-bellied brent goose, bar-tailed godwit</p> <p>Additional Special Conservation Interests:<br/>Grey plover, dunlin, redshank, wetland &amp; waterbirds</p> | <p>To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Light-bellied brent goose, bar-tailed godwit, grey plover, dunlin, redshank, wetland &amp; waterbirds.</p> | <p>Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat)</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Water quality/pollution</p> <p>Disturbance including recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Inappropriate land management</p> |
| <p><b>IE 004135</b><br/><b>Ardboline Island and Horse Island</b></p> | <p>Site is selected for:<br/>Cormorant, barnacle goose</p> <p>Additional Special Conservation Interests:<br/>Corncrake</p>  | <p>To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Cormorant, barnacle goose, corncrake.</p>  | <p>Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat)</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Water quality/pollution</p> <p>Disturbance including recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Inappropriate land management</p> |
| <p><b>IE 004187</b><br/><b>Sligo/Leitrim Uplands</b></p>             | <p>Site is selected for: Peregrine, chough</p>  | <p>To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at favourable conservation status: Peregrine, chough.</p>   | <p>Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat)</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Water quality/pollution</p> <p>Disturbance including recreation/amenity use</p>  |

| Site code<br>Site name | Qualifying interests | Conservation objectives | Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)  |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
|                        |                      |                         | Introduction of alien invasive species<br>Illegal Dumping<br>Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use<br>Inappropriate land management |