

# NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

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IN SUPPORT OF THE  
**APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT**

FOR THE  
**DRAFT DUBLIN DOCKLANDS  
VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**for:** **Fáilte Ireland**  
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# Section 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This Natura Impact Statement has been prepared in support of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the "Habitats Directive").

This report is part of the ongoing AA process that is being undertaken alongside the preparation of the VEDP. It will be considered, alongside other documentation prepared as part of this process, when Fáilte Ireland finalises the AA at adoption of the VEDP.

## 1.2 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the "favourable conservation status" of habitats and species of European Community Interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as European sites and Natura 2000.

AA is required by the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act (as amended). AA is an assessment of the potential for adverse or negative effects of a plan or project, in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a European Site. These sites consist of SACs and SPAs and provide for the protection and long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

## 1.3 Approach

The AA is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives.

The ecological desktop study completed for the AA of the VEDP comprised the following elements:

- Identification of European sites within 15km of the VEDP boundary with identification of potential pathways links for specific sites (if relevant) greater than 15km from the VEDP boundary;
- Review of the NPWS site synopsis and conservation objectives for European sites with identification of potential pathways from the VEDP area; and
- Examination of available information on protected species.

There are four main stages in the AA process as follow:

### **Stage One: Screening**

The process that identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or 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 European 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. If adequate mitigation is proposed to ensure no significant adverse impacts on European sites, then the process may end at this stage. However, if the likelihood of significant impacts remains, then the process must proceed to Stage Three.

**Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions**

The process that examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the European site.

**Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain**

An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the 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. This approach aims to avoid any impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan-making process and avoiding such impacts. Second, the approach involves the application of mitigation measures, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If potential impacts on European sites remain, the approach requires the consideration of alternative solutions. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan/project is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect(s).

The assessment of potential effects on European sites is conducted following a standard source-pathway-receptor<sup>1</sup> model, where, in order for an effect to be established all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the model is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance.

In the interest of this report, receptors are the ecological features that are known to be utilised by the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of a European site. A source is any identifiable element of the VEDP provision that is known to interact with ecological processes. The pathways are any connections or links between the source and the receptor. This report provides information on whether direct, indirect and cumulative adverse effects could arise from the VEDP.

The NIS exercise has been prepared taking into account legislation including the aforementioned legislation and guidance including the following:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009;
- "Commission Notice: Managing Natura 2000 sites - The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC", European Commission 2018;
- "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC", European Commission Environment DG, 2002; and
- "Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC", European Commission, 2000.

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<sup>1</sup> Source(s) – e.g. pollutant run-off from proposed works; Pathway(s) – e.g. groundwater connecting to nearby qualifying wetland habitats; and Receptor(s) – qualifying aquatic habitats and species of European Sites.

## Section 2 Description of the VEDP

The **focus** of the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) is on creating a strongly integrated tourism proposition for the Dublin Docklands area (see Figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.1 Indicative map of the Dublin Docklands area to which the VEDP relates**

The structure of the Plan is based around the **Destination Promise** and two **Experience Development Themes**. The Experience Development Themes provide the basis for a coherent industry approach to experience development. The themes have been developed to deliver a consistent destination narrative to be applied to local experience development and influence future 'product' development.

The **Destination Promise** is:

*"Explore the energy of the Docklands canals, river and port where history, the pulse of innovation and generations of creativity create the daily vibe in Dublin's urban village."*

The **Experience Development Themes** are:

1. **Water** - Dockland Waters, Dublin's Maritime Tapestry  
*"From the port, river to the canals, the Docklands has played a historical role in almost every facet of Irish life and the major events that have shaped the country. The visitor will explore the heritage of the Docklands area and the richness of local stories told by the locals. The Port and the Docklands waters provide the backdrop for innovative engagement with these stories delivered on the water or by the waterside."*
2. **Innovation** - Local Traders, Global Traders  
The Docklands' has always been Ireland's innovation district. From the pioneers of international maritime trade to global tech giants, it is a neighbourhood of innovation and creativity. Innovation must become an expected experience component within a destination that each day challenges traditional ways of doing things.

The opportunity to further enhance each of these two themes is supported by a series of **experience development recommendations**, some of which are **Catalyst Projects**. The Plan includes **10 Catalyst Projects**, projects designed to be transformative for the destination and motivating for the international visitor. Many of these are already in planning or feasibility phase and will be supported by the Plan. They are as follows (these are accompanied by specific **Actions** in Appendix I "Delivering the Plan"):

1. Development of the Custom House Visitor Centre
2. CHQ Irish Food Market
3. Assess the feasibility of establishing a White Water Rafting / Water Centre at George's Dock
4. Assess the feasibility of the development of the Port Line and Dublin Port Odlum's Quarter
5. Docklands WaterLine

6. Iconic Docklands Gateways
7. Increase Water Animation on the Liffey
8. Grand Canal Docks Floating Markets
9. Trinity's Innovation Campus
10. Techplex delivering Technology /Science Innovation

**Other, Supporting Experience Development Recommendations** are provided under each of the Plan's two themes, Water and Innovation. These are supported by Experience Development Projects in Appendix I "Delivering the Plan".

**Destination Enabling Initiatives** are projects that will enhance the broader tourism infrastructure enabling the Docklands to build its existing tourism base. This will be through collaboration, product development, adoption of a consistent narrative and enhancing the area as a visitor destination. These also represent destination differentiators, leveraging the culture and heritage of the Docklands.

**Destination Enabling Initiatives** identified by the Plan are as follows (these are accompanied by specific **Actions** in Appendix I "Delivering the Plan"):

- VEDP Management: The creation of the structures that will support the implementation of the Docklands VEDP.
- Tourism Social Responsibility: Harness the potential of the commercial base within the Docklands to create a social responsibility project with tourism outputs through local community investment.
- Tourism Industry Network: The creation of a formal tourism industry network to become the focal point for sustained collaboration and destination development.
- Destination Festivals and Events: The creation of the internationally appealing festivals and events that contribute to the placemaking of the Docklands.
- Arts and Culture Focus: The enhancement of the current level of provision in arts and culture and build on the existing heritage of arts and culture across the destination.
- Added Value Focus: The creation of a focus around the evening economy to develop tourism opportunities to capitalise on the volume of business tourists staying within the destination during the week.
- Technology and Living History: The creation of a system to review the incorporation of technology to bring alive the living history stories of the Docklands in an interesting way for visitors.
- Urban Adventure Hub: The positioning of Docklands as the base for all urban adventure that supports existing activity and promotes new enterprise development through the adventure theme.
- Destination Visitor Orientation: The creation of a sense of destination throughout the Docklands linking both sides of the River Liffey, fostering and encouraging increased levels of visitor flows between both sides of the river.
- Evening Economic Innovation: Develop the evening economy proposition across the Docklands to attract and retain visitors into the destination in the evening time.
- Water Animation: The creation of activity on the River Liffey and the Grand Canal that will act as a catalyst for further engagement with the water and contribute to the Urban Adventure theme.

The Plan identifies the following **Hero Products**, projects that exist currently that represent 'hero' products possess the capacity to attract increased visitor numbers into the destination:

#### Water Theme

- EPIC at CHQ
- Custom House Visitor Centre
- Jeanie Johnston
- Dublin Bay Cruises
- Dublin Discovered Boat Tour
- Dublin City Kayaking
- Viking Splash Tours
- 3 Arena
- Bord Gáis Energy Theatre
- Dublin Convention Centre
- Wakeboarding & SUP in Grand Canal Dock

#### Innovation Theme

- 3 Arena
- Bord Gáis Energy Theatre
- Lir Academy
- EPIC

In addition to providing further detail regarding Catalyst Projects, Supporting Experience Development Recommendations and Destination Enabling Initiatives Appendix I identifies a number of **Destination Projects** under the headings of "Destination Festivals and Events", "Destination Arts and Culture" and "Destination Visitor Orientation".

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>2</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The Eastern and Midlands RSEs sets out objectives relating tourism development that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSEs will inform the review of existing, assessed Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

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<sup>2</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

## Section 3 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

### 3.1 Introduction to Screening

This stage of the process identifies any potential significant affects to European sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

An important element of the AA process is the identification of the “conservation objectives”, “Qualifying Interests” (QIs) and/ or “Special Conservation Interests” (SCIs) of European sites requiring assessment. QIs are the habitat features and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive for which each European Site has been designated and afforded protection. SCIs are wetland habitats and bird species listed within Annexes I and II of the Birds Directive. It is also vital that the threats to the ecological / environmental conditions that are required to support QIs and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

The following NPWS Generic Conservation Objectives have been considered in the screening:

- For SACs, to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected; and
- For SPAs, to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

Where available, Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) designed to define favourable conservation status for a particular habitat<sup>3</sup> or species<sup>4</sup> at that site have been considered.

### 3.2 Identification of Relevant European sites

The Department of the Environment (2009) Guidance on AA recommends a 15 km buffer zone to be considered. A review of all sites within this zone has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the VEDP will not impose effects beyond the 15 km buffer.

Details of European sites that occur within 15 km of the VEDP is listed in Table 3.1. European sites and EPA Rivers and Catchments are also mapped on Figure 3.1 below. Information on QIs, SCIs and site-specific vulnerabilities and sensitivities (see Appendix I) and background information (such as that within Ireland’s Article 17 Report to the European Commission, site synopses and Natura 2000 standard data forms) has been considered by both the AA screening assessment (provided under this section) and Stage 2 AA (provided under Section 4). Conservation objectives that have been considered by the assessment are included in the following NPWS/ Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht documents:

- (2013) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for North Dublin Bay SAC 000206. Version 1.
- (2013) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for South Dublin Bay SAC 000210. Version 1.
- (2015) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for North Bull Island SPA 004006. Version 1.
- (2015) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024. Version 1.
- (2013) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC 003000. Version 1.
- (2016) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Howth Head SAC 000202. Version 1.
- (2012) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Baldoyle Bay SAC 000199. Version 1.
- (2012) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Baldoyle Bay SPA 004016. Version 1.
- (2018) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Howth Head Coast SPA 004113. Version 6.0.
- (2018) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Ireland’s Eye SPA 004117. Version 6.0.
- (2018) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Dalkey Islands SPA 004172. Version 6.0.
- (2017) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Ireland’s Eye SAC 002193. Version 1.
- (2013) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Malahide Estuary SAC 000205. Version 1.

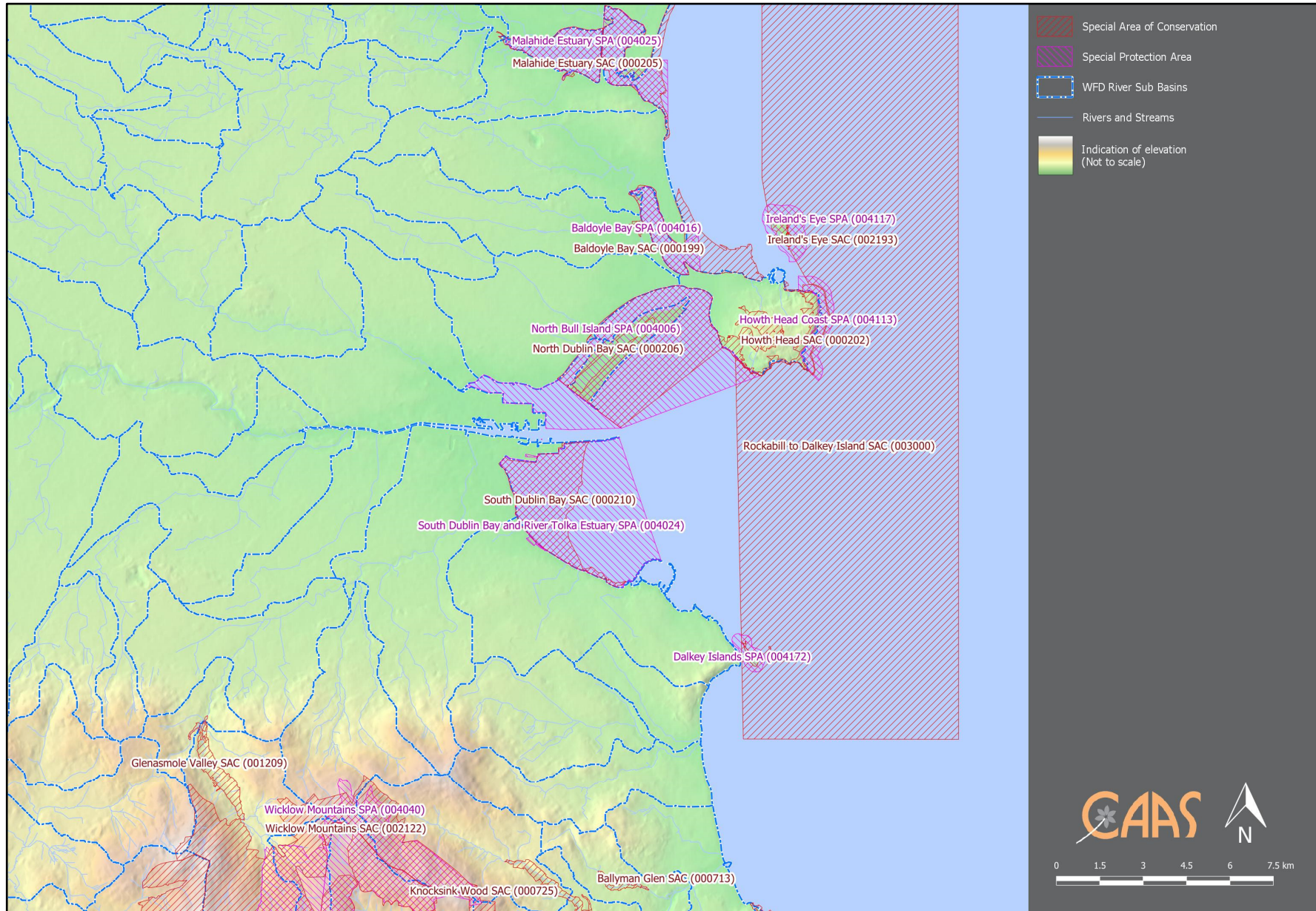
<sup>3</sup> Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when: its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing; the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

<sup>4</sup> The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when: population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats; the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.



- (2013) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Malahide Estuary SPA 004025. Version 1.
- (2017) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122. Version 1.
- (2018) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040. Version 6.0.
- (2018) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Glenasmole Valley SAC 001209. Version 6.0.
- (2018) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Knocksink Wood SAC 000725. Version 6.0.
- (2019) Conservation Objectives Conservation Objectives for Ballyman Glen SAC 000713. Version 1.

The assessment considers available conservation objectives. Since conservation objectives focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the QIs/SCIs of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential effects of the Plan against the QIs/SCIs of each site. The conservation objectives for each site were consulted throughout the assessment process.



**Figure 3.1 European sites within 15km of the area to which the VEDP relates<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded October 2019)  
CAAS for Fáilte Ireland

## 3.3 Assessment Criteria and Screening

### 3.3.1 Is the VEDP Necessary to the Management of European sites?

The overarching objective of the VEDP is not the nature conservation management of the sites, but to support the ongoing tourism development of the Dublin Docklands. Therefore, the VEDP is not considered to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites.

### 3.3.2 Elements of the VEDP with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

The **focus** of the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) is on creating a strongly integrated tourism proposition for the Dublin Docklands area.

The VEDP identifies **two overarching themes** for the Dublin Docklands (“Dockland waters, Dublin’s maritime tapestry” and “Local traders’ global innovators”) under both of which various provisions are identified (see Section 2 of this document and the main VEDP document), including those relating to (Catalyst Projects, Supporting Experience Development Recommendations, Destination Enabling Initiatives and Destination Projects).

Promoting tourism within the VEDP area could lead to tourism related operational effects such as human disturbance and trampling.

Increased levels of tourism may lead to development such as renovation work to existing structures or construction of new infrastructure such as carparks etc.

Increased visitor numbers to the Dublin Docklands area will also influence capacities associated with waste water and drinking water services.

However, implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

### 3.3.3 Characterising Visitor Interactions at Tourist Destinations

Fáilte Ireland regularly engages with environmental research that is used to make informed management decisions and produce robust guidelines to facilitate the protection of the environment. From its inception in 2014, the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Operational Programme Monitoring Programme (undertaken to date by CAAS on behalf of Fáilte Ireland guided by relevant stakeholders) has been conducting research into the impacts of tourism on the receiving environment. To date the surveys have covered 43 sites and monitored the activities and effects of over 20,000 visitors to WAW discovery points.

This data was reviewed to inform the AA process to identify and characterise potential effects and interactions from tourists along the WAW. It is assumed that visitor interactions within the VEDP area will be consistent with the trends, activities and effects recorded in this dataset. However, it is noted that the Dublin Docklands is an urban setting comprised of hard surfaces and manmade infrastructure and therefore the tourist typology may vary.

This research characterises visitor movements at each site while examining the ecological features and sensitives present. A detailed assessment of the site facilities and management actions on site is also undertaken. From this data, impacts to ecological features are quantified in a systematic way and management recommendations are made. Over the first 4 years of the monitoring, the data has shown that visitors themselves cause low level effects, and high-level effects are predominantly caused by the

mismanagement of sites. As well as the site-specific data being collected, the monitoring program collates and interprets existing national environmental indicator data compiling the results into annual macro monitoring reports. The WAW monitoring research is guided by an independent working group which steers the research and develops the program as the data is collected. This working group comprises of members from the EPA, NPWS, the Environmental Pillar and a representative from each of the County Councils along the WAW.

Each year the results are refined and published online in the form of Visitor Observation Reports, Ecological Impact Reports and the Macro Monitoring Reports. The reports are then dissected and detailed reports containing all relevant site-specific information are sent to each of the County Councils along the WAW; as well as any site management teams at sites not under the management of the County Council. This ensures that the research can be harnessed on site by those responsible while contributing towards informed management plans and guidelines created by Fáilte.

This extensive database demonstrates that over 85% of visitors observed at WAW discovery points are having low or no effects on the ecological features or processes at these sites. Ecological impacts observed comprise:

- Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;
- Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;
- Disturbance of wildlife;
- Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;
- Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;
- Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;
- Fishing activities;
- Removal and throwing of large rocks; and
- Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.

The Monitoring Programme has identified that dunes, machair, maritime grasslands and upland habitats such as heathlands are the most sensitive/vulnerable to visitor effects. Therefore, the management of visitor movements within these habitats is key for the avoidance of potential effects.

### **3.3.4 Screening of Sites**

Table 3.1 examines whether there is potential for effects on European sites considering information provided above, including Appendix I. Sites are screened out based on one or a combination of the following criteria:

- Where it can be shown that there are significant pathways such as hydrological links VEDP proposals and the site to be screened;
- Where the site is located at such a distance from that area to which the VEDP relates that effects are not foreseen; and
- Where it is that known threats or vulnerabilities at a site cannot be linked to potential impacts that may arise from the VEDP.

**Table 3.1 Screening of European sites within 15km of the VEDP boundary**

Site Code	European site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interest and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	Adjacent	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	The VEDP area is directly adjacent to the SAC and therefore there is potential for visitors to access the SAC during the operational phase of the VEDP. As indicated above in sub-section 3.3.3, visitors can directly affect the integrity of a site by introducing sources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;</li> <li>• Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;</li> <li>• Disturbance of wildlife;</li> <li>• Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;</li> <li>• Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;</li> <li>• Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;</li> <li>• Fishing activities;</li> <li>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to these potential effects from the operational elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Therefore, construction phase sources for effects such as noise, dust, hydrological interactions must be considered.</p>	Yes	Yes
004006	North Bull Island SPA	Adjacent	Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [A048] Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> ) [A052] Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [A054] Shoveler ( <i>Anas clypeata</i> ) [A056] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> ) [A143] Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> ) [A144] Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> ) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa limosa</i> ) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Curlew ( <i>Numenius arquata</i> ) [A160] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) [A169] Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The VEDP area is directly adjacent to the SPA and therefore there is potential for visitors to access the SPA during the operational phase of the VEDP. As indicated above in sub-section 3.3.3, visitors can directly affect the integrity of a site by introducing sources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;</li> <li>• Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;</li> <li>• Disturbance of wildlife;</li> <li>• Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;</li> <li>• Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;</li> <li>• Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;</li> <li>• Fishing activities;</li> <li>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to these potential effects from the operational elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Therefore, construction phase sources for effects such as noise, dust, hydrological interactions must be considered.</p>	Yes	Yes
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	Adjacent	Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> ) [A143] Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> ) [A144] Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> ) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [A179] Roseate Tern ( <i>Sterna dougallii</i> ) [A192] Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [A193]	The VEDP area is directly adjacent to the SPA and therefore there is potential for visitors to access the SPA during the operational phase of the VEDP. As indicated above in sub-section 3.3.3, visitors can directly affect the integrity of a site by introducing sources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;</li> <li>• Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;</li> <li>• Disturbance of wildlife;</li> <li>• Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;</li> <li>• Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;</li> <li>• Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;</li> <li>• Fishing activities;</li> <li>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to these potential effects from the operational elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure.</p>	Yes	Yes



Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Statement for the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan

Site Code	European site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interest and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
			Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Therefore, construction phase sources for effects such as noise, dust, hydrological interactions must be considered.		
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	1.17	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritima</i> ) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	The VEDP area is 1.17km from this SAC, the entrance to the SAC for visitors is through two land bridges which are not easily accessible from the VEDP area due to the urban context and the road network present. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SAC these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SAC; therefore, construction phase hydrological interactions must be considered for this site.	Yes	Yes
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	3.77	Reefs [1170] <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SAC these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SAC; therefore, construction phase hydrological interactions must be considered for this site.	Yes	Yes
000202	Howth Head SAC	4.03	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.  The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SAC are sensitive to direct land use management activities such as grazing regimes, farming practices and/or drainage activities. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SAC have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.  Therefore, in the context of this SAC there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.	No	No
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	4.95	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritima</i> ) [1410]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SAC these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to	Yes	Yes

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Site Code	European site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interest and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SAC; therefore, construction phase hydrological interactions must be considered for this site.		
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	4.95	Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [A048] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SPA these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SPA; therefore, construction phase hydrological interactions must be considered for this site.	Yes	Yes
004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	6.36	Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SPA these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SPA; however, the River Liffey and the Irish sea introduce significant dilution effects due to the distance between the sites and the volume of water involved.	No	No
004117	Ireland's Eye SPA	7.69	Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Guillemot ( <i>Uria aalge</i> ) [A199] Razorbill ( <i>Alca torda</i> ) [A200]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SPA these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SPA; however, the River Liffey and the Irish sea introduce significant dilution effects due to the distance between the sites and the volume of water involved.	No	No
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	7.83	Roseate Tern ( <i>Sterna dougallii</i> ) [A192] Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [A193] Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SPA these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SPA; however, the River Liffey and the Irish sea introduce significant dilution effects due to the distance between the sites and the volume of water involved.	No	No
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	7.95	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.  Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution	No	No

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Site Code	European site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interest and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				<p>and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SAC are sensitive to direct land use management activities such as grazing regimes, farming practices and/or drainage activities. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SAC have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.</p> <p>Therefore, in the context of this SAC there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.</p>		
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	9.01	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]                      Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]                      Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]                      Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p>	<p>The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.</p> <p>However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SAC these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SAC; however, the River Liffey and the Irish sea introduce significant dilution effects due to the distance between the sites and the volume of water involved.</p>	No	No
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	9.73	<p>Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005]                      Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]                      Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]                      Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]                      Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067]                      Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069]                      Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]                      Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]                      Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]                      Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]                      Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]                      Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]                      Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]                      Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]                      Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.</p> <p>However, the elements of the VEDP in-combination with the wider planning framework could result in construction/development of infrastructure. Construction phase dust, noise, light pollution etc. are known to have localised effects. Therefore, given the distances between the VEDP area and the SPA these sources for effects are not seen to have potential to give rise to significant effects. The site is hydrologically connected to the SPA; however, the River Liffey and the Irish sea introduce significant dilution effects due to the distance between the sites and the volume of water involved.</p>	No	No
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	11.40	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]                      Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]                      Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]                      European dry heaths [4030]                      Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]                      Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]                      Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and</p>	<p>Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SAC are sensitive to groundwater interactions and direct land use management activities such as grazing regimes, farming practices and/or drainage activities. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SAC have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.</p>	No	No



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Site Code	European site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interest and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
			<p>submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]                      Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]                      Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladanii</i>) [8110]                      Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]                      Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]                      Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]  <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p>	<p>Therefore, in the context of this SAC there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.</p>		
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	11.69	<p>Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098]                      Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]</p>	<p>The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.</p> <p>Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SPA are sensitive to disturbance effects, habitat interactions, reduction in prey availability etc. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SPA have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.</p> <p>Therefore, in the context of this SPA there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.</p>	No	No
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	12.04	<p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210]                      Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]                      Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]</p>	<p>The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SPA, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.</p> <p>Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SAC are sensitive to groundwater interactions and direct land use management activities such as grazing regimes, farming practices and/or drainage activities. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SAC have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.</p> <p>Therefore, in the context of this SAC there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.</p>	No	No

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Site Code	European site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interest and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	13.58	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) [91E0]	<p>The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.</p> <p>Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SAC are sensitive to groundwater interactions and direct land use management activities such as grazing regimes, farming practices and/or drainage activities. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SAC have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.</p> <p>Therefore, in the context of this SAC there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.</p>	No	No
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	14.15	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	<p>The VEDP area is a significant distance from this SAC, and there are no policies or objectives within the VEDP to promote visitor movements outside of the Dublin Docklands area. Therefore, there are no operational effects identified.</p> <p>Potential construction phase elements of projects that may arise due to the implementation of the VEDP in combination with the wider planning framework may have localised effects such as noise disturbances, dust, light pollution and/or hydrological interactions. Sources such as surface water run-off may have wider reaching effects to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The VEDP area is coastal therefore there is limited hydrological connectivity inland. The qualifying interests of this SAC are sensitive to groundwater interactions and direct land use management activities such as grazing regimes, farming practices and/or drainage activities. No sources for effects with pathways to affect the ecological integrity of the SAC have been identified due to the distance between sites, the coastal nature of the docklands and the characteristics of the VEDP.</p> <p>Therefore, in the context of this SAC there are no pathways for effects identified, thus further consideration is not required.</p>	No	No

### 3.4 Other Plans and Programmes

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combination with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European sites. Appendix II outlines a selection of plans or projects that may interact with the VEDP to cause in-combination effects to European sites such as the Tourism Action Plan 2016-2018. These plans and programmes were considered throughout the assessment.

The **focus** of the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) is on creating a strongly integrated tourism proposition for the Dublin Docklands area.

The VEDP identifies **two overarching themes** for the Dublin Docklands (“Dockland waters, Dublin’s maritime tapestry” and “Local traders’ global innovators”) under both of which various provisions are identified (see Section 2 of this document and the main VEDP document), including those relating to (Catalyst Projects, Supporting Experience Development Recommendations, Destination Enabling Initiatives and Destination Projects).

In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland’s planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The Eastern and Midlands RSEs sets out objectives relating tourism development that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSEs will inform the review of existing, assessed Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

It is recognised that the identification of in-combination effects is limited, and that, as is normal practice, the assessment of in-combination effects will need to be undertaken in a more comprehensive manner at project-level.

Additional information on the relationship with other plans and programmes is provided at Appendix II.

### 3.5 AA Screening Conclusion

The effects that could arise from the VEDP have been examined in the context of several factors that could potentially affect the integrity of any European site. On the basis of the findings of this Screening for AA, it is concluded that the VEDP:

- Is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site; and
- May, if unmitigated, have significant adverse effects on 7 (no.) European sites.

Therefore, a Stage 2 AA is required for the VEDP (see Section 4 of this report). An Ancillary AA determination is provided at Figure 3.2.

**Ancillary AA determination, further to the main AA Natura Impact Statement**

under the  
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (as amended)  
for the  
Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan

**Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening**


This ancillary determination is ancillary to both:

- Fáilte Ireland's AA Natura Impact Statement; and
- Fáilte Ireland's AA determination that is made in advance of finalisation of the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan.

In making the determination that AA is required, the information on the potential effects on European Sites arising from the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan is taken into account (this information is reproduced in the AA Natura Impact Statement).

That information has been carefully considered and its reasoning and conclusion agreed with and adopted – allowing the AA Natura Impact Statement to conclude at the end of Section 3 “Screening for Appropriate Assessment” of the Natura Impact Statement that Stage 2 AA is required. It has been determined that the Dublin Docklands Visitor Experience Development Plan may have effects on a number of European Sites - therefore, Stage 2 AA (including the preparation of the Natura Impact Statement) is required for the Scheme (see Natura Impact Statement subsection 3.5 “AA Screening Conclusion”).

**Signatory:**



**Date: 15.11.19**

**Figure 3.2 Ancillary AA Determination**

## Section 4 Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

### 4.1 Introduction

The Stage 2 AA assesses whether the Plan alone, or in-combination with other plans, programmes, and/or projects, would result in adverse impacts on the integrity of the seven European sites brought forward from screening (see Table 3.1), with respect to site structure, function and/or conservation objectives.

### 4.2 Characterisation of European sites Potentially Affected

The AA Screening identified seven European sites with pathway receptors for potential effects arising from the implementation of the VEDP (see Section 2).

Appendix I characterises each of the qualifying features of the seven European sites brought forward from Stage 1 in context of each of the sites' vulnerabilities. Each of these site characterisations were taken from the NPWS website<sup>6</sup>.

### 4.3 Identifying and Characterising Potential Significant Effects

The following parameters are described when characterising impacts<sup>7</sup>:

**Direct and Indirect Impacts** - An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of a Plan/Project.

**Magnitude** - Magnitude measures the size of an impact, which is described as high, medium, low, very low or negligible.

**Extent** - The area over which the impact occurs – this should be predicted in a quantified manner.

**Duration** - The time for which the effect is expected to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature.

- Temporary: Up to 1 Year;
- Short Term: The effects would take 1-7 years to be mitigated;
- Medium Term: The effects would take 7-15 years to be mitigated;
- Long Term: The effects would take 15-60 years to be mitigated; and
- Permanent: The effects would take 60+ years to be mitigated.

**Likelihood** – The probability of the effect occurring taking into account all available information.

- Certain/Near Certain: >95% chance of occurring as predicted;
- Probable: 50-95% chance as occurring as predicted;
- Unlikely: 5-50% chance as occurring as predicted; and
- Extremely Unlikely: <5% chance as occurring as predicted.

**Ecologically Significant Impact** - An impact (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographic area.

**Integrity of a Site** - The coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

The Habitats Directive requires the focus of the assessment at this stage to be on the integrity of the site as indicated by its Conservation Objectives. It is an aim of NPWS to draw up conservation management plans for all areas designated for nature conservation. These plans will, among other things, set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest within a site.

SSCOs have been prepared for a number of European sites. These detailed SSCOs aim to define favourable conservation condition for the qualifying habitats and species at that site by setting targets for appropriate attributes which define the character habitat. The maintenance of the favourable

<sup>6</sup> last accessed 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019; <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>

<sup>7</sup> These descriptions are informed by publications including: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2016) "Guidelines for ecological impact assessment"; Environmental Protection Agency (2002) "Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements"; and National Roads Authority (2009) "Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes".

condition for these habitats and species at the site level will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

***Favourable conservation status of a species** can be described as being achieved when: 'population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.'*

***Favourable conservation status of a habitat** can be described as being achieved when: 'its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable'.*

Generic Conservation Objective for cSACs:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.

One generic Conservation Objective for SPAs:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

#### **4.3.1 Types of Potential Effects**

Assessment of potential impacts on European sites is conducted utilising a standard source-pathway model (see approach referred to under Sections 1.3 and 3).

The 2001 European Commission AA guidance outlines the following potential changes that may occur at a designated site, which may result in effects on the integrity and function of that site:

- Loss/reduction of habitat area;
- Habitat or species fragmentation;
- Disturbance to key species;
- Reduction in species density;
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.); and
- Climate change.

Each of these potential changes are considered below and in Table 4.1 with reference to the QIs/SCIs of all of the European sites brought forward from Stage 1 of the AA process (see Section 3).

##### **4.3.1.1 Loss/Reduction of Habitat Area**

The Dublin Docklands area is a highly urbanised landscape with minimal vegetation within the VEDP area. There are no European sites within the VEDP area and therefore there will be no direct loss or reduction of Annex I habitat.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

Tourism experiences supported by the VEDP are managed independently to Fáilte Ireland and therefore there is a risk of habitat loss or reduction due to the implementation of the Plan. Habitat destruction could occur at unmanaged/mismanaged sites or through inadequate operating procedures of strategic partners that are promoted by the VEDP.

Taking into account all of the above, mitigation measures are included in the VEDP (see Section 5), e.g. in order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate

compliance<sup>8</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

#### **4.3.1.2 Habitat or species Fragmentation**

There are no European sites within the Dublin Docklands VEDP area. The European sites within 15km of the site are coastal except the following:

- Wicklow Mountains SAC;
- Wicklow Mountains SPA;
- Glenasmole Valley SAC;
- Knocksink Wood SAC; and
- Ballyman Glen SAC.

The VEDP itself is coastal and therefore the ecological resources within the VEDP area are not suitable for the ecological connectivity of these inland SACs and SPA.

Potential effects from the operational phase of the VEDP have been identified for three European sites:

- South Dublin Bay SAC;
- North Bull Island SPA; and
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.

Visitor interactions and activities at coastal tourist destinations have the potential to result in the following effects:

- Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;
- Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;
- Disturbance of wildlife;
- Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;
- Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;
- Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;
- Fishing activities;
- Removal and throwing of large rocks; and
- Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.

These sources for effects are localised and small scale; however, if unmanaged, the provisions to increase tourist numbers to the Dublin Docklands could result in habitat loss (as indicated above) which could affect the connectivity of habitats and species populations.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

Taking into account all of the above, mitigation measures are included in the VEDP (see Section 5), e.g. in order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>9</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

#### **4.3.1.3 Disturbance to Key Species**

Visitor movement patterns and activities on site can introduce direct and indirect disturbance effects to designated species. Similarly, potential disturbance effects could occur during construction at a destination. These effects are dependent on on-site management practices, visitor behaviours and the operational procedures of strategic partners.

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<sup>9</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

Potential disturbance effects from the operational phase of the VEDP have been identified for three European sites:

- South Dublin Bay SAC;
- North Bull Island SPA; and
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

Taking into account all of the above, mitigation measures are included in the VEDP (see Section 5), e.g. in order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>10</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

#### **4.3.1.4 Reduction in species density**

Visitor movement patterns and activities on site can introduce direct and indirect disturbance effects to designated species. These effects can influence the ranging behaviours of species over time and therefore influence the density of species at a local level. These effects are dependent on on-site management practices, visitor behaviours and the operational procedures of strategic partners.

Potential disturbance effects from the operational phase of the VEDP have been identified for three European sites:

- South Dublin Bay SAC;
- North Bull Island SPA; and
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

Taking into account all of the above, mitigation measures are included in the VEDP (see Section 5), e.g. in order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>11</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

#### **4.3.1.5 Changes of Indicators of Conservation Value**

Changes in key indicators of conservation value may arise through vectors such as decreases in water quality / quantity (e.g. through inadequate wastewater treatment, run-off of pollutants during construction and operation of developments, agricultural runoff). However, the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment.

<sup>10</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

<sup>11</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.



Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

The VEDP aims to increase visitor numbers within the Dublin Docklands as well as extend the dwell time and seasonal spread of visitors. The key elements of the Plan that have been identified to have potential effects (see Section 3.3.2) are due to the promotion of tourism and the direct effects of tourism on the receiving environment at a local level. These potential effects are influenced by on-site management practices, visitor behaviours and the operational procedures of strategic partners.

Taking into account all of the above, mitigation measures are included in the VEDP (see Section 5), e.g. Potential effects due to infrastructure maintenance or development pressures are considered in detail in the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme' although, this VEDP is not within the WAW catchment, the VEDP will comply with the following. In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>12</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

#### **4.3.1.6 Climate change**

Increases in tourist numbers will result in travel related greenhouse gas emissions to air. Such effects upon greenhouse gas emissions will not affect changes projected to arise from climate change to the degree that it would affect the QIs or SCIs of the European sites considered.

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<sup>12</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

**Table 4.1 Characterisation of Potential Effects arising from the VEDP**

Site Code	Site Name <sup>13</sup>	Characterisation of Potential Effects <sup>14</sup>
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	<p>Implementation of the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, has the potential to increased visitor activities in the docklands area, which is adjacent to the SAC boundary. There is existing connectivity corridors for visitors that link the docklands to the SAC, and extend along the coastal edge through the SAC. Therefore, there is potential for the following effects to occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;</li> <li>• Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;</li> <li>• Disturbance of wildlife;</li> <li>• Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;</li> <li>• Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;</li> <li>• Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;</li> <li>• Fishing activities;</li> <li>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Therefore, visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>This site was also brought forward to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea. Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p> <p>Further details of the mitigation measures can be found in Section 5 below.</p>
004006	North Bull Island SPA	<p>Implementation of the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, has the potential to increased visitor activities in the docklands area, which is adjacent to the SPA boundary. Therefore, effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution could influence the ranging behaviour of the SCI species. Therefore, visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>This site was also brought forward to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea. Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p> <p>Further details of the mitigation measures can be found in Section 5 below.</p>
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	<p>Implementation of the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, has the potential to increased visitor activities in the docklands area, which is adjacent to the SPA boundary. Therefore, effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution could influence the ranging behaviour of the SCI species. Therefore, visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>This site was also brought forward to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea. Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p> <p>Further details of the mitigation measures can be found in Section 5 below.</p>
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	<p>There were no operational phase effects identified for this European site due to the absence of connectivity pathways for visitors and associated effects. This site was carried to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea.</p> <p>Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p>
003000	Rockbill to Dalkey Island SAC	<p>There were no operational phase effects identified for this European site due to the absence of connectivity pathways for visitors and associated effects. This site was carried to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea.</p> <p>Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p>

<sup>13</sup> For distance from Plan boundary and qualifying features for each European Site (QIs and SCIs), please refer to Table 3.1

<sup>14</sup> Informed by, inter alia, *The Status of Protected EU Habitats and Species in Ireland, Overview Volume 1* (NPWS, 2013)

Site Code	Site Name <sup>13</sup>	Characterisation of Potential Effects <sup>14</sup>
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	<p>There were no operational phase effects identified for this European site due to the absence of connectivity pathways for visitors and associated effects. This site was carried to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea.</p> <p>Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p>
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	<p>There were no operational phase effects identified for this European site due to the absence of connectivity pathways for visitors and associated effects. This site was carried to Stage 2 AA due to the hydrological pathways present and the potential for infrastructural development and site maintenance practices interacting with the hydrological characteristics of the River Liffey and Irish Sea.</p> <p>Measures have been included in the VEDP (see Section 5 of this document) to ensure that compliance is demonstrated with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (including those relating to the protection of water) for funding under the Plan to be provided.</p>

## Section 5 Mitigation Measures

The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance<sup>15</sup> with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents<sup>16</sup>:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the VEDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the VEDP is not part and does not contribute towards. Such legislation, policies, plans and programmes include:

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- The Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 (as varied), the George's Quay Local Area Plan 2012 (as extended), the North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock SDZ Planning Scheme 2014 and the Poolbeg West SDZ Planning Scheme 2019, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management; and
- The Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions), the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions) and the Dublin City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024.

### Infrastructure Capacity

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) the potential impact on existing infrastructure shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate, where relevant. The promotion of developing visitor friendly infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.

### Visitor Management

Those receiving funding shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities.

Extensive research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas with visitor management strategies. Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

### Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services

Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

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<sup>15</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

<sup>16</sup> These current versions of these documents are provided at Appendix III "Fáilte Ireland published documents referenced in the VEDP".

## Section 6 Conclusion

Stage 1 Screening and Stage 2 AA has been carried out. The implementation of the VEDP would have the potential to result in effects to the integrity of European sites, if unmitigated.

The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the QIs, SCIs and conservation objectives of the European sites have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and mitigate potential effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition, lower level plans, if any, and projects arising through the implementation of the VEDP will themselves be subject to their own AA/screening for AA processes, as relevant. Furthermore, in order to be realised, projects included in the VEDP will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier AA) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the VEDP is not part and does not contribute towards.

In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects were considered in the assessment and the mitigation measures incorporated into the VEDP allow a conclusion to be arrived at that there will be no significant adverse effects as a result of the implementation of the VEDP either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.

Having incorporated mitigation measures, it is concluded that the VEDP will not give rise to any effect on the ecological integrity of any European sites, alone or in combination with any other plans, programmes or projects<sup>17</sup>. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated.

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<sup>17</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:  
a) no alternative solution available,  
b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and  
c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

## Appendix I Background information on European sites

List of European sites within 15 km of the VEDP boundary; including the Qualifying features (Qualifying Interests or Special Conservation Interests) and Site Vulnerability/Sensitivity

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Site Description/Vulnerability
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	0.00	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]                      Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]                      Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]                      Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]                      Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]                      Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]                      Humid dune slacks [2190]  <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p>	<p>This site covers the inner part of north Dublin Bay, the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to the Martello Tower at Howth Head. The North Bull Island is the focal point of this site. It now extends for about 5km in length and is up to 1km wide in places. A well-developed and dynamic dune system stretches along the seaward side of the island. Towards the tip of the island, the saltmarsh grades naturally into fixed dune vegetation. The habitat 'annual vegetation of drift lines' is found in places, along the length of Dollymount Strand, with species such as Sea Rocket (<i>Cakile maritima</i>), Oraches (<i>Atriplex spp.</i>) and Prickly Saltwort (<i>Salsola kali</i>). North Dublin Bay is of international importance for waterfowl.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in North Dublin Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Habitat Area, Community Extent, Structure &amp; Distribution. To restore the favourable conservation condition of Annual vegetation of drift lines, Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows, Embryonic shifting dunes, Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ('white dunes') and Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes') in North Dublin Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, distribution, Structure/functionality, Composition. To restore the favourable conservation condition of Humid dune slacks in North Dublin Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: area, distribution, structure/functionality, hydrological characteristics, composition. To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Petalwort in North Dublin Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: distribution, population size, area of suitable habitat, hydrological/soil condition, structure.</p>
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	0.00	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]                      Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</p>	<p>This site lies south of the River Liffey in Co. Dublin, and extends from the South Wall to the west pier at Dun Laoghaire. It is an intertidal site with extensive areas of sand and mudflats. The sediments are predominantly sands but grade to sandy muds near the shore at Merrion Gates. The main channel which drains the area is Cockle Lake. Drift line vegetation occurs in association with the embryonic and incipient fore dunes. Typically drift lines occur in a band approximately 5m wide, though at Booterstown this zone is wider in places. A small area of pioneer saltmarsh now occurs in the lee of an embryonic sand dune just north of Booterstown Station. This early stage of saltmarsh development is here characterised by the presence of pioneer stands of glassworts (<i>Salicornia spp.</i>) occurring below an area of drift line vegetation.</p> <p>Urbanisation, roads, recreation, fishing, marine pollution and hydrological interactions are known threats/pressures identified in the standard data form for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS. However, amenity use of the bay is noted which could cause disturbance to protected bird species.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in South Dublin Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: habitat area, community extent, structure &amp; distribution.</p>
004006	North Bull Island SPA	0.00	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]                      Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]                      Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]                      Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]                      Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]                      Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]                      Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]                      Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]                      Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]                      Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]                      Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]                      Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]                      Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]                      Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]                      Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]                      Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169]                      Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]                      Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>This site covers all of the inner part of north Dublin Bay, with the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to Drumleck Point at Howth Head. The North Bull Island sand spit is a relatively recent depositional feature, formed as a result of improvements to Dublin Port. It is almost 5km long and 1km wide and runs parallel to the coast between Clontarf and Sutton. Part of the interior of the island has been converted to golf courses. A well-developed and dynamic dune system stretches along the seaward side of the island. The island shelters two intertidal lagoons which are divided by a solid causeway. These lagoons provide the main feeding grounds for the wintering waterfowl. The sediments of the lagoons are mainly sands with a small and varying mixture of silt and clay.</p> <p>Urbanisation, recreational pressure, fishing and roads are known threats/pressures identified in the standard data form for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS. However, amenity use of the bay is noted which could cause disturbance to protected bird species.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the SCI species in the North Bull Island SPA, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Population and Distribution. To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat in North Bull Island SPA as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it. this is defined by the following attribute and target: habitat area.</p>

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004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	0.00	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]                      Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]                      Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]                      Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]                      Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]                      Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]                      Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]                      Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]                      Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]                      Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]                      Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougalli</i>) [A192]                      Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]                      Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]                      Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA comprises a substantial part of Dublin Bay. It includes the intertidal area between the River Liffey and Dun Laoghaire, and the estuary of the River Tolka to the north of the River Liffey, as well as Booterstown Marsh. A portion of the shallow marine waters of the bay is also included. In the south bay, the intertidal flats extend for almost 3km at their widest. The sediments are predominantly well-aerated sands. Several permanent channels exist, the largest being Cockle Lake. A small sandy beach occurs at Merrion Gates, while some bedrock shore occurs near Dun Laoghaire. The landward boundary is now almost entirely artificially embanked. An area of grassland at Poolbeg, north of Irishtown Nature Park, is also included in the site. The site is an important site for wintering waterfowl, being an integral part of the internationally important Dublin Bay complex.</p> <p>Urbanisation, fishing, hydrological interactions, recreation, and roads are known threats/pressures identified in the standard data form for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS. However, amenity use of the bay is noted which could cause disturbance to protected bird species.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Light-bellied Brent Goose, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank and Black-headed Gull in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Population Trend &amp; Distribution Grey Plover is proposed for removal from the list of Special Conservation Interests for South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA. As a result, a site-specific conservation objective has not been set for this species. To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Roseate Tern, Common Tern and Arctic Tern in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Breeding population abundance, productivity rate, passage population, distributions, prey biomass, connectivity, disturbance. to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it. this is defined by the following attribute and target: habitat area.</p>
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	3.77	<p>Reefs [1170]  <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]</p>	<p>This site includes a range of dynamic inshore and coastal waters in the western Irish Sea. These include sandy and muddy seabed, reefs, sandbanks and islands. This site extends southwards, in a strip approximately 7km wide and 40km in length, from Rockabill, running adjacent to Howth Head, and crosses Dublin Bay to Frazer Bank in south Co. Dublin. The site encompasses Dalkey, Murlins and Rockabill islands. Reef habitat is uncommon along the eastern seaboard of Ireland due to prevailing geology and hydrographical conditions. Expansive surveys of the Irish coast have indicated that the greatest resource of this habitat within the Irish Sea is found fringing offshore islands which are concentrated along the Dublin coast. The selected site contains a wide array of habitats believed to be important for Harbour Porpoise including inshore shallow sand and mudbanks and rocky reefs scoured by strong current flow.</p> <p>Shipping lanes, fisheries, hydrological interactions, and urbanisation have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Reefs in Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Distribution, Community Structure To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Harbour porpoise in Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: access to suitable habitat, disturbance.</p>
000202	Howth Head SAC	4.03	<p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]                      European dry heaths [4030]</p>	<p>Howth Head is a rocky headland situated on the northern side of Dublin Bay. The peninsula is composed of Cambrian slates and quartzites, joined to the mainland by a post-glacial raised beach. Limestone occurs on the north-west side while glacial drift is deposited against the cliffs in places. The maritime flora is of particular interest as a number of scarce and local plants have been recorded. Rock outcrops which are important for lichens are distributed widely around Howth Head. The Earlscliffe area is of national importance for lichens and is the type locality for the black, yellow and grey lichen zonation</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts and European dry heaths in Howth Head SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Distribution, Ecosystem Functionality, Community Dynamics, Composition/Structure, Distinctiveness</p>
000199	Baldoye Bay SAC	4.95	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]                      Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p>	<p>Baldoye Bay SAC extends from just below Portmarnock village to the west pier at Howth in Co. Dublin. It is a tidal estuarine bay protected from the open sea by a large sand-dune system. Two small rivers, the Mayne and the Sluice, flow into the bay. Areas of saltmarsh occur near Portmarnock Bridge and at Portmarnock Point, with narrow strips along other parts of the estuary. Baldoye Bay is an important bird site for wintering waterfowl.</p> <p>Urbanisation, outdoor recreation, changes to hydrological characteristics and roads etc, have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in Baldoye Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: habitat area, community extent, structure &amp; distribution. to</p>

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				maintain the favourable conservation condition of <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i> ) and Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritimi</i> ) in Baldoye Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area Distribution, Structure, Vegetation Composition
004016	Baldoye Bay SPA	4.95	Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [A048] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	<p>Baldoye Bay extends from just below Portmarnock village to the west pier at Howth, Co. Dublin. It is a tidal estuarine bay protected from the open sea by a large sanddune system. Two small rivers, the Mayne and the Sluice, flow into the inner part of the estuary. Large areas of intertidal flats are exposed at low tide. These are mostly sands but grade to muds in the inner sheltered parts of the estuary. Baldoye Bay is of high ornithological importance for wintering waterfowl, providing good quality feeding areas and roost sites for an excellent diversity of waterfowl species.</p> <p>The main threat to the birds is disturbance as it is located in a densely-populated area. Urbanization, hydrological interaction, invasive species, recreational pressure and succession processes have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit in Baldoye Bay SPA, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Population Trend &amp; Distribution. To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat in Baldoye Bay SPA as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it, this is defined by the following attribute and target: habitat area</p>
004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	6.36	Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188]	<p>Howth Head is a rocky headland situated on the northern side of Dublin Bay. The peninsula is composed of Cambrian rock of the Bray Group, the most conspicuous component being quartzite. The site comprises the sea cliffs extending from just east of the Nose of Howth to the tip of the Bailey Lighthouse peninsula. The marine area to a distance of 500m from the cliff base, where seabirds socialise and feed, is included within the site.</p> <p>The seabirds within the site are not under significant threat at present. Human disturbance and fire are the two threats/pressures identified by the standard data form.</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.</p>
004117	Ireland's Eye SPA	7.69	Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Guillemot ( <i>Uria aalge</i> ) [A199] Razorbill ( <i>Alca torda</i> ) [A200]	<p>Ireland's Eye is located about 1.5km north of Howth in Co. Dublin. It is a Cambrian island with quartzite which forms spectacular cliffs on the north-east side. Elsewhere much of the area is covered by drift. The thin drift soils of the Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks Vegetated Sea Cliffs on Ireland's Eye support 'interesting' plant communities. A small area of shingle vegetation occurs above the sandy beach at Carrigeen Bay on the western side of the island.</p> <p>Recreational pressure, agriculture, and hydrological interaction have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.</p>
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	7.83	Roseate Tern ( <i>Sterna dougallii</i> ) [A192] Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [A193] Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194]	<p>The site comprises Dalkey Island, Lamb Island and Maiden Rock, the intervening rocks and reefs, and the surrounding sea to a distance of 200 m. Dalkey Island, which is the largest in the group, lies c. 400m off Sorrento Point on the Co. Dublin mainland from which it is separated by a deep channel. The island is low-lying, the highest point of which (c. 15 m) is marked by a Martello Tower. Soil cover consists mainly of a thin peaty layer, though in a few places there are boulder clay deposits. Vegetation cover is low-growing and consists mainly of grasses. The site is an important breeding site for protected bird species.</p> <p>Urbanisation, recreation and agriculture have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.</p>
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	7.95	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	<p>Ireland's Eye is located about 1.5km north of Howth in Co. Dublin. It is a Cambrian island with quartzite which forms spectacular cliffs on the north-east side. Elsewhere much of the area is covered by drift. The thin drift soils of the Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks Vegetated Sea Cliffs on Ireland's Eye support 'interesting' plant communities. A small area of shingle vegetation occurs above the sandy beach at Carrigeen Bay on the western side of the island.</p> <p>Recreational pressure, agriculture, and hydrological interaction have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Perennial vegetation of stony banks in Ireland's Eye SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Distribution, Structure/Functionality, Vegetation Composition To maintain the</p>



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				<p>favourable conservation condition of Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts in Ireland's Eye SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: habitat length, distribution, structure/functionality, vegetation composition.</p>
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	9.01	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]                      Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]                      Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]                      Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p>	<p>Malahide Estuary is situated immediately north of Malahide and east of Swords in Co. Dublin. It is the estuary of the River Broadmeadow. The site is divided by a railway viaduct. The outer part of the estuary is mostly cut off from the sea by a large sand spit, known as 'the island'. The outer estuary drains almost completely at low tide, exposing sand and mud flats. The inner stony shore has frequent Sea-holly (<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>). Welldeveloped saltmarshes occur at the tip of the spit; Atlantic salt meadow is the principle type. The estuary is an important wintering bird site.</p> <p>The inner part of the estuary is heavily used for water sports. A section of the outer estuary has recently been infilled for a marina and housing development. Urbanisation, bridges, recreational pressures, hydrological interaction and invasive species have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in Malahide Estuary SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Extent, Community Dynamics. To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand and Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) in Malahide Estuary SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: area, distribution, structure/functionality, hydrological characteristics, vegetation structure/composition. Spartina swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>) was originally listed as a qualifying Annex I habitat for Malahide Estuary SAC due to historical records of two rare forms of cordgrass– small cordgrass (<i>Spartina maritima</i>) and Townsend's cordgrass (<i>S. x townsendii</i>). However, Preston et al. (2002) considers both forms to be alien. In addition, all stands of cordgrass in Ireland are now regarded as common cordgrass (<i>S. anglica</i>) (McCorry et al., 2003; McCorry and Ryle, 2009). As a consequence, a conservation objective has not been prepared for this habitat. It will therefore not be necessary to assess the likely effects of plans or projects against this Annex I habitat at this site.</p>
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	9.73	<p>Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005]                      Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]                      Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]                      Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]                      Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067]                      Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069]                      Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]                      Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]                      Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]                      Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]                      Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]                      Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]                      Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]                      Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]                      Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>Malahide Estuary is situated in north Co. Dublin, between the towns of Malahide and Swords. The site encompasses the estuary, saltmarsh habitats and shallow subtidal areas at the mouth of the estuary. A railway viaduct, built in the 1800s, crosses the site and has led to the inner estuary becoming lagoonal in character and only partly tidal. Much of the outer part of the estuary is well-sheltered from the sea by a large sand spit, known as "The Island". This spit is now mostly converted to golf-course. The outer part empties almost completely at low tide and there are extensive intertidal flats exposed. Substantial stands of eelgrass (both <i>Zostera noltii</i> and <i>Z. angustifolia</i>) occur in the sheltered part of the outer estuary, along with Tasselweed (<i>Ruppia maritima</i>). Green algae, mostly <i>Ulva</i> spp., are frequent on the sheltered flats. Common Cord-grass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>) is well established in the outer estuary and also in the innermost part of the site. The intertidal flats support a typical macroinvertebrate fauna, with polychaete worms (<i>Arenicola marina</i> and <i>Hediste diversicolor</i>), bivalves such as <i>Cerastoderma edule</i>, <i>Macoma balthica</i> and <i>Scrobicularia plana</i>, the small gastropod <i>Hydrobia ulvae</i> and the crustacean <i>Corophium volutator</i>. Salt marshes, which provide important roosts during high tide, occur in parts of the outer estuary and in the extreme inner part of the inner estuary. These are characterised by such species as Sea Purslane (<i>Halimione portulacoides</i>), Sea Aster (<i>Aster tripolium</i>), Thrift (<i>Armeria maritima</i>), Sea Arrowgrass (<i>Triglochin maritima</i>) and Common Saltmarsh-grass (<i>Puccinellia maritima</i>).</p> <p>Human disturbance through recreation, railway lines, paths/tracks, invasive species, urbanisation and landfill are the known threats and pressures identified in the standard data form by the NPWS.</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Great Crested Grebe, Brent Goose, Shelduck, Pintail, Goldeneye, Red-breasted, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit and Redshank in Malahide Estuary SPA, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: population trend &amp; distribution.</p>
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	11.40	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]                      Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]                      Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]                      European dry heaths [4030]                      Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]                      Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]                      Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]                      Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]                      Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110]                      Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]                      Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</p>	<p>Wicklow Mountains SAC is a complex of upland areas in Counties Wicklow and Dublin, flanked by the Blessington reservoir to the west and Vartry reservoir in the east, Cruagh Mountain in the north and Lybagh Mountain in the south. Most of the site is over 300 m, with much ground over 600 m. The highest peak is 925m at Lugnaquilla. The Wicklow uplands comprise a core of granites flanked by Ordovician schists, mudstones and volcanics. The vegetation over most of Wicklow Mountains SAC is a mosaic of heath, blanket bog and upland grassland (mostly on peaty soil, though some on mineral soil), stands of dense Bracken (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>), and small woodlands mainly along the rivers. Mountain loughs and corrie lakes are scattered throughout the site. Alpine vegetation occurs on some of the mountain tops, notably in the Lugnaquilla area, and also on exposed cliffs and scree slopes elsewhere in the site.</p> <p>The most common land use is traditional sheep grazing, but others include turf cutting, mostly hand-cutting but some machine-cutting also occurs. Peat erosion is frequent on the peaks. This may be a natural process, but is likely to be accelerated by activities such as grazing. Recreational pressure, human disturbance effects, hydrological interactions, agriculture, invasive species and landslides are known threats/pressures identified in the standard data form for the site.</p>

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			Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) and Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds in Wicklow Mountains SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Distribution, 'typical' species, Vegetation Composition/Structure, Hydrological Characteristics, Water Quality, Water Nutrient/Chemical Composition, Lake Substratum, Community Dynamics/Abundance of Algae Macrophytes, Acid Status, Turbidity, Fringe Habitat Area & Condition. To restore the favourable conservation condition of European dry heaths, Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and sub-mountain areas, in Continental Europe) and Alpine and Boreal heaths in Wicklow Mountains SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Distribution, Ecosystem Functionality, Community Dynamics, Composition/Structure, Distinctiveness. To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae in Wicklow Mountains SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets: Area, Distribution, Structure, Soil Toxicity, Vegetation Composition/Structure.
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	11.69	Merlin ( <i>Falco columbarius</i> ) [A098] Peregrine ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) [A103]	This is an extensive upland site, comprising a substantial part of the Wicklow Mountains. Most of the site is in Co. Wicklow, but a small area lies in Co. Dublin. Exposed rock and scree are features of the site. The predominant habitats present are blanket bog, heaths and upland grassland. Traditionally a ground-nesting species, Merlin in the Wicklow Mountains are usually found nesting in old crows' nests in conifer plantations. The open peatlands provide excellent foraging habitat for Merlin with small birds such as Meadow Pipit being their main prey. The cliffs and crags within the site also provide ideal breeding locations for Peregrine.  Agriculture, recreation, roads and peat extraction are known threats/pressures identified in the standard data form for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.  To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	12.04	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates ( <i>Festuco-Brometalia</i> ) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) [6410] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]	Glenasmole Valley in south Co. Dublin lies on the edge of the Wicklow uplands, approximately 5km from Tallaght. The River Dodder flows through the valley and has been impounded here to form two reservoirs which supply water to south Dublin. The non-calcareous bedrock of the Glenasmole Valley has been overlain by deep drift deposits which now line the valley sides. Tufa depositing springs are long-known from the site, along the valley sides, and some have substantial tufa mounds and banks. Wet semi-natural broadleaved woodland is also found around the reservoirs. The lake shore vegetation is not well developed, which is typical of a reservoir.  Forestry, agriculture, invasive species, and urbanisation have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.  To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	13.58	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) [91E0]	Knocksink Wood is situated in the valley of the Glencullen River, just north-west of Enniskerry in Co. Wicklow. The fast flowing Glencullen River winds its way over granite boulders along the valley floor. The steep sides of the valley are mostly covered with calcareous drift, and support extensive areas of woodland. This site has one of the most diverse woodland invertebrate faunas in Ireland, including some wet woodland organisms which are threatened at an international level. Vertebrates noted in the vicinity, either by tracks, sett or sight, include Red Squirrel, Badger, Rabbit and Deer. The woodland supports large populations of birds, including many common passerines (Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Wren, Chaffinch) and crows, such as Rook, Hooded Crow, Magpie, Jackdaw and Raven. Buzzard have been recorded in the area and Dipper are occasionally seen on the river.  Recreation, urbanisation, forestry, agriculture and invasive species have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.  To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	14.15	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	Ballyman Glen is situated approximately 3 km north of Enniskerry and straddles the County boundary between Dublin and Wicklow. It is orientated in an east-west direction with a stream running through the centre. The glen is bounded mostly by steeply sloping pasture with Gorse ( <i>Ulex europaeus</i> ) and areas of wood and scrub.  Agriculture, pollution to surface water, recreation, forestry and urbanisation have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.  To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.

**List of all Qualifying Interests of SACs that have undergone Assessment including Summaries of Current Threats and Sensitivity to Effects**

<b>Qualifying Interests</b>	<b>Current threats to Qualifying Interests</b>	<b>Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests</b>
Alkaline fens [7230]	Land reclamation, peat extraction; afforestation; erosion and landslides triggered by human activity; drainage; burning and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) [91E0]	Inappropriate grazing levels; invasive species; and clearance for agriculture or felling for timber	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Changes in management.
Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]	Abandonment; overgrazing; burning; outdoor recreation; quarries; communication networks; and wind farm developments.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change
Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	Grazing; sand and gravel extraction; recreational activities; coastal protection works	Overgrazing and erosion. Changes in management.
Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) [1330]	Overgrazing; erosion; invasive species, particularly common cordgrass ( <i>Spartina anglica</i> ); infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Overgrazing, erosion and accretion
Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]	Land reclamation, peat extraction; afforestation; erosion and landslides triggered by human activity; drainage; burning and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]	Land reclamation, afforestation; drainage; and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Estuaries [1130]	Pollution, fishing /aquaculture and habitat quality.	Inappropriate development, changes in turbidity and
Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]	Recreation; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing: non-native plant species, particularly sea buckthorn ( <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> ),	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
Humid dune slacks [2190]	Agricultural improvement; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing; forestry; recreational activity	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management. Sensitive to hydrological change.
Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	Decrease in water quality: Use of pesticides; fertilization; vegetation removal; professional fishing (including lobster pots and fyke nets); hunting; poisoning; sand and gravel extraction; mechanical removal of peat; urbanised areas; human habitation; continuous urbanization; drainage; management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; and canalization or modifying structures of inland water course.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Sensitivity to pollution
Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritimi</i> ) [1410]	Over-grazing by cattle or sheep; infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development and reclamation.
<i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) [6410]	Agricultural intensification; drainage; abandonment of pastoral systems	Surface and groundwater dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Changes in management. Changes in nutrient status
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	Aquaculture, fishing, bait digging, removal of fauna, reclamation of land, coastal protection works and invasive species, particularly cord-grass; hard coastal defence structures; sea-level rise.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Moderate sensitivity to pollution. Changes to salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development
Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]	Nutrient enrichment; afforestation; waste water; invasive alien species; sport and leisure activities.	Surface and groundwater dependant. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]	Reclamation, afforestation and burning; overstocking; invasion by non-heath species; exposure of peat to severe erosion.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	The introduction of alien species; sub-optimal grazing patterns; general forestry management; increases in urbanisation and human habitation adjacent to oak woodlands; and the construction of communication networks through the woodland.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Introduction of alien species.
Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ) [3110]	Nutrient enrichment; afforestation; waste water; invasive alien species; sport and leisure activities.	Surface and groundwater dependant. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution
<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	There are no significant impacts affecting this species.	None identified
Petrifying springs with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) [7220]	Ground water interactions, on site management activities	Surface and groundwater dependant. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	The main threats to this species include; by-catch in fishing gear, pollution of the marine environment and habitat degradation.	Falling prey densities is a threat to this species.
Reefs [1170]	Professional fishing; taking for fauna; taking for flora; water pollution; climate change; and change in species composition.	Sensitive to disturbance and pollution.
<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]	Invasive Species; erosion and accretion	Marine water dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Infilling, reclamation, invasive species

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Qualifying Interests	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates ( <i>Festuco-Brometalia</i> ) (* important orchid sites) [6210]	Land reclamation, afforestation; drainage; and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]	Removal of beach material and interference with the supply of sand; construction of coastal defences; sand compaction caused by vehicles and trampling.	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management
Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels ( <i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i> ) [8110]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access.	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation
Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]	Forestry planting and agricultural improvements are ongoing and causing habitat loss, along with succession to heath and scrub.	Land use management activities

List of all Special Conservation Interest of SPAs that have undergone Assessment including Summaries of Current Threats and Sensitivity to Effects

Special Conservation Interests				Vulnerabilities of Special Conservation Interests
Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [A048] Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> ) [A052] Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [A054] Shoveler ( <i>Anas clypeata</i> ) [A056] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> ) [A143] Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> ) [A144]	Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> ) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa limosa</i> ) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Curlew ( <i>Numenius arquata</i> ) [A160] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) [A169] Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137]	Roseate Tern ( <i>Sterna dougallii</i> ) [A192] Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [A193] Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184]	Guillemot ( <i>Uria aalge</i> ) [A199] Razorbill ( <i>Alca torda</i> ) [A200] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Great Crested Grebe ( <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> ) [A005] Goldeneye ( <i>Bucephala clangula</i> ) [A067] Red-breasted Merganser ( <i>Mergus serrator</i> ) [A069] Merlin ( <i>Falco columbarius</i> ) [A098] Peregrine ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) [A103]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bird species are particularly vulnerable to direct disturbance due to noise and/or vibration. These effects are localised and disturbance effects are foreseen to be low at distances beyond 2km.</li> <li>Direct habitat loss is a serious concern for bird species, as well as the reduction in habitat quality. Habitat degradation could occur through effects such as local enrichment due to agricultural practices or damage to habitat through activities such as trampling.</li> <li>Prey species diversity and availability is a key element of species conservation. Community dynamics and ecosystem functionality are complex concepts and require site specific information. The site synopsis and conservation objectives for the SPAs identified within the ZOI were used to identify any specific prey sensitivities.</li> <li>Availability of nesting/roosting habitat. Particularly for the Hen Harrier.</li> <li>Vegetation composition, structure and functionality.</li> </ul>
Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]				Direct land take is a common vulnerability to all sites; as well as significant water quality effects. The conservation objective of all SPAs designated for Wetland and Waterbirds is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds using it.

## Appendix II Relationship Other Plans and Programmes

Relationship Other Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Relevance to the Plan
<b>Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework, (replacing the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020) and the National Development Plan (2018-2027)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between.</li> <li>The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the new National Planning Framework. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase of over 1 million people.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>€27 billion multi-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>EirGrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2017-2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EirGrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland; "<i>Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way.</i>"</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users.</li> <li>It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)</b>	<p>Vision: "<i>Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological development of the sector is among the best in the EU.</i>"</p>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry.</li> <li>The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland (in/pending preparation)</b>	<p>It is intended that the Marine Spatial Plan will be finalised in 2020, and forwarded to the European Commission at that time, ahead of the due date for submission by Member States of their plans in March 2021.</p>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Tourism Action Plan 2016-2018</b>	<p>Includes a total of 23 actions to be addressed in the period between now and 2018 aimed at securing continued growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment.</p>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Food Harvest 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Harvest 2020 is a roadmap for the Irish food industry, as it seeks to innovate and expand in response to increased global demand for quality foods. It sets out a vision for the potential growth in agricultural output after the removal of milk quotas.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Relationship Other Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Relevance to the Plan
<b>National Rural Development Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>River Basin Management Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River Basin Management Plans set out the status of waters in the River Basin District.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)</b>	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland</li> <li>Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland</li> <li>Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable.</li> <li>By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies, replacing Regional Planning Guidelines [in preparation]</b>	Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) provide long-term strategic planning frameworks and will be replaced by Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs). The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies will provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs</b>	<p>Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site</li> <li>To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest</li> <li>To describe the site and its management</li> <li>To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site</li> <li>To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overarching vision for each LECP is: "to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities"</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<b>Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Planning Schemes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines planning objectives for land use development (including transport objectives).</li> <li>Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies.</li> <li>Sets out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area.</li> </ul>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

## **Appendix III Fáiite Ireland published documents referenced in the VEDP**

Contents of Appendix III to this Natura Impact Statement:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme **Appendix 5** "Site Maintenance Guidelines" and other relevant measures from the Fáiite Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme **Appendix 6** "Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others" (and any subsequent replacements).



**WILD ATLANTIC WAY**

SLÍ FHIÁIN AN ATLANTAIGH

# Site Maintenance Guidelines

*for launching the  
Wild Atlantic Way*



**Fáilte Ireland**

National Tourism Development Authority

the **paulhogarth** company



BRADY SHIPMAN MARTIN





## INTRODUCTION

The *Wild Atlantic Way* will be the longest coastal driving attraction in the world, inviting greater tourism numbers to the west coast of Ireland from overseas tourist markets to explore this unique and varied, but wild landscape and seascape.

**The Vision** for the *Wild Atlantic Way* is to build on the existing international reputation of the West Coast of Ireland, and to develop an all encompassing World Class tourism product that will invite visitors to experience the unique wild and natural seascape and landscape of the Atlantic Coast.

It will be at once wild, natural, vibrant and authentic; unspoilt, intriguing, exciting and memorable. It will showcase the wild landscapes and seascapes, and the heritage and history of the places along it.

### What does it look like?

The *Wild Atlantic Way* is a route along the Atlantic coast from Kinsale in County Cork to the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal, and will be fully developed over a period of 10 years.

Along the **Route** there are **159 Discovery Points**, large and small, each chosen for their potential to offer visitors an authentic and intimate experience of the natural and wild landscape and seascape. The majority of these Discovery Points are alongside or accesses by rural roads, with others being located within village and harbour settings. Additionally, there are **22 Embarkation Points** to island Discovery Points.

Each Discovery Point already has a parking facility in the form of a lay-by or car park, and these will serve as the **Arrival Points** for each site. A number of these Discovery Points will be further enhanced to improve the quality of the visitor experience, subject to compliance with the relevant environmental and habitats regulations.

*At this stage, we want the help of the Local Authorities to prepare the Arrival Points to the Discovery Points for the launch of the Wild Atlantic Way in 2014.*

*This document provides guidelines as to the works that may be required to meet a minimum standard of presentation of these sites. The Guidelines also include an Ecological Method Statement which sets out the ecological standards and procedures which must be complied with by the Local Authorities in implementing any works.*

In relation to the further development of the *Discovery Points*, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment are currently being undertaken of the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme and the findings of these assessments will determine the scope, extent and nature of future works, if any.

These Guidelines, therefore, relate only to the parking facilities at the *Discovery Points*.



Ferry to Island

**P** Car parks & Lay-bys

 Potential Discovery Points



## OVERVIEW

The parking facilities are the **Arrival Points** for vehicles and provide pedestrian access for visitors to the *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers, and in the longer term, to the *Discovery Points*.

In some cases, the parking facility will incorporate the *Discovery Point*, either because there is no access from it into the surrounding landscape for a variety of reasons, or that it is considered that the best view of the surrounding landscape and seascape is to be had from the parking facility.

**Parking facilities are not authentic landscape elements**, however, it is important that they are well presented and do not compromise visitor experience of the natural landscape or seascape attraction.

By virtue of their remote and unsheltered locations, many are highly exposed to the excesses of wind and rain, and have endured damage to surfaces, boundaries and facilities - in some cases giving rise to a sense of dereliction. **Poor presentation and dereliction** will undermine visitor experience of the sites.

The purpose of this document is to assist Local Authorities in identifying appropriate repair works that **will enhance the presentation** and visitor experience of parking facilities. Included as part of these guidelines is an Ecological Method Statement. All remedial works undertaken by Local Authorities should comply with these Guidelines and the Ecological Method Statement.

**All parking facilities should be effective, visually discreet, and compatible with their natural context.**



## SITE APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The extent of what is considered the Site Approach will be determined by the particular characteristics and context of each site.

- In the case of lay-bys, the approach will probably only include the section of road alongside it and any defined entrance.
- For small car parks at the end of cul-de-sacs or along very minor roads, the approach may include some or all of the minor road linking to the main route, as well as any defined entrance.
- Car parks adjacent to settlements, beaches and harbours vary considerably in size, and may incorporate and service other facilities or attractions. In such cases, it may be appropriate that the approach be limited to the part of the car park where the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker is to be located.

### Typical maintenance works may include:

- Repair of broken road surfaces;
- Repair of rutted road edges;
- Cutting roadside grass verges;
- Trimming of hedgerows;
- Weeding and removal of inappropriate species and dead planting;
- De-cluttering and removal of excessive or obsolete signage;
- Repairing or removing broken or inappropriate entrance structures including height restrictions;
- Removal or tidying up of derelict or abandoned equipment in adjoining fields or areas.





## PARKING SURFACES

The site car parks, by virtue of their exposed locations, are prone to physical damage by high volumes of drainage, high winds and temperature change, giving rise to broken and uneven surfaces, potholes and surface drainage problems.

Parking surfaces should be **continuous, reasonably firm and durable, be free of tripping hazards**, incorporating free flowing drainage, and should also be **visually compatible** with the surrounding context.

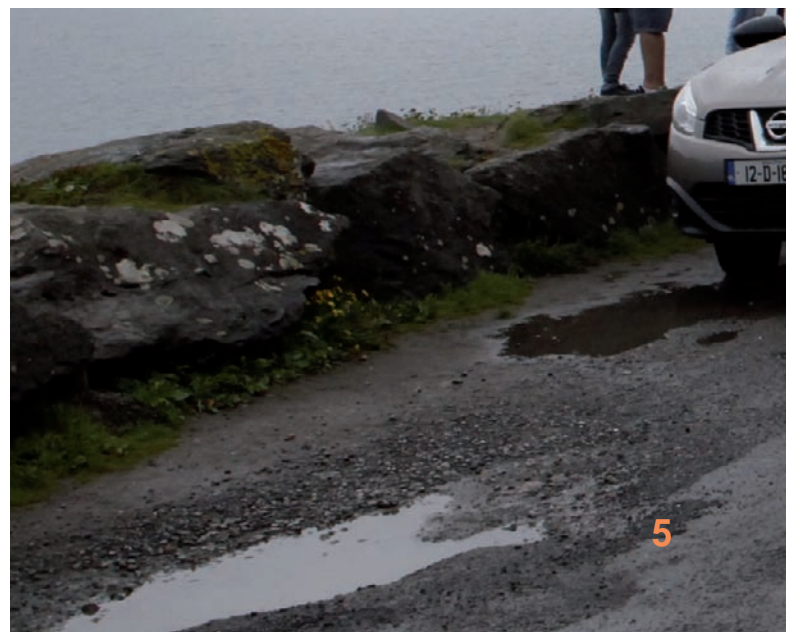
Surface materials will typically include tar and chip or compacted stone for rural sites, whereas village and harbour sites might include bitumen macadam, tar and chip, and possibly concrete.

Hot rolled asphalt incorporating drainage channels, gullies, painted line markings, concrete edgings etc are not generally appropriate, but may be required at specific sites where higher volumes of visitors are anticipated.

### Issues to Consider

- General:** Tidy up sites by removing **debris and gravel piles**, and repairing broken elements.
- Drainage:** Examine the effectiveness of the site drainage, by considering site levels and gradients, the source and direction of cross flows, and the optimum outlet routes. Determine free **flowing discreet drainage system** that will assist in ensuring the integrity of the parking surface and edges.
- Surfaces:** Repair any broken surfaces, potholes, sudden level changes or broken or rutted edges that may give rise to tripping and difficulties for buggies and wheelchair users. Use materials that are consistent with the local road, existing car park or surrounding landscape context as appropriate.
- Vegetation:** Grass and other vegetation can break through compact surfaces after a number of years. In some cases this might be considered part of the **character**; for others, it might be considered **derelict**. An assessment of what is appropriate must be made, and such vegetation either left alone, or the surface renewed to eliminate it. If renewing surfaces, the specification should consider the likelihood of vegetation re-establishing itself.

In general, **do not introduce urban traffic solutions** such as highly finished tarmac, paint marking, bollards, kerbs, barriers or traffic signage in areas that are distinctly rural and natural in appearance.





## SITE BOUNDARIES

Boundaries for parking facilities vary significantly, and typically in rural settings include earth mounds, sod and stone banks, hedgerows, post and wire fencing etc., that are consistent with the wider landscape setting. In some cases, they may also include examples of local craftsmanship, such as dry stone walls.

Rural boundaries have an **inherent rugged and almost natural appearance**. Undulating lines, off-plumb fence posts, and weathered appearances are perfectly acceptable authentic elements of the landscape.

### Repair and maintenance works for improved presentation may require:

- Earth mounds:** Any broken or eroded parts should be repaired to match the original.
- Sod and Stone banks:** Reinststate any damaged sections and remove overgrown or dead planting, or any inappropriate species;
- Hedgerows:** In general, annual trimming to maintain vistas should be undertaken outside bird nesting season, ideally in autumn to allow recovery in advance of the tourism season.
- Dry stone walls:** Repair any broken or fallen sections to match the original
- Post & wire fence:** Replace and missing or broken posts or sections of wire
- Sand dunes:** Natural features with marram grass should not need maintenance.

Inappropriate boundaries might include bollards (concrete, steel, painted timber), boulders, chain link fencing, painted timber fences, crash barriers, and walls made from blockwork, modular materials or concrete.

Where inappropriate boundary treatments are present they should be removed and replaced with an alternative that is consistent with the surrounding landscape context. If vehicular constraints are necessary for safety or for restricting access, consider solutions derived from typical appropriate boundaries.





## SIGNAGE

Sites should be free of all unnecessary clutter, so as not to detract from the setting and visitor experience. Excesses of signage, for direction, safety, information, interpretation and other purposes needs to be rationalised and simplified.

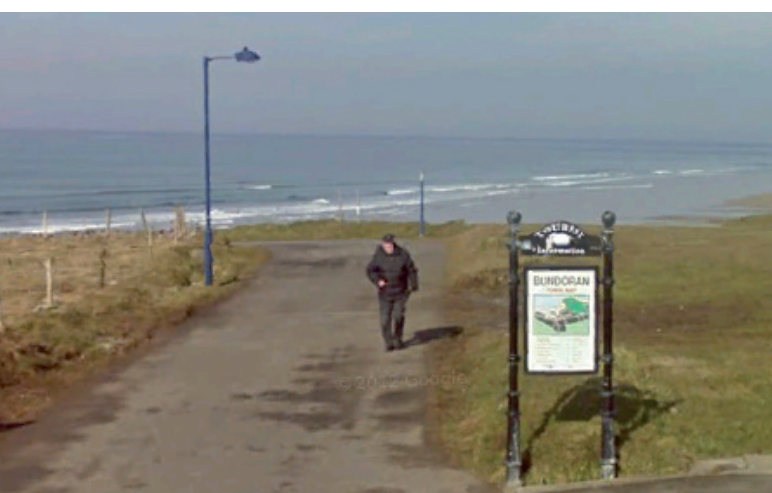
**In many instances, typical actions required that may include:**

- Removal of abandoned or derelict signage and signage infrastructure;
- Removal of any urban or otherwise inappropriate signage structures;
- Removal of all commercial advertising;
- Repair and repainting of signage infrastructure.

Local Authorities, in consultation with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant bodies, should seek to remove other tourism and interpretive signage, and if appropriate and necessary, to seek to incorporate other information in conjunction with the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker.

The *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker will incorporate interpretation signage, the content for which will be agreed by means of a separate consultative process.

The objective is that upon arrival, the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker should be readily visible, not confused amongst other signage, and be close to the point of interaction (or departure to) the natural and wild experience identified with each site.





## SITE FURNITURE

Where site furniture is provided, it is important that it is appropriate to the natural landscape setting, and well maintained so as to enhance visitor experience of the site.

### Actions required may include:

- Removal, replacement or repair of any furniture that is broken or appears derelict;
- Removal of any urban style seating or other site furniture that detracts from the authenticity of the site;
- Removal of any makeshift site furniture such as picnic tables and seating made of block, brick or concrete structures;
- Removal of bins comprising re-used oil barrels and other containers, moulded plastic, and urban council type bins.

Picnic tables and seating should generally be understated, robust and well maintained. Easy access is important, including the approach route and base installation.

Bins, where provided, should be convenient without being prominent, and should generally be of naturally bleaching timber construction. Consideration should be given where possible to the provision of dual bins for rubbish and recycling.

Particular attention should be given to the most appropriate location for the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker. It should be obvious at the point of arrival by car, and also at the point of leaving the car park behind and proceeding by foot to the natural setting, and in time, to the Discovery Point.

Local Communities, themselves part of the *Wild Atlantic Way* experience, may have implemented community projects and in some cases, memorial plaques. It is important that the Local Authority identifies such interventions and their origins, and undertakes any improvement works in a manner that engages with such community participation.



## SITE FACILITIES

The majority of sites do not typically incorporate extensive visitor facilities. Toilet facilities are provided at many of the village, beach and harbour locations, either on a permanent or seasonal basis. In addition, some of the parking facilities double as the location for community recycling facilities.

### Actions required:

#### Toilet Blocks

Ensure toilet blocks in use are properly presented and maintained, internally and externally, so as not to undermine visitor experience;

Some sites incorporate disused and derelict toilet blocks. Where there is a demand, these should be refurbished and well presented. Otherwise, derelict toilet facilities should be demolished and their sites reinstated.

#### Temporary Toilets

Portaloos, whether temporary or permanent, are substantially below any international or local visitor expectation and should be removed.

Where there is a demand for toilet facilities, consideration should be given to the provision of proper facilities.

In exceptional circumstances, if temporary facilities are provided, they should always be fully screened by timber panelling and hedgerows.

#### Recycling:

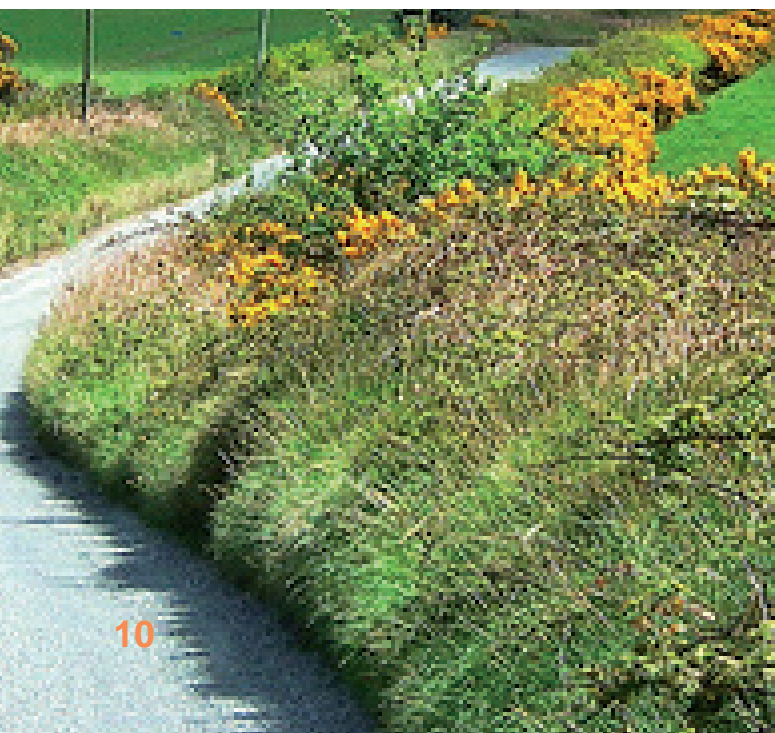
Consider possible alternative sites

Ensure they are located out of sight of visitors;

Provide screening, perhaps using timber panels and hedgerow surrounds









## SITE LIGHTING

The majority of sites are distinctly rural in character with the exception of those located in villages and harbours. In this regard, sites should have no lighting provided as frequently, the dusk, dawn or night time experience of the seascape and skyline is part of the experience.

Inappropriate lighting installations should be removed.

In village, harbour or promenade locations, lighting may be a reasonable expectation and appropriate. Local Authorities should ensure that such fittings and illumination levels are suitable to the location. Bollard lighting might be considered a good alternative, perhaps in conjunction with lamp standards, to provide suitable wayfinding lighting without compromising the village or harbour character.

## SOFT LANDSCAPING

In general, vegetation at sites in the form of indigenous hedgerows, shrubs, grass, marram grass and seasonal flowers is entirely appropriate.

Any vegetation that is dead, not indigenous, or inconsistent with the local landscape context, should be removed and replaced as appropriate in order to reinforce the authenticity of sites.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The authenticity of the wild and natural environments being showcased along the *Wild Atlantic Way* is an essential part of the experience. In this regard, sites should be maintained and repaired in a sustainable manner, using, as appropriate, locally sourced materials and indigenous planting, as well as management techniques that are environmentally responsible. Particular regard should be given to safeguarding ecological characteristics, including flora and fauna, and the protection of the natural environments.







## MAINTENANCE & SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

All sites that are brought up to an acceptable standard will be awarded a *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers and an interpretative panel, both of which will be placed in a suitable location at the Arrival Point. The high quality presentation of the sites however, will be an ongoing requirement, in order to maximise visitor experience and match expectations.

Fáilte Ireland will require a Service Level Agreement for each site with the relevant Local Authority.

This will serve as a contract between Fáilte Ireland and the Local Authority to ensure that investment in the sites now will continue to be effective for the *Wild Atlantic Way*.

### What will the Service Level Agreement include?

Following the identification and agreement of the scope of works required for each site at this stage, a site specific Service Level Agreement will also be prepared. In essence, the Service Level Agreement will seek to ensure that maintenance and improvement works undertaken in the short term are kept at an acceptable standard by the Local Authority into the future.

Typically, they are likely to include:

- Periodic reporting on site condition, including photographs
- Defined management regimes and programmes
- Sites to be kept clean and tidy
- Bins to be emptied and any loose rubbish picked up
- Vegetation to have scheduled seasonal management plans
- Signage is kept clear and well presented, and unauthorised signage or advertisements removed
- Any painted structures should be re-painted as required to maintain good presentation
- Toilet facilities, where provided, are kept clean and stocked with necessary supplies
- Lighting, if appropriate, is maintained in full working order
- Site furniture is kept in good condition
- Parking surfaces to be maintained in good order
- Items that are broken, including by vandalism, are repaired quickly
- Graffiti is removed

Local Authorities will be required to commit to allocating appropriate resources to ensure that the appropriate standard is maintained.







# ECOLOGICAL METHOD STATEMENT

## 1.1 Introduction

All projects must be undertaken in accordance with the Wild Atlantic Way candidate Discovery Points Remedial Works Guidelines, including this Ecological Method Statement, and in accordance with the requirements of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

The purpose of the Ecological Method Statement is to identify what ecological control methods need to be specified to avoid adverse ecological effects arising from remedial works. All projects must comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project.

Remedial works are proposed at a number of sites. The works vary in scale and are specific to the individual sites and incorporate a combination of the proposed works outlined on Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 Proposed Works for Wild Atlantic Way candidate Discovery Points**

<b>Proposed works</b>
Extend surfacing in car park
Enlargement of car park/lay-by
Provision of footpath
Provision of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Provide Wild Atlantic Way site marker
Lay-by reshaping
Removal/replacement of bollards
Extension of timber boardwalks to create access locations within car park to boardwalks
<b>Proposed Management Activities</b>
Road repairs (e.g. pot holes)
Repair stone walls, fencing, concrete posts, and furniture
Repair surfacing in car park
Removal of vegetation, tree and hedgerow cutting
Repair and maintain verge around car park and along access road
Rationalise existing information signage, removal of existing barriers, general tidy up of area
Undertake maintenance of grassed amenity areas
Maintenance of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Repair works to paths, slipways, kerbs, steps, etc. due to storm damage
Reinstate rock armour
Drainage clearance works

The locations of these sites are often within areas of high ecological sensitivity and therefore it will be necessary to consider the potential effects of such works on the natural environment. Depending on the site and the specific complexities, the works could potentially give rise to the following adverse ecological effects:

- Habitat loss and disturbance
- Disturbance of species
- Introduction and spread of invasive alien species.
- Increased runoff of silt and pollutants to surrounding aquatic ecosystems, which could impact on aquatic habitats and species



## 1.2 Ecological Control Measures

A number of Ecological Control Measures are to be integrated into the design of each site. The Ecological Control Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. Particular measures (see Table 1.2 below) are listed against each type of works being proposed for each site. It will be necessary for the Local Authority to specify that, when planning works at individual sites, the measures are adhered to and appropriately incorporated into the construction approach. Site specific detail on how these measures will be incorporated into the construction design will vary depending on the characteristics of each site and will need to be considered prior to the commencement of construction.

**Table 1.2 Ecological Control Measures**

No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
<b>G1</b>	<p>All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be segregated to prevent contamination, stored appropriately and covered where required. Removal of waste materials from site shall be undertaken by an approved contractor for treatment/disposal.</p> <p>Hazardous waste material shall be stored separately from other inert waste materials and kept covered in an appropriate area/container(s) to ensure that the material does not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network materials. The hazardous waste materials shall be removed from site by an approved contractor for treatment at a licenced facility - as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works.</p> <p>Particular care shall be taken in the removal of stockpiles of material such as gravel and chippings. (Such stockpiles are frequently sources of non-native invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed). Disposal of contaminated material may require transport to an approved, licensed facility.</p>
<b>G2</b>	<p>All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be removed in such a manner as to ensure that none of the material is contaminated and/or released inadvertently to watercourses and other sensitive ecological habitats.</p>
<b>G3</b>	<p>Prior to removal, all vegetation shall be checked by the Ecological Clerk of Works to ensure that it is free of non-native invasive species, such as Japanese knotweed. Should any such species be encountered, the area shall be treated as directed by expert advice on the management of invasive species.</p>
<b>G4</b>	<p>Works involving the removal or clearing of vegetation that would have any impacts on nesting birds shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (i.e. outside the period 1st March to 31st August).</p> <p>In addition, the possible presence of roosting bats shall be considered prior to the undertaking any works that may disturb the roosts. Any further safeguards shall be included and provided for subject to the supervision of the Ecological Clerk of Works</p>
<b>G5</b>	<p>Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be stored on-site in a secure, dry and contained area and isolated from drainage connections to any existing surface water drainage network</p>

No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
<b>G6</b>	Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be used in a manner that ensures that contamination of other materials does not occur and that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network
<b>G7</b>	Where possible, machinery shall only operate from existing parking or built surfaces, and shall not enter any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G8</b>	All resurfacing works shall be undertaken within the existing or formerly paved areas
<b>G9</b>	All resurfacing and other minor construction or demolition works (including removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables) should be undertaken in a manner that ensures that no materials can inadvertently enter any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat, and in a manner that ensures there are no impacts on fauna such as birds and bats – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G10</b>	Prior to use, resurfacing materials, including hardcore and sub-surface fill material will be stored in a manner that ensures that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network, or any sensitive ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G11</b>	All timber to be used in works shall be sustainably sourced
<b>G12</b>	<p>Works to define boundary edges shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat on the natural environment – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works and shall consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Proposed low earth bunds shall be placed within the existing parking or built surface areas.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All material used, including rock, soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting</li> </ul>
<b>G13</b>	Removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat.
<b>G14</b>	Works to provide a natural surface to bare areas shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on the natural environment. All material used, including soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting.
<b>G15</b>	Where possible, site markers shall be placed within existing hard standing areas and installed in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>G17</b>	An Ecological Clerk of Works shall be retained to advise on and monitor works associated with construction, demolition, resurfacing and/or drainage

### 1.3 Advisory Measures

Advisory Measures, in addition to the requirements to comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project are detailed in Table 1.3 below.

**Table 1.3 Advisory Measures**

No.	Description
<p><b>1. Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network</b></p>	<p>Contribute as appropriate towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Ramsar Sites, Salmonid Waters and Wicklow National Park.</p> <p>The protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, will be supported in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)<sup>1</sup>, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)<sup>2</sup>, the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)<sup>3</sup>, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).</li> <li>• National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976<sup>4</sup>, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008<sup>5</sup> and the Flora Protection Order 1999.</li> <li>• National policy guidelines, including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.</li> <li>• Catchment and water resource management Plans.</li> <li>• Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: and Ireland’s National Biodiversity Plan;</li> <li>• Ireland’s Environment 2012 (EPA, 2012), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report’s goals and challenges.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

<sup>2</sup> Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur)

<sup>3</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats

<sup>4</sup> Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

<sup>5</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats

No.	Description
<p><b>2. Appropriate Assessment</b></p>	<p>All projects will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and an Appropriate Assessment report to the relevant level of detail, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or</li> <li>2. The project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or</li> <li>3. The project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of 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 this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.</li> </ol> <p>The methodology followed by the Appropriate Assessment should follow, as relevant and appropriate, that outlined in DEHLG (2009) <i>Appropriate Assessment of Plans &amp; Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities</i>.</p>

No.	Description
<b>3. AA and Exemptions</b>	<p>Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42). A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.</p> <p>If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought<sup>6</sup>. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.</p>
<b>4. Environmental Control Measures</b>	<p>A number of Environmental Control Measures have been integrated into the design of each site. The Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. These measures should be taken into account by any Appropriate Assessments and are part of the design and are not mitigation.</p>
<b>5. Protection of Natura 2000 Sites</b>	<p>No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects<sup>7</sup>).</p>
<b>6. Coastal Focus</b>	<p>Works undertaken in coastal areas will be in accordance with best practice and support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats. Protect, enhance and conserve the beaches from inappropriate development. Facilitate and Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.</p>
<b>7. Biodiversity and Ecological Networks</b>	<p>Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p>

<sup>6</sup> As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.

<sup>7</sup> Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- a) no alternative solution available,
- b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and
- c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

No.	Description
<b>8. Waters</b>	Protect the water resources, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU <i>Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC)</i> , the <i>European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended)</i> , the <i>North Western International</i> , the <i>Western</i> , the <i>Shannon International</i> and the <i>South Western River Basin Management Plans 2009-2015</i> (or any such plans that may supersede same) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same).
<b>9. Non-Designated Sites</b>	Recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve biological diversity.
<b>10. Non-native invasive species</b>	Support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.
<b>11. Environmental Assessment</b>	Ensure, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) - and relevant transposing Regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>12. Cumulative/In-combination effects</b>	Any new development that could interact with projects for remedial works would have to comply with the provisions contained in relevant land use and other sectorial plans e.g. Development Plans, River Basin Management Plans. These provisions have been subject to and informed by Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment which have considered in-combination effects.  With respect to events (such as a vehicle collision) that are not reasonably foreseeable, contingency plans and procedures are already in place at various levels e.g. emergency plans, local response arrangements.  As part of the wider Wild Atlantic Way project, environmental monitoring is being coordinated at a number of levels – this includes monitoring related to habitats.
<b>13. Works to be carried out at candidate Discovery Points and potential impacts</b>	The methodology for the incorporation of environmental control measures will require consideration at project level for each site to account for individual complexities with regards to the sensitivities and layout of the individual site.



**WILD ATLANTIC WAY**

*SLÍ FHIÁIN AN ATLANTAIGH*

## Appendix 6

### 'Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others'

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA which has been undertaken for the Operational Programme, the findings of which have been informed by the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and are presented in an SEA Environmental Report which accompanies Operational Programme, has resulted in the integration of this Appendix into the Operational Programme in order to facilitate environmental protection and sustainable development at lower levels of decision making.

This appendix includes various provisions with which local authorities and others will demonstrate compliance at lower levels of decision making in order to get funding. These decision making processes will include project level Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and AA as appropriate.

Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42).

A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.

If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought<sup>1</sup>. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.

Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.

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<sup>1</sup> As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.



Topic <sup>2</sup>	Requirement <sup>3</sup>
<b>All</b>	<p><b>Regulatory framework for environmental protection and management</b></p> <p>Local authorities and others shall cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. Local authorities and others will demonstrate, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.</p>
<b>All</b>	<p><b>Information to be considered by local authorities and others at lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment</b></p> <p>Lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment by local authorities and others, as relevant, should consider the sensitivities identified in Section 4 of the SEA Environmental Report, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas;</li> <li>• Features of the landscape that provide linkages/connectivity to designated sites (e.g. watercourses, areas of semi-natural habitat such as linear woodlands etc)</li> <li>• Salmonid Waters;</li> <li>• Shellfish Waters;</li> <li>• Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments;</li> <li>• Nature Reserves;</li> <li>• Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas;</li> <li>• Areas likely to contain a habitat listed in annex 1 of the Habitats Directive;</li> <li>• Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and Zones of Archaeological Potential;</li> <li>• Entries to the Record of Protected Structures;</li> <li>• Un-designated sites of importance to wintering or breeding bird species of conservation concern;</li> <li>• Architectural Conservation Areas; and</li> <li>• Relevant landscape designations.</li> </ul>
<b>All</b>	<p><b>Construction and Environmental Management Plan</b></p> <p>Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) shall be prepared in advance of the construction of larger projects and implemented throughout. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures indicated in this Appendix to the Operational Programme and any lower tier Environmental Impact Statement or Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse,</li> <li>b. location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities,</li> <li>c. details of site security fencing and hoardings,</li> <li>d. details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction,</li> <li>e. details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage,</li> <li>f. measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network,</li> <li>g. measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris,</li> <li>h. alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during the course of site development works,</li> <li>i. details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels,</li> <li>j. containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater,</li> <li>k. disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil,</li> <li>l. a water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains,</li> <li>m. details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan.</li> <li>n. if peat is encountered - a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan.</li> <li>o. measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed).</li> <li>p. appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases.</li> </ol>
<b>All</b>	<p><b>Maintenance Plan</b></p> <p>Lower tier assessments should examine the need for Maintenance Plans informed by environmental considerations to be prepared and implemented.</p>
<b>Biodiversity and flora and fauna</b>	<p><b>Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network</b></p> <p>Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); UNESCO World Heritage and UNESCO Biosphere sites; Ramsar Sites; Salmonid Waters; Shellfish Waters; Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves); Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas; Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs); Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979) ; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).</p>

<sup>2</sup> The SEA Directive identifies a number of environmental topics which must be considered in the assessments being undertaken for plans and programmes. These topics are listed in this column and comprise biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape.

<sup>3</sup> The provisions listed under this column are the requirements which the local authorities and others will have to comply with in order to get funding.

	<p>Local authorities and others shall demonstrate compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)<sup>4</sup>, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)<sup>5</sup>, the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)<sup>6</sup>, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).</li> <li>• National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976<sup>7</sup>, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008<sup>8</sup> and the Flora Protection Order 1999.</li> <li>• National policy guidelines (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same), including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.</li> <li>• Catchment and water resource management Plans, including River Basin District Management Plans 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same).</li> <li>• Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland's 2<sup>nd</sup> National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same).</li> <li>• Ireland's Environment 2014 (EPA, 2014, including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Appropriate Assessment</b></p> <p>All projects and plans arising from this programme will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or</li> <li>2. The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or</li> <li>3. The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of 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 this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Protection of Natura 2000 Sites</b></p> <p>No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this programme (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects<sup>9</sup>).</p>
	<p><b>NPWS &amp; Integrated Management Plans</b></p> <p>Regarding, integrated management plans, Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for Special Area of Conservation involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done.</p> <p>Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for all Natura sites (or parts thereof), Fáilte Ireland and local authorities shall engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Operational Programme and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard to local communities.</p>

<sup>4</sup> Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

<sup>5</sup> Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur).

<sup>6</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats.

<sup>7</sup> Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

<sup>8</sup> Including protected species and natural habitats.

<sup>9</sup> Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

a) no alternative solution available,

b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and

c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

	<p><b>Coastal Zone Management</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and local authorities and others shall, as appropriate: support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats; and facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity and Ecological Networks</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate, as appropriate, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p><b>Protection of Riparian Zone and Waterbodies and Watercourses</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that waterbodies and watercourses are protected from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine, wetland and coastal areas, as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Non-Designated Sites</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate the appropriate protection of non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity.</p> <p><b>Non-native invasive species</b> Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.</p>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<p><b>Human Health</b> Local authorities and others shall assess proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, local authorities and others shall ensure the introduction of mitigation measures in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.</p>
<b>Soil</b>	<p><b>Soil Protection and Contamination</b> Local authorities and others shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p> <p><b>Areas of geological interest</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate protection and maintenance of the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest.</p>
<b>Water</b>	<p><b>Water Framework Directive and associated legislation</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute towards, as appropriate, the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009), the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same). Local authorities and others shall support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development.</p> <p><b>River Basin Management Plan</b> Local authorities and others shall support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the various River Basin Management Plans 2009 – 2015, and associated Programmes of Measures, or any such plans that may supersede same during the lifetime of the Operational Programme, as well as relevant recommendations contained in the Water Quality in Ireland 2007 – 2009 (EPA, 2011, and any updated/superseding document). Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that proposals for development would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands and coastal waters. Also local authorities and others shall have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 which provides guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p><b>Bathing Water</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute towards the achievement of the requirements of the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008) and EU Mandatory Values, as a minimum, and EU Guide Values, where possible.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk Management Guidelines</b> Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010), the DEHLG/OPW publication <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines</i> (2009) (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same) and relevant outputs of the Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS).</p> <p><b>Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)</b> Local authorities and others shall ensure that new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as appropriate.</p>
<b>Air and Climatic</b>	<p><b>Infrastructure for Walking, Cycling and Water-based activities</b> Local Authorities and others shall work with Fáilte Ireland, the National Trails Office, Coillte, the</p>

<b>Factors</b>	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking, cycling and water-based activities along the Wild Atlantic Way.
<b>Material Assets</b>	<p><b>Construction Waste</b> Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that all waste arising during construction phase will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts and regulations and Regional Waste Management Plans. Construction Waste Management Plans will be implemented by local authorities and others to minimise waste and ensure correct handling and disposal of construction waste streams in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, July 2006.</p>
	<p><b>Waste Creation</b> Local authorities and others shall support the minimisation of waste creation and promote a practice of reduce, reuse and recycle where possible.</p>
	<p><b>Waste Disposal</b> Local authorities and others shall safeguard the environment by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.</p>
	<p><b>Irish Water</b> Local authorities and others shall co-operate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its new role as the lead authority for water services.</p>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<p><b>Archaeological Heritage</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and sympathetic enhancement of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended).</p>
	<p><b>Protection of Archaeological Sites</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, in the ownership/guardianship of the State, or that are subject of Preservation Orders or have been registered in the Register of Historic Monuments. Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.</p>
	<p><b>Consultation</b> Local authorities and others shall consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.</p>
	<p><b>Underwater Archaeological Sites</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of underwater archaeological sites in riverine, intertidal and sub-tidal locations.</p>
	<p><b>Architectural Heritage</b> Local authorities and others shall help to ensure the appropriate protection of architectural heritage by complying, as appropriate, with the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any updated/superseding document).</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p><b>Landscape Designations</b> Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of county and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments. Proposals for development that have the potential to significantly adversely impact upon these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape character and visual impacts of the proposed development - demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation. Such assessments should be prepared having regard to the relevant aspects of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013 Landscape Institute).</p>
	<p><b>Coastal Areas and Seascapes</b> Local authorities and others shall protect the character and visual potential of the coast and conserve the character and quality of seascapes.</p>