

# NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

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IN SUPPORT OF THE  
**APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT**

FOR THE  
**DRAFT DINGLE PENINSULA  
VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**for:**

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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 Dingle Peninsula 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 AA Screening 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 Dingle Peninsula Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) is to motivate international tourists to visit and stay in the local communities across the peninsula, increase the economic dividend generated by international visitors to the area while extending the season. The challenge for all destinations is to deliver enough memorable moments that will inspire visitors to share their experience and also encourage them to return. The Plan is designed to stimulate increased dispersion of visitors across Dingle Peninsula throughout the year. The enhancement of existing experiences and the development of new visitor experiences, based on the recommended development themes, are designed to address the issues of seasonality, regionality while realising increased socio-economic benefits.

The **overarching objective** of the Plan is to support the ongoing tourism development of the Dingle Peninsula, evolving from visitor attraction to a year-round tourism destination. The purpose of the Plan is to present the stories and destination themes of the Dingle Peninsula and organise them into a development framework for adoption as a commercial action plan for the next three to five years. This framework will provide the context for tourism operators and stakeholders to work in partnership, create new and improve existing visitor experiences, and communicate cohesive and unified stories to the visitor.

The **key focus areas of the Plan** are to:

- Deliver a Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) as a 3-5 year commercial development plan for an area;
- Ensure the local experiences are brought to life through the development of the optimal mix of hero and ancillary products that get people into an area and keep them there;
- Unlock the economic growth potential of an area by progressing a range of key initiatives that will motivate and facilitate potential tourists to visit and stay in the local area;
- Develop a sustainable basis for commercial development centred on creating strong signature, supporting and ancillary experiences that are commoditised through the creation of saleable experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike; and
- Create the conditions to encourage international visitors to immerse themselves actively in the locale, interact with people; engage the senses by getting active in nature; attend festivals; learn the history and stories of the places; and enjoying the food and entertainment on offer. The focus is to deliver memorable moments that inspire tourists to not only share their experience with others but also makes them want to return.

Based on future engagement and collaboration, the **key objectives** of the Plan as a three to five year commercial plan are:

- to develop compelling local experiences that are aligned to two key international marketing themes: Inspired Culture and Timeless Wellbeing
- to develop compelling experiences that: motivate visitors to stay longer and spend more; extend the length of the season; align to the Wild Atlantic Way brand and target markets; sustain and increase job creation in the local area; protect the special environmental, cultural and linguistic character of the region; and become a catalyst for a fresh approach to sustainable destination development;
- develop the Dingle Peninsula as a leading international destination as opposed to a one day visitor attraction;
- leverage the uniqueness of the natural and cultural heritage assets and devise innovative experiences for visitors to immerse themselves in Irish language and culture;
- deliver one of the most renowned walking routes in the world; and
- build on global macro tourism trends to become an internationally renowned natural wellbeing destination delivered through the natural and cultural assets of the area.

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 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).

The Dingle Peninsula is under the **Wild Atlantic Way key proposition**, which is to "Experience one of the wildest, most enhancing and culturally rich coastal touring routes in the world. Wherever you travel along the Wild Atlantic Way you'll find magic, adventure, history and beauty in abundance".

The VEDP identifies **two overarching themes** for the Wild Atlantic Way key proposition ("Inspired Culture" and "Timeless Wellbeing") under both of which four **Destination Experience Themes** are identified, with which visitors can connect with that showcase the key proposition, and associated **Hero Products** through which the Destination Themes can be accessed. **Supporting Experiences** (what each business does to bring the signature experience to life) and **Ancillary Experiences** (how the wider tourism offering supports the regional themes) are also identified.

**Destination Experience Themes** and associated **Hero Products** under the **overarching theme** of "Inspired Culture" are as follows:

**Theme: The Gaeltacht Life**

- Basket Islands
- Basket Island Visitor centre
- Irish Language Schools and vibrant Irish language in the community
- An Tinteán Ceoil
- Oidhreacht Corca Dhuibhne

**Theme: Myths to Local Legends**

- Mount Brandon
- Conor Pass
- Annascaul Lake
- Gallarus Oratory

**Theme: Learning on the Edge**

- Dingle Cookery School
- Louis Mulcahy Pottery Workshops
- Watersports on the North Shore
- Irish language learning at Oidhreacht Corca Dhuibhne

**Theme: Centuries of Creative Spirit**

- Louis Mulcahy Pottery
- Basket Islands & Basket Island Centre
- Brian De Staic, Jeweller

**Destination Experience Themes** and associated **Hero Products** under the **overarching theme** of "Timeless Wellbeing" are as follows:

**Theme: Seasons of Vitality**

- Dingle Way
- Sleah Head Drive
- Conor Pass
- Dingle Sea Safari
- Dingle Peninsula Blueways
- Dingle Marina

**Theme: A Social Energy**

- Irish Cultural Sessions in traditional pubs around Dingle Peninsula
- An Tinteán Ceoil, Cloghane

**Theme: Wellbeing of Adventure**

- Dingle Way
- Climb Mount Brandon
- Surf the Wild Atlantic Way at Inch Beach
- Watersports in Castlegregory and North Shore
- Scuba Diving in the Maharees
- SUP Tours Dingle

**Theme: Peninsula of Contrasts**

- The Dingle Way
- Basket Islands
- Sleah Head Drive
- Mount Brandon
- Sea Safari & Harbour Cruises
- Conor Pass
- Eco Marine Tours

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

Central to the VEDP is the **Work Plan** that outlines the projects identified to deliver the Dingle Peninsula VEDP over the next three to five years. The work streams are categorised under four sections (A. Catalyst Projects, B. Experience Development Projects based on VEDP Themes, C. Destination Enabling Projects and D. Local Industry Focused projects) to provide a basis for all stakeholders to engage with the VEDP.

The Work Plan identifies the project lead organisations and partners as well as associated timeframes for delivery.

The following **Catalyst Projects** are designed to create long-term destination impacts creating sustainable conditions for experience development while building on the inherent strengths of the destination. The catalyst projects are included based on their strategic capacity to create a globally leading visitor proposition, facilitate tourism dispersion across the Dingle Peninsula and sustain the rich cultural heritage of the area:

- Assess the feasibility of enhancing the Dingle Way to become an internationally renowned walking destination and provide the necklace to integrate all themes.
- Assess the feasibility of developing a new Traffic Management Plan to investigate options to address current traffic movement throughout the Dingle Peninsula.
- Assess the feasibility of Dingle Hospital delivering a gateway visitor experience for the Dingle Peninsula and provide visitor interpretation for the stories of the Peninsula while contributing to the sustainable tourism development of the destination.
- Assess the development of the Brandon Basecamp as a catalyst for developing the potential of the area as a focal point for walking and leisure activities.
- Assess the feasibility of promoting and expanding the eight identified Blueway sites across the Dingle Peninsula.
- Support the development of a new focus on the Irish language and integration with visitor experiences.
- Assess the potential to extend the opening period of the Blasket Islands Visitor Centre while assessing the delivery of improved mooring facilities on the Great Blasket Island.
- Assess the feasibility of improved levels of visitor interpretation focused on the Maherees and the incorporation of the Seven Hogs stories.
- Assess the feasibility of enhancing the archaeology story of the Dingle Peninsula to enhance visitor experience and act as an information and interpretation base for surrounding key sites.
- Assess the feasibility of establishing an Arts & Cultural Centre that will enhance the visual and performance arts level of provision while enhancing visitor evening economy options.

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 RSEs for the Southern Region set out objectives relating to tourism development that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. When adopted, 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.

## 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 in 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:

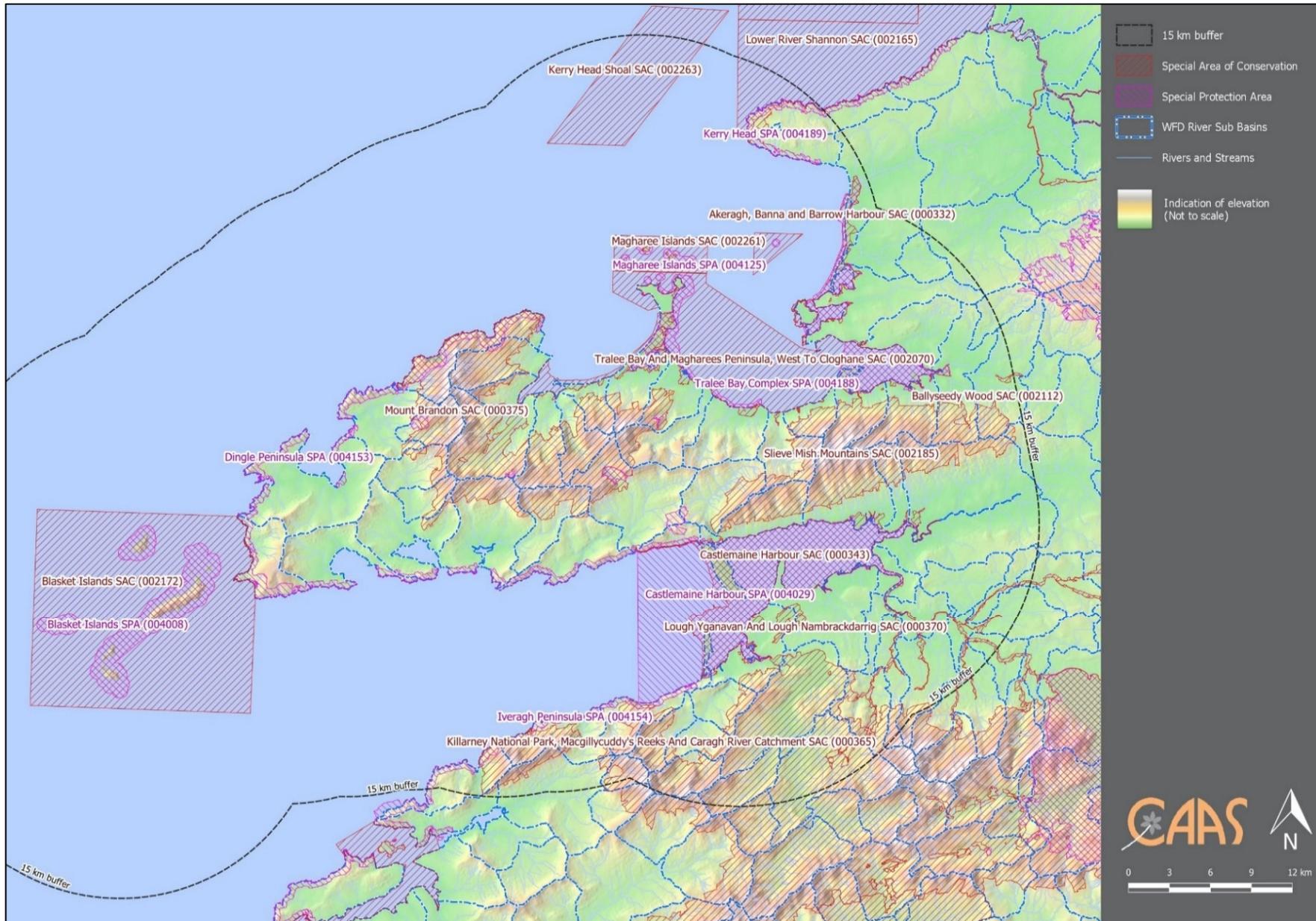
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Blasket Islands SPA [004008]. Generic Version 6.0.
- (2014) Conservation Objectives: Blasket Islands SAC [002172]. Version 1.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Magharee Islands SPA [004125]. Generic Version 6.0.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Dingle Peninsula SPA [004153]. Generic Version 6.0.
- (2014) Conservation Objectives: Tralee Bay Complex SPA [004188]. Version 1.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Slieve Mish Mountains SAC [002185]. Generic Version 6.0.
- (2013) Conservation Objectives: Magharee Islands SAC [002261]. Version 1.
- (2016) Conservation Objectives: Mount Brandon SAC [000375]. Version 1.
- (2014) Conservation Objectives: Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC [002070]. Version 1.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Lough Yganavan and Lough Nambrackdarrig SAC [000370]. Generic Version 6.0.
- (2017) Conservation Objectives: Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC [000332]. Version 1
- (2017) Conservation Objectives: Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy’s Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC 000365. Version 1.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Iveragh Peninsula SPA [004154]. Generic Version 6.0.

<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: Kerry Head Shoal SAC [002263]. Version 1.
- (2012) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Shannon SAC [002165]. Version 1.0.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Kerry Head SPA [004189]. Generic Version 6.0.
- (2018) Conservation objectives for Ballyseedy Wood SAC [002112]. Generic Version 6.0.

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 VEDP boundary<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded March 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 Dingle Peninsula, evolving from visitor attraction to a year-round tourism destination. 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 Dingle Peninsula Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) is to motivate international tourists to visit and stay in the local communities across the peninsula, increase the economic dividend generated by international visitors to the area while extending the season. The challenge for all destinations is to deliver enough memorable moments that will inspire visitors to share their experience and also encourage them to return. The Plan is designed to stimulate increased dispersion of visitors across Dingle Peninsula throughout the year. The enhancement of existing experiences and the development of new visitor experiences, based on the recommended development themes, are designed to address the issues of seasonality, regionality while realising increased socio-economic benefits.

The VEDP identifies **two overarching themes** for the Wild Atlantic Way key proposition (“Inspired Culture” and “Timeless Wellbeing”) under both of which four **Destination Experience Themes** are identified, with which visitors can connect with that showcase the key proposition, and associated **Hero Products** through which the Destination Themes can be accessed. **Supporting Experiences** (what each business does to bring the signature experience to life) and **Ancillary Experiences** (how the wider tourism offering supports the regional themes) are also identified.

VEDP experiences and products, increased visitor numbers, an increased dwell time and a broader seasonal spread each have the potential to encourage visitors to unmanaged or mismanaged European Sites that may be vulnerable to increased recreational activity and amenity use has the potential to encouraged visitors to these sites and introduce effects. The nature and scale of these effects vary depending on the nature of the tourist enterprise and the location of their operation.

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

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

### 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.

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
004008	Blasket Islands SPA	Within	Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Manx Shearwater ( <i>Puffinus puffinus</i> ) [A013] Storm Petrel ( <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> ) [A014] Shag ( <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> ) [A018] Lesser Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> ) [A183] Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194] Razorbill ( <i>Alca torda</i> ) [A200] Puffin ( <i>Fratercula arctica</i> ) [A204] Chough ( <i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346]	The SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
002172	Blasket Islands SAC	Within	Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330] <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]	The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of soil, interactions with marine trophic structures and the trampling/destruction of vegetation. Increased levels of tourism could increase pressures such as pollution through the mismanagement of waste water, inappropriate development and /or the mismanagement of visitors at a site. Sources for effects from visitor movements that could impact upon the QIs include: <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>	Yes	Yes
004029	Castlemaine Harbour SPA	Within	Red-throated Diver ( <i>Gavia stellata</i> ) [A001] Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [A050] Mallard ( <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> ) [A053] Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [A054] Scaup ( <i>Aythya marila</i> ) [A062] Common Scoter ( <i>Melanitta nigra</i> ) [A065] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> ) [A144] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Greenshank ( <i>Tringa nebularia</i> ) [A164] Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) [A169] Chough ( <i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
000343	Castlemaine Harbour SAC	Within	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]	The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate, interactions with marine trophic structures, the trampling/destruction of vegetation and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Increased levels of tourism could increase pressures such as	Yes	Yes

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>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]                      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]                      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]                      Dunes with <i>Salix repens ssp. argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]                      Humid dune slacks [2190]                      Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Inion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]  <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]  <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]  <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]  <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]  <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p>	<p>pollution through the mismanagement of waste water, inappropriate development and /or the mismanagement of visitors at a site Sources for effects from visitor movements that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>		
004125	Maghree Islands SPA	Within	<p>Storm Petrel (<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>) [A014]                      Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]                      Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045]                      Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]                      Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]                      Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]                      Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195]</p>	<p>The SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
004153	Dingle Peninsula SPA	Within	<p>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]                      Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]                      Chough (<i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]</p>	<p>The SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects identified in the monitoring data that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
004188	Tralee Bay Complex SPA	Within	<p>Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038]                      Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]                      Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]                      Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050]                      Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]                      Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053]                      Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]                      Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062]                      Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]                      Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</p>	<p>The SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects identified in the monitoring data that could impact upon the sensitive receptors of the SPA include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes

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
			Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> ) [A142] 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] Common Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> ) [A182] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
002185	Slieve Mish Mountains SAC	Within	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] 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] <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]	The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate, the trampling/destruction of vegetation and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include: <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>	Yes	Yes
002261	Magharee Islands SAC	Within	Reefs [1170]	The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects from vessels on the sea, interactions with marine trophic structures, and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Increased levels of tourism could increase pressures such as pollution through the mismanagement of waste water, inappropriate development and /or the mismanagement of visitors at a site. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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; and</li> <li>• Fishing activities.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
000375	Mount Brandon SAC	Within	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]	The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate and the trampling/destruction of vegetation. Increased levels of tourism could increase pressures such as pollution through the mismanagement of waste water, inappropriate development and /or the mismanagement of visitors at a site Sources for effects from visitor movements that could impact upon the QIs include: <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> </ul>	Yes	Yes

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>Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</p> <p>Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladan</i>) [8110]</p> <p>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]</p> <p>Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</p> <p><i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</p> <p><i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing activities;</li> <li>Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul>		
002070	Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC	Within	<p>Estuaries [1130]</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Coastal lagoons [1150]</p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]</p> <p>Reefs [1170]</p> <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</p> <p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritima</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</p> <p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>Dunes with <i>Salix repens ssp. argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]</p> <p>Humid dune slacks [2190]</p> <p>Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]</p> <p>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> <p><i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p> <p><i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p>	<p>The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate, interactions with marine trophic structures, the trampling/destruction of vegetation and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Increased levels of tourism could increase pressures such as pollution through the mismanagement of waste water, inappropriate development and /or the mismanagement of visitors at a site Sources for effects from visitor movements that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>	Yes	Yes
000370	Lough Yganavan and Lough Nambrackdarrig SAC	2.79	<p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</p> <p><i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> (Kerry Slug) [1024]</p>	<p>The QIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as direct disturbance, trampling and/or destruction of vegetation. The distances between Dingle Peninsula and the European Site mean that there are no pathways for effects and therefore, no further consideration is required.</p>	No	No
000332	Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC	4.16	<p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p>	<p>The QIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as direct disturbance, trampling and/or destruction of vegetation. The distances between Dingle Peninsula and the</p>	No	No

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>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]                      Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritim</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]                      European dry heaths [4030]</p>	European Site mean that there are no pathways for effects and, therefore, no further consideration is required.		
000365	Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC	4.75	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]                      Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]                      Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]                      Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]                      European dry heaths [4030]                      Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]  <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]                      Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]                      Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]                      Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]                      Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]                      Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]                      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]  <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles [91J0] <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> (Kerry Slug) [1024] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]  <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065]  <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]  <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]  <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]  <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]  <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]  <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421] <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833]  <i>Alosa fallax killarneyensis</i> (Killarney Shad) [5046]</p>	The QIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as direct disturbance, trampling and/or destruction of vegetation. The site is also hydrologically sensitive however there are no surface water pathways between the Dingle Peninsula and the SAC. Given the distances between Dingle Peninsula and the European Site, there are no pathways for effects and, therefore, no further consideration is required.	No	No

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
004154	Iveragh Peninsula SPA	6.68	Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Peregrine ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) [A103] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Guillemot ( <i>Uria aalge</i> ) [A199] Chough ( <i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346]	The SCIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as direct disturbance and/or noise pollution. Given the distances between Dingle Peninsula and the European Site, there are no pathways for effects and, therefore, no further consideration is required.	No	No
002263	Kerry Head Shoal SAC	7.08	Reef [1170]	The QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects from vessels on the sea, interactions with marine trophic structures, and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Increased levels of tourism could increase pressures such as pollution through the mismanagement of waste water, inappropriate development and /or the mismanagement of visitors at a site. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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; and</li> <li>• Fishing activities.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	9.66	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110] Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Coastal lagoons [1150] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] 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] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinia caerulea</i> ) [6410] 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] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	The QIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as direct disturbance, trampling and/or destruction of vegetation. The site is also hydrologically sensitive however there are no surface water pathways between the Dingle Peninsula and the SAC. Given the distances between Dingle Peninsula and the European Site there are no pathways for effects and, therefore, no further consideration is required.	No	No
004189	Kerry Head SPA	9.68	Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Chough ( <i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346]	The SCIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as direct disturbance and/or noise pollution. Given the distances between Dingle Peninsula and the European Site there are no pathways for effects identified and, therefore, no further consideration is required.	No	No
002112	Ballyseedy Wood SAC	13.72	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]	The QIs for the site are sensitive to local effects such as land use management and/or the spread of invasive species. Given the distances between Dingle Peninsula and the European Site there are no pathways for effects identified and, therefore, no further consideration is required.	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 Dingle Peninsula Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) is to motivate international tourists to visit and stay in the local communities across the peninsula, increase the economic dividend generated by international visitors to the area while extending the season. The challenge for all destinations is to deliver enough memorable moments that will inspire visitors to share their experience and also encourage them to return. The Plan is designed to stimulate increased dispersion of visitors across Dingle Peninsula throughout the year. The enhancement of existing experiences and the development of new visitor experiences, based on the recommended development themes, are designed to address the issues of seasonality, regionality while realising increased socio-economic benefits. The Plan's overarching objective is to support the ongoing tourism development of the Dingle Peninsula, evolving from visitor attraction to a year-round tourism destination. The purpose of the Plan is to present the stories and destination themes of the Dingle Peninsula and

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 RSE for the Southern Region set out objectives relating tourism development that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. When adopted, 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 12 (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  
Dingle 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 Dingle Visitor Experience Development Plan.

In making the determination that AA is required, the information on the potential effects on European Sites arising from the Dingle 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 Dingle 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:** 04.11.19

**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 12 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 12 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 12 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**

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

<sup>8</sup> Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

- 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**

All the European Sites within the Dingle VEDP area are coastal, except for the Slieve Mish Mountains and Mount Brandon SACs.

Visitor interactions and activities at Discovery Points 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 Dingle Peninsula 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.

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).

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

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

#### 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.

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.

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 Dingle Peninsula 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. 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.

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

<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>
004008	Blasket Islands SPA	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
004008	Blasket Islands SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of soil, interactions with marine trophic structures and the trampling/destruction of vegetation. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
004029	Castlemaine Harbour SPA	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</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>
000343	Castlemaine Harbour SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate, interactions with marine trophic structures, the trampling/destruction of vegetation and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
004125	Magharee Islands SPA	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
004153	Dingle Peninsula SPA	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
004188	Tralee Bay Complex SPA	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the SCIs for the SPA are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance and noise pollution issues. Sources for effects that could impact upon the SCIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Removal and throwing of large rocks; and</li> <li>• Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>

Site Code	Site Name <sup>13</sup>	Characterisation of Potential Effects <sup>14</sup>
002185	Slieve Mish Mountains SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate, the trampling/destruction of vegetation and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
002261	Magharee Islands SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects from vessels on the sea, interactions with marine trophic structures, and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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; and</li> <li>• Fishing activities.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
000375	Mount Brandon SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate and the trampling/destruction of vegetation. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>

Site Code	Site Name <sup>13</sup>	Characterisation of Potential Effects <sup>14</sup>
002070	Tralee Bay And Magharees Peninsula, West To Cloghane SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects such as direct disturbance, compaction of substrate, interactions with marine trophic structures, the trampling/destruction of vegetation and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</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>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</p>
002263	Kerry Head Shoal SAC	<p>As identified on screening Table 3.1, the QIs for the SAC are sensitive to potential effects from vessels on the sea, interactions with marine trophic structures, and potential interactions with water quality through dumping etc. Sources for effects that could impact upon the QIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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; and</li> <li>• Fishing activities.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the VEDP introduces potential sources for effects through additional infrastructural demands placed on tourist destinations within the VEDP area that are connected to the European site. The sources for effects include dust, increased noise pollution, lighting effects, potential destruction of vegetation etc. Effects will be mitigated through demonstration of compliance with the measures detailed under Section 5.</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:

- 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 Kerry County Development Plan, include 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) and the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions).

### Infrastructure Capacity

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) the potential impact on existing infrastructure as well as the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourism-related traffic volumes along any routes resulting from the relevant initiative 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.

## 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>16</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>16</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 Name	Site Code	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Site Description/Vulnerability
004008	Blasket Islands SPA	Within	Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Manx Shearwater ( <i>Puffinus puffinus</i> ) [A013] Storm Petrel ( <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> ) [A014] Shag ( <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> ) [A018] Lesser Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> ) [A183] Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194] Razorbill ( <i>Alca torda</i> ) [A200] Puffin ( <i>Fratercula arctica</i> ) [A204] Chough ( <i>Pyrhacorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346]	The Blasket Islands are situated at the western end of the Dingle Peninsula in Co. Kerry. The site comprises five of the islands in the group. Four of these, Inishtooskert, Inishnabro, Inishvickillane, Tearaght Island, are between 7 km and 12 km from the mainland, while the smallest island, Beginish, is within 2 km of the mainland. There were no site-specific threats identified outside the site boundary by the NPWS and the Conservation Objectives published for the site are generic. Therefore, the ecological resources which the special conservation interest species were considered in the assessment. These bird species are vulnerable to localised management and land use activities as well as being sensitive to disturbance effects such as noise.
002172	Blasket Islands SAC	Within	Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330] <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]	The Blasket Islands are situated at the end of the Dingle Peninsula in Co. Kerry. The site includes all of the islands in the group as well as a substantial area of the surrounding seas. The site is one of the two most important breeding sites in the country for <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> , with c. 600 animals in a recent survey. The site is of significance for the occurrence of <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> with relative high abundances recorded, and presents high quality habitat for this marine mammal. The Blasket Islands have at least 15 species of breeding seabird, with internationally important populations of <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> and <i>Puffinus puffinus</i> . The NPWS have identified threats to the site to include grazing, which has been identified within the site boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004029	Castlemaine Harbour SPA	Within	Red-throated Diver ( <i>Gavia stellata</i> ) [A001] Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [A050] Mallard ( <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> ) [A053] Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [A054] Scaup ( <i>Aythya marila</i> ) [A062] Common Scoter ( <i>Melanitta nigra</i> ) [A065] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> ) [A144] Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [A157] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Greenshank ( <i>Tringa nebularia</i> ) [A164] Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) [A169] Chough ( <i>Pyrhacorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Castlemaine Harbour SPA is a large coastal site occupying the innermost part of Dingle Bay. It extends from the lower tidal reaches of the River Maine and River Laune to west of the Inch and Rosbehy peninsulas. The site comprises the estuaries of the River Maine and the River Laune, both substantial rivers, and has extensive areas of intertidal sand and mud flats. Castlemaine Harbour SPA is one of the most important sites for wintering waterfowl in the south-west. It provides habitats for an excellent diversity of waterbirds, including divers and seaduck. The NPWS have identified threats within the site boundary to include; recreational activities, marine and freshwater aquaculture and invasive non-native species. Continuous urbanisation and dispersed urbanisation have been identified as threats beyond the boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000343	Castlemaine Harbour SAC	Within	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</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] Dunes with <i>Salix repens ssp. argentea</i> ( <i>Salicion arenariae</i> ) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Inion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) [91E0] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	This large site located on the south-east corner of the Dingle Peninsula consists of the whole inner section of Dingle Bay, i.e. Castlemaine Harbour, the spits of Inch and White Strand/Rosebehy and a little of the coastline to the west. Inch Spit holds a fine sand dune system and is one of the largest and best remaining dune systems in the Country. The NPWS have identified threats within the site boundary to include; recreational activities, marine and freshwater aquaculture, grazing, removal of beach materials, invasive non-native species. All of these threats have been identified within the site boundary. Threats beyond the boundary have been identified to include; dispersed habitation, grazing and urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.

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			<p><i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]  <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]  <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]  <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p>	
004125	Magharee Islands SPA	Within	<p>Storm Petrel (<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>) [A014]  Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]  Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045]  Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]  Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]  Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]  Little Tern (<i>Sterna albigifrons</i>) [A195]</p>	<p>The Magharee Islands or Seven Hogs lie about 2 km north of the Magharee Peninsula. The group includes seven main islands (Illaunimill and Illauntannig being the largest) plus a number of holms and skerries. The islands are exposed on their west coasts and more sheltered to the east, with moderately strong currents between them. The site is of international importance for breeding seabirds. The wintering population of <i>Branta leucopsis</i> is of national importance and is notable as it is the most southerly population in Ireland. The NPWS have identified threats within the site to include; nautical sports and grazing. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS beyond the boundary.</p>
004153	Dingle Peninsula SPA	Within	<p>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]  Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]  Chough (<i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]</p>	<p>The Dingle Peninsula SPA is a large site situated on the west coast of Co. Kerry. It encompasses the high coast and sea cliff sections of the peninsula from south of Brandon Point in the north, around to the end of the peninsula at Slea Head, and as far east as Inch in the south. The site includes the sea cliffs, the land adjacent to the cliff edge, an area of sand dunes near Murreagh and also several upland areas further inland of the coast about Ballybrack, Lough Doon, Anascaul Lough, Arraglen and Ballynane. The high-water mark forms the seaward boundary. The NPWS have identified threats within and beyond the site boundary to include; structures and buildings in the landscape, predation and competition. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p>
004188	Tralee Bay Complex SPA	Within	<p>Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038]  Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]  Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]  Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050]  Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]  Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053]  Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]  Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062]  Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]  Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]  Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]  Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]  Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142]  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]  Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]  Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>The Tralee Bay Complex SPA is located along the coast of north Co. Kerry between Ballyheige in the north, Tralee in the east and Stradbally in the west. The site includes the inner part of Tralee Bay, including Derrymore Island, the inlets of Barrow Harbour and Carrahane Strand, Akeragh Lough, Lough Gill, and much of the intertidal habitat from Scraggane Point at the northern end of the Magharees Peninsula around the coast to c. 2 km south of Ballyheige. This is an international important site supporting over 20,000 wintering waterbirds, including an international important population of <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>. The NPWS have identified threats within the site boundary to include; the removal of beach materials, walking horseriding and the use of non-motorised vehicles, nautical sports and grazing. All of these pressures have been identified within the boundary. Threats beyond the boundary include; grazing, fertilisation and urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p>
002185	Slieve Mish Mountains SAC	Within	<p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]  European dry heaths [4030]  Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]  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]  <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]</p>	<p>The Slieve Mish Mountain Range dominates and forms the backbone of the eastern reaches of the Dingle Peninsula from the outskirts of Tralee town in the east to the village of Annascaul in the west. This mountain range is composed of a ridge of predominantly Old Red Sandstone of the main series, which abuts the Dingle Beds' sandstones in the north west. The site contains a number of habitats which are listed in the EU Habitats Directive. Over-grazing is widespread, and has contributed to the degradation of much of the wet heath, oligotrophic lakes and blanket bog. However, extensive areas of dry heath of reasonable quality remain within the site, along with alpine/sub-alpine heath on the highest ridges. The cliff vegetation is of good quality and is unaffected by the grazing. The NPWS has identified threats beyond the boundary to include; restricting agricultural land holding, sand and gravel extraction, fertilisation, dispersed habitation and peat extraction. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p>
002261	Magharee Islands SAC	Within	<p>Reefs [1170]</p>	<p>This marine site lies about 2 km north of the Magharee Peninsula and is centred around the Magharee Islands, a group of seven main islands. The site includes two of the smaller islands, Illaunbarnagh and Mucklaghmore, which lie about 5 km to the north-east of the main group of islands. The islands are exposed on their west coasts and more sheltered on their east coasts with moderately strong currents between them. The islands are composed of Carboniferous limestone. A maritime grassy sward occurs on the islands. Site has important examples of infralittoral reef communities. These are varied, being exposed to wave action on the west coasts of the islands, and more sheltered on the east coasts with tide swept areas due to the currents between the islands. There are no site-specific threats identified by the NPWS for this site.</p>

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000375	Mount Brandon SAC	Within	<p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]                      Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]                      Soft water lakes with base rich influences [3130]                      Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]                      European dry heaths [4030]                      Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]                      Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and sub mountain 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]  <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]  <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]</p>	<p>This site ranges from sea-level to sea cliffs, which are among the highest in Ireland, up to Mount Brandon, which at 952 m is the highest peak outside of the Macgillycuddy Reeks. The predominant rocks are Devonian (Old Red Sandstone and Dingle Beds), with some pre-Devonian rocks also present. The highest ridges and cliffs support arctic-alpine communities. This site is of high ecological importance for the alpine and arctic-alpine heath and cliff communities it supports. The NPWS have identified pressure to the site to include; peat extraction, recreational activities, grazing, camping/caravans, roads and motorways and removal of hedges and copses or scrub. All of these threats have been identified within the boundary. Threats beyond the boundary have been identified as; mowing/cutting of grassland, restructuring agricultural land holding and forestry. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p>
002070	Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC	Within	<p>Estuaries [1130]                      Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]                      Coastal lagoons [1150]                      Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]                      Reefs [1170]                      Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]                      Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</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]                      Dunes with <i>Salix repens ssp. argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]                      Humid dune slacks [2190]                      Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]                      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]  <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]  <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p>	<p>The site is very important in terms of (a) the variety of sublittoral sediment communities in which a number of rare species occur and good examples of littoral and sublittoral reef communities; (b) the extensive intertidal habitats, which support internationally important numbers of wintering waders and wildfowl, including several which are listed in Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, and (c) the fringing coastal habitats, which provide excellent examples of a number of Annexed habitats (most notably the fixed dunes &amp; dune slacks at Maherabeg, which are among the most species-rich examples of these habitats in Ireland, and the lagoon known as Lough Gill, which is important geomorphologically). The NPWS have identified pressures to the site to include; sand and gravel extraction, removal of hedges and copses or scrub, recreational activities, disposal of household/ recreational facility waste, hunting, fishing and fertilisation. All of these pressures have been identified within the boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p>
000370	Lough Yganavan and Lough Nambrackdarrig SAC	2.79	<p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]                      Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]  <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> (Kerry Slug) [1024]</p>	<p>Site comprises Lough Yganavan and two considerably smaller loughs, L. Nambrackdarrig and an unnamed lough. They lie 1-2 km from the coastline. Yganavan is a shallow lake (Max. depth 0.8m) and is noted for its very brown soft water. The lakes have sandy beds and mostly stony shores - the stones provide cover for <i>Bufo calamita</i> and <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i>. A residual sanddune system, with a heath type character, occurs along the south-east to northeast shore of Yganavan. A feature of this habitat is that it floods periodically, giving rise to unusual invertebrate and plant communities. The sandy-heath grades into blanket bog, mostly cutaway. The two small loughs are surrounded by cutaway bog. Part of the site is a Nature Reserve. The Site has good and somewhat unusual examples of two annexed habitats - a residual inland fixed dune system and a shallow oligotrophic lake system. <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> is common within the site. The very localised and Red Data Book species <i>Bufo calamita</i> breed, Lough Nambrackdarrig being its most inland station in Ireland. The NPWS Have identified pressures to the site to include; grazing and invasive non-native species. These pressures have been identified within the site boundary. Threats beyond the site boundary have been identified as modification of cultivation practices, hand cutting of peat and dispersed habitation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.</p>
000332	Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC	4.16	<p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]                      Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]                      Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</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]</p>	<p>The site covers a 10 km stretch of coast running southwards from Ballyheigue to Fenit, Co. Kerry. A good diversity of coastal habitats occurs, including rocky shore, shingle and sandy beaches, sand dunes, salt marshes, intertidal sand and mud flats, dry heath and dry grassland, wet grassland and reed beds. Akeragh Lough, formerly a brackish lagoon, has silted up since the 1970s and is now mostly wet grassland and swamp vegetation. The underlying geology is limestone and as a result the sandy soil is calcareous in nature and has a high shell fragment content. Recreation and grazing (cattle and rabbits) are the primary land uses. The site is of importance mainly for the diversity of sand dune and salt marsh habitats. Of particular note are the fixed dunes which are substantial in area and of good quality in the southern part of site. There is an interesting transition through a series of dune communities, including humid dune slacks, to salt marsh</p>

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			Humid dune slacks [2190] European dry heaths [4030]	communities at Carrahan Strand. The NPWS have identified threats to the site to include; removal of beach materials, recreational activities, and grazing. All of these pressures have been identified within the site boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000365	Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC	4.75	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoetes-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) [6410] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] 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] Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles [91J0] <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> (Kerry Slug) [1024] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Euphydrys aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421] <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833] <i>Alosa fallax killarneyensis</i> (Killarney Shad) [5046]	This is the largest terrestrial site in Ireland and encompasses the mountains and lakes of the Iveragh Peninsula and the Paps range. It is the most mountainous region of Ireland, and includes the highest peak Carrauntoohil at 1039 m. The underlying rock is almost entirely Old Red Sandstone, although carboniferous limestone occurs on the east side of Lough Leane. Glacial processes have shaped the sandstone into dramatic ridges and valleys, including the well wooded Killarney valley. A wide range of semi-natural habitats are present, along with some improved land and forestry in the Caragh River catchment. Generally, the proximity of the site to the Atlantic in the south-west ensures a strong oceanic influence. The NPWS have identified threats to the site to include; recreational activities, dispersed habitation, grazing, hunting, fishing, mowing/cutting of grassland, peat extraction, fertilisation and invasive non-native species. All of these threats have been identified within and beyond the site boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004154	Iveragh Peninsula SPA	6.68	Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Peregrine ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) [A103] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Guillemot ( <i>Uria aalge</i> ) [A199] Chough ( <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346]	The Iveragh Peninsula SPA is a large site situated on the west coast of Co. Kerry. The site encompasses the high coast and sea cliff sections of the peninsula from just west of Rosbehy in the north, around to the end of the peninsula at Valencia Island and Bolus Head, and as far east as Lamb's Head in the south. The site includes the sea cliffs, the land adjacent to the cliff edge and also areas of sand dunes at Derrynane and Beginish. The high-water mark forms the seaward boundary except at Doulus Head/Killelan Mountain where the adjacent sea area to a distance of 500 m from the cliff base is included. The site is underlain by Devonian sandstones, siltstones and mudstones. A small area of igneous rocks (dolerite and gabbro) occurs at Beginish and on the adjacent shore. No site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
002263	Kerry Head Shoal SAC	7.08	Reef [1170]	The Kerry Head Shoal is a deep (20-52m) limestone reef running in a north east / south- west direction. The reef is situated on the west coast of Ireland, to the north of Tralee Bay and to the west of Kerry Head. It is exposed to the full force of swells from the Atlantic. The infralittoral and circalittoral reef communities of the Kerry head Shoal are extremely exposed to wave action and subject to weak tidal streams. The circalittoral reef topography ranges from big relatively flat terraces cut by gullies to ridged bedrock and angular boulders. The NPWS have identified hunting and fishing as pressures within the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	9.66	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110] Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Coastal lagoons [1150] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	A very large, long site approximately 14 km wide and 120 km long, encompassing: the drained river valley which forms the River Shannon estuary; the broader River Fergus estuary, plus a number of smaller estuaries e.g. Pounasherry Bay; the freshwater lower reaches of the Shannon River, between Killaloe and Limerick, plus the freshwater stretches of much of the Feale and Mulkear catchments; a marine area at the mouth of the Shannon estuary with high rocky cliffs to the north and south; ericaceous heath on Kerry Head and Loop Head; and several lagoons. The underlying geology ranges from Carboniferous limestone (east of Foynes) to Namurian shales and flagstones (west of Foynes) to Old Red Sandstone (at Kerry Head). The salinity of the system varies daily with the ebb and flood of the tide and with annual rainfall fluctuations seasonally. The NPWS have identified threats to the site to include; invasive non-native species, fertilisation,

			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] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) [6410] 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] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	recreational activities, paths, tracks and cycling tracks, marine and freshwater aquaculture, hand cutting of peat. All of these pressures have been identified within the boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS
004189	Kerry Head SPA	9.68	Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Chough ( <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346]	Kerry Head SPA is situated on the south side of the mouth of the River Shannon in north Co. Kerry. It encompasses the sea cliffs from just west of Ballyheigue, around the end of Kerry Head to the west and north-eastward as far as Kilmore. The site includes the sea cliffs and the land adjacent to the cliff edge (inland for 300 m). The high-water mark forms the seaward boundary. Most of the site is underlain by Devonian siltstone, sandstones and mudstones; a small section of the site has rocks of Carboniferous age. The NPWS have identified threats to the site to include; lack of grazing and modification of cultivation practices. All of these pressures have been identified within the boundary. Cultivation, the use of biocides, hormones and chemicals, agricultural structures and buildings in the landscape and storage of materials have been listed as potential threats beyond the boundary. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
002112	Ballyseedy Wood SAC	13.72	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]	Situated about 3 km south-east of Tralee on the south bank of the lower reaches of the River Lee. The wood is derived from the plantings of the Ballyseedy Estate. There are now few of the original trees remaining and, in their place, a dense secondary growth has arisen made up of mainly native species. Much of the site is of wet woodland, which grades into dry woodland in areas above the flood-plain. The high-water table of the woods is maintained more from water draining into the site from the south than from the river itself. The NPWS have identified threats to the site to include; invasive non-native species and grazing. These threats have been identified within the site boundary. Beyond the boundary threats to the site include roads/ motorways and dispersed habitation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.

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

Qualifying Interests	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
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.
<i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> ( <i>Twaite Shad</i> ) [1103]	Habitat quality, particularly at spawning sites is the most notable threat to this species.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change
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.
Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]	Drainage; burning; peat extraction; overgrazing; afforestation; erosion; and climate change.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Erosion, land-use changes
Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> ( <i>Salicion arenariae</i> ) [2170]	Agricultural improvement; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing; forestry; recreational activity	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	Natural erosion processes exacerbated by recreation and sand extraction. Coastal protection interfering with natural processes	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
Estuaries [1130]	Pollution, fishing /aquaculture and habitat quality.	Inappropriate development, changes in turbidity and

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Qualifying Interests	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
<i>Euphydrys aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065]	Declines in habitat quality lead to species decline.	Habitat management; land use change and drainage.
European dry heaths [4030]	Afforestation, overburning, over-grazing, under-grazing and bracken invasion.	Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Changes in management. Changes in nutrient status
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.
<i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]	Distance to human activities, accidental entanglement in fishing gear competition for prey resources, illegal killing, pollution and habitat degradation.	Prey availability, reduction in available habitat and water quality.
Humid dune slacks [2190]	Agricultural improvement; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing; forestry; recreational activity	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management. Sensitive to hydrological change.
<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change
<i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	Surface water dependent Highly 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
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]	Poor substrate quality due to increased growth of algal and macrophyte vegetation as a result of severe nutrient enrichment, as well as physical siltation.	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change. Very highly sensitive 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.
Molinia 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
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
Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]	Disruption of the sediment supply, owing to the interruption of the coastal processes, caused by developments such as car parks and coastal defence structures including rock armour and sea walls. The removal of gravel.	Marine water dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Coastal development, trampling from recreational activity and gravel removal.
<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	There are no significant impacts affecting this species.	None identified
<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	Barriers to upstream migration (e.g. weirs), which limit access to spawning beds and juvenile habitat are main threats to this species.	Marine water dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Coastal development, trampling from recreational activity.
<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.
Salicornia 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
<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]	Marine survival rates are of concern for the populations.	Disease, parasites and barriers to movement.
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 ladanii</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

Qualifying Interests	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]	Threatened by habitat loss, deliberate collection, encroachment of invasive or vigorous species, or indirectly by water pollution, removal of woodland or alteration of watercourses.	Land use management and direct impacts
Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	Erosion; grazing; recreational pressures; development of golf courses and housing; dumping; cutting of peat; coastal protection works; climate change	Coastal development. Erosion, over-grazing and recreation
Vertigo angustior (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]	Loss of riverside and canalside habitat; exploitation of esker sites and drainage of wetlands, and sheep grazing and overexploitation of dune sites.	Groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260]	Eutrophication; overgrazing, excessive fertilisation; afforestation; and the introduction of invasive alien species.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.
Submerged or partially submerged seacaves [8330]	No specific threats were identified for the habitat.	Sensitive to natural processes and human activities.
Soft waterlakes with base rich influences [3130]	Eutrophication, peat cutting, losses from agriculture and peatland drainage.	Highly sensitive to hydrological change and water pollution.
Coastal Lagoons [1150]	Drainage, natural silting, nutrient enrichment, water pollution from industrial and commercial activities.	Sensitive to disturbance and pollution.
Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]	Drainage, siltation and pollution are threats to this habitat type	Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.
Kerry Slug ( <i>Geomalacus maculosus</i> ) [1024]	Main threats to this species include; afforestation, forestry management, invasion of woodland by <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> , agricultural reclamation and infrastructure development	Land use management, groundwater dependant
<i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]	Overgrazing; fire; agricultural expansion; invasion by alien species particularly <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> ; and poor regeneration.	Onset of inundation or waterlogging Inappropriate management
<i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles [9130]	Invasive alien's species. Restricted distribution and limited suitable habitat	Inappropriate management, Invasion by alien species
Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303]	Loss of roosting sites due to deterioration or renovation of old buildings, loss of commuting routes linking roosts to foraging sites, and unsympathetic management of foraging habitats are the major threats to this species.	Highly sensitive to disturbance.
Slender Naiad ( <i>Najas flexilis</i> ) [1833]	Fertilization; disposal of household waste; water pollution; eutrophication; and invasion by alien species.	Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.
Sandbanks [1110]	The NPWS state that it is considered that current pressures and future threats are unlikely to significantly impact this habitat.	None identified
Bottle-Nosed Dolphin ( <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> ) [1349]	The bottlenose dolphin is vulnerable to a range of threats and pressures in its natural habitat. Such threats and pressures include accidental entanglement in fishing gear, competition for prey resources, pollution and other habitat degradation, and disturbance by human activities.	Human interaction, pollution, noise.

**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
Fulmar ( <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> ) [A009] Manx Shearwater ( <i>Puffinus puffinus</i> ) [A013] Storm Petrel ( <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> ) [A014] Shag ( <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> ) [A018] Lesser Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> ) [A183] Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194] Razorbill ( <i>Alca torda</i> ) [A200] Puffin ( <i>Fratercula arctica</i> ) [A204] Chough ( <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> ) [A346] Red-throated Diver ( <i>Gavia stellata</i> ) [A001]	Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [A017] Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [A050] Mallard ( <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> ) [A053] Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [A054] Scaup ( <i>Aythya marila</i> ) [A062] Common Scoter ( <i>Melanitta nigra</i> ) [A065] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> ) [A144] Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [A162] Greenshank ( <i>Tringa nebularia</i> ) [A164] Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) [A169]	Peregrine ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) [A103] Whooper Swan ( <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> ) [A038] Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046] Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [A048] Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [A050] Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> ) [A052] Mallard ( <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> ) [A053] Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [A130] Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> ) [A137] Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140] Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [A141] Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> ) [A142]	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] Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> ) [A169] Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [A179] Common Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> ) [A182] Peregrine ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> ) [A103] Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188] Guillemot ( <i>Uria aalge</i> ) [A199]	<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 2011 -2016</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.</li> <li>To be superseded by Draft Grid Implementation Plan 2017-2022</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>	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.	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>	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.	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.
<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</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.

Relationship Other Plans and Programmes	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Relevance to the Plan
	development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas	– 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 (RSESS).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.