

SCREENING
FOR
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT
REPORT

FOR
PROPOSED VARIATION No. 1
TO THE
LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2022

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF
ARTICLE 6(3) OF THE EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE**

for: Louth County Council

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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report (which details the findings of an AA screening exercise also known as *Stage One* AA), for Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 has been prepared to assess whether or not *Stage Two* AA is required. AA is a procedure carried out 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").

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 process 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 screening of the Proposed Variation comprised the following elements:

- Identification of European sites within 15km¹ of the Proposed Variation boundary with identification of potential pathways links for specific sites (if relevant) greater than 15km from the Plan boundary, to which the Proposed Variation relates;
- Review of the NPWS site synopsis and conservation objectives for European sites with identification of potential pathways from the Plan area, to which the Proposed Variation relates; 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

¹ Beyond 15km landscape scale ecological interactions are likely to minimise potential effects unless significant hydrological pathways are present.

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-receptor² 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 Proposed Variation 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 Proposed Variation.

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

- AA 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.
- Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021.

² 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 Proposed Variation

The Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 provides for sustainable development and proper planning within the administrative area of Louth County Council.

In accordance with section 13(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Louth County Council is proposing a variation of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Proposed Variation No. 1).

The reason for Variation, is to update the Core Strategy to take account of the methodology and housing projections as set out in the Section 28 Guidelines 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning' and the 'Projected Housing Demand by Local Authority Area 2020-2031 – ESRI NPF Scenario Housing Supply Target' provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in December 2020.

This will ensure that the housing provision in the Development Plan is consistent with and aligned with national and regional policy.

The Variation will also update the Development Plan to ensure it is consistent with Part V of the Planning and Development Act as amended by the Affordable Housing Act 2021.

The Variation proposes amendments to the sections/tables of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 as identified on Table 2.1. For further detail, the Proposed Variation document should be referred to.

Table 2.1 Parts of the existing Plan proposed to be Varied and Proposed Changes

Chapter	Reference	Title	Proposed Change
Chapter 2 – Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy	Section 2.6.3	Projecting Housing Demand to 2027	The text and tables in Sections 2.6.3, 2.6.4, and 2.6.5 will be deleted and replaced with a new Section 2.6.3 which will include 1 no. table.
	Section 2.6.4	Occupancy Rate	
	Section 2.6.5	Projected housing Requirement	
	Table 2.17	Core Strategy Table	This table will be updated and will now be Table 2.15.
	Table 2.18	Overview of Key Statistics for Drogheda	The projected housing stock in 2027 and the projected housing stock increase 2021-2027 will be updated. This table will now be Table 2.16.
	Table 2.19	Overview of Key Statistics for Dundalk	The projected housing stock in 2027 and the projected housing stock increase 2021-2027 will be updated. This table will now be Table 2.17.
	Table 2.20	Overview of Key Statistics for Ardee	The projected housing stock in 2027 and the projected housing stock increase 2021-2027 will be updated. This table will now be Table 2.18.
	Table 2.21	Overview of Key Statistics for Dunleer	The projected housing stock in 2027 and the projected housing stock increase 2021-2027 will be updated. This table will now be Table 2.19.
Table 2.22	Overview of Key Statistics for Self-Sustaining Towns	The projected housing stock increase 2021-2027 will be updated. This table will now be Table 2.20.	
Chapter 3 – Housing Strategy	Section 3.4	Housing Strategy	Update the projection of households that will not qualify for a mortgage/be able to afford private rental during the plan period, based on the revised housing allocations.
	Policy Objective HOU3	Housing Strategy	Amend the text in this policy objective to reflect the amendments to Part V of the Planning and Development Act under the Affordable Housing Act 2021.
Volume 2 – Settlement Statements	Vol 2	Settlement Overview Table in the Settlement Statement for each of the 5 Self-Sustaining Towns	Update the Housing Allocation in each of these tables to reflect that set out in the revised Core Strategy Table.
Volume 3 – Housing Strategy	App 3	Update the Housing Strategy	Update the Housing Strategy to take account of the revised housing projections for the County and the amendments to Part V of the Planning and Development Act under the Affordable Housing Act 2021.
General	-	Section numbers and Table numbers	All section numbers and Table numbers will be reviewed and updated to take account of any sections or tables deleted as a result of the proposed Variation.

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 habitat³ or species⁴ 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 the characteristics of the Proposed Variation has identified that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the Proposed Variation will not impose effects beyond the 15 km buffer. Beyond this distance potential effects are diminished due to landscape scale ecological interactions. All European sites within a 15km radius of the Variation area were examined to assess potential connectivity corridors on a landscape scale and assess potential interactions between the Proposed Variation and the conservation objectives of each of the sites.

Details of European sites that occur within 15 km of the Proposed Variation are listed in Table 3.1. European Sites and the EPA Rivers and Catchments are also mapped on Figure 3.1 below. Information on QIs, SCIs and site-specific vulnerabilities and sensitivities (see Appendix I) and background information (such as that within Ireland’s Article 17 and Article 12 Reports to the European Commission, site synopses and Natura 2000 standard data forms) has been considered. Conservation objectives that have been considered by the assessment are included in the following NPWS/ Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht documents:

- NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives for Carlingford Mountain SAC [IE0000453] Version 8.
- NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives for Dundalk Bay SAC [IE0000455] Version 1.
- NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives for Clogher Head SAC [IE0001459] Version 1.
- NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives for Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC [IE0001957] Version 1.
- NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC [IE0002299] Version 8.
- NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives for Carlingford Shore SAC [IE0002306] Version 1.
- NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives for Dundalk Bay SPA [IE0004026] Version 1.
- NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives for Carlingford Lough SPA [IE0004078] Version 1.
- NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives for Boyne Estuary SPA [IE0004080] Version 1.
- NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives for Stabannan-Braganstown SPA [IE0004091] Version 8.
- NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives for River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA [IE0004158] Version 1.
- NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA [IE0004232] Version 8.
- JNCC (2017) Conservation Objectives for Eastern Mourne SAC [UK0016615] Version 2.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

JNCC (2015) Conservation Objectives for Derryleckagh SAC [UK0016620] Version 2.
JNCC (2015) Conservation Objectives for Rostrevor Wood SAC [UK0030268] Version 2.
JNCC (2015) Conservation Objectives for Slieve Gullion SAC [UK0030277] Version 2.1.
JNCC (2015) Conservation Objectives for Carlingford Lough SPA [UK9020161] Version 3.

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.

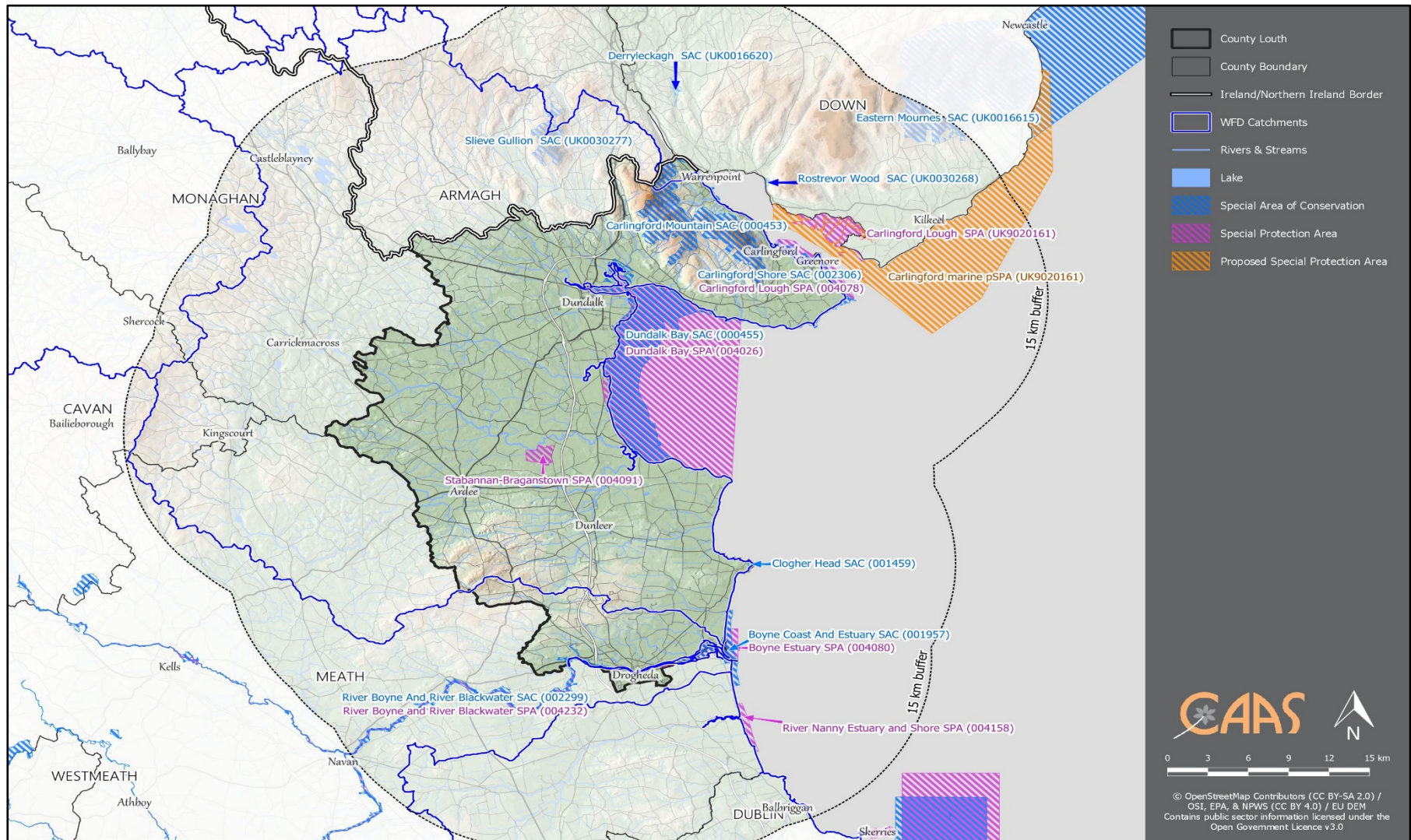


Figure 3.1 European sites with pathways for potential effects from the Plan boundary⁵

⁵ Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded March 2022)

3.3 Assessment Criteria

3.3.1 Is the Proposed Variation Necessary to the Management of European Sites?

The overarching objective of the Proposed Variation is not the nature conservation management of the sites, but to vary the text related to housing within the existing Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027. Therefore, the Proposed Variation is not considered to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites.

3.3.2 Elements of the Proposed Variation with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

The updating of the existing Plan's Core Strategy involves a reduction in the housing allocation to all categories of settlements, in line with national and regional policy for proper planning and sustainable development. These changes are carried through to all related parts of the Plan as relevant, including in the main Plan document and in Volumes 2 (Settlement Statements) and 3 (Housing Strategy). The reduction in the housing allocation does not necessitate a reduction in the areas of land zoned in the County.

Updates to the Plan to ensure it is consistent with Part V of the Planning and Development Act as amended by the Affordable Housing Act 2021 relate to housing tenure (social and affordable).

The initial Plan was subject to its own AA considerations – and so too were subsequent variations to the plan – which incorporated mitigation measures for the protection of European sites into the plan itself.

This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the known threats and pressures related to European sites. There are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the existing AA processes.

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 no significant pathways such as hydrological links to Proposed Variation proposals and the site to be screened;
- Where the site is located at such a distance from that area to which the Proposed Variation relates those 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 Proposed Variation.

3.4.1 Types of Potential Effects and Changes

As outlined in the European Commission Environment DG document "*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*" outlines the types of effects that may affect European Sites.

These include effects from the following activities:

- Land take
- Resource Requirements (Drinking Water Abstraction Etc.)
- Emissions (Disposal to Land, Water or Air)
- Excavation Requirements
- Transportation Requirements
- Duration of Construction, Operation, Decommissioning

In addition, the guidance document outlines the following likely 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.

Assessment of potential impacts on European Sites is conducted utilising a standard source-pathway model (see approach referred to under Section 1 and Section 3).

The Proposed Variation is considered in Table 3.1 with reference to the QIs/SCIs of all of the European sites identified.

Table 3.1 Screening of European sites with pathways for potential effects to the Plan's (to which the Proposed Variation relates) boundary

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests & 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
000453	Carlingford Mountain SAC	Within	Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210], Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110], Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010], Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas - and submountain areas in Continental Europe [6230], Blanket bogs * if active bog [7130], Alkaline fens [7230], Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060], European dry heaths [4030], Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
000455	Dundalk Bay SAC	Within	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330], Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Estuaries [1130]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
001459	Clogher Head SAC	Within	European dry heaths [4030], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC	Within	Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210], <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> - white dunes [2120], Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation - grey dunes [2130], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330],	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for</p>	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests & 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
			Embryonic shifting dunes [2110], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Estuaries [1130]	<p>the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>		
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	Within	River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099], Alkaline fens [7230], Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
002306	Carlingford Shore SAC	Within	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
004026	Dundalk Bay SPA	Within	Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065], Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142], Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052], Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069], Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141], Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184], Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156], Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048], Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005], Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182], Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160], Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046], Pintail (<i>Anas</i>	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European</p>	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests & 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
			<i>acuta</i>) [A054], Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179], Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043], Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053], Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]	Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.		
004078	Carlingford Lough SPA	Within	Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
004080	Boyne Estuary SPA	Within	Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195], Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169], Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142], Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048], Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141], Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156], Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	Within	Greylag goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
004232	River Boyne and River	Within	Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) [A229]	The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests & 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
	Blackwater SPA			<p>Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>		
UK9020 161	Carlingford Lough SPA	1.19	Brent Goose (<i>Branta berniciahrota</i>) [A674], Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193], Sandwich tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
UK0030 268	Rostrevor Wood SAC	2.76	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
UK0030 277	Slieve Gullion SAC	3.31	European dry heaths [4030]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no</p>	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests & 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
				additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.		
004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	3.89	Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144], Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
UK0016620	Derryleckagh SAC	4.38	Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No
UK0016615	Eastern Mournes SAC	11.83	11.83 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010], European dry heaths [4030]	<p>The Proposed Variation provides for changes to the text of the Plan relating to housing - see Section 2 and 3.3.2. Housing projects being undertaken under County Development Plans are required to comply with various legislation (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment) and other licencing requirements as appropriate. In addition, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites introduced by the Proposed Variation that were not already considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).</p> <p>This Proposed Variation was considered with respect to the above stated and the known threats and pressures related to this European site. In consideration of the above, there are no additional sources for effects on European sites identified resulting from the Proposed Variation to the 2021-2027 Plan that have pathways for effects to the ecological integrity of this European Site. As there are no additional sources with pathways for significant effects foreseen, no further assessment is required.</p>	No	No

3.5 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. There are no provisions in the Proposed Variation that introduce any additional sources for effects on European sites. Therefore, there are no in combination effects identified.

Section 4 AA Screening Conclusion

This report to inform the AA screening determination for Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 demonstrates that the implementation of the Proposed Variation will not result in adverse effects to the ecological integrity of any European site.

Following the source-pathway-receptor model, the relevant attributes of European sites were assessed. No sources for effects to any European site would arise from the Proposed Variation that have not already been considered by the Stage 2 AA undertaken for the existing County Development Plan (the findings of which are provided in a Natura Impact Statement that accompanies the Plan).

The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives of the European sites have been addressed through existing, already in-force policies and objectives within the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (that was subject to Stage 2 AA) with which all lower tier plans/projects must comply. In addition, any future projects, plans etc. that may arise will themselves be subject to AA/screening for AA when further details of design and location are known.

It is concluded that Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 will not give rise to any effects on the integrity of any European Site, alone or in combination with any other plans, programmes, and projects etc.

Appendix I Background information on European sites

European sites with functional connectivity (ecological pathways) to the proposed CDP variation area including their Qualifying Interests, known threats and pressures

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known threats and pressures
000453	Carlingford Mountain SAC	Alkaline fens [7230], Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210], European dry heaths [4030], Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060], Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140], Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas - and submountain areas in Continental Europe [6230], Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110], Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010], Blanket bogs * if active bog [7130]	J02.01.03, B02.01, I03.01, J01, G02, J03.02, I02, K04.01, D02.03, I01, B02.02, A04.03, X, A04.02, G05, J03.01, G01.08, G01.03.02, G05.01	Infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits, forest replanting, genetic pollution (animals), fire and fire suppression, sport and leisure structures, anthropogenic reduction of habitat connectivity, problematic native species, competition (flora), communication masts and antennas, invasive non-native species, forestry clearance, abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, no threats or pressures, non-intensive grazing, other human intrusions and disturbances, reduction or loss of specific habitat features, other outdoor sports and leisure activities, off-road motorized driving, trampling, overuse
000455	Dundalk Bay SAC	Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinlietalia maritimae</i>) [1330], Estuaries [1130]	G02.09, I01, J02.12.01, H01, H02.06, J02.04, J03.01, H04.02, M02.04, J02.01.03, G02, J02.01.02, H05, E03.03, F02.03.01, K04.01, J02.04.01, E03.01, F05, H01.06, K01.01, G01, G05.02, H05.01, K02, G01.01.01, J03.02	Wildlife watching, invasive non-native species, sea defence or coast protection works, tidal barrages, pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), diffuse groundwater pollution due to agricultural and forestry activities, flooding modifications, reduction or loss of specific habitat features, nitrogen-input, migration of species (natural newcomers), infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits, sport and leisure structures, reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh, soil pollution and solid waste (excluding discharges), disposal of inert materials, bait digging or collection, competition (flora), flooding, disposal of household or recreational facility waste, illegal taking or removal of marine fauna, diffuse pollution to surface waters due to transport and infrastructure without connection to canalization or sweepers, erosion, outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, shallow surface abrasion or mechanical damage to seabed surface, garbage and solid waste, biocenotic evolution, succession, motorized nautical sports, anthropogenic reduction of habitat connectivity
001459	Clogher Head SAC	European dry heaths [4030], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	J03.01, J02.12.01, E06.02, D01.01, D03.01.03, E05, X, D03.01, A04.02, E03.01, I01, G02, F02.01, A04.03, D03.01.02	Reduction or loss of specific habitat features, sea defence or coast protection works, tidal barrages, reconstruction, renovation of buildings, paths, tracks, cycling tracks, fishing harbours, storage of materials, no threats or pressures, port areas, non-intensive grazing, disposal of household or recreational facility waste, invasive non-native species, sport and leisure structures, professional passive fishing, abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, piers or tourist harbours or recreational piers
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Embryonic shifting dunes [2110], Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210], Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinlietalia maritimae</i>) [1330], Estuaries [1130], Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> - white dunes [2120], Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation - grey dunes [2130]	G05, E03.01, J03.03, H01, J02.12, J02.02, J02.12.01, J02.01.03, L07, E03.03, G03, E01, K02, G01.03.02, D01.01, G05.04, G01.02, E05, I01, D01.05, J02	Other human intrusions and disturbances, disposal of household or recreational facility waste, reduction, lack or prevention of erosion, pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), dykes, embankments, artificial beaches, general, removal of sediments (mud...), sea defence or coast protection works, tidal barrages, infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits, storm, cyclone, disposal of inert materials, interpretative centres, urbanised areas, human habitation, biocenotic evolution, succession, off-road motorized driving, paths, tracks, cycling tracks, vandalism, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, storage of materials, invasive non-native species, bridge, viaduct, human induced changes in hydraulic conditions
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355], 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], Alkaline fens [7230]	A01, E01.04, A05.02, G05.06, E02, A03, D01.02, H01, E03.02, G05, A10.01, G01, G02.10, J02.11, C01.01, A07, B01.02, A08, J02.05.02, J02.10, E05, J02, J02.15, I01, D01.05, E03.04	Cultivation, other patterns of habitation, stock feeding, tree surgery, felling for public safety, removal of roadside trees, industrial or commercial areas, mowing or cutting of grassland, roads, motorways, pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), disposal of industrial waste, other human intrusions and disturbances, removal of hedges and coppice or scrub, outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, other sport or leisure complexes, siltation rate changes, dumping, depositing of dredged deposits, sand and gravel extraction, use of biocides, hormones and chemicals, artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees), fertilisation, modifying structures of inland water courses, management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes, storage of materials, human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, other human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, invasive non-native species, bridge, viaduct, other discharges
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) [A229]	D01.02, E01, X, E01.03, J02	Roads, motorways, urbanised areas, human habitation, dispersed habitation, human induced changes in hydraulic conditions

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Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known threats and pressures
002306	Carlingford Shore SAC	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	F05, G05, F02, F04.02.01, F01.02, H01, F05.07, F06, F01.03, G01.03, F02.03, G01.01, F01, F03.01, X, H01.01, G01.03.01	Illegal taking or removal of marine fauna, other human intrusions and disturbances, fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, hand raking, suspension culture, pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), other (i.e. drift nets), hunting, fishing or collecting activities not referred to above, bottom culture, motorised vehicles, leisure fishing, nautical sports, marine and freshwater aquaculture, hunting, no threats or pressures, pollution to surface waters by industrial plants, regular motorized driving
004026	Dundalk Bay SPA	Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142], Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043], Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149], Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054], Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069], Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184], Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065], Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179], Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046], Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162], Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052], Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160], Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005], Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048], Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156], Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141], Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]	F02.03, E01, J02.12, E02, A04, D03.02, G01.02, E01.03, J02.11, I01, E03, G01.01, D01.02, A08	Leisure fishing, urbanised areas, human habitation, dykes, embankments, artificial beaches, general, industrial or commercial areas, grazing, shipping lanes, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, dispersed habitation, siltation rate changes, dumping, depositing of dredged deposits, invasive non-native species, discharges, nautical sports, roads, motorways, fertilisation
004078	Carlingford Lough SPA	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	F01	Marine and freshwater aquaculture
004080	Boyne Estuary SPA	Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048], Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195], Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156], Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142], Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169], Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141], Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]	I01, G02.01, G01.02, E01, J02.05, F02.03, J02.01.02, J02.11, F01	Invasive non-native species, golf course, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, urbanised areas, human habitation, modification of hydrographic functioning, general, Leisure fishing, Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh, Siltation rate changes, dumping, depositing of dredged deposits, marine and freshwater aquaculture
004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	Greylag goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]	A04, A08, A02, A01, D01.02	Grazing, fertilisation, modification of cultivation practices, cultivation, roads, motorways
UK902 0 161	Carlingford Lough SPA	Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A674], Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193], Sandwich tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191]	I01, D02, H03, D03, F02, M02, F01, M01, G01, J03, K03 Invasive	Invasive non-native species, utility and service lines, marine water pollution, shipping lanes, ports, marine constructions, fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, changes in biotic conditions, marine and freshwater aquaculture, changes in abiotic conditions, outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, other ecosystem modifications, interspecific faunal relations.
UK003 0 268	Rostrevor Wood SAC	Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]	I01, H04	Air pollution, air-borne pollutants, Invasive non-native species
UK003 0 277	Slieve Gullion SAC	European dry heaths [4030]	G01, J01, A02, H04, A04, I01	Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Fire and fire suppression, Modification of cultivation practices, Air pollution, air-borne pollutants, Grazing, Invasive non-native species
004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184], Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]	G01.02, E01.01	Walking, horse riding and non-motorised vehicles, continuous urbanisation
UK001 6 620	Derryleckagh SAC	Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]	I01, H04, K02, B06, A04, H01, J02	Air pollution, air-borne pollutants, invasive non-native species, biocenotic evolution, succession, grazing in forests/ woodland, grazing, pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), human induced changes in hydraulic conditions
UK001 6615	Eastern Mourne SAC	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010], European dry heaths [4030]	H04, J02, J01, G01, I01, I02, A04, M01	Air pollution, air-borne pollutants, human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, fire and fire suppression, outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, invasive non-native species, problematic native species, cultivation, changes in abiotic conditions.

Appendix II Further information on the Qualifying Interests of SACs

Qualifying Interests of SACs including summaries of current threats and sensitivities

Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)	[1099]	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change. Availability of suitable spawning ground is a considerable issue for the species.
Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	[1106]	Marine survival rates are of concern for the populations.	Disease, parasites and barriers to movement.
Estuaries	[1130]	Pollution, fishing /aquaculture and habitat quality.	Inappropriate development, changes in turbidity
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.
Annual vegetation of drift lines	[1210]	Grazing; sand and gravel extraction; recreational activities; coastal protection works.	Overgrazing and erosion. Changes in management.
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.
Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts	[1230]	A number of significant pressures were identified, including trampling by walkers, invasive non-native species, gravel extraction, and sea-level and wave exposure changes due to climate change. There have been no significant losses in sea cliff habitat since the Directive came into force.	Land use activities such as tourism and/or agricultural practices. Direct alteration to the habitat or effects such as burning or drainage.
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.
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.
Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	[1355]	Decrease in water quality: Use of pesticides; fertilization; vegetation removal; professional fishing (including lobster pots and fyke nets); hunting; poisoning; sand and gravel extraction; mechanical removal of peat; urbanised areas; human habitation; continuous urbanization; drainage; management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; and canalization or modifying structures of inland water course.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Sensitivity to pollution.
Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)	[1410]	Over-grazing by cattle or sheep; infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development and reclamation.
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.
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with white dunes (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>)	[2120]	Recreation and coastal defences, which may interfere with local sediment dynamics.	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (<i>grey dunes</i>)	[2130]	Recreation; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing; non-native plant species, particularly sea buckthorn (<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>).	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix	[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.
European dry heaths	[4030]	Afforestation, over burning, over-grazing, under-grazing and bracken invasion.	Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Changes in management. Changes in nutrient status.
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.
Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (<i>and submountain areas, in Continental Europe</i>)	[6230]	Bracken encroachment, succession, inappropriate grazing, afforestation; drainage; and infrastructural development.	Changes in management such as grazing regime. Changes in nutrient or base status. Changes to vegetation composition. Introduction of alien species.
Blanket bogs (* if active bog)	[7130]	Land reclamation, peat extraction; afforestation; erosion and landslides triggered by human activity; drainage; burning and infrastructural development.	Surface water interactions. Drainage and land use management are the key things.

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Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Transition mires and quaking bogs	[7140]	Drainage; burning; peat extraction; overgrazing; afforestation; erosion; and climate change.	Surface water interactions. Groundwater isolated system with sensitivities related to the bog basin. Drainage and land use management are the key things.
Alkaline fens	[7230]	Land reclamation, peat extraction; afforestation; erosion and landslides triggered by human activity; drainage; burning and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management.
Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>)	[8110]	Overgrazing, under grazing and succession were recorded as medium-importance pressures in this reporting period, and Structure and functions were again assessed as Inadequate, the trend is considered to be stable rather than improving. This change is due to improved knowledge and the habitat is considered to have been stable since before the last assessment.	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation	[8210]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access.	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isle	[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.

Appendix III Further information on the Special Conservation Interests of SPAs

Special Conservation Interests and Vulnerabilities of SPAs

Special Conservation Interest (SCI) Species
Great crested grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005]
Greylag goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]
Red-throated diver <i>Gavia stellata</i> [A001]
Common shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]
Eurasian teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053]
Northern pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]
Black (common) scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065]
Red-breasted merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069]
Eurasian oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]
Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]
European golden plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]
Grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]
Northern lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142]
Red knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]
Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]
Bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]
Eurasian curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]
Common redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]
Ruddy turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169]
Black-headed gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>) [A179]
Mew gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]
Herring gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]
Little tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195]
Great northern diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003]
Great cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]
Tundra swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>) [A037]
Whooper swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> [A038]
Eurasian wigeon (<i>Anas Penelope</i>) [A050]
Northern pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]
Common goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067]
Ruff (<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>) [A151]
Common greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) [A164]
Greenland white-fronted goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]

Vulnerabilities of Special Conservation Interests

- 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 2km⁶.
- 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.
- 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.
- Availability of nesting/roosting habitat. Particularly for the Hen Harrier.
- Vegetation composition, structure and functionality.

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.

⁶ SNH (2007) A Review of Disturbance Distances in Selected Bird Species: Scottish Natural Heritage; M. Ruddock & D.P. Whitfield