

Sligo County Council

**Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2014-2020**  
**Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Statement**

Prepared by the **Heritage Office**  
of Sligo County Council

24 April 2014

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Legislative Context

Sligo County Council intends to review the Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2004-2013(LAP) and prepare a new LAP for the period 2014-2020, in line with the provisions of the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017. The review follows the procedure set out in Sections 18-20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) relating to the preparation and adoption of local area plans.

An important aspect of the Development Plan is how the Plan may impact on European Sites designated for nature conservation, i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as “The Habitats Directive”, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are SACs and SPAs designated under the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive (Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC)).

In accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive (43/92/EEC) and EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), the impacts of the policies and objectives of all statutory land use plans on certain sites that are designated for the protection of nature (Natura 2000 sites<sup>1</sup>), must be assessed as an integral part of the process of drafting of the plan. This is to determine whether or not the implementation of plan policies could have negative consequences for the habitats or plant and animal species for which these sites are designated. This assessment process is called an Appropriate Assessment (AA) and must be carried out on all stages of the plan making process.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA):

*Article 6(3): “Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”*

*Article 6(4): “If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the*

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<sup>1</sup> Natura 2000 sites include Special Areas of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas designated under the Birds Directive. Special Areas of Conservation are sites that are protected because they support particular habitats and/or plant and animal species that have been identified to be threatened at EU community level. Special Protection Areas are sites that are protected for the conservation of species of birds that are in danger of extinction, or are rare or vulnerable. Special Protection Areas may also be sites that are particularly important for migratory birds. Such sites include internationally important wetlands.

*compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”*

This document provides a record of the first phase of the Habitats Directive Assessment (HAD) process for the proposed Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020(LAP). All Natura 2000 sites within the potential impact zone of the plan have been screened to determine whether there is potential for significant impacts on qualifying features of Natura 2000 sites to arise out of implementation of the Plan.

### **Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017**

Sligo County Development Plan came into force on 13 June 2011. It will remain operational for a period of maximum six years. The Plan sets out the Council’s policies and objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County of Sligo.

The undertaking of Appropriate Assessment (AA) is mandatory in the case of development plans. The AA of the CDP 2011-2017 was undertaken by environmental consultants CAAS on behalf of Sligo County Council. The resultant Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was published alongside the CDP 2011-2017.

The Appropriate Assessment informed the policies and objectives of the Plan and also suggested appropriate mitigation measures, which were incorporated in to the relevant chapters of the Plan upon its adoption in 2011.

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report should be read in conjunction with the CDP 2011-2017 and the associated Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.

Sligo CDP and its associated Appropriate Assessment Screening Report are available at [www.sligococo.ie/cdp](http://www.sligococo.ie/cdp).

## **1.2 Stages of the Appropriate Assessment**

This document has been prepared in accordance with 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”*, referred to as the *“EC Article 6 Guidance Document”*. The guidance document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive, and is viewed as an interpretation of the EU Commission’s document *“Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”*, referred to as *“MN2000”*. In addition, *“Appropriate Assessment Guidance for Planning Authorities”* was published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in December 2009 (DEHLG, 2009) and amended in March 2010. Cognisance has been taken of this document in carrying out this assessment. In complying with the obligations under Article 6(3) and with reference to the guidance documents mentioned above, this AA has been broadly structured as follows:

### **1) Stage 1 – Screening for Appropriate Assessment**

- Description of the plan;
- Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites potentially affected;
- Identification and description of individual and cumulative impacts likely to result from implementation of the Plan;
- Assessment of the significance of the impacts identified above on site integrity.
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

## 2) Stage 2 –Appropriate Assessment

- Description of the Natura 2000 sites that will be considered further in the AA;
- Description of significant impacts on the conservation features of these sites likely to occur from the Plan;
- Mitigation Measures; and
- Conclusions.

## 3) Stage 3- Assessment of Alternative Solutions

## 4) Stage 4 – Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain (Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest and Compensation Measures).

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

### 1.3 Terminology

A number of different terms have been used in the recent past to describe the process and outputs associated with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. These include Appropriate Assessment (AA), Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA), Habitats Directive Assessment Report, Natura Impact Statement (NIS), Natura Impact Report (NIR).

In an effort to provide consistency and transparency in the planning process and to come into line with the terminology used in the most recent DEHLG guidance, it has been decided to use just two terms throughout this document.

For the purposes of this report the following terms have been adopted:

- **Appropriate Assessment (AA)** has been used to refer to the process and includes the various stages outlined in Section 1.2 above.
- **Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Statement** has been used to refer to the output from Stage 1 of the AA process and includes the information necessary for the competent authority to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications of the Plan.

It should also be noted that the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 also uses the term Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) in addition to the term Appropriate Assessment to describe the process and outputs associated with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. These terms are used interchangeably throughout the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Approach**

Appropriate Assessment of the proposed Local Area Plan (LAP) was undertaken and the findings of the assessment are presented in this Habitats Directive Screening Report. The approach taken in the making of this assessment follows *European Communities, 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, 2002*, and *Local Government and Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009*. As the LAP is progressed through the plan making process the appropriate assessment process will continue in tandem and will inform the decision making process in terms of any likely significant impacts arising from the LAP on Natura 2000 sites.

### **2.2 Data Sources**

The appropriate assessment of potential impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites in this report is based on a desktop review of information relating to these sites and to the habitats and species that they support. References and data used are cited in the back of this report.

### **2.3 Consultation**

This report will be placed on public display with the proposed Local Area Plan and will be referred to Government Departments and other statutory consultees for consideration during the consultation process. Submissions on same will be taken into consideration in the drafting of the final plan and accompanying Appropriate Assessment.

### 3 STAGE 1 – SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 Description of the draft Plan

Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2004-2013 was adopted by Sligo County Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004. On 6 September 2010, Sligo County Council decided to extend the life of Enniscrone LAP by three years, to 5 September 2013.

The Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 (CDP) now specifies that the Enniscrone Local Area Plan is to be reviewed by 2014. The new Enniscrone LAP has been prepared in accordance with the procedure set out in Sections 18–20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The CDP earmarks Enniscrone as a Key Support Town, in order to build on its strengths and existing scale of development. As recommended in the CDP, the strategy for Enniscrone will be to consolidate the town through the provision of an appropriate range of services including social infrastructure, retail, office, commercial and enterprise facilities to enable it to serve its residents and those in the rural catchment in an appropriate manner.

#### **Enniscrone Local Area Plan – purpose and structure**

The development of Enniscrone is guided by the following vision:

***To create a sustainable, economically and socially successful town, in an exceptional physical setting, where natural and built heritage are preserved and enhanced, and where new development will be of a high design standard.***

To achieve the vision, the following strategic aims will be pursued:

- SA-1** Promote the sustainable and consolidated development of Enniscrone as a Key Support Town with a special tourism function.
- SA-2** Facilitate economic activity, in particular tourism-related activities, by ensuring that sufficient land is zoned and adequate infrastructure is available to allow for the expansion of existing businesses and the setting up of new ones.
- SA-3** Ensure that the people of Enniscrone have access to affordable housing, education, community and recreational facilities.
- SA-4** Recognise the importance of natural, archaeological and architectural heritage in the LAP area as factors which contribute to Enniscrone’s attractiveness.
- SA-5** Seek the development of a more efficient and integrated circulation system, including walking and cycling links.
- SA-6** Ensure that the current and future population and businesses of Enniscrone are served by adequate environmental, energy and telecommunications infrastructure.

The Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan is structured under the following main headings:

- Chapter 1 Plan context
- Chapter 2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Chapter 3 Core Strategy

Chapter 4	Economic development
Chapter 5	Housing
Chapter 6	Community facilities
Chapter 7	Heritage
Chapter 8	Transport and circulation
Chapter 9	Infrastructure
Chapter 10	Environmental quality
Chapter 11	Urban design

**Note:** All the policies and objectives contained in Chapters 3 to 12 of the CDP are applicable to all settlements in County Sligo. These policies and objectives have already been assessed for effects on Natura 2000 Sites through the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process in preparing the CDP 2011-2017.

### **3.2 Features of the Draft Plan that could impact on Natura 2000 Sites**

The key aspects of the Plan which could give rise to direct/indirect impacts to Natura 2000 sites will principally be related to zonings, the Local Area Plan objectives, infrastructural provision and upgrades, coastal protection works, as well as recreational infrastructure and activities.

The main threats to Natura 2000 sites in general arise from the density of population present in the Enniscrone area in close proximity to the sites. Human pressure on the sites can be manifested in a number of ways either directly in the form of land take, trampling and disturbance by people themselves; or indirectly, for example, in the form of water quality deterioration resulting from sewage effluent and storm water discharges. The relative importance of these potential impacts will vary from site to site depending on the particular circumstances of the site and the human pressure in the vicinity.

Related to the Local Area Plan for Enniscrone is the need for adequate recreational/tourism facilities and given the strong coastal features in Enniscrone this can include provision of recreational infrastructure, promenades etc. If located in or adjacent to a protected site, such developments can have likely significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Similarly, provision of footpaths and cycleways within and close to Natura 2000 sites can have predicted and unforeseen negative impacts.

The provision of infrastructure is also a key consideration including wastewater treatment, drainage systems, waste management facilities and coastal protection works. The Natura 2000 sites within the Enniscrone Local Area Plan area are predominately coastal, and may be directly impacted by land take for infrastructural development or through pollution of these sensitive sites; therefore, it is essential that zonings take account of the direct and indirect impacts on Natura 2000 sites particularly where inadequate or insufficient wastewater treatment or drainage may be involved. Impacts arising from the implementation of objectives of the Draft Plan which could cause significant impacts on the integrity and conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites include activities which give rise to:



- direct impacts on habitats listed on Annex I of the Habitats Directive and for which the site is designated;
- reduction in the area of any habitats within the site;
- direct or indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality) in the Natura 2000 site;
- serious or ongoing disturbance to species or habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is selected (e.g. increased noise, illumination, human activity);
- direct or indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations of species for which the Natura 2000 site is designated;
- activities which interfere with mitigation measures put in place for other plans or projects.

All of the proposed objectives and zonings were reviewed as part of the screening process. Consideration was given to direct and indirect impacts which may arise from activities which could be encouraged by objectives contained in the Draft Plan. Such activities could include new residential, commercial, infrastructural, recreational or other development which may give rise to direct impacts on habitats or species (loss of habitat, disturbance to species); as well as activities which could have indirect impacts (e.g. activities which could affect water quality or hydrology which could in turn affect the status/health of populations of water dependant habitats or species).

### **3.3 Brief description and identification of the Natura 2000 sites to be screened**

Natura 2000 sites which were considered in relation to the potential for the plan and its policies to have an impact on them. This includes Natura 2000 sites within the plan boundary area and Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the plan boundary. The potential for Natura 2000 sites that are >15km from the plan boundary area to be impacted by plan policy was also considered. This could include sites which are hydrologically connected to watercourses or water bodies within the plan boundary area. Six Natura 2000 sites were identified during the screening of the Draft Local Area Plan that could potentially be impacted by the Plan. These were:

Special Areas of Conservation:

- Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000516 )
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000458)
- River Moy Estuary Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002298)
- Ox Mountains Bogs Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002006)
- Lough Hoe Bog Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000633)

Special Protection Areas:

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary Special Protection Area (Site Code 004036 )

Screening of the proposed Local Area Plan focused on the above sites, but excluded the Lough Hoe Bog SAC as it lies a significant distance from the plan area, does not maintain a hydrological link to the Plan area and therefore would not be affected by the implementation of the plan.

Screening was based on a desktop review of information relating to these sites and to the habitats and species that they support. Figures 1 and 2 below provide the locations of the SACs and SPAs within 15km of the Plan boundary, respectively. These sites along with their qualifying interests and principal threats are listed in Table 1 (SACs) and Table 2 (SPAs) below.



Fig. 1 Special Areas of Conservation (orange) within 15km (red circle) of Enniscrone.



Fig. 2 Special Protection Areas (purple) within 15km (red circle) of Enniscrone.

Table 1 List of Natura 2000 sites (Special Areas of Conservation) within 15km of the Enniscrone Local Area Plan area including known threats.

Site Name	Qualifying Feature		Documented Potential Threats*
	Annex I Habitat	Annex II Species	
Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC 000516	<p>1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)</p> <p>1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi)</p> <p>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes)</p> <p>*2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p>	n/a	<p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Development of marinas and ports</p> <p>Disturbance to marine mammals</p> <p>Dumping at sea</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation</p> <p>Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction</p> <p>Erosion (natural and anthropogenic)</p> <p>Agricultural abandonment</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> <p>Bracken and scrub encroachment</p> <p>Tourism related development</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Quarrying/removal of sand</p> <p>Aquaculture</p>
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC 000458	<p>1130 Estuaries</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>1210 Annual vegetation of draft lines</p> <p>2110 Embryonic shifting dunes</p> <p>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes)</p> <p>*2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p> <p>2190 Humid dune slacks</p> <p>1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)</p>	<p>1365 Phoca vitulina Common Seal</p> <p>1014 Vertigo angustior Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail</p>	<p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Development of marinas and ports</p> <p>Disturbance to marine mammals</p> <p>Dumping at sea</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Recreational/amenity use</p> <p>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation</p> <p>Drainage/Changes in local hydrology including water abstraction</p> <p>Erosion (natural and anthropogenic)</p> <p>Agricultural abandonment</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> <p>Bracken and scrub encroachment</p> <p>Tourism related development</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Quarrying/removal of sand</p> <p>Aquaculture</p>
River Moy Estuary SAC 002298	<p>7110 Active raised bogs</p> <p>7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration</p> <p>7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion</p> <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in British Isles</p> <p>*91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)</p>	<p>1106 Salmo salar Atlantic Salmon</p> <p>1095 Petromyzon marinus Sea Lamprey</p> <p>1096 Lampetra planeri Brook Lamprey</p> <p>1355 Lutra lutra European Otter</p> <p>1092 Austropotamobius pallipes Freshwater White-clawed Crayfish</p>	<p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Changes in water flow rates</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table</p> <p>Siltation</p> <p>Loss of fringe vegetation</p> <p>Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Loading from effluents(WWTP)</p> <p>Recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Developments – marinas</p> <p>Introduction of alien invasive species</p> <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <p>Felling/Removal of Trees</p> <p>Crayfish Fishing</p>
Ox Mountains Bogs SAC 002006	<p>7130 Blanket bog (*active only)</p> <p>4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix</p> <p>3160 Natural dystrophic lakes and</p>	<p>1013 Vertigo geyeri Geyer's Whorl Snail</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology including drainage</p> <p>Peat Extraction</p> <p>Overgrazing</p> <p>Forestry</p> <p>Burning</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p>

	ponds 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion		Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Increased pollution/reduction in water quality
Lough Hoe Bog SAC 000633	7130 Blanket bog (*active only) 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae)	1013 Vertigo geyeri Geyer's Whorl Snail 1092 Autropotamobius pallipes Freshwater White- clawed Crayfish	Changes in local hydrology including drainage Peat Extraction Overgrazing Forestry Burning Direct loss of habitat to development Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table Agricultural reclamation Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Increased pollution/reduction in water quality

**Note:** A number of species and habitats are given 'Priority' status in the Habitats Directive by the EU because they are considered to be particularly vulnerable and are mainly, or exclusively, found within the European Union. There are no 'Priority Species' currently known from Ireland. Priority Habitats are present in Ireland and are present within the Natura 2000 Sites adjoining Enniscrone. These are prefixed with an asterisk (for example, '\*Fixed Dunes (2130)') in **Table 1** above and in subsequent tables in this report. The importance of Priority Habitat is emphasised at several places in the Directive (Articles 4 and 5 and Annex III), not only in terms of the selection of sites, but also in the measures required for site protection (Article 6).

**Table 2 List of Natura 2000 sites (Special Protection Areas) within 15 km of the Enniscrone Local Area Plan area including known threats**

Site Name	Qualifying Feature Annex I Species	Documented Potential Threats*
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA 004036	Site is selected for: Ringed Plover Bar-tailed Godwit  Additional Special Conservation Interests: Golden Plover Grey Plover Sanderling Dunlin Curlew Redshank Wetland & Waterbirds	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird species of conservation interests (loss of habitat) Direct loss of habitat to development Waterquality/pollution Disturbance including recreation/amenity use Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Disturbance from Recreational/amenity use Inappropriate land management

### 3.4 Conservation Objectives

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is in the process of preparing Conservation Management Plans for all Natura 2000 sites in the country. These plans will have a range of conservation objectives which relate to the protection and enhancement of habitats and populations of species for which these sites are designated. In relation to appropriate assessment, regard must be had to potential impacts arising from the plan on the conservation objectives for all Natura 2000 sites.

A Natura 2000 site's Conservation Objectives are defined by DAHG and are, "intended to ensure that the relevant Annex I habitats and Annex II species present on a site are maintained in a favourable condition" (DEHLG, 2010). The DEHLG guidelines state that, "The Conservation Objectives derive from the qualifying interests, the Natura 2000 standard data form, and the management plan for the site, with summary information also available in the site synopsis." Whilst the Natura 2000 standard data forms and site synopses do present details of the qualifying features of Natura 2000 sites, and list the generic threats to those features, they do not define the Conservation Objectives of the site.

For the purposes of this assessment, information on the Conservation Objectives for the sites has been gained from consultation with NPWS relating to the Border Regional Planning Guidelines and NPWS generic Conservation Objectives for Natura 2000 Sites where no Management Plan is yet available.

Generic Conservation Objectives for SPAs are as follows:

- To maintain the bird species of special conservation interest for which the SPA has been listed, at favourable conservation status.

For cSACs, generic Conservation Objectives are as follows:

- To maintain Annex I habitats and Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status;
- To maintain the extent species richness and biodiversity of the entire site; and
- To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.

The 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 as defined below.

### **3.5 Documented threats to the Special Areas of Conservation**

Documented threats to Habitats Directive Annex I habitats and Annex II species in Ireland are presented in the 'Backing documents' and 'Form' for each habitat and species which are available at: <http://www.npws.ie/en/PublicationsLiterature/HabitatsDirectivereport07/>. Not all of these threats will apply to all cSACs in which these habitats and species are present; however gathering information on the documented perceived threats to the qualifying features of the sites (and therefore to the Conservation Objectives of the sites and the integrity of the sites) is an important prerequisite for assessing what are the 'likely significant effects' on the sites resulting from the Plan. No such information is available for Birds Directive Annex I bird species, and hence this method of inferring Conservation Objectives cannot be applied to SPAs. Threats include:

- reduction in habitat area
- disturbance to key species
- habitats or species fragmentation
- reduction in species density
- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)

It is important to realise that many of these threats do not necessarily represent activities that occur within the boundary of the Natura 2000 site. This applies in particular to aquatic and marine features and systems which can be affected by impact sources that occur a large distance from the site.

### **3.6 Documented threats to Special Protection Areas**

Similar threats will apply to many of the SPAs that often correspond geographically to the cSACs. Generally speaking, the threats to the Annex I habitats and Annex II species of the cSAC will also apply to the Annex I bird species and bird populations in general that are the qualifying features of the SPAs. However, the birds that constitute the qualifying features of the SPAs are subject to a number of additional threats that do not generally apply to the qualifying features of the cSAC such as hunting pressure (both legal and illegal); and disturbance from noise and visual cues such as movement of pedestrians and vehicles.

Generalised threats to the SPA relevant to the Draft Enniscrone LAP include:

- reduction in habitat area
- disturbance to key species
- habitats or species fragmentation
- reduction in species density
- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)

### 3.7 Plan analysis: screening of Draft Plan

Impacts arising from the implementation of the draft plan which are likely to cause significant impacts on the integrity and conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites include activities which give rise to:

- direct impacts on habitats listed on Annex I of the Habitats Directive and for which the site is designated;
- reduction in the area of any habitats within the site;
- direct or indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality) in the Natura 2000 site;
- serious or ongoing disturbance to species or habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is selected (e.g. increased noise, illumination, human activity);
- direct or indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations of species for which the Natura 2000 site is designated;
- activities which interfere with mitigation measures put in place for other plans or projects.

All of the Draft Plan objectives were reviewed to identify likely significant effect of the draft Plan on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites. Consideration was given to direct and indirect impacts which may arise from activities which could be encouraged by objectives contained in the draft plan. Such activities could include new residential, commercial, infrastructural, recreational or other development which may give rise to direct impacts on habitats or species (loss of habitat, disturbance to species); as well as activities which could have indirect impacts (e.g. activities which could affect water quality or hydrology which could in turn affect the status/health of populations of water dependant habitats or species).

**Table 3** below provides the plan analysis/screening matrix for the Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan objectives with an Appropriate Assessment Screening Response provided in each case. Those sites for which potential effects and impacts are identified are taken forward to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where that is required. Those for which no potential impacts are anticipated as a result of implementation of the Plan do not require Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment and are 'screened-out' in Stage 1 of the Appropriate Assessment.

**Table 3 Plan analysis for the Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Plan Policies Which Might Give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Natura 2000 site(s) which could be affected</b>
<b>Chapter 1 Plan Context</b>	Sets context for Plan	No impacts identified.	n/a
<b>Chapter 2 Strategic Environmental Assessment</b>	Outlines SEA screening process, consultation with environmental authorities and concludes that the proposed Plan is not likely to have significant effects in the environment.	No impacts identified	n/a
<b>Chapter 3 Core Strategy</b>	Outlines the pre-existing CDP provisions, including a recommended population level and the amount of land to be zoned residential in compliance with the core strategy. The Plan provides a moratorium on multi-unit housing developments during the life of the LAP.	Current water and waste water provision is adequate for the population and housing provision provided in the Plan.  No impacts identified.	n/a
	SLRP-1 to SLRP -3: Strategic Land Reserve	No impacts identified	n/a
	BZP-1 & BZP-2 Buffer Zone Policies	No impacts identified	n/a
<b>Chapter 4 Economic Development</b>	RDP-1 to RDP – 5: Retail Development Policies	No impacts identified	n/a



Chapter	Plan Policies Which Might Give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites	Potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites	Natura 2000 site(s) which could be affected
<b>Chapter 4 Economic Development Contd.</b>	RDO-1 & RDO-2: Retail Planning Objectives	No impacts identified	n/a
	RDO-3: Flagship Retail Project	No impacts identified	n/a
	IEP-1 & IEP-2: Industry and Enterprise Policies	No impacts identified	n/a
	IEO-1 & IEO-2: Industry and Enterprise Objectives	No impacts identified	n/a
	TOP-1 to TOP-8: Tourism Policies	No impacts identified	n/a
	TOO-1 to TOO-3: Tourism Objectives – Pier/Marina	No impacts identified	n/a
	TOO-4: Tourism Objectives – Caravan Park	No impacts identified	n/a
	TOO-5 to TOO-7: Tourism Objectives – The Hollows	No impacts identified	n/a

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Plan Policies Which Might Give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Natura 2000 site(s) which could be affected</b>
<b>Chapter 5 Housing</b>	Provides for the sustainable management of housing capacity in the town. HP-1 to HP-5: Housing Policies	No impacts identified HP-2: Positive Impact as residential development must not exceed water and wastewater provision.	n/a
	HP-6 & HP-7: Housing Policies within the Buffer Zone.	No impacts identified HP-6: Positive impact as provision of one-off rural housing in the buffer zone will be subject to AA under the Habitats Directive.	n/a
	HO-1: Housing Objectives	No impacts identified	n/a
<b>Chapter 6 Community Facilities</b>	CFP-1 to CFP-6: Policies relating to the provision of social and community facilities.	No impacts identified	n/a
	OSO-1 to OSO-4: Open space objectives for the Castle Field.	No impacts identified	n/a
	OSO-5 to OSO-6: Open space provision for new walkways.	No impacts identified	n/a
<b>Chapter 7 Heritage</b>	NHP-1 to NHP-7: Natural Heritage Policies	Positive impacts generally	n/a
	NHO-1: Natural Heritage Objective	Positive impacts for natural heritage generally and for protected habitats and species.	n/a
	AHP-1 & AHP-2; Archaeological Heritage Policies	No impacts identified	n/a

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Plan Policies Which Might Give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Natura 2000 site(s) which could be affected</b>
<b>Chapter 7 Heritage Contd.</b>	AHO – 1 to AHO-4: Archaeological Heritage Objectives	No impacts identified	n/a
	ARP-1 to ARP-4: Architectural Heritage Policies	No impacts identified	n/a
	ARO-1: Architectural Heritage Objectives	No impacts identified	n/a
	LCO-1: Landscape Character Objectives	Positive impacts for biodiversity generally possible.	n/a
<b>Chapter 8 Transport and Circulation</b>	TCP-1 to TCP-3: Transport and Circulation Policies	No impacts predicted, though implementation of policies would require appropriate assessment at project stage.	n/a
	TCO-1 & TCO-2: Transport and Circulation Objectives	No impacts predicted, though implementation of policies would require appropriate assessment at project stage.	n/a
	TCO-3 & TCO-4: Traffic Management Plan – Town Centre Zone.	No impacts predicted	n/a
	TCO-5 to TCO-8: Traffic Management Plan – one-way systems and access restrictions.	No impacts predicted	n/a
	TCO-9 to TCO-12: Traffic Management Plan – new car park and parking restrictions	No impacts predicted	n/a
	TCO-13: Redevelopment at the Pier	No impacts predicted	n/a
	TCO-14: Walking and Cycling	No impacts predicted	n/a
	TCO-15	No impacts predicted	n/a

Chapter	Plan Policies Which Might Give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites	Potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites	Natura 2000 site(s) which could be affected
<b>Chapter 9 Infrastructure</b>	Provides for water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, surface water collection and disposal and communications infrastructure. IP-1 to 1P-6: Infrastructure Policies	Existing and proposed provision of adequate waste water treatment infrastructure and waste management will have positive impacts on the environment generally.  Existing water is sourced from Lough Easkey, a designated Natura 2000 site. Current WTP design capacity is 4000m <sup>3</sup> /day, with supply averaging 3000m <sup>3</sup> /day to serve a population of 5000 (including Enniscrone) and a large agricultural demand. Existing water provision meets water demand for Enniscrone.	n/a
<b>Chapter 10 Environmental Quality</b>	Provides for air and water quality, noise pollution, coastal zone management issues and flood risk. WQP-1 to WQP-5: Water Quality Policies	Positive impacts for environment generally possible	n/a
	WQO-1 & WQO-2: Water Quality Objectives	Positive impacts for environment generally possible	n/a
	CPP-1: Coastal Protection Policy	Positive impacts for environment generally possible	n/a
	CPO-1 to CPO-3: Coastal Protection Objectives.	Positive impacts for environment generally possible	n/a
	NCP-1 & NCP-2: Noise Control Policies	No impacts identified	n/a
	FRMO-1: Flood Risk Management Objective	No impacts identified	n/a

Chapter	Plan Policies Which Might Give Rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites	Potential for impact on Natura 2000 sites	Natura 2000 site(s) which could be affected
<b>Chapter 11 Urban Design</b>	Provides for the shaping of the physical setting of Enniscrone through urban design. UDP-1 to UDP-5: Urban Design Policies	No impacts identified	n/a
	UDO-1 to UDO-3: Urban Design Objectives – Town Centre	No impacts identified	n/a
	UDO-4 to UDO-5: Urban Design Objectives – Tourist Areas	No impacts identified	n/a
	UDO-6: Urban Design Objectives – Infill Sites	No impacts identified	n/a
	UDO-7: Urban Design Objectives – Larger Backland Sites	No impacts identified	n/a
	UDO-8 to UDO-11: Urban Design Objectives – Town Edges.	No impacts identified	n/a

### 3.8 SCREENING CONCLUSION

The Habitats Directive Screening analysis undertaken on the Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan examined the key environmental factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network e.g. disturbance, habitat loss, etc. In undertaking the screening, there was a focus on determining if the implementation of the Plan would give rise to any likely significant effect on Natura 2000 sites in view of any site’s conservation objectives and integrity.

**Table 4** below summarises the findings of the screening assessment in a screening matrix for the Natura 2000 sites that were screened. The tables indicates “None” for sites where no negative impact is predicted on the conservation objectives or on the overall integrity of the site and “Potential Impact” for those sites where it is certain, likely or uncertain at the screening stage that impacts on the site may arise as a result of implementation of the Plan.

On the basis of this report, it is concluded therefore, that there is no potential for impacts on any Natura 2000 site, arising from the implementation of the draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan.

**Table 4 Summary of HDA Screening Matrix for the Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan**

Site Name	Reduction in Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitats for Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality etc.)
Lacken Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC	None	None	None	None	None
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC	None	None	None	None	None
River Moy Estuary SAC	None	None	None	None	None
Ox Mountains Bogs SAC	None	None	None	None	None
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA	None	None	None	None	None

#### 4.0 Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix and Screening Conclusion Statement

Plan Name	Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2014-2020
Name and location of Natura 2000 sites subject to screening for appropriate assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000516 )</li> <li>▪ Killala Bay/Moy Estuary Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000458)</li> <li>▪ River Moy Estuary Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002298)</li> <li>▪ Ox Mountains Bogs Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002006)</li> <li>▪ Killala Bay/Moy Estuary Special Protection Area (Site Code 004036 )</li> </ul>
Description of the proposed draft Plan	See section 3.2 above.
Is the proposed draft plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites identified above	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with the amendments being assessed could affect the site (provide details)	Enniscrone is located along the eastern shore of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA. There is continuous pressure to increase development around Killala Bay and the Moy Estuary. Development is guided by the relevant statutory plans adopted by Sligo and Mayo County Councils along with plans for development and expansion of port activities, marine recreation and tourism activities. Many of these plans give rise to projects which result in increased pressure on the marine environment including, water quality, pressure to infill and reclaim parts of the shoreline, increase in marine recreational activity as well as recreational activity along the shoreline. Any such projects could contribute to habitat loss and give rise to significant disturbance to species within the bay when considered cumulatively.
Assessment of Significant Effects	
Describe how the proposed Plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect Natura 2000 sites	No aspect of the draft Plan has been identified which could give rise to impacts which could be considered to be significant.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	<p>The draft plan does not direct development within or near any Natura 2000 site. There are no increased demands on existing water or wastewater infrastructure.</p> <p>On the basis of this assessment, it is concluded therefore, that no potential for impacts has been identified for any Natura 2000 site arising from the implementation of the Draft Plan.</p>

List of agencies consulted	This screening report will be available to the public during the consultation process on the draft plan, and will be referred to statutory consultees for review during this period.
Response to the consultation	Submissions made during the consultation process will be reviewed and considered at the end of the consultation process for the draft plan.
<b>Data Collected to Carry Out the Assessment</b>	
Who carried out the assessment	Siobhán Ryan, Heritage Officer, Sligo County Council
Sources of data	National Parks and Wildlife Service Site Synopses and other data relating to Natura 2000 sites.
Level of assessment completed	Screening
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed	This report
Date assessment completed	April 2014



## **5.0 Relevant documents and references**

Environment, Heritage and Local Government, National Parks and Wildlife Service. 2008. The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland.

Environment, Heritage and Local Government, National Parks and Wildlife Service. Various Years. Natura 2000 Site Synopses.

Environment, Heritage and Local Government. 2009. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities.

European Communities. 2000. Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Luxembourg.

European Communities. 2002. 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. Luxembourg.