

2019

SCREENING STATEMENT IN
SUPPORT OF APPROPRIATE
ASSESSMENT OF THE
HEALTHY CLARE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 -
2021

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1 HEALTHY CLARE STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2021

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Minogue & Associates have been appointed by Clare County Council to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment of the *Healthy Clare Strategic Plan 2019-2021*.

This Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA): Stage 1 Screening has been undertaken in conjunction with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Strategy and should be read in combination with the Strategy and associated SEA Screening Report.

The purpose of this Screening exercise is to assess whether the Strategy has the potential to result in likely significant effects to the integrity and conservation status of European Sites.

1.2 HABITATS DIRECTIVE ASSESSMENT

The Habitats Directive Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a land use plan or project on one or more Natura 2000 (N2K) Sites. It is noted that a Habitats Directive Assessment is commonly referred to as an “Appropriate Assessment” (Dodd *et al*, 2007). However “Appropriate Assessment” forms only one stage of the HDA process (all stages making up the assessment process are outlined in detail below). The EU Habitats Directive provides the legislative framework for the protection of habitats and species throughout Europe through the establishment of a network of designated conservation areas known as the N2K network. The N2K network includes sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), under the EU Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU Birds Directive. SACs are designated in areas that support habitats listed on Annex I and/or species listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive. SPAs are designated in areas that support: 1% or more of the all-Ireland population of bird species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive; 1% or more of the population of a migratory species; and more than 20,000 waterfowl.

Articles 6(1) & (2) of the Habitats Directive set out provisions for the conservation management of European Sites. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of this Directive set out a series of procedural steps to test whether or not a plan or project is likely to affect an N2K site. Article 6(3) also establishes the requirement for a HDA:

“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 and projects, shall be subjected to 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 implication 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 affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public”.

Therefore, the objective of this HDA is to assess and conclude whether or not the proposed Strategy will adversely affect the integrity of European Sites. Such a conclusion will be arrived at by assessing the

implications of the draft Strategy for each European Site’s conservation objectives and associated qualifying features of interests (i.e. those Annex I habitats and Annex II species of SACs and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of SPAs).

2 SCREENING METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The function of the Screening Assessment is to identify whether or not the Healthy Clare Strategic Plan will have a likely significant effect on European Sites. In this context “likely” means any effect that may be reasonably predicted and “significant” means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that is potentially relevant to the Site’s conservation objectives¹. Any effect, which would compromise the functioning and viability of a Site and interfere with achieving the conservation objectives of the Site would constitute a significant effect.

The HDA is underpinned by the precautionary principle. Therefore, if the risk of adverse impacts to the conservation objectives of a European Site cannot be ruled out it is assumed that an adverse impact may exist. Where such uncertainties are identified during the assessment, measures will be proposed to avoid or mitigate the risk of adverse impacts occurring.

The HDA was undertaken with reference to the following guidance documents on Habitats Directive Assessments:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009). DEHLG.
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans: Guidance for Plan-making bodies in Scotland (2015).
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites – The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC. European commission (2000). (To be referred to as MN 2000).
- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological Guidance of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2001).
- Guidance on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the Concepts of: Alternative Solutions, Imperative reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall coherence, Opinion of the Commission. European Commission (2007).
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans. Scott Wilson, Levett-Therivel sustainability Consultants, Treweek Environmental Consultants and Land Use Consultants (2006).

¹ See English Nature’s Habitat Regulations Guidance Note No. 3, 1999.

2.2 APPROACH TO HABITATS DIRECTIVE SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

As per the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) as amended, a Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken on behalf of Clare County Council to assess the Strategic Plans' potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

The European Commission's publication *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites* (2001) provide methodological guidance for Screening for Appropriate Assessment. The guidance publication outlines the stages involved in undertaking a Screening assessment of a plan or project that has the potential to have likely significant effects on European Sites. The methodology adopted for the Screening assessment of this Strategy is informed by these guidelines and was undertaken in the following stages:

1. Describe the Strategy and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of European Sites;
2. List all European Sites occurring within the study area;
3. Assess the goals of the Strategy and identify those that could have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites; and
4. Identify other plans or projects that, in combination with the goals Strategy, have the potential to affect European Sites.

2.3 CONSULTATION

Prescribed environmental authorities will be provided with these reports and feedback and consultation requested within the prescribed time period.

2.4 AIM AND PURPOSE OF HEALTHY CLARE STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2021

Vision for a Healthy Clare: Where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility.

Over the past number of years significant work has been undertaken, in consultation with the public, in developing national policies and plans. These include, but are not limited to, Tobacco Free Ireland (2013), National Sexual Health Strategy (2015), National Physical Activity Plan (2016), A Healthy Weight for Ireland Obesity Policy (2016), Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery - a health lead response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland (2017), National Get Ireland Walking Strategy (2017), Connecting for Life: Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2015-2020) and the National Positive Ageing Strategy (2013).

The Healthy Cities and Counties initiative is being pursued by all local authorities around the country. The process in Clare is being led by the Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) through the establishment of a Healthy Clare Working Group. The action plan contained within this strategy is a local plan that realises and assists in the implementation of the national priorities of the following:

- Physical Activity,
- Mental Health,
- Healthy Weight,
- Tobacco Free,
- Sexual Health, and
- Prevention & Reduction of Alcohol related harm.

A healthy population is also a major asset for our society; therefore the Healthy Clare Strategy aims to improve the overall health and wellbeing of the County's population. This means that all sectors of society need to be proactively involved in improving the health and wellbeing of our population. A person's health and wellbeing can be influenced by; economic status, education, housing, the physical environment in which people live and work. It can also be affected by policy decisions taken by Government, the individual choices people make about how they live, and the participation of people in their communities.

Through the process of extensive consultation with key stakeholders the six national priority themes were examined. The outcome of the consultation identified there were 2 key priority areas of Mental Health & Physical Activity for Clare. The Healthy Clare Strategy will focus on these areas as a priority as well as the delivery of actions in the other areas of Healthy Weight, Sexual Health, Tobacco Free and Drug & Alcohol related harm.

The Healthy Clare Working Group will identify the actions to be pursued over the next three years and identify the organisations in the county that are best placed to lead out on these priority areas. Work plans of local agencies have been examined to identify relatable actions to the priority areas of the Healthy Clare Strategy. In some cases the lead agencies will need to connect with other agencies in order to achieve these actions. It is equally important that actions within the strategy are looked at on a whole county basis.

This strategy is the first step towards a collaborative approach to a healthier Clare and one that can be built on through learning and experiences into the future.

In consideration of the geography of the county and the need to address any imbalance in terms of access, the recommendation is that the west of the county be looked at so that a greater degree of activity might take place in this area. Targeting areas of deprivation with priority health actions is a way forward. Feedback suggests that specific strategic actions should refer to the six health priorities of Healthy Ireland and relate to an all of County approach in terms of general development and promotions.

The work programme will be broken into a broad range of opportunity, which will embrace over time;

1. Promotions and evidence-based actions, guided by the Healthy Ireland Policy Priorities and other relevant Government Policies

2. Infrastructural development where necessary and in association with the mandate of the Local Authority

3. Equipment and facilities required to support the development of wellbeing in society

4. Advocacy with regard to collaboration and partnership. Consolidating this approach will be a key strategic intent for Healthy Clare.

There is a requirement to continue the conversation among agencies. However, the approach is one of responsibility, reporting, integration, collaboration and communication across the health themes.

3 EUROPEAN SITES

3.1 OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN SITES

As the proposed strategy applies to the County of Clare, the total county forms the basis for the study area. However a precautionary approach has been taken to this assessment and in line with current guidance on Habitats Directive Assessments, all European Sites occurring within Clare and within a 15km radius of Clare were included. Hence the study area includes all European Sites occurring within a 15km radius of Clare County. Table 3.1 lists all European Sites occurring within the study area, along with the dominant habitat features and/or species characteristics. These characteristics are important in establishing whether or not each site occurs within the sphere of influence of measures outlined in the strategic plan and whether it is likely to be vulnerable to any potential effects arising from the implementation of such policies. Figure 3.1 and 3.2 show the location of each of these European Sites within the study area.

TABLE 3.1: EUROPEAN SITES OCCURRING WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

Site Name	Distance from Clare (in M)	Dominant Habitat Features	Qualifying Species: Mobile or Sedentary
Ballyallia Lake SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
Ballycullinan Lake SAC	In Clare	Waterbody, Limestone Pavement	Na
Ballyogan Lough SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex SAC	In Clare	Coastal, grassland, limestone pavement	Sedentary
Danes Hole, Poulnalecka SAC	In Clare	Woodland, caves	Mobile
Dromore Woods And Loughs SAC	In Clare	Waterbody & Woodland	Mobile
Inagh River Estuary SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
Pouladatig Cave SAC	In Clare	Cave	Mobile
Lough Gash Turlough SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
Moneen Mountain SAC	In Clare	Waterbody, peatland, grassland, limestone pavement	Mobile
Moyree River System SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Mobile
Poulnagordon Cave (Quin) SAC	In Clare	Cave	Mobile

Site Name	Distance from Clare (in M)	Dominant Habitat Features	Qualifying Species: Mobile or Sedentary
Galway Bay Complex SAC	In Clare	Coastal	Mobile
Loughatorick South Bog SAC	In Clare	Peatland	Na
Ballyteige (Clare) SAC	In Clare	Peatland	Na
Ballyvaughan Turlough SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
Glenomra Wood SAC	In Clare	Woodland	Na
Carrowmore Point To Spanish Point And Islands SAC	In Clare	Coastal	Na
Termon Lough SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
East Burren Complex SAC	In Clare	Waterbody, peatland, grassland, caves	Mobile
Old Domestic Building (Keevagh) SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Newhall And Edenvale Complex SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Pollagoona Bog SAC	In Clare	Peatland	Na
Newgrove House SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Lower River Shannon SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Mobile
Old Farm Buildings, Ballymacrogan SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Ballycullinan, Old Domestic Building SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Toonagh Estate SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Carrowmore Dunes SAC	In Clare	Coastal	Sedentary
Kilkee Reefs SAC	In Clare	Coastal	Na
Slieve Bernagh Bog SAC	In Clare	Peatland	Na
Old Domestic Buildings, Rylane SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Ratty River Cave SAC	In Clare	Cave	Na
Knockanira House SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Kilkishen House SAC	In Clare	Structure	Mobile
Tullaheer Lough And Bog SAC	In Clare	Waterbody	Na
Ardrahan Grassland SAC	10150	Grassland	Na
Askeaton Fen Complex SAC	4380	Peatland	Na
Ballinduff Turlough SAC	7674	Waterbody	Na
Barrigone SAC	4916	Grassland	Mobile
Barroughter Bog SAC	9316	Peatland	Na
Caherglassaun Turlough SAC	2664	Waterbody	Mobiles
Cahermore Turlough SAC	5532	Waterbody	Na
Carrowbaun, Newhall And Ballylee Turloughs SAC	8180	Waterbody	Na
Castletaylor Complex SAC	13105	Waterbody, Peatland, Grassland, Limestone Pavement	
Clare Glen SAC	7565	Woodland	Sedentary
Cloonmoylan Bog SAC	5971	Peatland	Na
Connemara Bog Complex SAC	11859	Peatland	Mobile, sedentary
Coole-Garryland Complex SAC	982	Waterbody	Mobile
Cregg House Stables, Crusheen SAC	208	Structure	Mobile
Curraghchase Woods SAC	6285	Woodland	Mobile
Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC	4918	Woodland	Na

Site Name	Distance from Clare (in M)	Dominant Habitat Features	Qualifying Species: Mobile or Sedentary
Drummin Wood SAC	1492	Woodland	Na
Glenstal Wood SAC	9515	Woodland	Sedentary
Gortacarnaun Wood SAC	244	Woodland	Na
Inisheer Island SAC	7354	Limestone Pavement	Na
Inishmaan Island SAC	12583	Coastal	Na
Keeper Hill SAC	11367	Peatland	Na
Kerry Head Shoal SAC	7774	Coastal	Na
Kiltartan Cave (Coole) SAC	6231	Cave	Mobile
Kiltiernan Turlough SAC	10813	Waterbody	Na
Lough Corrib SAC	11307	Waterbody	Mobile
Lough Coy SAC	9101	Waterbody	Na
Lough Cutra SAC	2885	Waterbody	Mobile
Lough Fingall Complex SAC	6861	Waterbody	Mobile
Moanveanlagh Bog SAC	13927	Peatland	Na
Peterswell Turlough SAC	10029	Waterbody	Na
Pollnacknockaun Wood Nature Reserve SAC	7277	Woodland	Na
River Shannon Callows SAC	12974	Waterbody	Na
Rosturra Wood SAC	7803	Woodland	Na
Silvermine Mountains SAC	13953	Peatland	Na
Silvermines Mountains West SAC	8801	Peatland	Na
Sonnagh Bog SAC	7835	Peatland	Na
Tory Hill SAC	14014	Grassland	Na
Cliffs of Moher SPA	In Clare	Coastal	Mobile
Inner Galway Bay SPA	In Clare	Coastal	Mobile
Ballyallia Lough SPA	In Clare	Waterbody	Mobile
Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	In Clare	Waterbody	Mobile
River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	In Clare	Waterbody	Mobile
Illaunonearaun SPA	In Clare	Coastal	Mobile
Loop Head SPA	In Clare	Coastal	Mobile
Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA	In Clare	Peatland	Mobile
Mid-Clare Coast SPA	In Clare	Coastal	Mobile
Corofin Wetlands SPA	In Clare	Waterbody	Mobile
Lough Corrib SPA	14724	Waterbody	Mobile
Lough Cutra SPA	2911	Waterbody	Mobile
Middle Shannon Callows SPA	12946	Waterbody	Mobile
Coole-Garryland SPA	982	Waterbody	Mobile
Cregganna Marsh SPA	12195	Waterbody	Mobile
Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA	3906	Peatland	Mobile
Slievefelim to Silvermines Mountains SPA	7272	Peatland	Mobile
Connemara Bog Complex SPA	13533	Peatland	Mobile

Site Name	Distance from Clare (in M)	Dominant Habitat Features	Qualifying Species: Mobile or Sedentary
Kerry Head SPA	11124	Coastal	Mobile

FIGURE 3.1: SACS WITHIN COUNTY CLARE AND THE SURROUNDING 15KM BUFFER

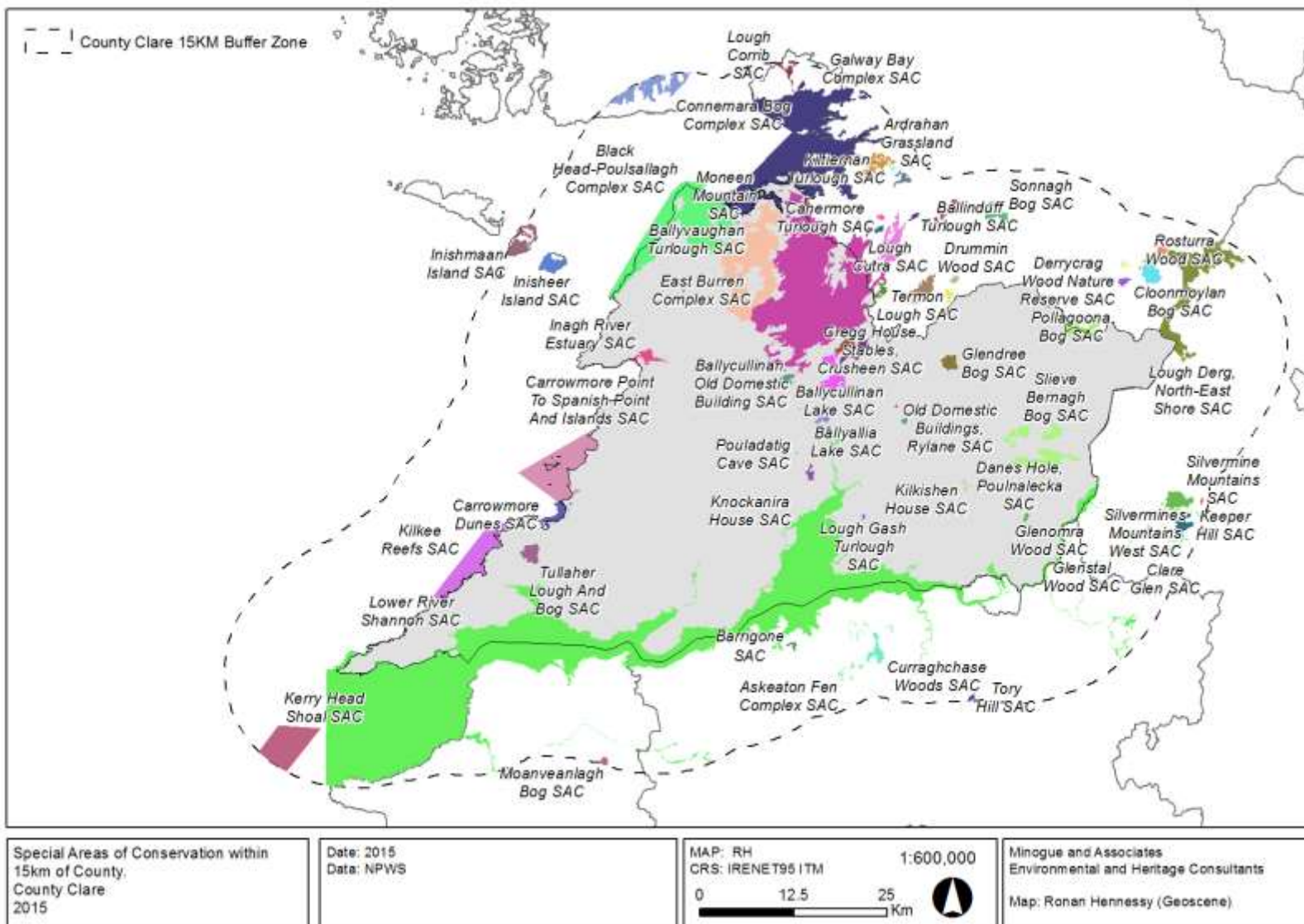
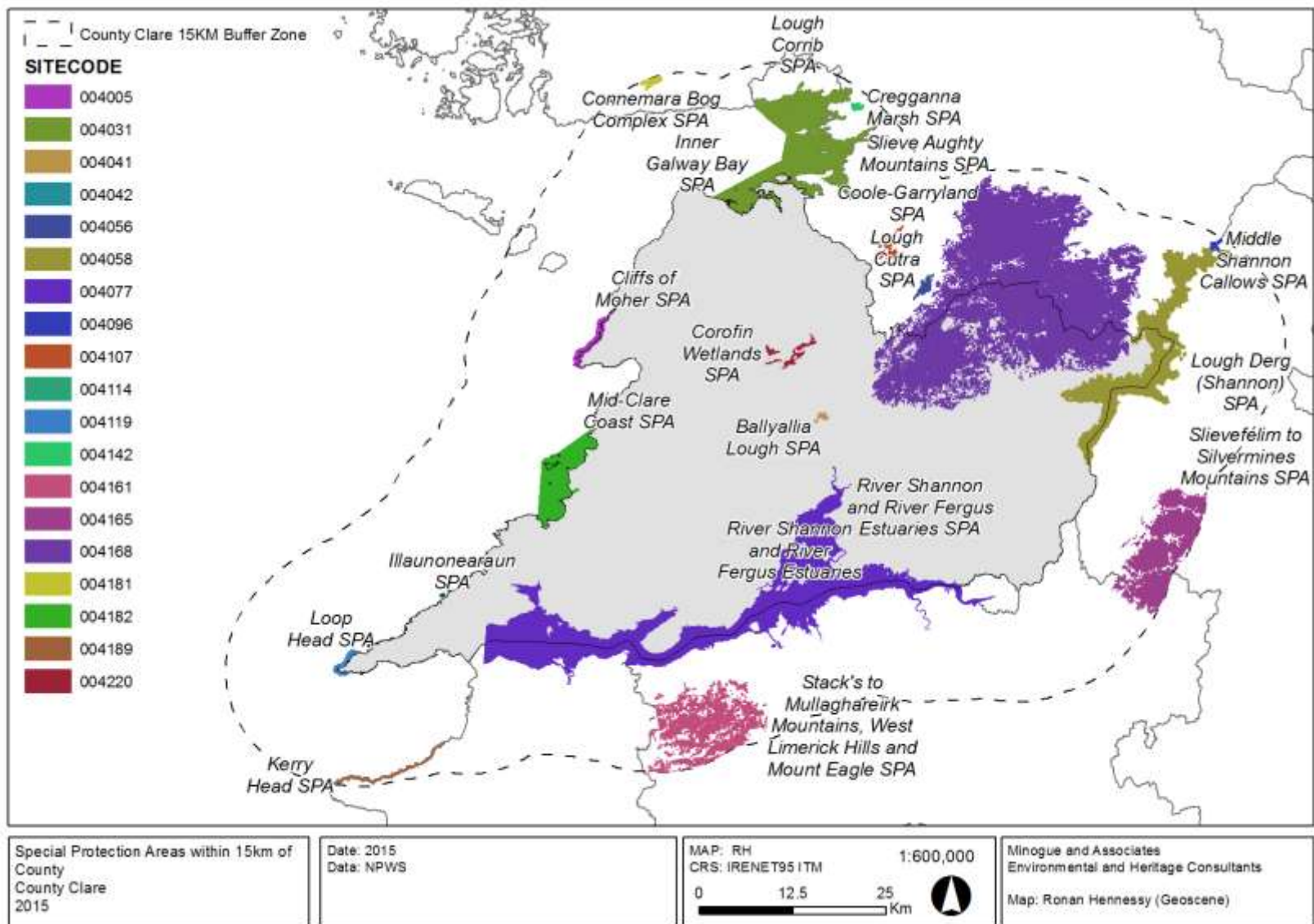


FIGURE 3.2: SPAS WITHIN COUNTY CLARE AND THE SURROUNDING 15KM BUFFER



A total of 94 European Sites occur within the study area. As can be seen from Table 3.1 the dominant broad habitat characterising European Sites occurring within the study area is waterbodies. Other dominant habitat characteristics include peatland, woodland, grassland, limestone pavement and caves.

With regard to species all SPAs support mobile bird species. Species are included as qualifying features of interest for 51 SACs occurring in the study area, 47 of which support mobile species and four of which support sedentary species. The dominant mobile species occurring in the study area is lesser horseshoe bats, followed by otter and freshwater aquatic species. Sedentary species consist of invertebrates and plants species.

The following sub-section provides a brief overview of the main sensitivities and pressure to habitat and species characteristics influencing European Sites.

3.1.1 WATERBODIES

Waterbodies are particularly sensitive to changes in the hydrological regime and water quality. The main pressures affecting these habitats include in stream river maintenance operations such as flood relief schemes and bridge construction, the influx of contaminated surface water from terrestrial activities, abstractions leading to changes in the hydrological regime and the spread of invasive species. Lakes are particularly sensitive to the spread of invasive species.

3.1.2 PEATLAND

Peatlands are particularly sensitive to changes in their hydrological regime. Peatland habitats rely on a high water table along with undisturbed and intact peat-forming surface vegetation. Overgrazing can result in a loss of typically peat-forming vegetation leading to a change in vegetation composition which can in turn undermine the active status of bog habitats. Peat extraction and drainage also undermine the intact nature of bog habitats necessary for peat accretion. Such practices will disrupt the hydrological regime of bog habitats leading to drying out of the surface bog and eventual degradation and erosion. Other pressures to peatland habitats include forestry and wind energy developments and recreational activities.

3.1.3 GRASSLAND

Seven European Sites are designated for the presence of semi-natural orchid-rich grasslands. These grassland habitats are sensitive to changes in grazing and management practices.

One European Site is designated for the presence of *Nardus* grassland. This habitat occurs in upland areas, usually in association with peatlands. It is sensitive to over-grazing and changes in landuse practices.

3.1.4 WOODLAND

Three European Sites are designated for the presence of woodland habitats. Wet alluvial woodland are dependent on surface and groundwater influences and are sensitive to changes in the hydrological regime that can result from drainage activities. They are also sensitive to inappropriate grazing regimes.

Drier oak and yew woodlands are sensitive to inappropriate grazing pressure and the spread of invasive species.

3.1.5 SPECIES

Aquatic fauna are sensitive to the same pressures outlined for waterbodies in Section 4.1.2 above. The marsh fritillary butterfly is also included as a mobile species. This species is sensitive to changes in grazing and land management practices. Improvements of semi-natural grasslands resulting in the loss of swards supporting the marsh fritillary larvae foodplant the devil's-bit scabious is known to have caused a decline in this species throughout Europe.

Bird species listed as species conservation interests for SPAs include waterbirds and raptors. Waterbirds are reliant on wetland habitats dominated by peatland and waterbodies. Bird species associated with such sites are sensitive to the pressures outlined in Section 4.1.1 and 4.1.3 above. In addition these species are sensitive to effects outside the boundaries of SPAs from development due to collision and/or disturbance.

The SPAs designated for raptors list hen harrier and merlin as the SCIs. Both species are sensitive to habitat change and disturbance. Recreational pressure and wind energy developments can result in displacement of these species resulting in a loss of suitable habitat.

Sedentary species include pearl mussels and Killarney fern. Pearl mussels are especially sensitive to surface water pollution with diffuse pollution arising from agricultural and forestry activity noted as a particular pressure. Fine sediment infiltration of the river bed substrate is also a main cause of decline for this species arising from a multitude of sources from land improvement and quarrying to drainage works. Modification of watercourses' hydrology and water abstraction from both surface and groundwater has also been noted as main threats to this species. Killarney fern is sensitive to inappropriate grazing, disturbance, fire and alien non-native or problematic native species.

3.2 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR EUROPEAN SITES – GENERAL OVERVIEW

In general the aims of Conservation Management Objectives for European Sites is to maintain the favourable conservation status of qualifying features of interest (SACs) and special conservation interests (SPA) and the overall integrity of the site so that it can continue to support these interests.

For the majority of the cSACs occurring within the study area only generic conservation management objectives have been published. The generic Conservation Management Objectives for cSAC occurring within the study area are as follows:

- To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status;
- To maintain the 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.

However more detailed information on the Conservation Management Objectives of a number of sites have been published since 2005. The presentation of conservation management objectives has evolved since this time.

Conservation Management Plans were published for a number of sites throughout the country in 2005 and these conservation plans were prepared for a five-year period between 2005 and 2010. In general each plan reiterated the generic conservation objectives for the qualifying habitats and species for which the site had been designated. Additional information, such as ongoing management issues for the SAC is provided in the 2005 – 2010 Conservation Management Plans.

In 2009 Conservation Statements were published for a number of cSACs throughout the country and these followed a similar format to that of the 2005 Conservation Management Plans.

Recently the Department has noted in the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 (NPWS, 2014) that many of the conservation plans completed prior to the current Conservation Objectives series do not conform with the Commission's definition of a comprehensive management plan.

The current Conservation Objectives Series goes further than the preceding 2005 Plans and 2009 Statements in that it outlines in detail the attributes that underpin favourable conservation status, along with targets and criteria for measuring the conservation status of each attribute. These documents have been prepared in line with the Commissions definition of a comprehensive management plan.

The European Sites for which conservation plans or detailed conservation objectives have been prepared are as follows:

- Lower River Shannon cSAC
- River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA
- Ballycullinan Old Farm Buildings SAC
- Barrigone
- Black Head Poullsallagh Complex
- Clare Glen
- Galway Bay Complex SAC
- Carrowmore Dunes SAC
- Carrowmore Point to Spanish Point and Islands SAC
- Glenomra Woods SAC

- Kilkee Reefs SAC
- Kilkishen House SAC
- Inagh River Estuary SAC
- Inisheer Island SAC
- Inishmaan Island SAC
- Inishmore Island SAC
- Newhall and Edenvale Complex SAC
- Old Farm Buildings Ballymacroghan SAC
- Old Domestic Buildings, Rylane SAC
- Ratty River Cave SAC
- Sliabh Bernagh Bog SAC
- Toonagh Estate SAC
- Inner Galway Bay SPA
- Mid-Clare Coast SPA

4 LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS TO EUROPEAN SITES

4.1 SCREENING OF ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY FOR LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

This is the draft Healthy Clare Strategic Plan as outlined in Section 2.4. The outcome of the consultation identified there were 2 key priority areas of Mental Health & Physical Activity for Clare. The Healthy Clare Strategy will focus on these areas as a priority as well as the delivery of actions in the other areas of Healthy Weight, Sexual Health, Tobacco Free and Drug & Alcohol related harm.

The Healthy Clare Working Group will identify the actions to be pursued over the next three years and identify the organisations in the county that are best placed to lead out on these priority areas

As the strategic plan does not contain individual objectives/policies or actions in Table 5.1 below the main text that presents the purpose of the strategy is assessed for their potential to result in land use activities that could have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites in the study area.

Indicators used to identify potential likely significant effects are based on indicators outlined in EU Guidelines and are as follow:

- Loss of habitat;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Disruption or damage to habitats;
- Disturbance to habitats or species that undermines favourable conservation status; and
- Change to key elements that underpin the structure and function of a site.

Each of the elements of the Strategy are either Screened In or Out of Appropriate Assessment in Table 4.1.

Reasons for Screening In elements relate to the potential for the element to result in likely significant effects to one or more of the European Sites outlined in Section 4 of this Screening Assessment.

Reasons for Screening Out elements relate to:

- elements indicating the general intention of the Local Authority
- elements that will not have any potential to result in land use activity.
- elements that are likely to have land use implications but whose effect on any particular European Site cannot be identified because of the generality of the text.

Table 4.1 Screening Table

Section	Text	Assessment	Screened In/Out
Chapter One International Policies and Practice, Trends and Considerations.	This chapter provides a review of health related policies and practice and engagement in healthy communities.	This chapter is primarily a literature review presenting findings of international health research relating to the Healthy Clare Strategic Plan with no direct or indirect relationship to European Sites.	Out
Chapter Two National Policy and Practice, Trends and Considerations	As above, this relates to presenting the national policy and practice	This chapter is primarily a literature review presenting findings of national health research relating to the Healthy Clare Strategic Plan with no direct or indirect relationship to European Sites.	Out
Chapter Three Local Profile, Policy and Practice	This presents key policy and practice as it relates to County Clare	This chapter presents an overview and breakdown of target groups, demographic information and health information as it relates to the County with no direct or indirect relationship to European Sites.	Out
Chapter Four Current Provision of Services and Infrastructure	This chapter provides a breakdown of the different health services being offered around the county, identification of target groups and potential funding streams	This presents information on current service providers and potential funding streams and collaboration with no direct or indirect relationship to European Sites.	Out
Chapter Five Consultation	This chapter presents the consultation process to date undertaken to inform the Strategic Plan and the key issues that emerged from same.	No direct or indirect relationship to European Sites.	Out
Chapter Six Three Year Strategic Focus	This chapter provides information on the priority areas and how the action plan will be developed and delivered	This relates priority areas and the future preparation of an action plan. No direct or indirect relationship to European Sites	Out
Chapter Seven Delivery, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	The Local Community development committee will approve the Healthy Clare Working Group and the Healthy Clare Working Group will deliver the Strategy and Action Plan	This relates to governance, delivery, monitoring and evaluation over 3 years. No direct or indirect relationship to European Sites	Out
In combination effects	There are no in combination or cumulative effects identified in relation to the Healthy Clare Strategic Plan at this juncture.		

5 SCREENING CONCLUSION

This Screening Statement in support of Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with current available guidance. In particular the DEHLG (2010) and SNH (2015) guidance documents have guided the approach to this screening.

The principle trigger for Appropriate Assessment would be if the contents of the *Healthy Clare Strategic Plan 2019-2021* were likely to have significant effects on a European site. The strategy has been formulated based on a review of international, national and local health policy, practices and trends and thereafter consultation, and delivery. None of these elements of the Strategic Plan are identified as having any direct or indirect effects on European sites. Moreover given the high level and health focus of the plan, no potential direct or indirect in combination effects from other plans or projects are identified for this Strategic Plan.

Therefore, in accordance with the Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, it is concluded that the Healthy Clare Strategic Plan 2019-2021 has resulted in a finding of no significant effects, and therefore a Stage II Appropriate Assessment is not required.