



# **Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2015-2021**

## **Appendix 5**

### **Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Determination**



# **Part 1**

Determination as to whether or not the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan would adversely affect the integrity of a European site

**Wexford County Council  
November, 2014**

## **Introduction**

RPS, on behalf of Wexford County Council, carried out a formal screening process of the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020 to determine whether Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive was required. This Screening Report is included in Part 2 of this document. The Council propose Material Alterations to the Draft Local Area Plan. These proposed Material Alterations have also been formally screened to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment was required. This report forms an Addendum to the main Screening Report in Part 2 of this document.

The screening exercise was carried out in accordance with:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, referred to as MN2000, European Commission 2000; and
- 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 (EC2000).

The likely direct and indirect impacts that will arise from the Draft Local Area Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Local Area Plan, alone and in combination with other plans and programmes, have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity and conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 network. No Natura 2000 site will be adversely affected by the Draft Local Area Plan or the Proposed Material Alterations to the Plan. Further, there are a number of objectives in the Draft Local Area Plan governing the protection of Natura 2000 sites which will result in a positive impact on the Natura 2000 network. The Screening Report concludes that the Draft Local Area Plan or the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Local Area Plan will not have a

significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 network and therefore a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## **Determination**

Wexford County Council determined that an Appropriate Assessment of the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel 2014-2020 or the Proposed Material Alterations was not required having regard to

- The report of RPS contained in Part 2 of this document;
- The characteristics of the plan;
- The objectives of the plan to protect Natura 2000 sites and biodiversity; and
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report prepared by Wexford County Council

## **Part 2**

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

RPS

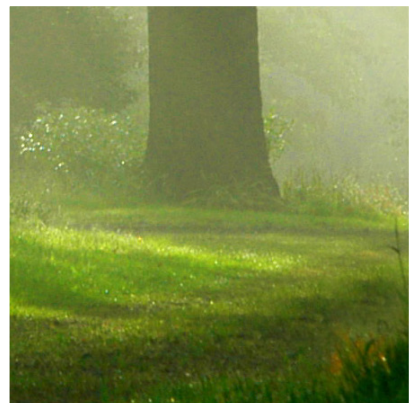
Updated October 2014



# Screening for Appropriate Assessment

## Draft Courtown and Riverchapel LAP 2014-2020

October 2014



# Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A Natura 2000 Sites Conservation Objectives**

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

This report comprises information in support of screening for an Appropriate Assessment in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Part X) (as amended); and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) of the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020.

## **1.1 PURPOSE TO THE DRAFT COURTTOWN AND RIVERCHAPEL LOCAL AREA PLAN 2014-2020**

It is an objective of the parent plan, the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019, to prepare a Local Area Plan for Courtown and Riverchapel. The purpose of the draft LAP is to set out a community led strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Courtown and Riverchapel area. This strategy will facilitate the planned, integrated and sustainable development of the area so that growth and development can take place in a co-ordinated manner, while protecting and preserving the area's character, heritage and amenity, and making a positive contribution to people's quality of life. The draft LAP has been prepared taking into account the Local Area Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in June 2013.

## **1.2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

The 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 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC) as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC.

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):

*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 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) states:

*If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [Natura 2000] 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 Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.*

These Articles mean that where the implementation of the draft LAP has potential to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, the relevant Local Authority (Wexford County Council) must ensure that an appropriate assessment is carried out in view of that site's conservation objectives. The draft LAP can be approved by Wexford County Council only if it has been ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 site(s) concerned, or in the case of a negative assessment and where there are no alternative solutions, the scheme can only be approved for reasons of overriding public interest.

### 1.3 STAGES OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Both EU and national guidance exists in relation to Member States fulfilling their requirements under the EU Habitats Directive, with particular reference to Article 6(3) and 6(4) of that Directive. The methodology followed in relation to this AA screening has had regard to the following guidance:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. <http://www.npws.ie>
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, referred to as MN2000, European Commission 2000; <http://ec.europa.eu>
- 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 (EC2000); <http://ec.europa.eu>
- Guidance document 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. <http://ec.europa.eu>

In complying with the obligations under Article 6(3) and following the EC2000 and MN2000 Guidelines, this AA has been structured in a stage by stage approach as follows:

#### 1) Screening stage

- Description of the draft Plan;
- Identification of Natura 2000 sites potentially affected;

- Identification and description of individual and cumulative impacts likely to result from the draft Plan;
- Assessment of the significance of the impacts identified on site integrity;
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects; and
- Screening conclusion.

## 2 SCREENING

### 2.1 DESCRIPTION OF DRAFT LOCAL AREA PLAN

Courtown and Riverchapel are located in the northeast of County Wexford approximately 6km east of Gorey, the main town in the north of Wexford, 16 km south of Arklow, County Wicklow and 35 km northeast of Wexford Town. The Wexford to Gorey Coast Road, the R742 passes through the centre of the plan area.

The two villages were once independent of one another however with the significant growth of the area the two villages have merged into one larger area. While commercial and tourist related developments are clustered around the harbour, the main social facilities, the school and community centre are located in Riverchapel. Both centres are dependent on one another for services and facilities.

It is not envisaged that any additional lands will be zoned for residential development from what was included in the Courtown and Riverchapel LAP 2002 (now expired), please see **Section 2.1.6** for further information. The draft LAP seeks to consolidate the existing urban settlement and will facilitate appropriate infill development subject to normal planning and environmental criteria. The draft LAP will facilitate the appropriate expansion of retail development sufficient to meet local needs and will support tourism development. In particular, the redevelopment of brownfield sites in the village centre will be encouraged. New community facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population will also be facilitated.

The draft LAP also promotes the integrated and sustainable development of the tourism product and infrastructure of the area. This will include objectives relating to recreation and marine leisure activities. The draft LAP also contains objectives for the development of environmentally sensitive coastal protection works.

There are no new roads proposed in the area. However, the development and upgrading of footpaths is a key objective of the draft LAP. The Council will promote the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car.



### **2.1.1 Development Strategy for the LAP Area**

The draft LAP envisages that Courtown and Riverchapel will experience a modest increase in population growth which will help to sustain existing services and increase the demand and feasibility to provide other important services in the plan area. The draft LAP also envisages that Courtown and Riverchapel will further develop its economic development potential and maximise its tourism role; both of which will be done in harmony with its permanent settlement role. The draft LAP focuses on the provision of additional infrastructure, services and community facilities to serve the existing and future population, and visitors to the area. The principles of sustainable development enshrine the strategy, with a strong emphasis on the protection of the area's natural heritage and environment.

### **2.1.2 Economic Development in the Plan Area**

Economic activity in the plan area is heavily focused on tourism, and it is considered that the greatest potential for economic and employment growth in the plan area lies in the further development of the local tourism product. There are many opportunities available to further maximise the tourism potential of both the plan area and the surrounding area and this is discussed in further detail in Section 6 of the draft LAP - Tourism and Economic Activity.

In terms of other sources of economic potential, the harbour is a key asset which could be further developed. The draft LAP also supports the development of enterprise ventures such as high quality office developments, call centres, I.T support services, start up or incubator units for new businesses, arts and crafts and artisan foods. The range of enterprise ventures is not limited to the aforementioned. The Council will consider all employment related proposals on their merits and their suitability to the area and subject lands

### **2.1.3 Tourism and Economic Activity**

There is significant potential to expand the tourism potential of Courtown and Riverchapel. Tourist activity can support community development, lead to local employment and help to enhance the overall image of the area. The draft LAP responds to this by promoting appropriate tourism developments and ensuring that

sufficient lands are zoned for tourism. The objectives of the draft LAP are designed to strengthen the tourism role of Courtown and Riverchapel while protecting and improving the quality of all available resources.

The draft LAP supports the sustainable development of the harbour area for marine recreation activities and associated infrastructure. It is essential that the location, scale, design, form and extent of any proposed development is capable of being integrated into the existing harbour area. Any such development will also have to comply with all relevant EU and national legislation, in particular the Habitats Directive and Environmental Impact Assessment.

#### **2.1.4 Community Facilities**

The draft LAP supports the provision of an extended range of community facilities in the plan area. While there is an existing community centre in Riverchapel, it is considered that based on the size of the population, the development of further community facilities would make a significant contribution on the local community. These facilities could be used for a variety of uses including the delivery of suitable health care services, community resource work, childcare and as well as catering for the various social and recreational needs of the community as discussed in further detail in Section 9 of the draft LAP.

#### **2.1.5 Access and Movement**

Courtown and Riverchapel are well served by a network of regional and local roads. The draft LAP has not identified a need for any additional link roads in the plan area.

Integrated land use and transportation planning is fundamental to the achievement of a shift in the modal share from the car to walking, cycling and public transport. The development of compact settlements with people living, working and shopping in the local area reduces the need to travel long distances, and increases the attractiveness of using alternative modes of transport.

Generally, the village centres and the established residential housing developments are well served by footpaths; however, there is no footpath link between the two village centres. There are also existing gaps in the footpath provision at Red Row and virtually no footpath provision from Riverchapel south bound to Glen Richards.

A well connected footpath network is essential to encourage more walking and improve public safety and therefore it is an objective of the draft LAP to address these deficiencies, subject to the necessary financial resources being in place. Map 10 of the draft LAP identifies the locations where additional accessible footpaths are required. The Council will also facilitate a pedestrian access between Riverchapel School and Beachside Estate. This will reduce the travelling distances for pupils, encourage pupils to walk to school which in turn will reduce the number of cars at the school during peak time. This pedestrian access is supported by Objective AM08 and is identified on Map 10 of the draft LAP.

#### **2.1.6 Housing**

The population target equates to 155 additional households/housing units required for the plan area. However, there are a significant number of vacant housing units in the plan area and it is considered that these units can contribute to facilitating the housing needs of the population target.

There is sufficient (1.8ha) undeveloped residential land zoned in the plan area to meet the housing requirement. These lands have been identified using the sequential approach focusing on infill sites in the village centre and thereafter greenfield lands located closest to the village centre. This, taken in conjunction with the quantum of housing units which can be provided by the current vacant stock and the extant permissions, is considered sufficient to meet the housing needs of the area during the lifetime of the draft LAP.

#### **2.1.7 Built and Natural Heritage**

Aside from protected structures there are other distinctive elements of the built heritage which make a positive contribution to the character of the area and help to achieve a sense of place. This includes elements of the older settlement of Courtown

such as the Fishermen's Cottages and the Harbour which have an important social and historical association with the development of the villages. The Council is committed to the protection, appreciation and appropriate re-use of this built heritage.

The Council will ensure that features or items of archaeological interest and recognised areas of archaeological potential are suitably safeguarded from development that would adversely affect and/or detract from the interpretation and setting of these sites.

Courtown and Riverchapel have a diverse natural heritage ranging from dunes, rivers and riparian habitats, woodlands and groups of trees. Natural heritage, often referred to as biodiversity, is important for many things including food, fertile soils and clean air and water. It can be threatened by the development of land and human activity. Therefore, it is important that the development objectives in the draft LAP are balanced with conservation measures and objectives which ensure that the area's natural heritage is protected and conserved.

While there are no Natura 2000 sites within or immediately adjoining the plan area, there are a number of these sites within 15km. These sites include the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC located approximately 10km along the coast to the north; the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC and the Cahore Marshes SPA, located approximately 10km along the coast to the south; and the Slaney River Valley located approximately 10km inland to the west. It is therefore an objective of the LAP (Objective AA01/NH01) to ensure that every plan or project and any associated works, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to appropriate assessment screening to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site(s) and that the requirements of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive are fully satisfied.

#### **2.1.8 Infrastructure**

Irish Water is now responsible for the delivery of water and waste water infrastructure. An upgrade to the Courtown Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is due to commence in 2014 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2015. The

upgraded plant will have a design capacity of 35,000P.E. with 20,000 P.E. allocated to Gorey and 15,000 P.E. allocated to Courtown.

A new Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and water storage reservoir are proposed at Ballyminaun Hill to the south of Gorey Town. It is anticipated that the new WTP will be completed mid 2016, subject to approval by Irish Water. Eight new boreholes will supply water to the new WTP at Ballyminaun Hill. Six of these boreholes have already been brought into production and the additional wells are expected to be brought into production once the new WTP is complete.

The upgrades to the WTP and the WWTP will ensure a sufficient supply of water and waste water infrastructure to serve new development in the plan area. Such infrastructure will be provided prior to, or in tandem with, the new development.

The Council will also encourage the owners of existing properties served by private on-site waste water treatment facilities to decommission these facilities and connect the property to the public waste water system. This would contribute to environmental gain and maximise the significant investment into this infrastructure in the plan area.

### **2.1.9 Flood Risk Management and Surface Water**

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identified, based on current available flood maps and associated information, that there are fluvial and coastal flooding risk issues along the course of the River Owenavorrhagh and River Aughboy and along the coastline. This has informed the zoning of lands in these areas. Where possible these areas have been avoided or zoned for compatible uses, for example Leisure and Amenity or Natural Amenity. The Council will have regard to all future flood maps and the flood management plan when assessing development proposals.

The management of surface water and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in rivers, streams and the storm water network. The Council will require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments. The incorporation of SuDS techniques allows surface water to be either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to water courses using porous surface

treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations. This will minimise the risk of flooding and contamination and protect environmental and water resources.

### **2.1.10 Coastal Protection**

Coastal erosion can have serious economic and social consequences. The winter of 2013/14 highlights the significant damage and costs to a community that can occur as a result of extreme weather events. As these events may be set to become more frequent, there is an increased need to ensure that future development in the plan area is carefully considered and managed from a coastal protection perspective. There is a strong case for restricting and containing development near the coast and development along the coast must recognise the need for coastal protection in all instances.

The draft LAP includes a statement of the Council's intent and an objective to carry out maintenance works on some existing coastal defence works. There is also reference to maintenance dredging of the harbour area and the potential, in the long term that the council will erect four breakwaters at Courtown beach to facilitate beach replenishing. Any such developments will be required to be subject to detailed environmental assessment and will be required to comply with the relevant EU and national legislation when such plans are developed to an appropriate stage. Such development will also be required to be in accordance with Objective CZM03 of the County Development Plan 2013-2019. The draft LAP also includes an objective to consider planning applications for coastal defence works by others. Such works will be required to be carried out in accordance with objective CZM03 of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019. The Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 was subject to SEA and Appropriate Assessment screening.

## **2.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT OF THE DRAFT COURTTOWN AND RIVERCHAPEL LOCAL AREA PLAN**

### **2.2.1 Water Quality**

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires Member States to manage all of their waters and ensure that they achieve at least 'good status' by 2015. EPA maps show that groundwater status in and adjacent to the plan area is good. Surface water



quality at Courtown North Beach Bathing Area and the Owenavorrhagh River is also good. However, surface water quality in the Breanogue River is identified as poor. WFD status is shown to be poor for both the Owenavorrhagh and Breanogue rivers and these rivers are identified as being at risk of not achieving good water quality status by 2015. Whereas, the coastal waterbody status is strongly expected to achieve good water quality status by 2015.

The Council is committed to protecting the water resources within and adjacent to the plan area, and to this regard there are a number of objectives within the draft LAP, which focus on maintaining and protecting the natural character and water quality of these waterbodies (e.g. Objective NH05 / F07 / WW02 / WW03 / WW05). Within the draft LAP area development proposals will be required to provide a buffer zone a minimum of 5-10m each side of the waters edge (e.g. Objective NH05 / F07). Objective WW02 specifically states %To ensure that development permitted would not have an unacceptable impact on water quality and quantity, including surface water, ground water, designated source protection areas, river corridors, estuarine waters, bathing waters, coastal and transitional waters+.

### **2.2.2 Water supply**

A new Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and water storage reservoir are proposed at Ballyminaun Hill to the south of Gorey Town. It is anticipated that the new WTP will be completed mid 2016, subject to approval by Irish Water. Eight new boreholes will supply water to the new WTP at Ballyminaun Hill. Six of these boreholes have already been brought into production and the additional wells are expected to be brought into production once the new WTP is complete. The upgrades to the WTP will ensure a sufficient supply of water to serve new development in the plan area. Such infrastructure will provided prior to, or in tandem with, the new development. It is an objective (Objective WW01) of the Council to promote the provision by Irish Water of adequate water to serve the needs of the plan area.

The Council is also actively pursuing a leakage reduction policy in the plan area and has a specific objective to this effect (Objective WW04).

### **2.2.3 Wastewater Facilities**

An upgrade to the Courtown WWTP is to commence shortly and is expected to be completed by the end of 2015. The upgrade will provide for 35,000 P.E. with 20,000 P.E. allocated to Gorey and 15,000 P.E. allocated to Courtown. The Council will also encourage the owners of existing properties served by private on-site waste water treatment facilities to decommission these facilities and connect the property to the public waste water system. This would contribute to environmental gain and maximise the significant investment into this infrastructure in the plan area.

The upgrades to the WWTP will ensure a sufficient supply of waste water infrastructure to serve new development in the plan area. It is an objective (Objective WW01) of the Council to ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided prior to, or in tandem with, new development.

The Council is committed to ensuring that adequate wastewater treatment facilities are in place to serve the existing and future population of the plan area (e.g. Objectives WW01 / WW02 / WW03 / WW05).

The upgrading of the drainage scheme in Courtown will lead to the general improvement of the water quality in the streams in the drainage scheme. A reduction in nutrient levels is to be expected with an overall improvement in the aesthetic quality of the waterways in the environs of Courtown.

### **2.2.4 Storm Water Management**

The management of surface and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in the storm water network, rivers and streams. New development can exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off. The provision of storm water retention facilities in new developments serve to attenuate surface water discharges until peak storm flows have abated. Surface water run-off and flow volumes can also be significantly reduced through the layout and design of new developments, for example by using permeable pavements in the design of new parking areas and access roads.

The Council will require the application of Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and have identified specific objectives in this regard (e.g. Objective F04 / F05 / F06). Reducing the extent of hard surfacing and using permeable pavements will aid in minimising the risk of flooding and contamination, and protect the environment and water resources.

### **2.2.5 Natural Heritage**

Courtown and Riverchapel have a diverse natural heritage ranging from dunes, rivers and riparian habitats, woodlands and groups of trees. There are two pNHAs in/adjacent to the plan area. Courtown Dunes and Glen pNHA (site code 000757) is a large area of mixed woodland situated immediately north of Courtown (at the northern end of the plan area). It consists mostly of mixed woodland along the Owenavarragh River and a dune ridge which is largely wooded. Ardamine Wood pNHA (site code 001733) is situated on the east coast approximately 3km south of Courtown (southern end of the plan area). The site consists of a woodland area with associated scrub and heath that slopes down to clay sea cliffs and bedrock shores.

The nearest Natura 2000 sites to Courtown include the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC located approximately 10km along the coast to the north; the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC and the Cahore Marshes SPA, located approximately 10km along the coast to the south; and the Slaney River Valley located approximately 10km inland to the west.

Protection of designated sites is high priority. The aim of the Council is to conserve and protect the natural heritage of the plan area to ensure that the ecological integrity of all natural heritage sites, designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, are protected.

The Council recognises that areas of nature conservation value are not confined to designated sites and there is a need to protect against the cumulative impact of development on the wide network of natural systems which make up the environment. Within the plan area and its immediate surroundings, an ecological survey has been completed to identify those habitats which would improve the ecological coherence of the entire area. The specific habitats identified include

significant treelines, dune scrub and woodland, watercourses and semi-natural areas, like mixed broadleaved woodland and fixed dunes. These are shown on Map 8 within the draft LAP.

The Council is committed to protecting the biodiversity and natural heritage of Courtown and Riverchapel, and to this end have included specific objections to ensure that not only are designated sites protected and enhanced, but that the ecological corridors connected to the entire area are also managed appropriately (e.g. NH01 / NH02 / NH03 / NH04 / NH05).

### 2.3 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURA 2000 SITES

This section of the screening process describes the Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the draft LAP boundary. A 15km buffer zone has been chosen as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected Natura 2000 sites are included in the screening process. This is in line with, *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*, produced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

**Table 2.1** lists the SACs and **Table 2.2** lists the SPAs that are within 15km of the LAP boundary, and **Figure 2.1** shows their locations in relation to the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020.

The integrity of a Natura 2000 site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the qualifying features of the SAC or SPA. The qualifying features for each SAC and SPA site have been obtained through a review of the Conservation Objectives available from the NPWS.

**Table 2.1: SACs within 15km of the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020**

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Habitats	Conservation Status <sup>1</sup>	Qualifying Species	Conservation Status <sup>1</sup>
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	<p>Estuaries [1130];</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140];</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260];</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles [91A0]; and</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0].</p>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p>	<p>Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029];</p> <p>Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095];</p> <p>Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096];</p> <p>River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099];</p> <p>Allis shad (<i>Alosa alosa</i>) [1102];</p> <p>Twaite shad (<i>Alosa fallax fallax</i>) [1103];</p> <p>Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106]; and</p> <p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355].</p>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Excellent</p>
001742	Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	<p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210];</p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110];</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila</i></p>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good</p>	-	

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Habitats	Conservation Status <sup>1</sup>	Qualifying Species	Conservation Status <sup>1</sup>
		<i>arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120];  Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]; and  Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetea) [2150].	Good  Good  Good		
000700	Cahore Polder and Dunes SAC	Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210];  Embryonic shifting dunes [2110];  Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]; and  Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130].	Good  Good  Good  Good	-	
001741	Kilmuckridge . Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]; and  Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130].	Excellent  Good	-	



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Habitats	Conservation Status <sup>1</sup>	Qualifying Species	Conservation Status <sup>1</sup>
002953	Blackwater Bank SAC	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110]	Good	-	

1 = Information on conservation status for each habitat and species within the SACs and SPAs was extracted from the Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms (in July 2013) on the NPWS website <http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/>. This information provides specific details on the conservation status of each habitat and species within the SAC and SPA rather than status of the habitats which is available in The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland.

**Table 2.2: SPAs within 15km of the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020**

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature Annex I species	Conservation Status
004143	Cahore Marshes SPA	To maintain or restore the favourable conservation conditions of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:  Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [A050];  Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [A140];  Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> ) [A142];  Greenland White-fronted Goose ( <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> ) [A395]; and  Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999].	Good  Excellent  Good  Excellent    Excellent

## **2.4 IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

The following potential impacts on Natura 2000 Sites owing to the implementation of the draft LAP have been identified.

### **2.4.1 Direct Impacts on Habitats and Species**

The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel has no potential to impact directly on the habitats or species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites in light of their conservation objectives as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area (ie. in excess of 10kms away).

### **2.4.2 Indirect Damage / Degradation of Habitats and Disturbance to Species**

The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel has no potential to impact indirectly on the habitats listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 sites in light of their conservation objectives, or result in disturbance to species as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area (ie. in excess of 10kms away), with no connecting pathways (i.e. rivers or streams).

### **2.4.3 Resource Requirements (e.g. Drinking Water Abstractions)**

The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel will require additional water resources. However, the proposed new boreholes to supply water to the new WTP at Ballyminaun Hill will not impact on the habitats and species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites in light of their conservation objectives as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area (i.e. No groundwater dependent ecosystems will be impacted).

### **2.4.4 Emissions (e.g. Disposal to Lands, Water Air)**

The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel has the potential to result in a reduction in the water quality in the receiving waterbodies through an increase in the waste water discharged. However, it is not envisaged that the implementation of the Plan will have any negative impacts

on water quality. The upgrade to the WWTP will have positive impacts for water quality and all new development will be subject to appropriate infrastructure being in place.

The surface water quality at Courtown North Beach Bathing Area is currently good, and the coastal waterbody status is strongly expected to achieve good water quality status in 2015.

#### **2.4.5 Excavation Requirements**

There are no significant excavations requirements proposed as part of the draft LAP and therefore, there is no potential to impact on the habitats and species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites.

### **2.5 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS**

#### **2.5.1 Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts**

**Tables 2.1** and **2.2** list the Natura 2000 sites within 15 km of the draft LAP area. There are six sites in all, five SACs and one SPA.

It is the aim of the Council to protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity within and adjacent to Courtown and Riverchapel. The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing sites designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, and have specific policies relating to their protection and maintenance, as appropriate (e.g. NH01 / NH02 / NH03 / NH04 / NH05). In particular, it is an objective of the Council to ensure that all plans and projects which could, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site(s) will be subject to Appropriate Assessment Screening (Objective AA01).

The nearest Natura 2000 sites to Courtown include the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC located approximately 10km along the coast to the north; the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC and the Cahore Marshes SPA, located approximately 10km along the coast to the south; and the Slaney River Valley located approximately 11km inland to the west. Protection of designated sites is high priority. The aim of the Council is to

conserve and protect the natural heritage of the plan area to ensure that the ecological integrity of all natural heritage sites, designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, are protected. Therefore, the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan will not result in direct impacts on the SPA or SACs through land take or fragmentation of habitats.

Increased development and construction of residential and commercial units will lead to increased demand for potable water and increased pressure on existing and future waste water treatment systems. The upgrades to the WTP and the WWTP will ensure a sufficient supply of water and waste water infrastructure to serve new development in the plan area. Such infrastructure will be required to be put in place prior to development taking place. It is not envisaged that the implementation of the draft LAP will have any negative impacts on water quality. The upgrade to the WWTP will have positive impacts for water quality and all new development will be subject to appropriate infrastructure being in place.

The Council is committed to ensuring that adequate wastewater treatment facilities are in place to serve the existing and future population of the plan area (e.g. Objectives WW01 / WW02 / WW03 / WW05). Such wastewater objectives will ensure that sewage will be treated to an appropriate standard such that it will not impact on receiving waters, and therefore, will not result in any indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.

There are a number of other watercourses within and adjacent to the draft LAP area, which drain into the St Georges Channel. The Council is committed to protecting these water resources, and to this regard there are a number of objectives within the draft LAP, which focus on maintaining and protecting the natural character and water quality of these waterbodies (e.g. Objective NH05 / F07 / WW02 / WW03 / WW05). Within the draft LAP area development proposals will be required to provide a buffer zone a minimum of 5-10m each side of the watercourse edge (e.g. Objective NH05 / F07). Objective WW02 specifically states 'To ensure that development permitted would not have an unacceptable impact on water quality and quantity, including surface water, ground water, designated source protection areas, river corridors, estuarine waters, bathing waters, coastal and transitional waters'.

The management of surface and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in the storm water network, rivers and streams. New development can exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off. The Council will require the application of Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and have identified specific objectives in this regard (e.g. Objective F04 / F05 / F06). Reducing the extent of hard surfacing and using permeable pavements will aid in minimising the risk of flooding and contamination, and protect the environmental and water resources.

Such water quality objectives will ensure that the receiving waterbodies, including the marine environment and its associated SACs (e.g. Blackwater Bank SAC), are protected, and therefore, will not result in any indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.

The Slaney River Valley SAC is a sufficient distance (11km) from the draft LAP area and has no connecting pathways (i.e. rivers or streams) to be impacted by the present or future development of the draft Courtown and Riverchapel LAP area.

This AA has examined each objective within the draft Courtown and Riverchapel LAP and has determined that there is no potential to impact on the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC, the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC, the Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC, the Blackwater Bank SAC or the Cahore Marshes SPA.

### **2.5.2 Cumulative and In Combination Impacts**

This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination or cumulative effects/impacts of the proposed draft LAP with other such Plans and projects on the Natura 2000 network. Other Plans and projects specific to the relevant Natura 2000 sites are the following:

- Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022;
- South-East River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015;
- County Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018;

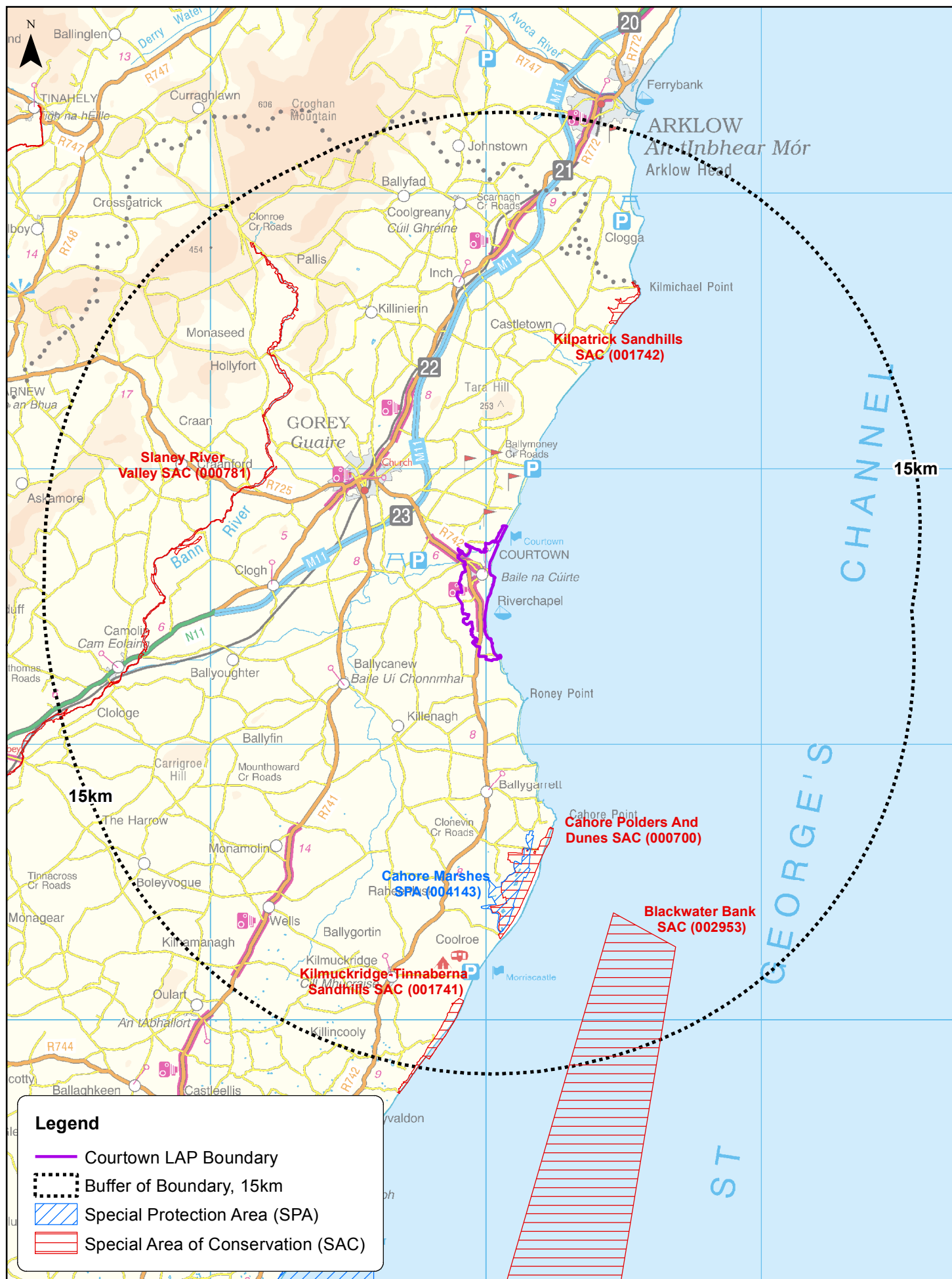
- Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019;
- Gorey Local Area Plan 2010;
- IPPC Programme;
- Groundwater Pollution Reduction Programmes;
- Surface Water Pollution Reduction Programmes;
- Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study;
- Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans;
- Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study;
- Courtown Drainage Scheme; and
- WTP and Water Storage Reservoir at Ballyminaun Hill.

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022 provides the framework within which regional development plans are to be prepared. Section 8 of this document (Heritage & Environment) sets a policy (PPO 8.6) to ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on plant, animal and bird species and habitats protected by law and that developments affecting Natura 2000 sites are assessed in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. There is also a policy (PPO 8.10) that Local Authorities should, where possible, promote awareness of invasive species in collaboration with other relevant agencies and take appropriate measures for their management and control.

The County Development Plan and Local Area Plan identified all include numerous policies and objectives aimed at protecting the natural environment, including Natura 2000 sites. Explicit reference to Appropriate Assessment Screening for plans and projects are made in these plans, and the plans themselves have been subject to Appropriate Assessment, with findings of no significant adverse effects.

The upgrading of the drainage scheme in Gorey and Courtown will lead to the general improvement of the water quality in the streams in the drainage scheme. A reduction in nutrient levels is to be expected with an overall improvement in the aesthetic quality of the waterways in the environs of Courtown.

No other pathway has been identified by which any of the Plans and Programmes identified could have a significant ~~in~~ combination effect on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified.



**Protected Sites, Natura 2000**

**Figure 2.1**

Project **AA for the Courtown LAP (2014-2020)**

Client  
**Wexford County Council**



**RPS**

West Pier Business Campus,  
Dun Laoghaire,  
Co Dublin, Ireland.

Tel: +353 (0) 1 4882900  
Fax: +353 (0) 1 2835676  
Email: [ireland@rpsgroup.com](mailto:ireland@rpsgroup.com)  
Web Page: [rpsgroup.com/ireland](http://rpsgroup.com/ireland)

**Issue Details**

Drawn By: NON	Project No. MDE1147
Checked By: BD	File Ref: MDE1147arc002D01
Approved By: KB	Drawing No. Rev: Arc0002 D01
Scale: 1:180,000 @ A4	
Date: 10/04/2014	
NOTE: 1. This drawing is the property of RPS Group Ltd. It is a confidential document and must not be copied, used, or its contents divulged without prior written consent. 2. Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence EN 0005014 ©Copyright Government of Ireland.	



### **3 SCREENING CONCLUSION AND STATEMENT**

The likely impacts that will arise from the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. No Natura 2000 site within 15km of the LAP area will be adversely affected. A Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix has been completed and is presented in Section 4 of this Screening Statement.

On the basis of the findings of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment of Natura 2000 sites, it is concluded that the proposed draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan will not have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## 4 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT MATRIX

Name of project or Plan	Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	<p>Slaney River Valley SAC;  Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC;  Cahore Polder and Dunes SAC;  Kilmuckridge . Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC;  Blackwater Bank SAC; and  Cahore Marshes SPA.</p>
Description of the project or Plan	<p>Courtown and Riverchapel are located in the northeast of County Wexford approximately 6km east of Gorey, the main town in the north of Wexford, 16 km south of Arklow, County Wicklow and 35 km northeast of Wexford Town. The Wexford to Gorey Coast Road, the R742 passes through the centre of the plan area.</p> <p>The two villages were once independent of one another however with the significant growth of the area the two villages have merged into one larger area. While commercial and tourist related developments are clustered around the harbour, the main social facilities, the school and community centre are located in Riverchapel. Both centres are dependent on one another for services and facilities.</p> <p>It is not envisaged that any additional lands will be zoned for residential development from what was included in the Courtown and Riverchapel LAP 2002 (now expired). However, the draft LAP seeks to consolidate the existing urban settlement and will facilitate appropriate infill development subject to normal planning and environmental criteria. The draft LAP will facilitate the appropriate expansion of retail development sufficient to meet local needs and will support tourism development. In particular, the redevelopment of brownfield sites in the village centre will be encouraged. New community facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population will also be facilitated.</p> <p>The draft LAP also promotes the integrated and sustainable development of the tourism product and infrastructure of the area. This will include objectives relating to recreation and marine leisure activities. The draft LAP also contains objectives for the development of environmentally sensitive coastal protection works.</p> <p>There are no new roads proposed in the area. However, the development and upgrading of footpaths is a key objective of the draft LAP. The Council will promote the use of alternative modes of transport to</p>

	the private car.
Is the project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?	No
Are there other projects or Plans that together with the project or Plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?	<p>Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022;</p> <p>South-East River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015;</p> <p>County Biodiversity Action Plan 2013-2018;</p> <p>Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019;</p> <p>Gorey Local Area Plan 2010;</p> <p>IPPC Programme;</p> <p>Groundwater Pollution Reduction Programmes;</p> <p>Surface Water Pollution Reduction Programmes;</p> <p>Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study;</p> <p>Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans;</p> <p>Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study;</p> <p>Courtown Drainage Scheme; and</p> <p>WTP and Water Storage Reservoir at Ballyminaun Hill.</p>
<b>The Assessment of Significance of Effects</b>	
Describe how the project or Plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.	<p>The following potential impacts on Natura 2000 Sites owing to the implementation of the draft LAP have been identified.</p> <p><b>Direct Impacts on Habitats and Species</b></p> <p>The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel has no potential to impact directly on the habitats or species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites in light of their conservation objectives as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area (ie. in excess of 10kms away).</p> <p><b>Indirect Damage / Degradation of Habitats and Disturbance to Species</b></p> <p>The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel has no potential to impact indirectly on the habitats listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 sites in light of their conservation objectives, or result in disturbance to species as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area (ie. in excess of 10kms away), with no connecting pathways (i.e. rivers or streams).</p> <p><b>Resource Requirements (e.g. Drinking Water</b></p>

	<p><b>Abstractions)</b></p> <p>The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel will require additional water resources. However, the proposed new boreholes to supply water to the new WTP at Ballyminaun Hill will not impact on the habitats and species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites in light of their conservation objectives as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area (i.e. No groundwater dependent ecosystems will be impacted).</p> <p><b>Emissions (e.g. Disposal to Lands, Water Air)</b></p> <p>The construction of new residential and other development within Courtown and Riverchapel has the potential to result in a reduction in the water quality in the receiving waterbodies through an increase in the waste water discharged. However, it is not envisaged that the implementation of the Plan will have any negative impacts on water quality. The upgrade to the WWTP will have positive impacts for water quality and all new development will be subject to appropriate infrastructure being in place.</p> <p>The surface water quality at Courtown North Beach Bathing Area is currently good, and the coastal waterbody status is strongly expected to achieve good water quality status in 2015.</p> <p><b>Excavation Requirements</b></p> <p>There are no significant excavations requirements proposed as part of the draft LAP and therefore, there is no potential to impact on the habitats and species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites.</p>
<p>Explain why these effects are not considered significant.</p>	<p>It is the aim of the Council to protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity within and adjacent to Courtown and Riverchapel. The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing sites designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, and have specific policies relating to their protection and maintenance, as appropriate (e.g. NH01 / NH02 / NH03 / NH04 / NH05). In particular, it is an objective of the Council to ensure that all plans and projects which could, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site(s) will be subject to Appropriate Assessment Screening (Objective AA01).</p> <p>The nearest Natura 2000 sites to Courtown include the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC located approximately 10km along the coast to the north; the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC and the Cahore Marshes SPA, located approximately 10km along the coast to the south; and</p>

	<p>the Slaney River Valley located approximately 11 km inland to the west. Protection of designated sites is high priority. The aim of the Council is to conserve and protect the natural heritage of the plan area to ensure that the ecological integrity of all natural heritage sites, designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, are protected. Therefore, the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan will not result in direct impacts on the SPA or SACs through land take or fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>Increased development and construction of residential and commercial units will lead to increased demand for potable water and increased pressure on existing and future waste water treatment systems. The upgrades to the WTP and the WWTP will ensure a sufficient supply of water and waste water infrastructure to serve new development in the plan area. Such infrastructure will be required to be put in place prior to development taking place. It is not envisaged that the implementation of the draft LAP will have any negative impacts on water quality. The upgrade to the WWTP will have positive impacts for water quality and all new development will be subject to appropriate infrastructure being in place.</p> <p>The Council is committed to ensuring that adequate wastewater treatment facilities are in place to serve the existing and future population of the plan area (e.g. Objectives WW01 / WW02 / WW03 / WW05). Such wastewater objectives will ensure that sewage will be treated to an appropriate standard such that it will not impact on receiving waters, and therefore, will not result in any indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>There are a number of other watercourses within and adjacent to the draft LAP area, which drain into the St Georges Channel. The Council is committed to protecting these water resources, and to this regard there are a number of objectives within the draft LAP, which focus on maintaining and protecting the natural character and water quality of these waterbodies (e.g. Objective NH05 / F07 / WW02 / WW03 / WW05). Within the draft LAP area development proposals will be required to provide a buffer zone a minimum of 5-10m each side of the water's edge (e.g. Objective NH05 / F07). Objective WW02 specifically states %To ensure that development permitted would not have an unacceptable impact on water quality and quantity, including surface water, ground water, designated source protection areas, river corridors, estuarine waters, bathing waters, coastal and transitional waters+.</p> <p>The management of surface and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution</p>
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	<p>risk in the storm water network, rivers and streams. New development can exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off. The Council will require the application of Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and have identified specific objectives in this regard (e.g. Objective F04 / F05 / F06). Reducing the extent of hard surfacing and using permeable pavements will aid in minimising the risk of flooding and contamination, and protect the environmental and water resources.</p> <p>Such water quality objectives will ensure that the receiving waterbodies, including the marine environment and its associated SACs (e.g. Blackwater Bank SAC), are protected, and therefore, will not result in any indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>The Slaney River Valley SAC is a sufficient distance (11km) from the draft LAP area and has no connecting pathways (i.e. rivers or streams) to be impacted by the present or future development of the draft Courtown and Riverchapel LAP area.</p> <p>This AA has examined each objective within the draft Courtown and Riverchapel LAP and has determined that there is no potential to impact on the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC, the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC, the Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC, the Blackwater Bank SAC or the Cahore Marshes SPA.</p>
List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.	<p>NPWS</p> <p>IFI: Mr. Donnachadh Byrne . (01) 2787022</p>
Response to consultation.	Identified the need for policies regarding waste water, waste water connections, uninterrupted fish passage of watercourses, protection of riparian zones and SUDS.
<b>Data Collected to Carry Out the Assessment</b>	
Who carried out the assessment?	RPS
Sources of data	<p>NPWS database</p> <p>Information from Wexford County Council</p>
Level of assessment completed	Desktop
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?	Wexford County Council Planning Department
Overall Conclusion	Stage 1 Screening indicates that the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan alone and in combination with other plans and programmes will not have a significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 network. Therefore, a Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under Article 6(3) of the Habitats

	Directive 92/43/EEC is not required.
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## **5 ADDENDUM**

### **5.1 SCREENING OF MATERIAL AMENDMENTS FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT**

The Chief Executive of Wexford County Council is recommending that proposed amendments be made to the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020. This addendum comprises a screening of the proposed amendments for Appropriate Assessment under the EU Habitats Directive.

### **5.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

The ~~Chief Executive's~~ Report on the Submissions and Observations received on the Draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2014-2020~~q~~(October 2014) recommended that proposed amendments be made to the draft LAP. These proposed amendments include minor changes to text in the Introduction and the Economic Development, Tourism and Economic Activity, Community Facilities, Recreation, Amenity and Open Space, Action and Movement and Housing chapters; minor changes to text in the Land Use Zoning chapter, and also minor changes to the Land Use Zoning. A strategic flood risk assessment has also been conducted, and amendments have been proposed to Section 14 ~~Flood Risk Management and Surface Water~~', which reflect the results of this assessment.

With regards to Natural Heritage, proposed amendments have been made to Section 12.3.3 ~~River Corridors and Riparian Zones~~q The proposed amendments increase the protection afforded to watercourses by stating that the Council will apply the principles set out in ~~Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment~~q(Shannon Regional Fisheries Board) when considering development proposals in the vicinity of rivers and streams. Amendments relating to this text have been proposed for Objectives NH05, NH07 and F07. Additional protection has been afforded to watercourses in proposed amendments to Objective NH06 relating to the culverting of rivers and streams.

It is also proposed to insert Section 12.3.4, which includes text relating to the control of invasive non-native species. Amendments relating to the control of invasive non-native species have been made to Objectives NH08 and NH09.



### **5.3 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS**

The likely significant impacts that will arise from the proposed amendments to the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan (2014-2020) alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been considered with regards to the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. The proposed material amendments will not result in any significant negative impacts upon the Natura 2000 network. Indeed, the proposed amendments relating to river corridors and riparian zones and invasive non-native species are likely to result in a positive effect on the ecology of the Courtown and Riverchapel area.

### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

The likely direct and indirect impacts that will arise from the proposed amendments to the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan (2014-2020) alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity and conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 network. No Natura 2000 site will be adversely affected by the proposed material amendments to the Plan. Further, there are a number of objectives in the draft Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan (2014-2020) governing the protection of Natura 2000 sites which will result in a positive impact on the Natura 2000 network. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed material amendments will not have a significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **NATURA 2000 SITES**

### **CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES**

## Conservation Objectives for Cahore Marshes SPA [004143]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- 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.

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, and
- 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.

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

- |                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| ◆ <i>Anas penelope</i>                | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>          | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>            | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ Wetlands                            | []          |

### Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Cahore Marshes SPA [004143]. Generic Version 4.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: [www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning](http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning)

# National Parks and Wildlife Service

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## *Conservation Objectives Series*

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Blackwater Bank SAC 002953



*An Roinn  
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta*  

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*Department of  
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*



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**Citation:**

**NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Blackwater Bank SAC 002953. Version 1.  
National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the  
Gaeltacht.**

**Series Editor: Rebecca Jeffrey  
ISSN 2009-4086**

## Introduction

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

A site-specific conservation objective aims to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at that site.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- 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.

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, and
- 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.

### Notes/Guidelines:

1. The targets given in these conservation objectives are based on best available information at the time of writing. As more information becomes available, targets for attributes may change. These will be updated periodically, as necessary.
2. An appropriate assessment based on these conservation objectives will remain valid even if the targets are subsequently updated, providing they were the most recent objectives available when the assessment was carried out. It is essential that the date and version are included when objectives are cited.
3. Assessments cannot consider an attribute in isolation from the others listed for that habitat or species, or for other habitats and species listed for that site. A plan or project with an apparently small impact on one attribute may have a significant impact on another.
4. Please note that the maps included in this document do not necessarily show the entire extent of the habitats and species for which the site is listed. This should be borne in mind when appropriate assessments are being carried out.
5. When using these objectives, it is essential that the relevant backing/supporting documents are consulted, particularly where instructed in the targets or notes for a particular attribute.

## Qualifying Interests

*\* indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive*

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002953	Blackwater Bank SAC
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1110	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time
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**Please note that this SAC adjoins Long Bank SAC (002161) and Carnsore Point SAC (002269). See map 2. The conservation objectives for this site should be used in conjunction with those for adjacent sites as appropriate.**

## Supporting documents, relevant reports & publications

*Supporting documents, NPWS reports and publications are available for download from: [www.npws.ie/Publications](http://www.npws.ie/Publications)*

<b>Year :</b>	2012
<b>Title :</b>	Subtidal benthic investigations of the Blackwater Sandbank
<b>Author :</b>	Aquafact
<b>Series :</b>	Unpublished document for the Marine Institute and NPWS
<hr/>	
<b>Year :</b>	2007
<b>Title :</b>	Benthic surveys of sandbanks in the Irish Sea
<b>Author :</b>	Roche, C.; Lyons, D.O.; Farinas Franco, J.; O'Connor, B.
<b>Series :</b>	Irish Wildlife Manual No. 29
<hr/>	
<b>Year :</b>	2013
<b>Title :</b>	Blackwater Bank SAC (site code 2953) Conservation objectives supporting document- marine habitat V1
<b>Author :</b>	NPWS
<b>Series :</b>	Unpublished document to NPWS



## Spatial data sources

<b>Year :</b>	Interpolated 2013
<b>Title :</b>	2005, 2012 sandbank surveys
<b>GIS Operations :</b>	Polygon feature classes from marine community types base data sub-divided based on interpolation of marine survey data. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising. Clipped to SAC boundary
<b>Used For :</b>	1110, Marine community types (maps 3 and 4)

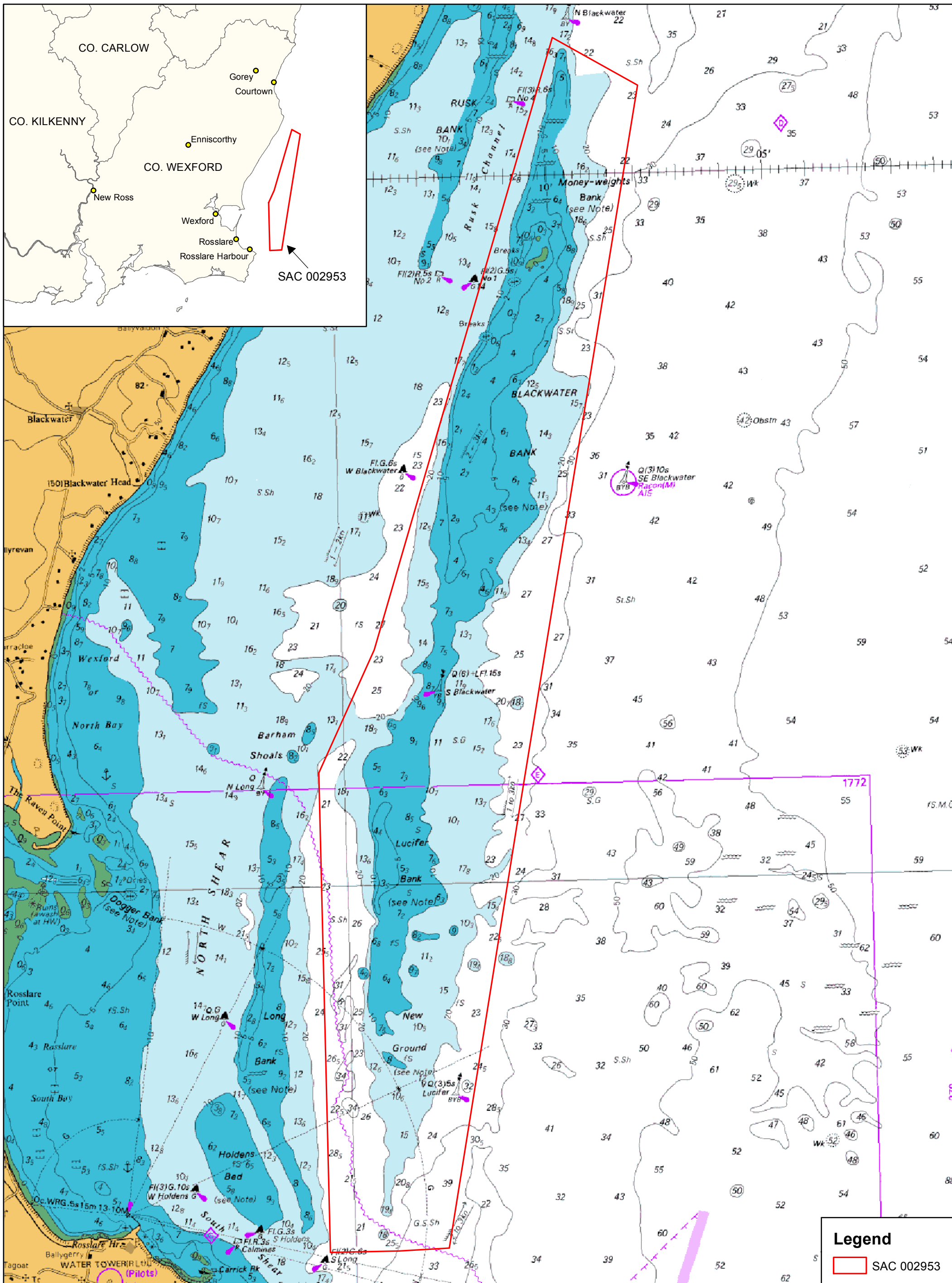
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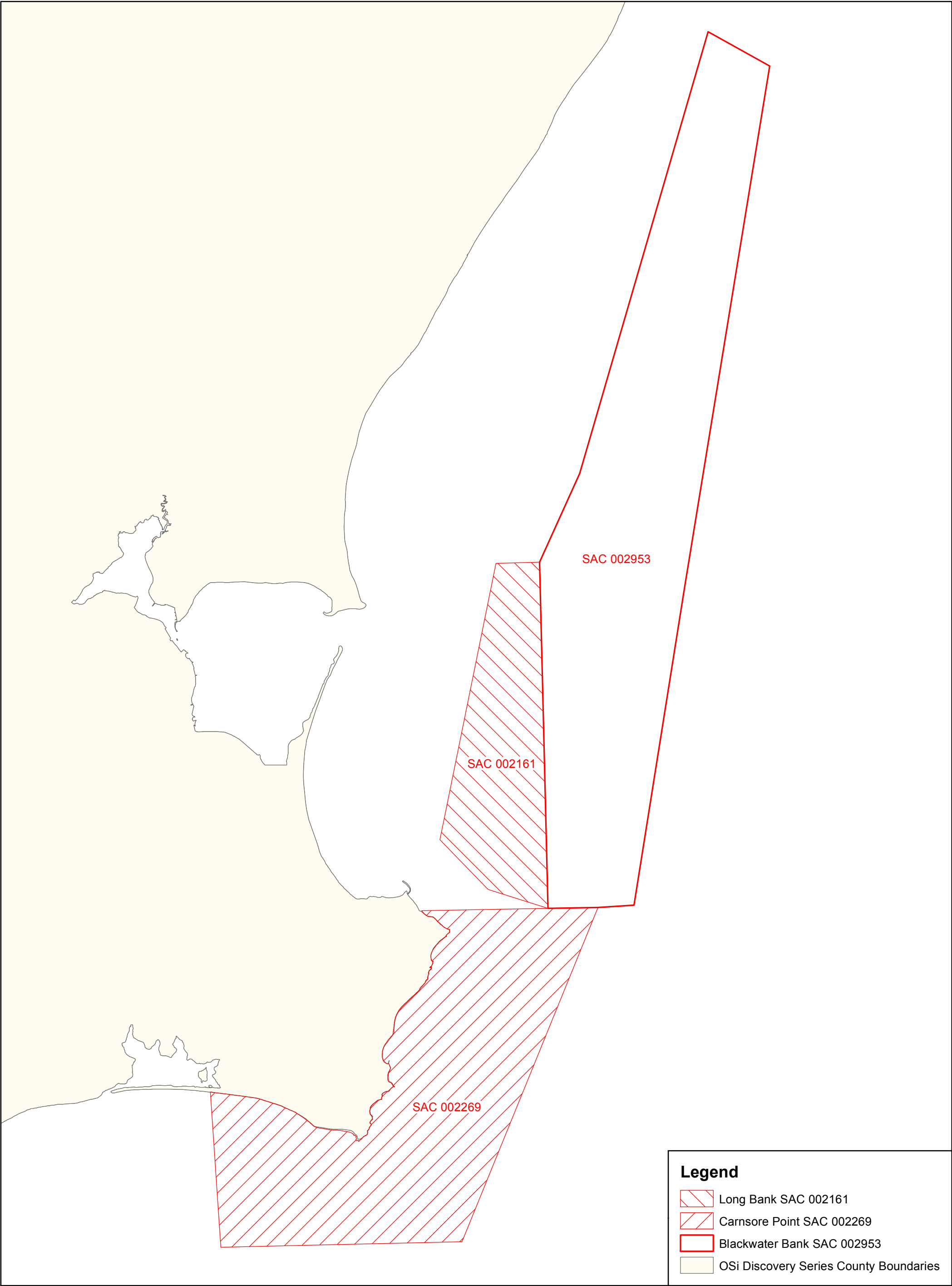
## Conservation Objectives for : Blackwater Bank SAC [002953]

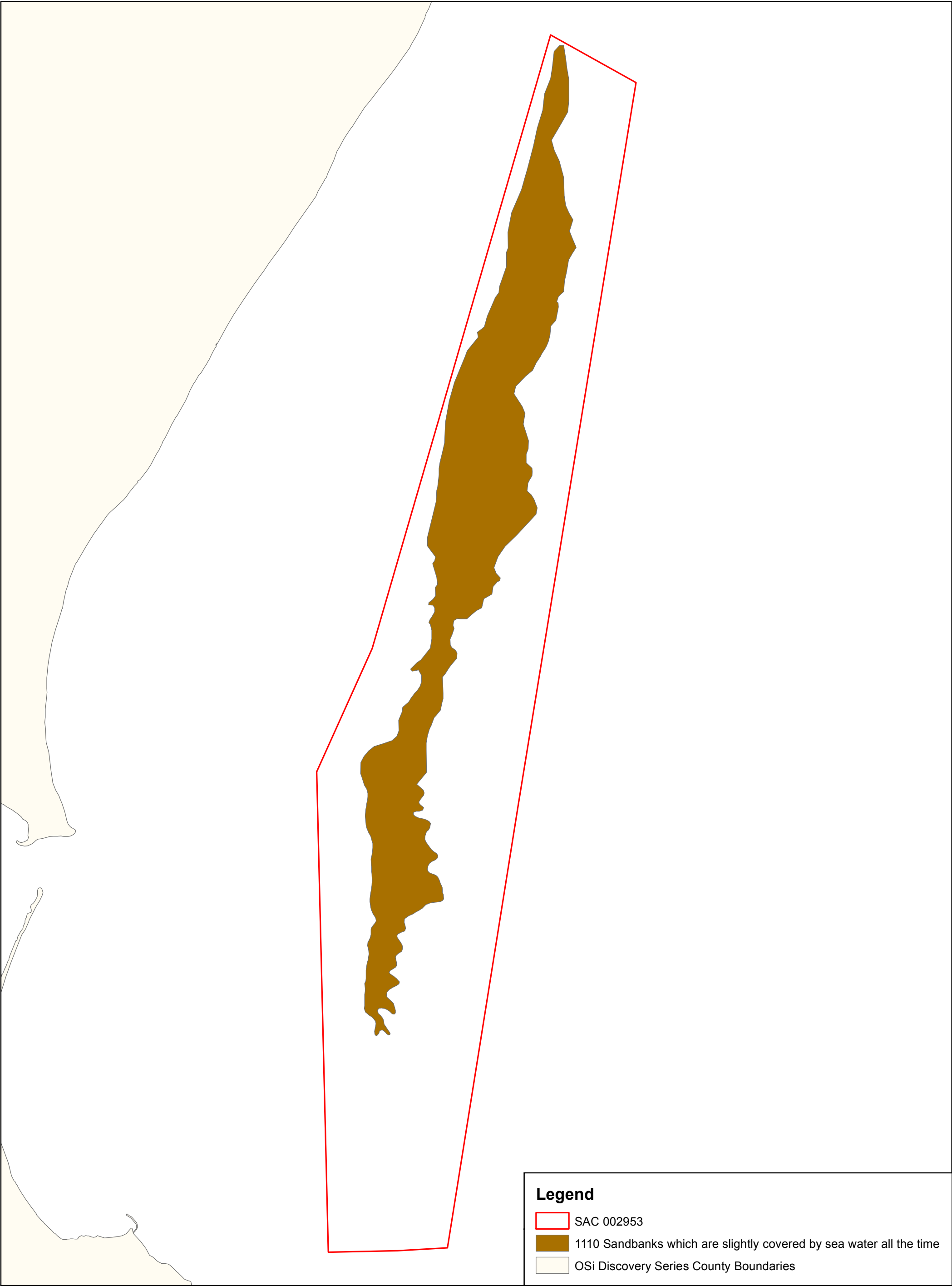
### 1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time

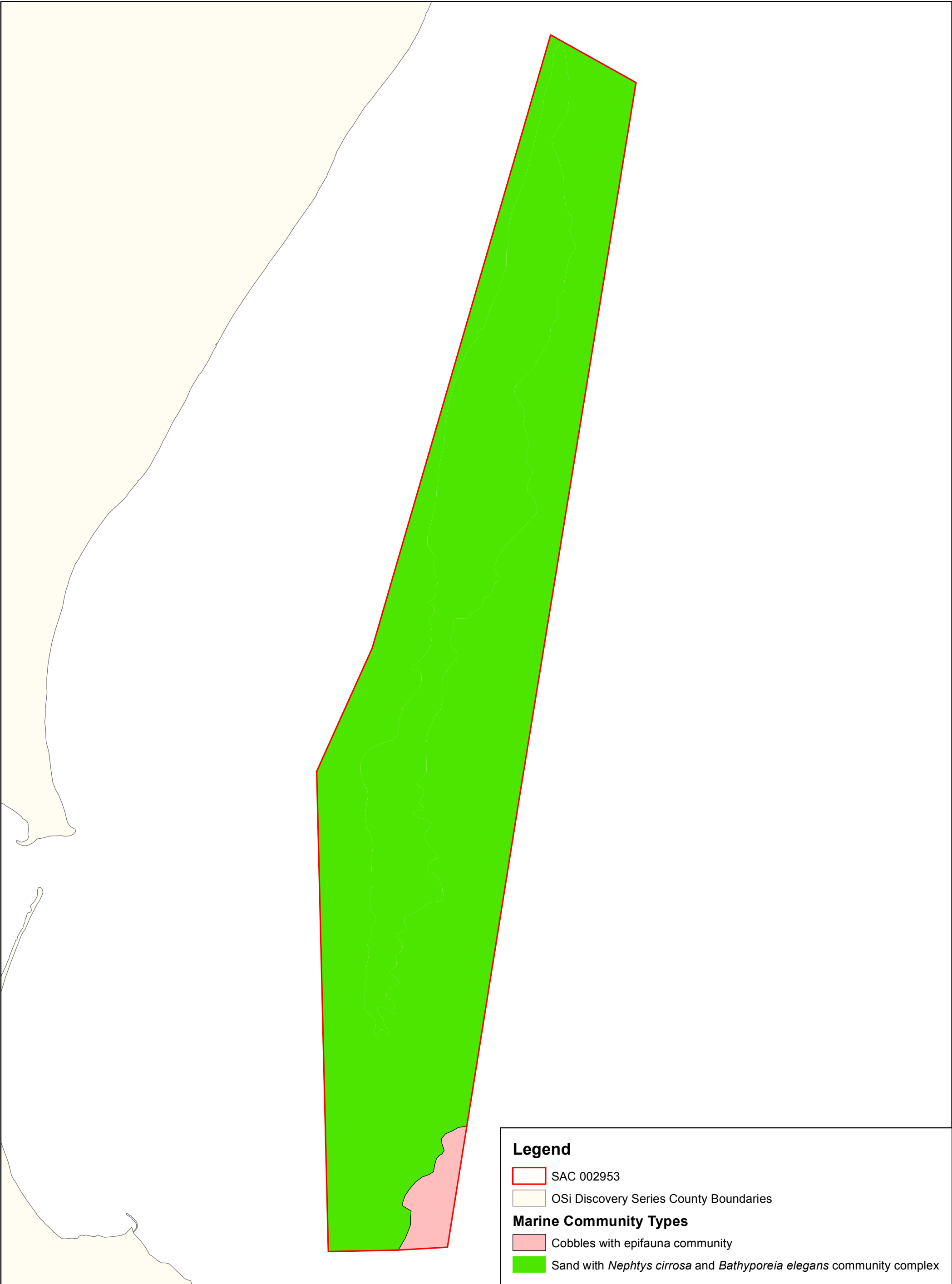
**To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time in Blackwater Bank SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 3	Habitat area was estimated as 3488ha using the Carnsore Point to Wicklow Head Admiralty Chart (no. 1787-0)
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	The distribution of sandbanks is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 3	Distribution established using the Carnsore Point to Wicklow Head Admiralty Chart (no. 1787-0)
Community distribution	Hectares	Conserve the following community type in a natural condition: Sand with <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> and <i>Bathyporeia elegans</i> community complex. See map 4	The likely area of the community was derived from benthic surveys undertaken in 2005 (Roche et al., 2007) and in 2012 (Aquafact, 2012). See marine supporting document for further details









**Legend**

- SAC 002953
- OSi Discovery Series County Boundaries
- Marine Community Types**
- Cobbles with epifauna community
- Sand with *Nephtys cirrosa* and *Bathyporeia elegans* community complex

## Conservation Objectives for Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC [001742]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- 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.

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, and
- 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.

Objective: 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:

- ◆ [1210] Annual vegetation of drift lines
- ◆ [2110] Embryonic shifting dunes
- ◆ [2120] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes")
- ◆ [2130] \* Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")
- ◆ [2150] \* Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Ulicetea*)

### Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC [001742]. Generic Version 3.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: [www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning](http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning)



## Conservation Objectives for Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC [001741]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

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- 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.

Objective: 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:

- ◆ [2120] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes")
- ◆ [2130] \* Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")

### Citation:

NPWS (2011) *Conservation objectives for Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC [001741]. Generic Version 3.0.*  
Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: [www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning](http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning)



# National Parks and Wildlife Service

## *Conservation Objectives Series*

### Slaney River Valley SAC 000781



*An Roinn  
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta*  

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*Department of  
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*



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**Citation:**

NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: Slaney River Valley SAC 000781. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

**Series Editors: Rebecca Jeffrey & Naomi Kingston  
ISSN 2009-4086**

## Introduction

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

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### Notes/Guidelines:

1. The targets given in these conservation objectives are based on best available information at the time of writing. As more information becomes available, targets for attributes may change. These will be updated periodically, as necessary.
2. An appropriate assessment based on these conservation objectives will remain valid even if the targets are subsequently updated, providing they were the most recent objectives available when the assessment was carried out. It is essential that the date and version are included when objectives are cited.
3. Assessments cannot consider an attribute in isolation from the others listed for that habitat or species, or for other habitats and species listed for that site. A plan or project with an apparently small impact on one attribute may have a significant impact on another.
4. Please note that the maps included in this document do not necessarily show the entire extent of the habitats and species for which the site is listed. This should be borne in mind when appropriate assessments are being carried out.
5. When using these objectives, it is essential that the relevant backing/supporting documents are consulted, particularly where instructed in the targets or notes for a particular attribute.

## Qualifying Interests

\* indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive

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### 000781 Slaney River Valley SAC

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1029	Freshwater Pearl Mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>
1095	Sea Lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>
1096	Brook Lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i>
1099	River Lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>
1103	Twaite Shad <i>Alosa fallax</i>
1106	Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> (only in fresh water)
1130	Estuaries
1140	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
1355	Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>
1365	Harbour Seal <i>Phoca vitulina</i>
3260	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation
91A0	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles
91E0	* Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> )

**Please note that this SAC is adjacent to/overlaps with Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC 000710; The Raven SPA 004019; and Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA 004076. See map 2.**

## Supporting documents, relevant reports & publications (listed by date)

Supporting documents, NPWS reports and publications are available for download from: [www.npws.ie/Publications](http://www.npws.ie/Publications)

<b>Title:</b>	Comparison of field- and GIS-based assessments of barriers to Atlantic salmon migration: a case study in the Nore Catchment, Republic of Ireland
<b>Year:</b>	in press
<b>Author:</b>	Gargan, P.G.; Roche, W.K.; Keane, S.; King, J.J.; Cullagh, A.; Mills, P.; O'Keeffe, J.
<b>Series:</b>	Journal of Applied Ichthyology
<b>Title:</b>	Slaney River Valley SAC (000781). Conservation objectives supporting document - marine habitats and species [Version 1]
<b>Year:</b>	2011
<b>Author:</b>	NPWS
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to NPWS
<b>Title:</b>	NPWS Rare and Threatened Species Database
<b>Year:</b>	2011
<b>Author:</b>	NPWS
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished NPWS Dataset
<b>Title:</b>	Slaney River Valley SAC (000781). Conservation objectives supporting document - woodland habitats [Version 1]
<b>Year:</b>	2011
<b>Author:</b>	NPWS
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to NPWS
<b>Title:</b>	Subtidal Benthic Investigations in Slaney River Valley cSAC (000781) and Wexford Harbour and Sloba SPA (004076) Co. Wexford
<b>Year:</b>	2010
<b>Author:</b>	Aquafact
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to NPWS & MI
<b>Title:</b>	Otter tracking study of Roaringwater Bay
<b>Year:</b>	2010
<b>Author:</b>	De Jongh, A.; O'Neill, L.
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Draft Report to NPWS
<b>Title:</b>	A provisional inventory of ancient and long-established woodland in Ireland
<b>Year:</b>	2010
<b>Author:</b>	Perrin, P.M.; Daly, O.H.
<b>Series:</b>	Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 46
<b>Title:</b>	Report of the standing scientific committee to the DCENR. The status of Irish salmon stocks in 2010 and precautionary catch advice for 2011
<b>Year:</b>	2010
<b>Author:</b>	SSC
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to DCENR
<b>Title:</b>	A survey of mudflats and sandflats in Ireland. An intertidal soft sediment survey of Wexford Harbour
<b>Year:</b>	2009
<b>Author:</b>	ASU
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to NPWS

<b>Title:</b>	The European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Water) Regulations 2009. [S.I. 272 of 2009]
<b>Year:</b>	2009
<b>Author:</b>	Government of Ireland
<b>Series:</b>	Irish Statute Book
<b>Title:</b>	Aspects of anadromous Allis shad ( <i>Alosa alosa</i> Linnaeus) and Twaite shad ( <i>Alosa fallax</i> Lacépède) biology in four Irish Special Areas of Conservation (SACs): status, spawning indications and implications for cons
<b>Year:</b>	2008
<b>Author:</b>	King, J.J.; Roche, W.K.
<b>Series:</b>	Hydrobiologia 602, 145–154
<b>Title:</b>	Water-starworts, <i>Callitriche</i> , of Europe
<b>Year:</b>	2008
<b>Author:</b>	Lansdown, R.V.
<b>Series:</b>	BSBI Handbook, No. 11, London
<b>Title:</b>	Poor water quality constrains the distribution and movements of Twaite shad <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Lacepede, 1803) in the watershed of river Scheldt
<b>Year:</b>	2008
<b>Author:</b>	Maas, J.; Stevens, M. ; Breine, J.
<b>Series:</b>	Hydrobiologia 602, 129 - 143
<b>Title:</b>	National Survey of Native Woodlands 2003-2008
<b>Year:</b>	2008
<b>Author:</b>	Perrin, P.; Martin, J.; Barron, S.; O'Neill, F.; McNutt, K.; Delaney, A.
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to NPWS
<b>Title:</b>	Supporting documentation for the Habitats Directive Conservation Status Assessment - backing documents, Article 17 forms and supporting maps
<b>Year:</b>	2007
<b>Author:</b>	NPWS
<b>Series:</b>	Unpublished Report to NPWS
<b>Title:</b>	A Survey of Juvenile Lamprey Populations in the Corrib and Suir Catchments
<b>Year:</b>	2007
<b>Author:</b>	O'Connor, W.
<b>Series:</b>	Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 26
<b>Title:</b>	Otter Survey of Ireland 2004/2005
<b>Year:</b>	2006
<b>Author:</b>	Bailey, M.; Rochford, J.
<b>Series:</b>	Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 23
<b>Title:</b>	Otters - ecology, behaviour and conservation
<b>Year:</b>	2006
<b>Author:</b>	Kruuk, H.
<b>Series:</b>	Oxford University Press

<b>Title:</b>	Harbour seal population assessment in the Republic of Ireland: August 2003
<b>Year:</b>	2004
<b>Author:</b>	Cronin, M.; Duck, C.; Ó Cadhla, O.; Nairn, R.; Strong, D.; O'Keeffe, C.
<b>Series:</b>	Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 11
<b>Title:</b>	The status and distribution of lamprey and shad in the Slaney and Munster Blackwater SACs
<b>Year:</b>	2004
<b>Author:</b>	King, J.J.; Linnane, S.M.
<b>Series:</b>	Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 14
<b>Title:</b>	Monitoring the river, sea and brook lamprey, <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> , <i>L. planeri</i> and <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>
<b>Year:</b>	2003
<b>Author:</b>	Harvey, J.; Cowx, I.
<b>Series:</b>	Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No. 5, English Nature, Peterborough
<b>Title:</b>	Ecology of Watercourses Characterised by <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> Vegetation
<b>Year:</b>	2003
<b>Author:</b>	Hatton-Ellis, T.W.; Grieve, N.
<b>Series:</b>	Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Ecology Series No. 11. English Nature, Peterborough
<b>Title:</b>	Ecology of the Allis and Twaite shad
<b>Year:</b>	2003
<b>Author:</b>	Maitland, P.S.; Hatton-Ellis, T.W.
<b>Series:</b>	Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Ecology Series No. 3. English Nature, Peterborough
<b>Title:</b>	Pondweeds of Great Britain and Ireland
<b>Year:</b>	2003
<b>Author:</b>	Preston, C.D.
<b>Series:</b>	BSBI Handbook, No. 8, London
<b>Title:</b>	Reversing the habitat fragmentation of British woodlands
<b>Year:</b>	2002
<b>Author:</b>	Peterken, G.
<b>Series:</b>	WWF-UK, London
<b>Title:</b>	Aquatic Plants in Britain and Ireland
<b>Year:</b>	2001
<b>Author:</b>	Preston, C.D.
<b>Series:</b>	Harley Books, Colchester
<b>Title:</b>	Diet of Otters <i>Lutra lutra</i> on Inishmore, Aran Islands, west coast of Ireland
<b>Year:</b>	1999
<b>Author:</b>	Kingston, S.; O'Connell, M.; Fairley, J.S.
<b>Series:</b>	Biol & Environ Proc R Ir Acad B 99B:173–182
<b>Title:</b>	The spatial organization of otters ( <i>Lutra lutra</i> ) in Shetland
<b>Year:</b>	1991
<b>Author:</b>	Kruuk, H.; Moorhouse, A.
<b>Series:</b>	J. Zool, 224: 41-57

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**Title:** CORINE Biotopes Database - Ireland

**Year:** 1989

**Author:** NPWS

**Series:** Unpublished NPWS Dataset

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**Title:** The vegetation of Irish rivers

**Year:** 1987

**Author:** Heuff, H.

**Series:** Unpublished Report

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**Title:** Otter survey of Ireland

**Year:** 1982

**Author:** Chapman, P.J.; Chapman, L.L.

**Series:** Unpublished Report to Vincent Wildlife Trust

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**Title:** The distribution of grey and common seals on the coasts of Ireland

**Year:** 1966

**Author:** Lockley, R.M.

**Series:** Irish Naturalists' Journal 15: 136-143

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## Spatial data sources

<b>Year:</b>	2010
<b>Title:</b>	EPA WFD transitional waterbody data
<b>GIS operations:</b>	Clipped to SAC boundary
<b>Used for:</b>	1130 (map 3)
<b>Year:</b>	Interpolated 2011
<b>Title:</b>	2008 intertidal survey data; 2010 subtidal survey data
<b>GIS operations:</b>	Polygon feature classes from marine community types base data sub-divided based on interpolation of marine survey data. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used for:</b>	Marine community types, 1140 (maps 4 and 5)
<b>Year:</b>	2005
<b>Title:</b>	OSi Discovery series vector data
<b>GIS operations:</b>	High water mark (HWM) and low water mark (LWM) polyline feature classes converted into polygon feature classes and combined; EU Annex I Saltmarsh and Coastal data erased out if present
<b>Used for:</b>	Marine community types base data (map 5)
<b>Year:</b>	Revision 2010
<b>Title:</b>	National Survey of Native Woodlands 2003-2008. Version 1
<b>GIS operations:</b>	QIs selected; clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used for:</b>	91A0, 91E0 (map 6)
<b>Year:</b>	Derived 2011
<b>Title:</b>	Internal NPWS files
<b>GIS operations:</b>	Dataset created from spatial references contained in files
<b>Used for:</b>	3260 (map 6)
<b>Year:</b>	2011
<b>Title:</b>	NPWS rare and threatened species database
<b>GIS operations:</b>	Dataset created from spatial references in database records. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used for:</b>	1365 (map 7)
<b>Year:</b>	2005
<b>Title:</b>	OSi Discovery series vector data
<b>GIS operations:</b>	High Water Mark (HWM) polyline feature class converted into polygon feature class; clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used for:</b>	1365 (map 7)
<b>Year:</b>	2005
<b>Title:</b>	OSi Discovery series vector data
<b>GIS operations:</b>	Creation of an 80m buffer on the marine side of the high water mark (HWM); creation of a 10m buffer on the terrestrial side of the HWM; combination of 80m and 10m HWM buffer datasets; creation of a 10m buffer on the terrestrial side of the river banks data; creation of 20m buffer applied to canal centreline data. These datasets are combined with the derived EPA WDF Waterbodies data. Overlapping regions investigated and resolved; resulting dataset clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used for:</b>	1355 (no map)

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<b>Year:</b>	2010
<b>Title:</b>	EPA WFD Waterbodies data
<b>GIS operations:</b>	Creation of a 20m buffer applied to river and stream centreline data; creation of 80m buffer on the aquatic side of lake data; creation of 10m buffer on the terrestrial side of lake data. These datasets are combined with the derived OSi data. Overlapping regions investigated and resolved; resulting dataset clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used for:</b>	1355 (no map)

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**1029      Freshwater Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera***

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The status of the freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) as a qualifying Annex II species for the Slaney River Valley SAC is currently under review. The outcome of this review will determine whether a site-specific conservation objective is set for this species

**1095 Sea Lamprey *Petromyzon marinus***

**To restore the favourable conservation condition of Sea lamprey in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Distribution: extent of anadromy	% of river accessible	Greater than 75% of main stem length of rivers accessible from estuary	Artificial barriers can block or cause difficulties to lampreys' upstream migration, thereby limiting species to lower stretches and restricting access to spawning areas. In this site, some barrier modification is required (e.g. Clohamon weir) to permit sea lamprey passage (Gargan et al., in press)
Population structure of juveniles	Number of age/size groups	At least three age/size groups present	Attribute and target based on Harvey and Cowx (2003)
Juvenile density in fine sediment	Juveniles/m <sup>2</sup>	Juvenile density at least 1/m <sup>2</sup>	Juveniles burrow in areas of fine sediment in still water. Attribute and target based on data from Harvey and Cowx (2003)
Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	m <sup>2</sup> and occurrence	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds. Improved dispersal of spawning beds into areas upstream of barriers	Attribute and target based on spawning bed mapping by Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). Lampreys spawn in clean gravels
Availability of juvenile habitat	Number of positive sites in 3rd order channels (and greater), downstream of spawning areas	More than 50% of sample sites positive	Target based on studies by Central Fisheries Board (CFB)/IFI; Ecofact for NPWS (e.g. King and Linnane, 2004; O'Connor, 2007)

**1096 Brook Lamprey *Lampetra planeri***

**To restore the favourable conservation condition of Brook lamprey in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Distribution	% of river accessible	Access to all water courses down to first order streams	Artificial barriers can block lampreys' upstream migration, thereby limiting species to lower stretches and restricting access to spawning areas. Barrier modification required to facilitate passage of adult fish within channels (Gargan et al., in press)
Population structure of juveniles	Number of age/size groups	At least three age/size groups of brook/river lamprey present	Attribute and target based on data from Harvey & Cowx (2003). It is impossible to distinguish between brook and river lamprey juveniles in the field, hence they are considered together in this target
Juvenile density in fine sediment	Juveniles/m <sup>2</sup>	Mean catchment juvenile density of brook/river lamprey at least 2/m <sup>2</sup>	Juveniles burrow in areas of fine sediment in still water. Attribute and target based on data from Harvey & Cowx (2003) who state 10/m <sup>2</sup> in optimal conditions and more than 2/m <sup>2</sup> on a catchment basis
Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	m <sup>2</sup> and occurrence	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds	Attribute and target based on spawning bed mapping by Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). Lampreys spawn in clean gravels
Availability of juvenile habitat	Number of positive sites in 2nd order channels (and greater), downstream of spawning areas	More than 50% of sample sites positive	Target based on studies by Central Fisheries Board (CFB)/IFI; Ecofact for NPWS (e.g. King and Linnane, 2004; O'Connor, 2007)

**1099 River Lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis***

**To restore the favourable conservation condition of River lamprey in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Distribution: extent of anadromy	% of river accessible	Greater than 75% of main stem and major tributaries down to second order accessible from estuary	Artificial barriers can block lampreys' upstream migration, thereby limiting species to lower stretches and restricting access to spawning areas. Barrier modification required to facilitate passage of adult fish within channels (Gargan et al., in press)
Population structure of juveniles	Number of age/size groups	At least three age/size groups of river/brook lamprey present	Attribute and target based on data from Harvey & Cowx (2003). It is impossible to distinguish between brook and river lamprey juveniles in the field, hence they are considered together in this target
Juvenile density in fine sediment	Juveniles/m <sup>2</sup>	Mean catchment juvenile density of brook/river lamprey at least 2/m <sup>2</sup>	Juveniles burrow in areas of fine sediment in still water. Attribute and target based on data from Harvey & Cowx (2003) who state 10/m <sup>2</sup> in optimal conditions and more than 2/m <sup>2</sup> on a catchment basis
Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	m <sup>2</sup> and occurrence	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds	Attribute and target based on spawning bed mapping by Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). Lampreys spawn in clean gravels
Availability of juvenile habitat	Number of positive sites in 2nd order channels (and greater), downstream of spawning areas	More than 50% of sample sites positive	Target based on studies by Central Fisheries Board (CFB)/IFI; Ecofact for NPWS (e.g. King and Linnane, 2004; O'Connor, 2007)

**1103 Twaite Shad *Alosa fallax***

**To restore the favourable conservation condition of Twaite shad in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Distribution: extent of anadromy	% of river accessible	Greater than 75% of main stem length of rivers accessible from estuary	In some catchments, artificial barriers block twaite shads' upstream migration, thereby limiting species to lower stretches and restricting access to spawning areas. Barrier modification required to facilitate passage of adult fish within channels (Gargan et al., in press)
Population structure- age classes	Number of age classes	More than one age class present	Regular breeding has not been confirmed in the River Slaney in recent years (King and Roche, 2008)
Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	m <sup>2</sup> and occurrence	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning habitats	
Water quality- oxygen levels	Milligrammes per litre	No lower than 5mg/l	Attribute and target based on Maas, Stevens and Briene (2008)
Spawning habitat quality: Filamentous algae; macrophytes; sediment	Occurrence	Maintain stable gravel substrate with very little fine material, free of filamentous algal (macroalgae) growth and macrophyte (rooted higher plants) growth	

## Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]

### 1106 Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar* (only in fresh water)

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Salmon in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Distribution: extent of anadromy	% of river accessible	100% of river channels down to second order accessible from estuary	Artificial barriers can block salmon's upstream migration, thereby limiting species to lower stretches and restricting access to spawning areas
Adult spawning fish	Number	Conservation Limit (CL) for each system consistently exceeded	A conservation limit is defined by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) as "the spawning stock level that produces long-term average maximum sustainable yield as derived from the adult to adult stock and recruitment relationship". The target is based on the Standing Scientific Committee of the National Salmon Commission's annual model output of CL attainment levels. See SSC (2010). Stock estimates are either derived from direct counts of adults (rod catch, fish counter) or indirectly by fry abundance counts. The fish counter at Clohamon is used to assess the run of salmon on the Slaney. The Slaney is currently (2011) below its CL for both 1SW salmon (meeting 54%) & MSW salmon (meeting 34%)
Salmon fry abundance	Number of fry/5 minutes electrofishing	Maintain or exceed 0+ fry mean catchment-wide abundance threshold value. Currently set at 17 salmon fry/5 min sampling	Target is threshold value for rivers currently exceeding their conservation limit (CL)
Out-migrating smolt abundance	Number	No significant decline	Smolt abundance can be negatively affected by a number of impacts such as estuarine pollution, hydroelectric schemes, predation and sea lice ( <i>Lepeophtheirus salmonis</i> )
Number and distribution of redds	Number and occurrence	No decline in number and distribution of spawning redds due to anthropogenic causes	Salmon spawn in clean gravels
Water quality	EPA Q value	At least Q4 at all sites sampled by EPA	Q values based on triennial water quality surveys carried out by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)



**1130 Estuaries**

**To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Estuaries in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 3	Habitat area was estimated as 1,905ha using OSi data and the defined Transitional Water Body area under the Water Framework Directive. See marine supporting document for further information
Community distribution	Hectares	The following community types should be maintained in, or restored to, a natural condition: Mixed sediment community complex; Estuarine muds dominated by polychaetes and crustaceans community complex; and Sand dominated by polychaetes community complex. See map 5	The likely area of sediment communities was derived from a combination of intertidal and subtidal surveys undertaken in 2008 and 2010 (ASU, 2009; Aquafact, 2010). See marine supporting document for further information

**1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide**

**To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 4	Habitat area was estimated as 1,027ha using OSi data. See marine supporting document for further information
Community distribution	Hectares	The following community types should be maintained in a natural condition: Estuarine muds dominated by polychaetes and crustaceans community complex; and Sand dominated by polychaetes community complex. See map 5	The likely area of sediment communities was derived from a intertidal surveys undertaken in 2008 (ASU, 2009). See marine supporting document for further information

## Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]

### 1355 Otter *Lutra lutra*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Otter in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Distribution	Percentage positive survey sites	No significant decline	Measure based on standard otter survey technique. FCS target, based on 1980/81 survey findings, is 88% in SACs. Current range in south-east estimated at 73% (Bailey and Rochford 2006)
Extent of terrestrial habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 64.7ha above high water mark (HWM); 453.4ha along river banks/ around ponds	No field survey. Areas mapped to include 10m terrestrial buffer along shoreline (above HWM and along river banks) identified as critical for otters (NPWS, 2007)
Extent of marine habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 534.7ha	No field survey. Area mapped based on evidence that otters tend to forage within 80m of the shoreline (HWM) (NPWS, 2007; Kruuk, 2006)
Extent of freshwater (river) habitat	Kilometres	No significant decline. Length mapped and calculated as 264.1km	No field survey. River length calculated on the basis that otters will utilise freshwater habitats from estuary to headwaters (Chapman and Chapman, 1982)
Extent of freshwater (lake/lagoon) habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 0.4ha	No field survey. Area mapped based on evidence that otters tend to forage within 80m of the shoreline (NPWS, 2007)
Couching sites and holts	Number	No significant decline	Otters need lying up areas throughout their territory where they are secure from disturbance (Kruuk, 2006; Kruuk and Moorhouse, 1991)
Fish biomass available	Kilograms	No significant decline	Broad diet that varies locally and seasonally, but dominated by fish, in particular salmonids, eels and sticklebacks in freshwater (Bailey and Rochford 2006) and wrasse and rockling in coastal waters (Kingston et al., 1999)
Barriers to connectivity	Number	No significant increase	Otters will regularly commute across stretches of open water up to 500m e.g. between the mainland and an island; between two islands; across an estuary (De Jongh & O'Neill, 2010). It is important that such commuting routes are not obstructed

**1365 Harbour Seal *Phoca vitulina***

**To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Harbour Seal in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Access to suitable habitat	Number of artificial barriers	Species range within the site should not be restricted by artificial barriers to site use. See map 7	See marine supporting document for further details
Breeding behaviour	Breeding sites	The breeding sites should be maintained in a natural condition. See map 7	Attribute and target based on background knowledge of Irish breeding populations and review of data from unpublished National Parks & Wildlife Service records. See marine supporting document for further details
Moulting behaviour	Moult haul-out sites	The moult haul-out sites should be maintained in a natural condition. See map 7	Attribute and target based on background knowledge of Irish populations, review of data from Lockley (1966), Cronin et al. (2004) and unpublished National Parks & Wildlife Service records. See marine supporting document for further details
Resting behaviour	Resting haul-out sites	The resting haul-out sites should be maintained in a natural condition. See map 7	Attribute and target based on background knowledge of Irish populations and unpublished National Parks & Wildlife Service records. See marine supporting document for further details
Disturbance	Level of impact	Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the harbour seal population at the site. See map 7	See marine supporting document for further details

## Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]

### 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes. See map 6 for mapped known extent	The full distribution of this habitat and its sub-types in this site is currently unknown. The basis of the selection of the SAC for the habitat is the presence of an excellent example of the vegetation assemblage associated with tidal reaches of large rivers between Enniscorthy and Polladern townland (see map 6). This sub-type is characterised by the presence of the rare and protected species short-leaved water-starwort ( <i>Callitriche truncata</i> ) and Opposite-leaved pondweed ( <i>Groenlandia densa</i> ). Other sub-types of the habitat were recorded in two tributaries of the Slaney: <i>Scapanietum undulatae</i> and <i>Pellietum epiphyllae scapanietosum</i> (Derreen River) and <i>Callitricho-Batrachionthe</i> (Derreen and Derry Rivers) (Heuff, 1987). Other examples of these or other sub-types may be present within the SAC
Habitat area	Kilometres	Area stable at 12.6km or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 6	The full extent of this habitat in this site is currently unknown. The target of 12.6km applies to the tidal sub-type only
Hydrological regime: river flow	Metres per second	Maintain appropriate hydrological regimes	Due to regular disturbance (through variations in flow), river macrophytes rarely reach a climax condition but frequently occur as transient communities. A natural (relatively unmodified) flow regime is required for both plant communities and channel geomorphology to be in favourable condition, exhibiting typical dynamics for the river type (Hatton-Ellis and Grieve, 2003). For most of the sub-types of this habitat, high flows are required to maintain the substratum (see below) necessary for the characteristic species. Flow variation is particularly important, with high and flood flows being critical to the hydromorphology
Hydrological regime: tidal influence	Daily water level fluctuations - metres	Maintain natural tidal regime	The disturbance associated with the tidal regime is the primary driver of the tidal sub-type and rare associated species (see Lansdown, 2008; Preston, 2003; Preston and Croft, 2001)

**3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation**

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Substratum composition: particle size range	Millimetres	For the tidal sub-type, the substratum of the channel must be dominated by particles of sand to gravel, with silt at the river margins	Target applies to tidal sub-type only. The size and distribution of substratum particles is largely determined by the river flow and tidal regime. Short-leaved water-starwort ( <i>Callitriche truncata</i> ) has been recorded from gravel-dominated substratum in the centre of the channel, as well as muds in marginal inlets and at the rivers' edge (J. Ryan, pers. comm., NPWS Rare and Threatened Species Database, 2011). Opposite-leaved pondweed ( <i>Groenlandia densa</i> ) is typically found on silts, sometimes sands, while needle spike-rush ( <i>Eleocharis acicularis</i> ) requires the marginal fine muds
Water quality: nutrients	Milligrammes per litre	The concentration of nutrients in the water column must be sufficiently low to prevent changes in species composition or habitat condition	The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) do not monitor the tidal stretch of the Slaney. However, the data from upstream of Enniscorthy suggest the water quality for the tidal stretch is at good status (2007-2009). It is likely that the rare species associated with the tidal sub-type are tolerant of some nutrient enrichment, but may be sensitive to severe enrichment (Preston, 2003). Consequently, water quality should reach Water Framework Directive good status, in terms of nutrient standards, and macroinvertebrate and phytobenthos quality elements (see S.I. 272 of 2009)

## Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]

### 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculon fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculon fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	Typical species of the relevant habitat sub-type reach favourable status	The sub-types of this habitat are poorly understood and their typical species have not yet been defined. Additional typical species and appropriate targets may emerge. The typical species of the tidal sub-type in the Slaney include short-leaved water-starwort ( <i>Callitriche truncata</i> ), opposite-leaved pondweed ( <i>Groenlandia densa</i> ), spiked water-milfoil ( <i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i> ), other pondweeds ( <i>Potamogeton</i> spp.), as well as pioneer vegetation of bare mud, e.g. needle spike-rush ( <i>Eleocharis acicularis</i> ) (NPWS Rare and Threatened Species Database, 2011; NPWS, 1989; J. Ryan, pers. comm.). The tidal stretch also supports important reed beds (including common reed ( <i>Phragmites australis</i> ), greater pond-sedge ( <i>Carex riparia</i> ), reed canary-grass ( <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> ) and common club-rush ( <i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i> )), marginal swamp vegetation and freshwater marsh. The invasive macrophyte Nuttall's waterweed ( <i>Elodea nuttallii</i> ) is also known to occur in the tidal stretch of the Slaney (R. Goodwillie, pers. comm.). The typical species may include higher plants, bryophytes, macroalgae and microalgae
Floodplain connectivity: area	Hectares	The area of active floodplain at and upstream of the habitat must be maintained	River connectivity with the floodplain must be maintained. The site of the tidal sub-type in the Slaney River is within an area of floodplain. Floodplain connectivity is particularly important in terms of sediment sorting and nutrient deposition

## Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]

### 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles

To restore the favourable conservation condition of old sessile oakwoods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, at least 146.17ha for sub-sites surveyed. See map 6	Minimum area, based on 10 sites surveyed by Perrin et al. (2008) - site codes 1, 8, 26, 158, 172, 180, 210, 310, 749 and 988. NB further unsurveyed areas maybe present within the SAC
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline. Surveyed locations shown on map 6	Distribution based on Perrin et al. (2008). NB further unsurveyed areas maybe present within the SAC
Woodland size	Hectares	Area stable or increasing. Where topographically possible, "large" woods at least 25ha in size and "small" woods at least 3ha in size	The sizes of at least some of the existing woodlands need to be increased in order to reduce habitat fragmentation and benefit those species requiring 'deep' woodland conditions (Peterken, 2002). Topographical constraints may restrict expansion
Woodland structure: cover and height	Percentage and metres	Diverse structure with a relatively closed canopy containing mature trees; subcanopy layer with semi-mature trees and shrubs; and well-developed herb layer	Described in Perrin et al. (2008). See woodland habitats supporting document for further details
Woodland structure: community diversity and extent	Hectares	Maintain diversity and extent of community types	Described in Perrin et al. (2008). See woodland habitats supporting document for further details
Woodland structure: natural regeneration	Seedling:sapling:pole ratio	Seedlings, saplings and pole age-classes occur in adequate proportions to ensure survival of woodland canopy	Oak regenerates poorly. In suitable sites ash can regenerate in large numbers although few seedlings reach pole size
Woodland structure: dead wood	m <sup>3</sup> per hectare; number per hectare	At least 30m <sup>3</sup> /ha of fallen timber greater than 10cm diameter; 30 snags/ha; both categories should include stems greater than 40cm diameter	Dead wood is a valuable resource and an integral part of a healthy, functioning woodland ecosystem.
Woodland structure: veteran trees	Number per hectare	No decline	Mature and veteran trees are important habitats for bryophytes, lichens, saproxylic organisms and some bird species. Their retention is important to ensure continuity of habitats/niches and propagule sources
Woodland structure: indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	No decline	Includes ancient or long-established woodlands, archaeological and geological features as well as red-data and other rare or localised species. Perrin and Daly (2010) list sites 1, 26, 158, 172, 180, 310, 749 as potential ancient/long-established woodlands



**91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles**

To restore the favourable conservation condition of old sessile oakwoods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Vegetation composition: native tree cover	Percentage	No decline. Native tree cover not less than 95%	Species reported in Perrin et al. (2008)
Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	A variety of typical native species present, depending on woodland type, including oak ( <i>Quercus petraea</i> ) and birch ( <i>Betula pubescens</i> )	Species reported in Perrin et al. (2008)
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Occurrence	Negative indicator species, particularly non-native invasive species, absent or under control	The following are the most common invasive species in this woodland type: beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> ), rhododendron ( <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> ), cherry laurel ( <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> )

## Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]

### 91E0 \* Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion) in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, at least 18.7ha for sites surveyed. See map 6	Minimum area, based on 7 sites surveyed by Perrin et al. (2008) - site codes 1, 157, 208, 209, 211, 875, 988. NB further unsurveyed areas maybe present within the SAC
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline. Surveyed locations shown on map 6	Distribution based on Perrin et al. (2008). NB further unsurveyed areas maybe present within the SAC
Woodland size	Hectares	Area stable or increasing. Where topographically possible, "large" woods at least 25ha in size and "small" woods at least 3ha in size	The sizes of at least some of the existing woodlands need to be increased in order to reduce habitat fragmentation and benefit those species requiring 'deep' woodland conditions (Peterken, 2002). Topographical and land-ownership constraints may restrict expansion
Woodland structure: cover and height	Percentage and metres	Diverse structure with a relatively closed canopy containing mature trees; subcanopy layer with semi-mature trees and shrubs; and well-developed herb layer	Described in Perrin et al. (2008). See woodland habitats supporting document for further details
Woodland structure: community diversity and extent	Hectares	Maintain diversity and extent of community types	Described in Perrin et al. (2008). See woodland habitats supporting document for further details
Woodland structure: natural regeneration	Seedling:sapling:pole ratio	Seedlings, saplings and pole age-classes occur in adequate proportions to ensure survival of woodland canopy	Alder and oak regenerate poorly. Ash often regenerates in large numbers although few seedlings reach pole size
Hydrological regime: Flooding depth/height of water table	Metres	Appropriate hydrological regime necessary for maintenance of alluvial vegetation	Periodic flooding is essential to maintain alluvial woodlands along river floodplains
Woodland structure: dead wood	m <sup>3</sup> per hectare; number per hectare	At least 30m <sup>3</sup> /ha of fallen timber greater than 10cm diameter; 30 snags/ha; both categories should include stems greater than 40cm diameter (greater than 20cm diameter in the case of alder)	Dead wood is a valuable resource and an integral part of a healthy, functioning woodland ecosystem

**Conservation objectives for: Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]**

**91E0 \* Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)**

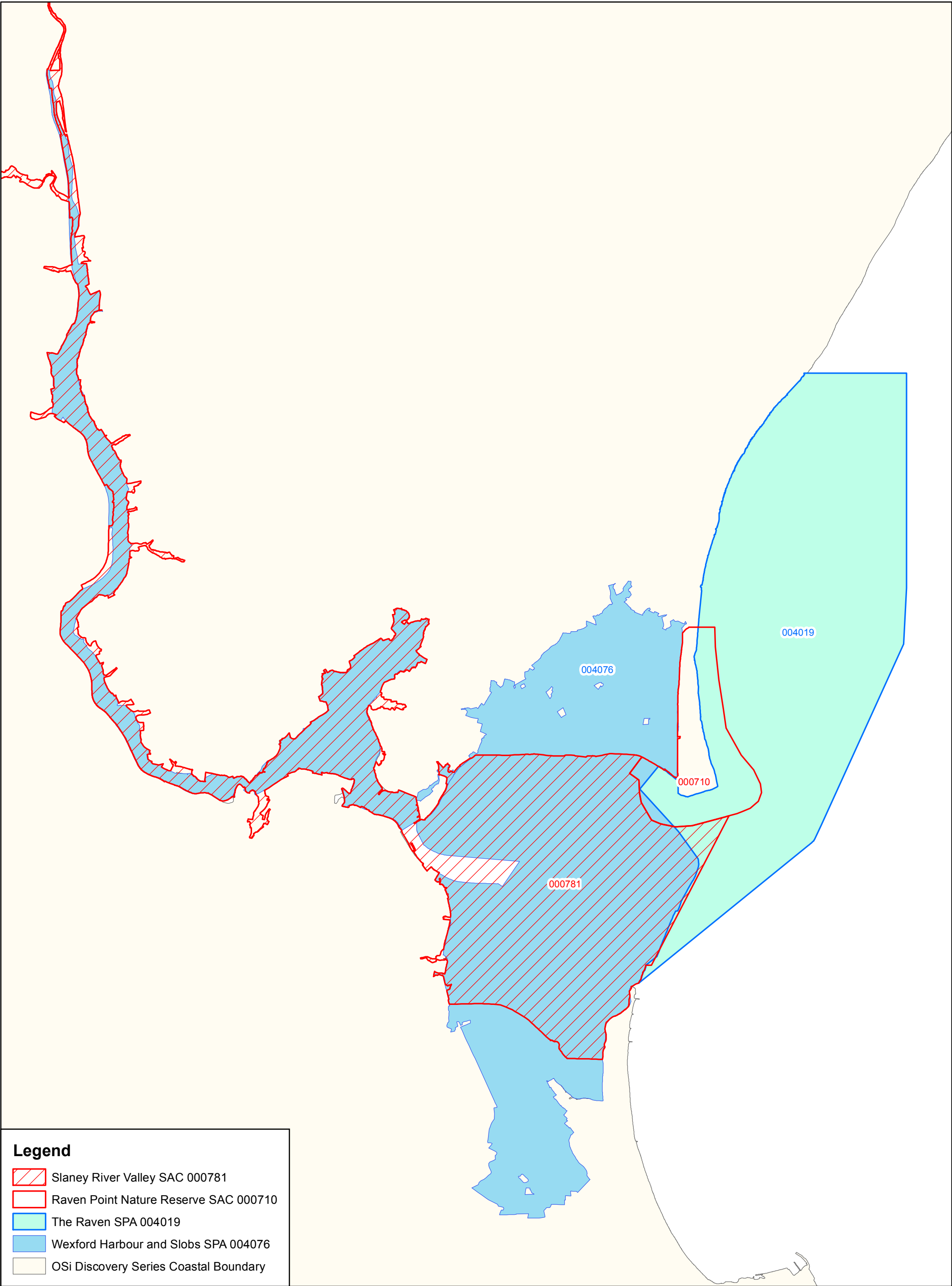
To restore the favourable conservation condition of Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion) in the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Woodland structure: veteran trees	Number per hectare	No decline	Mature and veteran trees are important habitats for bryophytes, lichens, saproxylic organisms and some bird species. Their retention is important to ensure continuity of habitats/niches and propagule sources
Woodland structure: indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	No decline	Includes ancient or long-established woodlands, archaeological and geological features as well as red-data and other rare or localised species. Perrin & Daly (2010) list site 1as containing potential ancient/long established woodlands
Vegetation composition: native tree cover	Percentage	No decline. Native tree cover not less than 95%	Species reported in Perrin et al. (2008)
Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	A variety of typical native species present, depending on woodland type, including alder ( <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> ), willows ( <i>Salix</i> spp) and, locally, oak ( <i>Quercus robur</i> ) and ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> )	Species reported in Perrin et al. (2008)
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Occurrence	Negative indicator species, particularly non-native invasive species, absent or under control	The following are the most common invasive species in this woodland type: sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> ) and Himalayan balsam ( <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> )








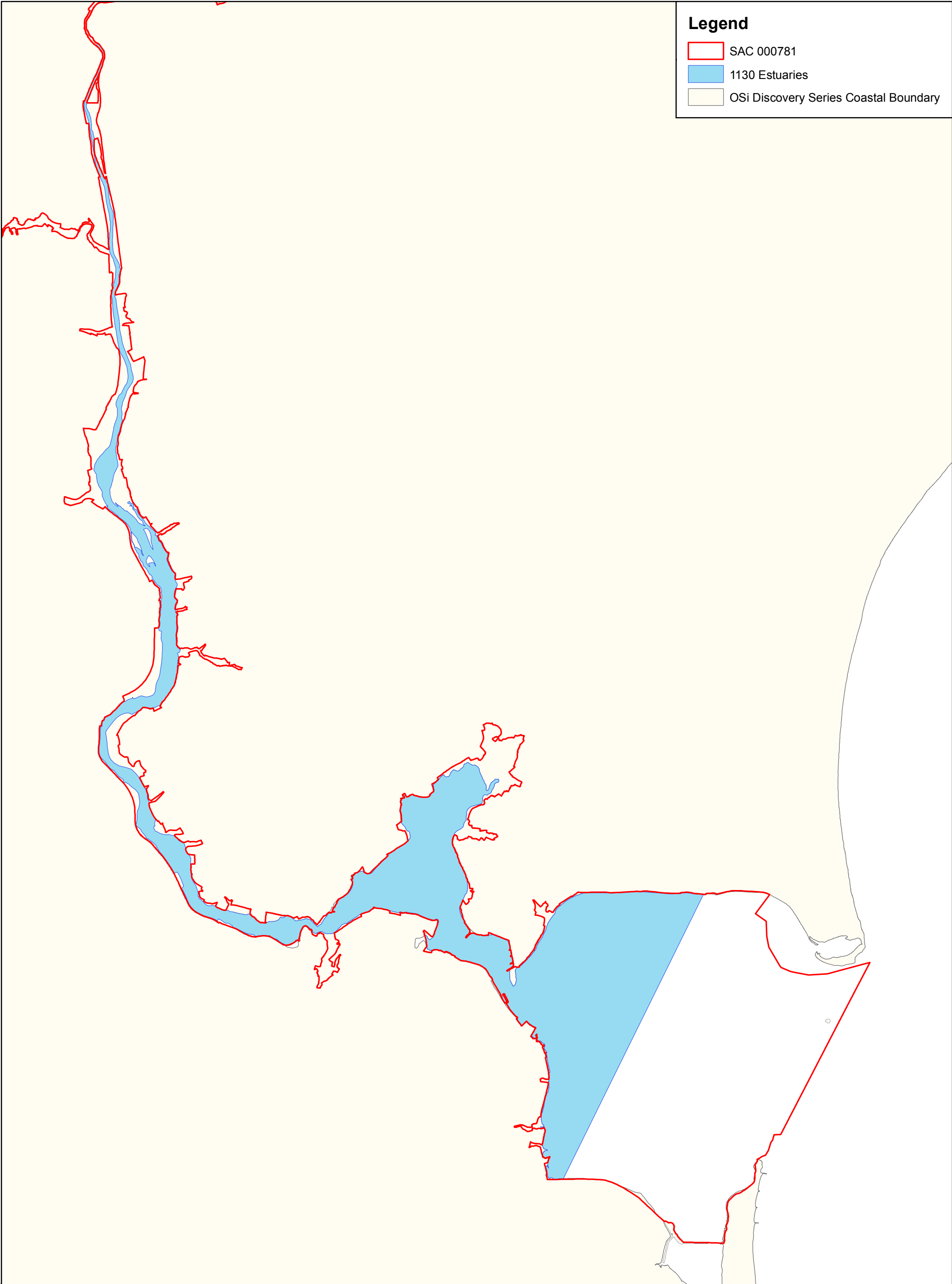






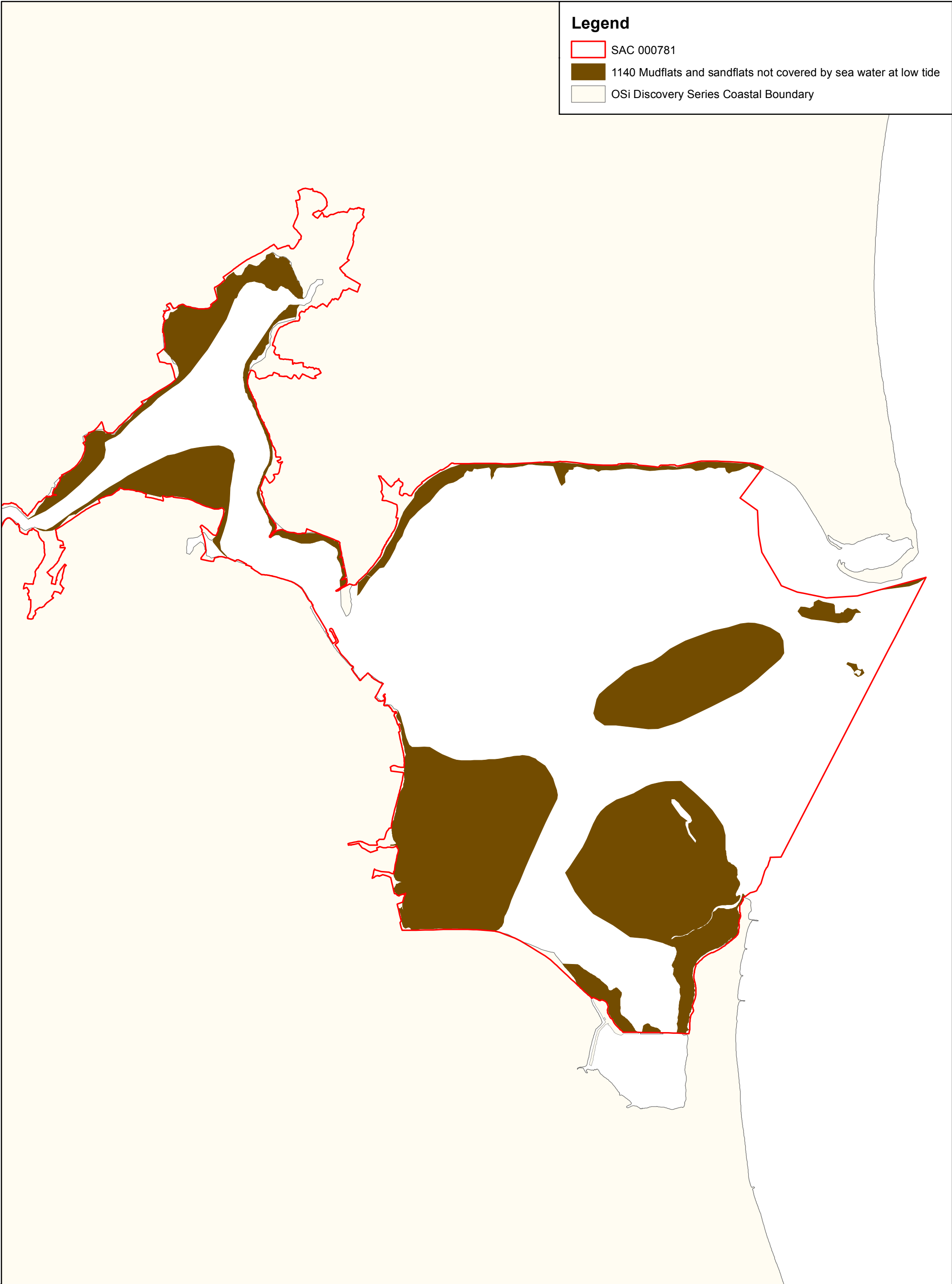
**Legend**

-  Slaney River Valley SAC 000781
-  Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC 000710
-  The Raven SPA 004019
-  Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA 004076
-  OSI Discovery Series Coastal Boundary



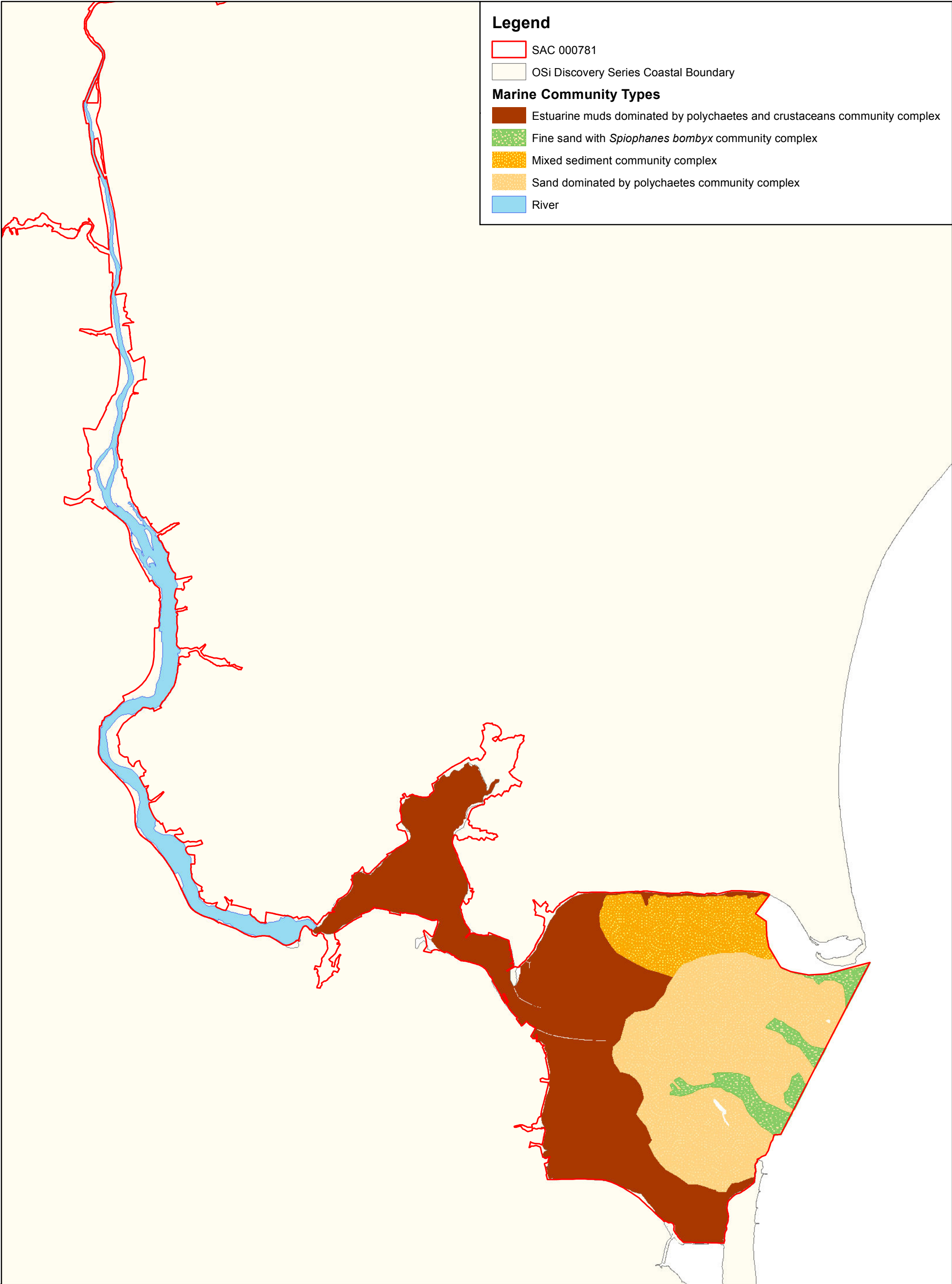
Legend

- SAC 000781
- 1130 Estuaries
- OSi Discovery Series Coastal Boundary



**Legend**

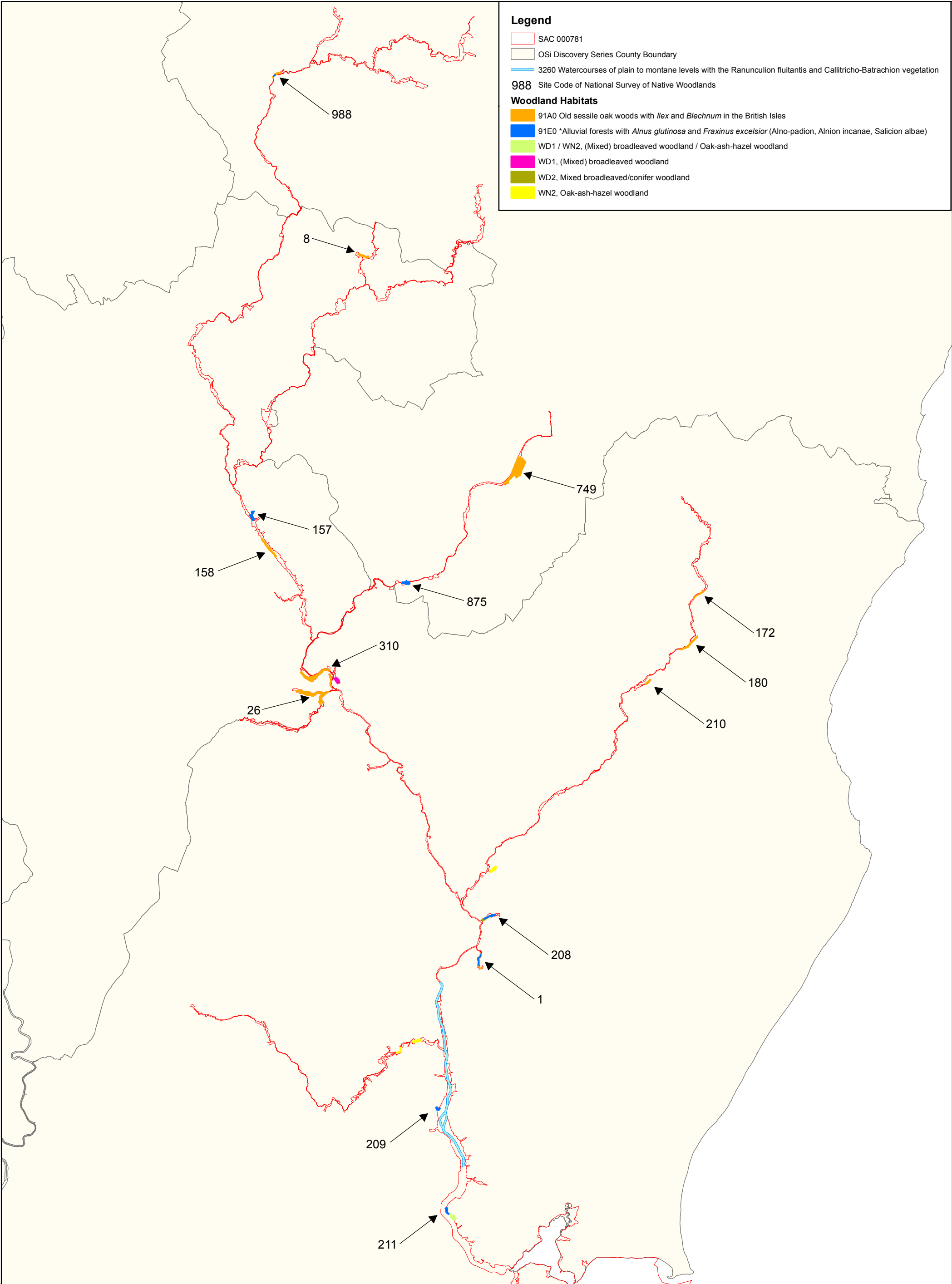
- SAC 000781
- 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by sea water at low tide
- OSi Discovery Series Coastal Boundary

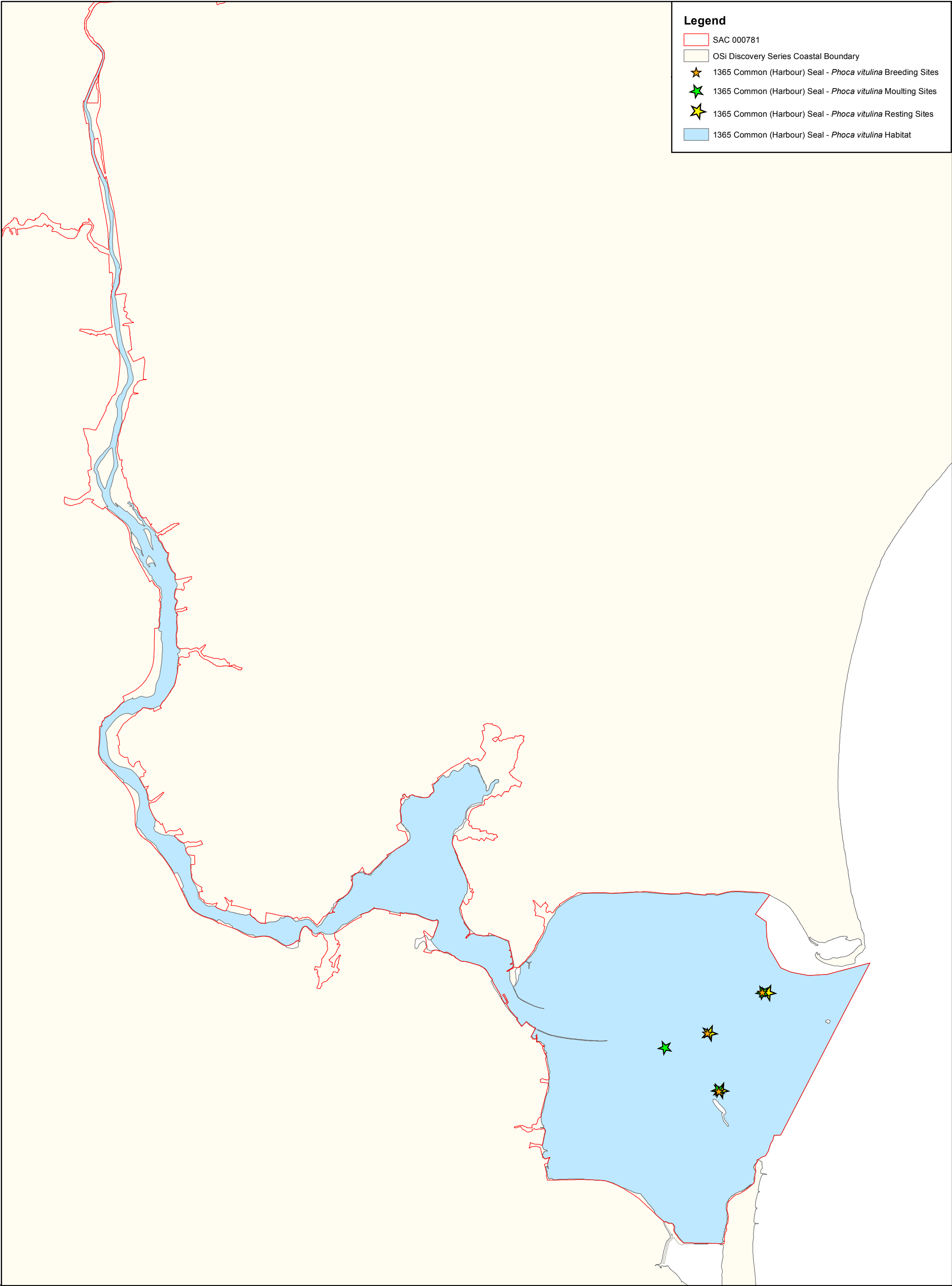


**Legend**

- SAC 000781
- OSi Discovery Series Coastal Boundary
- Marine Community Types**
- Estuarine muds dominated by polychaetes and crustaceans community complex
- Fine sand with *Spiophanes bombyx* community complex
- Mixed sediment community complex
- Sand dominated by polychaetes community complex
- River







**Legend**

- SAC 000781
- OSi Discovery Series Coastal Boundary
- ★ 1365 Common (Harbour) Seal - *Phoca vitulina* Breeding Sites
- ★ 1365 Common (Harbour) Seal - *Phoca vitulina* Moulting Sites
- ★ 1365 Common (Harbour) Seal - *Phoca vitulina* Resting Sites
- 1365 Common (Harbour) Seal - *Phoca vitulina* Habitat

## Conservation Objectives for Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC [000700]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- 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.

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, and
- 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.

Objective: 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:

- ◆ [1210] Annual vegetation of drift lines
- ◆ [2110] Embryonic shifting dunes
- ◆ [2120] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes")
- ◆ [2130] \* Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")

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Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: [www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning](http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning)

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