

SCREENING STATEMENT
IN SUPPORT OF THE
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

FOR THE
**PROPOSED ALTERATION AND PROPOSED MATERIAL
ALTERATION**

TO THE
PROPOSED AMENDMENT

TO THE
GAELTACHT LOCAL AREA PLAN 2008-2014

for: Galway County Council

County Buildings
Prospect Hill
Galway



by: CAAS

2nd Floor, The Courtyard
25 Great Strand Street
Dublin 1



JANUARY 2013

Table of Contents

Section 1	Introduction	2
1.1	Background.....	2
1.2	Legislative Context	2
1.3	Stages of Appropriate Assessment	3
Section 2	Screening	4
2.1	Description of Proposed Alteration	4
2.2	Description of Material Alteration	4
2.3	European Sites in and within 15 km of the Plan Area	5
2.4	Assessment.....	17
2.5	Other Plans and Programmes	18
2.6	Consultation.....	19
2.7	Conclusions of Stage 1	20
Section 3	Finding of No Significant Effects Report	21

List of Figures

Figure 2.1	Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 from the Proposed Amendment	4
Figure 2.2	Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 for the Material Alteration.....	5
Figure 2.3	European Sites within 15km of the Plan Area Boundary	16

List of Tables

Table 2.1	SACs potentially affected by the Proposed Alteration and Material Alteration	6
Table 2.2	SPAs potentially affected by the Proposed Alteration and Material Alteration	14
Table 2.3	Other Plans & Programmes	19

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This is the Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alteration to the Proposed Amendments to the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014 in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive¹.

This report is divided into these three sections:

- Section 1 Introduction
- Section 2 Stage 1 Screening
- Section 3 Finding of No Significant Effects Report

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 candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European 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 [European] 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

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [European 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.

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

This legislation is implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. These new regulations consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats)(Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010, as well as addressing transposition

¹ Directive 92/43/EEC

failures identified in the CJEU judgements. Screening for appropriate assessment is also a requirement of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010.

1.3 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

This Screening has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance and legislation:

- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.
- Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009.
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting European Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC,* European Commission Environment DG, 2000.
- *Managing European Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC:* European Commission, 2000

AA comprises up to four stages:

Stage One: Screening

The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a European Site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European Site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts.

Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the European Site.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

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

Section 2 Screening

2.1 Description of Proposed Alteration

Alterations proposed to Appendix 2 of the Gaeltacht LAP (as amended) to reinstate the following note under the Zoning Matrix:

Exclusively residential proposals in the village centre (Mixed. Dev) zone will not normally be permitted.

Alterations proposed to Section 6.2 and Section 7.2 of the Gaeltacht LAP (as amended) as follows:

~~Residential Density Guidelines 1999~~ *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009.*

2.2 Description of Material Alteration

Alteration proposed to the land use zoning of the submission lands and additional adjoining lands to the north from 'Recreation and Amenity' zoning to 'Residential (Phase 2)' zoning as per the current residential zoning in Map 7.1 An Spidéal Land Use Zoning.

Figure 2.1 shows the Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 from the Proposed Amendment.

Figure 2.2 shows the Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 for Material Alteration No. 2.

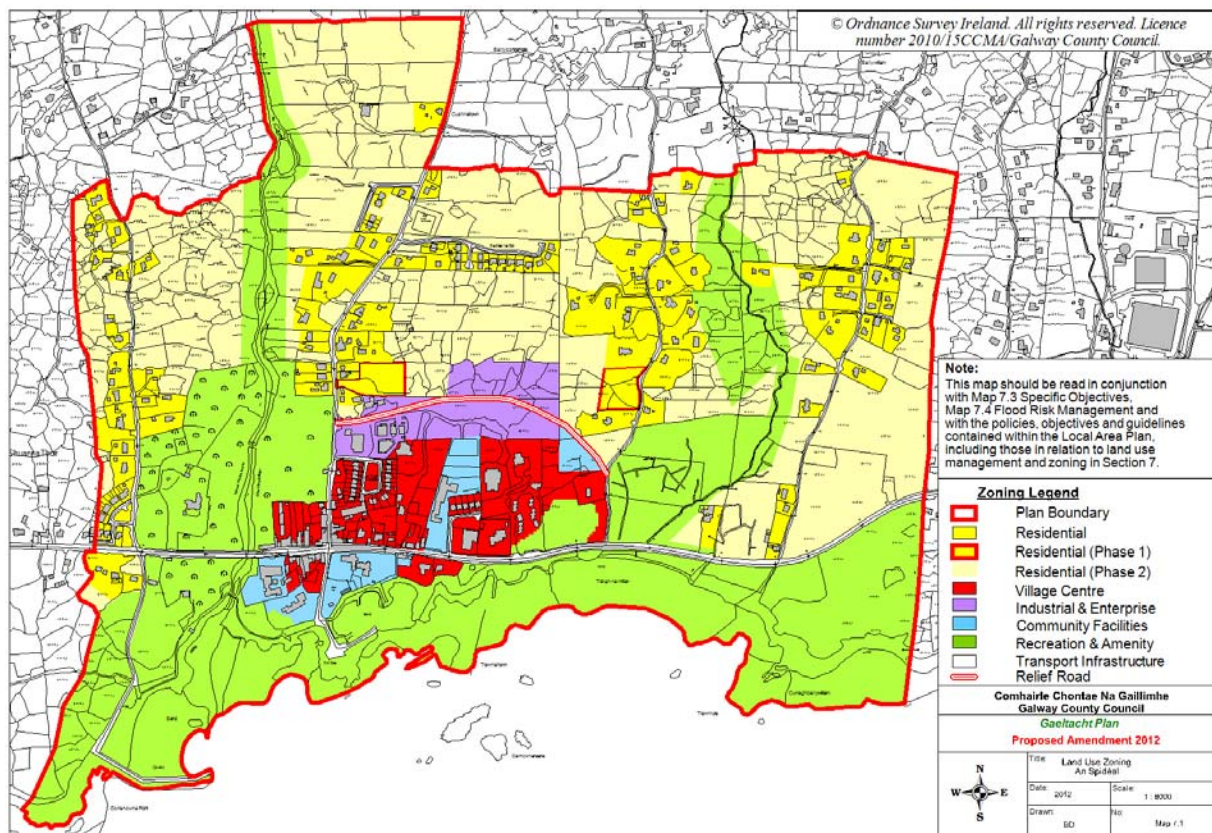


Figure 2.1 Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 from the Proposed Amendment

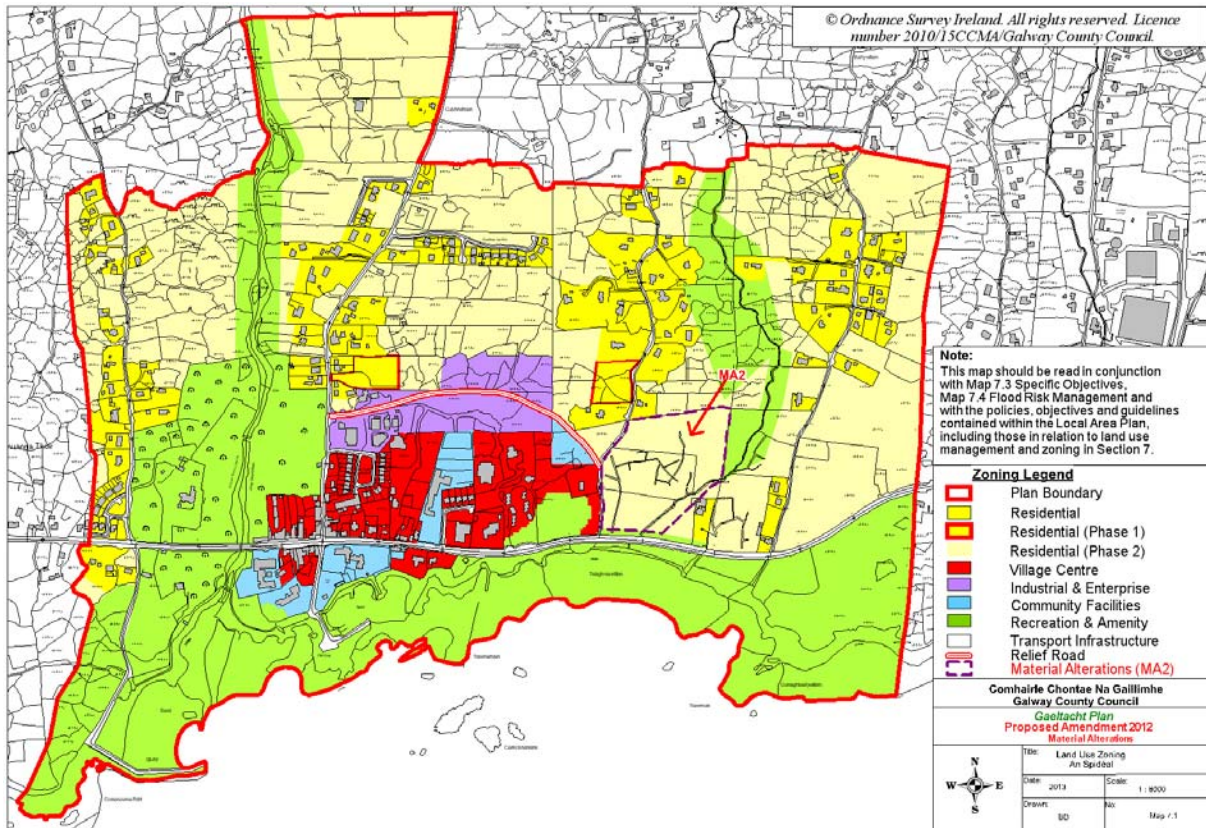


Figure 2.2 Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 for the Material Alteration

2.3 European Sites in and within 15 km of the Plan Area

2.3.1 SACs and SPAs

This section of the screening process describes the European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network within a 15km zone of impact of the plan area. A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the DoE document *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities* and as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected European designated sites are included in the screening process. A map indicating the locations of the sites is given in Figure 2.3.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 lists the European designated sites that are the plan area and 15 km of the boundary. The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the NPWS website.

Table 2.1 SACs potentially affected by the Proposed Alteration and Material Alteration

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
000020 Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex cSAC	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation Alpine and Boreal heaths Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(important orchid sites) Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) Reefs Limestone pavements Submerged or partly submerged sea caves Perennial vegetation of stony banks <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>
000054 Moneen Mountain cSAC	Limestone pavements Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(important orchid sites) Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae Alpine and Boreal heaths Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Turloughs <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>
000212 Inishmaan Island cSAC	Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Machairs [21A0] European dry heaths [4030] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(*important orchid sites) [6210] Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] Limestone pavements [8240]
000213 Inishmore Island cSAC	<i>Vertigo angustior</i> [1014] Coastal lagoons [1150] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	<p>Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salix arenariae</i>) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Machairs [21A0] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>)(*important orchid sites) [6210] Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] Limestone pavements [8240] Submerged or partly submerged sea caves [8330]</p>
000242 Castletaylor Complex cSAC	<p>Turloughs Alpine and Boreal heaths <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>)(important orchid sites) Limestone pavements</p>
000268 Galway Bay Complex cSAC	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Coastal lagoons [1150] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Common seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>) [1365] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Turloughs [3180] <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>)(*important orchid sites) [6210] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] Alkaline fens [7230]</p>
000297 Lough Corrib cSAC	<p>Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029] White-clawed crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092] Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095] Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106] Lesser horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) [1303] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Shining sickle moss (<i>Drepanocladus vernicosus</i>) [1393] Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</p>

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(*important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in British Isles [91A0] Bog woodland [91D0]
000322 Rahasane Turlough cSAC	Turloughs
000324 Rosroe Bog cSAC	Blanket bog (active only) Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion
000328 Slyne Head Islands cSAC	Reefs <i>Halichoerus grypus</i>
000330 Tully Mountain cSAC	European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Blanket bog (active only)
000461 Ardkill Turlough cSAC	Turloughs
000479 Cloughmoynes cSAC	Limestone pavements
000480 Clyard Kettle-holes cSAC	Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae Turloughs
000504 Kilglassan/Cahevavostia Turlough Complex cSAC	Turloughs
000525 Shrule Turlough cSAC	Turloughs
000541 Skealaghan Turlough cSAC	Turloughs
000606 Lough Fingall Complex cSAC	Turloughs Limestone pavements Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(important orchid sites) Alpine and Boreal heaths Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	Rhinolophus hipposideros
000996 Ballyvaughan Turlough cSAC	Turloughs
001251 Cregduff Lough cSAC	Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]
001257 Dog's Bay cSAC	Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] European dry heaths [4030]
001271 Gortnandarragh Limestone Pavement cSAC	Limestone pavements
001275 Inisheer Island cSAC	Coastal lagoons [1150] Reefs [1170] European dry heaths [4030] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>)(*important orchid sites) [6210] Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] Limestone pavements [8240]
001285 Kiltiernan Turlough cSAC	Turloughs
001309 Omey Island Machair cSAC	Machairs (in Ireland) Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>
001311 Rusheenduff Lough cSAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) <i>Najas flexilis</i>
001312 Ross Lake And Woods cSAC	Lesser horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) [1303] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Alkaline fens [7230] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]
001536 Mocarha Lough cSAC	Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i>
001774 Lough Carra/Mask Complex cSAC	Lesser horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) [1303] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Shining sickle moss (<i>Drepanocladus vernicosus</i>) [1393] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	<p>Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] European dry heaths [4030] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(*important orchid sites) [6210] Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion)</p>
<p>001926 East Burren Complex cSAC</p>	<p>Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. Turloughs Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation Alpine and Boreal heaths Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia)(important orchid sites) Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) Alkaline fens Limestone pavements Caves not open to the public Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Lutra lutra</i> <i>Euphydrias aurinia</i></p>
<p>001932 Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erri ff Complex cSAC</p>	<p>Coastal lagoons Annual vegetation of drift lines Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetalia) Dunes with Salix repens ssp.argentea (Salix arenariae) Machairs (in Ireland) Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or of the Isoëto-Nanojuncetalia Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Blanket bog (active only)</p>

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	Transition mires and quaking bogs Alkaline fens Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <i>Salmo salar</i> <i>Lutra lutra</i> <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> <i>Najas flexilis</i>
002008 Maumturk Mountains cSAC	Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106] Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Blanket bog (*active only) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]
002031 The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex cSAC	Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Blanket bog (*active only) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles [91A0]
002034 Connemara Bog Complex cSAC	Marsh fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>) [1065] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106] Coastal lagoons [1150] Reefs [1170]

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	<p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Blanket bog (*active only) [7130] Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] Alkaline fens [7230] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles [91A0]</p>
002074 Slyne Head Peninsula cSAC	<p>Coastal lagoons Annual vegetation of drift lines Perennial vegetation of stony banks Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Machairs (in Ireland) Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>)(important orchid sites) Large shallow inlets and bays Reefs Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. European dry heaths Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) Alkaline fens <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> <i>Najas flexilis</i></p>
002111 Kilkieran Bay And Islands cSAC	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Coastal lagoons [1150] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</p>

Site Name (Site Code)	Conservation Interests
	Common seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>) [1365] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Machairs [21A0] Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]
002118 Barnahallia Lough cSAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) Blanket bog (active only) Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>)
002119 Lough Nageeron cSAC	Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]
002129 Murvey Machair cSAC	Machairs (in Ireland) <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>
002130 Tully Lough cSAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) <i>Najas flexilis</i>
002244 Ardrahan Grassland cSAC	Alpine and Boreal heaths Limestone pavements Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands
002265 Kingstown Bay cSAC	Large shallow inlets and bays
002320 Kildun Souterrain cSAC	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>
002352 Monivea Bog cSAC	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration Active raised bogs Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion

Table 2.2 SPAs potentially affected by the Proposed Alteration and Material Alteration

Site Code SPA Name	Feature of Interest
004062 Lough Mask SPA	Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999]
Inishmore SPA 004152	Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199]
Cliffs of Moher SPA	Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204] Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]
Rahasane Turlough SPA	Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999]
Cregganna Marsh SPA	Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]
Slyne Head To Ardmore Point Islands SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>)
Connemara Bog Complex SPA	Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]
Illaunnanoon SPA	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191]
Inishbofin, Omev Island and Turbot Island	Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122]
004031 Inner Galway Bay	Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [A028] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]

Site Code SPA Name	Feature of Interest
	Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999]
004042 Lough Corrib SPA	Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>) [A051] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]

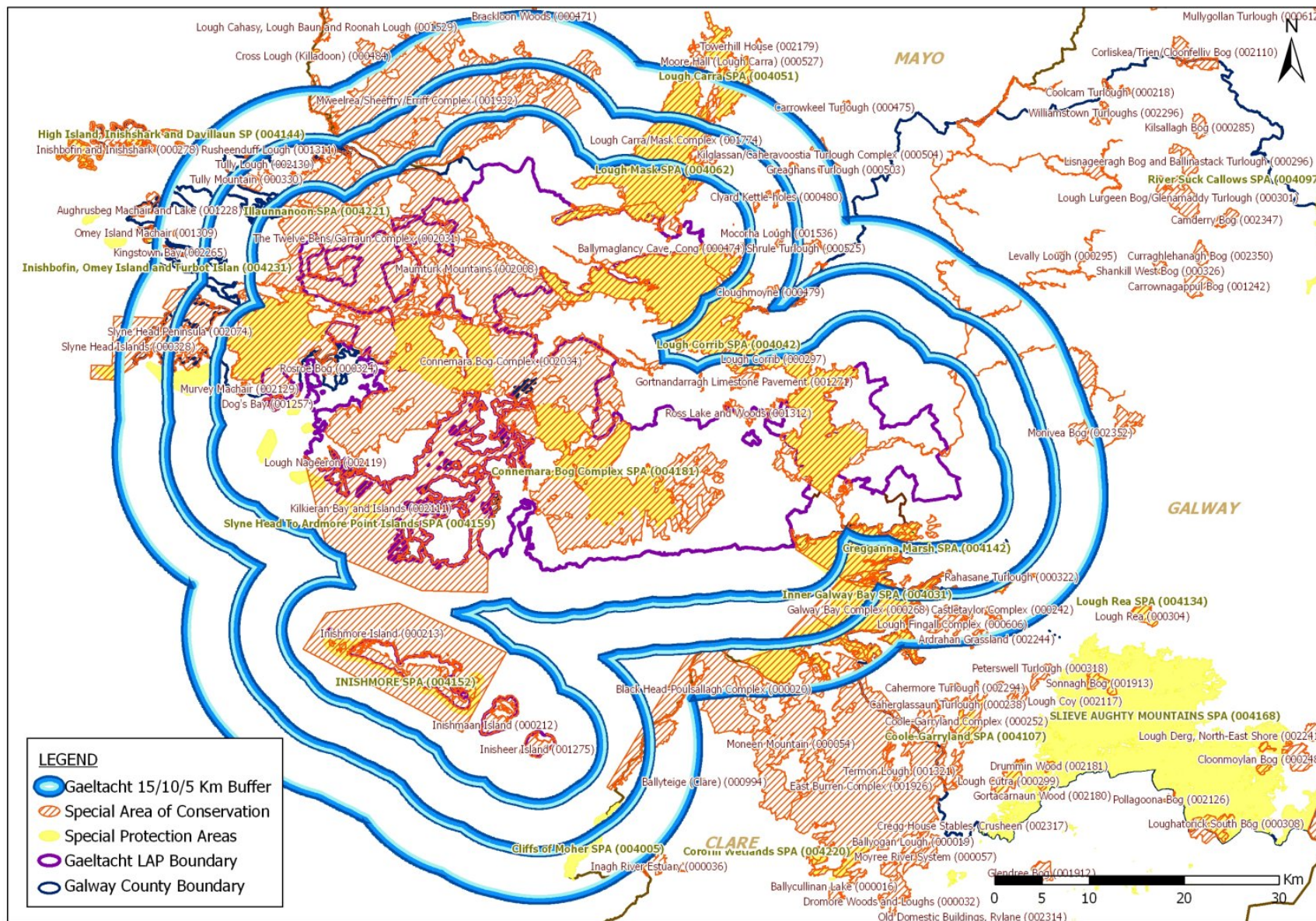


Figure 2.3 European Sites within 15km of the Plan Area Boundary

2.4 Assessment

2.4.1 Is the Plan Necessary to Management of European Sites?

Under the Habitats Directive, Plans that are directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site do not require AA. For this exception to apply, management is required to be interpreted narrowly as nature conservation management in the sense of Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive. This refers to specific measures to address the ecological requirements of annexed habitats and species (and their habitats) present on a site(s). The relationship should be shown to be direct and not a by-product of the plan, even if this might result in positive or beneficial effects for a site(s). The primary purpose of the Material Alteration is not nature conservation management of the sites, but to provide for development. Therefore, the Material Alteration is not considered by the Habitats Directive to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European designated sites.

The Proposed Alteration provides for a note to be added to the LAP Zoning Matrix and for references to government guidelines to be updated and would not be likely to interact with European Sites therefore it is not considered further.

2.4.2 Elements of the Plan with Potential to Give Rise to Impacts

The LAP provides a 6 year statutory framework for guiding development and decision-making on planning applications and Council activities in the area covered by the LAP. The Plan provides guidance as to how this development can be achieved and what new developments are needed. Development is limited to within the boundary of the Plan area and will not impact directly on the European sites that form the Natura 2000 network of sites.

The Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014 as proposed to be amended has already been subject to screening for Appropriate Assessment. The assessment concluded that the amended plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European designated site. The present assessment examines only those impacts that will arise through the Material Alteration to the Amendments of the Plan as outlined in Section 2.1. The assessment process identifies whether the changes brought about by the Material Alteration are likely to cause any direct, indirect or secondary impacts (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on any European designated sites.

2.4.3 Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

In general, any development that may result from implementation of the amended LAP, such as construction of housing, roads, rail, water and wastewater infrastructure, gas, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure could lead to a number of impacts depending on where development is sited, the scale of development and types and quantities of emissions. In practice and as outlined in the EU document "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting European Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC", and the national guidance document 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities', impacts that could potentially occur through the Material Alteration can be categorised under a number of headings

- Loss/Reduction of habitat area – e.g. as a result of development, transport infrastructure etc
- Disturbance to key species – e.g. as a result of increased public access to protected sites and increased recreational pressure such as development of footpaths and cycleways particularly along the coast.
- Habitat or species fragmentation – e.g. through land intensification and urbanisation
- Reduction in species density

- Changes in key indicators of conservation value such as decrease in water quality and quantity – e.g. through inadequate wastewater treatment, runoff of pollutants during construction and operational phases of development.

It should be noted that the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014 as proposed to be amended has already been subject to screening for Appropriate Assessment at the time the Plan was first made (2007). The present assessment examines only those impacts that will arise through the changes to the Plan brought about by the Material Alteration as outlined in Section 2.1 and 2.2.

Loss/Reduction of habitat area

Implementation of the Material Alteration will not result in any direct loss or reduction in area of any European designated site. There are not statutory environmental designations within the town plan boundary of An Spidéal. Connemara Bog Complex cSAC is approximately 1.5 km to the north of the area subject to the Material Alteration. There will be no impacts on any European designated site in this respect.

Disturbance to key species

As previously outlined, the area subject to Material Alteration is sufficiently distant from the designated sites to ensure that impacts from disturbance will not occur.

Habitat or species fragmentation

Habitat and species fragmentation can occur through the breaking up of habitats resulting in interference with existing ecological units or when construction introduces a barrier to the free movement of species from one habitat to another. The area subject to Material Alteration is sufficiently distant from the designated sites to ensure that habitat or species fragmentation within or between European designated sites will not occur.

Reduction in species density

Increased disturbance, loss of habitat and habitat fragmentation can all lead to reduction in species density. As outlined in the previous sections, no habitat loss or fragmentation will occur through the implementation of the Material Alteration, while any impacts through disturbance will not occur. There will be no impacts on any European designated site in this respect.

Changes in key indicators of conservation value such as decrease in water quality and quantity

An Spidéal is sufficiently remote from any European site that supports groundwater dependant habitats to ensure that there is no hydrogeological connectivity between the Material Alteration subject lands and the sites. Therefore, development within the Material Alteration subject lands will not result in any decrease or flow of groundwater to these sites.

The area subject to the Material Alteration is sufficiently distant from coastal designated sites to ensure that any potential changes in water quality are unlikely to affect any European designated site.

Climate Change

The Material Alteration will not contribute to effects arising from climate change.

2.5 Other Plans and Programmes

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combination with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network. Table 2.3 lists plans or programmes that have the potential to interact with the LAP to cause in-combination effects to European designated sites. The plans or projects are listed according to a spatial hierarchy of International, National, Regional/Local Projects and Plans. As outlined in the previous sections, the Material Alteration is unlikely to have a negative impact on the Natura network of sites and there are sufficient measures within the existing LAP and the Proposed Amendment to ensure the protection

and management of the environment. Therefore, there is little potential for in-combination impacts with other plans and programmes to arise.

Table 2.3 Other Plans & Programmes

International	
Directive	Purpose
EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	Objectives seek to maintain and enhance the quality of all surface waters in the EU.
EU Freshwater Fish Directive (78/659/EEC)	Objectives seek to protect those fresh water bodies identified by Member States as waters suitable for sustaining fish populations. For those waters it sets physical and chemical water quality objectives for salmonid waters and cyprinid waters.
EU Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	This directive establishes a regime, which sets underground water quality standards and introduces measures to prevent or limit inputs of pollutants into groundwater.
EU Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	The Floods Directive applies to river basins and coastal areas at risk of flooding. With trends such as climate change and increased domestic and economic development in flood risk zones, this poses a threat of flooding in coastal and river basin areas.
Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)	This Directive has the objective of reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and preventing further pollution.
The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)	The primary objective is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of discharges of urban wastewater, by the provision of urban wastewater collecting systems (sewerage) and treatment plants for urban centres. The Directive also provides general rules for the sustainable disposal of sludge arising from wastewater treatment.
The Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (96/61/EC)	Objective is to achieve a high level of protection of the environment through measures to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions to air, water and land from industrial sources.
National	
Plan	Purpose
National Development Plan 2007-2013	Objectives of the NDP are to promote more balanced spatial and economic development.
National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020	Objectives of the NSS are to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development across Ireland, supported by more effective planning.
West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022	Policy document which aims to direct the future growth of the Mid West Region over the medium to long term and works to implement the strategic planning framework set out in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS)
Local	
Galway County Development Plan Galway City Development Plan Moycullen Local Area Plan Berna Local Area Plan Mayo County Development Plan Oughterard Local Area Plan Headford Local Area Plan Oranmore Local Area Plan Athenry Local Area Plan Claregalway Local Area Plan Tuam Local Area Plan	Overall strategies for the proper planning and sustainable development of the administrative area of the relevant Local Authorities.

2.6 Consultation

As part of the SEA screening process, environmental authorities were notified that a submission or observation in relation to whether or not implementation of the amended plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment may be made to the Council (a period of 4 weeks was allowed

for the reply). Two submissions in response to the notice were made, one from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and one from the Department of Arts, Heritage and The Gaeltacht. The submissions make reference to issues relevant to Appropriate Assessment and all issues raised have been noted and considered in the preparation of the Natura Impact Report for the Proposed Amendment as well as in the preparation of this document.

2.7 Conclusions of Stage 1

The likely impacts that will arise from the Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alteration to the Proposed Amendments to the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014 have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network. On the basis of the findings of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment, it is concluded that the Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alteration:

- (i) are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site; and
- (ii) will not have any significant impacts on the European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network

Therefore a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Section 3 Finding of No Significant Effects Report

Name of project or plan	Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alterations to the Proposed Amendment to the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014
Name and location of European Site	000020 Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex cSAC 000054 Moneen Mountain cSAC 000212 Inishmaan Island cSAC 000213 Inishmore Island cSAC 000242 Castletaylor Complex cSAC 000268 Galway Bay Complex cSAC 000297 Lough Corrib cSAC 000322 Rahasane Turlough cSAC 000324 Rosroe Bog cSAC 000328 Slyne Head Islands cSAC 000330 Tully Mountain cSAC 000461 Ardkill Turlough cSAC 000479 Cloughmoyne cSAC 000480 Clyard Kettle-holes cSAC 000504 Kilglassan/Caheravoostia Turlough Complex cSAC 000525 Shrulle Turlough cSAC 000541 Skealaghan Turlough cSAC 000606 Lough Fingall Complex cSAC 000996 Ballyvaughan Turlough cSAC 001251 Cregduff Lough cSAC 001257 Dog's Bay cSAC 001271 Gortnandarragh Limestone Pavement cSAC 001275 Inisheer Island cSAC 001285 Kiltiernan Turlough cSAC 001309 Omey Island Machair cSAC 001311 Rusheenduff Lough cSAC 001312 Ross Lake And Woods cSAC 001536 Mocerha Lough cSAC 001774 Lough Carra/Mask Complex cSAC 001926 East Burren Complex cSAC 001932 Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex cSAC 002008 Maumturk Mountains cSAC 002031 The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex cSAC 002034 Connemara Bog Complex cSAC 002074 Slyne Head Peninsula cSAC 002111 Kilkieran Bay And Islands cSAC 002118 Barnahallia Lough cSAC 002119 Lough Nageeron cSAC 002129 Murvey Machair cSAC 002130 Tully Lough cSAC 002244 Ardrahan Grassland cSAC 002265 Kingstown Bay cSAC 002320 Kildun Souterrain cSAC 002352 Monivea Bog Csac 004062 Lough Mask SPA Inishmore SPA 004152 Cliffs of Moher SPA Rahasane Turlough SPA Cregganna Marsh SPA Slyne Head To Ardmore Point Islands SPA

	<p>Connemara Bog Complex SPA Illaunnaon SPA Inishbofin, Omey Island and Turbot Island 004031 Inner Galway Bay 004042 Lough Corrib SPA</p>
Description of the project or plan	<p><i>Description of Proposed Alteration</i></p> <p>Alterations proposed to Appendix 2 of the Gaeltacht LAP (as amended) to reinstate the following note under the Zoning Matrix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusively residential proposals in the village centre (Mixed. Dev) zone will not normally be permitted. <p>Alterations proposed to Section 6.2 and Section 7.2 of the Gaeltacht LAP (as amended) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential—Density—Guidelines—1999 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009. <p><i>Description of Material Alteration</i></p> <p>Alteration proposed to the land use zoning of the submission lands and additional adjoining lands to the north from 'Recreation and Amenity' zoning to 'Residential (Phase 2)' zoning as per the current residential zoning in Map 7.1 An Spidéal Land Use Zoning.</p> <p>Figure 2.1 shows the Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 from the Proposed Amendment.</p> <p>Figure 2.2 shows the Land Use Zoning Map 7.1 for Material Alteration No. 2.</p>
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site?	No
The Assessment of Significance of Effects	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the European Site.	The plan is not likely to affect the Natura 2000 network.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant.	See Section 2.4 of this document.
Data Collected to Carry Out the Assessment	
Who carried out the assessment?	Dr. Marian Coll, Ecologist with CAAS
Sources of data	<p>Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alterations to the Proposed Amendment to the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014</p> <p>Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alteration</p> <p>Natura Impact Report for the Proposed Amendment to the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014</p>

Appropriate Assessment Screening of Proposed Alteration and Proposed Material Alterations to the Proposed Amendment to the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008-2014

	NPWS.ie EPA.ie
Level of assessment completed	Desktop
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?	www.galway.ie .
Overall Conclusion	Stage 1 Screening indicates that the Proposed Alteration and the Proposed Material Alteration will not have a significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 network of sites. Therefore, a Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC is not required.