



Enniskerry Local Area Plan 2009



PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

MARCH 2009

Enniskerry Local Area Plan 2009

Introduction

The proposed modifications to the draft Enniskerry Local Area Plan 2009-2015 constitute a further stage in the making of the new Enniskerry Local Area Plan as set out in the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2006.

Process to Date

The most recent stages in the making the Local Area Plan leading to the publication of these modifications can be summarised as follows:

- A Background Issues Paper was prepared and made available to the public from 4th June 2008.
- Public consultation was carried out with local stakeholders and the general public on 10th June 2008.
- The Draft Local Area Plan (consisting of a written statement and a set of maps) was published by the Council and placed on display on Wednesday 26th November 2008.
- A 6-week period followed during which time members of the public and interested groups and bodies could make submissions/observations on the Draft Plan (concluding on 7th January 2009).
- The County Manager prepared a report on submissions/observations received during the public consultation period. This report was submitted to the Elected Members of the Council for their consideration
- Having considered the Draft Plan, the submissions/observations received during the public consultation period and the Manager's Report, the Elected Members of the Council resolved at the Council meeting of 2nd March 2009 to make modifications to the Draft Local Area Plan.
- As these modifications constitute material alterations to the Draft Local Area Plan, the proposed modifications are hereby placed on public display for a period of not less than 4 weeks in accordance with the provisions of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2006.

Display of proposed modifications to Draft LAP

The proposed modifications are available for inspection during normal working hours at the following locations:-

Wicklow County Council Offices, Station Road, Wicklow

Wicklow County Council Offices, Mill Road, Greystones

Enniskerry, Bray, Ballywaltrim and Greystones libraries

or

on the Wicklow County Council website www.wicklow.ie

Identification of the proposed modifications

Only those sections of the written statement which are proposed to be modified are set out in this report. The report includes six maps, which will show and identify any proposed mapping modifications. Modifications to the written statement are identified in the following manner

- deleted text in ~~blue strikethrough~~
- new text in red

Each of the proposed changes has a separate number and the location of the proposed modification will be identified at the start of each. The modifications are set out below in the order in which they appear in the draft plan.

Making written submissions/observations

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed modifications to the Draft Plan must be made in writing to:

Ms L Earls,
A/Senior Executive Officer,
Planning & Economic Development Department,
Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings,
Wicklow Town

Submissions or observations may also be made by email to the following address:
planreview@wicklowcoco.ie

All submissions/observations should state the name (s) and address (es) of the person, group or public body from whom same is received.

Submissions/observations should be marked "Enniskerry Local Area Plan"

The latest date for submissions/observations is: Wednesday 8th April 2009

It should be noted that **only submissions/observations relating to the proposed modifications to the draft plan can be taken into consideration at this stage of the Local Area Plan making process** and submissions/observations that raise issues other than those proposed Modifications cannot be considered.

Submissions/observations should quote the relevant change number referred to below in this report.

Next steps

When the display period for the proposed modifications to the Draft LAP is completed, the County Manager will prepare a report on the proposed modifications and any written submissions or observations received within the prescribed period. This report will include the County Manager's opinion in relation to all of the proposed modifications, the issues raised in any submission and his recommendation in relation to the proposed modifications.

The report will be submitted to the Elected Members of the County Council for their consideration. Following consideration of the report, the local area plan shall be deemed to be made with the modification proposed or, if different from that modification, the modification as recommended in the Manager's report *unless*, where such a recommendation for a different modification is so made, the Council members decide to make the plan otherwise than in accordance with that recommendation and the modification the Council members so decide upon shall be the original modification proposed by them subject to such Modification of it as they consider appropriate (**Section 20 (3) (g) (ii) of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2006**).

In making the Local Area Plan the Members of Council are restricted to:

- Considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the Local Area Plan relates,
- The statutory obligations of the local authority and
- Any relevant policies and objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government.

It is expected that the final plan will be made by the Council in April / May 2009

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The Strategic Environmental Assessment process is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme.

Appropriate Assessment (under the Habitats Directive) is a process which comprises the assessment, based on scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site¹ and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of the plan, considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies impact on the site.

Both assessments inform plans of the environmental impacts of alternative actions and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into plan making.

SEA

In accordance with Section 14A of Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004), the draft Enniskerry LAP was 'screened' for environmental impacts. Screening is the technique applied to determine whether a particular Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant an SEA. The key indicator that will determine if a SEA is required of particular non-mandatory Plans, is if they are likely to have *significant environmental effects* on the environment or not. It was concluded that the draft plan would not warrant a full SEA (please see Section 5 of Part A of the draft LAP for further information).

¹ Natura 2000 sites are sites subject to European designations, normally known as SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and SPA (Special Protection Area). These are protected under the Habitats Directive of 1992 (EU directive 92/43/EEC)

The proposed modifications to this draft also require to be screened for SEA in order to ensure that the analysis previously carried out remains valid. This screening document is included in this document as an addendum (Appendix 1).

Appropriate assessment

While there is no national legislation or guidelines with regard to 'appropriate assessment', it is the current recommendation of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government that any land use plan is screened for any potential impact on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. In any case where, following screening, it is found that the draft plan may have an impact, a full 'appropriate assessment' must be carried out, as well as a full SEA.

The proposed modifications to this draft also require to be screened for AA in order to ensure that the analysis previously carried out remains valid. This screening document is included in this document as an addendum (Appendix 2).

Conclusions of screening

The SEA screening exercise found that no impacts other than possible impacts on Knocksink Wood cSAC are likely to arise from the proposed modifications. The AA screening further evaluated this impact. The AA screening found that effects on the integrity of Knocksink cSAC, arising from the proposed modifications were likely (in particular, proposed modification 1a/M1), and therefore full Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment is warranted.

Under Article 6(3) of Habitats Directive, an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site concerned of the plan or project implies that, **prior to its approval**, all the aspects of the plan or project which can, by themselves or in combination with other plans or projects, affect the site's conservation objectives **must be identified in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field**. The competent national authorities, taking account of the appropriate assessment of the implications for the site concerned in the light of the site's conservation objectives, are to authorise such an activity **only if they have made certain that it will not adversely affect the integrity of that site**. That is the case where no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects².

² 'Waddensee Judgement' European Court of Justice, C-127-02

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS
(presented in the order they appear in the plan)

Proposed Modification No. 1

Part B: Section 4 - 'Residential development' (p. 6)

Change from:

To cater for the 2016 population of 2,190, to allow for the anticipated decrease in household sizes, provide for 30% "headroom", and adopting an "excess factor" of 6%, a total of ~~21.55ha~~ **25.25ha** of land has been designated for residential development, as follows:

Location	Proposed zoning	Area (ha)
AG lands at Cookstown (south of Enniskerry Demesne)	R1 (AA4)	2.15
AG lands south of Countybrook Lawns	R2 (AA2)	3
AG lands north of Monastery Grove	R1	3.6
AA1	R1 / R2	9.12
Knocksink	R2	3
Cookstown	R2	0.8
Monastery	R2	3
Kilgarran	TC (AA5)	0.7
Total		21.55 25.25

TC = 40/ha max

R1 = ~~20/ha max~~ **County Development Plan maximum densities for Enniskerry**

R2 = 10/ha max

Modification 2

Part B: Section 4 - 'Residential development' (p. 6)

Amend 6th and 7th bullet point under 'policies / objectives' as follows:-

- In the RE **and R (new residential)** zones, house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill / **new** residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity will be permitted. While new developments shall have regard to the protection of the residential and architectural amenities of houses / **buildings** in the immediate environs, alternative and contemporary designs shall be encouraged (including alternative materials, heights and building forms), to provide for visual diversity;
- To provide for ~~6.8ha~~ **9.8ha** of low density (max. 10/ha) housing at Monastery, Knocksink and Cookstown areas of Enniskerry.

Modification 3

Part B: Section 10 – 'Heritage' (p. 10)

Add new policy / objective

- **All proposals for development in the vicinity of the Glencullen / Cookstown River (a key spawning tributary of the River Dargle) shall comply with salmonid waters constraints. All proposed works shall be designed and implemented in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner and shall not impact negatively on the salmonid status of this system.**

Modification 4

Part B: Section 7 – 'Community Infrastructure'

Amend as follows:-

Education

Primary: The projected population for Enniskerry will be 2,190 by 2016; however, the primary schools in Enniskerry have a wider catchment area that extends beyond Enniskerry and cater for approximately 35% more pupils than the town population alone would generate. Based on this projected population of 2,190 by 2016 and increasing this by 35%, c. 350 primary school places will be required for Enniskerry (14 classrooms). Therefore there is a need to ensure that primary school provision can be expanded to 16 classrooms.

Given the anticipated increase in pupil numbers, this plan makes provision for the **extension or** relocation and expansion of St. Mary's and St. Gerard's by designating **sufficient** land for a 16-classroom school in AA1, **which adjoins the existing school site**. This plan shall extend the CE zone at the permitted Powerscourt NS site to 1.35ha.

Policies / Objectives

- To provide and maintain sufficient lands within the village to cater for anticipated educational expansion requirements over the period of the plan,
- Extend the existing designated 1ha primary school site located to the south of Enniskerry to 1.35ha by extending the site up to the R760;
- ~~Provide a site of 1.2ha for a new 16 classroom school in AA1.~~ **Provide for sufficient lands (minimum 1.2ha) in AA1 to allow for either the extension or the relocation and expansion of St. Mary's and St. Gerard's**

Modification 5

Part B: Section 11 – 'Action Area Plans'

Action Area 1

- (a) Amend land-use zoning map to extend AA1 boundary to include R2 lands at Knocksink
- (b) Amend Action Area 1 text as follows

Action Area 1

This Action Area is located west of Enniskerry town centre and immediately north of Kilgarron housing development, in the townland of Parknasilloge, as shown on Map 1. This action area measures c. ~~13.5ha~~ **16.25ha**. This action area shall be developed as a residential, open space, employment and community zone in accordance with the following criteria:-

- A minimum area of 2ha shall be reserved as Active Open Space (this is the size of the area currently occupied by Enniskerry GAA). In the event of the relocation of the GAA to an alternative location, this quantum of AOS shall, as a minimum, be maintained within the overall action area. Any alternative AOS shall be maintained available for general public use, shall be suitably sized to allow for organised sporting activities i.e. pitches, courts etc and shall be so located within the action area so as to be easily accessible by the wider community. (Any proposals to redevelop the existing GAA grounds will only be considered when the Council has been satisfied that suitable alternative lands have been secured for this sporting facility)
- A minimum of 1.2ha shall be ~~provided for a primary school site, at a location that is easily accessible by vehicles and pedestrians~~ **provided for either the extension or relocation and expansion of St. Mary's and St. Gerard's national school**
- A minimum of 0.4ha shall be provided for a community uses, including a community centre of not less than 500sqm and an equipped playground of not less than 400sqm
- A minimum of 1ha shall be provided for employment uses. Generally, this shall comprise office/studio/surgery type development of the highest architectural quality

and layout. A minimum of 0.4ha of this area shall however be reserved for local service and incubator businesses.

- **The car park associated with the employment area shall be so located and designed to facilitate tourist use during non-business hours and shall at all times remain available and open for this use**
- A maximum of ~~180~~ **210** residential units may be provided on the remainder of the site (~~c. 9ha~~ **12ha**), **of which a minimum area of 3ha shall be strictly reserved for lower density housing at a maximum density of 10/ha.** A full range of unit sizes, including smaller 1 and 2-bedroomed units shall be provided and no more than 50% of the units shall exceed 3 bedrooms or 125sqm in size
- The development shall be delivered in phases such that adequate education, community and employment facilities are provided for each phase; in particular, the school site shall be provided in Phase 1 accompanied by no more than 25% of the residential development and the employment facilities shall be provided no later than Phase 2 accompanied by no more than an additional 50% of the residential units
- A maximum of two vehicular access points onto Local Primary Road L1010 (Enniskerry – Glenree) shall be permitted. Pedestrian linkages through the R2 zone to the east shall also be provided.
- To achieve a sense of place and allow for visual diversity any residential application should provide for a number of identifiable and distinct housing estates (not exceed 60 units), each containing different house designs within an overall unified theme.
- Full geotechnical and archaeological assessment of the lands shall be undertaken prior to any development taking place.

Modification 6

Part B: Section 11 – ‘Action Area Plans’

Action Area 2

- (a) Omit ‘route corridor’ and replace with indicative route lines (see map)
- (b) Amend Action Area 2 text as follows

Action Area 2

This Action Area is located on the northern side of the settlement, in the townland of Monastery, as shown on Map 1. This action area measures c. 5.7ha and includes 3ha zoned for housing, 0.25ha is occupied by an existing dwelling, and the remainder being reserved for agricultural use. This action area shall be developed in accordance with the following criteria:-

- ~~A maximum of 3ha may be developed for low medium density housing at a maximum density of 10/ha (4/acre);~~ **A maximum of 12 residential units may be constructed**
- The optimum location for housing shall be determined following
 - an archaeological evaluation of the action area, with particular regard to the existing National Monument (Annabaskey Church)
 - agreement with the Planning Authority of the final route corridor of the Fassaroe – Monastery link road.
 - consideration of the amenities of existing properties along Ballyman Road
- Suitable access shall be provided from Ballyman Road and any access road shall be designed to form the final element of the future Fassaroe – Monastery link road

Modification 7

Part B: Section 11 – ‘Action Area Plans’

Action Area 4

Amend Action Area 2 text as follows:-

This Action Area is located south of the town centre, in the townland of Cookstown, as shown on Map 1. This action area measures c. 9.3ha. This action area shall be developed as a residential, open space, community and agricultural zone in accordance with the following criteria:-

- A maximum of 2.15ha may be developed for housing at a maximum density of 20/ha (8/acre). A full range of unit sizes, including smaller 1 and 2-bedroomed units shall be provided and no more than 50% of the units shall exceed 3 bedrooms or 125sqm in size
- A minimum area of 0.4ha (1 acre) shall be provided for voluntary / sheltered housing, of a type to be agreed with the Local Authority, in addition to any Part V obligations under the Wicklow Housing Strategy. Permission will not be considered for private housing until sufficient progress has been made on this element
- Access to the site shall be from local road LP-1020
- An amenity zone shall be established along the full southern and western boundaries of the action area, which shall comprise an amenity walk area along the existing tree lined field boundaries connecting through the development to regional road R760 (Enniskerry – Kilmacanogue) and to the existing pedestrian route along the Dargle
- The remainder of the site not designated for a particular purpose (either housing or amenity use) shall be retained in agricultural use for possible future development purposes
- **Any development shall be so designed to maintain maximum views of the Sugarloaf from Cookstown Road.**

Modification 8

Part B: Section 11 – ‘Action Area Plans’

Add New Action Area

Action Area 5

This Action Area is located south of the town centre, in the townland of Kilgarran, as shown on Map 1. This action area measures c.2.5ha. This action area shall be developed as a residential area in accordance with the following criteria:-

- Access to the site shall strictly be from local road LP-1010 (Enniskerry – Kilgarran) and no opening, entrance or otherwise (including for construction purposes) shall be made along the Forge Road;
- Development proposals shall be accompanied by a detailed tree survey of the entire action area, including all trees along site boundaries. Development proposals shall include measures to protect and re-inforce existing mature trees and proposals for new tree planting;
- The finished floor level of any development shall not exceed 90.00mOD (for the avoidance of doubt, this being the existing ground level at the south-east of the existing jumping arena); the top ridge height of any structure shall not exceed 98.00m OD;
- The site shall be developed at ‘town centre’ type densities and shall generally comprise terraces and courtyards of dwellings, as opposed to detached format housing;
- The remainder of the site not designated for a particular purpose (either housing or amenity use) shall be retained in agricultural use

Map changes

Modification M1

Map 1 Rezone AG lands Monastery (c. 3ha) to R2 (new residential – low density) including 30m wide buffer zone

Modification M2

Map 2 Expand boundary of AA1 to include R2 lands at Knocksink

Modification M3

Map 3 Omit 'route corridor' in Monastery and replace with indicative route lines

Modification M4

Map 4 Add new action area AA5 in Kilgarran

Modification M5

Map 5 Rezone lands outside the draft plan boundary along regional road R117 as RE (existing residential)

Modification M6

Map 6 Zone additional lands outside the draft plan boundary along Ballyman Road (c. 0.34 ha) as RE (Map 6)

Modification M7

Make any necessary plan boundary modifications associated with these changes

Appendix 1

SEA screening of proposed modifications

The purpose of this report is to consider whether the proposed modifications to the Enniskerry Local Area Plan will have any likely significant environmental effects, which would require Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental impacts

1. Characteristics of the modifications

Modification	Characteristics
1a / M1	Zoning of 3ha of land for low density residential development, including 30m buffer zone along western boundary (approximately 25 additional residential units)
1b	Change in allowable density on R1 lands from 20/ha to the standard set in the CDP for Enniskerry (currently also 20/ha)
2	Amendment to housing policy to ensure additional protection of existing residential and heritage amenities where new buildings are being permitted
3	New policy to provide additional protection to the Glencullen / Cookstown River (a key spawning tributary of the River Dargle)
4	Amendment to education policy which provides an opportunity for the existing primary school to expand on the existing site, rather than relocate
5a / M2	Amendment to Action Area 1 to include R2 lands at Knocksink
5b	Amendment to Action Area 1 to allow for either the relocation of the St. Mary's NS to a new site in AA1 or its expansion on its existing site
5c	Amendment to Action Area 1 to require tourist use of any car park provided for the employment area
6a / M3	Omit wide route corridor for the Fassaroe – Monastery link and replace with indicative route lines
6b	Reduce number of residential units allowable in AA2 from 30 to 12
7	Amend AA4 to ensure that any development shall be so designed to maintain maximum views of the Sugarloaf from Cookstown Road.
8 / M4	Add new action area and rezone land from agriculture to part residential, part agriculture and allow the provision of c. 28 units
M5	Rezone lands outside the draft plan boundary along regional road R117 as RE (existing residential)
M6	Zone additional lands along Ballyman Road (c. 0.34 ha) as RE

2. Characteristics of any effects

The effects have been determined having regard to:-

- The area likely to be affected
- The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects
- The cumulative nature of the effects
- The transboundary nature of the effects
- The risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)
- The magnitude and spatial extent of the effect (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).
- The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values
 - intensive Land Use
- The effects on areas or landscapes, which have recognised national, European Union or international protection status

Modification	Likely effect on the environment
1a / M1	Likely effect on Knocksink Wood cSAC through construction in proximity, principally possible alterations to the water and drainage regime
1b	No effect
2	Likely positive effect
3	Likely positive effect
4	No effect
5a / M2	No effect
5b	No effect
5c	Likely risk to human health or the environment through increased traffic movements on Kilgarran Road
6a / M3	Likely positive effect on archaeological heritage as possible route no longer traverses recorded monument site
6b	Likely positive effect
7	Likely positive effect
8 / M4	Likely negative impacts on architectural conservation through possible demolition of cottage on Kilgarran Road Likely positive effect through additional tree protection
M5	Likely risk to human health or the environment through increased traffic movements on regional road R117
M6	No effect

Significance of effects

Assessment is the process of evaluating the importance or significance of project/plan impacts (whether adverse or beneficial). In most cases, this is essentially a judgment, built up from a number of factors, but it may also be made more objective with the use of criteria and standards. The assessment of significance will be based upon factors such as the following:

- The character and perceived value of the affected environment;
- The magnitude, spatial extent and duration of anticipated change;
- The resilience of the environment to cope with change;
- Confidence in the accuracy of predictions of change;
- The existence of policies, programmes, plans, etc. which can be used as criteria;
- The existence of environmental standards against which a proposal can be assessed (e.g. air quality standards, water quality standards);
- The degree of public interest and concern in the environmental resources concerned and the issues associated with a proposed project;
- Scope for mitigation, sustainability and reversibility.

Having regard to these factors and the identified likely impacts set out above, it is considered that the only significant likely effect on the environment is the likely impact on Knocksink Wood cSAC through construction activity in or adjoining the cSAC. This is more fully addressed in the Appropriate Assessment screen (Appendix 2)

Appendix 2

Appropriate Assessment screening of proposed modifications

An “appropriate assessment” (AA) means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site³ and the development where necessary of measures to preclude negative effects. The impacts assessment must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of approving the plan, considered with any current or proposed activities, development or policies impacting on the site. All plans and projects should aim to identify any possible impacts early in the plan-making process and then either alter the plan to avoid them or introduce mitigation measures to the point where no adverse impacts remain.

Where the Planning Authority is uncertain that there is a prima facie case for an AA, the Plan (including any modifications thereof) must be screened for possible significant effects.

Screening is the technique applied to determine whether a particular plan would be likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site and would thus warrant an AA. The key indicator that will determine if an AA of a plan is required is the determination of whether they are likely to have *significant environmental effects* on a Natura 2000 site or not.

Appropriate assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the 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 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 social or economic nature, the Member State 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.

Ballyman Glen cSAC (SITE CODE: 000713)

Ballyman Glen is situated approximately 3 km north of Enniskerry. It is orientated in an east-west direction with a stream running through the centre. The glen is bounded mostly by steeply sloping pasture with Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and areas of wood and scrub. **This site**

³ Natura 2000 sites are sites subject to European designations, normally known as SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and SPA (Special Protection Area). These are protected under the Habitats Directive of 1992 (EU directive 92/43/EEC)

is a candidate SAC selected for alkaline fen and petrifying springs, both habitats listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.

Fens are dynamic semi-natural systems and in general, management is needed to maintain open-fen communities and their associated species richness. Without appropriate management (e.g. mowing, grazing, burning, peat cutting, scrub clearance), natural succession will lead to scrub and woodland forming. Factors affecting this habitat type are⁴:

- Past loss of area by drainage and conversion to intensive agriculture. Excessive water abstraction from aquifers has dried up or reduced spring line flows, and generally lowered water tables. Abstractions can also affect the natural balance between the differing water qualities of ground water and surface water.
- Small total area of habitat and critically small population sizes of several key species dependent on the habitat.
- Lack of or inappropriate management of existing fens leading to drying, scrub encroachment and succession to woodland.
- Valley fens are particularly susceptible to agricultural run-off and afforestation within the catchment.
- Enrichment or hypertrophication resulting in changing plant communities.

Knocksink Wood (SITE CODE: 000725)

Knocksink Wood is situated in the valley of the Glencullen River north-west of Enniskerry. The fast-flowing Glencullen River winds its way over granite boulders along the valley floor. The steep sides of the valley are mostly covered with calcareous drift. A notable feature of the slopes are the frequent and extensive springs and seepage areas within the woodland. **These petrifying springs are listed as a priority habitat on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. Associated with the springs and the river are stands of wet alluvial forest, also a habitat listed with priority status on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.**

Wet woodland is affected by the following factors that impact directly or indirectly upon its condition and dynamics⁵:

- Clearance and conversion to other land-uses, particularly in woods recently established on wetland sites,
- Cessation of management in formerly coppiced sites may encourage succession to drier woodland types,
- Lowering of water-tables through drainage or water abstraction, resulting in change to drier woodland types,
- Inappropriate grazing levels and poaching of the soil by sheep, cattle and deer leading to a change in the woodland structure, ground flora impoverishment and difficulties for regeneration,
- Flood prevention measures, river control and canalization, leading to loss of dynamic disturbance-succession systems and invertebrate communities, as well as possible reductions in the extent of individual sites,
- Constraints on the spread of woodland from conservation sites onto adjacent ground from agriculture, industrial or residential development, leading to greater uniformity of structure across the site,
- Poor water quality arising from eutrophication, industrial effluents or rubbish dumping leading to changes in the composition of the ground flora and invertebrate communities,
- Invasion by non-native species which alter vegetation composition and lower conservation value (e.g. Indian balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*); air pollution which may influence particularly bryophyte and lichen communities; and diseases such as *Phytophthora* root disease of alder,
- Climate change, potentially resulting in changes in the vegetation communities.

⁴ Source: UK Biodiversity Action Plan

⁵ Source: UK Biodiversity Action Plan

As set out in the SEA screen (Appendix 1), proposed modification 1a/M1 is considered likely to have impacts on Knocksink Wood cSAC through

- Lowering of water-tables through drainage or water abstraction, resulting in change to drier woodland types,
- Constraints on the spread of woodland from conservation sites onto adjacent ground from agriculture, industrial or residential development, leading to greater uniformity of structure across the site,
- Poor water quality arising from eutrophication, industrial effluents or rubbish dumping leading to changes in the composition of the ground flora and invertebrate communities,
- Invasion by non-native species which alter vegetation composition and lower conservation value (e.g. Indian balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*); air pollution which may influence particularly bryophyte and lichen communities; and diseases such as *Phytophthora* root disease of alder,