

Draft County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2025-2029

Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

October 2024



1. Introduction

The Draft County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2025-2029 has been prepared by Wicklow County Council. This Plan sets out a framework for better management and protection of Wicklow's heritage assets. At its core lies the recognition that our Wicklow heritage is a unique and precious resource for all and is essential to our health and wellbeing. The aims and objectives of the Heritage Plan are aligned with a range of policies at international, national, and local level relevant to the management, care and protection of our heritage.

This is the Appropriate Assessment screening report for the Draft County Wicklow Heritage Plan.

This document constitutes an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared for this purpose. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)), and are designated for nature conservation. The requirements for an Appropriate Assessment are set out under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), transposed into Irish law through the European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). A comprehensive study has been undertaken and the potential impacts on European sites, both as a result of the implementation of the Draft Heritage Plan and in combination with other plans and projects are appraised in this report.

1.1 Background -The Habitats and Birds Directives

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the EU. Under the Directive member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation [SACs] which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in a European Union context. The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds] is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Directive requires that Special Protection Areas [SPAs] be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention. Special Areas of Conservation [SACs] designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas [SPAs], designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000.

The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. Article 6[3] and 6[4] of the Directive set out key elements of the system of protection including the requirement for Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects.

1.2 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening has been undertaken in fulfilment of the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the European Communities [Birds and Natural Habitats] Regulations 2011 and taking into account the Guidance issued by the Government in this regard.

2. Methodology

2.1 Screening

The function of the Screening exercise is to identify whether the Heritage Plan will have a likely significant effect on European Sites. In this context “likely” refers to the presence of doubt regarding the absence of significant effects (ECJ case C-127/02) and “significant” means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that has the potential to undermine the site’s conservation objectives (English Nature, 1999; ECJ case C127/02 &). In other words, any effect that compromises the integrity of a site and interferes with achieving the conservation objectives for the site would constitute a significant effect.

The nature of the likely interactions between the Heritage Plan and the integrity of the associated European sites will depend upon the sensitivity of the SPAs special conservation interests (SCIs) and the SAC Qualifying Interest Features to potential impacts arising from the Heritage Plan; the current conservation status of the SPA and its SCIs and the SAC and its QIs; and any likely changes to key environmental indicators (e.g. habitat structure; vegetation community) that underpin the conservation status of the European sites, in combination with other plans and projects. Please refer to Appendix A for a synopsis of the Qualifying Interest Features and the Special Conservation Interests together with the environmental and ecological conditions that maintain the condition of these features.

This Screening exercise has been undertaken with reference to respective National and European guidance documents: Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2010) and Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological Guidance of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC and recent European and National case law (ECJ C-258/11 & High Court case ref 2014-320-JR). The following guidance documents were also of relevance during this Screening Assessment:

- The Habitats Regulations; A guide for competent authorities. Environment and Heritage Service, Sept 2002.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites – The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC. European commission (2000). (To be referred to as MN 2000).
- Guidance on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the Concepts of: Alternative Solutions, Imperative reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall coherence, Opinion of the Commission. European Commission (2007)

The EC (2001) guidelines outline the stages involved in undertaking a Screening exercise of a plan or project that has the potential to have likely significant effects on European Sites.

2.2 Methodology

The methodology adopted for this Screening exercise is informed by these guidelines and was undertaken in the following stages:

Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities which comprises the following steps:

- i. Description of the Plan and plan area characteristics
- ii. Identification of European Sites (Natura 2000) and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives
- iii. Assessment of the likely effects direct, indirect and cumulative undertaken on the basis of available information
- iv. Screening statement with conclusions

3. Description of the Heritage Plan

The Wicklow Heritage plan is a strategic plan with a stated aim to support better protection and promotion of our heritage by fostering awareness, building capacity in the heritage sector and building climate resilience in our heritage assets.

It sets out a series of 45 actions to be progressed under six key strategic themes as follows

- ~ Protecting Our Heritage
- ~ Connecting People and Place
- ~ Sharing and Celebrating Our Heritage
- ~ Collaboration and Partnership
- ~ Building and Sharing Knowledge
- ~ Responding to Climate Change

The scope of the Plan is the functional area of the county. Wicklow County Council will take a lead on the delivery of actions in association with a range of stakeholders.

Protecting Our Heritage: There are 14 actions under this theme which seek to support better protection and management of Wicklow's Heritage through increasing the capacity of the Heritage Sector and progressing evidence-based action.

Connecting People and Place: There are 7 actions under this theme which seek to increase appreciation of the richness of Wicklow's heritage by stimulating curiosity, enhancing access for all and providing more opportunities for people to engage with heritage in new and innovative ways.

Sharing and Celebrating Our Heritage: There are 6 actions which seek to Raise awareness and enthusiasm for Wicklow's heritage through providing opportunities for engagement and learning that nurture a sense of pride of place and enable everyone to cherish and celebrate what we have. Continue to support the committed, strong and active network of community groups, volunteers and organisations in the county.

Collaboration and Partnership: There are 12 actions which seek that the Heritage Plan will seek to act as a catalyst for partnership action to enhance the management and protection of our heritage and embed community engagement.

Building and Sharing Knowledge: There are 5 actions seeking to enhance and expand the knowledge base for cultural, natural and built heritage and address knowledge gaps.

Responding to Climate Change: 6 actions under this theme seek to protect the county's heritage from the impact of climate change by adopting a place-based approach that accounts for local

circumstances, establishing a baseline for adaptation and mitigation, and taking nature-based measures to reduce impacts.

The Heritage Plan comprises of the following:

- Introduction: This sets out the National and local context, describes how the plan was prepared and the implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.
- The Plan: sets out the key objectives and the actions
- The appendices give an overview of the process of formulating the Plan, the membership of the Wicklow Heritage Forum, the public consultation process, relevant heritage legislation and sources of useful information

4. Brief Description of European sites

4.1 European sites

This section of the screening process describes the Natura sites within a 15 km potential zone of impact of the Plan Area. The distance of 15 km is currently recommended in the DoE document *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities*, however, sites beyond this distance should also be considered where there are hydrological linkages or other pathways that extend beyond 15 km thereby ensuring that all potentially affected Natura sites are included in the screening process. A map indicating the locations of the sites is presented in

Based on the above approach, a total of 29 Natura sites, comprising 23 SACs, and 6 SPAs require consideration in the AA process.

Table 1 and Table 2 below list the European sites that are a) within County Wicklow and b) within 15km of the county boundary. The qualifying features of each site are also presented. In order to determine the potential for impacts from the draft Plan, information on the qualifying features, known vulnerabilities and threats to site integrity pertaining to all potentially affected European sites was reviewed from a variety of sources available on www.npws.ie, including:

- Ireland's Article 17 Report to the European Commission "Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland" (NPWS, 2019.)
- Site Synopses
- NATURA 2000 Standard Data Forms

4.2 Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs)

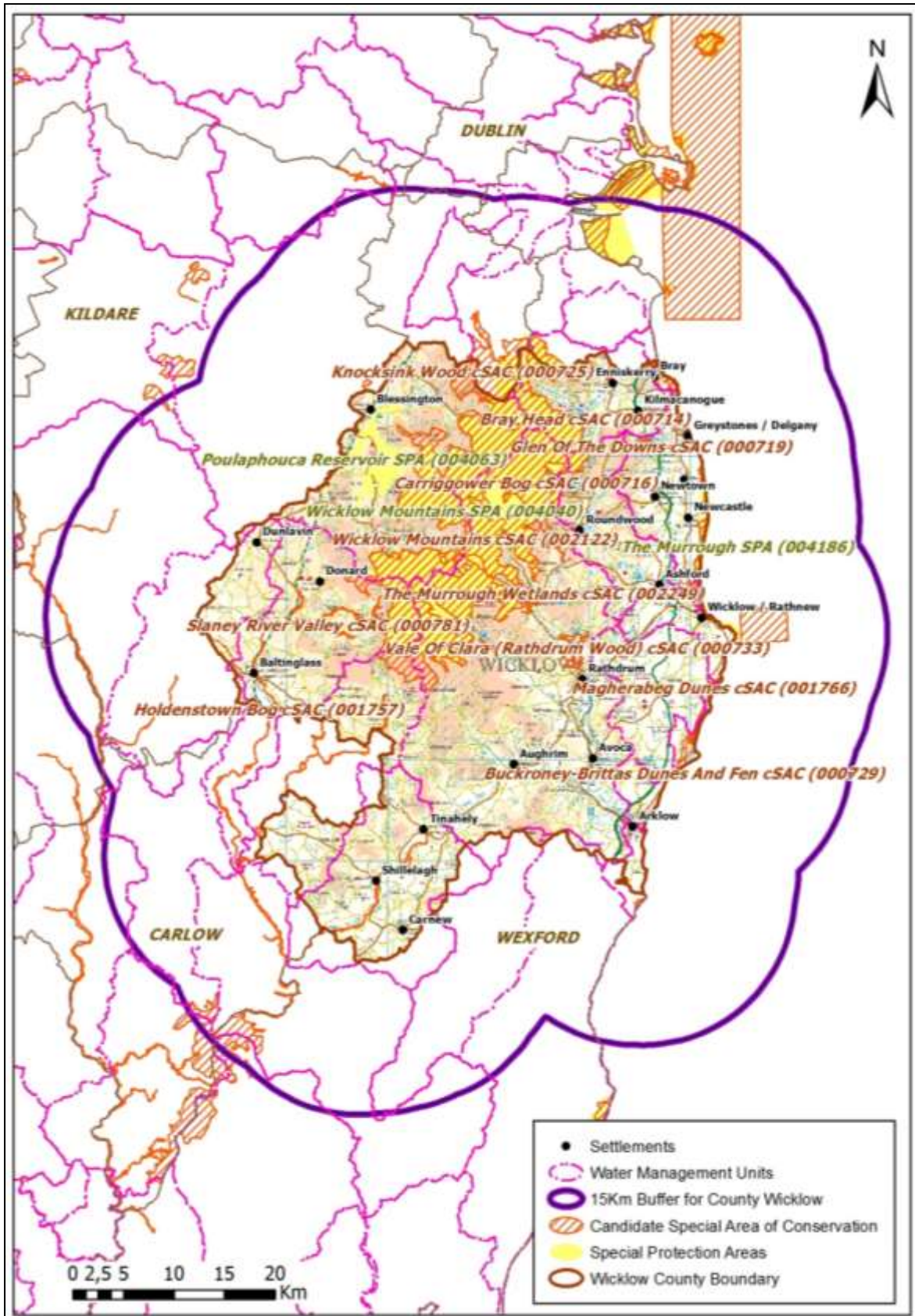
Since the conservation objectives for the European sites focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the qualifying features of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential implications of the implementing the draft Plan against the qualifying features of each site.

Those relevant cSAC sites are selected for a range of different habitats and species listed on Annex I and Annex II of the habitats directive, known as Qualifying Interests (QIs). In summary, those QIs for which cSAC sites are selected are presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

Those SPA sites listed have been selected for the protection of endangered species of wild birds. Each SPA has been selected for one or a combination of the following:

Listed rare and vulnerable species (as listed on Annex I of EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EC);
Regularly occurring migratory species, such as ducks, geese, and waders;
Wetlands, especially those of international importance, which attract large numbers of migratory birds each year.

The features for which SPAs have been selected are referred to as Special Conservation Interests (SCIs). Those SCIs for which sites are selected are presented in Table 1 and Table 2 below.



Map 1 European sites within Co. Wicklow and within 15 km of the County Boundary

Table 1. European Sites in County Wicklow and their qualifying features

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying features (QIs or SCIs)
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	Alkaline fens; Petrifying springs*
000714	Bray Head SAC	Dry heaths; Sea cliffs
000716	Carriggower Bog SAC	Transition mires
000717	Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC	Old oak woodlands
000719	Glen of the Downs SAC	Old oak woodlands
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	Petrifying springs*; Residual alluvial forests
000729	Buckronev-Brittass Dunes and Fen SAC	Alkaline fens; Decalcified dune heath*; Drift lines; Dune slack; Dunes with creeping willow; Embryonic shifting dunes; Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*; Marram dunes (white dunes); Mediterranean salt meadows; Perennial vegetation of stony banks
000733	Vale of Clara (Rathdrum Wood) SAC	Old oak woodlands
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	Estuaries; Floating river vegetation; Old oak woodlands; Residual alluvial forests*; Tidal mudflats; Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>); Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>); Common Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>); Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>); Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>); River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>); Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>); Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>)
001757	Holdenstown Bog SAC	Transition mires

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying features (QIs or SCIs)
001766	Magherabeg Dunes SAC	Decalcified dune heath*; Drift lines; Embryonic shifting dunes; Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*; Marram dunes (white dunes); Petrifying springs*
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	Alpine and subalpine heath; Blanket bog (active)*; Calcareous rocky slopes; Dry heaths; Dystrophic lakes; Old oak woodlands; Siliceous rocky slopes; Siliceous scree; Soft water lakes with base rich influences; Species-rich nardus upland grassland*; Wet heath; Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)
002249	The Murrrough Wetlands SAC	Alkaline fens; Atlantic salt meadows; Cladium fen*; Drift lines; Mediterranean salt meadows; Perennial vegetation of stony banks
002274	Wicklow Reef SAC	Reefs
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>); Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)
004063	Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>); Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)
004127	Wicklow Head SPA	Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>)
004186	The Murrrough SPA	Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>); Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>); Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>); Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>); Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>); Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>); Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>); Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>); Wetland and Waterbirds

*Indicates priority habitat

Table 2. European Sites within 15 km of the Boundary of County Wicklow and their qualifying features

(listed according to their NPWS site code)

Site Name	Location	Qualifying features (QIs or SCIs)
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	Atlantic salt meadows; Drift lines; Dune slack; Embryonic shifting dunes; Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*; Marram dunes (white dunes); Mediterranean salt meadows; Salicornia mud; Tidal mudflats; Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>)
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	Tidal mudflats
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	Alkaline fens; Cladium fen*; Petrifying springs; Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>); Geyer's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>); Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)
000397	Red Bog, Kildare SAC	Transition mires
000770	Blackstairs Mountains SAC	Dry heaths; Wet heath
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	Molinia meadows; Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*; Petrifying springs*
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	Petrifying springs* Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>); Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)
001742	Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	Decalcified dune heath* Drift lines; Embryonic shifting dunes; Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*; Marram dunes (white dunes)
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	Atlantic salt meadows; Dry heaths; Estuaries; Floating river vegetation; Hydrophilous tall herb; Mediterranean salt meadows; Old oak woodlands; Petrifying springs*;

Site Name	Location	Qualifying features (QIs or SCIs)
		Residual alluvial forests*; Salicornia mud; Tidal mudflats; Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>); Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>); Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>); Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>); Irish Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i>); Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>); Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>); River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>); Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>); Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>); White-Clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)
004006	North Bull Island SPA	Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>); Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>); Black-headed Gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>); Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>); Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>); Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>); Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>); Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>); Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>); Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>); Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>); Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>); Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>); Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>); Teal (<i>Anas cracca</i>); Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>); Wetlands & Waterbirds
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>); Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) ; Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>); Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>); Black-headed Gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>); Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>); Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) ; Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>); Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>); Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>);

Site Name	Location	Qualifying features (QIs or SCIs)
		Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>); Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>); Wetlands & Waterbirds

5. Assessment of likely effects

In order to assess whether the implementation of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan will have any effects on European sites, each of the actions in the Plan has been assessed for direct, indirect or cumulative impacts to European sites listed in Tables 1 and 2 (see Table 3).

Table 3 Assessment of Heritage Plan Actions

<i>Heritage Plan Action</i>	<i>Heritage Plan Outcome</i>	Direct Impacts	Indirect Impacts	Cumulative Impacts	Comment
<p>1. Advocate for enhanced capacity within Wicklow County Council to meet the demands for local authority heritage services through the resourcing of additional multidisciplinary heritage expertise.</p> <p>2. Support the Wicklow County Archives Service in preserving and making accessible the archival heritage of County Wicklow.</p> <p>3. Sustain and grow the Wicklow Community Archaeology Scheme and the valuable conservation, research and community engagement activities it delivers.</p>	<i>Enhanced heritage capacity, skills, resources and expertise within Wicklow</i>	x	x	x	The area of focus is compatible with the conservation management objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites
<p>4. Support the inclusion of robust heritage protection policy into county and Regional Plans and programmes (i.e. County Wicklow Development Plan, Local Area Plans, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund¹, Rural</p>	<i>Heritage policy is reflected in all Council programmes and plans.</i>	x	x	x	The area of focus is compatible with the conservation management objectives of European Sites and will not have the

¹ The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) aims to deliver more compact and sustainable development, as envisaged under Project Ireland 2040 by part-funding regeneration and rejuvenation projects in Ireland's five cities and other large towns <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

<p>Regeneration and Development Fund² Climate Adaption and Town Centre First Policy³).</p> <p>5. Support the development of evidence led policy advice to better protect the historic character of towns and villages</p>					potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites
<p>6.Support the preparation and implementation of conservation management plans as best practice for managing heritage assets under Council control and explore partnerships as relevant to promote this approach for other assets outside of Council control</p>	<i>Additional Conservation Management Plans prepared for key and vulnerable sites.</i>	x	x	x	The preparation of conservation plans will ensure that the potential impact on European sites is informs future management decisions.
<p>7. Support heritage led regeneration and adaptive reuse of built heritage in villages, towns and sensitive landscapes through promoting best practice guidance and public realm⁴ planning.</p> <p>8. Promote and support the use of traditional building skills in the care and maintenance of historic structures</p>	<i>More appropriate care and maintenance of historic structures.</i>	x	x	x	The action has potential to contribute to the conservation management objectives of European Sites through collaborative approach towards conservation of historic built environment.
<p>9. Leverage funding opportunities such as the Community Monuments Fund⁵, Built Heritage</p>	<i>Increased investment in protection of</i>	x	x	x	The action has potential to contribute to

² The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) is a key capital investment scheme which directly supports the objectives of Our Rural Future and the Town Centre First policy <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

³ The Town Centre First Policy, launched on 4 February 2022, is a major cross-government policy that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into our town centres. It advocates for a holistic, place-based approach to sustainable rural development <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/473d3-town-centre-first-policy/>

⁴ Publicly owned spaces and facilities.

⁵ The Community Monuments Fund was first established in 2020 to provide investment in Ireland's archaeological heritage. Funding is prioritised for local authorities, private owners and custodians and community groups for the care, conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of archaeological monuments <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

<p>Investment Scheme⁶, the Historic Towns Initiative⁷ and Croí Cónaithe Scheme⁸ to enable the care, conservation, and promotion of archaeological monuments and architectural heritage by the Council, private owners, custodians and community groups.</p> <p>10. Promote awareness of funding streams to support community heritage projects, such as the Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grants Scheme⁹, Community Foundation Ireland's climate action and biodiversity funds</p>	<p><i>heritage.</i></p>				<p>the conservation management objectives of European Sites through collaborative approach towards conservation of historic built environment.</p>
<p>11. Support the roll out of a dedicated conservation advice scheme to help communities and individuals to better manage and protect heritage assets.</p> <p>12. Enhance the capacity of local communities to better manage and record heritage through providing training and support.</p>	<p><i>High quality community-led heritage projects are enabled.</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>The action will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Site</p>
<p>13. Work with the Biodiversity Officer to support the development</p>	<p><i>Enhanced protection of Wicklow's</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>This action will not involve land use</p>

⁶ The Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structure Fund (HSF) are annual grant schemes to support the repair and conservation of Protected Structures and other historic buildings and support associated heritage skills, tradespersons and contractors. <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

⁷ The Historic Towns Initiative is an initiative to promote heritage-led regeneration and to improve the quality of our historic towns and villages for residents and tourists <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/>

⁸ The Croí Cónaithe (Cities) Scheme is a vacant property refurbishment grant to bring vacant properties back into residential use. <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

⁹ The Community Heritage Grants Scheme is an annual grant scheme for community groups and not-for-profit non-governmental organisations around the country for heritage projects <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/>

<p>and implementation of the County Wicklow Biodiversity Plan 2025-2030 to protect key habitats and species.</p> <p>14. Work cross departmentally with the Climate Action Team to support initiatives to enhance the climate resilience of our natural, built and cultural heritage.</p>	<p><i>heritage.</i></p>				<p>activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites but ultimately will contribute to the conservation management objectives of European Sites through collaborative implementation of plans and initiatives.</p>
<p>15. Record and highlight interconnecting aspects of Wicklow’s tangible and intangible heritage including history, people and landscapes, places, geological heritage, fieldnames, food heritage and traditions.</p> <p>16. Reinforce and expand the Irish Community Archive Network (ICAN) in County Wicklow in partnership with the National Museum of Ireland and The Heritage Council as a vehicle to help communities connect with and record their local heritage</p>	<p><i>Enhanced knowledge and understanding of Our Wicklow Heritage.</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>The action will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>
<p>17. Work with relevant Council departments, Town Teams and other local stakeholders to embed a community led placemaking approach into new public realm works and to new trail and active travel infrastructure.</p>	<p><i>Increased visibility and acknowledgment of local heritage in public spaces.</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>This action will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites</p>

<p>18. Work with Town Teams and other community-based groups to encourage the use of vacant spaces and non-traditional venues and formats to animate local heritage.</p>					
<p>19. Work collaboratively to improve access to Wicklow's National Monuments and publicly owned archaeological sites through universal design and a range of inclusive approaches to interpretation, both site-based and digital.</p> <p>20. Seek opportunities to embed heritage into other community-based programmes centred on health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on inclusivity through engaging with new and marginalised communities.</p> <p>21. Encourage a sustainable approach to tourism and recreation that protects sensitive landscapes and maximises opportunities for meaningful connections with natural and cultural heritage.</p>	<p><i>Better access for all to Wicklow's heritage.</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>Enhancement of access to publically owned archaeological sites will not give rise to significant landuse effects and will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>Encouraging sustainable tourism and recreation to protect sensitive landscapes will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. This approach will have the potential to contribute to the conservation</p>

					management objectives of European Sites by highlighting significance of same.
<p>22. Celebrate and explore the diverse heritage of all our communities in Wicklow and seek ways to share and celebrate this in public platforms.</p> <p>23. Develop an annual communication programme to highlight and celebrate achievements under the Wicklow Heritage Plan. Include within this, opportunities for in-person networking and knowledge sharing events, as well as online content, social media posts and promotion.</p> <p>24. Maximise the opportunities offered by National Heritage Week and National Biodiversity Week to celebrate our Wicklow heritage and explore opportunities to embed heritage in other initiatives such as Culture Night and Engineers Week, Climate Action Week as capacity allows.</p> <p>25. Celebrate and share our Wicklow heritage through the production of exhibitions, publications, digital technology, traditional and social media</p> <p>26. Optimise the use of the</p>	<p><i>Wicklow's Heritage is widely celebrated and shared across the county.</i></p>	x	x	x	<p>Celebrating aspects of Wicklow's heritage will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites</p>

<p>excellent resources available through Wicklow Libraries, Local Studies and County Archives services to support local historical research, training and knowledge sharing.</p>					
<p>27. Work in partnership with providers to support the delivery of inspiring and relevant heritage education for children, young people and teachers in a range of setting with an emphasis on the outdoor classroom and nature-based learning.</p>	<p><i>Children and young people get to connect with and spend more time in nature.</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>Working in partnership to encourage outdoor and nature based learning will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites</p>

<p>28. Strengthen key heritage partnerships to facilitate the implementation of national programmes on a local level such as Heritage Keepers¹⁰, the Heritage in Schools Scheme¹¹, Adopt a Monument, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan¹² and the work of the Wicklow Uplands Council.</p> <p>29. Avail of opportunities to work with third level institutes and others to further research aspects of Wicklow's heritage.</p> <p>30. Sustain and develop existing models of community heritage collaboration such as Irish Community Archive Network (ICAN) and the Glendalough Heritage Forum and explore opportunities to develop new ones.</p> <p>31. Support the crucial role played by volunteers and heritage groups, by facilitating networking, capacity building and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>32. Develop multi-disciplinary, creative, artistic and cultural collaborations through Wicklow's Culture and Creativity Strategy and</p>	<p><i>A range of active and vibrant collaborations are in place that result in enhanced protection and promotion of Wicklow's heritage</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>These collaborations will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites</p>
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¹⁰ The Heritage Keepers Programme is open to community groups and primary schools from all across Ireland to support planning a project that promotes or preserves an aspect of local built, cultural, or natural heritage. Heritage Keepers can also provide a grant towards completing this action <https://www.heritagekeepers.ie/>

¹¹ Heritage in Schools Scheme provides specialists who visit primary schools (in-person or virtually) to help children and their teachers learn about and appreciate their local heritage. <https://www.heritageinschools.ie/>

¹² The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is a framework bringing together different sectors across the island of Ireland to create a landscape where pollinators can survive and thrive. Implementation is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre <https://pollinators.ie/>

<p>the Creative Ireland Programme¹³ as a catalyst to connect people to heritage.</p> <p>33. Liaise with Screen Wicklow to explore collaborations to celebrate Wicklow's unique film heritage.</p> <p>34. Support the work of Arklow Maritime Museum and advocate for the development of a more secure and sustainable operational model</p>					
<p>35. Support projects to identify and record aspects of Wicklow's heritage to address information gaps, focussing in particular on intangible cultural heritage. Seek to document and share this aspect of our Wicklow heritage.</p> <p>36. Develop GIS and other tools to better embed identification, mapping and protection of heritage into the process of planning and sustainable delivery of green infrastructure.</p> <p>37. Audit oral heritage collections in Wicklow, identifying conservation needs and supporting the development of appropriate and sustainable access.</p> <p>38. Audit heritage collections</p>	<p><i>An expanded knowledge base on Wicklow's heritage</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>Expanding our knowledge base of Wicklow's heritage will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites</p>

¹³ The Creative Ireland Programme is the Government's implementation framework for the promotion and strengthening of culture and creativity throughout Ireland <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/>

<p>of Wicklow origin in National Cultural Heritage facilities with a view to creating and displaying an online catalogue of these on Our Wicklow Heritage.</p> <p>39. Share research relating to Wicklow’s Heritage by supporting the production of publications and events, using traditional and digital media in creative and innovative formats.</p>					
<p>40. Support delivery of the National Sectoral Climate Adaptation Plans¹⁴ for Biodiversity, Built and Archaeological Heritage in Wicklow, the Local Authority Climate Action Charter¹⁵ and the County Wicklow Climate Action Plan.</p> <p>41. Support the embedding of climate resilience as part of all plans under the Rural Redevelopment Fund¹⁶, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund¹⁷, Town and Village Renewal Scheme¹⁸ and the CLÁR Programme¹⁹.</p> <p>42. Implement national</p>	<p><i>Heritage considerations are integral to Wicklow County Council’s approach to addressing climate change.</i></p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>Ensuring the consideration of heritage as part of wider Council programmes concerned with urban regeneration and climate action will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>Implementing climate risk assessments</p>

¹⁴ Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications Sectoral Adaptation Planning <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/51df3-sectoral-adaptation-planning/>

¹⁵ Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications Sectoral Adaptation Planning [gov - Local Authority https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d914a-local-authority-climate-action-charter/](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d914a-local-authority-climate-action-charter/)

¹⁶ The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) is a key capital investment scheme which directly supports the objectives of Our Rural Future and the Town Centre First policy <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

¹⁷ The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) aims to deliver more compact and sustainable development, as envisaged under Project Ireland 2040 by part-funding regeneration and rejuvenation projects in Ireland’s five cities and other large towns <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

¹⁸ The Town and Village Scheme is one of a series of national and local support measures designed to rejuvenate small rural towns and villages throughout Ireland, under the Department of Rural & Community Development’s Rural Development Investment Programme <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-rural-and-community-development/>

¹⁹ The CLÁR programme (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) provides funding for small-scale infrastructural projects in rural areas to support sustainable development in identified areas by attracting people to live and work there <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-rural-and-community-development/>

<p>guidelines on climate risk assessment of Council owned heritage assets (natural and built) and identify priority areas for action.</p> <p>43. Support and encourage nature-based measures to address coastal erosion and best practice sustainable management of Wicklow’s uplands, natural heritage, habitats, and landscapes e.g., bog restoration, coastal protection, fire control, rewilding of river banks and restoring uplands for downstream benefits.</p> <p>44. Support and promote best practice in adaptive reuse of historic structures and build climate resilience of architectural and archaeological heritage through schemes such as the Built Heritage Investment Scheme, Historic Structures Fund²⁰, Historic Towns Initiative, Irish Walled Towns Network²¹ and the Community Monument Fund.</p> <p>45. Encourage communities to engage in climate action projects that protect heritage by collaborating with other stakeholders to deliver Climate Action Week and promotion of An Taisce Green Schools</p>					<p>will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites. Preparation of a baseline data for the heritage sites at risk will have the potential to contribute to the conservation management objectives of European Sites by aiding the strategic decision making. level appropriate assessment</p>
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²⁰ The Historic Structures Fund supports conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the broader benefit of communities and the public <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/>

²¹ The role of the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN) is to **unite and co-ordinate** the strategic efforts of local authorities and community groups involved in the **management, conservation and enhancement** of historic walled towns in Ireland, both North and South <https://irishwalledtownsnetwork.ie/>

<p>Programme, the Heritage in Schools Scheme and other programmes that encourage active engagement on climate and biodiversity.</p>					
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5.1 Examination of the Plan’s potential to result in negative impacts to European sites within 15 km of the Plan area.

European Sites and their associated qualifying features and associated conservation objectives are likely to be compromised by the plan only where the actions of the plan have the potential to result in land use activities than could result in damage or disturbance to qualifying habitat and qualifying species and the processes that they rely upon to maintain their favourable conservation status. As identified in Table 3 above, the Plan will not result in the implementation of land use activities that will have the potential to result in negative impacts to European Sites and their conservation objectives. On the contrary all aims and actions of the plan have been identified as having the potential to result in neutral to positive implications for European Sites and their conservation status.

The implementation of the Heritage Plan will have the potential to contribute to the future conservation management of European Sites within the county boundary through enhanced public awareness, maintenance of records and knowledge transfer.

5.2 In-combination effects with other plans & projects

As part of the Habitats Directive Article 6(3) assessment process consideration must be given to the potential for the Plan to combine with other plans or projects to result in cumulative negative effects to European Sites. The Heritage Plan has been prepared for coordinated heritage management and programming for the next five years within Wicklow County Council. The implementation of the plan will have the potential to result in a positive effect for European Sites within the county and will not have the potential to combine with other plans to result in cumulative negative effects to European Sites.

6. Screening statement with conclusions

The Screening of the Draft County Wicklow Heritage Plan as set out above shows that the plan will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in negative impacts to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites occurring within or surrounding the plan area and will not have the potential to compromise the achievement of the conservation objective of these European Sites.

The examination of the plan has found that the plan will have the potential to contribute to the conservation management of European Sites within and surrounding the plan area and will thus have positive implications for the conservation objectives of these European Site. In light of the findings of this report it is concluded that the Draft County Wicklow Heritage Plan is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion