R263/L-1195 Halls Junction Safety Improvement Scheme

HABITATS DIRECTIVE ARTICLE 6 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Chomhairle Chondae Dhun na nGall

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains a Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the proposed R263 / L1195 Safety Improvement Scheme in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The project is unlikely to have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site or qualifying interest due to the separation distance between the Works and the SPA.

This report clearly determines that Appropriate Assessment is not required.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive states the following:

6(3) – *'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'*.

6(4) – *'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 a 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'.

Appropriate Assessment process follows a four stage approach. The outcome of each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. Stages

1-2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step in Article 6(4).

Appropriate Assessment process comprises of the following stages;

Stage 1 – Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Stage 3 – Alternative Solutions

Stage 4 – Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/ Derogation.

Screening determines whether Appropriate Assessment (AA) is necessary by examining:

1. *'whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, and'*
2. *'the potential effects of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects and plans, on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives, and considering whether these effects will be significant'*.

Screening is an iterative process that involves consideration of the plan or project and its likely effects, and of the Natura 2000 sites and their ecological sensitivities, and the likely interaction of these. If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or it the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA).

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The proposed **R263 /L-1195 Halls Junction Safety Improvement Scheme** is located on a stretch of the R263 Regional road network approximately 750m north of the village of Kilcar, Co. Donegal. The works continue northwestwards towards Slieve League ending at a point approximately 300m northwest of Caishleen Bridge at an appropriate point to tie in to existing widened road construction.

The objective of the proposed works is to improve the safety on this stretch of the road network by improving the poor geometric alignment, visibility restrictions and narrow road widths which have been determined as contributing to the causes of collisions

and driver confusion. There is proposed to be a re-priority of the current junction arrangement in as the traffic figures support this.

4.0 NATURA 2000 SITES

The approach to screening follows guidance provided in the document 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities'.

1. Any Natura 2000 sites **within or adjacent** to the plan or project area.

   - There are no SAC or SPA sites within or adjacent to the proposed project.

2. Any Natura sites **within the likely zone of impact** of the plan or project. A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans, while for projects, the distance could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less that 100m, and must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects. Due to the minor nature of the proposed works, and the fact that they do not significantly increase the paved surface area, likely surface water runoff or pollutants, it is considered that a zone of likely influence of 5km will be more than sufficient in this case. The following SAC or SPA sites are located within the likely zone of impact (5km) of the proposed project.

   - **West Donegal Coast SPA Site Code: IE0004150**

   - **Slieve League SAC Site Code: IE0000189**

3. Natura 2000 sites **that are more than 15km** from the plan and project area depending on the likely impacts of the plan or project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, bearing in mind the precautionary principle.

   - Due to the minor nature and scale of the works proposed it is considered that the works will not impact on any SAC or SPA sites that are more than 15km from the proposed project.

A Site Synopsis of the Natura 2000 sites identified in (2) above is attached in Appendix 1 of this report.

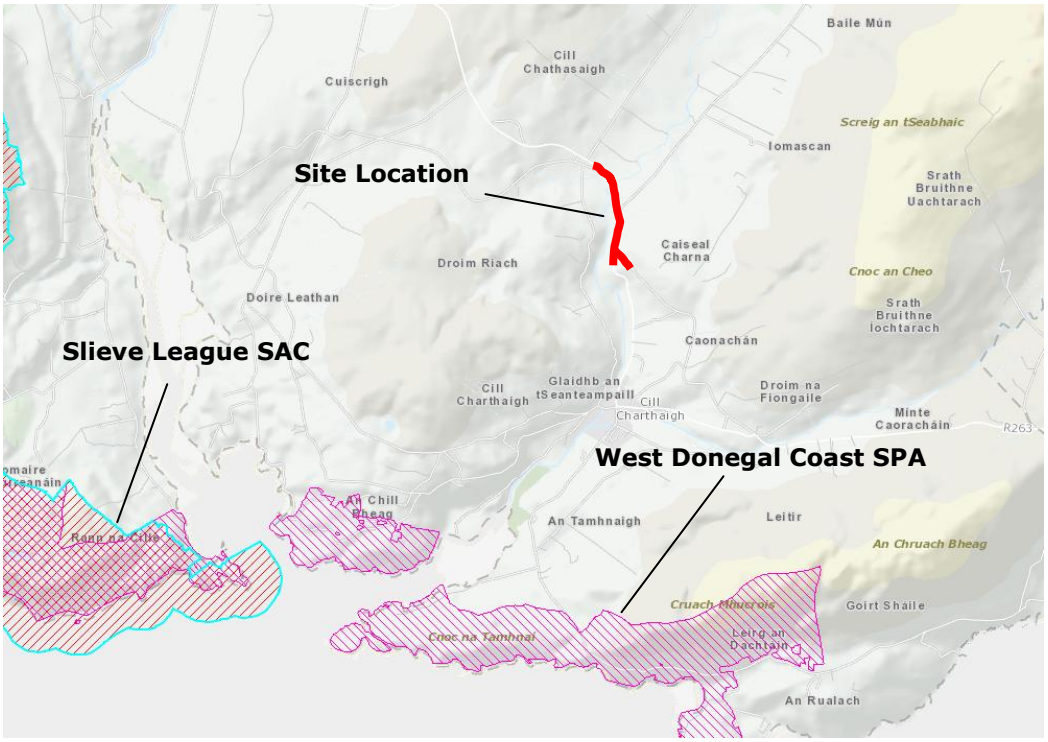

Figure 1 – Site Location and SAC/SPA locations

4.1 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES FOR NATURA 2000 SITES

Conservation objectives for the various SPA's and SAC's have been set by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. These objectives are generally to maintain or restore the favorable conservation status for habitats and species of community interest within the Natura sites. The specific conservation objectives for each site is listed below

- **West Donegal Coast SPA Site Code: IE0004150**

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species:

- Chough
- Peregrine
- Fulmar
- Cormorant
- Shag
- Herring Gull

- Kittiwake
- Razorbill

- **Slieve League SAC Site Code: IE0000189**

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- [1170] Reefs
- [1230] Vegetated Sea Cliffs
- [4010] Wet Heath
- [4030] Dry Heath
- [4060] Alpine and Subalpine Heaths
- [6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities
- [7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)*
- [8110] Siliceous Scree
- [8210] Calcareous Rocky Slopes
- [8220] Siliceous Rocky Slopes

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY EFFECTS

Assessment of likely effects is the process of establishing whether the plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 site or sites. It is based on a preliminary impact assessment using available information and data. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could be significant.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially, significant, or uncertain, or it the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA).

A preliminary impact assessment using available information and data was undertaken to establish whether the plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 site.

Examples of effects that are likely to be significant are:

- Any impact on an Annex I habitat.
- Causing reduction in the area of the habitat or Natura 2000 site.

- Causing direct or indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality and supply, soil compaction) in the Natura 2000 site.
- Causing serious or ongoing disturbance to species or habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is selected (e.g. increased noise, illumination and human activity).
- Causing direct or indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations on the Natura 2000 site.
- Interfering with mitigation measures put in place for other plans or projects.

It is concluded the subject project does not have any significant impact on identified Natura 2000 Sites, Appendix 2 contains an Assessment of Natura 2000 Sites identified at Section 4.0 above. No other plans or projects have been identified in respect of which combined effects with the subject project require consideration.

5.1 CUMULATIVE, DIRECT, INDIRECT, SHORT & LONG TERM EFFECTS

The development will not have a direct effect on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified near the proposed project. The development will not lead to loss of habitat, fragmentation or any impact on water resources located within a Natura 2000 site.

The site is located on/along an existing road on the outskirts of a village. The proposal includes the realignment and widening of an existing road. There will be controls in place as shown in Appendix 1 throughout the construction phase. The controls will in particular focus on the number of drains and the river running through and along the site extents.

5.2 OTHER SPECIES - OTTER [1355] LUTRA LUTRA

The ecology of otters has been the subject of a project under the LIFE Nature programme of the European Commission, published by Life in UK Rivers. The study shows that otters require huge territories. Quantities of prey dictate numbers of

otters and any factor that impacts on fish stock numbers can have significant impact. The food taken by otters has been the subject of a number of studies, and the main prey of the otter includes fish, frogs, crayfish and eels. Chemical vulnerability relates to prey (principally fish) and the possibility of contamination.

Otters are very mobile creatures and so have the potential to be present in the area. However they are also shy creatures and the works are located on and along an existing road with significant levels of traffic and therefore noise which will have a greater affect on their movements and makes their presence less likely. The site will be checked for the presence of otter holts in advance of the works.

5.3 WETLAND BIRDS

Given the separation between the works area and the areas of ornithological interest and that the works will be undertaken in a way that prevents accidental pollution of the watercourse which connects the sites, then it is considered extremely unlikely that there will be a direct or indirect impact on the ornithological interest within the SPA as a result of the proposed works.

5.4 PARTICULAR HABITATS

The SAC's identified have been dedicated for a number of particular habitats including reefs and blanket bogs. This SAC is located outside the site extents and therefore the project will not impact on this area.

5.5 OTHER POLICIES, PLANS OR PROJECTS

There are no other works, policies, plans or projects known that would impact on any of the Natrua 2000 sites identified. As the works are non intrusive in nature on the Natura 2000 sites, it is unlikely that the project will have any effect on these species.

Assessment of likely effects is the process of establishing whether the plan or project is likely to affect a Natura 2000 site or sites. It is based on a preliminary impact

assessment using available information and data. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could be significant.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially, significant, or uncertain, or it the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA).

A preliminary impact assessment using available information and data was undertaken to establish whether the plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 site.

Examples of effects that are likely to be significant are:

- Any impact on an Annex I habitat.
- Causing reduction in the area of the habitat or Natura 2000 site.
- Causing direct or indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality and supply, soil compaction) in the Natura 2000 site.
- Causing serious or ongoing disturbance to species or habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is selected (e.g. increased noise, illumination and human activity).
- Causing direct or indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations on the Natura 2000 site.
- Interfering with mitigation measures put in place for other plans or projects.

It is concluded the subject project does not have any significant impact on identified Natura 2000 Sites, Appendix 1 contains an Assessment of Natura 2000 Sites identified at Section 4.0 above. No other plans or projects have been identified in respect of which combined effects with the subject project require consideration.

6.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Further to the above assessment of Natura 2000 sites (as detailed in Appendix 1) within the likely zone of impact (5km) of the proposed road works it is considered that the project will have no adverse effect on the integrity or conservation objectives of any of

the Natura 2000 sites. Best practice in construction and the separation distance between the Works and sensitive receptors and qualifying interests of the SAC's & SPA's will ensure this.

As such it is concluded that Appropriate Assessment is not required.

7.0 REPORT ACCEPTANCE SHEET

The Habitats Directive Article 6 screening report has determined that the proposed R263 /L-1195 Halls Junction Safety Improvement Scheme is unlikely to have a significant effect on any Natura site.

Screening Report Prepared and Recommended By:

John Mc Cafferty Date: 13th August 2020

Assistant Engineer

Screening Report Approved By:

Michael Canning Date 13th August 2020

Executive Engineer

Appendix 1 – Natura 2000 Site Synopsis & Assessment of Natura 2000 Sites

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: WEST DONEGAL COAST SPA

SITE CODE: 004150

The West Donegal Coast SPA comprises separate sections of the Co. Donegal coastline and extends from Muckros Head in the south, northwards to Slieve League, Malin Beg, Rocky Point, Glen Head, Slieve Tooey, Maghera, Loughros Point, Dunmore Head, Aran Island, Magheradrumman, Carrickfin, Carnboy, Bunbeg, Magheragallan, Lunniagh, as far as Carrick, to the south of Bloody Foreland. The site includes the high coast areas and sea cliffs of the mainland and Aran Island, the land adjacent to the cliff, areas of sand dunes/machair at Maghera, Mullaghderg, Braade/Carrickfin/Carnboy, Magheragallan and Lunniagh/Carrick, and also several areas further inland of the coast at Croaghmuckros and Slieve League, north of Glencolumbkille and south of Dunmore Head. A low-lying area of land on the coast at Bunbeg used by roosting Chough is also included. The high water mark forms the seaward boundary, except at Tormore Island where the adjacent sea area to a distance of 500 m from the cliff base is included. Most of the site is underlain by granite and quartzite, though various other, particularly metamorphic, rock types also occur; rocks of Carboniferous age are found at Muckros Head.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Chough, Peregrine, Fulmar, Cormorant, Shag, Herring Gull, Kittiwake and Razorbill.

Vegetated sea cliffs are the predominant habitat of the site; these occur along its length and support a good variety of plant species typical of the habitat, including some rarities. The cliff tops support heath, blanket bog or coastal grassland. The northern section of the site includes several areas of machair. Apart from the sea cliffs and machair, the site includes areas of dry heath, wet heath, blanket bog, upland acid grassland, dense Bracken (Pteridium aquilinum), scrub, semi-improved and improved pasture grassland, fixed and mobile dune grassland, freshwater marsh, streams, oligotrophic lakes, bedrock shores and islets.

The site supports an important population of breeding Chough, a Red Data Book species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive; 40 breeding pairs were recorded from the site in the 1992 survey and 58 in the 2002/03 survey. Concentrations of breeding pairs occur on the Glencolumbkille Peninsula, from Killybegs in the south to Loughros Beg Bay in the north and on Aran Island. On Aran the exposed maritime situation coupled with sheep grazing has resulted in large areas of short sward suitable for foraging Chough. Flocking activity is centred on some of

the extensive sand dune systems present; flocks of 76, 22 and 40 birds were recorded at Carrick, Dooey and Sheskinmore respectively in October 2004. At Sheskinmore, which is included in a separate SPA, larger flocks of as many as 140 birds have been previously reported. Up to 40 birds have been recorded roosting at Glen Head near Glencolumbkille and feeding in that area during September 2004.

Flock birds feeding at Sheskinmore were roosting at nearby Dunmore Head during October 2004 and a communal roost site associated with dune feeding exists near Bunbeg, Gweedore within sight of the dunes at Magheragallan.

The site supports a nationally important Peregrine population (6 pairs in 2002). The site also holds nationally important populations of Fulmar (1,879 pairs), Cormorant (71 pairs in 1999 and 2006), Shag (86 pairs), Herring Gull (229 pairs), Kittiwake (1,037 pairs) and Razorbill (322 pairs). Other species that occur include Black Guillemot (155 individuals), Guillemot (366 pairs), Great Black-backed Gull (15 pairs) and Lesser Black-backed Gull (2 pairs) – all seabird data from 1999 except where indicated. The most important breeding seabird colony in the site is at Tormore Island, a small precipitous grassy sea stack rising to a peak of 139 m, on the north side of the Glencolumbkille Peninsula. Puffin has been recorded breeding on Tormore in the past, with an estimated 3,000 birds in 1970, though such high numbers are no longer considered to occur. Small groups of Barnacle Goose, also an E.U. Birds Directive Annex I species, occasionally graze on the sward on top of the stack. Twite and Ring Ouzel, both Red-listed species are also know to occur within the West Donegal Coast SPA.

The West Donegal Coast SPA contains nationally important breeding populations of Chough, Peregrine and six seabird species: Fulmar, Cormorant, Shag, Herring Gull, Kittiwake and Razorbill. The presence of Chough and Peregrine, species that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, is of note.

Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service 30.5.2015

An Roinn
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

SITE SYNOPSIS

Site Name: Slieve League SAC

Site Code: 000189

This site encompasses the spectacularly scenic coastline from Glen Bay, at Glencolumbkille, around to a point south-east of Teelin, in south Co. Donegal. Inland, the uplands of Slieve League (595 m O.D.) and Leahan (427 m O.D.) are included, along with Loughs Agh and Auva.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[1170] Reefs
[1230] Vegetated Sea Cliffs
[4010] Wet Heath
[4030] Dry Heath
[4060] Alpine and Subalpine Heaths
[6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities
[7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)*
[8110] Siliceous Scree
[8210] Calcareous Rocky Slopes
[8220] Siliceous Rocky Slopes

The site has important examples of reef communities, including two rare biotopes. A reef of cobbles, pebbles and boulders exposed to wave action, in 12-17 m of water, supports a community characterised by the brown alga Laminaria saccharina and ephemeral red algae. This is a rare community and the recently described red alga Schmitzia hiscockiana is present. Halarachnion ligulatum is also characteristic of the area.

At depths of between 17 and 26 m the substratum is solid bedrock. The community present here is characterised by sponges, hydoids, the sea fan Eunicella verrucosa, the anthozoans Alcyonium digitatum and Alcyonium glomeratum, the fragile bryozoans Pentapora foliacea and Porella compressa, the bryozoan crust Parasmittina trispinosa, and the feather star Antedon bifida. A variety of red algae, including Cryptopleura ramose, and the brown alga Dictyota dichotoma are present. This site is one of the most northerly records for the sea fan Eunicella verrucosa. This biotope is similar to the biotope with erect sponges Eunicella verrucosa and Pentapora foliacea on slightly tide swept moderately exposed circalittoral rock, but is unusual in that it occurs in shallower water and has a variety of red algae present.

Along the southern side of the site are very steep, often precipitous slopes and sea cliffs which are among the highest in Europe (590 m O.D.), rising from the sea almost to the summit of Slieve League. Mainly of quartzite, they are capped by an inlier of basal Carboniferous sandstones and conglomerates, a remnant of the Tertiary peneplain. Only parts of the less-steep slopes are vegetated. A heathy vegetation of Heather (Calluna vulgaris) and dwarf Bracken (Pteridium aquilinum) occurs, with Bearberry (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi) and Devil's-bit Scabious (Succisa pratensis), and coastal elements including Thrift (Armeria maritima), Sea Campion (Silene vulgaris subsp. maritima) and Rock Samphire (Crithmum maritimum). Where slopes are very sheer, there is no vegetation and the cliff faces and scree patches are exposed.

On the northern slopes of the mountain is a fine, north-facing corrie, in which lies Lough Agh. The steep back wall of this corrie is also remarkable for its flora, which consists of an extremely species-rich assemblage of alpine plants, including a number of rare species, including some which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book. These include Alpine Bistort (Polygonum viviparum), Alpine Saw-wort (Saussurea alpina), Yellow Saxifrage (Saxifraga aizoides), Purple Saxifrage (S. oppositifolia) and Holly Fern (Polystichum lonchitis). An upland ledge aspect of the Annex I habitat Hydrophilous tall herb communities has recently been recorded from the site. A further species found on the coast at this site is Sea Pea (Lathyrus japonicus subsp. maritimus). This species is listed in the Red Data Book and the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015, as is Alpine Bistort. Slieve League also has a range of Red Listed bryophyte species, including Arctoa fulvella, Campylopus subulatus, Ditrichum zonatum, Gymnomitrion concinnatum, Marsupella sphacelata, Philonotis rigida and Scapania gymnostomophila.

The remainder of the site is predominantly covered with blanket bog. In places, deep erosion channels in the peat expose the full peat profile. A fine example of undrained blanket bog with numerous pools occurs at Lough Auva. Wet heath occurs on the shallower peats in association with blanket bog and with dry or alpine heaths. It is notable for the presence of Crowberry (Empetrum nigrum), along with more common species such as Heather, Purple Moor-grass (Molinia caerulea), Deergrass (Scirpus cespitosus), Cross-leaved Heath (Erica tetralix) and Tormentil (Potentilla erecta).

This site is of major ecological importance. Slieve League supports good quality lowland and mountain blanket bog, wet and dry heath and excellent quality alpine heath and sea cliff vegetation. The cliffs above Lough Agh support a very rich and diverse montane flora which includes some very rare vascular plants and bryophyte species. The site provides good breeding habitat for several seabird species, and also holds important populations of Chough and Peregrine, both listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. The site is an important feeding site for Barnacle and Greenland White-fronted Goose.

Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service Version date: 20/07/2016

1. Natura 2000 Site ID & Characteristics	2. Site Importance	3. Site Vulnerability	4. Likely Impact of Proposed Development	5. Cumulative Effects	6. Development Likely to Cause Significant Impact
SITE NAME: WEST DONEGAL COAST SPA **SITE CODE: 004150** The West Donegal Coast SPA comprises separate sections of the Co. Donegal coastline and extends from Muckros Head in the south, northwards to Slieve League, Malin Beg, Rocky Point, Glen Head, Slieve Tooey, Maghera, Loughros Point, Dunmore Head, Aran Island, Magheradrumman, Carrickfin, Carnboy, Bunbeg, Magheragallan, Lunniagh, as far as Carrick, to the south of Bloody Foreland. The site includes the high coast areas and sea cliffs of the mainland and Aran Island, the land adjacent to the cliff, areas of sand dunes/machair at Maghera, Mullaghderg, Braade/Carrickfin/Carnboy, Magheragallan and Lunniagh/Carrick, and also several areas further inland of the coast at Croaghmuckros and Slieve League, north of Glencolumbkille and south of Dunmore	The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Chough, Peregrine, Fulmar, Cormorant, Shag, Herring Gull, Kittiwake and Razorbill. Vegetated sea cliffs are the predominant habitat of the site; these occur along its length and support a good variety of plant species typical of the habitat, including some rarities. The cliff tops support heath, blanket bog or coastal grassland. The northern section of the site includes several areas of machair. Apart from the sea cliffs and machair, the site includes areas of dry heath, wet heath, blanket bog, upland acid grassland, dense Bracken (Pteridium aquilinum), scrub, semi-improved and improved pasture grassland, fixed and mobile dune grassland, freshwater marsh, streams, oligotrophic lakes, bedrock shores and islets. The site supports an important population	Site is extensive and primarily vulnerable to effects of surrounding agricultural activities and urban residential and industrial development. The only potential risk factor is the entry of pollutants into the drainage network and particularly nutrient pollution of waters. This will be negated	• Proposal is to realign and widen a section of road as detailed above. • The SPA is located outside the site extents. • With the controls in place as described likely impact on the SPA is unlikely. **Consideration:** Scheme does not impact the SPA.	• There are no other works planned for the area. • The works do not constitute a major change in the land use of the area. **Consideration:** Scheme does not have a cumulative impact on the SPA.	**Consideration:** The scheme does not have a significant impact on the Natura 2000 Site. This is due to the separation distance between the works and the qualifying interests contained in the SPA and controls that will be in place during construction.

Head. A low-lying area of land on the coast at Bunbeg used by roosting Chough is also included. The high water mark forms the seaward boundary, except at Tormore Island where the adjacent sea area to a distance of 500 m from the cliff base is included. Most of the site is underlain by granite and quartzite, though various other, particularly metamorphic, rock types also occur; rocks of Carboniferous age are found at Muckros Head.	of breeding Chough, a Red Data Book species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive; 40 breeding pairs were recorded from the site in the 1992 survey and 58 in the 2002/03 survey. Concentrations of breeding pairs occur on the Glencolumbkille Peninsula, from Killybegs in the south to Loughros Beg Bay in the north and on Aran Island. On Aran the exposed maritime situation coupled with sheep grazing has resulted in large areas of short sward suitable for foraging Chough. Flocking activity is centred on some of the extensive sand dune systems present; flocks of 76, 22 and 40 birds were recorded at Carrick, Dooey and Sheskinmore respectively in October 2004. At Sheskinmore, which is included in a separate SPA, larger flocks of as many as 140 birds have been previously reported. Up to 40 birds have been recorded roosting at Glen Head near Glencolumbkille and feeding in that area during September 2004. Flock birds feeding at Sheskinmore were roosting at nearby Dunmore Head during October 2004 and a communal roost site	though controls which will be put in place prior to construction. These controls will include storage and mixing of materials/ chemicals in a safe area located away from waters. All workers will be made aware of the presence of the habitat as part of their site induction. Contractor to ensure solids are removed from any surface water prior to discharge into			

	associated with dune feeding exists near Bunbeg, Gweedore within sight of the dunes at Magheragallan. The site supports a nationally important Peregrine population (6 pairs in 2002). The site also holds nationally important populations of Fulmar (1,879 pairs), Cormorant (71 pairs in 1999 and 2006), Shag (86 pairs), Herring Gull (229 pairs), Kittiwake (1,037 pairs) and Razorbill (322 pairs). Other species that occur include Black Guillemot (155 individuals), Guillemot (366 pairs), Great Black-backed Gull (15 pairs) and Lesser Black-backed Gull (2 pairs) – all seabird data from 1999 except where indicated. The most important breeding seabird colony in the site is at Tormore Island, a small precipitous grassy sea stack rising to a peak of 139 m, on the north side of the Glencolumbkille Peninsula. Puffin has been recorded breeding on Tormore in the past, with an estimated 3,000 birds in 1970, though such high numbers are no longer considered to occur. Small groups of Barnacle Goose, also an E.U. Birds Directive Annex I species, occasionally graze on the	storm drains, this to be ensured by keeping a tidy organised site with areas clearly marked for mixing chemicals and by regularly sweeping approach roads to and within the site. Bunds to be in place in the event of a spillage to minimise impact.			

	sward on top of the stack. Twite and Ring Ouzel, both Red-listed species are also know to occur within the West Donegal Coast SPA. The West Donegal Coast SPA contains nationally important breeding populations of Chough, Peregrine and six seabird species: Fulmar, Cormorant, Shag, Herring Gull, Kittiwake and Razorbill. The presence of Chough and Peregrine, species that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, is of note. Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service 30.5.2015				
Site Name: Slieve League SAC **Site Code: 000189** This site encompasses the spectacularly scenic coastline from Glen Bay, at Glencolumbkille, around to a point south-east of Teelin, in south Co. Donegal. Inland, the uplands of Slieve League (595	The site has important examples of reef communities, including two rare biotopes. A reef of cobbles, pebbles and boulders exposed to wave action, in 12-17 m of water, supports a community characterised by the brown alga Laminaria saccharina and ephemeral red algae. This is a rare community and the recently described red alga Schmitzia hiscockiana is present.	Site is extensive and primarily vulnerable to effects of surrounding agricultural activities and urban residential and	• Proposal is to realign and widen a section of road as detailed above. • The SAC is located	• There are no other works planned for the area. • The works do not constitute	**Consideration:** The scheme does not have a significant impact on the Natura 2000 Site. This is due to the separation

m O.D.) and Leahan (427 m O.D.) are included, along with Loughs Agh and Auva. The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes): • [1170] Reefs • [1230] Vegetated Sea Cliffs • [4010] Wet Heath • [4030] Dry Heath • [4060] Alpine and Subalpine Heaths • [6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities • [7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)* • [8110] Siliceous Scree • [8210] Calcareous Rocky Slopes • [8220] Siliceous Rocky Slopes	Halarachnion ligulatum is also characteristic of the area. At depths of between 17 and 26 m the substratum is solid bedrock. The community present here is characterised by sponges, hydoids, the sea fan Eunicella verrucosa, the anthozoans Alcyonium digitatum and Alcyonium glomeratum, the fragile bryozoans Pentapora foliacea and Porella compressa, the bryozoan crust Parasmittina trispinosa, and the feather star Antedon bifida. A variety of red algae, including Cryptopleura ramose, and the brown alga Dictyota dichotoma are present. This site is one of the most northerly records for the sea fan Eunicella verrucosa. This biotope is similar to the biotope with erect sponges Eunicella verrucosa and Pentapora foliacea on slightly tide swept moderately exposed circalittoral rock, but is unusual in that it occurs in shallower water and has a variety of red algae present. Along the southern side of the site are very steep, often precipitous slopes and sea cliffs which are among the highest in Europe (590 m O.D.), rising from the sea	industrial development. The only potential risk factor is the entry of pollutants into the drainage network and particularly nutrient pollution of waters. This will be negated though controls which will be put in place prior to construction. These controls will include storage and mixing of materials/ chemicals in a safe area located away	outside the site extents. • With the controls in place as described likely impact on the SAC is unlikely. **Consideration:** Scheme does not impact the SAC.	a major change in the land use of the area. **Consideration:** Scheme does not have a cumulative impact on the SAC.	distance between the works and the qualifying interests contained in the SPA and controls that will be in place during construction.

	almost to the summit of Slieve League. Mainly of quartzite, they are capped by an inlier of basal Carboniferous sandstones and conglomerates, a remnant of the Tertiary peneplain. Only parts of the less-steep slopes are vegetated. A heathy vegetation of Heather (Calluna vulgaris) and dwarf Bracken (Pteridium aquilinum) occurs, with Bearberry (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi) and Devil's-bit Scabious (Succisa pratensis), and coastal elements including Thrift (Armeria maritima), Sea Campion (Silene vulgaris subsp. maritima) and Rock Samphire (Crithmum maritimum). Where slopes are very sheer, there is no vegetation and the cliff faces and scree patches are exposed. On the northern slopes of the mountain is a fine, north-facing corrie, in which lies Lough Agh. The steep back wall of this corrie is also remarkable for its flora, which consists of an extremely species-rich assemblage of alpine plants, including a number of rare species, including some which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book. These include Alpine Bistort (Polygonum viviparum), Alpine Saw-wort (Saussurea	from waters. All workers will be made aware of the presence of the habitat as part of their site induction. Contractor to ensure solids are removed from any surface water prior to discharge into storm drains, this to be ensured by keeping a tidy organised site with areas clearly marked for mixing chemicals and by regularly sweeping approach roads to and within			

	alpina), Yellow Saxifrage (Saxifraga aizoides), Purple Saxifrage (S. oppositifolia) and Holly Fern (Polystichum lonchitis). An upland ledge aspect of the Annex I habitat Hydrophilous tall herb communities has recently been recorded from the site. A further species found on the coast at this site is Sea Pea (Lathyrus japonicus subsp. maritimus). This species is listed in the Red Data Book and the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015, as is Alpine Bistort. Slieve League also has a range of Red Listed bryophyte species, including Arctoa fulvella, Campylopus subulatus, Ditrichum zonatum, Gymnomitrion concinnatum, Marsupella sphacelata, Philonotis rigida and Scapania gymnostomophila. The remainder of the site is predominantly covered with blanket bog. In places, deep erosion channels in the peat expose the full peat profile. A fine example of undrained blanket bog with numerous pools occurs at Lough Auva. Wet heath occurs on the shallower peats in association with blanket bog and with dry or alpine heaths. It is notable for the presence of Crowberry (Empetrum nigrum), along with more	the site. Bunds to be in place in the event of a spillage to minimise impact.			

	common species such as Heather, Purple Moor-grass (Molinia caerulea), Deergrass (Scirpus cespitosus), Cross-leaved Heath (Erica tetralix) and Tormentil (Potentilla erecta). This site is of major ecological importance. Slieve League supports good quality lowland and mountain blanket bog, wet and dry heath and excellent quality alpine heath and sea cliff vegetation. The cliffs above Lough Agh support a very rich and diverse montane flora which includes some very rare vascular plants and bryophyte species. The site provides good breeding habitat for several seabird species, and also holds important populations of Chough and Peregrine, both listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. The site is an important feeding site for Barnacle and Greenland White-fronted Goose. Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service Version date: 20/07/2016				