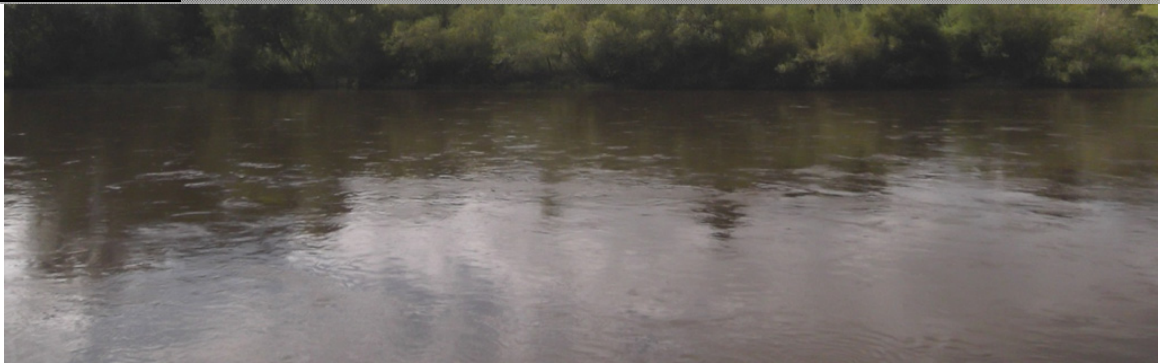




APPENDIX
2

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT



Carrick on Suir Town Council

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1 Introduction to Habitats Directive and Article 6 Assessment

The aim of the European Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of wild habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is to create a network of protected wildlife sites in Europe, maintained at a favourable conservation status¹. Each member state must designate their most important natural areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The Directive specifies the scientific criteria on the basis of which SAC sites must be selected and very strictly curtails the grounds that can be used as justification for damaging a site. The network of sites is referred to as NATURA 2000 and includes SACs for protected habitats and species and SPAs (Special Protection Areas) for protected bird habitats.

The European Habitats Directive (Council of the European Communities 1992) was transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 and amended in 1998, 2005 and 2011. The (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 address transposition issues raised in judgements of the ECJ against Ireland in 2008 and along with provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (Part XAB), clarify the obligations of planning authorities under the Birds and Habitats Directives.

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive provides a strict assessment procedure for any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a designated European site but which has the potential to have implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Draft Carrick on Suir Town Development Plan (COSTDP) 2013, therefore, falls under the remit of Article 6.

The 2011 Planning Regulations and the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 require planning authorities when considering an application for a development that is likely to have a significant effect on a SAC/SPA, to ensure that an appropriate assessment of the implications of the development for the conservation status of the site is undertaken. Similarly land use plans are required to be subject to an appropriate assessment screening as set out in Section 177 U of the Act. "The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is not required if it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site."

¹ The conservation status of a species can be taken as "favourable" when population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future and there is and will continue to be a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis. Article 1 (i) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. The conservation status of a habitat can be taken as "favourable" when its natural range and area it covers within that range is stable or increasing and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future.

2 Guidance on the implementation of Article 6

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government published *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities in December 2009*. This guidance document establishes the steps and procedures to be followed in undertaking an appropriate assessment of statutory land use plans within the framework of current planning legislation.

Section 4.10 of the Guidance states; "It is the competent authority's responsibility to carry out the appropriate assessment of the plan. The Statement of AA of plans should be based on best available information, objective criteria, best scientific knowledge and expert judgment in relation to its impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and to its structure and function. There should be no reasonable scientific doubt as to the absence of effects."

It is recommended that the Department² be consulted by a planning authority at every stage of the plan making process (i.e. at the pre-draft, draft and proposed amendments stages). The Department's comments should be taken into account by the planning authority before the plan is adopted. In each iteration of the plan, earlier observations from the Department should be carried forward.

Section 4.8 of the guidance states "The key to deciding if an appropriate assessment of a plan would be required is determined by an assessment of whether the plan and its policies and objectives are likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. The decision will be influenced by the nature and extent of the development likely to be proposed in the plan, and the plan's area *in situ*, *ex situ* and in combination relationship to adjoining the Natura 2000 sites and the wider Natura 2000 network.

When screening the plan and its policies and objectives there are two possible outcomes:

The plan poses no risk of a significant effect and as such requires no further assessment; or the plan has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain) and AA of the plan is necessary.

Screening can be used to establish which policies and objectives have potential to have significant effects, and therefore the ones that require further attention at the AA stage.

The European Commission methodological guidance on the provisions of article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive sets out the four stages for the assessment.³

² Now the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

³ *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites- methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6 (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.*

Managing Natura 2000 sites The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2002)

Stage 1: Screening

The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant;

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts. The output of the AA is a Natura Impact Report;

Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site;

Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

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

3 Procedure for stage one screening

This report consists of a screening for Habitats Directive Assessment of the COSTDP 2013.

This stage examines the likely effects of the COSTDP 2013 on Natura 2000 sites in Carrick on Suir and within a 15km radius of the town and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these sites will not be significantly impacted by policies, objectives and zonings in the COSTDP 2013. This assessment comprises four steps:-

Step 1: determining whether the project or plan is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site: -

The COSTDP 2013 is a spatial planning framework for Carrick on Suir and is not directly connected to the management of any Natura 2000 sites.

Step 2: describing the project or plan and the description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination have the potential for having significant effects on the Natura 2000 site;

The objective of the COSTDP is to provide a strategic planning framework for the development of Carrick on Suir. The COSTDP 2013 is intended to be a framework for local authority development and will address issues such as settlement, infrastructure, economic development, community facilities, heritage conservation and environmental protection.

With a total population in excess of 5,886 (Census 2011) Carrick on Suir accounts for approximately 6% of the population of South Tipperary. Key assets of the town are its built heritage and riverside setting providing potential for an enhanced tourism base. The town is developed around the River Suir which is a SAC. This is the only Natura 2000 site within the town plan area while two Natura 2000 sites occur within 15km of Carrick on Suir :- Comeragh Mountains in Co. Waterford and Hugginstown Fen in Co. Kilkenny (Map 1).

Step 3: Identifying the potential effects on the Natura 2000 site;

The DoEHLG Guidance on Appropriate Assessment on Plans and Projects in Ireland (December 2009) states that all N2000 sites within or adjacent the plan area must be mapped and tabulated, and site integrity and site conditions necessary to support the site integrity must be indicated.

The information presented in Table 1 details the Natura 2000 site within Carrick on Suir . Table 2 details sites outside Carrick on Suir and within a 15km buffer of the town.

The N2000 sites are listed by designation; Special Areas of Conservation / Special Protection Areas. The following information is listed for each N2000 site:

- Site code
- Site name

- Qualifying interests
- Conservation objectives
- Threats to site integrity

Step 4: Assessing the significance of any effects on the Natura 2000 site.

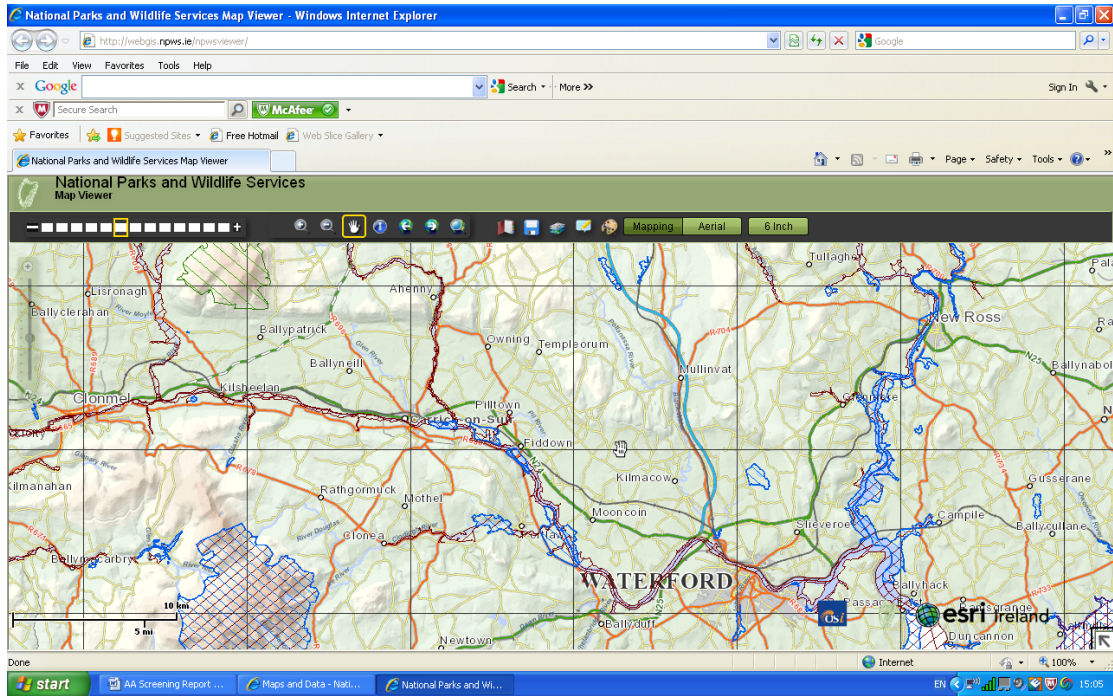
The screening stage involves application of the precautionary principle proportional to the policy/objective and the Natura 2000 site in question. Objectives and policies from the Draft COSTDP and their impact on the N2000 were screened to ascertain if the policies / objectives were likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites, using the following framework.

- Town Plan zoning/policy/objective
- N2000 site
- Qualifying interests
- Threats to site integrity
- Potential impacts from COSTDP 2013
- Risk of significant impact (Y/N)
- Potential 'in combination' impacts
- Risk of significant impacts (Y/N)
- Avoidance and (then) mitigation measures
- Action required: Policy change needed / rewording / additional CDP objective

Where no significant effects are found, then policies or objectives are accepted. If all the policies / objectives in the Draft COSTDP 2013 were found not to have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site no further HDA assessment is required.

Where a policy / objective as worded does have potential for a significant effect, then the policy /objective needs to be amended or rejected. The local authority understands that if it still wishes to proceed with the policy /objective even though it may have a significant effect, then a Stage 2 extended HDA assessment and preparation of a Natura Impact Report is required.

Map 1. Natura 2000 sites in the catchment of Carrick on Suir (www.npws.ie)



4 Qualifying interests and Conservation Objectives of Natura 2000 sites

Table A2.1: Natura 2000 sites within Carrick on Suir

Carrick on Suir		Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)		
Site code	Site name	Qualifying interests (of entire SAC)	Conservation objectives	<i>Threats to site integrity</i>
0002137	Lower River Suir	<p>Alluvial Wet Woodlands and Yew Wood,</p> <p>Floating River Vegetation,</p> <p>Atlantic Salt Meadows, Mediterranean Salt meadows</p> <p>Old Oak Wood and Eutrophic Tall Herbs</p> <p>Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, River Lamprey,</p> <p>Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter</p>	<p>To maintain the Annex I habitats and Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status.</p> <p>Relevant to Carrick on Suir are:</p> <p>Alluvial Wet Woodlands</p> <p>Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, River Lamprey,</p> <p>Twaite Shad, Crayfish</p> <p>Otter</p>	<p>Obstructions, impassable weirs, gross pollutants, specific pollutants, channel maintenance, man-made barriers to migration, eutrophication, leisure fishing drift netting, use of pesticides, fertilisation, removal of hedges and copses, removal of scrub, felling of native or mixed woodland, professional fishing (including fyke nets) hunting, trapping, poisoning, poaching, sand and gravel extraction, mechanical removal of peat, urbanised areas, human habitation, continuous urbanisation, industrial or commercial areas, discharges, disposal of household waste, industrial waste, inert materials, other discharges, routes, bridge, viaduct, water pollution, other forms of pollution, infilling of ditches, dykes, pods, pools, marshes or pits, drainage, management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes, removal of sediments, canalisation or modifying structures of inland water course</p> <p>Overgrazing, infilling and reclamation,</p>

			inappropriate grazing levels and invasive species, clearance for agriculture or felling for timber, planting of non-native conifers, Increased development
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Table A2.2: Natura 2000 sites within 15km of Carrick on Suir

County Waterford		Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	
Site code/name	Qualifying interests	Conservation objectives	<i>Threats to site integrity</i>
001952 Comeragh Mountains	Blanket bog, Dry, Wet and Alpine Heath, Rocky Slopes, Oligotrophic Lakes, Floating River Vegetation, Shining Sicklemoss	To maintain the Annex I habitats and Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status.	Agriculture, burning, sand and gravel extraction, urbanisation, industrialisation, acidification, tropospheric ozone and nitrogen enrichment caused by atmospheric deposition Abandonment, overgrazing, burning, quarrying, outdoor recreation
County Kilkenny		Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	
Site code/name	Qualifying interests	Conservation objectives	<i>Threats to site integrity</i>
000404 Hugginstown Fen	Alkaline Fen	To maintain the Annex I habitats and Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status.	Peat or Turf cutting, arterial drainage, local drainage and agricultural reclamation

Table 3 presents a strategic level assessment of impacts from the COSTDP 2013 on Natura 2000 sites. Potential impacts for Annex II species that occur within the Town are also screened. These include Lamprey, Twaite Shad and Otter.

Table A3.3: Habitats Directive Assessment Matrix to determine general risk of significant impacts on River Suir & species

Natura 2000 Site SAC	Pressure Topic	Possible impacts from Draft COSTDP 2013	Risk of Significant Impact	Mitigation measure
Lower River Suir	Water quality Waste Water Treatment (EPA classify Lower Suir Estuary trophic status as Eutrophic, Upper Suir Estuary as potentially Eutrophic) ⁴	Increase in population in Carrick on Suir Town along River Suir , increase in development on lands adjacent to SAC	Adequate WWT capacity to ensure required water quality standards due to the existence of secondary WWTP with a p.e. of 11,000 COSTDP 2013 proposes phased zoning of 35.61ha over the lifetime of the plan with 17.58 ha in Phase 1 and 18.03 ha in Phase 2 a reduction from the existing 89.05 ha currently zoned	No mitigation required for WWT WFD and South-East River Basin District Management Plan Standards will guide monitoring and restoration measures.
Annex II species	Conservation Status on a national level ⁵	Pressure Topic		Mitigation measure
Twaite Shad	Bad Classed as Vulnerable on the 2011 Red List ⁶	Water quality		Water quality targets set out in the SE River Basin District Management Plan

⁴ Integrated Water Quality Report 2011 South East Ireland EPA 2012

⁵ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland DoEHLG 2008

⁶ Amphibian, Reptile and Freshwater Fish Red List 2011 NPWS 2011

Allis Shad	Unknown	Water quality	Water quality targets set out in the SE River Basin District Management Plan
Otter	Poor	Water quality Disturbance to river banks	Infrastructure projects will be subject to A.A. at the project level.
River Lamprey	Good A NPWS survey in 2006 reported that river/brook lampreys are presently at a favourable status in the Suir catchment.	Water quality	Water quality targets set out in the SE River Basin District Management Plan
Sea Lamprey	Poor	Weirs and Channel maintenance	Infrastructure projects will be subject to A.A. at the project level
Crayfish	Poor	Water quality Disturbance to river banks	Infrastructure projects will be subject to A.A. at the project level

5 Review of Conservation Status of River Suir SAC in Carrick on Suir

5.1 Qualifying Habitats protected in the River Suir SAC in Carrick on Suir

One of the Annex 1 habitats listed as a qualifying interest for the Lower River Suir SAC and that is present in Carrick on Suir is Alluvial Woodland. Some of the best examples of this type of woodland in the site are found on the islands just below Carrick-on-Suir. Species occurring here include Almond Willow (*Salix triandra*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Grey Willow (*S.cinerea*), Osier (*S. viminalis*), with Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Pendulus Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*). The terrain is littered with dead trunks and branches and intersected with small channels which carry small streams to the river. In the drier areas the wet woodland species merge with other tree and shrub species including Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*). This adds further to the ecological interest of this site.⁷

Map 2 details the habitats in the plan area and location of alluvial woodland in the SAC.

⁷ NPWS Site Synopsis for Lower Suir SAC



COS_habitat_map Legend



Figure A2.2 Habitat mapping of Plan area

6 Potential Impacts of the COSTDP 2013

6.1 Development Policies and Objectives

Potential impacts on the Natura 2000 network from all policies and development objectives in the Draft COSTDP 2013 and proposed amendments were screened and assessed. Table 4 presents amendments proposed to those policies and objectives found to have potential for impacts. Policies at pre-draft stage were mitigated by inclusion of policy AH5 to ensure any development objectives and policies that could impact on the River Suir SAC will be screened for appropriate assessment at the project level and progressed in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

In the context of Habitats Directive Assessment, potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites may arise where increased population growth cannot be served by water and wastewater infrastructure leading to deterioration of water quality standards and pollution which may compromise habitat quality and thereby affect the favourable conservation status of habitats and species. The WWTP at Carrick on Suir involving secondary and nutrient treatment has a population equivalent of 11,000 while the P.E of the urban area is 7,557 so there is adequate waste water capacity to cater for projected population growth in Carrick on Suir. The River Suir and River Lingaun are both currently classified as being of moderate status (Q3-4) in 2011 under the EPA classification. The River Suir is identified as “being at risk of not achieving good status” under the WFD (adjacent to the Plan area) while the River Lingaun “is expected to achieve good status”. The Upper Suir Estuary is currently classified as being potentially eutrophic while the Middle and Lower Suir Estuary are currently noted as being eutrophic.

In recognition of the water quality status of the plan area, policies INF 10 and INF 11 of the Plan state the Town Council’s policy to comply with Surface Water, Waste Water and Urban Waste Water Regulations and also with the objectives, policies and Programme of Measures of the SERBDMP.

In line with population projections set out in the SE Regional Planning Guidelines, the Plan proposes phased zoning of 35.61 ha over the lifetime of the plan with 17.58 ha in Phase 1 and 18.03 ha in Phase 2 a reduction from the existing 89.05ha zoned in the existing town plan.

Some policies set a framework for future development that may impact on the River Suir SAC, e.g. INF3 and AH1 (section 8.4). The exact location of the proposed river crossing is not yet decided but will be at the western end of the town (indicated on Figure 3 Core Strategy Map) and thus not impacting on the alluvial woodland which is a qualifying interest of the SAC in the Draft Plan area. The project proposal will be subject to AA screening at the project level to determine potential impacts on Otter and fish species (Twaiter Shad, Lamprey and Salmon) and subject to approval of the NPWS⁸ and IFI⁹. Similar river crossings have been constructed over cSAC rivers in Irish towns without adverse effects on the SAC where appropriate mitigation measures were used. The AA process has informed Section 6.16 Action 1 of the Plan regarding an “appropriately designed and constructed river crossingand..... subject to further environmental assessment”.

⁸ National Parks and Wildlife Service

⁹ Inland Fisheries Ireland

Policy AH4 aims to promote increased accessibility to the River Suir. Any proposals for linear park development will be subject to approval of the NPWS and IFI and are mitigated by the inclusion of policy AH5 to ensure any development objectives and policies that could impact on the River Suir SAC will be progressed in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Assessment of the 4 Strategic Development Sites which are all located along the River Suir implies requirement for AA screening at the project level. These sites are all urban sites and will not cause loss of habitat from the SAC as such but impacts such as potential for impacts on water quality will need to be appraised at the project level should these sites be put forward for development. The addition of policy TC3 “to promote the environmentally sustainable development of the SDS in accordance with policies and objectives of the Plan” will mitigate for any potential for adverse impacts from these sites.

The SE Regional Waste Management Plan is currently under review which includes an AA screening and so will not be subject to AA screening as part of this plan review process.

6.2 Land Use Zonings

An overlay of the SAC boundary on the draft land use zonings indicated no conflicts between proposed zonings and the River Suir SAC. All lands along the river are zoned as agriculture or for amenity and thus are compatible with the objectives for the SAC. There is no encroachment of other land use zonings on the SAC. The land use zonings are thus in compliance with the requirements of Circular Letter PSSP 5/2011, Compliance of Existing Land Use Plans with the EU Habitats Directive.

6.3 Impacts on Natura sites within 15km of Carrick on Suir

There are 2 Natura 2000 sites located within 15km of Carrick on Suir – the Comeragh Mountains (Co. Waterford) and Hugginstown Fen (Co. Kilkenny). Hugginstown Fen does not share a physical or hydrological link with Carrick on Suir and will not be directly affected by policies in the COSTDP 2013 area. Crotty's Lake in the Comeraghs is one of 6 water supply sources used for Carrick on Suir with a daily abstraction volume of 1300m³ and serving a population of 2,500.¹⁰ In a study on water abstractions from lakes – *Revised Risk Assessment Methodology for Surface Water Abstractions from lakes (2009)* Crotty's lake passed all pressures screening in this assessment and was not included in the list of lakes prioritised for monitoring due to suspected impacts from abstraction pressures. Crotty's lake has been used to supplement the water supply to Carrick on Suir since the early 1900s and the scheme was extended in 1953/54 and again in 1962. The lake is filled from underground springs and to a lesser extent from surface run-off from the surrounding slopes.¹¹ Neither Crotty's lake or associated environmental vulnerabilities are referred to specifically in the Site Synopsis or Natura 2000 Standard Data Form for the Comeragh Mountains SAC and it is inferred that the ongoing water abstraction from this site is not causing loss of favourable conservations for species or habitats for which the Comeragh Mountains SAC is designated (i.e. Blanket Bog, Dry, Wet and Alpine Heath, Rocky Slopes, Oligotrophic lakes, Floating River Vegetation and Shining Sicklemoss).

¹⁰ Table B-1 Abstractions within the 1a/1b lakes and their catchments in Abstractions- National POM/Standard Study, Revised Risk Assessment Methodology for surface water abstractions from lakes (2009) Eastern River Basin District and Dublin City Council

¹¹ A Guide to the Comeragh Mountains, Declan McGrath, 2008

6.4 Cumulative Impacts

A review of land use zonings along the administrative areas of Carrick on Suir Town Council and Waterford County Council (Carrickbeg) shows compatibility between uses with open space zoned along the southern bank of the River Suir and agricultural greenbelt zoned at the edge of Carrickbeg. To the west of the plan area an area of land within County Waterford is zoned as Special Use/Biotechnology Park but has not been developed to date.

A number of sites in the catchment of the Suir, downstream of Carrick on Suir have IPCC licences:

Mr. Jimmy Foran, Code P0573-01

Messrs Pat Moloughney/Philip De Vere Hunt, Code P0238-01

Eastman Chemical Luxemburg S.A.R.L., Code P0002-01

Dawn Meats (Exports) Ltd., Code P0179-01.

- Queally Pig Slaughtering Ltd., Code P0175-01.

- Shamrock Aluminium Ltd., Code P0249-01.

- Waterford Stanley Ltd., Code P0520-01.

- Cherry's Breweries Limited Code P0449-02.

Galco (Waterford) Ltd., Code P0385-01.

- Waterford Plating Company Ltd., Code P0280-01.

- IVAX Pharmaceuticals Ireland, Code P0698-01.

- Waterford Carpets Ltd., Code P0510-01.

- Novartis Animal Health Ireland Ltd., Code P0085-01.

- PPI Adhesive Products Ltd., Code P0093-01.

- AIBP t/a AIBP Waterford, Code P0205-01

The cumulative impact on the conservation objectives of the Special Area of Conservation should not be significant provided that the facilities listed above comply with the terms of their licences.

The delivery of the N24 Bypass is now likely to be medium term and is dependent on the required funding being allocated. The route of the N24 realignment has also been revised and is now outside of the Plan Boundary. The project will be subject to EIA and AA screening if and when progressed.

6.5 AA & Flood Risk

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was prepared as part of the Development Plan Review Process and recommendations integrated into policies of the Draft Plan. An indicative flood zone map was prepared for the County in 2010 detailing indicative flood risk zones A and B (Map 3) based on their vulnerability to river and coastal flooding. The indicative flood risk zones do not include the effects of other forms of flooding such as from groundwater or artificial drainage systems. Based on this mapping, the Flood Zone A within Carrick on Suir includes areas at Coolnamuck and along the Clonmel Road to Sean Tracey Park, within the town centre, along the Glen River, at Ballylynch and along the Lingaun River (Map 4).

Overlay of the flood risk zones on the River Suir SAC demonstrate overlap of Flood Risk Zones with the SAC. As per policy INF 21 of the COSTDP 2013 development proposals for lands within these flood

zones shall be the subject of a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment. The requirement for site specific flood risk assessment is conducive to protecting the SAC and an adjacent buffer.

7 Conclusion

A Habitats Directive Screening Assessment was carried out on the Draft COSTDP 2013 and proposed material amendments to the plan. A review of conservation objectives and threats to site integrity for the River Suir SAC was undertaken to identify sites that may be impacted by policies/objectives in the Draft COSTDP 2013. Pressure topics such as water quality and land use zonings were assessed for their impacts on the SAC. Screening for impacts on Annex II species occurring within the Plan area was also carried out. All these species are water dependant species and thus, protecting the habitat in which they occur will by association enable protection of their conservation status. Conservation status for River Lamprey is considered good.¹² Species such as Salmon, Crayfish, Twaite Shad and Otter are considered to hold bad and poor conservation status on a national level reflecting the need to address water pollution and management of riparian zones; however information is lacking to accurately assess their status within Carrick on Suir. The availability of adequate capacity in the Carrick on Suir WWTP will contribute to achieving required targets in the SERBDMP. Objectives in the Plan to achieve water quality targets set out in the SERBDMP and to implement best practice for the collection and reuse or disposal and treatment of surface water will also serve to improve water quality and wetland habitats and species.

While there is good data available on qualifying habitats in the SAC in Carrick on Suir, data is lacking on protected species such as Twaite Shad and Allis Shad and surveys of these species would usefully inform AA of future projects that may affect the river.

Data is being collected on Otter in the area through the NPWS National Otter Survey 2010/2011 and will inform assessment of the conservation status of the species for Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.

It is considered that the COSTDP 2013 will not have any adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites in or within a 15km catchment of Carrick on Suir. Any future plans or projects arising from the Plan and that may impact on Natura 2000 sites within the town will be subject to an appropriate assessment in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, Section 177(v) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and as per policy AH5 under Chapter 8 in the COSTDP (Section 8.2.1).

The proposed material amendments to the Draft COSTDP and AA Screening Report were made available for public consultation from July 26th until August 30th 2013. No submissions were received on the AA screening Report.

The findings of the AA Screening Report were used to inform adoption of the final plan.

¹² The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (DoEHLG 2008)

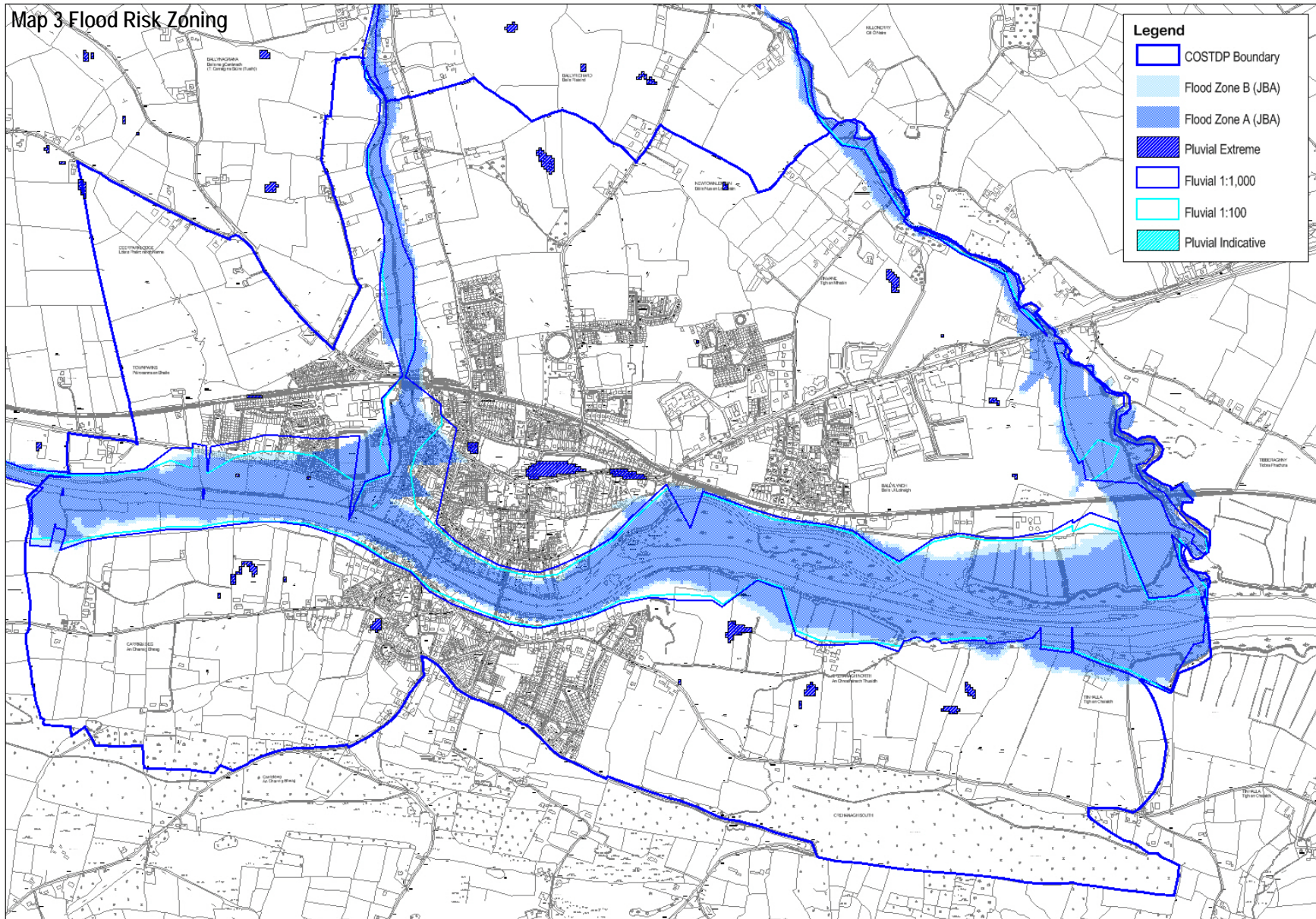
This screening assessment should be read in conjunction with the COSTDP 2013 and the accompanying Environmental Report prepared in fulfilment of the SEA process with particular reference to section 4.2 Flora, Fauna and Biodiversity and Appendix 1 SEA Matrix re- assessment of all policies, and objectives and proposed material amendments.

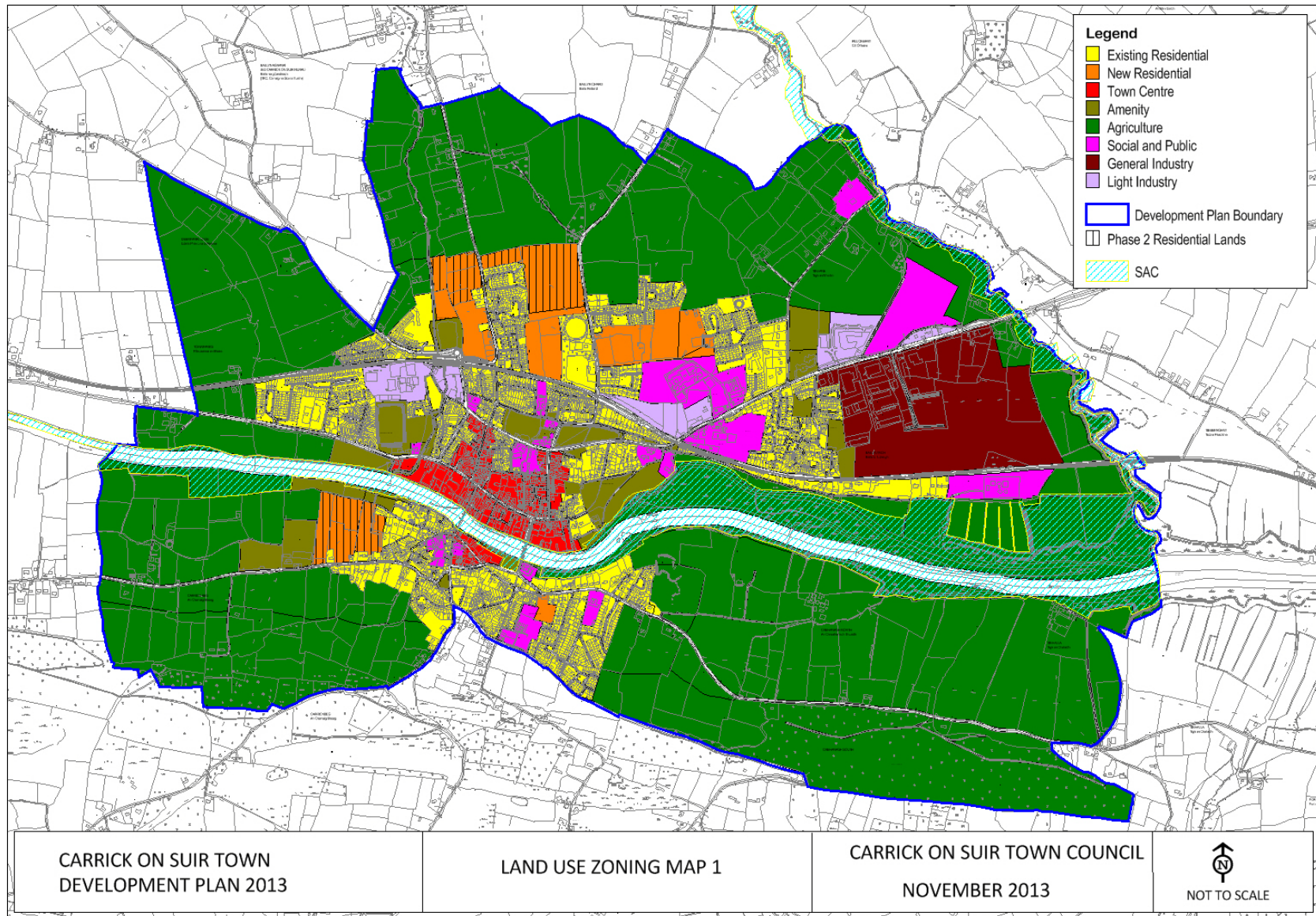
Appendix 1.1: AA Screening Assessment of Pre-Draft COSTDP 2013 policies & objectives

Reference No.	Draft COSTDP 2013	Comment/Proposed Amended Policy following screening of Draft COSTDP 2013	Amended policy following public consultation and review of submissions
Policies			
INF2 Figure 7	The Planning Authority will reserve the route of the Proposed New Road to the south of the Ormond Castle free from development	<p>Insert additional policy</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation status of the Lower River Suir SAC and ensure that development is not permitted that adversely affects the integrity of the site unless of overriding public interest and subject to compliance with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive</p> <p>This was implemented by the Forward Planning Team by inserting policy AH5</p>	
INF3	The Planning Authority will reserve the route of the proposed new river crossing free from development	Subject to provisions of policy AH5.	
INF18	It is the policy of the Council to promote the increased re-use and recycling of materials from all waste sources and to implement the policy objectives of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region 2006. During the life of the Dev Plan the Council will implement the policy objectives of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region 2006 as they relate to Carrick on Suir.	SE Waste Management Plan is being subject to review in 2012 and SEA and AA screening and thus will not be screened as part of this Plan.	
Section 6.15 (2)	Protection of reservation corridor for new river crossing and provision of a new bridge and associated road network as and when appropriate funding is identified.	Subject to provisions of policy AH5.	

AH10	It is a policy of the Council to ensure that all residents have reasonable access to a range of different types of open space and to seek the establishment of new public parks at the Bog Field (Carrick Beg), south and east of the Ormond Castle and along the Glen River	Subject to provisions of policy AH5.	
AH4	It is the policy of the Council to protect and improve the natural amenity potential and accessibility of the River Suir and its tributaries and to protect and improve access to the River Suir without compromising the quality and setting of the river	It is the policy of the Council to protect and improve the natural amenity potential and accessibility of the River Suir and its tributaries and to protect and improve access to the River Suir without compromising the quality and setting of the river. Subject to provisions of policy AH5.	
Section 8.4 AH1	To develop additional public open space along the Glen River, at the Bog Field adjacent to the Co-op site and to the east and south of Ormond Castle as and when the necessary resources become available.	Subject to provisions of policy AH5.	
Figure 3 Core Strategy Map	N24 Road Re-alignment	The delivery of the N24 Bypass is now likely to be medium term and is dependent on the required funding being allocated. The route of the N24 realignment has also been revised and is now outside of the Plan Boundary.	
Figure 3 Core Strategy Map	Indicative River Crossing	Proposed River Crossing will be subject to compliance with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive as set out in Policy AH5. Similar river crossings have been constructed over cSAC rivers in Irish towns without adverse effects in the cSAC where	

		appropriate mitigation measures were used. Site of indicative river crossing does not impact on alluvial woodland area and is characterised by improved agricultural grassland on either bank of the river.	
Section 6.15 – Specific Infrastructure Action No. 1	Protection of reservation corridor for new river crossing and provision of a new bridge and associated road network as and when appropriate funding is identified.	Protection of reservation corridor for an appropriately designed and constructed river crossing and provision of a new bridge and associated road network as and when appropriate funding is identified and subject to further environmental assessment. Footnote to be added on env. assessment - design and location subject to assessment of effects on otters and other protected wildlife and habitats within the River Suir SAC	Protection of reservation corridor for an appropriately designed and constructed river crossing and provision of a new bridge and associated road network as and when appropriate funding is identified and subject to further environmental assessment. Footnote to be added on env. assessment - design and location subject to assessment of effects on otters and other protected wildlife and habitats within the River Suir SAC
Section 3.2.3 and Figure 5 Public Realm and Transportation Map	Pedestrian linkages to be provided /enhanced (relevant to sections along River Suir)	Subject to provisions of policy AH5 and AH4 addition to AH4 above	
Strategic Development Sites	SDS1,2,3 &4 fronts on to the River Suir SAC and any development proposals will be subject to AA Screening	Policy TC3 “to promote the environmentally sustainable development of the SDS in accordance with policies and objectives of the Plan” will mitigate for any potential for adverse impacts from these sites.	





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