

**Screening Matrix for Dredging of sand at Rosslare Eurport and use of this material for beach nourishment at Rosslare Strand, Co. Wexford.**

<p>Brief description of the project or plan</p>	<p>A sand bank has accreted on the eastern side of the main east breakwater at Rosslare Europort, Co. Wexford. Material from this sand bank is being transported into the navigation channel of the Port, reducing the channel depth and thus posing a hazard to safe navigation and berthing of vessels at the port. It is proposed to dredge, using trailer suction or similar dredger, up to 100,000m<sup>3</sup> of the accreted clean sand to restore the charted depth to -7.2m CD. The dredged material is to be beneficially re-used for beach nourishment at Rosslare Strand.</p> <p>The area to be dredged is not within a Natura 2000 site but is located approximately 2Km to the southeast of the Longbank SAC (Site Code 00216) and 1.6Km to the north of the Carnsore Point SAC (Site Code 002269). Similarly, the area to be used for the placement of dredged material for beach nourishment at Rosslare Strand is approximately 3.5Km west of Longbank SAC and 2.7Km northwest of the Carnsore Point SAC.</p>
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<p>Brief description of the Natura 2000 site</p>	<p><b>Longbank SAC (Site Code 00216): NPWS Site Synopsis</b></p> <p>Long Bank and Holdens Bed are situated several kilometres to the east of Rosslare and Wexford Harbour on the East coast. They are at the southern end of a series of offshore sand banks that run from Arklow to the south of Rosslare. Long Bank is approximately 12 km in length and, at its widest, is approximately 1.4 km in width, while Holdens Bed is approximately 3.7 km in length and 1.4 km wide. The two banks are separated by a channel and are separated from the Lucifer Bank to the east by an area of deeper water. Offshore sand banks are generally constructed of sediment that ranges from cobbles to coarse sand and the sand is duned in large waves at least a meter in height and several meters in width. Where the current is strong the surface fauna is typically very sparsely scattered, with, e.g. an occasional starfish, crabs or hermit crabs. These banks, however, frequently have a distinctive meiofauna living within them and can be important feeding grounds for birds.</p> <p>The site is of conservation importance for its submerged sandbanks, a habitat that is listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.</p> <p><b>Carnsore SAC (Site Code 002269): NPWS Site Synopsis</b></p> <p>This site is situated in the south-east of Co. Wexford and comprises the area of sea and underlying bedrock and</p>
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sediments off Carnsore Point. The coastal boundary follows the High Water Mark from just north of Greenore Point to Tacumshin Lake; the seaward boundary follows a line just to the west of Black Rock, south of the Barrels Rocks, east of the Bailies and as far north as South Long light. The bedrock of the site is of granite, felsite and other intrusive rocks rich in silica. Most of the site comprises rocky reefs that are typically strewn with boulders, cobbles and patches of sand, both on the shore and underwater, and areas of intertidal mud/sand flats. The site is exposed to the prevailing wind and swells from the west. Tidal streams tend to be moderate but are strong in some areas. Offshore, Barrels Rocks are extremely exposed to the full force of Atlantic swells. Carnsore Point has good examples of intertidal and subtidal reef communities typical of areas that are very exposed to moderately exposed to wave action. Both on the shore and underwater, the reefs are typically strewn with boulders, cobbles and patches of sand. The intertidal reef to the east of Carnsore Point is moderately exposed to wave action. It has an extensive area of granite with the limpet, *Patella vulgata*, the topshell, *Osilinu (=Monodonta) lineatus*, and abundant juvenile barnacles in the upper shore. The midshore has a poorly defined band of *Fucus vesiculosus* followed by luxuriant knotted wrack *Ascophyllum nodosum* with the epiphyte *Polysiphonia lanosa*. The low shore is characterised by *Fucus serratus* with occasional *Laminaria digitata* and the green algae *Cladophora rupestris*. The communities at each are typical for this type of shore. There is a good example of a subtidal reef community very exposed to wave action in shallow water at Barrels Rocks characterized by abundant *Mytilus edulis* with the brown alga, *Alaria esculenta*, an understory of pink coralline algal crusts and *Corallina officinalis* with the hydroid, *Tubularia sp* on steep surfaces. Also in shallow water but in areas with a little less exposure to wave action species rich (81 - 110 species) kelp park of *Laminaria hyperborea* is found with an understory of hydroids, sponges, and bryozoans but at two sites this community is unusual. At south-east of Splagh rock the understory is very similar to the sea squirt community of *Stolonica socialis* and *Polyclinum aurantium* whereas north east of Terchen the bivalve *Musculus discors* carpets much of the area with a variety of sponges, hydroids, sea squirts and bryozoans. In deeper water at depths of 11-30 m there are excellent examples of the sea squirt community dominated by the sea squirts *Polyclinum aurantium* with the bryozoan *Flustra foliacea*. *Stolonica socialis* may also be present in this community. There is an unusual variation of this community where the dominant sea squirt is *Polycarpa scuba (= rustica)* and the bryozoan *Flustra foliacea* is absent and at another site *Distomus variolosus* is the most abundant sea squirt. At 23 m low lying rock surrounded by coarse sand is covered by the bivalve *Musculus discors* which considered to be an uncommon community. A number of species with a limited

	<p>distribution in Ireland occur at two or more sites within the area. These are the sponge <i>Tethyspira spinosa</i>, the anemone <i>Cataphellia brodricii</i> and the sea squirts <i>Distomus variolosus</i>, <i>Stolonica socialis</i> and <i>Archdistoma aggregatum</i>, and <i>Polycarpa scuba</i>. The sea squirt <i>Sidnyum elegans</i> and the recently described bryozoan <i>Schizomavella sarniensis</i> each occur at a single site. <i>Tethyspira spinosa</i> is only known from the Saltees, Hook Head and Roaringwater Bay in Ireland. <i>Cataphellia brodricii</i> occurs in this community and in shallow water both around the Saltee Islands and other areas in the south-east. <i>Stolonica socialis</i> in Ireland is only known from the south-east and north-west coasts and in Britain in the south, southwest, and English Channel. <i>Sidnyum elegans</i> has not previously been recorded in Ireland and to date all records are from the south-east and it has a limited distribution in Britain. <i>Archdistoma aggregatum</i> is known from a few sites in south-west Britain, Northern Ireland, the Saltee Islands, Carnsore Point area and south of the River Shannon Estuary. <i>Polycarpa scuba</i> (=rustica) is only known from the Irish Sea, English Channel and Brittany. The littoral sediment communities of Carnsore Point are represented by a moderately exposed shore at Carne Beach. There are talitrid amphipods living under drift algae on the strand line. The midshore is populated by polychaete worms (<i>Arenicola marina</i>, <i>Scolelepis foliosa</i> and <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i>), and the burrowing amphipod, <i>Bathyporeia pelagica</i>. The low shore is characterized by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i>, crustacean (<i>Crangon crangon</i> and <i>Portumnus latipes</i>) and the bivalve mollusc (<i>Angulus tenuis</i>). The site is of considerable conservation significance for the presence of intertidal mud/sand flats and of reefs, both habitats that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive.</p>
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<b>Assessment criteria</b>	
Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.	Resuspension of sediments during dredging and advective transport of these resuspended sediments from the dredging site and from the beach nourishment location could occur. This could potentially result in smothering of sessile flora and fauna and a reduction in water column transparency in the Natura 2000 sites. An accidental spill of oil, lubricants and other pollutants from the dredging vessels and barges could occur.

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

Land-take:	The location of the proposed activity is not within either of the adjacent Natura 2000 sites thus there is no land take from the sites
Distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site:	None likely. Dominant currents at the dredge site and area to be used for placement of the dredged material for beach nourishment are typically northerly in direction thus material would not typically be transported into the adjacent Natura 2000 sites.
Resource requirements (water abstraction etc.):	None
Emissions (disposal to land, water or air):	<p>Sand will be resuspended during the dredging operation. This will be localised. Dominant current patterns at the dredge site are northerly in direction thus the advective transport of any material remaining in suspension into the adjacent Natura 2000 sites will be minimal and not significant. Dominant wave current patterns at the beach nourishment site are also northerly thus the advective transport of material into the adjacent Natura 2000 sites from this location will also be minimal and not significant.</p> <p>Any accidental oil spills / pollution events associated with the dredging activity are likely to be minor in nature, have a localised impact only and will not have a significant direct or indirect impact on the qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 site. An oil spill contingency plan is in place at the Port.</p>
Excavation requirements:	Material will not be excavated / removed from the Natura sites
Transportation requirements:	Material will be removed from the dredge site to the beach nourishment site by barge but the transportation route will not traverse the Natura 2000 sites and no significant impacts are likely
Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning:	The activity will be of short duration, approximately 2 months and no significant impacts are likely
Other:	None

Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:	
Reduction of habitat area:	There will be no reduction in habitat area within the Natura 2000 sites arising from the proposed works
Disturbance to key species:	There will be no disturbance to key species within the Natura 2000 sites arising from the proposed works.
Habitat or species fragmentation:	There will be no habitat or species fragmentation within the Natura 2000 sites arising from the proposed activities.
Reduction in species density:	There will be no reduction in species density within the Natura 2000 site arising from the proposed activities
Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality):	There will be no changes in key indicators of conservation value within the Natura 2000 sites arising from the proposed activities
Climate change:	Given the nature, scale and duration of the proposed activities the contribution to climate change is insignificant.

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in term of;	
Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:	The proposed activities will not interfere with the key relationships that define the structure of the Longbank SAC or Carnsore Point SAC
Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site:	The proposed activities do not pose a threat to the function of the sites. The ecological interactions will be minimal and not significant.
Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:	None identified
None identified:	None identified
Fragmentation:	None identified
Disruption:	None identified

Disturbance:	None identified
Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.):	None identified. Resuspension and subsequent settlement of sand during the dredging operation will be localised and is not likely to significant impact on any key elements of the Natura 2000 sites.

Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.	None identified
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## Finding of no significance effect report:

Name of project or plan:	Dredging of sand at Rosslare Eurport and use of this material for beach nourishment at Rosslare Strand, Co. Wexford
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	Longbank SAC (Site Code 00216) Carnsore Point SAC (Site Code 002269).
Description of the project or plan	It is proposed to dredge, using trailer suction or similar dredger, up to 100,000m <sup>3</sup> of the accreted clean sand from the eastern side of the main east breakwater at Rosslare Europort and use this material for beach nourishment at Rosslare Strand. The area to be dredged is approximately 4.57 Ha and the area to be used for placement of the dredged material for beach nourishment approximately 19.55 Ha.
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?	No.
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?	Ongoing ferry operations at the Port
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.	The dredging site and beach nourishment site are not located within a Natura 2000 site. Any sediment resuspension will be localised to the dredging and beach nourishment sites and the dominant currents will typically transport any material remaining in suspension in a northerly direction and not towards or into the adjacent Natura 2000 sites. The proposed activity is thus not likely to affect the features or qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 site.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant.	<p>The proposed activity will not interfere with the structure or function of the adjacent Natura 2000 sites. There will be no loss of habitat within the sites, no fragmentation of the sites, no reduction in species density within the sites and no impact on water or sediment quality within the sites.</p> <p>On the basis of the above it is considered that there will be <b><u>no significant effects</u></b> posed by the proposed activity on the Longbank SAC or Carnsore Point SAC.</p>
Who carried out the assessment?	DECLG 04/09/2014