



Appropriate Assessment Stage 1 Screening Report

Screening Report on proposed works by Donegal County Council
at new Pier in Greencastle, Co. Donegal located within 5Km of
North Inishowen Coast Line SAC Site Number 002012

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1. INTRODUCTION

Greentrack Consultants have been instructed by Donegal County Council to prepare this Screening Report under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive, of proposed works to attach floating pontoons and a floating breakwater beside the partially constructed breakwater and associated revetment works at the new harbour development in Greencastle. This proposed development is to provide pontoon facilities for pleasure craft and cruise ship tenders in this area.

The aim of this Screening Report is to assess any likely significant effects or impacts on the North Inishowen Coast Special Area of Conservation Site Number 002012 which lies within 5Km of this proposed development. This screening report will examine the effects of this development on the SAC, both independently and in conjunction with other plans and projects.

1.1 Background and Requirement for Screening Report

1.1.1 Project Description

Donegal County Council are working with the local community in Greencastle to provide mooring facilities for the many pleasure craft and cruise liner tenders that visit Lough Foyle and the environs. This facility will encourage pleasure boats and cruise ships to visit Greencastle and help the local economy. The additional benefit will be a reduction in the ongoing congestion in Greencastle Harbour. The cruise liner tender berth and pontoon facility is located 250m South West of the existing harbour and are located adjacent to the partially constructed breakwater.

Photograph 1 Greencastle Harbour



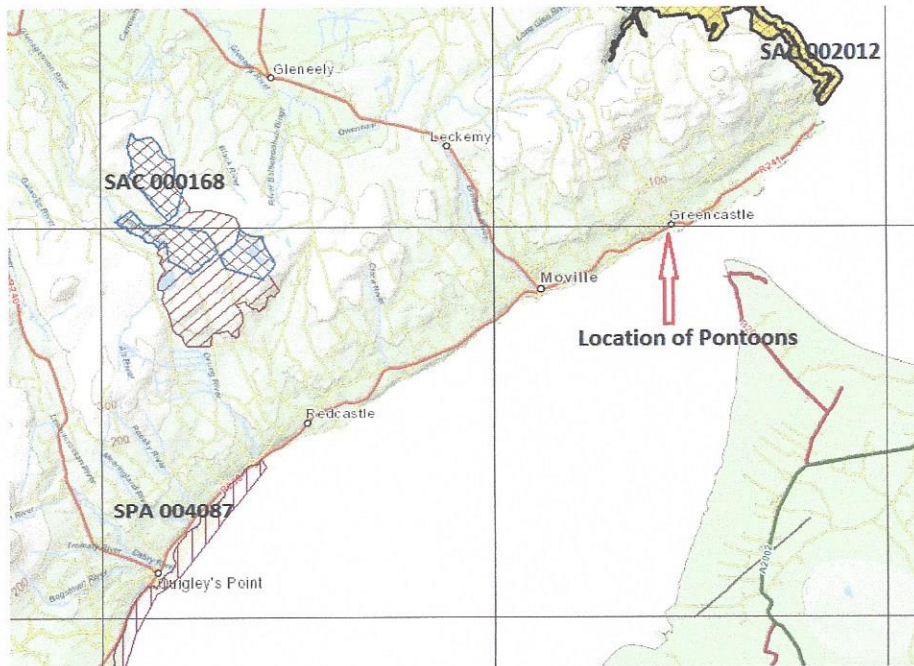
Photograph 2: Partially constructed breakwater and associated revetment works.



1.1.2 Project Location

The proposed site is not located within any Natura 2000 site as detailed in Map 1 below.

Map 1 : Site Location Relative to Natura 2000 sites



Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence Number EN0075912

The Lough Foyle SPA Site Number 004087 closest point to the proposed development is 12.25 Km South West at "Vances Point" in the townland of Drung. On this basis the proposed development is considered to be located outside the zone of influence of this Natura 2000 site and will have no effect on the stated qualifying interests

The Magheradrumman Bog SAC Site Number 000168 closest point to the proposed development is 10.25Km West and inland. On this basis the proposed development is considered to be located outside the zone of influence of this Natura 2000 site and will have no effect on the stated qualifying interests.

The North Inishowen Coast SAC Site Number 002012 closest point to the proposed development is 4.7Km North East along the coast line in the townland of Stroove. As the proposed development is located within 5km of this Natura 2000 site it is considered that the qualifying interests may be within the zone of influence of the development and hence the requirement for this Article 6 Screening Report.

1.1.3 Requirement for Screening Report

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna) formed a basis for the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's). Similarly, Special Protection Areas are legislated for under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds). Collectively, SACs and SPAs are referred to as Natura 2000 sites. In general terms, they are considered to be of exceptional importance in terms of rare, endangered or vulnerable habitats and species within the European Community. Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken for any plan or project that is likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site. An Appropriate Assessment is an evaluation of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negatives effects. The main aim of the EU Habitats Directive is to "contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States to which the treaty applies". The Directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Natural Habitat) Regulations, S1 94/1997.

Article 6, paragraph of the Habitats Directive states that:

"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".

As such any project likely to have a significant effect, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, upon the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site must undergo an assessment of its implications on relevant Natura 2000 sites. In order to establish whether or not a likely significant effect will arise as a result of the implementation of a project a Screening Assessment should be undertaken.

This proposed development is deemed to have one SAC site within its zone of influence namely North Inishowen Coast SAC Site number 002012

1.1.4 Stages of the Habitat Directive Assessment

The Appropriate Assessment process consists of four stages as summarised below in sequential order. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. Stages 1 and 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, which is the main derogation step to Article 6(4).

- **Stage 1- Screening:** This stage will examine the possible effects of a proposed project, either as a stand alone project or in combination with other projects, on a Natura 2000 site and consider whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant.
- **Stage 2-Appropriate Assessment :** In this stage the impact of the project (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site is considered with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and to its structure and function. The EU Commission services' guidance on Natura 2000 sites states that: "The integrity of a site involves its ecological function. The decision as to whether it is adversely affected should focus on and be limited to the sites' conservation objectives"
- **Stage 3 - Assessment of Alternative Solutions:** Should the Appropriate Assessment determine that adverse impacts are likely upon a Natura 2000 site then stage 3 will examine alternative ways to implement the project which will avoid the adverse effects, where possible.
- **Stage 4 - Assessment where no alternative solution exists and where adverse impacts remain :** Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the Natura 2000 site will be necessary.

Following on from Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive the objective of this report is to screen for Likely Significant Effects and to conclude whether or not the proposed development has the potential to cause significant adverse effects to the integrity of North Inishowen Coast Line SAC.

This report will deal with stage one, Screening, only. The outcome of the screening process will determine if stage 2, Appropriate Assessment, is required.

1.2 Guidance Documents

This NIS was carried out in accordance with relevant guidance, in particular:

- Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission, 2002
- Managing Natura 2000 sites – The Provisions of Articles 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission, 2000
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009), DEHLG
- Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHGL) Circular letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 dated February, 2008
- Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHGL) Circular letter NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10 dated March 2010

2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Approach

The function of this “Screening Report” is to identify whether or not the proposed development of floating pontoons and a floating breakwater within the site of the partially constructed breakwater at Greencastle Harbour will have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 site independently or in conjunction with other planned or existing projects.

2.2 Methodology

The methodology used for this report is undertaken in the following stages:

- Define the project and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of Natura 2000 sites
- Identify Natura 2000 sites likely to be influenced by this proposed development
- Review the proposed activities and determine if they are or have the potential to affect the Natura 2000 site and determine whether the Natura 2000 site is vulnerable to the effect.
- Identify other plans or project that, in combination with this proposal, have the potential to affect Natura 2000 sites.

3 THE PROJECT AND NATURA 2000 BASE LINE

3.1 Definition of the project

The project has been defined in Section 1.1.1 and it is clear that it is not necessary for the nature conservation of the North Inishowen Coast SAC.

3.2 Identification of Natura 2000 site

The Natura 2000 sites occurring within the area of influence of the proposed development is the North Inishowen Coast SAC Site number 002012 as detailed below:

North Inishowen Coast Line SAC

The North Inishowen Coast, covering the most northerly part of the island of Ireland, stretches from Crummies Bay in the west up to Malin Head and back down to Inishowen Head to the east. It encompasses an excellent variety of coastal habitats including high rocky cliffs, offshore islands, sand dunes, salt marsh, a large intertidal bay, and rocky, shingle and sand beaches. There are excellent raised beaches along the east coast including the oldest and best preserved late-glacial fossil coast in Ireland (between Ineuran Bay and Esky Bay). Indeed it is the only well preserved such coast in Europe and so is of international importance. Also of geomorphological interest is the small area of stone polygons near Malin Tower.

Sea cliffs are a feature of the site, with the best examples found in the west of the site (Dunree to Leenan Head and Dunaff Head) and in the area to the north-west of Glengad Head. Cliffs are often less than 50 m in height, though they reach over 200 m at Dunaff and to the north-west of Glengad Head. The dominant rock type is quartzite which is particularly hard and unyielding. The vegetation cover of the cliffs is variable, depending on factors such as underlying geology, aspect and the degree of exposure to winds and sea-spray. Common plant species of the rocky cliffs Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Rock Spurrey (*Spergularia spp.*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Scurvey Grass (*Cochlearia officinalis*), Sea Campion (*Silene vulgaris* subsp. *maritima*) and Buck's-horn Plantain (*Plantago coronopus*). In addition to the higher plants, the saxicolous lichen *Ramalina siliquosa* is a very characteristic feature of cliffs throughout the site. The cliffs contain a number of rare plant species, notably Scot's Lovage (*Ligusticum scoticum*), a legally protected species. Two other scarce species recorded at the site, Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*) and Purple Saxifrage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*), are listed in the Red Data Book as they are protected in Northern Ireland. *Orobanche hederæ*, a locally rare species of broomrape parasitic on Ivy (*Hedera helix*), has been recently recorded from sea cliffs to the north of Leenan Bay. The striking succulent species Roseroot (*Rhodiola rosea*), which is largely restricted to high mountain cliffs and sea-cliffs in the west and the north of the country, is also frequent throughout the site. In many parts of the site sea cliff areas support dry heath and grassland vegetation which occurs as a mosaic with the rocky cliff areas. Shingle beaches are well represented at the site, with the best examples at Rockstown harbour/Tullagh Point and along the north-western shoreline of Malin Head promontory. These areas contain good examples of raised beaches, characterised by large mounds of shingle, which may be interspersed by low cliffs (as seen at Tullagh Point). Although the vegetation of these shingle areas is usually quite sparse, plant species such as Sea Sandwort (*Honkenya peploides*), Sea Mayweed (*Matricaria maritima*) and Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*) are locally frequent. The rare and legally protected Oyster Plant (*Mertensia maritima*) has been recorded recently growing on shingle substrate within the site. Sand dune systems occur within the site at several locations, with good examples of fixed dunes and machair. The dune habitat at the Isle of Doagh is by far the most extensive. Typical species of the fixed dunes include Marram Grass (*Ammophila*

arenaria) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), accompanied by Bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Sand Sedge (*Carex arenaria*), Mouse-ear (*Cerastium* spp.), Wild Thyme (*Thymus praecox*), Smooth Meadow Grass (*Poa pratensis*) and Hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*). Bryophyte cover is usually well developed with species such as *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Hypnum cupressiforme*, and *Calliergon cuspidatum* being frequent. Although much of the botanical character of the machair habitat at Doagh Isle has been modified due to agricultural reclamation, reseeding and overgrazing, significant areas with a typical machair flora remain. The sward is typically dominated by low herb species such as Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Red Clover (*Trifolium repens*) and Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*) Significant areas of dry heath occur in the site at both low and high altitudes. The best-developed and most extensive areas are to be found at Dunaff Head and Binnion Hill, however the habitat is also encountered at sea level where it tends to form a mosaic with grassland vegetation. Typically the vegetation develops on shallow peats of less than 50cm in depth and is dominated by Ling (*Calluna vulgaris*). Other frequent shrub species include Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*). In addition to the dwarf ericoid component, acid grassland species such as Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*), Velvet Bent (*Agrostis canina*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and Heath-grass (*Danthonia decumbens*) are a frequent component of the vegetation. This combination of plant species gives rise to a mosaic of dwarf heath and acid grassland, the relative proportion of which depends on factors such as degree of exposure, grazing intensity and the frequency of fire. Often there is much outcropping rock present and invasion by Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is a frequent feature of the habitat (as seen at Binnion Hill). At Dunaff Head the habitat forms a mosaic with blanket bog. The main threats to the heath habitat at present are overgrazing and Trawbreaga Bay is a very sheltered sea bay with a narrow strait to the open sea at the north end. It is fed by a number of small rivers or streams. An estimated 80% of the bay area is exposed at each low tide to expose a mixture of mudflats, sandbanks and stony/rocky substrates. Mats of green algae occur on the open flats and *Fucus* spp. on the stones. Some areas of saltmarsh fringe the bay.

This site has important bird interests. An Internationally Important population of Barnacle Geese occur in the area, with Trawbreaga Bay their most important haunt. For the four winters 1994/95 - 1997/98 the mean peak count was 673 birds. Barnacle Goose is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. A range of other waterfowl species winter at Trawbreaga Bay, with an Internationally Important population of Brent Geese (338 in winters 1994/95-97/98). Other species which occur in regionally or locally important numbers include Wigeon, Mallard, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Curlew and Redshank. Two Annex I Birds Directive species breed within the site. There are up to 12 breeding territories of Peregrine and 12 pairs of Chough. Both of these species are associated with the rocky sea cliffs, with the Choughs utilising the heath and sandy habitats for feeding. Several species of seabird breed on the cliffs and islets. These include Fulmar (150+ pairs), Cormorant (270+ pairs), Shag (330+ pairs), Kittiwake (<500 pairs), Guillemots (c.1,000 individuals), Razorbills (c.1,000 individuals) and Black Guillemots (c. 80 individuals). (All data from 1970s).

The machair and dunes at Doagh Isle and elsewhere support breeding waders. In 1996 the following were recorded: Oystercatcher (2+ pairs), Ringed Plover (7 pairs), Lapwing (15 pairs) and Snipe (3 pairs). Otter is regularly seen along the shoreline and may breed within the site. Otter is a species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. This northern site is of high conservation value because of the extensive area of relatively unspoilt coastal habitats and the range of plant and animal species that these habitats support. Of particular note is the presence of good examples of two EU Habitats Directive Annex I priority habitats, fixed dunes and machair. Very good examples of several other Annex I habitats are found, notably sea cliffs, vegetated shingle banks, dry heath and intertidal sand and mud flats. There are two legally protected plant species and a range of scarce species. The diversity of bird species is of particular note, with wintering waterfowl, breeding seabirds and breeding waders. Important populations of three EU Birds Directive Annex I species occur - Barnacle Goose, Peregrine and Chough.

3.3 Conservation status

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favorable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved 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, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favorable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long term basis.

3.5 Conservative Objectives

North Inishowen Coast SAC:

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- [1014] *Vertigo angustior*
- [1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
- [1220] Perennial vegetation of stony banks
- [1230] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
- [1355] *Lutra lutra*
- [2130] * Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")
- [21A0] Machairs (* in Ireland)
- [4030] European dry heaths

4 Assessment of Likely Effects

Table 4.1 provides information on the following elements associated with the subject Natura 2000 site:

- a) Qualifying Interests
- b) Site Sensitivity and vulnerability
- c) Current Conservation Status
- d) General Threats
- e) Specific Threats from proposed development

4 (a): The qualifying interests are the features for which the site has been designated as a Natura 2000 Site under the Habitats Regulations and covers listed habitats, species and bird populations as detailed in then site synopsis and the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form.

4 (b): Site sensitivity and vulnerability is based on the sensitivity of the qualifying interests for which the site is designated as detailed in then Natura 2000 Standard Data Form.

4(c): The conservation status of the qualifying interest is listed as detailed in the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form.

4(d): The general Threats are based on information contained within the site synopsis, the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form, field visit and local information.

4(e): The screening of potential threats from the proposed project to the qualifying interests is based on field study and analysis of all the information available to Greentrack.

Table 4.1
North Inishowen Coast SAC Site Number 002012
Screening Matrix for proposed development of a boat haven in Greencastle Harbour

| Qualifying Interest | Site Sensitivity | Conservation Status | General Threats | Potential Threat from Proposed Development |
|---|---|---------------------|---|---|
| European dry heaths [4030] | Overgrazing, turf cutting, dumping, reclamation. | Good | The main threats to this habitat are overgrazing, turf cutting and dumping of rubbish. | The proposed development and associated activities do not pose a significant threat to this qualifying interest. The nearest designated dry heaths are 20km from this development. |
| Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coast [1230] | Coastal development, erosion, overgrazing and recreational activities. | Excellent | The main threats to this habitat are overgrazing, erosion and recreational pressures. | The proposed development and associated activities do not pose a significant threat to this qualifying interest. The nearest designated vegetated sea cliffs are located 5km from this development. |
| Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] | Surface and marine water dependant. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Moderate sensitivity to pollution. Sensitive to changes in salinity and tidal regime as well as coastal development and recreational activities. | Good | The main threat to this habitat is from coastal development associated with holiday activity in this area and associated recreational activities. Agriculture in this area is extensive and does not pose a direct threat through land reclamation at the moment. | The proposed development and associated activities do not pose a significant threat to this qualifying interest. The nearest designated mud and sand flats are located 20 km from this development. |

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|--|--|--------------------|---|---|
| Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] | Sensitive to farming practices and mechanical damage from recreational activities. Also sensitive to invasion by scrub. | Average to reduced | The main threat to this habitat is mechanical damage due to recreational activities and removal of sand. Overgrazing is not an issue in this habitat due to the nature of local farming practices | The proposed development and associated activities do not pose a significant threat to this qualifying interest. The nearest designated fixed coastal dunes are located 15km from this development. |
| Machairs [21A0] | Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Sensitive to changes in farming practices including grazing frequency, fertilisation and reclamation. Sensitive to mechanical damage. | Average to reduced | The main threat to this habitat is from holiday activity in this area and associated recreational activities. Agriculture is extensive and does not pose a direct threat through land reclamation and overgrazing. Pollution from farming activity is a threat. | The proposed development and associated activities do not pose a significant threat to this qualifying interest. The nearest designated machair grassland is located 30km from this development. |
| Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] | Tidal water dependant for sediment. Sensitive to storm damage, flooding and erosion. | Excellent | The main threat to this habitat is from human disturbance through foot and recreational traffic. Grazing would be very infrequent in this area and does not pose a threat. Removal of shale material would also pose a serious threat. | The proposed development and associated activities do not pose a significant threat to this qualifying interest. The nearest designated stony banks are located 10 km from this development. |

| Qualifying Interest | Population on site relative to national population | Principal Supporting Habitat within SAC site | Conservation Status of species | General Threats | Potential Threat from Proposed Development |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] | 2 to 15% | Salt meadows, pasture land and mud flats. | Excellent | This Annex 1 listed qualifying interest is threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated recreational activities. Illegal hunting would also be a threat to this species. | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on this Annex 1 listed bird. These migratory birds are not common to the Greencastle area. |
| Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrines</i>) [A103] | 2 to 15% | Wet Heath and Blanket Bog habitat | Excellent | The main threat to this Annex 1 listed bird of prey is from local farming activities including the use of vermin bait. | Proposed development will have no significant effect on this Annex 1 listed bird. These birds are not common to the Greencastle area. |
| Choughs (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Excellent | The main threat to this Annex 1 listed bird is from local farming activities including the use of residual anthelmintics which can be digested by the dung beetle. | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on this Annex 1 listed bird. These birds are not common to the Greencastle area. |
| Northern fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Excellent | These regularly occurring migratory bird not listed on Annex 1 is threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are not common to the Greencastle area. |
| Great Cormorant | 2 to 15% | Coastal habitats | Excellent | | |

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|---|----------|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|-------------------------|--|--|
| (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] | | | | | recreational activities | These regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1 are threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated recreational activities | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are not common to the Greencastle area. |
| Black legged Kittiwake (<i>Riss tridactyla</i>) [A188] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | | Excellent | | | |
| Common Murre (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | | Excellent | | | |
| Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] | 2 to 15% | Coastal habitats | | Excellent | | | |
| Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand flats | | Good | | | |
| Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand flats. | | Good | | | |
| Lapwing (<i>Venellus vanillas</i>) [A142] | Below 2% | Improved and unimproved grassland | | Good | | | |
| Common Snipe (<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>) [A153] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | | Good | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|----------|--|------|---|
| Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla</i>) [A046] | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand flats. | Good | <p>These regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1 are threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated recreational activities</p> <p>Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are not common to the Greencastle area.</p> |
| Common Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Good | |
| Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand flats, sheltered and shallow subtidal and lagoon and associated habitats | Good | |
| Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] | Below 2% | Shallow subtidal, coastal lagoons and associated habitats plus intertidal mud and sandflats | Good | |
| Common Merganser (<i>Mergus merganser</i>) [A070] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Good | |
| Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Good | |
| Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand flats | Good | |
| Curlew | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand | Good | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-------------------------------|-----------|--|--|---|
| (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] | | flats | | | These regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1 are threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated recreational activities | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are not common to the Greencastle area. |
| Common Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) [A162] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Good | | These regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1 are threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated recreational activities | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are common to the Greencastle area but the existence of the commercial harbour has not effected them in any way. |
| Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) [A164] | Below 2% | Intertidal mud and sand flats | Good | | | |
| Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Good | | These regularly occurring birds not listed on Annex 1 are threatened by damage or pollution to supporting habitat caused by agricultural practices, coastal development and associated recreational activities | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are common to the Greencastle area but the existence of the commercial harbour has not effected them in any way. |
| Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Good | | | |
| Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] | Below 2% | Coastal habitats | Excellent | | This Annex 11 listed qualifying interest is threatened by loss of supporting habitat and hunting. | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on this Annex 11 listed qualifying interest. Otters are not found in the Greencastle area. |
| Whorl snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) [1014] | 2 to 15% | Coastal habitats | Good | | This Annex 11 listed qualifying interest is threatened by loss of habitat through intensive agricultural practices. | Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on this Annex 11 listed qualifying interest. |

Other important species of flora and fauna

| Qualifying Interest | Population on site relative to national population | Principal Supporting Habitat within SAC site | Conservation Status of species | General Threats | Potential Threat from Proposed Development |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <p>Sae Bluebells (<i>Merensia maritime</i>)</p> <p>Scots lovage (<i>Linguisticum scoticum</i>)</p> <p>Moss campion (<i>Silene acaulis</i>)</p> <p>Spring vetch (<i>Vicia lathyroides</i>)</p> <p>Sea kale (<i>Crambe maritime</i>)</p> | <p>Present and this site contains a large proportion of the national population of both these Red Data Book plants.</p> <p>Present on this site</p> | <p>Coastal habitats</p> <p>Coastal habitats</p> | <p>n/a</p> <p>n/a</p> | <p>These Red Data Book plants are threatened by damage, loss or pollution to supporting habitat.</p> <p>These Red Data Book plants are threatened by damage, loss or pollution to supporting habitat.</p> | <p>Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these Red Data Book plants.</p> <p>Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these Red Data Book plants.</p> |

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|--|-----------------------------|--|------------|--|--|
| <p>Purple saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga oppositifolia</i>)</p> | <p>Present on this site</p> | <p>Mosaic of habitats from coastal to heath.</p> | <p>n/a</p> | <p>These birds are threatened by loss of supporting habitat.</p> | <p>proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these birds which are not common to the Greencastle area.</p> |
| <p>European shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>)</p> <p>Black guillemot (<i>Cephus grille</i>)</p> <p>Common eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>)</p> <p>Red grouse (<i>Lagopus Lagopus</i>)</p> | <p>Present on this site</p> | <p>Mosaic of habitats from coastal to heath</p> | <p>n/a</p> | <p>These birds are threatened by loss of supporting habitat.</p> | <p>Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these birds which are not common to the Greencastle area.</p> |
| <p>European herring gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)</p> <p>Great black backed gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>)</p> | <p>Present on this site</p> | <p>Coastal habitats</p> | <p>n/a</p> | <p>These birds are threatened by loss of supporting habitat</p> | <p>Proposed development will have no significant adverse effect on these birds not listed on Annex 1. These birds are common to the Greencastle area but the existence of the commercial harbour has not effected them in any way.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|------------|---|---|
| <p>Common Seals (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)</p> <p>Grey Seals (<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>)</p> | <p>Present on this site</p> | <p>Coastal habitats with suitable haul out sites to allow for moulting</p> | <p>n/a</p> | <p>Loss of coastal habitats and haul out sites</p> <p>Illegal hunting</p> | <p>The proposed development could effect the local seal population but this is unlikely as there is no recognised haul out site in the vicinity of Greencastle harbour . Localised pollution and rubbish gaining access to the waters could cause a risk but this is mitigated with the implementation of the Greencastle Harbour Safety Statement which will govern all activities in and around the new pontoon area.</p> <p>In August 2011 a study was carried out by the Sea Mammal Rescue Unit (SMRU) of the University of St Andrews on seals in the North West of Ireland. This survey showed that seal populations had increased in Donegal from 770 to 1289.</p> |
|---|-----------------------------|--|------------|---|---|

5 The Receiving Environment

5.1 General Location

The receiving environment is situated 250m South West of the existing commercial harbour in Greencastle.

5.2 Location in relation to SAC

As detailed in Map No. 1 the proposed development is located 4.7 km South West from the closest boundary of North Inishowen Coast SAC.

5.3 Site description

The site as submitted with the foreshore licence application measures 0.76 Ha and runs parallel to the existing breakwater and associated revetment works that were the initial phase of the new Greencastle Harbour project. This existing breakwater provided an opportunity to develop a much needed boat heaven at Greencastle.

The site is easily accessible from both Greencastle village and Moville town by way of an existing coastal pathway. The site is secure and can only be accessed by way of a control gate under the management of the local harbour master.

Photograph 3: Existing site



Photograph 3 shows the existing secured site with the constructed breakwater to the right.

Photograph 4: Coastal Pathway



Photograph 4 shows the existing coastal pathway leading from Greencastle village to the proposed site.

Photograph 5: Existing Harbour facilities



Photograph 5 shows the congestion at the entrance to Greencastle Harbour.

5.4 Assessment Criteria

The criteria adopted for this assessment are based on a detailed field and desk assessment of the subject site in relation to the Natura 2000 site and what if any impact

this proposed development could have on the qualifying interests as detailed in table number 4.1.

6 Potential Impacts on the Integrity of this Natura 2000 Site.

Tables 4.1 detailed all qualifying interests, general threats and potential threats from the proposed development. This screening matrix has established that the proposed development will have no significant effect on any of the qualifying interest.

There is no other obvious development in this area that would change the outcome of the screening process when taken in combination with the boat haven development.

7 Conclusion

This Screening Report on the impacts of the proposed development of a boat haven at Greencastle Harbour, Co. Donegal was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

The proposed development is located 4.7Km South West of the nearest boundary of the Natura 2000 site.

This proposed development is designed to provide facilities for the large number of pleasure boats and cruise liners that visit this area throughout the year. Basic facilities such as electricity, water, disabled access and security will be provided to meet customer requirements. This development will help the local economy and will also provide an additional revenue stream to the Greencastle Harbour Authority. This development will also help alleviate congestion in the existing commercial harbour.

This screening stage of the appropriate assessment identified no likely significant impacts on this Natura 2000 sites from the proposed project, either independently or in conjunction with other developments. On this basis no further assessment is required.

This Screening Report is prepared under instruction from the applicant, Donegal County Council, to facilitate an application to the Department of the Environment for a foreshore lease of 0.74 ha. Greentrack accept no responsibility to any third party to whom this report is made known or available. Any such third parties rely on this Screening Report at their own risk.

Signed:

Dated: 12th February 2014



Denis Faulkner