Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Determination on proposed agricultural shed replacement adjacent to the Twelve Bens/ Garraun Complex SAC in accordance with Regulation 42A EC (Birds and Natural) Habitats Regulations 2011-2021

Prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
npws.ie

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1. Introduction

This determination on Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been made by the Ecological Assessment Unit (EAU) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in accordance with Regulation 42A(8) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2021 ('the 2011 Regulations").[1]

On the 6th May 2026, in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 42A(3) of the 2011-2021 Regulations, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage ('the Minister') furnished the EAU with a request for a Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) determination for proposed agricultural shed replacement adjacent to the Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex Special Area of Conservation [Site code: 002031], Co. Galway.

The EAU have evaluated and analysed the information contained in the referred to above documents and location maps provided and carried out a determination. The purpose of this document is to provide a record and an audit trail of the EAU reasoned thinking in view of best scientific information and the Conservation Objectives of European Sites. This determination does not constitute consent or authorisation for the proposed works. The proponent is responsible for ensuring that all other necessary consents, licences, or permissions are obtained, including, where relevant, a declaration under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

[1] As inserted by Regulation 7 of the European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Amendment).

2. Background

Pursuant to Regulation 42A(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011), a Screening for AA is required to be carried out on the project. AA is a process required under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive. Article 6(3) is transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), as amended, and by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

All plans and projects which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site, but which either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, are likely to have a significant effect on a “European Site”, require an AA of these effects to determine if they will adversely affect the integrity of these sites. The proposed conservation measures are considered to fall under the requirements of AA as applied to all plans and projects.

The Screening for AA process scrutinises the plan or project to determine if there is potential for likely significant effects either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, on a European Site. European Sites are part of the Natura 2000 network and include those designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Candidate SACs (cSACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPA). This Screening for Appropriate Assessment describes the outcome of this analysis in respect of the project.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This section provides details on the adopted methodology with sources of guidance and information gathered to inform the preparation of the report.

3.1. Guidance and Data Sources

- Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle. European Commission (2000);
- European Commission. (2001) Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodical Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- European Commission. (2007) Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. (2010) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities;
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10;
- European Commission. (2018) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- Office of the Planning Regulator. (2021) Practice Note PN01 - AA Screening for Development Management;
- Official Journal of the European Union. (2021) Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (Volume 64; 2021/C 437/01);

3.2. Assessment Methodology

This report is based on review of desktop data. Sources of information utilised for this report and accessed during June 2026 include the following:

- National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) Designations Viewer[2]; and,
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) Maps[3].

3.3. Legislative Background

According to the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), Member States are required to establish a Natura 2000 network of sites of highest biodiversity importance for rare and threatened habitats and species across the EU.

In Ireland, the Natura 2000 network of European sites comprises SACs, candidate SACs and SPAs.

SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species (other than birds). SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and all migratory birds and their habitats. The Annex habitats and species, for which each site is selected, are the Qualifying Interests (QI) for SACs and Special Conservation Interests (SCI) for SPAs of each site. Conservation Objectives for the site are defined for these QI or SCI.

A key requirement of the Habitats Directive is that the effects of any plan or project, which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site, but which alone, or in combination with, other plans or projects, are likely to have a significant effect on a European Site, should be assessed before any decision is made to allow that plan or project to proceed. The obligation to undertake a screening for AA, and if necessary, an AA, derives from Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and both involve a number of steps and tests that need to be applied in sequential order.

Article 6(3) is concerned with the strict protection of sites, while Article 6(4) is the procedure for allowing derogation from this strict protection in certain restricted circumstances.

[2] National Parks & Wildlife Service Designation Viewer. Accessed at ArcGIS Web Application 18/06/2026

[3] National Biodiversity Data Centre Maps. Accessed at Maps - Biodiversity Maps (biodiversityireland.ie) 18/06/2026

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

> "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 and 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 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".

Article 6(4) states:

> "If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.
>
> Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."

The competent authority is required to carry out a screening for AA, and if necessary, an AA as required by Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. If the competent authority determines that the plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of a European site, it may only authorise that plan or project by following the Article 6(4) procedure.

The Article 6(3) and 6(4) procedures are outlined as follows:

Stage 1 - Screening for Appropriate Assessment – to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the project or plan, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 site.

Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment – This is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the project or plan, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. The AA must include a final determination by the competent authority as to whether or not a proposed project would adversely affect the integrity of a Natura 2000 site. In order to reach a final determination, the competent authority must undertake examination, analysis and evaluation, followed by findings, conclusions and a final determination. The appropriate assessment must contain complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions, and may not have lacunae or gaps.

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.

Under Regulation 42A(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011-2021 (S.I. 293 of 2021), the Ecological Assessment Unit is the competent authority in relation to screening for AA of projects and plans (such as the proposed conservation measures) which the Minister proposes to undertake or adopt.

4. Overview of the Project

The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC (Figure 1) is an extensive site situated in the north-west of Connemara in Co. Galway and dominated by mountainous terrain (Figure 1). The site is bounded to the south by the Connemara Bog Complex, to the east by the Maumturk Mountains and to the north by Killary Harbour. Included within the site are the Twelve Bens mountain range, the mountains to the north of Kylemore (Doughruagh, Garraun and Benchoona), rivers including the Ballynahinch and Owenglin systems and an area of coastal heath and machair near Glassilaun. The site also includes some extensive tracts of lowland blanket bog which are continuous with the mountains. Most of the mountain summits reach a height in excess of 500m, the highest being Ben Baun in the Twelve Bens which reaches 730m. The site includes a large portion of the Connemara National Park and a Statutory Nature Reserve at Derryclare Wood.

The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex includes a wide variety of habitat types, nine of which are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive (including one with priority status), and populations of many rare or scarce plant and animal species. It is one of the largest and most varied protected sites in Ireland and so is of high conservation interest.

The suite of lowland lakes that encircle the mountains represent some of the finest oligotrophic lakes in the country and two rare, Red Data Book plant species, Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*) and Pillwort (*Pilularia globulifera*), occur. Slender Naiad is rare in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Both of these species are listed on the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015. The site contains several small areas of Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) woodland, a habitat which is particularly rare in Connemara. The best examples on the site of this habitat are found at Kylemore and on the north shore of Derryclare Lough. Derryclare Wood, a Statutory Nature Reserve, has been particularly well studied.

This project proposes to demolish an existing agricultural shed and construct a new agricultural shed on the same footprint. The existing shed is located within 20 m of the Twelve Bens Garraun Complex SAC (Figure 2).

4.1. Purpose

The existing shed, which comprises stone perimeter walls, a steel frame and a timber landing structure is in severe disrepair. The purpose of the project is to demolish the structure, remove all materials and construct a new shed. The intended use of the shed is for the storage of materials and equipment necessary for the management of the Connemara National Park.

5. Project Description

1. Demolition of Existing Shed

• The existing shed, which comprises stone perimeter walls, a steel frame and a timber landing structure, will be demolished and all materials removed from site prior to construction of the new shed.

• An ecological survey will be carried out before any works begin to check for bat roosts or bird nesting activity. Works will not commence until the survey is complete and any protected species concerns have been addressed.

• The demolition will be carried out in a top-down sequence — the timber landing and roof structure will be removed first, followed by the steel frame, and finally the stone walls.

• All demolished materials will be segregated and removed to a licensed waste facility. No burning of materials on site.

• Silt fencing will be in place around the site boundary before any ground disturbance begins to protect nearby drainage channels and watercourses.

2. Foundation Construction

• The new shed will be founded on a combination of reinforced concrete pad footings at each steel column location and reinforced concrete strip footings beneath the blockwork walls.

• Foundations will be excavated by a small mechanical excavator through any topsoil or soft overburden to bear on firm natural ground.

• Reinforced concrete will be poured into the excavations and allowed to cure before the steel frame is erected.

• All excavated material will be removed from site or reused on site as fill where suitable. Any surplus spoil will be removed to a licensed facility.

3. Ground Floor Slab

• A compacted stone sub-base will be laid across the floor area and compacted to form a firm working platform.

• A damp-proof membrane will be laid over the sub-base before a reinforced concrete slab is poured to form the finished ground floor.

4. Steel Frame Erection

• The steel columns and eave beams will be erected by a structural steelwork contractor and bolted to the cast-in base plates on the concrete pad footings.

• The frame will be temporarily braced during erection to ensure stability at all times.

5. Blockwork Walls

• Concrete blockwork walls will be constructed on the strip foundations around the perimeter of the building, rising to the underside of the eave beam.

• The blockwork will be tied to the steel frame as it is built to ensure lateral stability.

6. Roof Structure & Cladding

• Prefabricated timber roof trusses will be craned into position and fixed to the steel eave beam. Timber purlins will then be fixed across the trusses to support the roof cladding.

• Metal sheet cladding will be fixed to the roof purlins and to vertical rails on the side walls and gable ends to form the completed building envelope.

7. Internal Landing

• An internal upper-level landing will be constructed using engineered timber joists spanning between the steel frame. Timber decking will be fixed to the joists to form the landing floor.

• A stair and appropriate edge protection will be provided to give safe access to the landing.

8. Environmental Controls

• Silt fencing will be maintained around the site boundary throughout all works to prevent sediment run-off to nearby watercourses.

• All plant and machinery will be kept in good working order. Fuel and oil will be stored in bunded containers with a spill kit on site at all times.

• Construction hours will be limited to normal working hours, Monday to Friday.

• All waste materials will be removed from site regularly and disposed of through a licensed waste contractor.

6. Part 1: Necessary conservation measures

Answer these questions if the activity is “directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site”. Otherwise go to Part 2.

a). List the European site(s) and the relevant Conservation Objectives (include version number of the Conservation Objective).

b). State how this activity furthers the Conservation Objective(s)

c). Does this activity have the potential to impact negatively on any Conservation Objective (CO), Qualifying Interest (QI)/Special Conservation Interest (SCI) for this or any other European site?

Yes ☐ No ☐

d). Are there aspects of this activity which are NOT directly connected with the management of the site?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If the answer to EITHER of the above questions is **Yes** a Screening for AA is required, go to Part 2.

If the answer to BOTH questions is **No** go to Part 5.

7. Part 2: Identification of European Sites within the Potential Zone of Influence of proposed activities

List all European sites which may be affected by this activity because they are linked by an ecological pathway. If the site has a second European designation (SAC, SPA) this also needs to be considered.

The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC [Site code: 002031].

NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC 002031. Version 1. Accessed 18th June 2026.

Available at: https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002031.pdf

8. Part 3: Assess the likelihood of significant effects

Provide this information for **each site** listed in Part 2.

List the QI/SCIs for the site(s), their current conservation condition and the Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) for that QI/SCI. Then answer the questions about the impact on that QI/SCI.

Qualifying Interests

Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea* [3130]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion* [7150]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) [8110]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Inadequate**

Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Inadequate**

Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Inadequate**

Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Freshwater Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* [1029]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Bad**

Salmon *Salmo salar* [1106]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Inadequate**

Otter *Lutra lutra* [1355]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Favourable**

Slender Naiad *Najas flexilis* [1833]

- Overall assessment of Conservation Status: **Inadequate**

Conservation Objectives for Qualifying Interests.

Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110]

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.

- Typical species.
- Vegetation composition: characteristic zonation.
- Vegetation distribution: maximum depth.
- Hydrological regime: water level fluctuations.
- Lake substratum quality.
- Water quality: transparency, nutrients, phytoplankton biomass, phytoplankton composition, attached algal biomass, macrophyte status.
- Acidification status.
- Water colour.
- Dissolved organic carbon (DOC).
- Turbidity.
- Fringing habitat: area and condition.

Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea* [3130]

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoëto-Nanojuncetea* in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Typical species.
- Vegetation composition: characteristic zonation.
- Vegetation distribution: maximum depth.
- Hydrological regime: water level fluctuation.
- Lake substratum quality.
- Water quality: transparency, nutrients, phytoplankton biomass, phytoplankton composition, attached algal biomass, macrophyte status.

- Acidification status.
- Water colour.
- Dissolved organic carbon (DOC).
- Turbidity.
- Fringing habitat: area and condition.

Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Alpine and Boreal heaths in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Ecosystem function: soil nutrients.
- Community diversity.
- Vegetation composition: lichens and bryophytes, positive indicator species, dwarf shrub species, negative indicator species, non-native species.
- Vegetation structure: signs of grazing, signs of browsing, burning.
- Physical structure: disturbed bare ground.
- Indicators of local distinctiveness.

Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Blanket bogs (* if active bog) in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, peat formation, hydrology.
- Community diversity.

- Vegetation composition: positive indicator species, lichens and bryophytes, potential dominant species, negative indicator species, non-native species, native trees and shrubs.
- Vegetation structure: *Sphagnum* condition, signs of browsing, burning.
- Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, drainage, erosion.
- Indicators of local distinctiveness.

Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Ecosystem function: soil nutrients.
- Vegetation composition: positive indicator species, *Rynchospora* spp., potential dominant species, negative indicator species, non-native species, native trees and shrubs.
- Vegetation structure: *Sphagnum* condition, signs of browsing, burning.
- Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, drainage, erosion.
- Indicators of local distinctiveness.

Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) [8110]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Ecosystem function: soil nutrients.

- Vegetation composition: lichens and bryophytes, negative indicator species, non-native species, positive indicator species, grass species and dwarf shrubs, bracken, native trees and shrubs.
- Vegetation structure: grazing and browsing.
- Physical structure: disturbance.
- Indicators of local distinctiveness.

Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Ecosystem function: soil nutrients.
- Vegetation composition: positive indicator fern and *Saxifraga* species, positive indicator species, non-native species, bracken, native trees and shrubs.
- Vegetation structure: grazing and browsing.
- Indicators of local distinctiveness.

Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Ecosystem function: soil nutrients.
- Vegetation composition: positive indicator species, non-native species, bracken, native trees and shrubs.
- Vegetation structure: grazing and browsing.

- Indicators of local distinctiveness.

Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Habitat area.
- Habitat distribution.
- Woodland size.
- Woodland structure: cover and height, community diversity and extent, natural regeneration, dead wood, veteran trees, indicators of local distinctiveness.
- Vegetation composition: native tree cover, typical species, negative indicator species.

Freshwater Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* [1029]

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Freshwater Pearl Mussel in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Distribution.
- Population size.
- Population structure: recruitment, adult mortality.
- Suitable habitat: extent, condition.
- Water quality: macroinvertebrate and phytobenthos (diatoms).
- Substratum quality: filamentous algae (macroalgae); macrophytes (rooted higher plants).
- Substratum quality: sediment, oxygen availability.
- Hydrological regime: flow variability.

- Host fish.
- Fringing habitat: area and condition.

Salmon *Salmo salar* [1106]

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic Salmon in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Distribution: extent of anadromy.
- Adult spawning fish.
- Salmon fry abundance.
- Out-migrating smolt abundance.
- Number and distribution of redds.
- Water quality.

Otter *Lutra lutra* [1355]

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Otter in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Distribution.
- Extent of terrestrial habitat.
- Extent of marine habitat.
- Extent of freshwater (river) habitat.
- Extent of freshwater (lake) habitat.
- Couching sites and holts.
- Fish biomass available.
- Barriers to connectivity.

Slender Naiad *Najas flexilis* [1833]

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Slender Naiad in The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes:

- Population: extent, depth, viability, abundance.
- Species distribution.
- Habitat extent.
- Hydrological regime: water level fluctuations.
- Lake substratum quality.
- Water quality.
- Acidification status.
- Water colour.
- Associated species.
- Fringing habitat: area and condition.

Tick all the boxes below which may apply.

Your answer will determine if the activity is likely to have a (negative) effect on this QI/SCI. Negative effects may arise because of the activity's location within the site; its proximity to the QI/SCI or the size of the land take involved; the abstraction of water or minerals; emissions or waste arising; the types of transport or machinery being used; the length of time involved or seasonality of the work.

a). There is likely to be a reduction in the area of QI/SCI habitat ☐

b). The physical/chemical quality of the environment is likely to be changed in a way which may cause the deterioration of the QI/SCI habitat (e.g. applying lime to an acidic soil) ☐

c). The structure of the ecological community is likely to be altered (e.g. through altered species composition) in a way which will have negative impact on the QI/SCI. ☐

d). A QI/SCI species is likely to be disturbed (e.g. through noise, vibrations) ☐

e). The population size, characteristics or reproductive success of a QI/SCI species is likely to be changed either directly or indirectly (e.g. lighting close to a bat roost entrance) ☐

f). QI/SCI species or habitats are likely to be more vulnerable to change or less resilient to external change (e.g. to flooding, fire or drought) ☐

g). There are likely to be effects on other species /habitats (not a QI/SCI for this site) which are ecologically linked with this QI/SCI and, as a consequence, there are likely to be negative effects on this QI/SCI (e.g. the impacts on geese which are the SCI when their non-QI feeding areas are damaged). ☐

h). This activity will cause a deterioration in the conservation condition of this QI/SCI. ☐

i). There are likely to be other ecological effects not listed above which are likely to have a significant effect on the QI/SCI. ☐

Explain the effects:

_____

The effect on European Sites and their Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests within a defined Zone of Influence of the project was assessed using expert opinion.

The proposed demolition and construction works are located 20m from The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC. The works are local, temporary and minimal. Using the source-pathway-receptor model, there is no potential for a likely significant effect on this Natura 2000 site once carried out as described following best practice. No likely significant effects on the QI or SCI features of any other SAC or SPA are anticipated.

If you have ticked a box for any QI/SCI in any of the sites affected by this activity the likelihood of a significant effect cannot be ruled out and the activity MUST be screened IN for AA.

9. Part 4: In Combination Effects

Is this activity likely to cause negative effects in combination with any other plan or project?

(In answering this question you should consider any other consents which have been applied for or granted. For example, other ARCs, planning consents, forestry consents, or activities authorised as part of an agreed farm or land management plan. List the plans or projects considered).

_____

_____

No ☑ **Yes** ☐ **Uncertain** ☐

If the answer is Yes or Uncertain the activity MUST be screened IN for AA. Fill in Part 5 accordingly.

10. Part 5: Findings of the Screening for AA

Screening not carried out as the activity is “directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site”. ☐

Likely significant effects are expected or uncertain.

This activity Screens **IN** and AA **is** required. ☐

Likely significant effects are NOT expected.

This activity Screens **OUT** AA **is not** required. ☑

Prepared by: Laura Connolly, Ecologist

Signed: Laura Connolly

Date: 19th June 2026

11. Part 6: Determination

Following an analysis of the project, the EAU determines, in accordance with Regulation 42A(8) of the 2011 Regulations, that an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed agricultural shed replacement adjacent to the Twelve Bens/ Garraun Complex SAC is not required because it can be concluded, on the basis of objective scientific information following a Screening for Appropriate Assessment, that the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is considered not likely to have significant effects on a European site or sites in view of the sites’ Conservation Objectives.

Determined by: Donna Gavigan

Date: 29/06/2026

12. Supplementary Information

Figure 1 (below). Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex as per the NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC 002031. Version 1. (approx. location of proposed project)

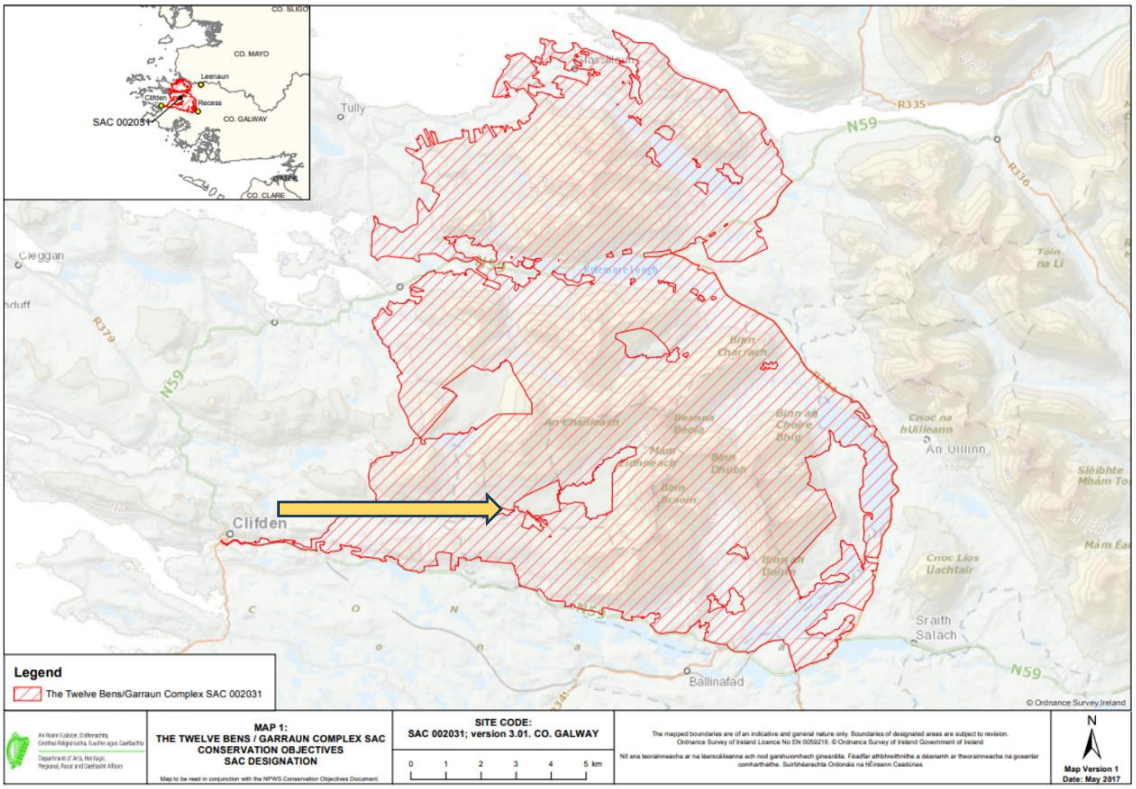
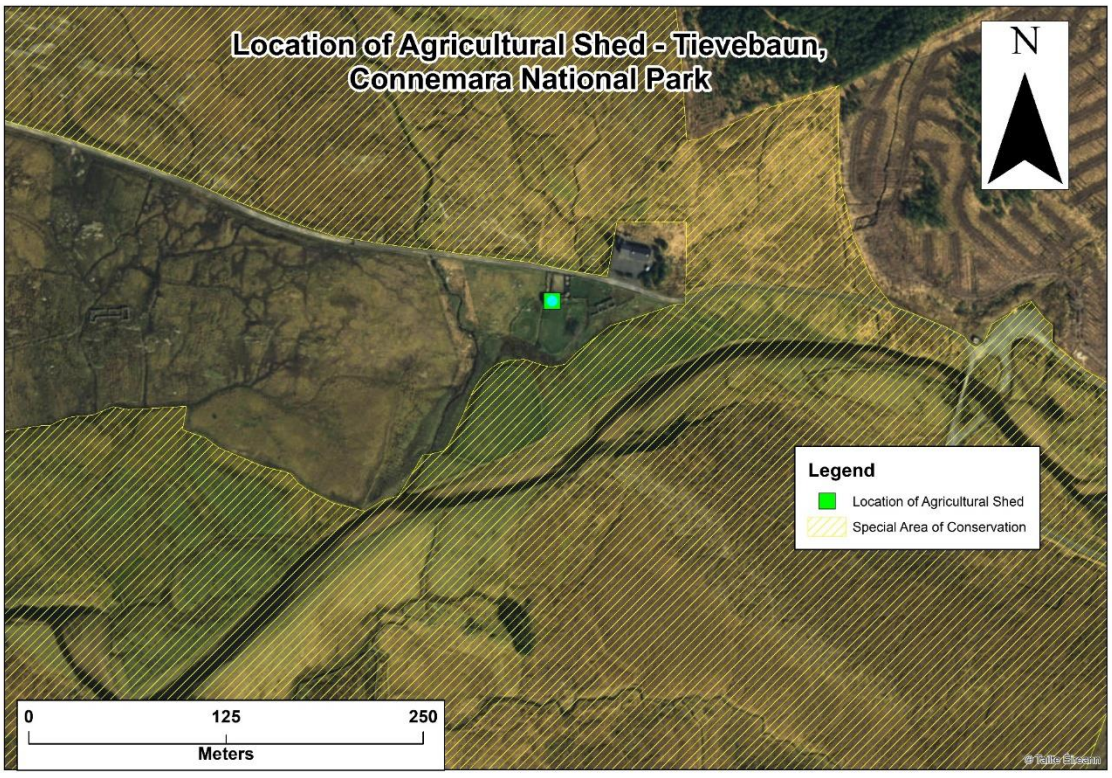


Figure 2 (below). Location of shed



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