



# EU Habitats Directive Screening Statement

in relation to

## Clountreem Landfill

*for*

## Cork County Council

Doherty Environmental

March 2013

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Cork County Council.

Habitats Directive Screening Assessment

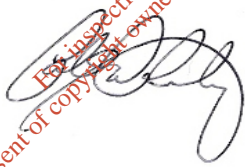
Clountreem Landfill

13<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

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For and on behalf of  
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Signed: 

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

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## 1 Introduction

The EU Birds and Habitat Directive obliges member states to establish a network of designated conservation areas known as the Natura 2000 (N2K) Network. The N2K network includes sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), under the EU Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the EU Birds Directive. Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive imposes strict land-use control measures on SACs and SPAs, with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) establishing a prior authorisation process for any land-use plan or project likely to have a significant effect on an N2K site.

In the case of the Clountreem Landfill it has been considered necessary by Cork County Council and as part of the EPA methodology for the assessment of disused landfill sites to examine whether the landfill and/or any proposed remediation activity at the landfill will have the potential to significantly effect the integrity and conservation status of qualifying interests associated with European Sites occurring within the vicinity of the landfill site.

The approach for this Article 6 assessment broadly follows the guidelines outlined in the European Commission (2001) guidance document *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (to be referred to throughout this report as the “EC guidance”). The completion of an Article 6 Assessment may involve the completion of a number of assessment stages with Stage 1 Screening determining whether additional Stages in the Article 6 Assessment process are required. These stages, as outlined in the above EC guidance and in more recent guidance published by the DOEHLG<sup>1</sup>, include:

- Stage 1 Screening for AA: This stage defines the project or activity to be assessed, establishes whether the project/activity is necessary for the conservation management of the European site and assesses the likelihood of the project having a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, upon a European Site.
- Stage 2 AA: If a project is likely to have a significant effect, an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken. In this stage the impact of the project to the Conservation Objectives of the European site is assessed and measures are proposed to avoid or reduce impacts so that they do not result in significant effects to the site. The outcome of this assessment will establish whether the project will have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site.
- Stage 3 Alternative Solutions: If it is concluded that, subsequent to the implementation of mitigation measures, a project has an adverse impact upon the integrity of a European site, it must be objectively concluded that no alternative solutions exist before the project can proceed to Stage 4.
- Stage 4 IROPI: Where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain but imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist for the implementation of a project, an assessment of compensatory measures that will effectively offset the damage to the European Site will be necessary.

The remainder of this report outlines the results of a Stage 1 Screening Assessment.

## 2 Stage 1: Screening

The function of the Screening Assessment is to identify whether or not the project will have a likely significant effect on European Sites. In this context “likely” refers to the presence of doubt with regard to the absence of significant effects (ECJ case C-127/02) and “significant” means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that

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<sup>1</sup> Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) (2010). *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities*. Second Edition, February, 2010

has the potential to undermine the site's conservation objectives (English Nature, 1999; ECJ case C-127/02). In other words, any effect, which would compromise the functioning and viability of a site, and interfere with achieving the conservation objectives of the site, would constitute a significant effect.

The nature of the likely interactions between the landfill and the integrity of European Sites will depend upon the sensitivity of the European Site's qualifying features to potential impacts arising from the landfill; the current conservation status of the European Sites occurring within the sphere of influence of the landfill; and the likely changes to water quality that will result from activities associated with the landfill, in combination with other plans and projects.

The EC guidance outlines the steps involved in undertaking a Screening Assessment, which involves the following:

1. Describe the project and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of European Sites;
2. Identify and describe the European Sites likely to be influenced by the project;
3. Assessment of the likely effects of the project and whether they are (alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to adverse effect any European Sites; and
4. Screening Conclusions.

## **2.1 Description of the Landfill and Relationship with European Sites**

### **2.1.1 Site Description**

The disused landfill site is located within the rural townland of Clountreem, approximately 1km to the north-northeast of Castletownbere, West Cork (G.R. V68880 47310). The site is located at approximately 70m OD Malin and is situated at the south western base of the Slieve Miskish Mountain. The site was acquired by Cork County Council in 1975 and used as the main municipal landfill for the area for 25 years until its closure in 1999.

The majority of the land cover surrounding the site is characterised by low-activity land management regimes. Low intensity sheep grazing was noted in places. Recent planting of coniferous seedlings was recorded to the west and north of the site. In general the land cover consists of heath land and associated habitats with extensive areas of exposed surface bedrock. The soils are characterised by peaty podzols with peatlands occurring in more elevated areas to the northeast of the site. The bedrock is characterised by old red sandstone (ORS) and sandstone and siltstone conglomerate, much of which is outcropping at the surface surrounding the site.

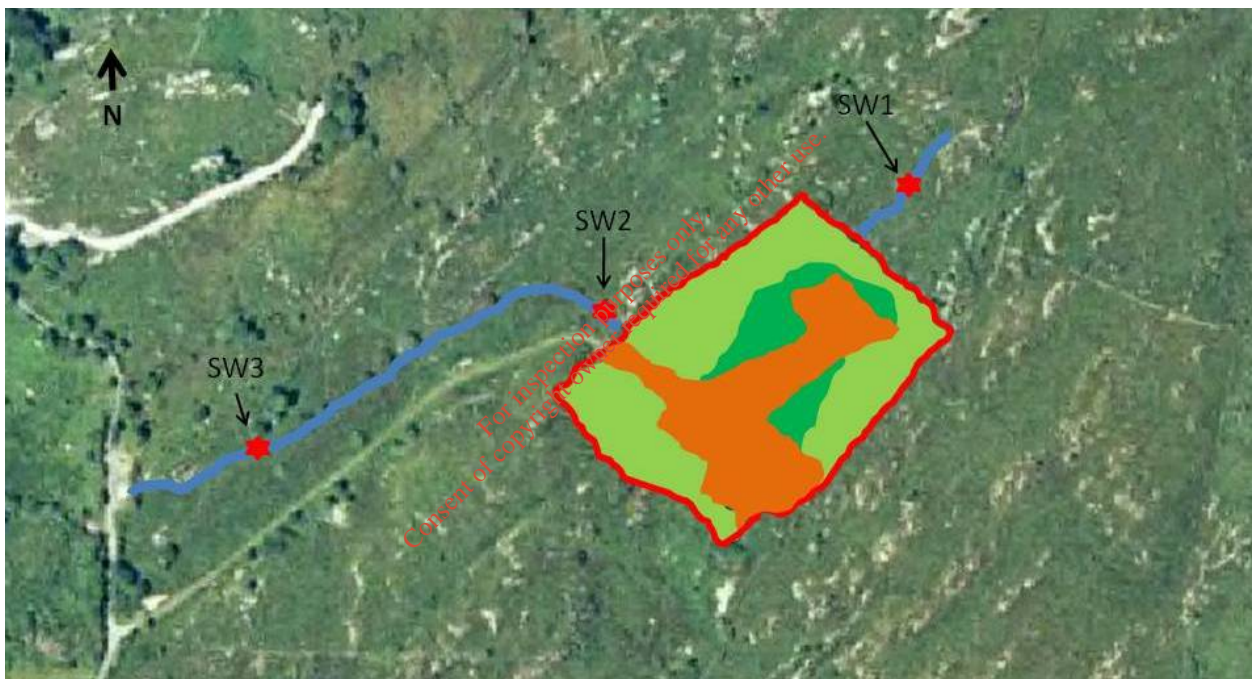
The land cover within the site is dominated by spreading scrub habitats. An upland stream flowing east to west is culverted through the site. The previous deposition of waste within the site has changed the topography of the site with a steep embankment present towards the south. To the south of the site the land cover is dominated by acid grassland and heath mosaics. Areas characterised by *Molinia* meadows were also noted to the south of the site. The land rises naturally to the north of the site.

The terrestrial habitats recorded within the survey area are presented in the Habitat Map, *Figure 1*. Four broad (Level 1) habitat groups were identified within the site area:







1. Freshwater;
2. Grassland;
3. Woodland & Scrub; and
4. Exposed Rock and Disturbed Ground.

Each of the broad habitats and the individual habitats (Level 3 habitats) making up these broad groups are described below. Habitats that represent a transition between two individual habitats will be described in the text below under the Level 3 habitat that they most resemble and details of such transitions will be outlined.

**Figure 2-1: Habitat Map & Key**



**Habitat Map Key**

	Scrub WS1		Upland Eroding River FW1
	Spoil and Bare Ground ED2		Survey Location
	Wet Grassland GS4		Site Boundary

**Freshwater**

The freshwater habitats identified within the site have been classified as:

- Upland eroding stream (FW1)

The Clountreem stream which is culverted through the site is classified as an upland eroding stream. The baseline conditions of this stream with regard to habitats and fauna are outlined in Ecology Report which forms Appendix 6 of the Cork County Council Clountreem Tier II Site Investigation Report.

### **Woodland and Scrub**

The woodland and scrub habitats identified within the site have been classified as:

- Scrub (WS1)

Immature scrub formerly dominated this site. Recent vegetation clearance has reduced the overall cover of this habitat. The remaining scrub is characterised by dense stands of gorse (*Ulex europeaus*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). A discrete area of willow (*Salix cinerea*) scrub is established along the south-facing slope towards the south of the site.

### **Exposed Rock and Bare Ground**

The exposed rock and bare ground habitats identified within the site have been classified as:

- Spoil and bare ground (ED2)

Recent disturbance to the site has resulted in the removal of much of the site's vegetation, with resultant bare ground dominating areas of the site. No vegetation is associated with this habitat.

### **Grassland**

The grassland habitat identified within the site have been classified as:

- Wet grassland (GS4)

The wet grassland habitat occurring within the site is dominated by soft rush (*Juncus effusus*). Other herbaceous species occurring in association within this habitat include creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), broad leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and floating sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*).

The site is surrounded to the south and west by wet grassland and wet heath mosaics. An area of wet grassland occurs in association with the willow scrub along the southern boundary of the site. The herb layer of this wet grassland habitat is dominated by nutrient-loving plant species such as nettles (*Urtica dioica*), creeping buttercup; meadow buttercup (*R. acris*); bulbous buttercup (*R. bulbosus*); broad-leaved dock; dandelion (*Taraxacum officinalis* agg.); soft rush; floating sweet grass; and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). The presence of a nutrient-loving plant community at this location is indicative of eutrophic conditions. Further south from the boundary of the site the vegetation grades from a floating sweet-grass and soft rush dominated herb layer to a typically nutrient-poor purple moor-grass meadow. This vegetation zonation may be related to excessive nutrient inputs derived from the landfill waste along the southern boundary of the site. The purple moor-grass dominated grassland to the south of the site corresponds with the EU Habitats Directive Annex I listed habitat *Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt laden soils (molinion*

*caerulae*) (6410). A further example of this habitat type occurs to the west of the site adjacent to the Clountreem Stream.

## **Fauna**

### *Mammals*

No records or evidence of mammal activity was recorded on site. The site does not have the potential to support roosting bat species and is unlikely to function as an important foraging habitat for bat species i.e. previous studies have shown that bats avoid moorland habitats such as heath and bog (see Russ & Montgomery, 2002; & Walsh & Harris, 1996).

While no evidence of otters (*Lutra lutra*) was recorded during the field survey, the Aghakista River system is likely to support otters. However the potential of the Clountreem Stream to function as a foraging resource for otters is considered to be limited.

The site was surveyed for field signs indicating the presence of badgers. These field signs, as described by Neal & Cheeseman (1996) include prints, pathways, setts, latrines, hairs and scratch marks. No evidence was noted during the field survey.

The area surrounding the site has the potential to support a range of small mammal species such as hedgehog and pygmy shrew.

The following bird species were recorded on site: hooded crow (*Corvus corone cornix*), robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), chaffinch (*Tringella coelebs*) and blackbird (*Turdus merula*).

No amphibians or signs indicating the presence of amphibian species were recorded on site. However the presence of wet grassland within and adjacent to the site and the presence of wet heath and bog surrounding the site increases the likelihood for amphibians to occur within and adjacent to the site.

### **2.1.2 Site Evaluation**

The habitats occurring within the site are considered to be of low ecological value (E). The bare ground supports little vegetation cover and does not function as a habitat for faunal species such as mammals and birds. The remaining scrub habitat occurring within the site is degraded and provides limited shelter for fauna species. The willow scrub along the southern boundary of the site has the potential to support a limited population of bird species. The wet grassland occurring within the site is dominated by soft rush and is not representative of the naturally occurring wet grassland habitats in this area. Overall the habitats occurring within the site are not representative of the natural and semi-natural habitats surrounding the site.

In its current state the site is considered to be of low ecological value and low conservation importance.



## 2.2 Tier II & Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) Investigations

Detailed Tier II investigations of the environmental risk associated with the Clountreem Landfill has been undertaken by Cork County Council. The results of this assessment are provided in the Clountreem Tier II Site Investigation Report prepared by Cork County Council. Waste material was found in all areas of the site and was assessed as being representative of late Stage IV or Stage V of the biodegradation process.

During the Tier I & II investigations a Source- pathway-receptor (SPR) model was used to identify environmental risks. This assessment was undertaken in line with the EPA guidance document A Code of Practice: Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Sites (2007). The Tier II investigations concluded that, based on the SPR model a high risk linkage existed between the land fill and the surface watercourse.

Physico-chemical and biological analysis taken along this watercourse upstream and downstream of the landfill concluded that leachate was likely to be negatively affecting the water quality of this stream.

On foot of the Tier II assessment a detailed QRA was undertaken for the landfill by White Young Green (see report title *Tier 3 Environmental Risk Assessment, WYG Environmental and Planning (Ireland) 06/10/10*). This assessment concluded that landfill leachate emitting to the stream flowing through the site has the potential to exceed environmental quality standards (EQS) for iron and manganese in dry weather and at flows of up to 2.16 and 1.14m<sup>3</sup>/hr. Significantly this assessment found that high exceedances of ammoniacal nitrogen, far higher than the EQS will occur in dry weather, low flow and high flow. The results showed that there was insufficient capacity to dilute the leachate entering the stream.

The Tier 3 report recommended undertaking remedial actions at the Clountreem Landfill site. This actions are detailed in Section 7 of the Tier 3 QRA report.

## 2.3 Proposed Activities at Clountreem Landfill

Remedial works are required at Clountreem Landfill site to prevent, as far as possible, leachate entering the surface water in the watercourse that flows under the waste mass and to prevent/reduce, as far as possible, the potential for leachate generation at the site.

In order to prevent the leachate from entering the watercourse it is recommended that the watercourse be diverted upstream of the landfill site and redirected around the waste body. The existing culvert running under the waste mass should be closed to break the link between the leachate and the surface water.

## 2.4 Identification and Description of European Sites

### 2.4.1 Identification of European Sites

Current guidance on undertaking EU Habitats Directive Article 6 Assessments advises that all European Sites occurring within a 15km radius of a project site should be included within a Screening Assessment (Scott Wilson *et al.*, 2006; DOEHLG, 2010). Three SACs and three SPAs occur within the surrounding 15km radius of the site. These sites as shown in Figures 2.3 and 2.4 below.

The European Sites occurring within the landfill's sphere of influence and the landfill and associated remediation plan's potential to effect European Sites depends upon the location of European Sites with respect to the landfill and the sensitivity of European Site qualifying features to landfill-derived contamination and activities associated with the remediation plan.

Potential impacts to European Sites may arise as a result of leachate emissions from the landfill site to European Site or from activities associated with the landfill remediation plan.

With regard to assessing the potential effects of leachate emissions on European Sites a Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) impact model is used to establish which European Sites occur within the sphere of influence of the landfill site. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published specific guidance for assessing the environmental risk of landfill sites in their guidance document *Code of Practice: Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites* (2007). The risk assessment methodology outlined in this guidance document is based upon the SPR model for environmental management.

This guidance document identifies leachate and landfill gas as the principal sources of landfill-derived contamination. With regard to leachate the guidance document outlines five potentially sensitive receptors, one of which includes protected areas such as European Sites. The guidance document identifies human presence as the only significant and potentially sensitive receptor to landfill gas. Therefore this Screening Assessment focuses on the potential for leachate, migrating from the Clountreem Landfill site to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

The potential pathways for leachate migration to receptors such as European Sites include:

- vertical movement to the water table or aquifer where groundwater is the receptor to be considered;
- vertical movement to an aquifer and then horizontally in the aquifer to a receptor (i.e. a water body, or in the case of the Clountreem Landfill the stream flowing through the landfill); and
- Horizontally at the ground surface or at shallow depth to a surface receptor).

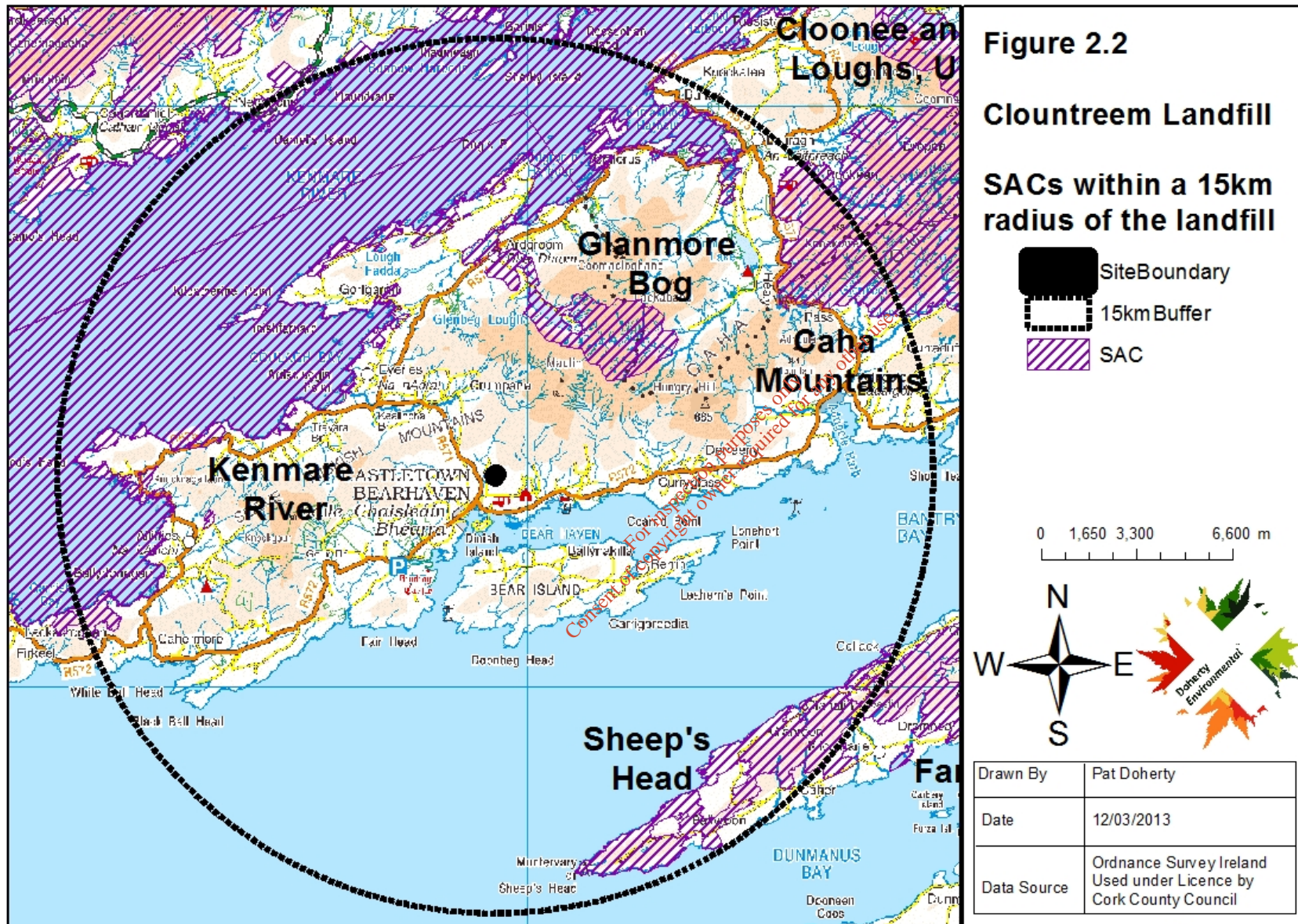
Leachate migration from the Clountreem Landfill site is likely to be a risk to receptors such as water-based habitats and species listed as qualifying features for European Sites occurring in the immediate vicinity of the landfill or downstream of an impact pathway. The only European Site occurring within relatively close proximity to the landfill is a section of the Beara Peninsula SPA located approximately 600m to the north of the landfill site. All other European Sites occur at remote distance from the landfill site and are not considered to occur within the landfills sphere of influence.

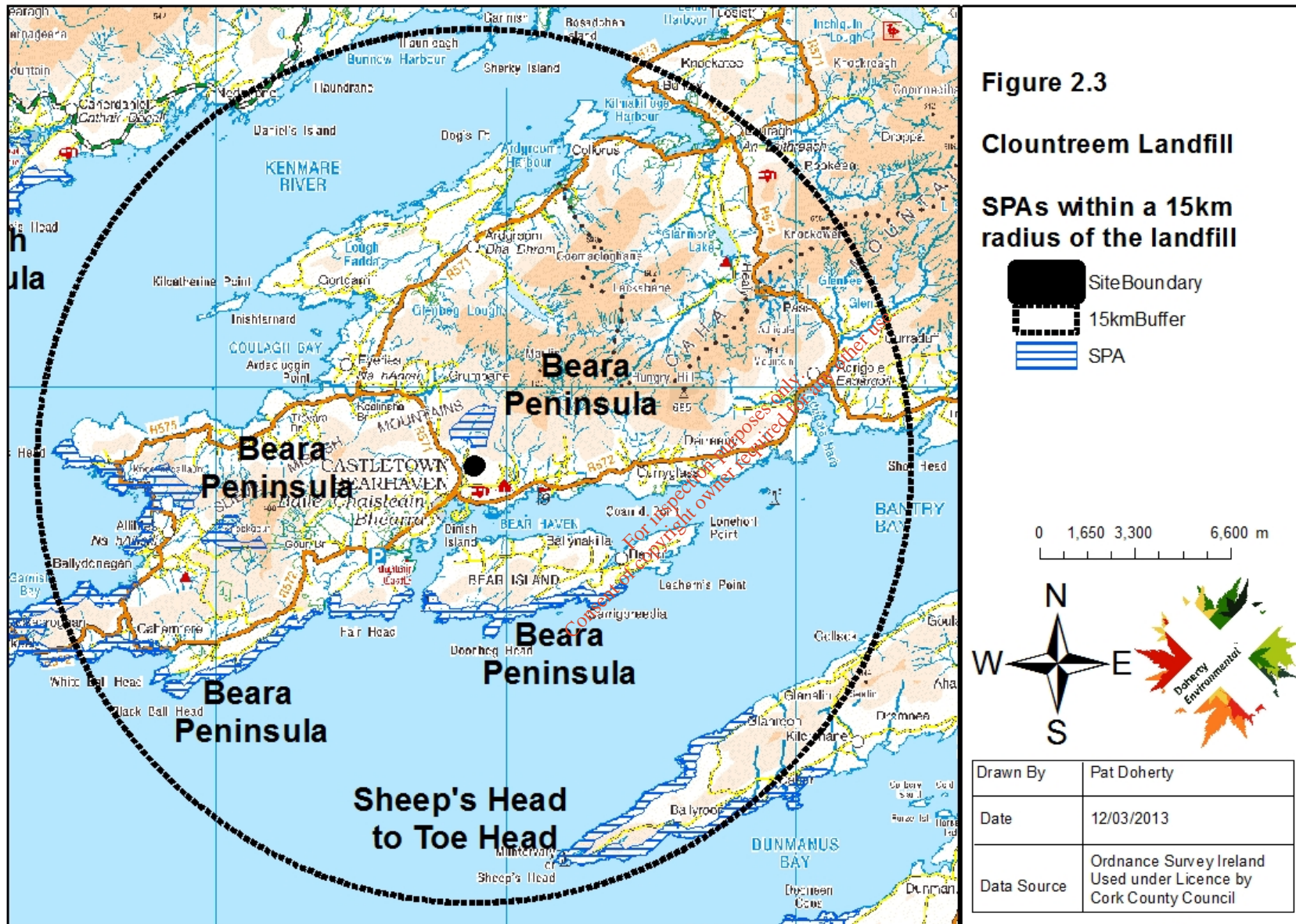
The section of the Beara Peninsula SPA occurring to the north of the site is likely to support mainly crough as well as fulmar. This section of the SPA is location at high elevations upslope of the landfill site. The distance between the site and the lack of a hydrological pathway from the site to this section of the SPA will ensure that any leachate emissions arising from the site will not have the potential to negatively affect this SPA.

It is also noted that the two bird species for which the SPA is designated are not reliant on freshwater habitats and are not likely to interact with polluted stretches of the minor watercourse affected by leachate emissions from the landfill.

Thus due to the lack of sensitivity of qualifying bird species to the pollution of the minor watercourse flowing through the landfill site and the fact that no hydrological pathways link the site to the SPA will ensure that leachate emissions from the site do not pose a threat of likely significant effects to the conservation status of the SPA.

The remainder of this Screening Assessment focuses on the potential for elements of the remediation plan proposed for the site to result in likely significant effects to the qualifying features of the Beara Peninsula SPA.





## 2.5 European Sites Baseline and Sensitivity

Table 3.1 provides information on the following elements associated with the Beara Peninsula SPA:

- Qualifying interests;
- Site sensitivity/vulnerability;
- Current Conservation Status; and
- Threats.

As noted above the qualifying interests are the features for which each site has been designated as a European Site under the Habitats Regulations.

At the time this assessment was undertaken, no Conservation Management Plan was available for this European Site. In the absence of these plans a list of generic conservation management objectives (CMOs) have been provided by the NPWS. These are:

- To maintain the bird species of special conservation interest, for which the SPA has been designated, at favourable conservation status.

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 favourable as defined below.

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.

**Table 2-2: European Sites Qualifying Interests**

EUROPEAN Site	Location	Qualifying Interests	Site Sensitivity	Conservation Status	Threats
004081 – Beara Peninsula SPA	Nearest point is located approximately 600m to the north of the Landfill Site	The listed qualifying features of interest for this SPA include:  <b>Chough and Fulmar</b>	Loss of habitat or fragmentation,  Highly sensitive to hydrological changes  Increased disturbance	Chough – Amber status  Fulmar – Green Status	No information is currently available on the threats to the qualifying features of this site.

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### 3 Assessment of Effects

**Describe the individual elements of the project that could give rise to impacts (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European Site.**

As outlined above in Section 2.2 the emission of leachate from the landfill to the minor watercourse flowing through the site will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. This is due to the lack of hydrological pathways linking the landfill site to European Sites. Also the qualifying features of the nearest European Site to the landfill i.e. choughs and fulmars of the Beara Peninsula SPA are not reliant on freshwater habitats and are not likely to interact with the leachate –contaminated stretch of the minor stream downstream of the landfill site.

Remedial activity associated with the landfill could have the potential to result in disturbance to qualifying bird species of SPA. The potential for disturbance or any other effects to occur as a result of the remedial activity is assessed in detail in Table 3.1 below. The assessment outlined in Table 3.1 is undertaken by analysing the potential effects of the remedial activity against a series of assessment criteria outlined in the European Commissions guidance document *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Effecting European Sites* (2001) and the National Appropriate Assessment Guidelines (2010 as updated).

The assessment outlined in Table 3.1 below should be read in conjunction with the Clountreem Tier II Site Investigation Report, prepared by Cork County Council (2011) and Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) prepared by White Young Green (2010).

**Table 3-1: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects to European Sites**

<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	
<b><i>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European Site by virtue of</i></b>	
Size and Scale	The project site occupies an area of land approximately 0.04 Ha in size.
Land-take	The project will not involve any land take from European Sites.
Distance from European Sites or key features of the site	The project site is located approximately 600m from the nearest point of the Beara Peninsula SPA.
Resource requirements	No resources associated with European Sites (e.g. water or mud/sand for abstraction etc.) will be required for, or utilized by the project.
Emissions	Leachate emissions from the landfill will not present a risk of likely significant effects to the Beara Peninsula SPA due to the lack of linkages between the site and the SPA and due to the low level of sensitivity of qualifying bird species, chough and fulmar, to pollution within the minor stream downstream of the landfill site.

	No other emissions from the landfill present a risk to the SPA.
Excavation requirements	The project will not involve any excavations from European Sites.
Transportation requirements	No transportation requirements are associated with the landfill.
Duration of the project	<p>With regard to leachate generation the landfill is assessed as being in the latter stages of degradation. As the degradation process continues through Stage V the concentration of contaminating parameters such as ammonia will decrease. However the time required for the establishment of benign conditions within the leachate cannot be estimated.</p> <p>The duration of remedial works at the landfill site will be completed over a short time-frame that is not expected to last longer than six months.</p>
Other	See Below
<b>Describe any likely changes to the European site arising as a result of:</b>	
Reduction of habitat area	The remedial activities at the landfill site will not result in a reduction in habitat important for chough or fulmar. No habitat occurring within the SPA will be affected by the remedial works.
Disturbance of key species	<p>The remedial works will involve the short-term presence of human activity on site during the diversion of the watercourse and the capping of the landfill.</p> <p>Plant machinery in the form of heavy goods vehicles delivering material for the capping of the landfill and compacting machinery including a JCB are likely to be use on site.</p> <p>The remedial activity will be undertaken approximately 600m from the nearest point of the Beara Peninsula SPA. It is also noted that the nearest suitable cliffs that may function as breeding habitat for chough is located over 1km to the north near Eagle Hill on Slieve Miskish Montain. The short-term duration of the remedial works coupled with the distance from the nearest suitable breeding habitat for choughs will ensure that these works do not pose a risk of likely significant effects to choughs as a result of disturbance. Fulmars are restricted to coastal cliffs and forage of the sea. This species is not likely to significantly interact with the area of the landfill site and will not experience any disturbance during the remedial works.</p>
Habitat or species fragmentation	The landfill does not pose a threat of habitat or species fragmentation within or adjacent to the Beara Peninsula SPA.



Reduction in species density	<p>As no impact pathway links the landfill and leachate generated within the landfill to the Beara Peninsula SPA, there will be no potential for the landfill to result in reductions of qualifying species densities within the surrounding area.</p> <p>The remedial activity will be of a short term nature and will be buffered from the SPA and areas of suitable habitat for chough and fulmars. It is predicted that the presence of human beings associated with the remedial works and associated noise will not have the potential to effect the densities of choughs or fulmars occurring in the surrounding area.</p>
Changes in key indicators of conservation status	<p>The European Commission (2006) Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for the Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive outlines key indicators for assessing the conservation status of designated sites. The key indicators for assessing the conservation status of key species i.e. species listed on Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive and Annex 2 of the EU Habitats Directive are:</p> <p><i>Range:</i> as outlined above the elements of the landfill will not result in direct or indirect impacts to European Sites. Therefore the distribution of qualifying species associated with European Sites will not be altered by the project.</p> <p><i>Population:</i> As the leachate generated within the landfill and the remedial works will not result in direct or indirect impacts to European Sites the populations of qualifying species will not be affected;</p> <p><i>Habitat for the species:</i> As direct or indirect impacts to European Sites are not predicted to occur, habitats which support foraging qualifying species will not be affected by the project; and</p> <p><i>Future Prospects:</i> As the landfill will not result in direct or indirect affects to European Sites the future prospect of the qualifying interests of this site will not be affected.</p>
Climate change	<p>There is currently insufficient information to predict the effects of climate change on the site. It is predicted that on a national level winters will become wetter and summers drier but the effect on local precipitation is unknown.</p>
<b>Describe any likely impacts on the European Site as a whole in terms of:</b>	
Interference with key relationships that define the structure and function of the	<p>Beara Peninsula SPA functions as an important breeding site for choughs. Coastal cliffs as well as inland breeding pairs at Slieve Miskish to the north of the landfill site and Caha Mountains further northeast and used as breeding sites for chough. Choughs breeding at coastal cliff site are known to forage up to 300m inland from coastal cliff tops. The inland breeding pairs are likely to</p>

site	<p>forage in the vicinity of the landfill site.</p> <p>Choughs forage on the ground for insects and other invertebrates and berries. They are not associated with foraging in freshwater habitats.</p> <p>Fulmars breed along coastal cliffs associated with the SPA. This qualifying species is not found breeding inland away from the coast.</p> <p>The structure of the SPA is dependent upon the maintenance of undisturbed cliff top site for breeding chough and fulmar.</p> <p>The nearest suitable cliff top breeding sites for chough are located over 1km to the north of the site in the vicinity of Eagle Mountain.</p> <p>Due to this separation distance of approximately 600m from the nearest point of the SPA and over 1km from the nearest suitable chough breeding site the remedial works at the landfill site will not have the potential to result in interference to the structure or function of this SPA.</p>
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**Describe from the above the elements of the project or plan or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale of magnitude of impacts is not known.**

Detailed Tier II and QRA Investigations have been undertaken for the Clountreem Landfill site. During these investigations it was established that the landfill does not represent a risk to protected areas such as European Sites due to the absence on an impact pathway linking the site to the protected areas.

This Screening Report considered the potential for leachate migration to the minor surface watercourse to negatively affect chough and fulmar. Both species are not closely associated with freshwater habitats and are not likely to forage within the stretch of the minor watercourse suffering from contamination downstream of the landfill site. Due to the foraging behaviour of chough and fulmar it was concluded that emissions to the minor watercourse will not result in likely significant effects to the qualifying features of the Beara Peninsula SPA.

The potential for remedial activities associated with the diversion of the minor watercourse around the landfill site and the capping of the landfill to result in disturbance to qualifying species was also considered. The presence of humans and the operation of machinery on site is not predicted to result in likely significant effects to breeding or foraging choughs or fulmars. The nearest potential breeding site for choughs to the landfill site is located over 1km to the north, northwest in the vicinity of Eagle Hill on Slieve Miskish Mountain. The small scale, short time frame and distance from potential breeding site will ensure disturbance to chough is avoided while undertaking remedial works.

## 4 Screening Conclusions

This Stage 1 Screening Assessment has resulted in a Finding of No Significant Effects to the Beara Peninsula SPA, which represent the only European Site occurring within the potential sphere of influence of the project site.

As the implementation of the proposed project will not result in likely significant effects to European Sites a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

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