

APPENDIX C9A.02:

Ecological Evaluation Criteria

Ecological Evaluation Criteria

Apx Table 1: Ecological Site Evaluation Scheme (adapted from NRA, 2009¹)

Ecological Valuation	Evaluation Category
<p>International Importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'European Site' including Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Site of Community Importance (SCI), Special Protection Area (SPA) or proposed Special Area of Conservation. ▪ Proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA). ▪ Site that fulfils the criteria for designation as a 'European Site' (see Annex III of the Habitats Directive, as amended). ▪ Features essential to maintaining the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network. ▪ Site containing 'best examples' of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. ▪ Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level) of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive; and/or ○ Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive. ▪ Ramsar Site (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially Waterfowl Habitat 1971). ▪ World Heritage Site (Convention for the Protection of World Cultural & Natural Heritage, 1972). ▪ Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO Man & the Biosphere Programme). ▪ Site hosting significant species populations under the Bonn Convention (Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979). ▪ Site hosting significant populations under the Berne Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979). ▪ Biogenetic Reserve under the Council of Europe. ▪ European Diploma Site under the Council of Europe. ▪ Salmonid water designated pursuant to the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988, (S.I. No. 293 of 1988). 	A
<p>National Importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Site designated or proposed as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA). ▪ Statutory Nature Reserve. ▪ Refuge for Fauna and Flora protected under the Wildlife Acts. ▪ National Park. ▪ Undesignated site fulfilling the criteria for designation as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA); Statutory Nature Reserve; Refuge for Fauna and Flora protected under the Wildlife Act; and/or a National Park. ▪ Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level) of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or ○ Species listed on the relevant Red Data list. ▪ Site containing 'viable areas' of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. 	B

¹ NRA (2009) *Guidelines for the Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes* Rev. 2. TII publication number PE-ENV-01112. National Roads Authority.

Ecological Valuation	Evaluation Category
<p>County Importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Area of Special Amenity. ▪ Area subject to a Tree Preservation Order. ▪ Area of High Amenity, or equivalent, designated under the County Development Plan. ▪ Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the County level) of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive; ○ Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive; ○ Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or ○ Species listed on the relevant Red Data list. ▪ Site containing area or areas of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive that do not fulfil the criteria for valuation as of International or National importance. ▪ County important populations of species or viable areas of semi-natural habitats or natural heritage features identified in the National or Local BAP, if this has been prepared. ▪ Sites containing semi-natural habitat types with high biodiversity in a county context and a high degree of naturalness, or populations of species that are uncommon within the county. ▪ Sites containing habitats and species that are rare or are undergoing a decline in quality or extent at a national level. 	C
<p>Local Importance (higher value):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locally important populations of priority species or habitats or natural heritage features identified in the Local BAP, if this has been prepared; ▪ Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the Local level) of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive; ○ Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive; ○ Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or ○ Species listed on the relevant Red Data list. ▪ Sites containing semi-natural habitat types with high biodiversity in a local context and a high degree of naturalness, or populations of species that are uncommon in the locality; ▪ Sites or features containing common or lower value habitats, including naturalised species that are nevertheless essential in maintaining links and ecological corridors between features of higher ecological value. 	D
<p>Local Importance (lower value):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sites containing small areas of semi-natural habitat that are of some local importance for wildlife; ▪ Sites or features containing non-native species that are of some importance in maintaining habitat links. 	E