

Marine Usage Licence Application Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report



Client: Oceyon

Location: Irish South Coast

Project Ref: OCE0001-1

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Report Sign Off Page

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1. Introduction

To ensure MARA can undertake the Appropriate Assessment process, all applicants are required to submit reports assessing any potential interactions with natura areas. The scale and complexity of the reporting should reflect the scale and complexity of the project. This report contains an analysis and screening of potential risks from the from the proposed surveys of a series of wrecks off the Irish South Coast to Natura sites.

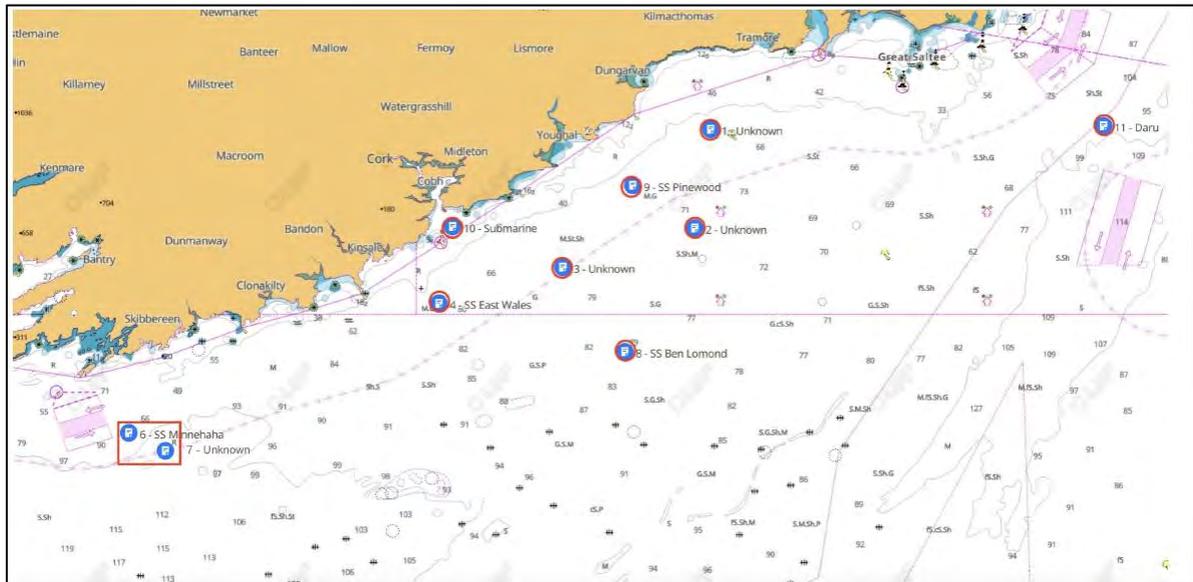


Figure 1-1: Proposed Survey Plan

2. Project Description

Oceyon are a compliance and technology company based in Switzerland, developing underwater technology on Remote Operated Vehicles (ROV) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUV) to survey and support salvage and safety interventions of anthropogenic structures (wrecks) by creating 3D and other models from data. This technology has been tested in alpine lakes in Switzerland, and the company now wish to test the methodology on marine shipwrecks.

The aim is to augment Oceyon's proprietary deep learning technology, which processes survey data into models. These models can be used to identify, wreck, identify historic seabed environmental or navigational risks and the output of the surveys can be used to provide public data analysis on heritage assets to the community at large.

Oceyon now wish to test the equipment in saline waters in the North Atlantic and have identified a number of wrecks off the south coast of Ireland to investigate. The assessment is based on non-invasive visual and acoustic surveys of the wrecks using ROV and AUVs deployed from a single small vessel.

The proposed Marine Usage Licence (MUL) is for a small, chartered vessel (up to 5 people and crew) to operate from coastal ports or harbours and visit a series of wrecks deploying remotely operated electric underwater vehicles (ROV and AUV) that will not disturb the wrecks, taking only photography and acoustic data scans. No divers will be used.

The proposal is for approximately one day surveys to each wreck site over the course of 2-3 week deployment period (**Figure 2-1** and **Table 2-1**)



Figure 2-1: Survey Plan

Table 2-1 Listing of proposed wrecks for survey

No	Name	Lat	Long	Length	Width	Depth	Distance from Coast (nm)
1	Unknown	51.96232	-7.31195	106	19	49.9	10
2	Unknown	51.74800	-7.36768	78	10.5	66.6	17
3	Unknown	51.66267	-7.82900	153.7	28	72.98	12
4	SS East Wales	51.58418	-8.26282	118	26.8	71.5	8
5	<i>removed</i>						
6	SS Minnehaha	51.30054	-9.34774	185	0	71.7	9
7	Unknown	51.26097	-9.21967	35.5	8.2	110.4	14
8	SS Ben Lomond	51.47836	-7.61222	96	17	74	25
9	SS Pinewood	51.84073	-7.58448	100	19	61.19	8
10	Submarine	51.75132	-8.21518	45	8	27	2
11	Daru	51.96990	-5.93738	113	15	88.7	20

2.1 Proposed Survey Equipment

The proposed survey is to deploy Remote Operated Vehicles (ROV) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUV) from a small 15m offshore craft to investigate wrecks off the southern coast of Ireland. The ROV will be deployed at each site, the AUV will be deployed only as required.

2.1.1 Equipment

The ROVs will be using the SeaTrac USBL by BluePrint for underwater positioning from a vessel and unit transponder.

ROV 1 equipped with:

- Sonoptix obstacle avoidance sonar dual frequency (400kHz and 700kHz)
- Tracker 650 DVL (Doppler velocity log) Frequency 650kHz
- Omniscan Side Scan Sonar Frequency 450kHz

ROV 2 equipped with:

- Oculus Imaging Sonar Dual Frequency 750kHz and 1200kHz
- Nortec 500 DVL Frequency 500kHz Noise Levels
- No Side Scan Sonar

AUV equipped with

- Side scan sonar 400kHz to 900kHz

2.1.2 Vessel

The equipment will be deployed from port and harbour facilities along the coast as needed. It is likely that the primary ports of call will be Cork Harbour or Youghal. The vessel is classed as a 15m crew transfer vessel. The proposed specification is outlined below (Table 2-2) The survey will be from this vessel or similar dependant on availability for the survey window.

Table 2-2 Proposed Vessel Specification

VESSEL SPECIFICATION			
VESSEL NAME	Fionn Mac Cumhail	TONNAGE	15.2 GT
CARGO	1t	BOLLARD PULL	3.28t
HULL MATERIAL	Marine grade aluminium	FUEL	Diesel
LENGTH OVERALL	16.1m	MAX SPEED	25 knots
BEAM	4.0m	FUEL BURN	120 litres per hour
DRAFT	0.6m	MAX WAVE HEIGHT	1.5m Hs
PASSENGERS &	12 PAX, 2 CREW	LICENCE	MSO P5 & MCA Cat. 2



Figure 2-2: Fionn MacCumhail vessel

2.2 Project Programme

The project will plan its deployment, subject to conditions and vessel availability upon the receipt of an MUL. Early planning was for October 2025; however, the project will await the appropriate licencing to commence the project programme. The next likely window for survey is Spring (March-April) 2026 or will be conducted at the next available window in 2026-7. The survey duration is approximately 14 days over a period of 2-3 weeks dependant on weather.

3. Guidance Policy and Standards

3.1 Relevant Guidance

This Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report has been prepared with regard to the following guidance documents, as relevant:

- OPR Practice Note PN01. Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision)
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10
- Assessment of Plans and Projects in Relation to Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2021)
- Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle (European Commission, 2000), and
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2019); and
- EC (2013) Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission.

The Natura 2000 network is a European network of important ecological sites, as defined under Article 3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, which comprises both Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Special Areas of Conservation are sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I, and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, of the Habitats Directive, and are established under the Habitats Directive itself. Special Protection Areas are established under Article 4 of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC for the protection of endangered species of wild birds. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

In Ireland these sites are designated as European sites - defined under the Planning Acts and/or the Birds and Habitats Regulations as (a) a candidate site of Community importance, (b) a site of Community importance, (c) a candidate special area of conservation, (d) a special area of conservation, (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area. They are commonly referred to in Ireland as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). 1

Nationally guidance '*Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-Made Sound Sources in Irish Waters*' (DAHG, 2014) which has been used to inform this risk assessment. In line with its recommendation a Marine Mammal Observer (MMO) has been appointed for the risk assessment process, a separate Annex IV Species Risk Assessment

report has been prepared for this survey, and an MMO will be aboard the vessel during the surveys.

3.2 Legislation

There is a requirement under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) to carry out Appropriate Assessment (AA). The information supporting this assessment is provided in an associated Appropriate Assessment Supporting Document.

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as 'The Habitats Directive', provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 of the Directive provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of a European Union (EU)-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000 (or 'European sites'). European sites comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated for habitats, plants, and non-bird species, under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC);
- Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated for bird species and their habitats, under the Birds Directive (79/409/ECC as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC).

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive plays a crucial role in the management of the sites that make up the Natura 2000 network. Articles 6(1) and 6(2) set out the need to identify conservation objectives and prevent deterioration of the habitats and species for which the sites have been designated. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European Sites.

The requirement for an assessment derives from Article 6 of the Directive, and in particular Article 6(3) which requires 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.”

In recognition of this, an AA Screening will be undertaken, in parallel with the SEA process. The first stage, a screening will determine if the plan has the potential to negatively affect the designated site, or the species for which it is designated.

Article 6(4) states:

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [European] 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 a social or economic nature, Member States 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.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended). In the context of the CAP, the governing legislation is principally European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations and specifically Article 27 which sets out the duties of public authorities (in this case MARA rather than the Local Authority, DCEE or the DHLGH) relating to nature conservation; and Article 42 which addresses AA. If screening for AA determines the likelihood for significant effects on a European site(s), in view of the conservation objectives of the site, then AA must be carried out for the plan, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to inform the decision making.

The AA process follows a sequential staging, the conclusion of each stage determining whether subsequent stages are required. The stages are outlined below.

Stage 1: Screening / Test of Significance:

This process identifies whether the proposed plan / project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of a European site(s) and identifies whether the plan / project is likely to have significant impacts upon a European site(s) either alone or in combination with other plans / projects.

The output from this stage is a determination by the Competent Authority (MARA) of not significant, significant, potentially significant, or uncertain effects. The latter three determinations will cause the plan / project to be brought forward to Stage 2.

Rowan has prepared an Appropriate Assessment Supporting Document which includes the Screening Assessment process.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment:

This stage considers the impact of the proposed development on the integrity of a European site(s), either alone or in combination with other plans / projects, with respect to:

- i) the site's conservation objectives; and
- ii) the site's structure, function and its overall integrity.

The output from this stage is an Natura Impact Statement (NIS), which is not thought required for this project.

There are two further stages to the AA process, however these are not thought required in this case.

4. AA Screening Methodology

4.1 AA Screening

This screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the proposed survey of wrecks along the south coast of Ireland (hereafter referred to as the project), individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site (i.e. Natura 2000 sites), in view of the site's conservation objectives.

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 network (hereafter referred to as 'European sites'). These European sites comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), as designated under the European Communities Directive (92/43/EEC), as amended (known as the Habitats Directive); and
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs), as designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC) as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC (hereafter referred to as the Birds Directive).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European Sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In 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.

Article 6(4) contains provisions for projects that must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, in spite of a negative assessment and the absence of alternative solutions. Due to the high threshold regarding what constitutes an imperative reason of overriding public interest, it is unlikely that such provisions will apply to an individual forest project.

4.2 European and national guidance

This AA Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with, and in consideration of, the following:

- DAFM. 2019. Appropriate Assessment Procedure: Guidance Note & IFORIS SOP for DAFM Forestry Inspectors, Working Document v.05Nov19
- European Commission 2021. Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC’.
- DEHLG. 2010. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government. Available at: www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2009_AA_Guidance.pdf
- Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10 on Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive – Guidance for Planning Authorities March 2010.
- Managing NATURA 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission 2000; http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf
- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting NATURA 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC; http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000management/docs/art6/Natura_2000_assess_en.pdf
- Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission; http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. http://www.npws.ie/publications/euconservationstatus/NPWS_2007_Conservation_Status_Report.pdf
- European Commission. 2000. Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC. European Communities. Available at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf

- European Commission. 2021. Assessment of plans and projects in relation to natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Part 1 and 2.
- European Commission. 2018. Commission notice: Managing Natura 2000 sites the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC. Available at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm
- European Commission. Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission.

Data Sources and site-specific data were accessed via the sources outlined in Section 3.4

4.3 European Sites

An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) of the implications of a plan or project, either individually or in-combination with other plans and projects, on a European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are designated for the conservation of important, rare or threatened habitats and species (excludes birds, refer to Special Protection Areas (SPAs)) across Europe. The designation features of SACs are referred to as 'qualifying interests' (QI) and comprise both species (excluding birds) and habitats. The process of designating SACs as SACs is ongoing in Ireland. The term SAC is used throughout this report for both SACs and cSACs, given they are subject to equal protection.

Special Protection Areas (SPA) are sites designated to protect rare and vulnerable bird species, regularly occurring migratory species, and wetlands, especially those of international importance. The designation features of SPAs are referred to as special conservation Interests (SCI), and comprise specific bird species, as well as wetland and waterbirds.

Individual Statutory Instruments (SIs) are used to designate European sites at a national level. Typically, an individual SI will designate an individual SAC or SPA and will identify the features for which it is designated. These features are also identified in the conservation objectives published by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for each European site. Any conservation objectives referred to in this report are referenced to identify the date of publication and the version involved.

Conservation objectives (in relation to a European site) refer to the maintenance of the habitat(s) and/or species (including birds) for which the site has been designated, at 'favourable conservation status', or their restoration to this status. NPWS are currently in the

process of developing detailed and site-specific conservation objectives for European sites in Ireland.

4.4 Site Suitability

An AIMU Report has been prepared for this project and included as part of the licence application. In terms of the suitability of the surveys and their location:

- The report identified the project costs of a non-invasive survey of anthropogenic structures on the seabed.
- The surveys will be within 350m of the structures at all times and of extremely short duration (part of daylight hours of the day and maximum 2 days at any one site)
- The report identified this project will occur entirely within the existing site and therefore there is no change of land use nor any impact to habitat of any kind as the project is already located in an operational site of made ground.

4.5 Location of Proposed Development in relation to Natura (EU) Sites

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, having regard, to the proposals size and nature in accordance with Article 120(1)b in particular, to:

The following identifies the relevant European sites, and compiles information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives in addition to outlining the potential for significant effects on each site. The proposed development site is not located within a European site. As outlined in Office of the Planning Regulator (2021) *“The zone of influence of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km).”*

A key factor in the consideration as to whether or not a particular European site is likely to be affected by the proposed works is its distance from the location of the works. It is generally, but not necessarily, the case that the greater the distance from the plan or project the smaller the likelihood of impacts.

In this case, the only European site to the proposed survey is the MV Dara which is at the boundary of the Seas around Wexford SPA. Best practice guidance suggests that an initial zone of influence be set at a radius of 2km for non-linear projects (IEA, 1995), however the project consists of the physical presence of a single vessel and an Annex IV species Risk assessment has determined that the noise output of the survey is below the level to cause injury to any of the considered marine species. As a result any risk of significant impacts to

Natura sites or their features of interest is considered on the potential for short term (one day) behavioural disturbance.

The potential zone of influence (ZOI) was set at a radius of 0.5km from the proposed survey sites based on the area larger than the maximum potential disturbance threshold exceedance for any marine mammal.

The vessel is a small 15m vessel and therefore the potential for an unplanned events (such as collision or loss of vessel and fuel inventory) is below the level of potential significant risk and is not considered further,

Potential connection and pathways to these sites is evaluated based on methods and nature of construction and normal industry practice mitigation.

All Irish sites within 15km of the survey as per the previous AA guidance are shown and listed on **Table 4-1** Special Areas of Conservation and **Table 4-2** Special Protected Areas.

Table 4-1: SACs within 15km of the survey

SITECODE	SAC SITE_NAME	COUNTY	Hectares	URL
002123	Ardmore Head SAC	wa	29.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002123
000764	Hook Head SAC	wx	17006	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000764
000109	Three Castle Head to Mizen Head SAC	co	353.0	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000109
001230	Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC	co	741.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001230
000097	Lough Hyne Nature Reserve and Environs SAC	co	451.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000097
000101	Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC	co	14285.3	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000101
002953	Blackwater Bank SAC	wx	12401.4	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002953
001547	Castletownshend SAC	co	17.0	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001547
002161	Long Bank SAC	wx	3370.9	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002161
000707	Saltee Islands SAC	wx	15822.3	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000707
000710	Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC	wx	556.4	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000710
001061	Kilkeran Lake and Castlefreke Dunes SAC	co	96.4	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001061
000709	Tacumshin Lake SAC	wx	527.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000709
000671	Tramore Dunes and Backstrand SAC	wa	770.1	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000671
002170	Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	co, ke, li, ti, wa	10068.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002170
002269	Carnsore Point SAC	wx	8736.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002269
001040	Barley Cove to Ballyrisode Point SAC	co	796.9	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001040
000708	Screen Hills SAC	wx	139.4	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000708
000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC	co	494.8	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000077
000665	Helvick Head SAC	wa	203.5	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000665
000704	Lady's Island Lake SAC	wx	507.0	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000704

SITECODE	SAC SITE_NAME	COUNTY	Hectares	URL
001070	Myross Wood SAC	co	4.0	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001070
000696	Ballyteige Burrow SAC	wx	667.1	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000696
000697	Bannow Bay SAC	wx	1287.9	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000697
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	cw, wi, wx	5948.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000781
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	cw, kd, kk, la, of, ti, wa, wx	12325.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002162
000091	Clonakilty Bay SAC	co	511.9	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000091
002324	Glendine Wood SAC	wa	19.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002324
002137	Lower River Suir SAC	kk, ti, wa	7083.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002137
001058	Great Island Channel SAC	co	1437.5	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001058

Table 4-2: SPAs within 15km of the survey

SITECODE	SPA SITE_NAME	COUNTY	Hectare	URL
004124	Sovereign Islands SPA	co	28.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004124
004032	Dungarvan Harbour SPA	wa	2221.4	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004032
004030	Cork Harbour SPA	co	2676.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004030
004009	Lady's Island Lake SPA	wx	478.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004009
004023	Ballymacoda Bay SPA	co	586.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004023
004020	Ballyteige Burrow SPA	wx	660.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004020
004191	Seven Heads SPA	co	446.9	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004191
004192	Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA	wa	784.3	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004192
004193	Mid-Waterford Coast SPA	wa	937.1	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004193
004028	Blackwater Estuary SPA	co	169.0	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004028

SITECODE	SPA SITE_NAME	COUNTY	Hectare	URL
004027	Tramore Back Strand SPA	wa	675.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004027
004002	Saltee Islands SPA	wx	870.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004002
004033	Bannow Bay SPA	wx	1363.3	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004033
004022	Ballycotton Bay SPA	co	281.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004022
004081	Clonakilty Bay SPA	co	507.8	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004081
004021	Old Head of Kinsale SPA	co	53.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004021
004076	Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA	wx	5979.3	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004076
004118	Keeragh Islands SPA	wx	80.0	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004118
004219	Courtmacsherry Bay SPA	co	1298.7	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004219
004156	Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA	co	2500.1	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004156
004028	Blackwater Estuary SPA	wa	700.8	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004028
004019	The Raven SPA	wx	4204.6	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004019
004190	Galley Head to Duneen Point SPA	co	416.1	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004190
004092	Tacumshin Lake SPA	wx	476.2	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004092
004237	Seas off Wexford SPA (marine)	wa, wx	305406.4	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004237

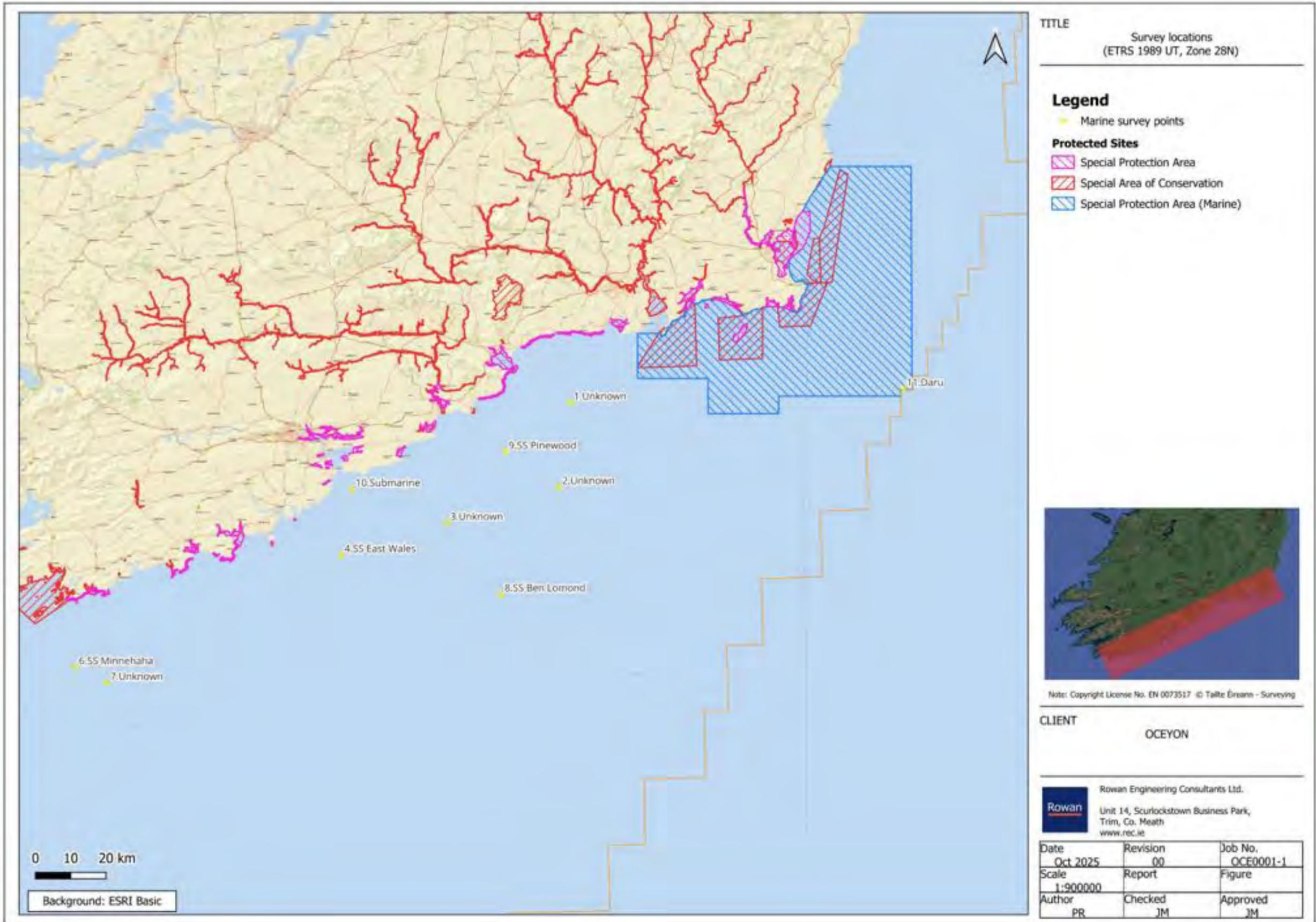


Figure 4-1: Map of Survey Location

As these works are being undertaken in the marine environment, using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model (OPR 2021), only marine and coastal Natura 2000 sites were considered in this screening process. The evaluation only considers AA Screening requirements. Annex IV risk assessment has also been conducted and provided with this application.

Table 4-3: Natura Sites within or adjacent to the survey

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Direct Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Indirect connectivity	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Seas off Wexford SPA	0m	Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) [A013] Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>) [A016] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Mediterranean Gull (<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>) [A176] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]	No – No risk of direct species impact	Yes, potential behavioral disturbance of species or their food source of up to 494m for a daylight working hours for one day, with a maximum exposure of a second day survey	Yes	No

		Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204] Sandwich Tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>) [A863] Little Tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>) [A885]				
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Table 4-4 Natura Sites in coastal regions to the survey

European Site Code	Within ZOI of project	List of Qualifying Interests	Direct Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Indirect connectivity	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Great Island SAC [Site code IE001058]	Over 2km	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Atlantic [1140] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]	No		No	No
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC [Site code IE002170]	Over 2km	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>)	No		No	No

European Site Code	Within ZOI of project	List of Qualifying Interests	Direct Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Indirect connectivity	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
		[91E0] Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Trichomanes speciosum (Killarney Fern) [1421] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] Alosa fallax fallax (Twaiite Shad) [1103] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]				
Roaringwater Bay and Islands SAC [Site code IE000101]	Over 2km	Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	No	No	No	
		Halichoerus grypus (Grey Seal) [1364] Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	No	No	No	

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
River Barrow and River Nore SAC [Site code IE002162]	Over 2km	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Reefs [1170] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachium</i> vegetation [3260] European dry heaths [4030] Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern)	No	No	No

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
		[1421] Margaritifera durrovensis (Nore Pearl Mussel) [1990] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] Alosa fallax fallax (Twaite Shad) [1103] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]			
Lower River Suir SAC [Site code IE002137]	Over 2km	Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles [91J0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	No	No	No

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
		Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] Alosa fallax fallax (Twaité Shad) [1103] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]			
Saltee Islands SAC [Site code IE000707]	Over 2km	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]	No	No	No
		Halichoerus grypus (Grey Seal) [1364]	No	No	
Slaney River Valley SAC [Site code IE 000781]	Over 2km	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	No	No	No

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
		(Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] Alosa fallax fallax (Twaité Shad) [1103] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]			
		Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]	No	No	
Kenmare River SAC [Site code IE002158]	167	Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]	No	No	

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
	Over 2km	<p>European dry heaths [4030] Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae [6130] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330] Vertigo angustior (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]</p>	No	No	No
		Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]	No	No	
Hook head SAC	Over 2km	<p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Tursiops truncatus (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349] Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]</p>	No	No	No
Cork Harbour SPA [IE004030]	Over 2km	<p>Grey Heron [A028] Pintail [A054] Oystercatcher [A130] Golden Plover [A140]</p>	No	No	No

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
		Grey Plover [A141] Lapwing [A142] Dunlin [A149] Black-tailed Godwit [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit [A157] Curlew [A160] Redshank [A162] Black-headed Gull [A179] Common Gull [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull [A183] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] Cormorant [A017] Shoveler [A056] Little Grebe [A004] Common Tern [A193] Wigeon [A050] Great Crested Grebe [A005] Common Tern [A193] Teal [A052] Shelduck [A048] Red-breasted Merganser [A069]			

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Development (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-Pathway Receptors)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screened In for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Ballycotton SPA	Over 2km	Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	No

4.6 Screening Assessment

In the interest of carrying out a thorough assessment in line with both the Habitats and Birds Directives, and the precautionary principle, the area of assessment was expanded beyond the Zol (494m) to 2km and consideration given to all Natura sites within 15km of the proposed survey areas.

This was done in the interest of ensuring that any pathways, however indirect or remote, were taken into account.

All European sites within 15km are listed in the table. The qualifying interests, and the potential impact of the proposed development on each European site and qualifying interest, of those in proximity to the site are shown and then screened.

No potential impacts are foreseen on European sites beyond 15km as there are no direct or indirect pathways to these sites.

Based on the assessment all the Natura sites within 15km+ of the location are Screened Out for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment, for either having no direct or indirect pathway to impact the site, or that there is no likelihood of significant effects.

Based on the assessment of coastal sites all sites with the exception of the Waters off Wexford SPA have been Screened out.

The survey will only enter or interact with one Natura site. The Waters off Wexford SPA has been designated for bird species. The survey includes the wreck of the Daru which is located within the outer edge of the site. The survey at this location will consist of a single small vessel and deployment of seabed survey equipment for daylight hours for approximately one day, two days at the maximum. The Annex IV assessment includes evaluation of the noise output of the survey, This is below the level of any injury to marine species. The survey could cause behavioural avoidance within 494m of the vessel for daylight hours for one day with a maximum of a return second day visit (16 hrs estimated maximum over 48 hrs and not exceeding 24 hrs) . As a result in relation to the SPA and qualifying interests, the survey will not pose any risk of detrimental effect to species, qualifying interest or individuals. The potential of significant impact is therefore screened out for further consideration. The controls included in the survey include the presence of an MMO aboard for the duration of the survey. As well as identifying any marine mammals in the area, the MMO scans will include consideration of any seabirds at sea, as a result there is no risk to the features of interest in the SPA from the survey.

4.7 Consideration of Annex IV Species within their natural range

A separate assessment of the risk to Annex IV species and consideration of whether derogation would be required has been prepared and is included with the MUL application.

4.8 Cumulative and in combination Effects

4.8.1 Other Plans and Projects

Assessment of the MARA website and local planning authority approvals shows no proposed developments or active planning within 5km of the proposed survey in the likely windows of operation. As such the assessment determined there are no other projects with the potential for cumulative or on combination effects.

4.9 Data Used for AA Screening

NPWS site synopses and Conservation objectives of sites within 15km were assessed, NPWS map viewer and website as well as supporting papers. The most recent SAC and SPA boundary shapefiles were downloaded and overlaid on GIS maps and satellite imagery including the site boundary.

Coastal County Council eplan, the MARA website of pending applications and other national development and Departmental data sources were consulted to confirm the other plans and programmes.

5. Appropriate Assessment – Screening Conclusion

This Screening Report concludes that as the proposed survey occurs at location of anthropogenic structures on the seabed, the survey is non-invasive and does not change the nature of the conditions, operations or the category or nature of the sites existing use and natural environment.

Having taken into consideration the proposed survey, the short duration of each deployment and the likelihood of any interaction or pathway to conservation sites, and the proposed survey and normal vessel operational safeguards to control any, it is concluded that the proposed survey would not give rise to any significant effects to designated sites.

This report presents the information required for the competent authority to screen for appropriate assessment and to determine whether or not the Proposed Activity, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any Natura or European designated site.

On the basis of the content of this report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct a Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment and consider whether, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, the Proposed Activity, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European site.

The assessment concluded that the proposed Project does not have the potential to have significant effects on any European Site or its conservation objectives and as such it is recommended that **a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is not required in this case.**