

Chapter 4 Biodiversity

Appendix 2-A

Criteria used to determine the value of ecological resources (taken from NRA, 2009)

Importance	Criteria
International Importance	<p>-‘European Site’ including Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Site of Community Importance (SCI), -Special Protection Area (SPA) or proposed Special Area of Conservation.</p> <p>-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).</p> <p>-Features essential to maintaining the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network</p> <p>-Site containing ‘best examples’ of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>-Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level) of the following:</p> <p>Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive; and/or</p> <p>Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>-Ramsar Site (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially Waterfowl Habitat 1971).</p> <p>-World Heritage Site (Convention for the Protection of World Cultural & Natural Heritage, 1972).</p> <p>-Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO Man & The Biosphere Programme).</p> <p>-Site hosting significant species populations under the Bonn Convention (Convention on the -Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979).</p> <p>-Site hosting significant populations under the Berne Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979).</p> <p>-Biogenetic Reserve under the Council of Europe.</p> <p>-European Diploma Site under the Council of Europe.</p> <p>-Salmonid water designated pursuant to the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988, (S.I. No. 293 of 1988).</p>

Importance	Criteria
National Importance	<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.
County Importance	<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

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	<p>uncommon within the county.</p> <p>-Sites containing habitats and species that are rare or are undergoing a decline in quality or extent at a national level.</p>
Local Importance (higher value)	<p>-Locally important populations of priority species or habitats or natural heritage features identified in the Local BAP, if this has been prepared;</p> <p>-Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the Local level) of the following:</p> <p>Species of bird, listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive;</p> <p>Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive;</p> <p>Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or</p> <p>Species listed on the relevant Red Data list.</p> <p>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</p> <p>-Sites or features containing common or lower value habitats, including naturalised species that are essential in maintaining links and ecological corridors between features of higher ecological value.</p>
Local Importance (lower value)	<p>-Sites containing small areas of semi-natural habitat that are of some local importance for wildlife;</p> <p>-Sites or features containing non-native species that are of some importance in maintaining habitat links.</p>