

National Parks and Wildlife Service

Conservation Objectives Series

Ballintra SAC 000115



An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

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Introduction

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

A site-specific conservation objective aims to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at that site.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which 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.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is 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.

Notes/Guidelines:

1. The targets given in these conservation objectives are based on best available information at the time of writing. As more information becomes available, targets for attributes may change. These will be updated periodically, as necessary.
2. An appropriate assessment based on these conservation objectives will remain valid even if the targets are subsequently updated, providing they were the most recent objectives available when the assessment was carried out. It is essential that the date and version are included when objectives are cited.
3. Assessments cannot consider an attribute in isolation from the others listed for that habitat or species, or for other habitats and species listed for that site. A plan or project with an apparently small impact on one attribute may have a significant impact on another.
4. Please note that the maps included in this document do not necessarily show the entire extent of the habitats and species for which the site is listed. This should be borne in mind when appropriate assessments are being carried out.
5. When using these objectives, it is essential that the relevant backing/supporting documents are consulted, particularly where instructed in the targets or notes for a particular attribute.

Qualifying Interests

** indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive*

000115	Ballintra SAC
4030	European dry heaths
8240	Limestone pavementsE

Supporting documents, relevant reports & publications

Supporting documents, NPWS reports and publications are available for download from: www.npws.ie/Publications

NPWS Documents

Year :	2006
Title :	Conservation Plan for 2006-2011. Ballintra cSAC Site Code 000115 Co. Donegal
Author :	NPWS
Series :	Conservation Plan
Year :	2009
Title :	Ireland Red List No. 2: Non-marine molluscs
Author :	Byrne, A.; Moorkens, E.A.; Anderson, R.; Killeen, I.J.; Regan, E.C.
Series :	Ireland Red List series, NPWS
Year :	2010
Title :	Ireland Red List No. 4: Butterflies
Author :	Regan, E.C.; Nelson, B.; Aldwell, B.; Bertrand, C.; Bond, K.; Harding, J.; Nash, D.; Nixon, D.; Wilson, C.J.
Series :	Ireland Red List series, NPWS
Year :	2012
Title :	Ireland Red List No. 8: Bryophytes
Author :	Lockhart, N.; Hodgetts, N.; Holyoak, D.
Series :	Ireland Red List series, NPWS
Year :	2013
Title :	National survey of limestone pavement and associated habitats in Ireland
Author :	Wilson, S.; Fernandez, F.
Series :	Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 73
Year :	2016
Title :	Ireland Red List No. 10: Vascular Plants
Author :	Wyse Jackson, M.; FitzPatrick, Ú.; Cole, E.; Jebb, M.; McFerran, D.; Sheehy Skeffington, M.; Wright, M.
Series :	Ireland Red List Series, NPWS
Year :	2018
Title :	The Irish Juniper Monitoring Survey 2017
Author :	O'Neill, F.H.; Martin, J.R.
Series :	Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 101
Year :	2018
Title :	The Irish Juniper Monitoring Survey 2017 - Appendices
Author :	O'Neill, F.H.; Martin, J.R.
Series :	Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 101

Other References

Year :	1934
Title :	<i>Helianthemum vulgare</i> in Ireland
Author :	Praeger, R.L.
Series :	Irish Naturalists' Journal 5(4): 76-77

Year : 1985
Title : The present status and ecology of *Helianthemum nummularium* (L.) Miller in Ireland
Author : Curtis, T.G.F.; Bassett, J.A.; McGough, H.N.
Series : Irish Naturalists' Journal, 21(12): 515-517

Spatial data sources

Year :	2013
Title :	National Survey of Limestone Pavement and Associated Habitats in Ireland distribution data
GIS Operations :	Dataset clipped to the SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
Used For :	8240 (map 2)

Conservation Objectives for : Ballintra SAC [000115]

4030 European dry heaths

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of European dry heaths in Ballintra SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes	European dry heath occurs in areas of deeper soil, which are peaty in nature, in Ballintra SAC. There is a wet black bog-rush (<i>Schoenus nigricans</i>) flush in the centre of the dry heath area. Dry heath also occurs in intimate association with the Annex I habitat Limestone pavements* (habitat code 8240). Therefore, these habitats cannot be easily mapped or considered separately. Conservation objectives for the Annex I habitats should be used in conjunction with each other as appropriate. As part of the National Survey of Limestone Pavement and Associated Habitats, Wilson and Fernandez (2013) recorded the habitat in the sub-site Ballynacarrick (site code NSLP13). This survey should be consulted for further details
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes	See the notes for Habitat area above
Vegetation composition: positive indicator species	Number at a representative number of monitoring stops	At least seven positive indicator species present	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013), where the list of positive indicator species for this habitat, as identified by Wilson and Fernandez (2013), is also presented. Positive indicator species recorded in the habitat in the SAC include bell heather (<i>Erica cinerea</i>), ling (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), lady's bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>), slender St. John's-wort (<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i>), common bird's-foot-trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>), tormentil (<i>Potentilla erecta</i>), devil's-bit scabious (<i>Succisa pratensis</i>), wild thyme (<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>), flea sedge (<i>Carex pulicaris</i>) and blue moor-grass (<i>Sesleria caerulea</i>) (Wilson and Fernandez, 2013; NPWS internal files)
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Negative indicator species collectively not more than 1% cover	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013), where the list of negative indicator species for this habitat, as identified by Wilson and Fernandez (2013), is presented
Vegetation composition: non-native species	Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Non-native species not more than 1% cover	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013)
Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs	Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Cover of native trees and shrubs (excluding juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>)) not more than 25% cover	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013). Scrub encroachment is impacting on the habitat in the SAC (Wilson and Fernandez, 2013)
Physical structure: disturbance	Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Less than 10% disturbed bare ground (excluding rocks/stones)	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013). Damage from poaching by grazing cattle has been reported from the flush area in the habitat in the SAC (NPWS, 2006; NPWS internal files)
Indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	Indicators of local distinctiveness are maintained	This includes species on the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 and/or Red Lists (Byrne et al., 2009; Regan et al., 2010; Lockhart et al., 2012; Wyse Jackson et al., 2016, etc.) and other rare or localised species, as well as archaeological and geological features, which often support distinctive species

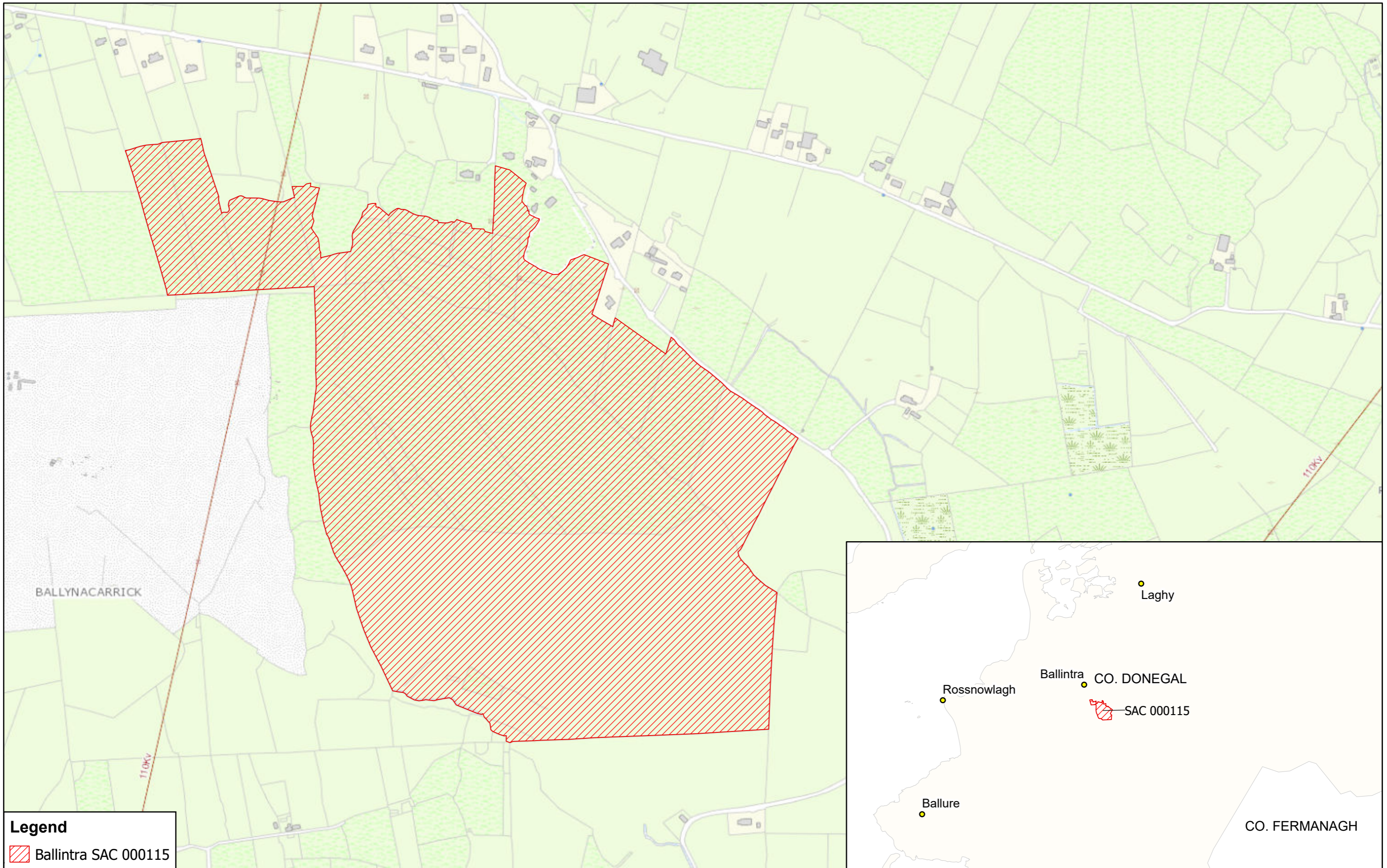
Conservation Objectives for : Ballintra SAC [000115]


8240 Limestone pavements


To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Limestone pavements* in Ballintra SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes	Limestone pavements* in Ballintra SAC represents one of the most northerly outposts of typical limestone flora in Ireland. The habitat exhibits a good example of shattered pavement and occurs in association with species-rich calcareous grassland, juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>) formations (see O'Neill and Martin, 2018, site DL30), scrub, and European dry heaths (4030), a Qualifying Interest (QI) for the SAC. Therefore, these habitats cannot easily be mapped or considered separately. Conservation objectives for the QI Annex I habitats should be used in conjunction with each other as appropriate. Wilson and Fernandez (2013) mapped the indicative area of limestone pavement, including mosaics with associated habitats, as 21.55ha within the SAC (see map 2). As part of the National Survey of Limestone Pavement and Associated Habitats (Wilson and Fernandez, 2013), the sub-site Ballynacarrick (code NSLP13) was surveyed in detail. This survey should be consulted for further details
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline. Map 2 shows indicative distribution, including mosaics with other habitats	See the notes for Habitat area above. Distribution based on data from Wilson and Fernandez (2013). This habitat can be split into exposed pavement and wooded pavement. In Ballintra SAC, the limestone pavement habitat occurs on Ballintra Hill and consists of shattered pavement in association with calcareous grassland, juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>), scrub and dry heath habitats
Vegetation composition: positive indicator species	Number at a representative number of monitoring stops	At least seven positive indicator species present	Positive indicator species for exposed and wooded pavement are listed in Wilson and Fernandez (2013). Positive indicator species recorded by Wilson and Fernandez (2013) in exposed pavement in the Ballynacarrick sub-site (site code NSLP13) include blue moor-grass (<i>Sesleria caerulea</i>), burnet rose (<i>Rosa spinosissima</i>), maidenhair spleenwort (<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>), wall-rue (<i>A. ruta-muraria</i>) and the mosses <i>Breutelia chrysocoma</i> , <i>Ctenidium molluscum</i> , <i>Fissidens dubius</i> , <i>Neckera crispa</i> and <i>Tortella tortuosa</i>
Vegetation composition: bryophyte layer	Percentage at a representative number of monitoring stops	Bryophyte cover at least 50% on wooded pavement	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013)
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage at a representative number of monitoring stops	Collective cover of negative indicator species on exposed pavement not more than 1%	Negative indicator species are listed in Wilson and Fernandez (2013). Negative indicator species for wooded pavement overlap with non-native species (below)
Vegetation composition: non-native species	Percentage at a representative number of monitoring stops	Cover of non-native species not more than 1% on exposed pavement; on wooded pavement not more than 10% with no regeneration	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013)
Vegetation composition: scrub	Percentage at a representative number of monitoring stops	Scrub cover no more than 25% of exposed pavement	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013). There is some encroachment of scrub, mostly hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), onto areas of limestone pavement in the SAC (NPWS, 2006; Wilson and Fernandez, 2013; NPWS internal files)
Vegetation composition: bracken cover	Percentage at a representative number of monitoring stops	Bracken (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>) cover no more than 10% on exposed pavement	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013)

Vegetation structure: woodland canopy	Percentage at a representative number of monitoring stops	Canopy cover on wooded pavement at least 30%	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013)
Vegetation structure: dead wood	Occurrence in a representative number of monitoring stops	Sufficient quantity of dead wood on wooded pavement to provide habitat for saproxylic organisms	Dead wood is a valuable resource and an integral part of a healthy, functioning woodland ecosystem
Physical structure: disturbance	Occurrence in a representative number of monitoring stops	No evidence of grazing pressure on wooded pavement	Attribute and target based on Wilson and Fernandez (2013)
Indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	Indicators of local distinctiveness are maintained	This includes species on the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 and/or Red Lists (Byrne et al., 2009; Regan et al., 2010; Lockhart et al., 2012; Wyse Jackson et al., 2016, etc.) and other rare or localised species, as well as archaeological and geological features, which often support distinctive species. The sole known Irish population of the FPO listed and Critically Endangered common rock-rose (<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>) (Wyse Jackson et al., 2016) occurs in the habitat in the SAC (Praeger, 1934; Curtis et al., 1985; NPWS, 2006; NPWS internal files)



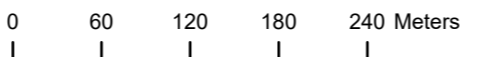
Legend
 Ballintra SAC 000115

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**MAP 1:
 BALLINTRÁ SAC
 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES
 SAC DESIGNATION**
 Map to be read in conjunction with the NPWS Conservation Objectives Document.

**SITE CODE:
 SAC 000115; version 3.01. CO. DONEGAL**

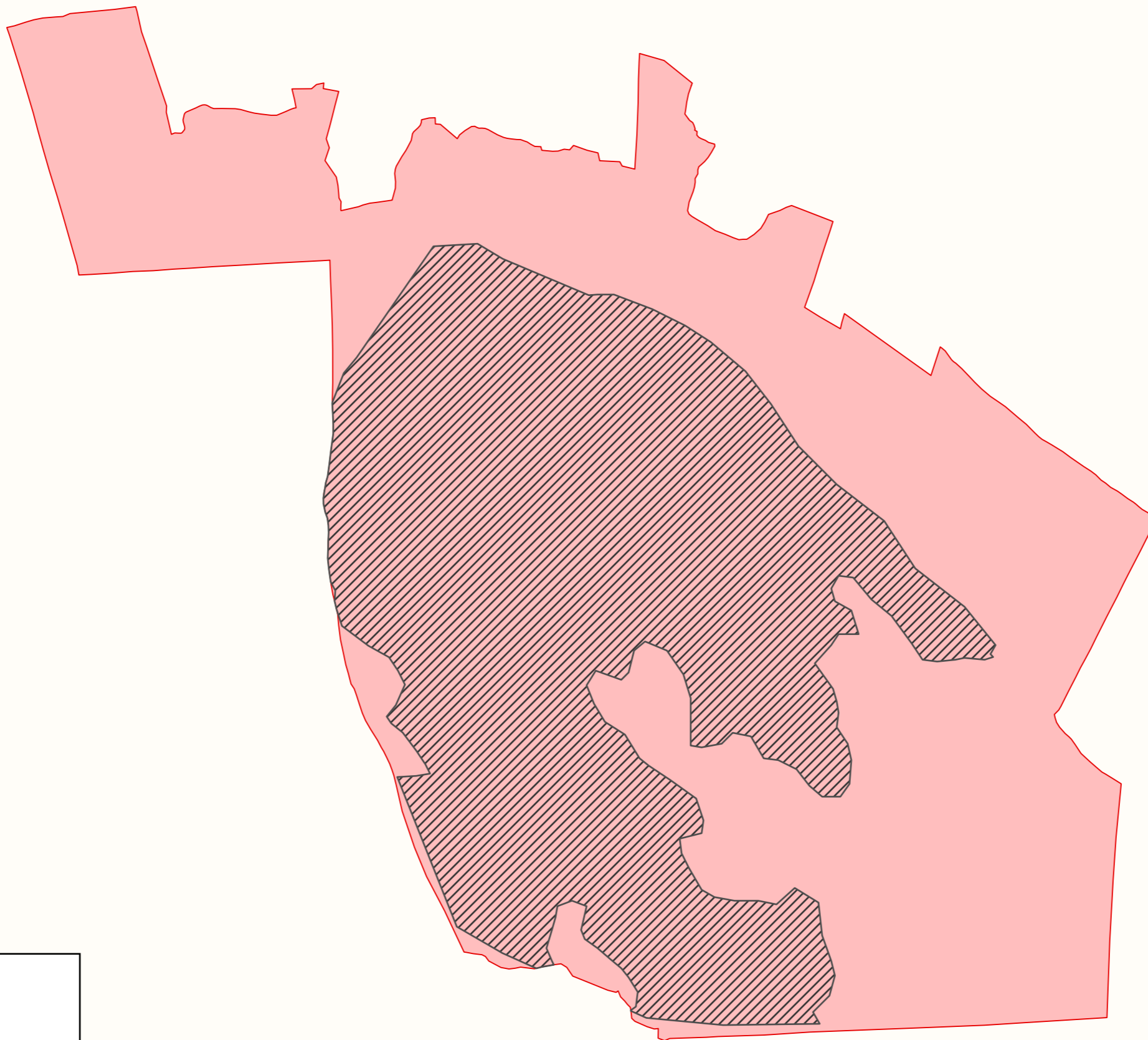
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The mapped boundaries are of an indicative and general nature only. Boundaries of designated areas are subject to revision.
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Níl sna teorainneacha ar na léarscáileanna ach nod garshuíomhach ginearálta. Féadfar athbhreithnithe a déanamh ar theorainneacha na gceantar comharthaíthe. Suirbhéarachta Ordonáis na hÉireann Ceadúnas Uimh EN 0059216. © Suirbhéarachta Ordonáis na hÉireann Rialtas na hÉireann


Map Version 1
Date: Nov 2018



Legend

-  8240 Limestone pavements
-  Ballintra SAC 000115
-  OSi Discovery Series County Boundary

