

Site name: Hugginstown Fen SAC 0000404

County: Kilkenny

Site Specific Conservation Objective (SSCO) Ecological Attributes

[7230] Alkaline fens

- 1 Habitat area
- 2 Habitat distribution
- 3.1 Ecosystem function: soil nutrients
- 3.2 Ecosystem function: peat formation
- 3.3 Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels
- 3.4 Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow
- 3.5 Ecosystem function: water quality
- 4 Community diversity
- 5.1 Vegetation composition: brown mosses
- 5.2 Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants
- 5.3 Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species
- 5.4 Vegetation composition: non-native species
- 5.5 Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs
- 5.6 Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover
- 6 Vegetation structure: litter
- 7.1 Physical structure: disturbed bare ground
- 7.2 Physical structure: tufa formations
- 8 Indicators of local distinctiveness

<div>Site name: Hugginstown Fen SAC 404</div> <div>Habitat/Species: [7230] Alkaline fens</div> <div>Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO): To maintain the favourable conservation condition of [7230] in SAC 000404</div>										
No.	Ecological Requirements (Attributes as per SSCO)	Pressure /Threat (EU Code 2025)	Pressure/ Threat Ranking	EU Conservation Measure Type (EU Code 2019-2024)	Measure Category	Conservation Measure	Delivery mechanism	Public Authority with statutory responsibility	Implementation timeframe	Integration with high level plans/policy:
1	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PL05 Modification of hydrological flow	Low	MJ02 Reduce impact of multi-purpose hydrological changes	Statutory	Planning, regulation and constraint of development with regard to water abstraction requirements and volumes. Registration of water abstraction is required for daily maximum which is greater than 25 cubic meters per day.	European Union (Water Policy) (Abstractions Registration) Regulations 2018	Uisce Éireann (Operator) / EPA	2018+	All government plans and policy documents are cognisant of these protections.
2	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PL05 Modification of hydrological flow	Low	MK02 Reduce impact of multi-purpose hydrological changes	Statutory	Consent is required for works on, or alterations to the banks, bed or flow of a drain watercourse or waterbody, if not covered by other regulations.	European Union Habitats (Hugginstown Fen Special Area of Conservation 000404) Regulations, 2016	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)/National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)	2003+	All government plans and policy documents are cognisant of these protections.
3	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PL02 Drainage (mixed or unknown drivers)	Low	MK02 Reduce impact of multi-purpose hydrological changes	Statutory	Consent is required for digging, ploughing, harrowing or otherwise disturbing soil or substrate, if not covered by other regulations. [Consent is not required for these activities on established reseeded grassland or cultivated land provided it is greater than 50m from a river, stream, floodplain, wetland, lake, turlough or pond.]	European Union Habitats (Hugginstown Fen Special Area of Conservation 000404) Regulations, 2016	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)/National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)	2003+	All government plans and policy documents are cognisant of these protections.
4	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PL01 Abstraction from groundwater, surface water or mixed water	Low	MJ02 Reduce impact of multi-purpose hydrological changes	Statutory	Consent is required for water abstraction, sinking of boreholes and wells, if not covered by other regulations.	European Union Habitats (Hugginstown Fen Special Area of Conservation 000404) Regulations, 2016	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)/National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)	2003+	All government plans and policy documents are cognisant of these protections.

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6	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PK01 Mixed source pollution to surface and ground waters (limnic and terrestrial)	Low	MA10 Reduce/eliminate point or diffuse source pollution to surface or ground waters (including marine) from agricultural activities.	Administrative	Nutrient management planning to balance nutrient inputs (mainly N, P, K and lime) with crop requirements. Nutrient applications may result in losses to water by runoff or leaching. For derogation farmers are obliged to create one.	Sixth Nitrates Action Programme (2026–2028)	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)	2026	CAP Strategic Plan
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8	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PA17 Agricultural activities generating pollution to surface or ground waters (including marine)	Low	MJ02 Reduce impact of multi-purpose hydrological changes	Statutory	Statutory Management Requirements: Fencing of water courses at a min 1.5m from the top of the watercourse or water edge. Applies to farmers with a grassland stocking rate that exceeds 170kg of organic nitrogen per Hectare, and/or is exporting slurry to avail of a lower stocking rate.	European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2022	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)	2022+	All government plans and policy documents are cognisant of these protections.

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11	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	PA17 Agricultural activities generating pollution to surface or ground waters (including marine)	Low	MJ02 Reduce impact of multi-purpose hydrological changes	Administrative	Contribute to a national reduction in chemical fertiliser control by nutrient management planning, soil testing, precision application, use of organic alternatives and adherence to crop nutrients requirements. Mandatory to register the purchase of all chemical fertiliser with the National Fertiliser Database	Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)	2022+	CAP Strategic Plan
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18	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	All/Other Relevant Threats and Pressures	N/A	MA - Measures related to agricultural practices and agriculture-related habitats	Contractual	Production of an accredited Farm Sustainability Plan by 100% of participants in the Agri-Climate Rural Environmental Scheme (ACRES).	Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)	2022+	CAP Strategic Plan
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20	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	All/Other Relevant Threats and Pressures	N/A	MJ01 Implement climate change mitigation measures, MJ02 Implement climate change adaptation measures	Administrative	A roadmap of actions to assist in the achievement of climate change objectives by no later than the end of the year 2050.	Ireland's Climate Action Plan	All Government Departments	2019+	Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021

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No.	Ecological Requirements (Attributes as per SSCO)	Pressure /Threat (EU Code 2025)	Pressure/ Threat Ranking	EU Conservation Measure Type (EU Code 2019-2024)	Measure Category	Conservation Measure	Delivery mechanism	Public Authority with statutory responsibility	Implementation timeframe	Integration with high level plans/policy:
21	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	All/Other Relevant Threats and Pressures	N/A	MJ01 Implement climate change mitigation measures, MJ02 Implement climate change adaptation measures	Administrative	Monitoring by regional staff at this SAC between 3/4 times per year.	NPWS Conservation Measure	National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS)	2025+	All government plans and policy documents are cognisant of these protections.
22	1. Habitat area, 2. Habitat distribution, 3. Ecosystem function: soil nutrients, 3.1 Ecosystem function: peat formation, 3.2. Ecosystem function: hydrology - groundwater levels, 3.3. Ecosystem function: hydrology - surface water flow, 3.4. Ecosystem function: water quality, 4. Community diversity, 5. Vegetation composition: brown mosses, 5.1. Vegetation composition: typical vascular plants, 5.2. Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species, 5.3. Vegetation composition: non-native species, 5.4.Vegetation composition: native trees and shrubs, 5.5. Vegetation composition: soft rush and common reed cover, 6. Vegetation structure: litter, 7.Physical structure: disturbed bare ground, 7.1.Physical structure: tufa formations, 8. Indicators of local distinctiveness	All/Other Relevant Threats and Pressures	N/A	MA - Measures related to agricultural practices and agriculture-related habitats	Administrative/Contractual	The production of NPWS Farm Plans at Hugginstown Fen SAC. This includes 6 plots covering 17 HA within the SAC.	NPWS Farm Plan Scheme	National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS)	2006+	European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011