

National Parks and Wildlife Service

Conservation Objectives Series

Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC 000261



An Roinn
Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta

Department of
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht



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Citation:

**NPWS (2018) Conservation Objectives: Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC
000261. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht.**

**Series Editor: Rebecca Jeffrey
ISSN 2009-4086**

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*

000261 Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC

91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Q. petraea* and *Q. robur* in the British Isles

Please note that this SAC overlaps with Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA (004168). See map 2. The conservation objectives for this site should be used in conjunction with those for the overlapping site as appropriate.

Supporting documents, relevant reports & publications

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

NPWS Documents

Year : 2008
Title : National survey of native woodlands 2003-2008
Author : Perrin, P.M.; Martin, J.; Barron, S.; O'Neill, F.H.; McNutt, K.E.; Delaney, A.
Series : Unpublished report to NPWS

Year : 2010
Title : A provisional inventory of ancient and long-established woodland in Ireland
Author : Perrin, P.M.; Daly, O.H.
Series : Irish Wildlife Manual No. 46

Year : 2017
Title : Management Guidelines for Ireland's Native Woodlands
Author : Cross, J.R.; Collins, K.D.
Series : National Parks and Wildlife Service and Forest Service

Other References

Year : 2002
Title : Reversing the habitat fragmentation of British woodlands
Author : Peterken, G.
Series : WWF-UK, London

Spatial data sources

Year : Revision 2010

Title : National Survey of Native Woodlands 2003-2008. Version 1

GIS Operations : QI selected; clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising

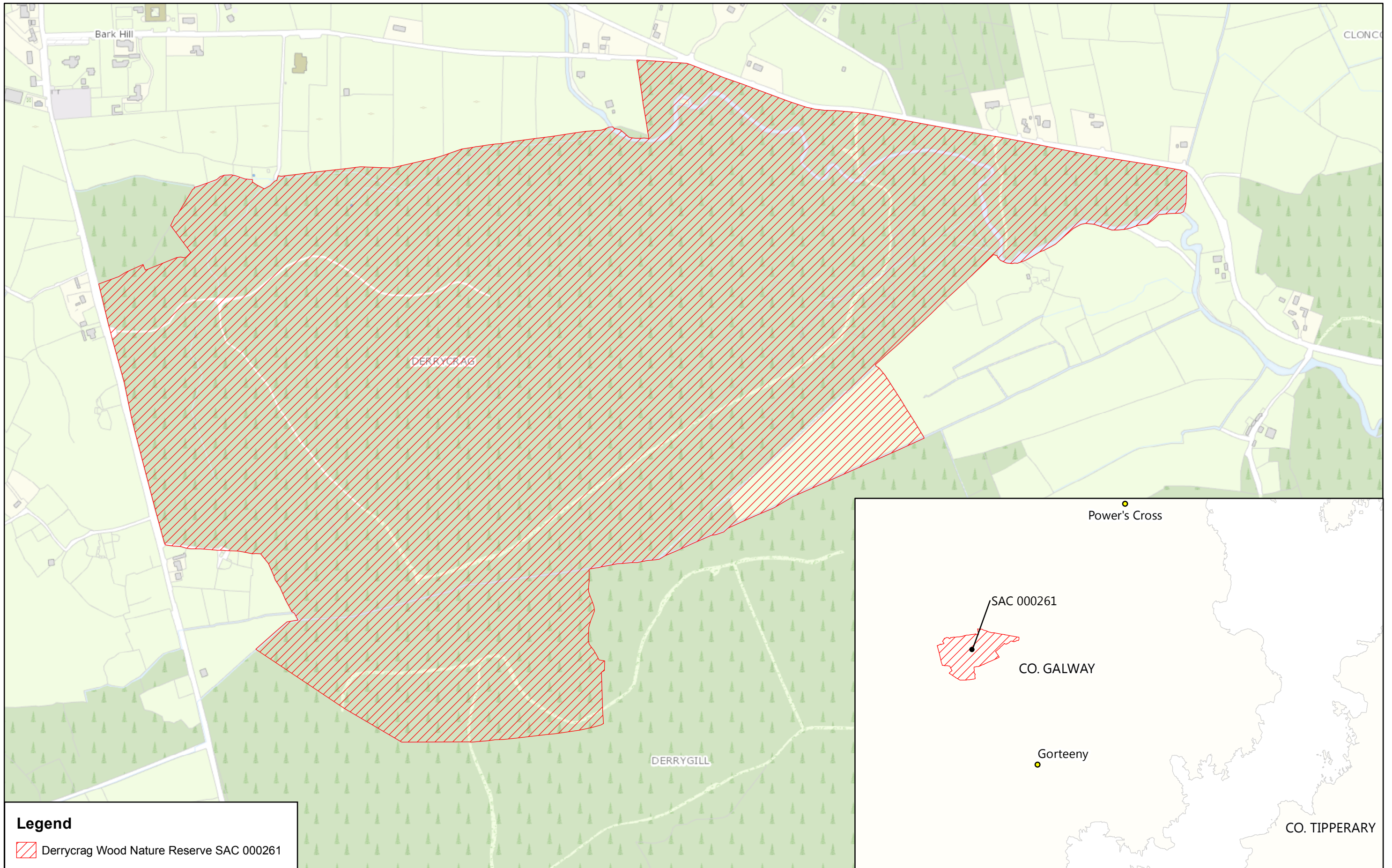
Used For : 91A0 (map 3)

91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles


To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles in Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve 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; at least 12.3ha for the sub-site (Derrycrag Wood) surveyed. See map 3 for surveyed areas	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles occurs in Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC where fragments of mature woodland remain among conifer plantations, which are being cleared. Until large-scale commercial forestry operations began in the 1930s and 1940s, Derrycrag Wood was part of one of the most extensive oak woodlands in Ireland, along with the woodlands of Pollnacknockaun (SAC 000319) and Rosturra (SAC 001313). The majority of the SAC is designated as a Nature Reserve. As part of the National Survey of Native Woodlands (NSNW), the sub-site Derrycrag Wood (NSNW site code 1608) was surveyed by Perrin et al. (2008). The minimum area of old oak woodland in the SAC is estimated to be 12.3ha. Map 3 shows the surveyed woodland classified as 91A0 (12.3ha) in the SAC. NB further unsurveyed areas may be present within the SAC
Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes. Surveyed woodland locations are shown on map 3	Distribution based on Perrin et al. (2008). NB further unsurveyed areas may be present within the SAC
Woodland size	Hectares	Area stable or increasing. Where topographically possible, "large" woods at least 25ha in size and "small" woods at least 3ha in size	The target areas for individual woodlands aim to reduce habitat fragmentation and benefit those species requiring 'deep' woodland conditions (Peterken, 2002). In some cases, topographical constraints may restrict expansion
Woodland structure: cover and height	Percentage and metres	Diverse structure with a relatively closed canopy containing mature trees; subcanopy layer with semi-mature trees and shrubs; and well-developed herb layer	Described in Perrin et al. (2008) and NPWS internal files
Woodland structure: community diversity and extent	Hectares	Maintain diversity and extent of community types	Described in Perrin et al. (2008) and NPWS internal files
Woodland structure: natural regeneration	Seedling:sapling:pole ratio	Seedlings, saplings and pole age-classes occur in adequate proportions to ensure survival of woodland canopy	Sessile oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) generally regenerates poorly. In suitable sites, ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) can regenerate in large numbers although few seedlings reach pole size. In this SAC, management of the wood includes gradual removal of exotic conifers, and thinning of Scots pine (<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>) stands, to allow the oak woodland to regenerate naturally in clearfelled areas (Perrin et al., 2008; Cross and Collins, 2017; NPWS internal files)
Woodland structure: dead wood	m ³ per hectare; number per hectare	At least 30m ³ /ha of fallen timber greater than 10cm diameter; 30 snags/ha; both categories should include stems greater than 40cm diameter	Dead wood is a valuable resource and an integral part of a healthy, functioning woodland ecosystem
Woodland structure: veteran trees	Number per hectare	No decline	Mature and veteran trees are important habitats for bryophytes, lichens, saproxylic organisms and some bird species. Their retention is important to ensure continuity of habitats/niches and propagule sources

Woodland structure: indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	No decline	Includes ancient or long-established woodlands (Perrin and Daly, 2010), archaeological and geological features as well as red data and other rare or localised species. Derrycrag Wood (NSNW site code 1608) is listed as possible ancient woodland by Perrin and Daly (2010)
Vegetation composition: native tree cover	Percentage	No decline. Native tree cover not less than 95%	Species reported in Perrin et al. (2008) and NPWS internal files
Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	A variety of typical native species present, depending on woodland type, including sessile oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) and birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>)	Species reported in Perrin et al. (2008) and NPWS internal files
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Occurrence	Negative indicator species, particularly non-native invasive species, absent or under control	The following are the most common non-native invasive species in this woodland type: beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>), sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) and rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>). Beech occurs in the oak woodland in this SAC (Perrin et al., 2008; NPWS internal files). Regeneration of Sitka spruce (<i>Picea sitchensis</i>) occurs in some clearfelled areas (Perrin et al., 2008)



Legend

 Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC 000261

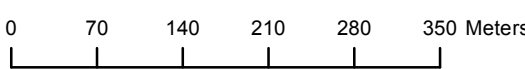
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MAP 1:
DERRYCRAG WOOD NATURE RESERVE SAC
CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES
SAC DESIGNATION

Map to be read in conjunction with the NPWS Conservation Objectives Document.

SITE CODE:
SAC 000261; version 3. CO. GALWAY

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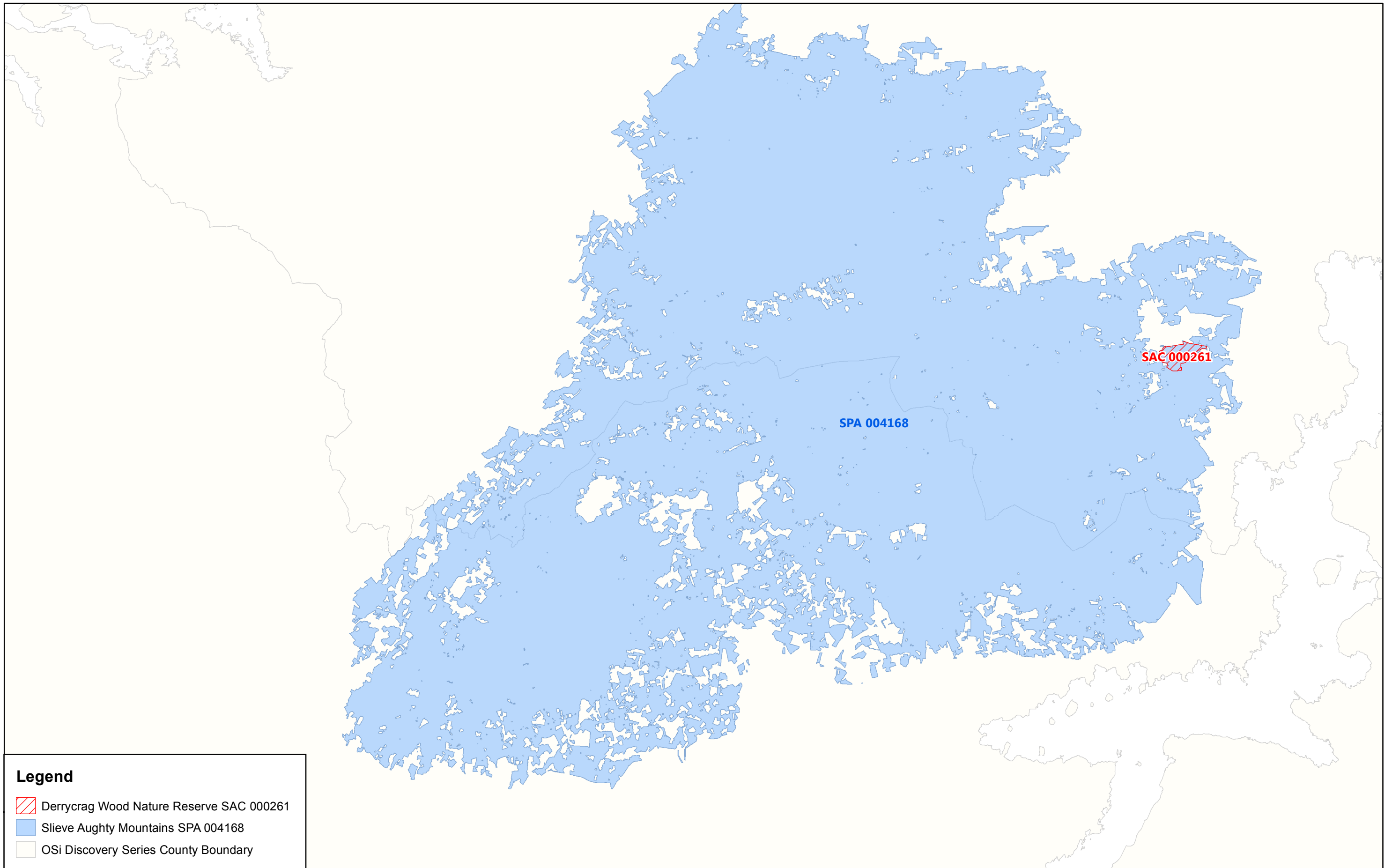


The mapped boundaries are of an indicative and general nature only. Boundaries of designated areas are subject to revision.
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

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Map Version 1
Date: Aug 2017



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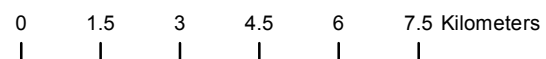
-  Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC 000261
-  Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA 004168
-  OSi Discovery Series County Boundary



**MAP 2:
DERRYCRAG WOOD NATURE RESERVE SAC
CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES
OVERLAPPING DESIGNATIONS**

Map to be read in conjunction with the NPWS Conservation Objectives Document.

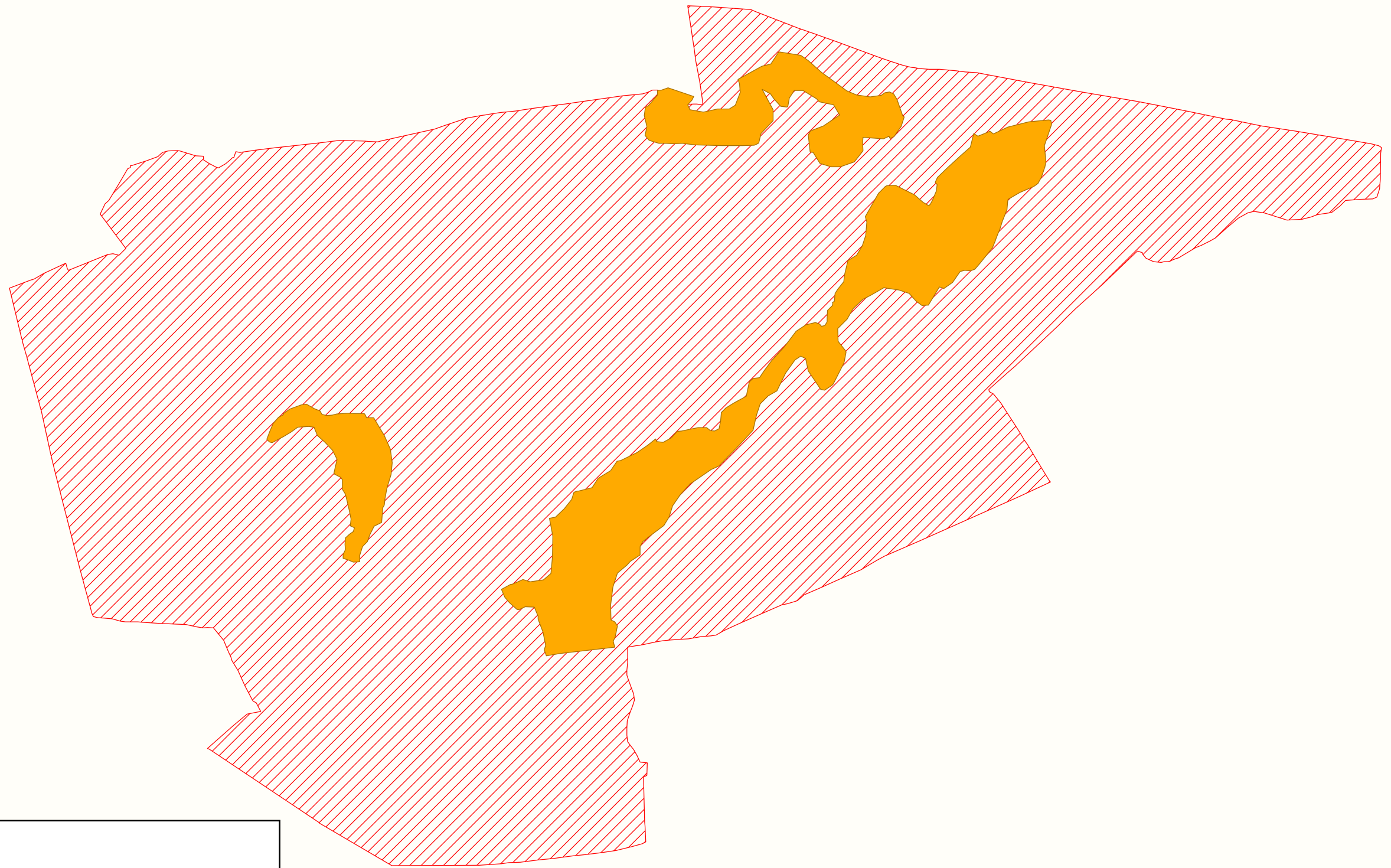
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Legend

- 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
- Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC 000261
- OSi Discovery Series County Boundary

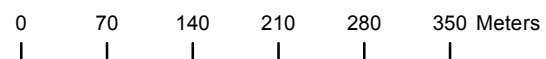


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**MAP 3:
DERRYCRAG WOOD NATURE RESERVE SAC
CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES
WOODLAND HABITATS**

Map to be read in conjunction with the NPWS Conservation Objectives Document.

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**Map Version 1
Date: Aug 2017**