



## Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

**CP0644: Bracklone 110kV station (Fibre Wrap of Portlaoise-Newbridge 110kV Overhead line only) [Exempted Development Ref: EXDEV-22/015] County Kildare and Laois**

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended ('The Regulations'), EirGrid has undertaken Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of relevant European sites, if the CP0644: Bracklone 110kV station (Fibre Wrap of Portlaoise-Newbridge 110kV Overhead line only) ('the development') individually or in combination with other plans or projects would be likely to have a significant effect (s) on a European site(s).

The development comprises

- wrapping telecommunication fibre cable on the conductor of the existing Portlaoise-Newbridge 110 kV Line
- the replacement of 37 no. existing wooden polesets to facilitate the telecommunication fibre cable [specifically Structures 15, 18, 22, 24, 27, 33, 41, 49, 65, 67, 110, 117A, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 128, 130, 133, 141, 145, 148, 151, 152, 155, 156, 168, 169, 171, 172, 180, 185, 188, 193, 205, 207]

### Analysis of Pathways to European sites

There are no works within or adjacent European sites. The River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC; site code 21621) is 0.3 km from the proposed works at its nearest point. The Pollardstown Fen Special Area of Conservation Interest (SAC; site code 3962) is c. 0.8 km from the development at its nearest point.

There are no watercourses or drainage ditches within any of the work sites, with hydrological connectivity to European sites. All works are outside the 'Medium Risk' (or 1 in one hundred year)<sup>3</sup> flood plain of the River Barrow .

None of the works are within the catchment of any Qualifying Interest (QI) Freshwater Pearl Mussels *Margaritifera margaritifera*.

None of the works require instream works.

There are no other European sites nearby, or potentially connected to the development via a source-pathway-receptor linkage.

The AA Screening assessment has reviewed the nature and scale of the works against hydrological connectivity and excluded the risk of downstream surface water impacts to any European sites. The risk of ex-situ impacts to the Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests roosting, foraging, or nesting away from European sites has also been excluded, following analysis of known and potential habitats for mobile bird and other animal populations.

### AA Screening Statement

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<sup>1</sup> NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: River Barrow and River Nore SAC 002162. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

<sup>2</sup> NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Pollardstown Fen SAC 000396. Version

1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

<sup>3</sup> 1% Annual Exceedance Probability Fluvial Flood event.

In accordance with Regulation 42(7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 SI 477 as amended, EirGrid has made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment is not required as the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is not likely to have a significant effect on any European sites. The risk of likely significant effects on European sites can be excluded on the basis of objective evidence.

This determination is based on the location, scale, extent and duration of the development, including temporary works, and has not taken account of measures intended to avoid or reduce significant effects on European sites.

Signed:



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31 March 2023