



## Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1004 Killonan-Limerick No.1 110kV Refurbishment Project [Exempted Development] County Limerick

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 CP1004 Killonan-Limerick No.1 110kV Refurbishment Project [Exempted Development] ('the Development') individually or in-combination with other plans or projects will result in likely significant effects on a European site(s).

As a worst-case scenario, the works for the Development will be similar to Uprate projects undertaken by EirGrid elsewhere. A summary of the works that may be required is as follows:

- the replacement ('restringing') of the existing Overhead Line (OHL) circuit conductor wires with new conductor wires including a fibre telecommunications cable;
- the replacement of existing polesets, angle masts and their associated hardware and all associated site development works, including foundation and shear block upgrades - any replacement structures will be constructed at, or immediately adjacent to the existing structures they will replace, will be along the same alignment as existing, and will be of a generally similar height and appearance;
- all associated works within the existing associated substations to facilitate the refurbished circuit including repairing, renewing, altering and/or removing existing apparatus; and,
- all associated temporary site development works to gain access to and work at the existing structures including clearance of vegetation, disassembly and reassembly of gate posts/piers and removal and reinstatement of existing fencing.

### Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

At approximately 2.1km distance, the closest European site to the Development is the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA, site code 004077<sup>1</sup>), which is designated for a range of mobile Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species that routinely forage in functionally-linked habitats beyond the site boundary. SCI species that are most strongly linked to off-site foraging in grassland and arable fields include whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus*, light-bellied Brent goose *Branta bernicla hrota*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* and lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*. While the Development lies within the core foraging range of these species, likely significant effects regarding noise and visual disturbance in functionally-linked habitats can be excluded. This is due to other suitable grassland / arable fields being available closer to the SPA, as well as the minor scale and temporary nature of the Development. Because habitats would be restored to their former state following completion of the works, there is no potential for the direct loss of functionally-linked habitats.

The Development lies approximately 2.3km from the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC, site code 002165<sup>2</sup>), which is designated for a range of Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats and species such as freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*, sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*, brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*, river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*,

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<sup>1</sup> NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA 004077. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<sup>2</sup> NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Shannon SAC 002165. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*, common bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*, and otter *Lutra lutra*. All QI features are sensitive to a deterioration in water quality, such as that potentially arising from construction and refurbishment works. The Development is traversed by the Ballynaclogh River and hydrologically connected to the Groody River (via engineered drains / ditches), which flow into the SAC approximately 3.3km and 4.9km downstream from the Development respectively. Despite the presence of hydrological connectivity, the minor scale of the Development and relatively long flowpath distance (which will allow sufficient attenuation and dilution) mean that likely significant effects in relation to water quality can be excluded. It is also noted that **significantly**, the Development does not traverse any catchment identified as supporting SAC freshwater pearl mussel populations.

There are no other European sites nearby, or potentially connected to the Development via a source-pathway-receptor link that may result in likely significant effects in view of the applicable site Conservation Objectives.

#### AA Screening Statement

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 the temporary nature of works, and has not taken account of mitigation measures intended to avoid or reduce significant effects on European sites.

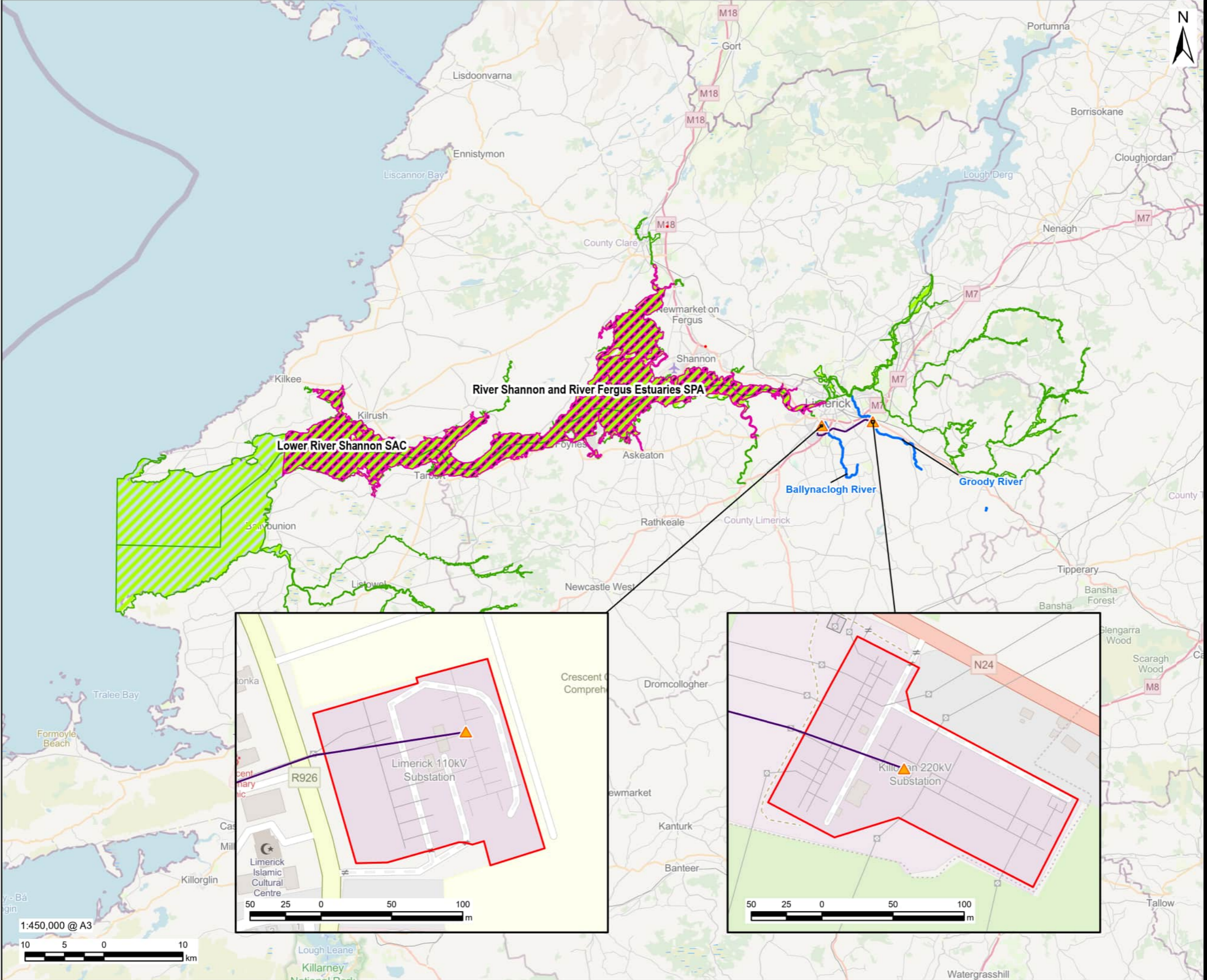
Signed:



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Robert Fennelly CEcol MCIEEM Lead Senior Ecologist

09 September 2024



**LEGEND**

- 110kV Station
- Station Boundary
- 110kV Conductor Lines
- Watercourses
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

**NOTES**  
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**ISSUE PURPOSE**  
FINAL  
**PROJECT NUMBER**  
60709780  
**FIGURE TITLE**  
European sites within the Zone of Influence of the Development

**FIGURE NUMBER**  
Figure 1