



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

Site Investigation Works for CP1021 East Meath to North Dublin Underground Cable Project [Exempted Development] Counties Meath and Dublin

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 Site Investigation Works for CP1021 East Meath to North Dublin Underground Cable Project ('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

- 33 Cable Percussion boreholes (BH),
- 28 Cable Percussive with Rotary Follow-on (BH*),
- 17 no. Window Samples (WS) (of which 5 no. are in roads, road verges, or other built surfaces)
- 225 no. Slit Trenches (IP, of which 139 are in roads, road verges, or other built surfaces)
- Groundwater monitoring will be undertaken at approx. 45 no. borehole locations

Analysis of Pathways to European sites

There are no European sites within, adjoining or within 3.5 km of the development. The nearest European sites to the development are the coincident boundaries of the Malahide Estuary Special Protection Area (site code 4025)¹ and Malahide Estuary Special Area of Conservation (site code 205)².

All Site Investigation locations are at least 10m away from watercourses and the hydrological distance along the watercourses to downstream European sites in Dublin Bay was found to be least 5.8km and at most 23.3km. None of the works are within the catchment of any Qualifying Interest (QI) Freshwater Pearl Mussels *Margaritifera margaritifera*, Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*, or Lamprey species. 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

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.

¹ NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SPA 004025. Version

1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

² NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SAC 000205. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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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