



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1104 Poulaphouca 110kV Station Refurbishment - [Exempted Development] County Kildare

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 CP1104 Poulaphouca Station Refurbishment [Exempted Development] ('the Development') individually or in-combination with other plans or projects will result in likely significant effects on a European site(s).

The Development comprises the installation of a single busbar, as well as upgrading of the compound and moving the northern boundary fencing by 2m for a distance of 38m. All works are to be carried out entirely within the substation boundary.

Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

The nearest European site to the Poulaphouca 110kV Station is the Poulaphouca Reservoir Special Protection Area (SPA)¹ approximately 430m to the east of the substation boundary. Owing to the Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the site, its primary sensitivities relate to loss of functionally linked habitat, noise and visual disturbance, and water quality.

The Development lies well within the maximum foraging distance of 15-20km reported for greylag goose *Anser anser*². Notwithstanding this, all refurbishment works will be carried out within the existing station boundary comprising hardstanding and electrical installations. The fencing will extend by 2m only and does not comprise of habitats that are suitable for foraging / loafing SCI greylag goose. Lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*, the other SCI species, are habitat generalists for which loss of functionally linked habitat is not a primary concern.

At 430m distance, the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA lies beyond a precautionary impact buffer zone for visual and noise disturbance.

The River Liffey, which feeds into the reservoir, runs approximately 83m from the station boundary and lies within the hydrological Zone of Influence of the Development. However, any potential negative impacts on the water quality in the SPA and, by extension, knock-on effects on the SCI bird populations are excluded based on the limited scale and duration of the works.

Other than the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, 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.

¹ NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA [004063]. First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives Version 1.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

² Scottish Natural Heritage (June 2016) Assessing connectivity with Special protection Areas (SPAs) Guidance. 4pp.

Signed:



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