



## **Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination CP1128 Knockraha 220kV Substation Works [Exempted Development] County Cork**

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, whether CP1128 Knockraha 220kV Substation Works [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 construction of a new H1 cable bay and its associated requirements. All works will occur within the boundary of the existing substation.

### **Analysis of Pathways to European sites**

According to published research<sup>1</sup>, the maximum distance to which non-breeding bird species for which Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated will typically travel to forage is 20km from the boundary of such a site. The only SPA designated for mobile Special Conservation Interest (SCI) non-breeding bird species located within 20km of the Development is Cork Harbour SPA [004030]<sup>2</sup>, which is located approximately 4. km from the Development.

Cork Harbour SPA comprises a large, sheltered bay system, encompassing several estuaries and inlets, as well as the intertidal area. It is designated for an assemblage of waterbirds that are closely associated with the intertidal and coastal habitats of the SPA, which are absent from the area adjacent to the Development. There is very limited potential for the SCI birds of Cork Harbour SPA to occur in the vicinity of the Development. Moreover, given that all works will occur within the existing substation boundary, the level of disturbance which could be caused is minor. Considering the low likelihood of birds being present and the fact that disturbance would be unlikely to occur due to the location and nature of the works, likely significant effects from disturbance of SCI species of Cork Harbour SPA using functionally-linked habitat are therefore excluded.

The nearest SAC is the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation (SAC) [001058]<sup>3</sup>, which is located approximately 4.7 km from the Development. It is designated for mudflats and salt meadow habitats. When considering the nature of the works and that all works associated with the Development will occur within the boundary of the existing substation, there is no pathway to the SAC or any other European site. Therefore, likely significant effects are excluded.

There are no direct hydrological connections between the Development and any European sites, nor are there any other European sites nearby which are connected to the Development that may result in likely significant effects in view of the 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

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<sup>1</sup> SNH (2016). Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Version 3 – June 2016.

<sup>2</sup> NPWS (2014). Conservation Objectives: Cork Harbour Special Protection Area. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<sup>3</sup> NPWS (2014). Conservation Objectives: Great Island Channel SAC. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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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24 June 2025