



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1246 Coomnaclohy Station - 110kV [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, if the CP1246 Coomnaclohy 110kV Station [Exempted Development] ('the Development') individually or in-combination with other plans or projects will result in Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) on a European site(s).

The Development comprises remote end works at Ballyvouskill 220kV substation, comprising the provision / replacement of various transformer elements and a cable sealing end. All works are to be carried out entirely within the boundary of the energised substation.

Analysis of Pathways to European sites

The nearest European site to the Ballyvouskill 220kV Substation is the Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains Special Protection Area (SPA)¹, designated for hen harrier, which lies approximately 245m to the south-east of the substation boundary. In the context of the Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species, the main impact pathways associated with the proposed works are noise / visual disturbance.

While Ballyvouskill Substation lies within the maximum off-site foraging distance for hen harrier, all works will be carried out within the existing substation boundary and there is no potential for loss of functionally linked habitat. Given the limited anticipated scale and duration of the works (and particularly that no noisy construction techniques such as piling will be needed), it is considered that there is no potential for noise and visual disturbance to hen harrier, both within the SPA boundary and in functionally linked habitat.

The Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment Special Area of Conservation (SAC)² is designated for a wide range of Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats and species, all of which are sensitive to negative changes in water quality and hydrological flows. Ballyvouskill Substation lies approximately 30m from the closest watercourse, which connects to the Finnow (Blackwater) river catchment downstream from the SAC. Therefore, there is no potential for the Development to result in water quality / flow changes within the SAC boundary. Several QI species (lamprey, Atlantic salmon, otter) may utilise the watercourse that lies close to the substation and which could be functionally linked. However, the scope and duration of the proposed works (i.e. primarily replacement of electrical equipment) means that the Development is unlikely to generate material impacts on the aquatic environment.

The Mullaghanish Bog SAC³, designated for blanket bog, lies approximately 4.4km from the Ballyvouskill Substation. However, the waterbody that lies closest to the Development is not in hydrological continuity with the SAC.

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

¹ NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA 004162. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

² NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC 000365. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

³ NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Mullaghanish Bog SAC 001890. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

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 LSEs 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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