



## Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

### CP1301 Dundalk-Louth 110kV Uprate Overhead Line Project [Exempted Development] Counties Louth and Monaghan

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 CP1301 Dundalk-Louth 110kV Uprate 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).

The development comprises:

- replacement of strain towers at six locations;
- replacement of 27 suspension towers with wooden polesets;
- replace polesets at 28 locations, retain polesets at eighteen locations;
- replace poleset crossarms at 21 locations, retain poleset crossarms at 25 locations;
- tower foundation strengthening at EM 1 and AM 18;
- tower foundation shear block remedial work at EM 1 and AM 18;
- replacement of existing 200mm<sup>2</sup> ACSR "Wolf" conductor with 430mm<sup>2</sup> ACSR "Bison" conductor;
- installation of fibre-wrap or Optical Phase Conductor (OPPC) on one phase;
- retention of towers at two existing locations, with bar member replacements at both locations;
- steelwork member replacements totalling approximately 300kg at two locations;
- tower painting recommended at EM 1 and AM 18, existing towers due for retention;
- fit new Anti-Climbing Guards (ACG) at EM 1;
- replace vibration dampers at all locations;
- replace suspension clamps at all locations;
- new duplicate insulators are required at EM 1;
- replace J bolts at EM 1;
- replace Sediver insulators at IMP 9 and IMP 78; and,
- new line identification labels and danger notices are to be installed at all locations.

#### Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

The closest European site to the Development is the Dundalk Bay Special Protection Area (SPA; site code 004026<sup>1</sup>) approximately 1.3km to the north-east of Dundalk 110kV Station. The SPA is designated for a variety of waterfowl and wader Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species, which are sensitive to direct noise / visual disturbance impacts (where utilising functionally-linked habitats in proximity to the Development), direct loss of functionally-linked habitats and water quality impacts arising from the Development. While there are potentially suitable foraging fields along the Development, any direct disturbance impacts to SCI birds will be negligible based on the limited scale, sequential nature and temporary duration of the works. For the same reasons, and with any impacted fields being restored to their former condition following completion of the works, it is considered that there will be no likely significant loss of functionally-linked habitat.

A section of the Development, between Dundalk 110kV Station and structure 4, lies in relatively close proximity to the Castletown River (approximately 88m at its closest), which feeds into the SPA 1.7km downstream from the Development. However, given the minor nature of the proposed

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<sup>1</sup> NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives; Dundalk Bay SAC 000455 and Dundalk Bay SPA 004026. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

works and attenuation / dilution processes along the flowpath, any hydrological impacts on this and all other European sites would be insignificant. The Dundalk Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC; site code 000455<sup>2</sup>), at 3.3km distance also hydrologically connected to the Development via the Castletown River, will also be protected from water pollution through mixing and dilution dynamics in Castletown Estuary.

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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20 August 2024

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<sup>2</sup> NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives; Dundalk Bay SAC 000455 and Dundalk Bay SPA 004026. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.