



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1304 Transformer Works at Louth 220 kV Substation, Flagford 220 kV Substation, Thurles 110 kV Substation and Ballynahulla 220 kV Substation [Exempted Development] (County Louth, County Roscommon, County Tipperary and County Kerry)

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 CP1304 Transformer Works ('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 the building of bunds, and storing of transformers within those bunds.

Louth 220 kV Substation

The development is not located within or near any European site; the closest such site is the Stabannan-Braganstown Special Protection Area (SPA; site code 004091), located 11 km to the south-east of the station boundary¹. This determination has had regard for this SPA and any other relevant European sites.

The development is not located within the catchment of any freshwater pearl mussels *Margaritifera*, or other sensitive aquatic species which are the QIs of European sites. Impact pathways to other far-flying mobile QI / SCI species from distant European sites do not arise, due to the absence of supporting habitats for such species within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the development, or because the development is outside the range of QI populations of a given species (e.g. which is the case lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, and marsh fritillary *Euphydryas aurinia*).

Flagford 220 kV Substation

The development is not located within or near any European site; the closest such site is Cloonshanville Bog Special Area of Conservation (SAC; site code 000614), located 16.3 km to the west of the station boundary². This determination has had regard for this SAC and any other relevant European sites.

The development is not located within the catchment of any freshwater pearl mussels, or other sensitive aquatic species which are the QIs of European sites. Impact pathways to other far-flying mobile QI / SCI species from distant European sites do not arise, due to the absence of supporting habitats for such species within the ZoI of the development, or because the development is outside the range of QI populations of a given species (e.g. which is the case lesser horseshoe bat and marsh fritillary).

Thurles 110 kV Substation

The development is not located within or near any European site; the closest such site is Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137), located 6.1 km to the south-west of the station boundary³. This determination has had regard for this SAC and any other relevant European sites.

The development is not located within the catchment of any freshwater pearl mussels, or other sensitive aquatic species which are the QIs of European sites. Impact pathways to other far-flying mobile QI / SCI species from distant European sites do not arise, due to the absence of supporting habitats for such species within the ZoI of the development, or because the development is outside the range of QI populations of a given species (e.g. which is the case lesser horseshoe bat and marsh fritillary).

Ballynahulla 220 kV Substation

¹ NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Stabannan-Braganstown SPA 004091. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

² NPWS (2016) Conservation Objectives: Cloonshanville Bog SAC 000614. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

³ NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Suir SAC 002137. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The substation is 438 m from Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (site code 004164)⁴ and Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC (site code 000365)⁵. Although the substation is within a freshwater pearl mussel catchment and lesser horseshoe foraging zone, all works will be carried out within the existing substation boundary containing hardstanding and electrical installations, areas which are unsuitable for QI / SCI species. There are plentiful other habitats in the surrounding area which QI / SCI species could utilise. There are no waterbodies within or directly adjacent to the substation boundary, thus should a pollution event occur, there is no potential for impact to European sites as there is no pathway. The relatively minor nature of the works means that any noise disturbance of SCI bird species within the vicinity of the development will be immaterial.

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.

The risk of ex-situ impacts to the Qualifying Interests (QI) and Special Conservation Interests (SCI) 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.

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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⁴ NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA 004161. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

⁵ 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.