



## Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

### CP1315 Newbridge 110 kV Station Works Project [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 proposed CP1315 Newbridge 110 kV Station Works Project [Exempted Development] ('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). All works for the development will be within the station boundary and will comprise of an uprate to the bay conductor.

The development is not located within or near any European site; the closest such site is Pollardstown Fen Special Area of Conservation (SAC; site code 000396), located 400 m to the west of the station boundary<sup>1</sup>. This determination has had regard for these and any other relevant European sites.

Potential noise and visual disturbance impacts to Qualifying Interest (QI) species foraging, resting or ranging beyond the European site boundary are excluded with cognisance of the location and nature of the works involved. For example, the development does not comprise very noisy construction activities. Therefore, there is no potential for disturbance impacts to mobile QI species utilising functionally linked habitats. There is no hydrological link between the development and the SAC, thus no potential for waterborne pollution.

Mouds Bog SAC (site code 002331)<sup>2</sup> is 420m from Newbridge station. It is designated for its peatland habitats and as there is no ecological pathway from the development to this SAC, therefore no effect is possible.

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 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.

The development is not located within the catchment of any freshwater pearl mussels *Margaritifera*, or other sensitive aquatic species which are the QI 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 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*).

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:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the initials "RQ", is written above a horizontal line.

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<sup>1</sup> NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Pollardstown Fen SAC 000396. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<sup>2</sup> NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: Mouds Bog SAC 002331. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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29 July 2024