



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1352 Cashla 220kv Station Works [Exempted Development] County Roscommon

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 Cashla 220kV Station 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 involves a new bay and underground cabling entirely within the existing Cashla 220kv Station boundary.

Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

There are no waterbodies or drainage ditches within or surrounding the Station, thus there is no hydrological link between the Station and any European site. The Development does not require in-stream activities or works within or adjacent to wetlands (including sites monitored by Birdwatch Ireland, bogs, or woodlands).

The closest European site to the Development is Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000297)¹ which is approximately 3.8km to the north. There is no potential for likely significant effects to Lough Corrib SAC or any other SAC as there is no ecological pathway / hydrological link by which the Development could impact Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats / species.

The closest Special Protection Area (SPA) to the Development is Inner Galway Bay SPA (site code 004031)² which is approximately 6.4km to the west. Inner Galway Bay SPA is designated for a number of wintering wetland birds and breeding birds. Inner Galway Bay SPA is well beyond the distance at which noise and/or visual disturbance of Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species could occur when these species are present within the European site boundary. Moreover, the minor nature of the works means that any noise disturbance of SCI birds occurring outside of SPAs but in the vicinity of the Development will be immaterial. According to guidance published by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (now NatureScot)³, the maximum core foraging range of named SCI species is 20km, thus in theory the SCI species of Inner Galway Bay SPA could occur within the Development. The works associated with the Development are all within the Station boundary, rather than converting any greenfield site to development. Therefore, there will be no loss of potentially functionally-linked habitat for any SCI species of Inner Galway Bay SPA.

Cregganna Marsh SPA (site code 004142)⁴ is 6.9km to the south-west and is designated for Greenland white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*. According to SNH guidance (2016), the core foraging range of Greenland white-fronted goose is 5-8km, placing the Development within the wider area potentially used by this SCI species. In line with the pathways assessed in relation to the Inner Galway Bay SPA above, there is no potential for likely significant effects on the SCIs of Cregganna Marsh SPA.

There are no other European sites nearby that are potentially connected to the Development via a source-pathway-receptor link.

¹ NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Lough Corrib SAC 000297. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

² NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Inner Galway Bay SPA 004031. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

³ Scottish Natural Heritage. (2016). Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs). 4pp.

⁴ NPWS (2023) Conservation Objectives: Cregganna Marsh SPA 004142. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

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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