



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1378 Fibre-wrapping the Lisheen – Thurles 110kV OHL, Lisheen 110kV Station Works and Thurles 110kV Station Works [Exempted Development] County Tipperary

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 CP1378 Fibre-wrapping the Lisheen - Thurles 110kV Overhead Line (OHL), Lisheen 110kV Station Works and Thurles 110kV 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:

- Fibre-wrapping the Lisheen - Thurles 110kV OHL.
- Replacement of a section of existing station fence with new standard palisade fence at Lisheen 110kV Station.
- Lisheen 110kV Station Busbar uprate.
- Telecommunications equipment inside Lisheen 110kV Station Control Room.
- Associated station works within Thurles 110kV Station.

Analysis of Pathways to European sites

The closest European site to the Development is Lower River Suir Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 002137¹), located approximately 6.2km south-west ('as the crow flies') from the Thurles 110kV Station. The SAC is designated for the Qualifying Interests (QI) of otter *Lutra lutra*, a range of aquatic species including freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*, and a range of Annex I habitats. The Development lies within the Suir catchment, which has previous records of freshwater pearl mussel, but the current status of the species is unknown². The Drish_040, Drish_050 and Drish_060 watercourses³ and numerous unnamed drains (present on the Tailte Éireann PRIME2 Watercourse layer⁴) are crossed by the OHL at numerous points, and eventually drain into Lower River Suir SAC more than 9km downstream at its closest point. Fibre wrapping is a non-intrusive process, and whilst there is an unnamed drain adjacent to Lisheen 110kV Station, this extends north and provides no connectivity to other watercourses. There is therefore no potential for likely significant effects on Lower River Suir SAC or any other European site regarding water quality.

Given the minor and temporary works involved, there is no potential for likely significant effects related to visual and noise disturbance of mobile QIs of Lower River Suir SAC that may be present beyond the SAC boundary. There are no other potential sources of impact from the Development that could result in likely significant effects on Lower River Suir SAC.

The only Special Protection Area (SPA) located within 20km of the Development (the largest core foraging range for any Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species⁵) is River Nore SPA,

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

² NPWS (2020) *Margaritifera* Sensitive Areas Map [Online] Available at: <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/habitat-and-species-data> (Accessed 17 December 2025).

³ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maps website [Online] Available at: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> (Accessed 17 December 2025).

⁴ Tailte Éireann website [Online] Available at: <https://tailte.ie/> (Accessed 17 December 2025).

⁵ Scottish Natural Heritage (June 2016) Assessing connectivity with Special protection Areas (SPAs) Guidance. [Online] Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2022-12/Assessing%20connectivity%20with%20special%20protection%20areas.pdf> (Accessed 17 December 2025).

which is designated for the SCI species kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, and located approximately 16.7km north-east. There is no hydrological connectivity between the Development and River Nore SPA, which is in a different catchment, and there is therefore no potential for likely significant effects on River Nore SPA regarding water quality. Kingfisher have been estimated to have a home range of 2.5km⁶. Considering the distance between the Development and River Nore SPA, along with the minor and temporary works involved, there is no likelihood for significant effects related to visual and noise disturbance of kingfisher.

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 relevant European site's 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 temporary works, and has not taken account of measures intended to avoid or reduce significant effects on European sites.

Signed:



Susanne Dunne ACIEEM Senior Ecologist

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⁶ Musseau, R., Angelier, F., Bichet, C., Millet, M., Rousselle, C., Moreau, J., and Bustamante, P.C. (2023). Sensitivity of the European Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) to global change: evidence from home range features and contaminations by trace elements and organic pollutants, a case study in the marshes of Western Europe.