



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1414 Kilcumber 110kV Station Works [Exempted Development] County Offaly

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 Kilcumber 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:

- Installation and commissioning of the Clonreen Battery Phase 2 RTU Modification in the existing Kilcumber 110kV Single Bay Station; and
- Installation and commissioning of the Clonreen Battery Phase 2 Submetering in the existing Kilcumber 110kV Single Bay Station.

Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

There are no waterbodies / drainage ditches within the Station boundary itself. There is a drainage ditch approximately 45m to the east of the Station boundary. The drainage ditch is hydrologically-linked via the Figle River, approximately 19km downstream, to the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 002162)¹.

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 Development is not within a freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* catchment for which the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is designated. However, given that all works will be restricted to the hard surface of the existing Station, and the separation distance of 45m to the drainage ditch, there is no potential for any pollution generated by the Development to reach the drainage ditch, the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, or other watercourses which could support freshwater pearl mussel.

The closest Special Protection Area (SPA) to the Development is River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (site code 004232)² which is approximately 20.2km from the Development. This is beyond the maximum core foraging range of Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species quoted in guidance published by Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot)³, which is stated as being up to 20km for certain geese species. It can therefore be excluded that SCI species belonging to River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA would occur in the vicinity of the Development.

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

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

¹ NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: River Barrow and River Nore SAC 002162. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

² NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA [004232]. First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives Version 1.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

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

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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