



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1424 Tarbert 220kV Station Works [Exempted Development] (Co. 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 CP1424 Tarbert 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 comprises the replacement of existing disconnects, circuit breaker and voltage transformer within the site boundary of the air-insulated Tarbert 220kV Station.

Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

The Development adjoins two European sites: the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC, site code 002165)¹, and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA, site code 004077)². The SAC is designated for a range of Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats and species, such as freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*, sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*, brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*, river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*, salmon *Salmo salar*, common bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* and otter *Lutra lutra*. The SPA is designated for various Special Conservation Interest (SCI) waders and waterbirds. Both the SAC and SPA support QIs and SCIs that are directly or indirectly dependent on adequate water quality. Despite the ecological sensitivity and proximity of these European sites, the Development is temporary and limited to minor infrastructure replacements within the developed Station boundary.

Some SCI species in the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA and Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (site code 004161)³, such as whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus*, light-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla hrota*, wigeon *Anas Penelope*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, redshank *Tringa totanus* and hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, are known to rely on functionally linked habitats outside the designated site boundary. However, the Development comprises works within the Tarbert 220kV Station and thus directly impacting hardstanding only. There will be no disturbance impacts to SCI birds within the SPA boundary or functionally linked habitats (e.g. scrub/grassland) to the south-west of the Station, because birds in the estuary will be habituated to the noise and human activity within the existing station, which is also separated and screened from the adjacent estuary by existing fencing, and a strip of rank grassland/scrub unsuited to roosting or feeding wetland birds.

There are no other European sites nearby, or potentially connected to the substation via a source-pathway-receptor link that may result in likely significant effects in view of the applicable site Conservation Objectives.

¹ NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Shannon SAC 002165. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

² NPWS (2012). Conservation Objectives: River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA 004077. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

³ 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.

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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