



## **Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination CP1426 Oldstreet-Woodland 400kV Fibre-wrapping, and Oldstreet Station and Woodland Station Works [Exempted Development] County Galway, County Meath, County Offaly and 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, whether CP1462 Oldstreet-Woodland 400kV Fibre-wrapping, and Oldstreet Station and Woodland 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 will comprise the following:

- Fibre-wrapping the existing Oldstreet-Woodland 400kV Overhead Line (OHL).
- Remote end works within Oldstreet Station and Woodland Station.

Structures 25, 26, 27, 28, 51, 52, 53, 57, 58, and 59 will be accessed on foot and the polesets climbed, and the fibre-wrapping at these structures will be undertaken from 1st April to 17th April, or from 17th August to 31st August, inclusive.

All works for the Development will be carried out above ground on existing structures. The Development will not require intrusive works. Works within the substations will be carried out entirely within the boundary of the existing energised substations.

### **Analysis of Pathways to European sites**

Based on the Development's project description, the following possible impacts are considered potentially relevant to the Development:

- Disturbance of qualifying species (e.g. visual, noise, vibration or artificial light). According to published research<sup>1</sup>, the maximum distance to which non-breeding bird species for which SPAs are designated may theoretically travel to forage is 20km from the boundary of such a site (though in reality, most species foraging distances are significantly lower than this). Cutts *et al.* (2013)<sup>2</sup> provides species-specific information on the sensitivity of several bird species which are qualifying features of SPAs to disturbance impacts from construction works.

The OHL oversails four European sites, comprising:

- Middle Shannon Callows Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004096<sup>3</sup>), oversailing between polesets 25-28. Designated for a variety of wintering and wetland bird species, including the long-ranging species whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus*, and wetlands.
- River Little Brosna Callows SPA (site code 004086<sup>4</sup>), oversailing between polesets 51-53 and 57-59. Designated for a variety of wintering and wetland bird species, including the

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Natural Heritage (2016). Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Version 3 – June 2016 (online). Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/assessing-connectivity-special-protection-areas> (Accessed 19 January 2026).

<sup>2</sup> Cutts, N., Hemingway, K and Spencer, J. (2013). Waterbird Disturbance Mitigation Toolkit: Informing Estuarine Planning & Construction Projects. Produced by the Institute of Estuarine & Coastal Studies (IECS) University of Hull. (online). Available at: [https://www.tide-toolbox.eu/tidetools/waterbird\\_disturbance\\_mitigation\\_toolkit/](https://www.tide-toolbox.eu/tidetools/waterbird_disturbance_mitigation_toolkit/) (Accessed 27 January 2026).

<sup>3</sup> NPWS (2022). Conservation Objectives: Middle Shannon Callows SPA 004096. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

<sup>4</sup> NPWS (2025). Conservation Objectives: River Little Brosna Callows SPA 004086. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

long-ranging species whooper swan and Greenland white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*.

- Ridge Road, SW of Rapemills Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000919<sup>5</sup>), oversailing between polesets 62-63. Designated for the Annex I habitat semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia).
- River Shannon Callows SAC (site code 000216<sup>6</sup>), oversailing between polesets 25-28. Designated for a variety of Annex I habitats and otter *Lutra lutra*.

The Development will require no removal of existing structures, foundation strengthening, or any type of intrusive works. There will therefore be no loss of Qualifying Interest (QI) habitat from within the boundary of River Shannon Callows SAC or changes to groundwater flow or volume. Fibre wrapping is a non-intrusive process, and there is no potential for any impacts or indeed likely significant effects to any European site regarding water quality. River Shannon Callows SAC is designated for the mobile QI otter, which may also occur in watercourses outside the bounds of the SAC. However, in the event where mobile QIs are present, the minor and temporary nature of the works mean that there is no potential for likely significant effects relating to visual and noise disturbance.

For the same reasons as outlined in relation to River Shannon Callows SAC, there is no likelihood of significant effects to Ridge Road, SW of Rapemills SAC, River Shannon Callows SPA, or River Little Brosna Callows SPA.

Fibre-wrapping of polesets 25-28, 51-53 and 57-59 will occur in either April or August. There is therefore no possibility of disturbance to any wintering Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) within the bounds of Middle Shannon Callows SPA. SCI birds may occur outside their European site boundaries, including the long-ranging species whooper swan, which has a core foraging range of <5km<sup>1</sup>. Disturbance to other SCI species may also occur at distance up to 500m<sup>2</sup>. Due to the minor and temporary nature of the works, there will be no likely significant noise and visual disturbance of SCI birds that may use functionally linked habitat (e.g. arable fields) along the OHL route.

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.

Signed:



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Susanne Dunne ACIEEM Senior Ecologist

10 February 2026

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Cork Harbour SPA 004030. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<sup>5</sup> NPWS (2018). Conservation Objectives: Ridge Road SW, of Rapemills SAC 000919. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<sup>6</sup> NPWS (2022). Conservation Objectives: River Shannon Callows SAC 000216. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.