



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1436(b) Ardnacrusha-Drumline 110kv OHL Dynamic Line Rating Device [Exempted Development] County Clare

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 Ardnacrusha-Drumline 110kV OHL Dynamic Line Rating Device [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 the installation of small-sized dynamic line rating devices (DLRs) on existing overhead line (OHL) spans between the Ardnacrusha and Drumline 110kV Stations.

Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

There are no installations within European sites. There are no waterbodies within the Ardnacrusha 110kV or Drumline 110kV stations, however the OHL passes over many waterbodies that are hydrologically linked with 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. Ardnacrusha Station lies approximately 1.5km from the Lower River Shannon SAC and Drumline Station is situated approximately 2.5km from the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA at their closest. The Development does not require in-stream activities or works within or adjacent to wetlands (including sites monitored by Birdwatch Ireland, bogs, or woodlands). None of the works are within the catchment of any Qualifying Interest (QI) freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*, Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*, or lamprey species.

Potential noise and visual disturbance impacts on QI otter *Lutra lutra* from the SAC were also considered. Due to their extensive home ranges, otter frequently utilise resting places and holts along watercourses beyond the designated site boundary, including those traversed by the Development. However, otter are also very tolerant of anthropogenic disturbance and construction works for the Development will not involve any piling activities (works with greatest at-source sound pressure levels). Furthermore, otter are primarily nocturnal mammals, and no night-time works will be undertaken for the Development.

The scope of the works includes the installation of small-sized devices on the OHL using a Mobile Elevated Working Platform. Therefore, there will be no loss of functionally-linked habitat for any Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species in the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. At a distance of more than 2.5km, the SPA lies beyond the impact zone for visual and noise disturbance, and there is no direct disturbance potential for SCIs within the designated site boundary. Moreover, the minor nature of the works means that any noise disturbance of SCI birds occurring outside of the SPA but in the vicinity of the Development will be immaterial.

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

AA Screening Statement

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.

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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22 September 2023