



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1466 Meath Hill Station Works and fibre-wrapping of Louth – Meath Hill 110kV Overhead Line [Exempted Development] (Counties Meath and Louth)

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 proposed CP1466 Meath Hill Busbar and fibre-wrapping of the Louth – Meath Hill 110kV overhead line (OHL) Project [Exempted Development] ('the development') individually or in combination with other plans or projects would be likely to have a significant effect (s) on a European site(s). Works for the development will comprise:

- Uprate the Meath Hill 110 kV busbar;
- Upgrade the palisade fence in Meath Hill 110kV station; and,
- Fibre wrap the Louth – Meath Hill 110kV OHL.

The development is not located within or near any European site; the closest such site is Stabannan-Braganstown Special Protection Area (SPA; site code 004091), located 11.8 km to the east of the OHL¹. This determination has had regard for these and any other relevant European sites.

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.

The risk of ex-situ impacts to the Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests roosting, foraging, or nesting away from European sites has also been excluded, following analysis of known and potential habitats for mobile bird and other animal populations.

The development is not located within the catchment of any freshwater pearl mussels *Margaritifera*, or other sensitive aquatic species which are the Qualifying Interests of European sites. Impact pathways to other far-flying mobile QI/SCI species from distant European sites do not arise, due to the absence of supporting habitats for such species within the Zone of Influence of the development, or because the development is outside the range of QI populations of a given species (e.g. which is the case lesser horseshoe bat, *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, and marsh fritillary *Euphydryas aurinia*).

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:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "RF", positioned above a horizontal line.

Robert Fennelly CEcol MCIEEM Lead Senior Ecologist

1 October 2024

¹ NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Stabannan-Braganstown SPA 004091. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.