



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1518 Lodgewood 220kV Station and Arklow 220kV Station Works and Fibre Linking Works [Exempted Development] County Wexford & County Wicklow

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 CP1518 Lodgewood 220kV Station and Arklow 220kV Station Works and Fibre Linking 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:

- Remote end station works at Lodgewood Station, including a protection upgrade on the Glenart (current Arklow) 220kV bay. This will include new protection relays and possible replacement of High Voltage (HV) equipment.
- Remote end station works at Arklow Station, including a protection upgrade on the Glenart (current Lodgewood) 220kV bay. This will include new protection relays and possible replacement of HV equipment.
- Installation of 2.6km fibre link along the Arklow - Glenart 220kV circuit by means of wrapped fibre on the earthwire.
- Installation of 2.6km fibre link along the Arklow - Shelton Abbey 110kV circuit and extended into Glenart by means of wrapped/buried fibre.
- Installation of a fibre link via an existing fibre duct that connects Arklow 220kV Station to an existing DSO station. A duct from Glenart to the existing fibre link will be required.

Analysis of Pathways to European sites: Lodgewood 220 kV Station

The closest European site to this element of the Development is Slaney River Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000781¹), which is located approximately 1.7km southeast ('as the crow flies'). The Qualifying Interests (QIs) of the SAC comprise a range of the Annex I habitats, a range of fish species, freshwater pearl muscle *Margaritifera margaritifera*, otter *Lutra lutra* and harbour seal *Phoca vitulina*. The Development is present within a freshwater pearl mussel catchment area of extant populations. There is currently no catchment of SAC populations present. There is no waterbody present within the substation boundary. A drain was identified on the Tailte Éireann PRIME2 Watercourses layer, present approximately 50m south of the Development, which extends along the southern boundary of the Development before flowing into the Bann_070 River². This unnamed drain and the Bann_070 River provides a hydrological connection to the Slaney River Valley SAC, which is located approximately 2km downstream (following the course of the surface waters). Given the minor and temporary works involved, and the hydrological distance between the Development and the Slaney River Valley SAC there is no potential for likely significant effects on Slaney River Valley SAC.

There are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs) located within the zone of influence of the Development. Suitable habitat for Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species present nearby to the Development is screened from the Development through the presence of woodland and trees surrounding the Development. Therefore there is no potential for likely significant effects on mobile species associated with any SPA as a result of disturbance of birds using functionally-

¹ NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: Slaney River Valley SAC 0022988. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

² Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maps website <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> (accessed 27 February 2025)

linked habitat. There will be no loss of habitat which could be used by these or any other SCI birds.

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 applicable site Conservation Objectives.

Analysis of Pathways to European sites: Arklow 220kV Station and loop-in to Glenart 220kV Station

The closest European site to this element of the Development is Buckroney-Brittas Dunes and Fen SAC (site code 000729³), which is located approximately 3.5km northeast ('as the crow flies'). The QI of the SAC comprise a range of the Annex I habitats. There is no terrestrial or hydrological link between this SAC and the Development. Due to the lack of a source-pathway-receptor link there will be no likely significant effects in view of the applicable site Conservation Objectives.

There are no SPAs or any 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 applicable site 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.

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:



Susanne Dunne ACIEEM Senior Ecologist

29 April 2025

³ NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Buckroney-Brittas Dunes and Fen SAC 000729. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.