



Appropriate Assessment Determination CP1519 Crane-Wexford 110kV Circuit Dynamic Line Rating, and Crane 110kV Station Works [Exempted Development] County Wexford

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 CP1519 Crane-Wexford 110kV Circuit Dynamic Line Rating (DLR), and Crane 110kV 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 involves:

- Installation of DLR measurement devices on the overhead line (OHL) of Crane-Wexford 110kV circuit DLR.
- Uprate of the lead in conductor in Crane 110kV station to at least the equivalent rating of 238 MVA (1250 A) in all seasons.
- Uprate of the line dropper and bay conductor in Crane 110kV station to at least the equivalent rating of 238 MVA (1250 A) in all seasons.

DLR measurement devices will not be installed between polesets 108 and 109.

The Development involves the installation, using a Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP) of a small sized DLR device on the OHL for the real-time measurements of power flow, circuit temperature and circuit angle. The Development will not require vegetation clearance or intrusive works. There will also be minor works within the substation boundary of Crane 110 kV station.

Analysis of Pathways to European sites

Based on the works involved, the following impacts were assessed for the potential for likely significant effects:

- Disturbance of qualifying species (e.g. visual, noise, vibration or artificial light). According to published research¹, 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)² provides species-specific information on the sensitivity of several bird species which are qualifying features of SPAs to disturbance impacts from construction works.
- Waterborne pollution of qualifying, supporting or functionally linked habitat(s), or of qualifying or supporting species using such habitats.

The following European sites are therefore considered to be within the potential zone of influence (Zoi) of the Development:

- Slaney River Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000781³). Oversailed by existing OHL between polesets 108 and 109. Numerous watercourses and unnamed drains traverse the OHL, some of which provide connectivity to the SAC. Designated for the Annex

¹ 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).

² 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/> (Accessed 27 January 2026).

³ NPWS (2011). Conservation Objectives: Slaney River Valley AC 000781. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

I habitats estuaries, mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, water course of plain to montane levels with the *Rancunulion flutantis* and *Callintro-Batrachion* vegetation, old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles, and alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanaea*, *Salicion albae*) and the Annex II species freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*, sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*, brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*, river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*, twaite shad *Alosa fallax fallax*, salmon *Salmo salar*, otter *Lutra lutra* and harbour seal *Phoca vitulina*.

- Wexford Harbour and Slobs Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004076⁴). The SPA is oversailed by existing OHL between polesets 108 and 109. Numerous watercourses and unnamed drains traverse the OHL, some of which are hydrologically connected to the SPA. Designated for number of wintering and wetland birds, including the long-ranging species Greenland white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*, light-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla hrota*, whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus* and Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, post-breeding/roosting hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, and wetland habitat.
- Ballyteige Burrow SPA (site code 004020⁵). Located approximately 15km south-west of the Development. Designated for a number of wintering and wetland birds, including the long-ranging species light-bellied brent goose, and wetlands.

The Development is not within any SAC catchment with extant populations of freshwater pearl mussel. Due to the nature and scale of the Development, which will only comprise the installation of small DLR measurement devices on the OHL and works within the bounds of Crane 110kV substation, its potential for negative water quality impacts is negligible. Therefore, there is no likelihood of significant effects to Slaney River Valley SAC regarding water quality. Due to the minor scale of the Development and temporary nature of the works, there will be no likely significant noise and visual disturbance of QI species of Slaney River Valley SAC using functionally linked watercourses along the OHL route.

For the same reasons as outlined in relation to Slaney River Valley SAC, there is no likelihood of significant effects to Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA regarding water quality. There will be no works between polesets 108 and 109 and there is therefore no possibility of disturbance of any Special Conservation Interests (SCI) within the bounds of Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA. Due to the minor scale of the Development and temporary nature of the works, there will be no pathway for any likely significant noise and visual disturbance of SCI species of Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA that may use functionally linked habitat (e.g. arable fields) along the OHL route.

As described for Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA, there is no likelihood of any pathway likely to result in any significant effects to Ballyteige Burrow SPA regarding noise and visual disturbance of SCI species.

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:



⁴ NPWS (2012). Conservation Objectives: Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA 004076. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

⁵ NPWS (2014). Conservation Objectives: Ballyteige Burrow SPA 004020. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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