



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

CP1534 Ennis 110kV Station Works [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, whether CP1534 Ennis 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 comprises:

- Uprate of 2no. Transformers from 31.5 MVA to 63 MVA.
- Additional Asset Refurbishment works.

Analysis of Pathways to European sites

The Development will occur entirely within the boundaries of the existing station. There will consequently be no loss of habitat, with all works taking place on constructed hard-standing.

The closest European site to Ennis Station is Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 002165¹), approximately 1.2km south-west ('as the crow flies'). The nearest watercourse² to the station is located approximately 240m away, on the other side of the R352 road and separated by areas of vegetation, including scrub/woodland. Given the distance involved, that all works will take place on the existing station hard-standing, and the buffering capacity of the intervening land, there is no possibility of waterborne pollution impacts on Lower River Shannon SAC and likely significant effects are therefore excluded.

The watercourses in the area around the Development are sufficiently distant (more than 200m at closest) such that any mobile QI species which may occur within them (e.g. otter *Lutra lutra*)³ will not be subject to disturbance from works.

According to published research⁴, the maximum distance to which non-breeding bird species for which a Special Protection Area (SPA) is designated will typically travel to forage is 20km from the boundary of such a site. There are three SPAs designated for non-breeding SCI bird species located within 20km of the Development:

- Ballyallia Lough SPA (site code 004041⁵), located approximately 2.7km north-west;
- River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA, located approximately 5.0km south-south-west; and,
- Corofin Wetlands SPA (site code 004220⁶), located approximately 11.0km north-west.

The habitat in the area surrounding Ennis Station is of limited suitability for non-breeding SCI species, with no large, open areas of grassland (much of that in the surrounding area is enclosed by trees/hedgerows, which reduce suitability). Furthermore, the station is entirely

¹ NPWS (2012). Conservation Objectives: Lower River Shannon SAC 002165. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

² According to Tailte Éireann Watercourse data.

³ NRA (2008). Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters Prior to the Construction of National Roads Schemes. National Roads Authority, Dublin.

⁴ SNH (2016). Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Version 3 – June 2016.

⁵ NPWS (2025). Conservation Objectives: Ballyallia Lough SPA 004041. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

⁶ NPWS (2025). Conservation Objectives: Corofin Wetlands SPA 004220. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

surrounded by roads, including the M18 and R352. It is also screened behind an embankment which is well vegetated and contains scrub/trees. There is consequently significant existing visual and noise screening. For these reasons, there will be no impact from the disturbance of the SCI species of SPAs, and likely significant effects are excluded.

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.

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

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