



## Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination CP1585 Clashavoon 220kV Station [Exempted Development] County Cork

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 CP1585 Clashavoon 220kV Station [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:

- Construction of a new 110 kV cable bay.
- Installation and termination of electrical equipment onto the existing 110 kV busbar.
- Installation of associated primary electrical plant including circuit breaker, disconnectors, instrument transformers, surge arresters and cable termination equipment.
- Provision of new foundations, support steelwork and cable trenches/ducting within the existing substation.

All works are to be carried out entirely within the boundary of the existing energised substation. The majority of works for the Development will be carried out above ground on existing structures, however, excavation within the substation will be required for new foundations and cable trenches/ducting. No vegetation clearance will be required for the Development.

### Analysis of Pathways to European sites

Based on the works involved, the following possible impact is considered potentially relevant to the Development:

- Disturbance of qualifying species (e.g. visual, noise, vibration or artificial light). According to published research<sup>1</sup>, the maximum distance to which non-breeding bird species for which Special Protection Areas (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)<sup>2</sup> provides species-specific information on the sensitivity of several bird species which are qualifying features of SPAs to disturbance impacts from construction works.

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

- Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA (site code 004162<sup>3</sup>), located approximately 5.4km north-west of the Development. Designated for the Special Conservation Interest (SCI) breeding hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> 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/](https://www.tide-toolbox.eu/tidetools/waterbird_disturbance_mitigation_toolkit/) (Accessed 27 January 2026).

<sup>3</sup> NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives: Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA 004162. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. [https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation\\_objectives/CO004162.pdf](https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004162.pdf)

- The Gearagh SPA (site code 004109<sup>4</sup>) located approximately 6.7km south-west of the Development. The SPA is designated for the waterbird species wigeon *Anas penelope*, Teal *Anas crecca*, mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, and coot *Fulica atra*, and wetland habitat.

There are no waterbodies within the substation boundary, therefore no hydrological-link to any European sites. The Development is located within a catchment with extant populations of freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* (Lee - Laney) which are not associated with any SAC. There is no connectivity to any European site designated for QI freshwater pearl mussel, therefore no potential for likely significant effects.

The closest European site to the Development is Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA, which is designated for hen harrier. Hen Harriers have a core foraging range of 2km<sup>1</sup>, and typically establish their nests within a territorial range of around 1 to 2km in optimal habitats. In less ideal conditions, such as areas with lower prey availability, these ranges may be larger. The Development involves works within the existing boundary of the substation, an area of hardstanding and established electrical installations. No suitable habitats for foraging SCI species associated with the Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA are present within the Development site. Given the minor nature of the Development and its distance from Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA, there is no potential for any likely significant effect from disturbance of foraging hen harrier using functionally linked habitat.

The only other SPA located within 20km of the Development is the Gearagh SPA. The Development site's current use and characteristics make it unsuitable for the wintering SCI species of the SPA. Therefore, there is no potential for likely significant effects to the Gearagh SPA related to disturbance of foraging 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 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.

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:



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Susanne Dunne ACIEEM Senior Ecologist

16 March 2026

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<sup>4</sup> NPWS (2014) *Conservation Objectives: The Gearagh SPA 004109* (Version 1), National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, available at: [https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation\\_objectives/CO004109.pdf](https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004109.pdf)