



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

Circuit Alteration Request - Gallanstown - Platin 110kV [Exempted Development] (Co. Meath)

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 Circuit Alteration Request - Gallanstown - Platin 110kV [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 the replacement of existing Poleset 129 (18m) with a higher Single Circuit Suspension (Non-Earthwire) Poleset (23 m). The Development is required to facilitate the construction works of the new and consented Bellewstown Substation, which does not form part of the Development)

Analysis of Pathways to European Sites

There are no waterbodies in the immediate vicinity of Poleset 129, with the closest waterbody (River Nanny [Meath]) situated approximately 274m to the west. The River Nanny drains into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore Special Protection Area (SPA, site code 004158)¹ approximately 10.8km downstream. This SPA is designated for the following Special Conservation Interests (SCIs): oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, knot *Calidris canutus*, sanderling *Calidris alba*, herring gull *Larus argentatus*, and its overall wetland and waterbird assemblage. Due to the minor nature of the Development and the great intervening distance (with associated dilution), there is no potential for adverse effects from the Development on the water quality in the SPA.

The closest European sites to Poleset 129 are the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (SAC, site code 002299)² and SPA (site code 004232)³ (at approximate distances of 4.2km and 4.4km, respectively). The SAC is designated for Qualifying Interest (QI) river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*, salmon *Salmo salar*, otter *Lutra lutra* and habitats that depend on water supply (e.g. alkaline fens, alluvial forests). The SPA is designated for SCI kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*. While these European sites are sensitive to water quality changes, they lie in a different catchment with no hydrological connectivity to the area surrounding Poleset 129. Therefore, there is no ecological pathway between the Development and the SAC/SPA.

Both the Boyne Estuary SPA (site code 004080)⁴ and River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA lie within 5-10km from Poleset 129, within the potential off-site maximum foraging ranges of golden plover and lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*. However no likely significant disturbance to SCI birds utilising functionally linked fields surrounding Poleset 12 are predicted having regard to the nature and scale of the Development.

¹ NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA [004158]. Version 1.0. Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

² NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC 002299. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

³ NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA [004232]. First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives Version 1.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

⁴ NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Boyne Estuary SPA [004080]. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

There are no other European sites nearby, or potentially connected to the Development via a source-pathway-receptor link that could 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 the temporary nature of works, and has not taken account of mitigation measures intended to avoid or reduce significant effects on European sites.

Signed:



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