



Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

Replacement of T2102 at Knockraha 220 kV 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, if the Replacement of T2102 at Knockraha 220 kV Station ('the development') individually or in combination with other plans or projects would be likely to have a significant effect (s) on a European site(s).

The development consists of works for the purpose of

- the removal of a transformer (T2102) from its current bay location (H4) and relocating it to a spare bay location (H14);
- the removal of associated apparatus, posts and gantries from their current location (H4/F6) and relocating them to a spare bay location (H14/F12) [These provide the connection between the 110 kV busbar, the 220 kV busbar and transformer (T2102)]
- associated and ancillary works including the excavation of the land for the above purpose..

Analysis of Pathways to European sites

The AA Screening assessment has reviewed the nature and scale of the works against hydrological connectivity and excluded the risk of downstream surface water impacts.

The development is not located within or near any European site; the closest such sites are the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA; site code 4030)¹, and the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation (SAC; site code 1058)² both located c. 4.8 the development site). This determination has had regard for these and all other European sites as relevant.

The risk of ex-situ impacts to the Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests roosting, foraging, or nesting away from European sites has also been excluded, following analysis of known and potential habitats for mobile bird and other animal populations.

The development is not located within the catchment of any Freshwater Pearl Mussels *Margaritifera*, or other sensitive aquatic species which are the Qualifying Interests of any European sites. Impact pathways to other far-flying mobile QI/SCI species from distant European sites do not arise, due to the absence of supporting habitats for such species within the Zone of Influence of the development (e.g. absence of wetland or flooded grasslands for wintering birds; absence of larval foodplant *Succisa pratensis* for QI marsh fritillary butterfly *Euphydryas aurinia*), or because the development is outside the range of QI populations of a given species (e.g. which is the case for both Kerry slug *Geomalacus maculosus* and lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*).

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.

¹NPWS (2014) Conservation Objectives: Cork Harbour SPA 004030. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

² NPWS (2014) Conservation Objectives: Great Island Channel SAC 001058. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Signed:



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