

Appropriate Assessment Conclusion Statement

Project reference: FS007083 Eirgrid – to lay four submarine electricity cables across the Shannon Estuary between Co. Kerry and Co. Clare.

The proposed project involves the laying of new electricity cables in the seabed across the Shannon Estuary between the Moneypoint substation in the townland of Carrowdotia, South County Clare and Kilpaddoge substation in the townland of Kilpaddoge, County Kerry.

This project is taking place within the Lower River Shannon SAC (IE002165) and the River Shannon & River Fergus Estuaries SPA (IE004077). The Appropriate Assessment screening process determined that likely significant effects could not be ruled out with respect the following:

- Physical disturbance to the seabed,
- Sediment resuspension,
- Onshore pre-construction,
- Construction noise/disturbance,
- In-combination noise effects.

In accordance with Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 SI 477 as amended, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment was required as the project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect the integrity of European sites in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

The Appropriate Assessment process determined that, with the exception of the underwater noise and its effect on Annex II species, the remaining activities identified would not cause effects that were deemed significant to the qualifying interests of any European site. It identified adherence to the NPWS *Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made Sound Sources in Irish Waters* (2014) as appropriate mitigation to avoid significant effects on these Annex II species.

It is therefore determined that the proposed project, either alone or in-combination with other projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of European sites, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

Signature and Date of Recommending Officer:  25th of May 2022
Marine Advisor Environment

Signature and Date of the Decision Maker: 
26/07/2022