Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Aglish 110kV Substation and Grid Connection

Co. Cork

Report prepared for Aglish Solar Farm Ltd

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16th February 2026

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Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

1 Introduction

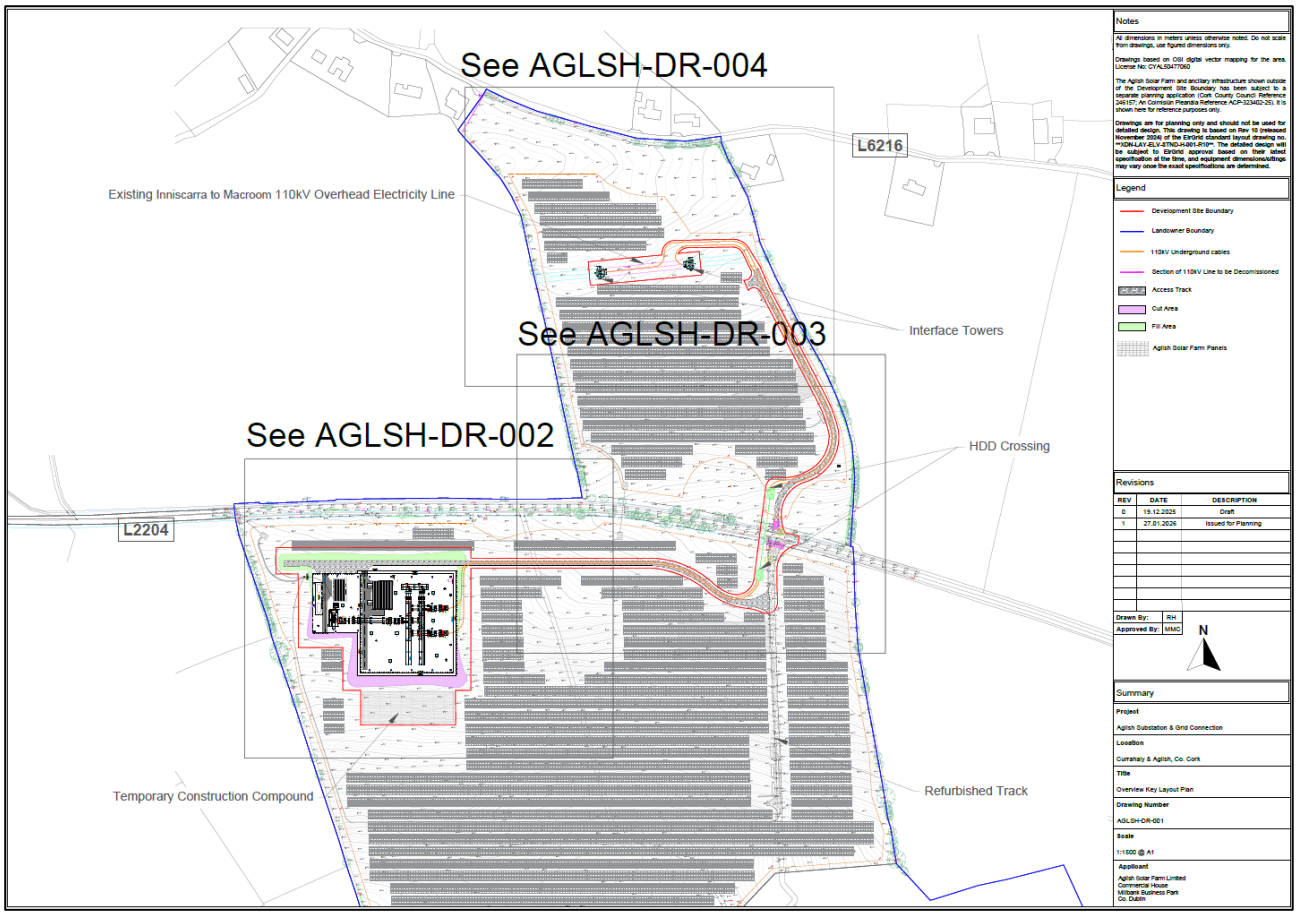
This report has been prepared by Greenleaf Ecology on behalf of Aglish Solar Farm Ltd. The purpose of this report is to inform screening for Appropriate Assessment for the proposed Aglish 110kV Substation and Grid Connection, Co. Cork (hereinafter referred to as 'the proposed development'). This report forms part of the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application for the same development which has been submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála in accordance with section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The proposed 110kV substation and grid connection will service Aglish Solar Farm, which is currently the subject of a first party appeal on a planning decision by Cork County Council to An Coimisiún Pleanála (Reference: ACP-323402-25).

This report comprises information in support of screening for AA to be undertaken by the competent authority for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora as transposed by the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) as amended.

1.1 Study Area

The proposed site is located in the townlands of Aiglish and Currahaly in County Cork. The layout of the proposed development is illustrated in Figure 1-1For clarity, the location of the proposed solar farm land parcels, interconnector cabling, substation and grid connection cabling is included in Figure 3-1.

Figure 1-1: Site Location Map



1.2 Statement of Authority

This AA Screening was carried out by Karen Banks, MCIEEM. Karen is an ecologist with Greenleaf Ecology and has 19 years' experience in the field of ecological assessment. Karen has extensive experience in the production of reports to inform AAs and Natura Impact Statements including those for transport infrastructure, small to large scale housing and mixed-use developments, flood alleviation schemes, solar farms and wind farms.

1.3 Legislative Context for Appropriate Assessment

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as "The Habitats Directive", provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) as amended. In the context of the Proposed Development, the governing legislation is Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Articles 6(3) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to adversely affect the integrity of European sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] *site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation, composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, shall enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. In Ireland, these sites are designated as European sites and include Special Protection Areas (SPAs), established under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC, as codified by 2009/147/EC) for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), established under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC for habitats and species.

The competent authority is obliged to consider, in view of best scientific knowledge, whether the proposed works are likely to have a significant effect either individually or in combination with other plans and projects. If screening determines that there is likely to be significant effects on a European site, then AA must be carried out for the proposed works at Aglish, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to inform the decision making by the Competent Authority.

2 Methodology

2.1 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government guidelines (DELHG, 2009, rev. 2010) outlines the European Commission's methodological guidance (EC, 2002) promoting a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

The four stages are summarised diagrammatically in Figure 2-1. Stages 1-2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3) and Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended. Stage 3 may be part of the Article 6(3) Assessment or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

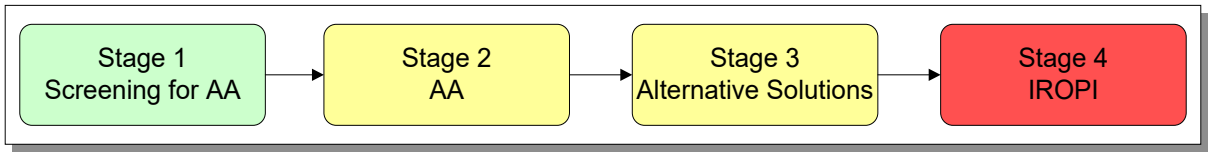


Figure 2-1: Stages of Appropriate Assessment - Taken from Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2010)

Stage 1 - Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3):

i. whether a plan or project (in this instance the proposed project) is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the European sites, and

ii. whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on the European sites in view of their conservation objectives.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or if the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). This report fulfils the information necessary to enable the competent authority to screen the proposal for the requirement to prepare an AA.

This report forms Stage 1 of the AA process and sets out the following information:

- Description of the proposed works;
- Characteristics of the proximal European sites; and
- Assessment of significance of the proposed works on the European sites in question.

The methodology followed in relation to this assessment has had regard to the following guidance and legislation:

- European Union Habitats Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 92/43/EEC;
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (DOEHLG 2009, rev 2010);
- The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2018);
- European Commission Notice Brussels C (2021) 6913 final 'Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' (EC, 2021);
- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission 2013;
- The European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats) Regulations 2011; and

- The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, S.I. No. 477 of 2011 (as amended).

2.2 Information consulted for this report

The Screening assessment had regard to the following sources of data and information:

- Information on the location, nature and design of the proposed project;
- Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government – online land use mapping www.myplan.ie/en/index.html;
- Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government- EIA Portal https://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/environmental-assessment/environmental-impact-assessment-eia/eia-portal
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Water Quality www.epa.ie, http://gis.epa.ie/Envision;
- Geological Survey of Ireland – Geology, soils and Hydrogeology www.gsi.ie;
- Water Framework Directive website – www.catchments.ie;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online European site network information, including site conservation objectives www.npws.ie;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS 2025a, 2025b);
- National Biodiversity Data Centre – www.biodiversityireland.ie;
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland – Mapping and Aerial photography www.osi.ie; and
- Site walkover surveys, undertaken between March 2024 and February 2025 by Ms K. Banks and aquatic ecology surveys completed by Ms. L. Williams in June and August 2024 (see Section 3.3).

2.3 Screening Protocol

The sequence of events when completing the AA Screening process is provided below:

- Ascertain whether the plan or project is necessary for the management of the European site;
- Description of the plan or project;
- Definition of the likely zone of influence for the proposed development;
- Identification of the European sites that are situated (in their entirety or partially or downstream) within the zone of influence of the proposed works;
- Identification of the most up-to-date QIs and SCIs for each European site within the zone of influence;
- Identification of the environmental conditions that maintain the QIs/SCIs at the desired target of Favourable Conservation Status;
- Identification of the threats/impacts – actual or potential that could negatively impact the environmental conditions of the QIs/SCIs within the European sites;
- Highlighting the activities of the proposed works that could give rise to significant negative impacts; and
- Identification of other plans or projects, for which in-combination impacts would likely have significant effects.

2.3.1 Screening Determination

The proposed development is one to which Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended applies. In accordance with Part XAB of the Planning Acts as amended, and Section 177U thereof:

> *"(5) The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is not required if it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site*".

This report is to inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment.

2.3.2 Zone of Influence

In accordance with EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, identification of the European sites that may be affected should be done by taking into consideration all aspects of the plan or project that could have potential effects on any European sites located within the zone of influence of the plan or project. This should take into account all of the designating features (species, habitat types) that are significantly present on the sites and their conservation objectives.

In particular, it should identify:

- Any European sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them;
- Any European sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project. Natura 2000 sites located in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) that could still be indirectly affected by aspects of the project, including as regards the use of natural resources (e.g. water) and various types of waste, discharge or emissions of substances or energy;
- European sites in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) which host fauna that can move to the project area and then suffer mortality or other impacts (e.g. loss of feeding areas, reduction of home range);
- European sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project.
- The range of European sites to be assessed, i.e. the zone in which impacts from the plan or project may arise, will depend on the nature of the plan or project and the distance at which effects may occur.

2.3.3 Likely Significant Effects

The threshold for a likely significant effect is treated in the screening exercise as being above a *de minimis* level[1]. The opinion of the Advocate General in CJEU case C-258/11 outlines:

"*the requirement that the effect in question be 'significant' exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on a European site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill.*"

In this report, therefore, 'relevant' European sites are those within the potential zone of influence of the construction and / or operation of the proposed development, and to which likely significant effect pathways were identified through the source-pathway-receptor model.

[1] *Sweetman v. An Bord Pleanála* (Court of Justice of the EU, case C-285/11). A de minimis effect is a level of risk that is too small to be concerned with when considering ecological requirements of an Annex I habitat or a population of Annex II species present on a European site necessary to ensure their favourable conservation condition. If low level effects on habitats or individuals of species are judged to be in this order of magnitude and that judgment has been made in the absence of reasonable scientific doubt, then those effects are not considered to be likely significant effects.

3 Project Description

3.1 General

The proposed development comprises of

1. A 110kV Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) electricity substation with single-storey substation building, single-storey Independent Power Producer (IPP) control room building, High Voltage (HV) electrical equipment and associated infrastructure (to include transformer, lightning protection masts, back-up diesel generator, fire/blast wall, telecoms pole, perimeter security fencing, security lighting, water and drainage infrastructure, and temporary construction compound) to connect to and serve a solar farm;
2. Associated loop-in / loop out infrastructure to connect into an existing 110kV overhead transmission line (including underground 110kV cabling [lengths of ca.790 and 880m from proposed substation to interface towers, including HDD crossing of L2204 road], 2 No. new interface towers and decommissioning of ca. 75m of existing 110kV overhead line);
3. Construction and operational access from the public road L2204;
4. All ancillary site development, landscaping and earthworks. The development subject to this application forms part of grid connection and access arrangements which will facilitate the connection of the proposed Aglish Solar Farm (Cork County Council Reference 24/6157 / An Coimisiún Pleanála ACP-323402-25) to the national grid. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the proposed development.

The operational lifetime of the solar farms is assumed to be 40 years. However, following the decommissioning of the solar farm, it is envisaged that the substation (and underground cable grid connection) will remain in situ as a valuable functioning and operational part of the electricity transmission network managed by the Transmission Systems Operator, EirGrid.

3.2 Substation

The substation will be based on EirGrid design specifications. The substation compound will consist of a two-storey GIS substation building, single-storey IPP Control Room building, HV electrical equipment and associated infrastructure including palisade fences and concrete post and rail fences. The installation of HV electrical equipment will include a transformer with associated equipment along with:

- Cable Sealing End (CSE);
- Surge Arrestor (SA);
- Earth Disconnect (DA, DB, DL, DT);
- Current /Voltage Transformer (CT/VT);
- House Transformer (HoT);
- Circuit Breaker (CB);
- Lightning Masts (LM);
- Back-Up Diesel Generator;
- Harmonic filters if required by EirGrid;
- Capacitor Bank if required by EirGrid;
- Fire/Blast Wall;
- Telecoms Pole;
- 110kV underground cable which will connect into the existing Inniscarra Macroom overhead line via 2 no. new Interface Towers

The substation compound has a total area of 11,996m^2.

Earthworks will be undertaken so the compound is level, with a finish compound level of 123.2m.

3.3 Site Access

The site will be accessed for both the construction and operational phases by means of two entrances from the L2204. These entrances will be subject to some upgrades, including removal of existing roadside sod and stone ditch to provide new gate as presented under Cork County Council Reference 24/6157. The entrances will be suitably splayed and have been subject to sight line and autotrack analysis, with the latter including modelling of abnormal load delivery for the transformer. Operational sightlines will be maintained by trimming back hedgerows with all necessary land within ownership.

A 4.5 metre wide compacted access track will extend from the entrance to the substation compound. The design includes a temporary construction track to cater for deliveries, which will be decommissioned post the construction phase (and land reinstated), as well as an operational access track. The track will include a geotextile base and filter membrane and 200 mm of Clause 804 sub-base.

3.4 Connection to National Grid

In order to connect to the transmission network, it is proposed to connect the 110kV substation into the national grid via a 'loop-in / loop-out' underground 110kV cable grid connection which will connect into the existing 110kV Inniscarra-Macroom overhead transmission line.

Two new steel lattice interface towers of approximately 16 m in height will form part of the existing overhead line and both towers will connect to the proposed 110kV substation via underground 110kV cables. The interface towers are approximately 75 metres apart, therefore the same length of the existing 110kV Inniscarra-Macroom overhead line will need to be decommissioned. The underground cable is comprised of 3 no. power ducts, 2 no. telecom ducts and 1 no. earth continuity duct. The cables to each interface tower are ca.790 and 880m metres in length. The crossing of the L2204 will be by means of Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD).

This connection method will constitute a new node of the transmission network, connecting the proposed substation and associated solar farm generation to the national electricity grid. The construction method for the interface towers and decommissioning of 110kV overhead lines is set out in the Aglish Substation & Grid Connection Construction Methodology prepared by Aglish Solar Farm Limited.

All works will be carried out in accordance with international best practice and full compliance with health and safety requirements.

3.5 Temporary Construction Compound

As outlined in the submitted site layout plans, it is proposed to provide a temporary construction compound south of the proposed substation, accessed from the entrance from the L2204 The temporary compound will include the following facilities at a minimum:

- Adequate canteen space to allow for all workers during the peak period;
- Office space with lighting, heating and internet facilities;
- Toilets and adequate welfare facilities for construction staff in accordance with the relevant statutory Health & Welfare guidelines;
- Parking space for both light and heavy vehicles;
- Designated skips and temporary storage areas.

3.6 Surface Water Drainage and Water Services

Surface water drainage proposals for the development have been developed to mimic the natural drainage patterns of the site and thereby be in accordance with the best management practices of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) including those set out in the SuDS Manual (C753) published by CIRIA in 2015. Specifically, this includes the following:

- The compound construction is formed with permeable stone thus mimicking a soakaway scenario. ESB compound stone is single sized for the first 150mm for safety purposes. It then changes to a graded 6F2 material.
- The main areas to be drained includes the roofs and the compound road. These equate to approximately 663m². The compound road will be drained via series of road gullies.
- Assuming even the most basic of infiltration rates down through the permeable compound stone, the existing greenfield situation is easily maintained.

The surface water generated in the hardstanding and bunded areas will discharge to the soakaway via a Class 1 Full Retention Oil Separator. The electrical transformer in the substation is oil filled equipment and, as such, is protected with impermeable bunds. Surface water generated in this bund will be pumped out by an oil sensitive pump ensuring that only non-contaminated water enters the site drainage network.

In relation to wastewater, a 5m^3 foul holding tank is proposed as part of the operational development. These tanks are normally used in ESB substations. It will be emptied periodically, with the capacity in excess of modelled holding requirements.

It is proposed to provide the required potable water demand of the station with a bored well on site. The potable water demand within the site will be low as the proposed station is to be unmanned. To avoid issues like stagnation in the water supply line and problems resulting from this, there will be a continual water demand of 24 litres per week from automatically flushing WCs within the station.

3.7 Site Restoration and Landscaping

This will involve the reinstatement of all other excavated materials and associated landscaping works. It will include the replacement of topsoil in disturbed ground areas such as access tracks and the removal of the construction compound and other temporary work areas.

The submitted Landscape Mitigation Plan identifies that c.31 no. metres of existing hedgerow and 2 no. trees will be removed to facilitate access to the fields that include the proposed substation and grid connection. These removal works are included in the wider solar farm application which provides for removal of a total of 86 no. linear metres of hedgerow and 3 trees, which will be offset by 872 linear metres of new hedgerow planting, as well as the bolstering of an additional 22,296 linear metres, where necessary, to fill any gaps in existing hedgerows.

3.8 Other Planned Works

Cork County Council Reference 24/6157 (ACP-323402-25)

It is intended that the proposed 110kV substation and grid connection will service the Aglish Solar Farm, which is currently the subject of a planning application to Kilkenny County Council. At the time of writing, the solar farm application is undetermined.

The solar farm with a total area of circa 161 hectares. The solar farm will consist of solar panels on ground mounted frames, 23 no. single storey electrical inverter/transformer stations, 6 no. single storey spare parts containers, 3 no. Ring Main Units, 7 no. weather stations, underground electrical ducting and cabling within the development site, private lands and within the L62031, L6203, R619, L6207, L22012 and L2204 public roads to connect solar farm field parcels, security fencing, CCTV, access tracks, 4 no. stream/drain deck crossings, 6 no. horizontal directional drill crossings (under watercourses/drains/public road), temporary construction compounds, landscaping and all associated ancillary development and drainage works. Construction and operational access will be via 7 no. entrances from the L62031, L6203, L22012, L6398 and L2204 local roads. The operational lifespan of the solar farm will be 40 years and planning permission is requested for this duration.

The solar farm will contribute directly to a carbon dioxide emission reduction of 28,657 tonnes per annum or the equivalent of approximately 1,146,298 tonnes of CO2 over the 40 year lifetime of the project.

The proposed solar farm, interconnector cabling, substation and grid connection locations are illustrated in Figure 3-1. It should be noted that the solar farm is located within parcels 1-6 and the substation and grid connection is located in parcels 5-6 only.

Figure 3-1: Solar Farm Land Parcels, Interconnector Cabling, Substation and Grid Connection Cabling Locations

3.9 Existing Environment

Multi-disciplinary ecology surveys of the proposed solar farm and substation site were undertaken between on 8th July and 29th February 2025 by ecologist Ms. Karen Banks, MCIEEM.

The proposed development is located within Parcel 5 and Parcel 6 of the proposed solar farm, as illustrated in Figure 3-1.

To enable a complete and robust assessment of potential cumulative and in-combination effects of the proposed development with the proposed solar farm, Section 3.9.2 to Section 3.9.5 below provide a description of elements of the existing environment of the entire solar farm site that are of relevance to this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR).

3.9.1 Habitats

The proposed solar farm site is dominated by agriculturally improved grassland fields (GA1) bound by a network of hedgerows (WL1) and treelines (WL2), some with associated drainage ditches (FW4). Small pockets of mature mixed broadleaved woodland (WD1) and scrub (WS1) are also present occasionally. The Cooldrum stream (FW2) bounds Land Parcel 3 to the west and the Rathonoane stream bounds Land Parcel 4 to the east; the River Lee/ Inniscarra Reservoir is located adjacent to the northern boundary of Land Parcel

2. Waterbodies are further described in Section 3.1.1 of this report and the Aquatic Ecological Impact Assessment accompanying the planning application for the solar farm (Cork County Council Reference 24/6157 / An Coimisiún Pleanála ACP-323402-25).

Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) is present within Land Parcel 4; Giant Rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*) and Skunk Cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) are also present to the south of Land Parcel 4, outside the site boundary. These species are Third Schedule listed species under Regulations 49 & 50 in the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

The proposed substation and grid connection site is comprised of agriculturally improved grassland (GA1) bound by hedgerows (WL1). No invasive plant species were recorded within the proposed site.

No Annex I habitats were recorded at the proposed site.

3.9.2 Species

Avifauna

A late wintering/ early breeding bird survey of the proposed solar farm site, including the proposed substation and grid connection site was undertaken on 28th March 2024 and breeding bird surveys were undertaken on 8th July 2024 and 10th July 2024. Winter bird surveys were undertaken on 27th and 28th February 2025 and breeding bird surveys were undertaken on 29th and 30th April 2025.

Twenty-three species of bird were recorded across the proposed solar farm site, including the proposed substation and grid connection site during the winter bird surveys undertaken in February 2025. Individual Snipe were flushed out from grassland in Parcel 2, Parcel 3, Parcel 4 and damp grassland on flat ground at the north of Parcel 6 and Redwing was recorded field feeding in Parcel 2, Parcel 3 and Parcel 4; these species are included on the BoCCI Red list. Three Amber listed species were recorded, namely Goldcrest, Greenfinch and House Sparrow. The remaining eighteen species recorded are common and widespread species within Ireland and are considered to be of least conservation concern (Green listed on the BoCCI). Observations of waterbirds were limited to Mallard utilising a seasonally flooded area to the south of Parcel 2, outside of the proposed site boundary. No areas of standing water suitable for use by waterbirds were recorded within the proposed site. No evidence of field feeding waterbirds, such as direct observation or the presence of droppings or feathers was recorded across the proposed site.

Bird species observed during breeding bird surveys comprised species that are typical of the agricultural fields present at the proposed site and surrounding landscape. No wetland birds were observed at the proposed site and its environs.

The proposed substation site is located within Parcel 5 and Parcel 6 of the overall proposed solar farm site (Figure 3-1). Avifaunal species recorded in Parcel 5 and Parcel 6 predominantly comprised species that are Green listed on the BoCCI, with the exception of a single Snipe at the north of Parcel 6, as noted previously. During the breeding bird season, species recorded were also predominantly Green listed on the BoCCI, with three Amber listed species (Swallow, Starling and Mallard) also recorded. No ground nesting birds or waterbirds were recorded breeding within the proposed site.

Full details of the existing habitats and species recorded at the proposed solar farm and substation site are enclosed within the Ecological Impact Assessment accompanying the planning application (Greenleaf Ecology, 2026).

3.9.3 Surface and Ground Water

3.9.3.1 Water Bodies

The proposed Aglish Solar Farm is located within the EPA delineated river water bodies Lee (Cork)_070 (RWB code: IE_SW_19L030500), Lee (Cork)_080 (RWB code: IE_SW_19L030600) and Bride (Lee)_040 (RWB code: IE_SW_19B041300).

The River Lee rises in the Shehy Mountains near Gouganebarra, Co. Cork. It flows eastwards through Ballingeary, Lough Allua and the Gearagh, from which point the two hydroelectric dams form Carrigadrohid and Inniscarra Reservoirs in succession. Below Inniscarra Dam, the lower River Lee flows towards Cork City, entering the sea at Cork Harbour. Land Parcels 1 to 4 drain via small tributary streams (Kame, Cooldrum, Rathonoane) entering at the south bank of the Inniscarra Reservoir just south of Coachford. Land Parcels 5 and 6, within which the proposed substation and grid connection site is located, drain in an easterly direction along a field boundary drain which forms into a gully stream that flows via Farran Cross and southwards to meet the River Bride at Bride Bridge.

The proposed development overlies the Ballinhassig East Ground Waterbody (GWB). The Devonian ORS and Dinantian Mudstones & Sandstones of this GWB have no intergranular permeability; groundwater flow occurs in fractures and faults; in-filling of fractures is to be expected. The permeability of individual fractures and the degree of interconnection will be generally low. In these rocks groundwater flow paths are expected to be relatively short, typically from 30-300 m, with groundwater discharging to small springs, or to the streams that traverse the aquifer. Flow directions are expected to approximately follow the local surface water catchments. Owing to the poor productivity of the aquifers in this body it is unlikely that any major groundwater- surface water interactions occur. Baseflow to rivers and streams is likely to be relatively low[2].

3.9.3.2 Surface Water Quality and Risk Characterisation

The EPA does not monitor the small streams draining the proposed solar farm development site. Table 3-1 shows recently available (2020-2023) river Q-value results from relevant, nearest downstream EPA stations on the River Lee and River Bride. The River Lee is currently 'good' ecological status (Q4) based on monitoring at two stations below Inniscarra Dam, downstream of the proposed solar farm development lands. The River Bride is currently rated at 'Moderate' ecological status (Q3-4) just downstream of the drain confluence arising from the Farran Stream. During EPA sampling of 2023, the Bride improved with distance downstream, meriting 'good' status (Q4) by the time it reaches Kilumney and continued at good ecological status all the way through Grange and Ovens to the Lee confluence. The Lee and the lower Bride are currently compliant with the WFD objective of good status.

Table 3-1: Rivers Lee and Bride - EPA Q-value data and WFD Status

EPA Code (RS)	River	Station Name	Q-value 2020	Q-value 2023	WFD Ecological Status (2019-2024)
19L030600	Lee	Inishcarra Br	Q4	Q4	Good
19L030700	Lee	Leemount Br	Q4	Q4	Good
19B041200	Bride	Bride Br	~	Q3-4	Moderate
19B041200	Bride	Kilcrea Br	Q3-4	~	Moderate
19B041400	Bride	Br at Kilumney	~	Q4	Good
19B041400	Bride	Ovens Br	~	Q4	Good
19B041400	Bride	Br u/s Lee R confl	Q4	Q4	Good

[2] https://secure.dccae.gov.ie/GSI_DOWNLOAD/Groundwater/Reports/GWB/BallinhassigGWB.pdf

Current EPA assigned waterbody status (2019-2024) for relevant receiving waterbodies is listed in Table 3-2**.** Inniscarra Reservoir (Lake Water Body code: IE_SW_19_138) is classified as a heavily modified waterbody (HMWB) for the purpose of power generation and abstraction for drinking water (EPA, 2023, 2024). For the purposes of WFD monitoring and reporting HMWBs have a different environmental objective which recognises that physical habitat conditions have been modified for the specified use. In the case of Inniscarra, Good Ecological Status cannot be achieved because the dam introduces a recognised migration barrier which impacts on fish status. HMWBs must still achieve good ecological condition for all the other status elements not affected by the physical modification (i.e., the dam), such as nutrients, specific pollutants, priority substances and any other biological quality elements. Inniscarra is monitored for macrophytes, phytoplankton, chlorophyll, nutrient (ammonia, total phosphorus) and general supporting physicochemical conditions, achieving 'good' status for all parameters during the 2016-2021 WFD reporting cycle (EPA Data).

Table 3-2: EPA Waterbody Status, Risk and Pressures

EPA Waterbody name and code	**EPA Watercourse / Lake Name**	**Aglish Solar Farm Sites**	**EPA assigned Waterbody Status (2019-2024)**	**EPA Identified Risk / Issue / Pressures**
Lee (Cork)_070 IE_SW_19L030500	Kame	**AG1, AG2**	Good	Not at risk
	Cooldrum	**AG3**		
	Rathonoane	**AG4**		
Lee (Cork)_080 IE_SW_19L030600	Nadrid	**AG5, AG5a, AG 7**	Good	Not at risk
	Aglish 19	**AG6**		
IE_SW_19_138 (Lake waterbody)	Inniscarra Reservoir	**AG8**	Good	Not at risk
Bride (Lee)_040 IE_SW_19B041300	Un-named Drain/ stream	**AG10, AG11a, AG11b, AG12**	Moderate	At risk: Nutrients / Domestic Wastewater

3.9.4 Flooding

The Office of Public Works (OPW) flood mapping (http://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/) was consulted for the flood extents for waterbodies in the vicinity of the proposed site. No risk of flooding at the site has been identified and no flood events have been recorded at the proposed site and its immediate environs.

3.9.5 Soil, Geology and Hydrogeology

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) online database (www.gsi.ie) was consulted for available edaphic, geological and hydrological information of the site and its environs. The site is overlaid by shallow, well drained mineral soils and deep, well drained mineral (mainly acidic) soils. In terms of bedrock geology, the Ballytrasna Formation, composed of purple mudstone and sandstone underlies the site.

The bedrock units which underlie the site are mapped by the GSI as part of the same Locally Important Aquifer. Groundwater vulnerability is a term used to represent the intrinsic geological and hydrogeological characteristics that determine the ease at which groundwater may be contaminated. The study area is of '*High to Extreme'* groundwater vulnerability. There are no karst features located in the vicinity of the proposed works.

3.10 Description of European Sites

This stage of the screening for AA process describes European sites within the likely zone of influence of the proposed development. The methodology for establishing the likely zone of influence is described in Section 2.3.2.

Connectivity between the proposed development and European sites has been reviewed. Connectivity is identified via the potential source-pathway-receptor model which identifies the potential impact pathways such as land, air, hydrological, hydrogeological pathways etc. which may support direct or indirect connectivity of the proposed development to European sites and/or their qualifying features.

In view of the location of the proposed development in relation to European sites (see Figure 3-2), the characteristics of the proposed development (substation development with no instream works, as detailed in Section 3) and the source, pathway and receptors of potential impacts, a 15km radius is considered an appropriate zone of influence to screen all likely significant effects that might impact upon the European sites. For clarity, this AASR includes consideration of European sites that are within a 15km radius of the proposed development and the proposed Aglish Solar Farm development. While Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC are located further downstream of the proposed site (c.30km and 34km downstream, respectively), taking in consideration the characteristics of the proposed development, these sites are beyond the likely zone of influence of the proposed Aglish 110kV Substation and Grid Connection. The establishment of the likely zone of influence is in line with EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*.

The European sites located within 15km of the proposed development are outlined in Table 3-3 and Figure 3-2**.** There are 2 European sites located within 15km of the proposed development; a third European site is located within 15km of the proposed solar farm:

1. The Gearagh SAC (000108);
2. The Gearagh SPA (004109); and
3. Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA (004162).

Source – pathway – receptor dynamics were assessed for the Gearagh SAC and the Gearagh SPA, and it was found that the Gearagh SAC and the Gearagh SPA are located 17km and 18.2km (respectively) upstream of the Kame River confluence with Inniscarra Reservoir and upstream of Carrigadrohid Dam; there is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater or any other pathway. There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater or any other pathway between the proposed development and Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA.

Figure 3-2: European Sites Located within 15km of the Proposed Development

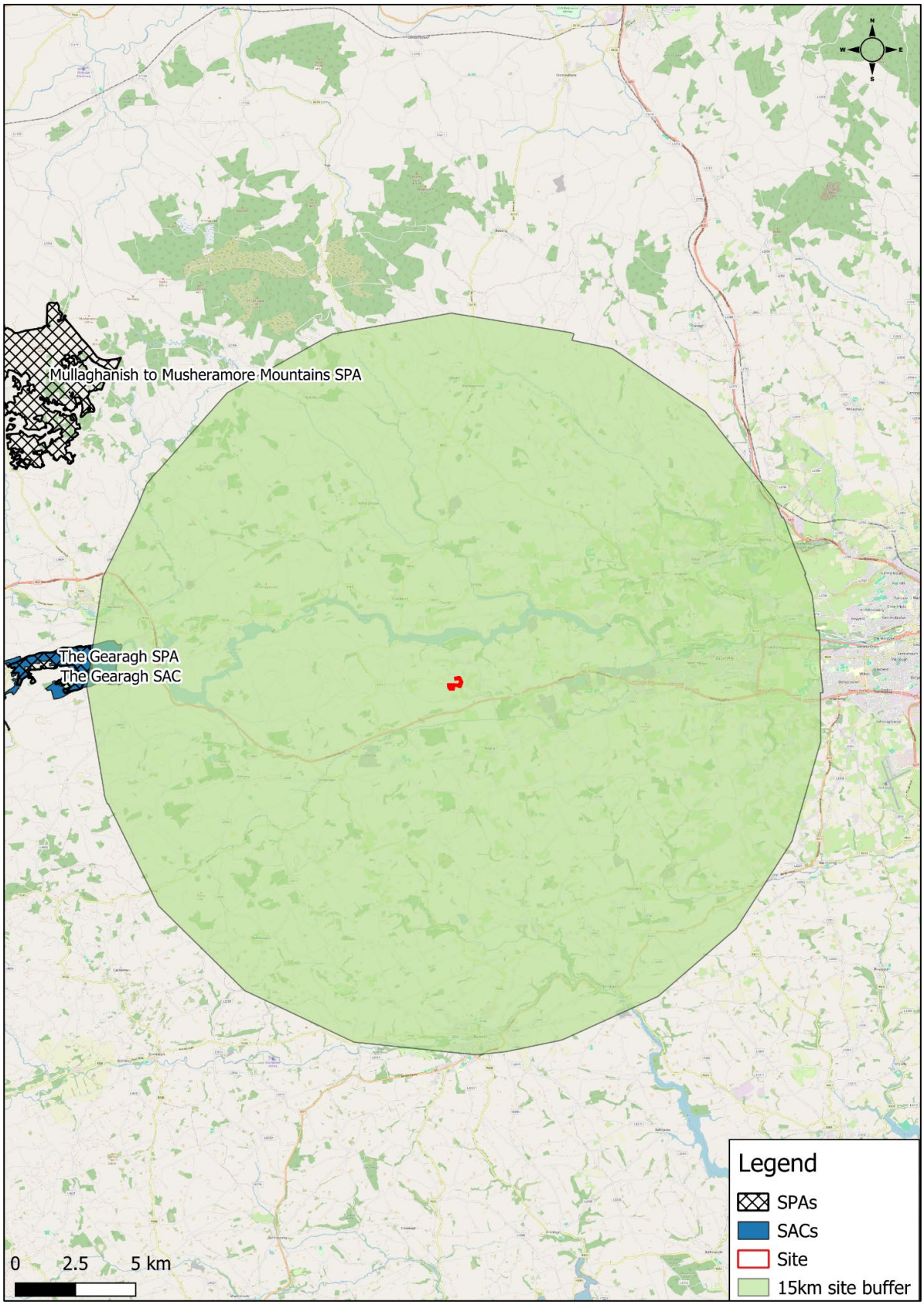


Table 3-3: European Sites within 15km of the Proposed Development

Site Name and Code	Qualifying Interests	Distance from Proposed Site (km)[3]	Connectivity
The Gearagh SAC (000108)	**Annex I Habitats** Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Rivers with muddy banks with Chenopodion rubri p.p. and Bidention p.p. vegetation [3270] Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] **Annex II Species** *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]	*Solar Farm* 8.0km *Substation and Grid Connection* 13.5km	*Solar Farm* There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater, or any other pathway. *Substation* There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater, or any other pathway.
The Gearagh SPA (004109)	**Bird Species** Wigeon (Anas penelope) [A050] Teal (Anas crecca) [A052] Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) [A053] Coot (Fulica atra) [A125] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	*Solar Farm* 9.3km *Substation and Grid Connection* 14.8km	*Solar Farm* There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater, or any other pathway. *Substation* There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater, or any other pathway.
Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA (004162)	**Bird Species** Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [A082]	*Solar Farm* 12.4km *Substation and Grid Connection* 18.2km	*Solar Farm* There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater, or any other pathway. *Substation* There is no connectivity via surface water, groundwater, or any other pathway.

3.10.1 Conservation Objectives

The integrity of a European site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) involves its ecological functions. The decision as to whether it is adversely affected therefore focuses on, and is limited to, conservation objectives set for a particular site (EC, 2018).

The overarching aim of the Natura 2000 network is to achieve Favourable Conservation Status of conservation worthy habitats listed in Annex I and the habitats of species listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive and/or of regularly occurring migratory bird species as well as those species defined in Annex I of the Birds Directive. It should be noted that in some situations that there is overlap in extent between certain

[3] For clarity, the distance from both the proposed substation and solar farm development has been included (straight line distance).

SACs and SPAs and indeed SAC and SAC. In that regard, the Conservation Objectives (CO's) should be jointly used as appropriate.

The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the CO's available from the NPWS: http://www.npws.ie/protected-sites. Site specific conservation objectives are available for Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA, Gearagh SAC and the Gearagh SPA; these were accessed in January 2026. For brevity, the site specific CO's are summarised as follows:

- *To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of Annex I habitats and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected*.
- *To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA*.

4 Screening Assessment Criteria

4.1 Management of European Sites

Appropriate Assessment is not required where the proposed development is connected with, or necessary to, the management of any European site. In this case, the proposed development is not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of any European site(s).

4.2 Likely Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts of the Project on European Sites

The proposed development is located outside the boundary of any European site; therefore, no direct effects will occur through land take or fragmentation of habitats.

The Gearagh SPA is of special conservation interest for wetland waterbirds. The habitats present within the proposed site (agricultural grassland bound by hedgerows, with treelines, small pockets of scrub and broadleaved woodland present within the wider proposed solar farm lands) are not suitable to support the water dependant SCI for this SPA (see Table 3-3). A field drain is located adjacent to the L2204, however there are no EPA mapped waterbodies at the proposed site and its immediate environs. Bird species observed during the ornithological surveys conducted between 28th March 2024 and 30th April 2025 comprised species that are typical of the agricultural fields present at the proposed site and surrounding landscape. No waterbirds were observed within the proposed site; wetland bird species recorded were limited to a Grey Heron and a small number of Great Black-backed Gull within Inniscarra Reservoir to the north of the proposed site and Mallard recorded flying over the proposed site. No SCI species for the Gearagh SPA were recorded. Furthermore, the proposed site is set back from the Gearagh SPA by 14.8km at its closest point. In consideration of these factors, it is considered that any disturbance/ displacement or ex-situ effects on the SCI of the Gearagh SPA as a result of the proposed development are extremely unlikely. Similarly, the habitats at the proposed site are not suitable to support Hen Harrier, the SCI for Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA and the proposed site is set back from this SPA by a distance of 18.2km. As such, disturbance/ displacement or ex-situ effects on the SCI for Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA are extremely unlikely.

There is no hydrological connectivity between the proposed site and Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA, the Gearagh SAC and the Gearagh SPA, therefore there will be no adverse effects on water quality within these European sites as a result of the proposed development.

As noted previously, the proposed site comprises agricultural grassland bound by hedgerows, with treelines, small pockets of scrub and broadleaved woodland present within the wider proposed solar farm lands. The proposed site does not provide support to QI habitats or species of the European sites within the likely zone of influence (i.e. Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA, the Gearagh SAC and the Gearagh SPA).

In view of the lack of connectivity to any European site within the likely zone of influence of the proposed development and the lack of any evidence that the proposed site provides a supporting role to QI habitats and species of European sites, no likely significant effects on European sites will occur as a result of the proposed development during the construction or operational phase.

4.2.1 In-combination Impacts with Other Plans and Projects in the Area

As part of the screening for AA, in addition to the proposed works, other relevant projects and plans in the region must also be considered at this stage and assessed in the context of potential for in-combination effects. These plans and projects are outlined and assessed in Table 4-1 below.

Table 4-1: Other Projects and Plans that could result in potential cumulative impacts

Plan / Programme/Policy	Key Objectives/Policies/Proposals	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
Cork County Development Plan 2022	The Cork County Development Plan includes the following Objectives of relevance to this report: **BE 15-2: Protect sites, habitats and species:** a) Protect all natural heritage sites which are designated or proposed for designation under European legislation, National legislation and International Agreements. Maintain and where possible enhance appropriate ecological linkages between these. This includes Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Marine Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna and Ramsar Sites. These sites are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan. b) Provide protection to species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2015, to Annexes of the Habitats and Birds Directives, and to animal species protected under the Wildlife Acts in accordance with relevant legal requirements. These species are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan. c) Protect and where possible enhance areas of local biodiversity value, ecological corridors and habitats that are features of the County's ecological network. This includes rivers, lakes, streams and ponds, peatland and other wetland habitats, woodlands, hedgerows, tree lines, veteran trees, natural and semi-natural grasslands as well as coastal and marine habitats. It particularly includes habitats of special conservation significance in Cork as listed in Volume 2 of the Plan. d) Recognise the value of protecting geological heritage sites of local and national interest, as they become notified to the local authority, and protect them from inappropriate development e) Encourage, pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the protection and enhancement of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. **BE 15-6: Biodiversity and New Development:** Provide for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the development management process and when licensing or permitting other activities by: a) Providing ongoing support and guidance to developers on incorporating biodiversity	Policies and objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 ensure that local planning applications comply with proper planning and sustainability and with the requirements of relevant EU Directives and environmental considerations, there is no potential for adverse in-combination effects on European Sites.

	considerations into new development through preplanning communications and the Council's guidance document 'Biodiversity and the Planning Process – guidance for developments on the management of biodiversity issues during the planning process' and any updated versions of this advice; b) Encouraging the retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and other features of high natural value within new developments; c) Requiring the incorporation of primarily native tree and other plant species, particularly pollinator friendly species in the landscaping of new developments; d) Fulfilling Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment obligations and carrying out Ecological Impact Assessment in relation to development and activities, as appropriate; e) Ensuring that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation. This includes lakes and ponds, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats; f) Ensuring that the implementation of appropriate mitigation (including habitat enhancement, new planting or other habitat creation initiatives) is incorporated into new development, where the implementation of such development would result in unavoidable impacts on biodiversity - supporting the principle of biodiversity net gain.	
Water Action Management Plan 2024	The Water Action Plan includes targeted measures for all water bodies, with the objective of either protecting water bodies at good or high status or restoring water bodies to at least good status. Where further specific measures are needed in addition to those set in this plan, integrated catchment planning approaches will be used to identify and decide on further specific measures for each water body. This will be reported in 46 Catchment Management Work Plans. These will be used to locate measures within each catchment. The list of water bodies and their associated status, significant pressures/issues and targeted measures, which are to be included in the Catchment Management Work Plans, will include targets for the third-cycle, along with Key Performance Indicators to monitor progress and outcomes.	The implementation and compliance with key environmental policies, issues and objectives of this management plan will result in positive in-combination effects to European sites. The implementation of this plan will have a positive impact for the biodiversity. It will not contribute to in-combination effects with the proposed development.
WWTP discharges	Coachford.	Discharges from municipal WWTPs are required to meet water quality standards. Irish Water Capital

		Investment Plan 2020-2024 proposes to upgrade water treatment services countrywide. The long-term cumulative impact is predicted to be negligible.
IPPC Programme	None present within the zone of influence of the proposed development.	N/A
Aglish Solar Farm (ABP Ref: 323402)	A 10 year permission is sought for a solar farm with a total area of circa 161 hectares and all associated site works. 40 years planning permission is requested.	Neither the proposed Aglish Solar Farm nor the proposed development support connectivity to any European site within the zone of influence of the proposed development. There is no potential for significant adverse in-combination impacts with the proposed development.
Aghabullogue GAA, Proposed Floodlighting (CCC Ref: 254354)	Permission to upgrade the existing floodlighting system to playing pitch number one (the old pitch), install a diesel-powered generator to operate the upgraded floodlighting system, upgrading the existing car park lighting and all associated site works.	Neither Aghabullogue GAA Club nor the proposed development support connectivity to any European site within the zone of influence of the proposed development. There is no potential for significant adverse in-combination impacts with the proposed development.
Coachford College (CCC Ref: 234312)	The demolition of the existing school buildings, the removal of existing pre-fabricated temporary accommodation and the construction of a new split level, part single storey, part two storey and part three storey 1000 pupil secondary school comprising a four classroom special education unit, a single storey multi purpose hall, general purpose room, general classrooms, specialist classrooms, social areas, library, administration areas, service yards, external stores, covered storage areas for construction studies, toilet and changing facilities and associated ancillary accommodation. The development also includes the provision of new site entrances, car parking area, drop-off areas, new site boundary, new ball courts, playing pitch, landscaped external areas and all associated site works.	The AASR prepared for the development found that there is no connectivity between the proposed development and European sites and concluded that there will be no likely significant impacts caused to any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the Proposed Development. A Natura Impact Statement is not required. There is no potential for significant adverse in-combination impacts with the proposed development.
Alterations to Residential Development (ABP Ref: 313728)	The alteration of the permitted No.62 detached house type B (under planning permission 19/06613) to 2no. semi-detached 3 bedroom Type F houses on an extended site area and including 5no. new detached 4bedroom dwelling composed of; 2no. Type B and 3No. Type C, together with associated site development works.	The inspectors report states that it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, on a European site. Permission has been granted.

		No potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites has been identified.
Quarry (Ref: 310214)	Development of a small scale quarry for rock extraction.	The applicant's AA Screening Report concluded with a finding of no significant effects to any European sites. The ABP inspectors report states that: "*Having reviewed the documents and submissions, I am satisfied that the information allows for a complete examination and identification of any potential significant effects of the development, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on European sites*". No potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites has been identified.
Castlemore Quarry, Crookstown, Co. Cork (Ref: 309891)	Extension of existing quarry excavation area.	Having carried out screening for Appropriate Assessment of the project, it was concluded that it may have a significant effect on the Cork Harbour SPA. Consequently, an appropriate assessment was required of the implications of the project on the qualifying features of those sites in light of its conservation objectives. Following an appropriate assessment, it was ascertained that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site No. 004030 or any other European site, in view of the site's conservation objectives. No potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites has been identified.
Solar Farm modification (CCC Ref: 22/4909)	Modification to the solar farm permitted under planning reg no. 15/6625 and extended under 21/4505. The modifications consist of changes to the dimensions of the permitted photovoltaic panels, replacement of the 2 transformer stations with 1 smaller transformer station and 1 smaller storage unit, changes to the design of the delivery station and associated layout changes. All modifications are within the boundary of the permitted development.	The screening for AA report completed for the application concluded that no significant adverse effects arising from the proposed development are likely to occur in relation to any Natura 2000 site. No potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites has been identified.

Solar Farm, Ballytrasna (Ref: 204916)	A solar PV panel array consisting of up to 5400sqm of solar panels on ground mounted steel frames, electricity control room, power inverter unit, underground cable ducts, temporary laydown area, boundary security fence, site entrance, CCTV and all associated site works. Extension of Duration of permission granted under Planning Reference 14/06644 and (ABP 04.244539).	The Planners Report states that neither an EIA or appropriate assessment were required in this instance/location (and this was assessed during the original application). No potential for significant adverse effects on European Sites was identified within the documentation for the original application (14/06644). In view of the lack of potential for the proposed development to result in a significant adverse effect on European sites, no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites with the permitted solar farm at Ballytrasna has been identified.

4.2.1.1 In-combination Impact Assessment Conclusion

The proposed development does not support any connectivity to European sites within the likely zone of influence of the proposed development. Likewise, the proposed Aglish Solar Farm does not support any connectivity to European sites within the likely zone of influence of the proposed development. As such, there is no potential for significant cumulative or in-combination impacts between Aglish Solar Farm Substation and Grid Connection and Aglish Solar Farm on European sites.

It is concluded that there will be no negative in-combination effects between the proposed development and plans or other projects in the area.

4.3 Screening Assessment

Table 4-2 identifies the potential direct, indirect and secondary impacts of the proposed development on European Sites within a 15 km radius.

Table 4-2: Potential Significant Effects on European Sites from the Proposed Development

Site Name and Code	Direct Impacts	Indirect / Secondary Impacts	Resource Requirements	Emissions (Disposal to land, Water or Air)	Excavation Requirements
The Gearagh SAC (000108)	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI
The Gearagh SPA (004109)	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI
Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA (004162)	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI

4.4 Likely Changes to the European Site(s)

The likely changes that could arise from the proposed development have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could have a significant effect on the relevant European Sites (Table 4-3)

Table 4-3: Likely Changes to European Sites

Site Name and Code	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality, etc.)	Climate Change
The Gearagh SAC (000108)	None	None	None	None	None	None
The Gearagh SPA (004109)	None	None	None	None	None	None
Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA (004162)	None	None	None	None	None	None

4.4.1 Elements of the Project where the Impacts are Likely to be Significant

No elements of the proposed development are likely to cause significant effects to the relevant European Sites.

5 Conclusion

This AA screening report has been prepared to assess whether the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, and in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).

The screening exercise was completed in compliance with the relevant European Commission guidance, national guidance and case law. The potential impacts of the proposed development have been considered in the context of the European sites potentially affected, their qualifying interests or special conservation interests, and their conservation objectives.

Through an assessment of the source-pathway-receptor model, which considered the ZoI of effects from the proposed development and the potential in-combination effects with other plans or projects, the following findings were reported:

- The proposed Aglish 110 kV Substation and Grid Connection, Co. Cork, either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

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