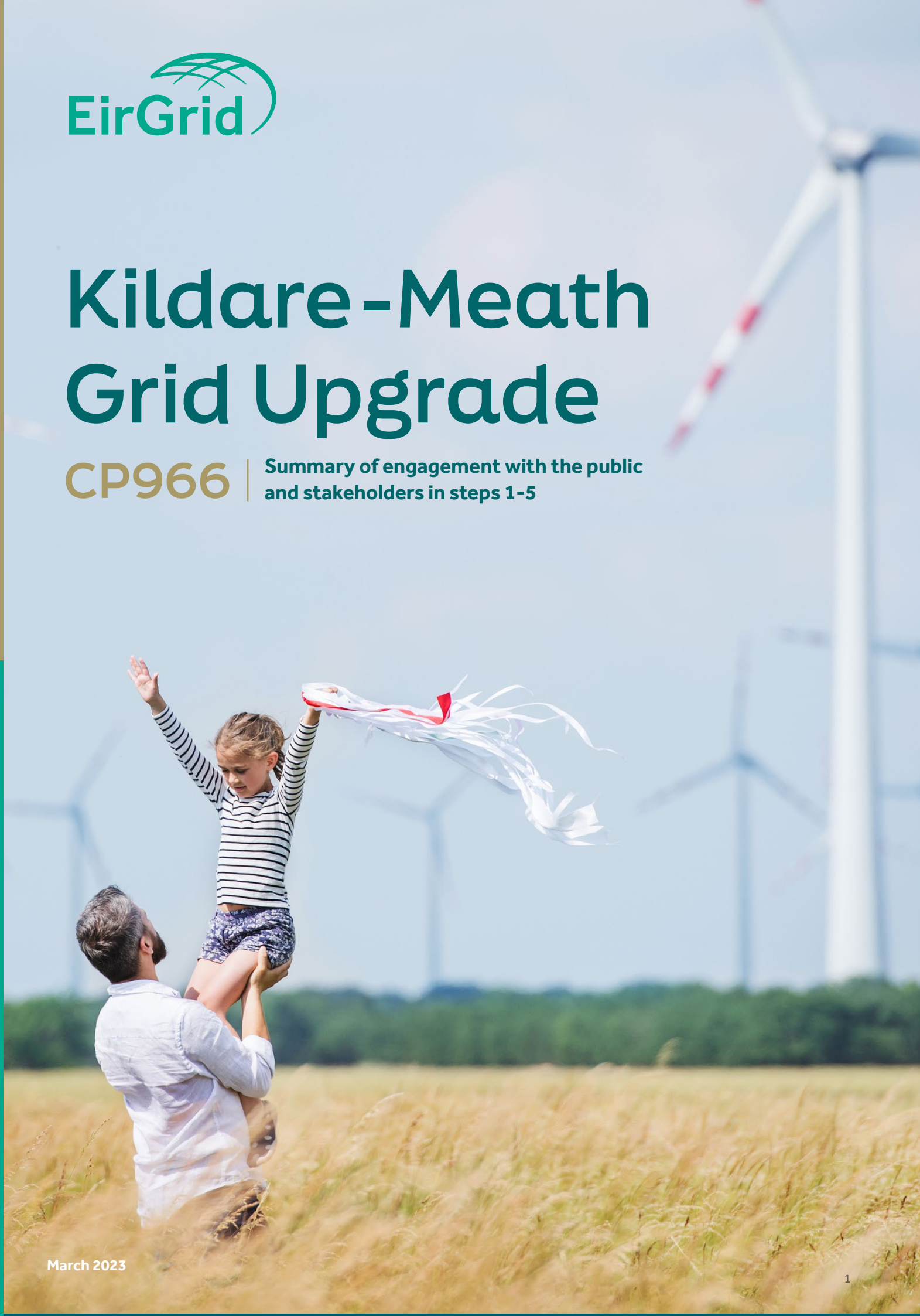
Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

CP966 | Summary of engagement with the public and stakeholders in steps 1-5



March 2023

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01 Introduction

1.1. About this report

This report provides a summary of all public and stakeholder engagement carried out from Step 1 to Step 5 of the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade project.

1.2. About EirGrid

EirGrid is the state-owned operator of Ireland's electricity transmission grid. It is responsible for a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity in Ireland. Since 2006, EirGrid has operated and developed the national high voltage electricity grid and wholesale market in Ireland. The grid moves wholesale power around the country, by bringing energy from generation station to heavy industry and high-tech users. The grid also supplies the distribution network operated by ESB Networks that powers every electricity customer in the country.

1.2.1. About the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade project (also known as Capital Project 966 or CP966) is intended to add a high-capacity underground electricity connection between the Dunstown substation near Two Mile House in Kildare and the Woodland substation near Batterstown in Meath.

The project is considered essential to meet the Government of Ireland's Climate Action Plan target up of 80% renewable energy generation by 2030, which includes transporting electricity from offshore renewable sources. It will also help meet the growing demand for electricity in the East of Ireland. This growth is due to increased population and economic activity in the region.

A significant number of Ireland's electricity generators are in the South and Southwest, where many wind farms and some modern electricity generators are located. The power they generate needs to be transported to where it is needed. The power is mainly transported cross-country on the two existing 400 kV lines from the Moneypoint station in Clare to the Dunstown substation near Two Mile House in Kildare and Woodland substation near Batterstown in Meath. The proposed Kildare-Meath project will connect these two lines, and this will strengthen the transmission network by improving reliability and security in the region.

For more information about the project, including the consultation brochure, visit the EirGrid website: www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath

02 Context

2.1. EirGrid's statutory role

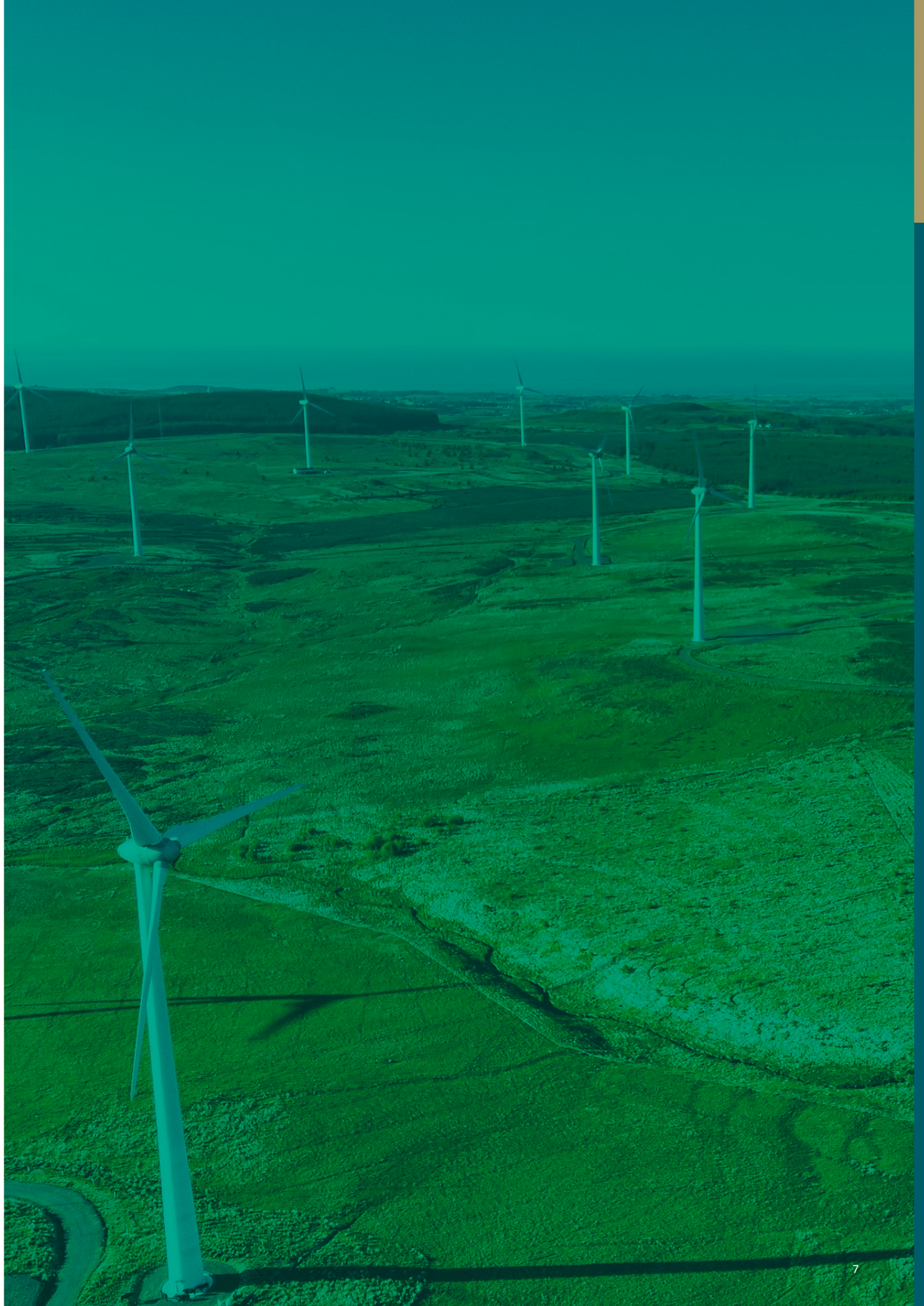
EirGrid is the national electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) for Ireland. Their role and responsibilities are set out in Statutory Instrument No. 445 of 2000 (as amended); in particular, Article 8(1) (a) gives EirGrid, the exclusive statutory function:

> "To operate and ensure the maintenance of and, if necessary, develop a safe, secure, reliable, economical, and efficient electricity transmission system, and to explore and develop opportunities for interconnection of its system with other systems, in all cases with a view to ensuring that all reasonable demands for electricity are met and having due regard for the environment."

Furthermore, as TSO, EirGrid are statutorily obliged to offer terms and enter into agreements, where appropriate and in accordance with regulatory direction, with those using and seeking to use the transmission system. Upon acceptance of connection offers by prospective network generators and demand users, they must develop the electricity transmission network to ensure it is suitable for those connections.

2.2. Regulatory targets

Part of EirGrid's responsibility is to develop the electricity transmission grid in accordance with the future needs of society. Careful analysis of different future energy scenarios specific to the area took place to establish that the transmission system is in compliance with the Transmission System Security Planning Standards (TSSPS).



2.3. EirGrid's approach to engagement

EirGrid follows a six-step approach to developing the grid. This is set out in full in EirGrid's Have your say document: http://www.eirgridgroup.com/newsroom/have-your-say-energy/

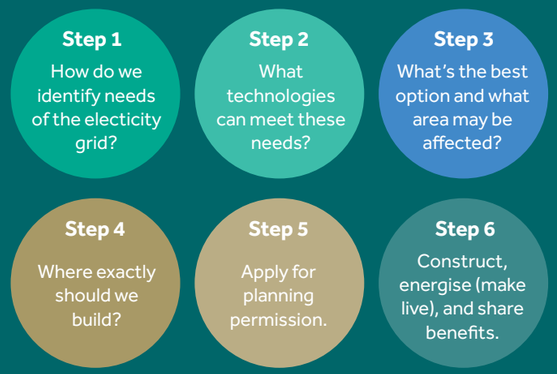


Figure 1: EirGrid's 6-Step approach to grid development

2.3.1. Steps 1-5 of the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

In **Step 1**, EirGrid identified the need for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade.

In **Step 2,** an initial list of 15 best performing technical options was compiled.

The options were a mix of overhead line, underground cable and up voltage technologies. Following a period of further detailed engagement with key stakeholders between November 2018 and February 2019 (see Section 3), four of these options were taken forward to **Step 3** in April 2019.

The options were:

- **Option 1**: To connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV;
- **Option 2**: To build a 400 kV overhead line;
- **Option 3**: To build a 220 kV underground cable;
- **Option 4**: To build a 400 kV underground cable.

EirGrid re-confirmed the need for the project at **Step 3** (i.e. What's the best option and what area may be affected) and investigated the shortlisted options to strengthen the electricity network between Dunstown and Woodland.

While investigating **Option 4**, to build a 400 kV underground cable, EirGrid identified that the cable would perform differently depending on how it was constructed. A fifth option was therefore added to cater for this variation in cable construction:

Option 5. To build a 400 kV underground cable using two new conductors in two separate routes.

EirGrid consulted on the shortlisted technology options to strengthen the electricity network and in April 2021 identified **Option 4**: to build a 400 kV underground cable as the best performing option to progress to **Step 4** (i.e. Where exactly we should build?)

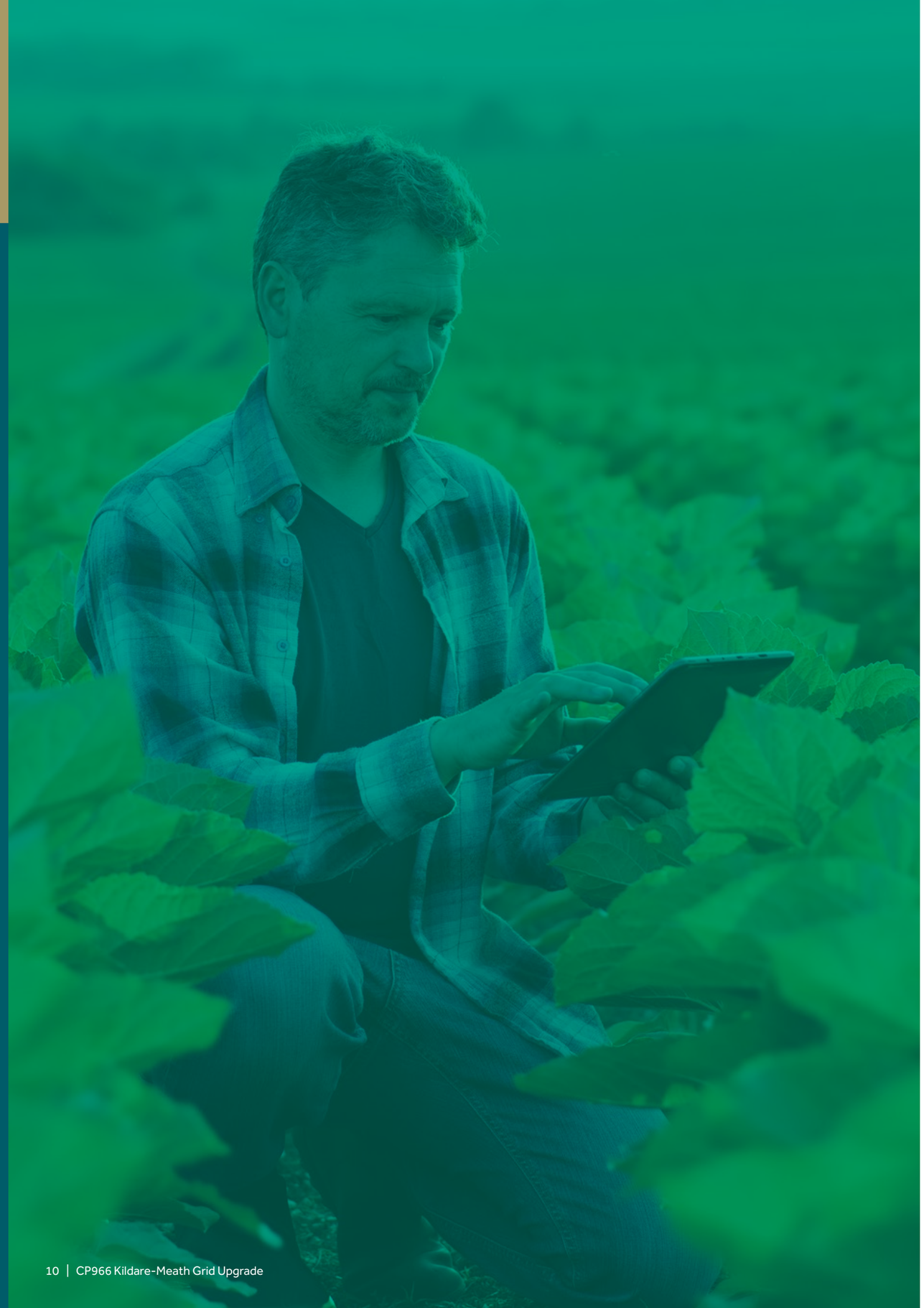
Four potential route options for the underground cables were identified and a 12-week public consultation was launched from August to November 2021. After considering the feedback received through the consultation process, EirGrid confirmed their Emerging Best Performing Route Option (EBPO) as Option A: The Red Option.

At the end of **Step 4,** EirGrid used a multi criteria assessment under the following five categories:

Figure 2: EirGrid's assessment categories

Following further engagement and technical studies, EirGrid confirmed the amendments to the route and announced their Best Performing Option (BPO) for the 400 kV underground cable. Five off-road sections required further engagement with affected landowners, and technical assessments were carried out to confirm the route within these wider areas.

The BPO has now been taken forward to the planning application process at **Step 5**. An interactive map can be viewed here: https://jacobs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c6b4133f808042b0aaa0a66a81b16ec2



03 Public participation and stakeholder engagement

3.1. Introduction

EirGrid's approach to consultation and public participation is driven by their commitment to the six-step grid development process, as outlined in Section 2.3 above.

At each step, a series of activities were carried out in order to inform, engage and consult with stakeholders and facilitate their participation in the project development process.

3.2. Step 1 (2016-2018)

3.2.1. Project Actions

In Step 1 EirGrid identified and confirmed the need for Capital Project 966 through a process of analysis of future energy scenarios of the area. This identified two drivers for the need to further develop the transmission system.

1. Increased demand on the east coast due to natural growth;
2. Integration of generation in the South and South West as significant levels of new renewable generation was being connected there and would need to be transported.

In July 2017, EirGrid published the Needs Report - Capital Project 966: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Step-1-Needs-Report-Capital-Project-966.pdf

This report described:

- The role of EirGrid, including the six-step engagement process;
- Regulatory targets and policy;
- The two drivers of the need for further development of the transmission system: increased demand on the east coast and the integration of generation in the South and South West;
- How the system is currently experiencing 'significant violations' with compliance with the Transmission System Security Planning Standards (TSSPS); and
- The plausible scale of solutions.

EirGrid had informal discussions with the regulator (CRU), Local Authorities, elected representatives, the EirGrid National Advisory Committee and Public Participation Networks (PPNs).

3.3. Step 2 (2018-2019)

3.3.1. Project Actions

In Step 2, EirGrid looked at a range of technical options that could meet the need they had identified. An initial long list of 15 solutions was created, which were then compared using two criteria - technical performance and economic performance. This led to the initial list being refined to the five best-performing options, using both overhead line and underground cable to link the two substations:

1. Dunstown to Woodland - Uprate of existing 220 kV overhead lines to 400 kV;
2. Dunstown to Woodland - New 400 kV overhead line;
3. Dunstown to Woodland - New 220 kV overhead line;
4. Dunstown to Woodland - New 220 kV underground cable;
5. Dunstown to Woodland - New 400 kV underground cable.

The five options were evaluated against a set of five criteria: technical, economic, environment, deliverability and socio-economic.

3.3.2. Stakeholder and Landowner Engagement

EirGrid identified the following strategic stakeholders, who were sent information about the project via email:

- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC);
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation;
- Kildare County Council;
- Meath County Council;
- Kildare Public Participation Network Officer;
- Meath Public Participation Network Officer;
- Kildare Elected Reps (Cllrs, TDs, Senators, MEPs);
- Meath Elected Reps (Cllrs, TDs, Senators, MEPs);
- Kildare Chamber of Commerce;
- Meath Chamber of Commerce;
- Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly;
- Chambers Ireland;
- Industrial Development Authority (IDA);
- Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC);
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU);
- Irish Farmers' Association (IFA);
- Equine industry.

3.3.2.1. Step 2 Phase A (March - June 2018)

In Phase A, the 15 initial options for meeting the need identified in Step 1 were evaluated and eventually narrowed to five options.

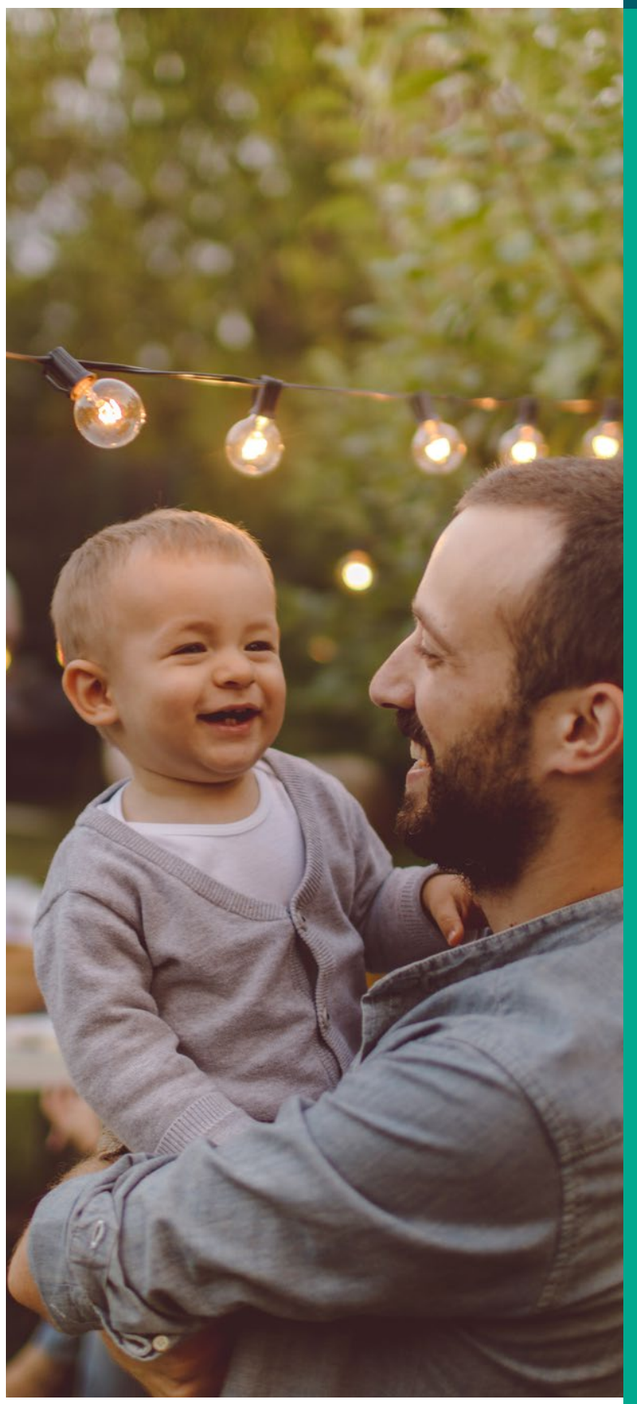
Stakeholder engagement activities included:

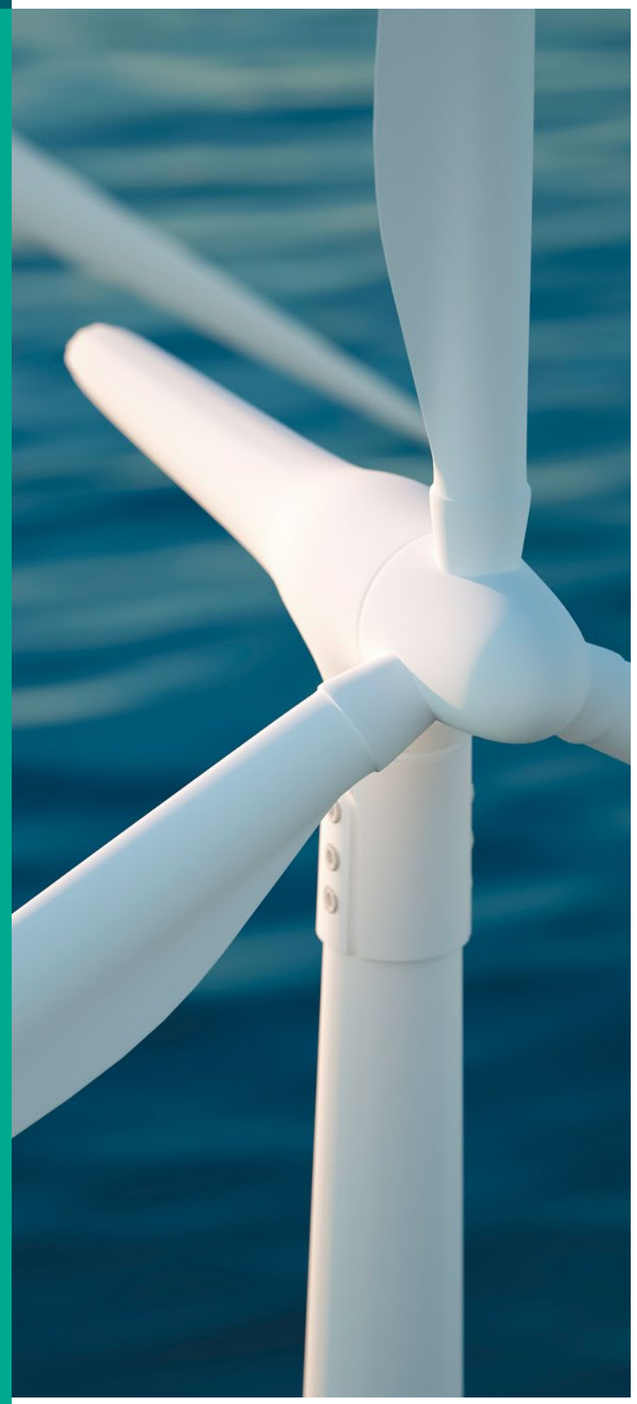
- In December 2017, following engagement with relevant stakeholders such as Government Departments, Meath and Kildare County Council, the IDA and the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, EirGrid published Step 2 Part A Options Report - Capital Project 0966: This described:
  - the long list of options which had been identified to meet the need identified in Step 1,
  - the steps that would be followed to narrow this long list of options,
  - the details of how each option was evaluated and reduced to 5 options,
  - the next steps that would be required.
  - The report can be viewed here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Step-2-Part-A-Options-Report-Capital-Project-966.pdf
- In June 2018, the project team provided stakeholder updates regarding 'Identifying the need and solution options' for the project. These summarised:
  - the need case,
  - the six-step process,
  - project drivers,
  - the technologies involved,
  - the long list of 15 possible solutions,
  - how it was refined,
  - the refined list of 5 options,
  - how these would be evaluated,
  - next steps.

The information was shared with DECC, IDA Ireland, Kildare County Council, Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly Office and Meath County Council. All organisations ranged from broadly to very supportive of the project. The presentation can be viewed via the following link: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/CP966-Step-2-Stakeholder-Presentation.pdf

3.3.2.2. Step 2 Phase B (November 2018 – March 2019)

A 10-week engagement period took place from 23 November 2018 to 4 February 2019. This period covered a broad range of stakeholder engagement with the general public, local communities and their elected representatives. Stakeholders were given an opportunity to provide feedback in relation to the assessment carried out to date and the solutions to be brought forward for further consideration in Step 3. In preparation for, and alongside the engagement,





EirGrid:

- Issued press releases to local media in Kildare and Meath;
- Shared up-to-date photography with media outlets and for social media;
- Created a dedicated CP966 section on EirGrid's website;
- In Autumn 2018, published a brochure on CP966. Similar to the stakeholder presentations. This covered introducing EirGrid, the six-step process, the project, the technologies involved, how the initial list of 15 solutions had been narrowed to five, what the five remaining options were and what criteria would be used to evaluate them going forward. This brochure was distributed via the EirGrid website and can be viewed here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/EirGrid-Capital-966-Project-Brochure.pdf. In addition, hard copies were printed and made available to the public and stakeholders;
- Utilised social media platforms as a means of communicating information about the project, public events and feedback channels, (although not as a means of collecting feedback);
- Created a helpline with staff briefed to receive project-specific calls;
- Went door to door in Woodland with project updates to include introduction to the Kildare Meath Grid Upgrade;
- Published project related material on the project website, including reports and project brochures;
- Issued a press statement to the media;
- Communicated details of the project via stakeholder presentations to Kildare County Council and Ratoath Municipal District Meath County Council;
- Engaged with the Public Participation Networks in Kildare and Meath to provide information on the project to local community groups in the region.

3.3.2.3. Summary of feedback

In March 2019, EirGrid published an independent report Capital Project 966 -Engagement Report Step 2. This report can be viewed via the EirGrid website here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Capital-Project-966-Stakeholder-Engagement-Step-2-Report-(2).pdf

This summarised the background to the consultation and engagement actions undertaken by EirGrid so far as part of Step 2. It went on to summarise the written feedback received to the formal consultation.

Engagement at a glance:

Activity	Number
Strategic Stakeholder Emails	24
Press Adverts	7
Social Media	Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin
Stakeholder Briefings	9
Submissions	11

Strategic stakeholders who responded to the consultation agreed with the need case for infrastructure improvements, while some also expressed preferences for specific methods to deliver these improvements. A few preferred use of the existing network to carry out the improvements.

Most residents and strategic stakeholders who responded requested further information from the EirGrid project team about particular aspects of the project, or how the project as a whole would develop, on a range of topics including undergrounding, cables, communication, roads and the environment.

At the same time, EirGrid published Options Report - Part B - Capital Project 0966: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Step-2-Part-B-Options-Report-Capital-project-966.pdf

This report followed on from the Part A Options Report which had been published in December 2017. It described how the five options identified in Part A had been evaluated and narrowed to four. This included an introduction to the need case identified in Step 1, the six-step process, the process and criteria for evaluating the five options, and the findings of this process.

EirGrid also published an updated brochure on the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Capital-Project-966-Brochure-Spring-2019.pdf

This described how, in the Step 2 consultation, most respondents had expressed a preference for either the underground option or the uprate option and discussed the uprate option in more detail. The brochure also communicated that the shortlist of five options had now been narrowed to four and described how this had been done. It went on to describe the next steps in the process.

3.4. Step 3 (2019-2020)

3.4.1. Project Actions

The shortlist of options to be evaluated in Step 3 that would address the need to upgrade the grid in the area are listed below.

Option 1: Dunstown to Woodland - Uprate of existing 220 kV overhead line to 400 kV;

Option 2: Dunstown to Woodland - New 400 kV overhead line;

Option 3: Dunstown to Woodland - New 220 kV underground cable;

Option 4: Dunstown to Woodland - New 400 kV underground cable.

EirGrid assessed these options against the five categories of a multiple criteria assessment, and as a result, EirGrid identified Option 1, which would use existing route corridors and infrastructure as much as possible to create a 400 kV overhead line, as the Emerging Best Performing Option (EBPO).

Option 4, which would involve building a new 400 kV underground cable, was identified as the emerging best performing alternative.

3.4.1. Stakeholder engagement

3.4.1.1. Information phase (20 July to 5 October 2020)

In the information phase, EirGrid informed and engaged with relevant regional and national stakeholders such as government Departments, Meath County Council, Kildare County Council, Elected Representatives, the IDA, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, Chambers of Commerce, Public Participation Networks and the Irish Farmers' Association.

This phase also included an information campaign in local newspapers and radio, video animation for social media awareness raising, the publication of investigative reports and technical assessments, an online interactive map and a webinar.

EirGrid also carried out door-to-door engagement within a two-mile radius of the substation at Woodland in the period.

Due to the challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic, EirGrid made additional efforts in reaching out to the public. Some of these activities included:

- Hosting public webinars;
- Advertising in local newspapers, on radio, bus stops, in some supermarkets and on social media;
- Developing a project micro-site (available at Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade (https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c7ec4696b65846feb1a384b85d39dde2);
- Hosting a virtual project exhibition (available at Eirgrid – Kildare-Meath (https://kildaremeath.consultation-online.com/);
- In-person meetings with our project liaison staff (as Covid-19 restrictions allowed);
- Ongoing engagement by phone and email.

3.4.1.2. Public consultation phase

Public consultation on the Emerging Best Performing Option took place between 6 October and 14 December 2020. The project questionnaire was distributed to all homes in the study area (approximately 57,000).

In total, this consultation received 178 responses. Responses to the consultation were submitted via an online form, by email and by post.

Response Channel	Response Volume
Online Responses	48
Hardcopy Responses	124
Letter / Email Responses	6
Meetings	9
Written feedback including queries on the project	11

Many respondents expressed support for Option 1. Dunstown to Woodland - Uprate of existing 220 kV overhead line to 400 kV, mainly because this option would make use of existing infrastructure. Many respondents also expressed support for Option 4. Dunstown to Woodland - New 400 kV underground cable, with a number saying that they prefer underground cables to overhead lines. A smaller number stated a preference for Options 2, 3 and 4.

The report in full can be read here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Kildare-Meath-Grid-Upgrade-Step3-Consultation-Final-report.pdf

3.5. Step 4 (2021-2022)

3.5.1. Project actions

At Step 4, EirGrid identified four potential underground cable route options, which were assessed against the five key assessment criteria (Environment, socio-economic, technical, deliverability and economic).

Step 4 was divided into two sub-steps: **Step 4A** and **Step 4B**. The Step 4A Report was published in March 2022 and presents an analysis of the proposed route options. It describes the process followed to identify the proposed route options and presents a comparative evaluation of those sites against the criteria. The report in full can be viewed at https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/KMGU-JAC-TN-0017-Step-4A-Report-08-03-2022-Compressed.pdf

Option A (the Red Route) was selected as the Emerging Best Performing (EPBO) Option as it scored more favourably in terms of Deliverability compared to the other options.

In Step 4B, Option A was re-examined to refine the route as far as possible to remove any wider areas (corridors) and to provide more certainty on the specific location.

3.5.2. Stakeholder engagement

3.5.2.1. Information and Consultation phase

EirGrid undertook a phase of information-giving to promote the consultation phase with local stakeholders, starting in mid-August 2021, two weeks before the consultation opened, and continuing for the duration of the consultation period: 31 August to 22 November 2021.

In July 2021, a Community Forum was established for the project. The role of the forum was to offer advice to EirGrid on key project developments such as:

- how they communicate and engage with the public;
- what they need to consider in developing the project;
- how they can deliver meaningful community benefit to the area where infrastructure is hosted.

In May 2021 EirGrid appointed an Irish non-profit organisation called Development Perspectives as the called Development Perspectives as the independent chair of the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Community Forum. An information evening was then held and that was followed a public nomination period where community groups were invited to express an interest in sitting on the forum. Kildare County Council and Meath County Council were also invited to nominate elected representatives onto the forum.

During the consultation phase, EirGrid carried out the following activities:

- Four Community Forum meetings;
- Onsite engagement with a Mobile Information Unit visiting nine towns and villages for one week: Batterstown, Kilcock, Maynooth, Straffan, Prosperous, Clane, Sallins, Naas and Two Mile House;
- Engagement (including meetings and/or written communications) with multiple stakeholders including:
  - Transport Infrastructure Ireland Kildare Meath Working Group,
  - Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications,
  - Local Authorities (Meath County Council, Kildare County Council, Maynooth Community Council),
  - Business stakeholders: Kildare Chamber, Meath Chamber, Enterprise Ireland, the ID,
  - Public Participation Networks: Kildare Partnership, Meath Partnership,
  - Elected representatives: including TDs from Meath East, Meath West, Kildare North and Kildare South, as well as Senators,
  - Kildare Councillors from Athy Municipal District, Kildare-Newbridge Municipal District, Celbridge-Leixlip Municipal District, Clane-Maynooth Municipal District, and Naas Municipal District,
  - Meath Councillors from Ashbourne Municipal District, Ratoath Municipal District, and Trim Municipal District,
  - Two Mile House Says No (battery objection group),
  - Irish Rail.
- Two public webinars, in September and October 2021;
- A media campaign in regional press and radio, social media (paid and organic), locally targeted advertising on digital screens and ad-boards, GAA pitch sponsorships (3-year agreements), a project website (https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/capital-project-966/the-project/) and online consultation portal (https://consult.eirgrid.ie/consultation/kildare-meath-grid-upgrade-step-4-consultation-underground-cable-route-options)
- The distribution of a project information leaflet and freepost questionnaire to every home in the study area (approximately 42,800).

3.5.2.2. Post-consultation

Following the consultation, EirGrid published a Step 4 Engagement Report. This report details feedback received on the EBPO through community and stakeholder engagement. Positive comments included:

- The proposed Community Benefit Scheme;
- The use of an underground cable;
- That the cable would run on roads close to residential property, as its construction could potentially mean the upgrade of local roads;

- Satisfaction at the level of engagement publicity during the consultation process, including advertisements in regional newspapers.

Some stakeholder expressed concerns over disruption to local communities and businesses, particularly as a result of increased traffic movements.

Among the concerns raised were the following:

- Impacts on local amenities such as sports pitches;
- The importance of communication with those who would be impacted, as identified on the maps provided, and ensuring sufficient detail was contained within the maps;
- Potential safety issues arising from Electromagnetic Fields (EMF);
- Concerns over the project timeline.

The full report can be viewed here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Kildare-Meath-Step-4-Engagement-Report_FINAL-14-June-2022.pdf

EirGrid also published a Step 4B Report – Route Options and Evaluation Report in June 2022, which confirmed the Best Performing Route Option in detail. A period of engagement followed with landowners, the community forum, infrastructure owners and other key stakeholders in addition to environmental surveys and assessments.

The report can be viewed in full here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/KMGU-JAC-TN-0048-STEP-4B-Final.pdf

EirGrid carried out door-to-door visits to community in and around Woodland following the announcement of Emerging Best Performing Option (EBPO). This included:

- Landowner engagement to agree access to lands for walkover surveys and ground investigation works;
- Ongoing landowner engagement to 'fine tune' routes through private lands;
- Engagement with other contractors and consultants to seek further information in relation to existing services within the roads;
- face to face engagement with all landowners;
- Meeting with non-impacted landowners to facilitate surveys on their lands;
- Ongoing engagement for additional elements associated with the cable route - passing bay locations for example.

3.6. Step 5

During Step 5 there has been ongoing engagement with a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

EirGrid undertook three Energy Citizen Roadshows within Counties Kildare and Meath. As part of a series of Energy Citizens Roadshow, these events were aimed at informing local communities on how the organisation plans to future-proof the electricity grid as well as providing information about microgeneration, home energy upgrades and retrofitting grants, and regional development issues. The roadshow concept was a follow on from the 2021 Shaping Our Electricity Future https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/shaping-our-electricity-f/ consultation programme during which EirGrid sought views and inputs from all sectors of society and industry about grid development.

The Kildare events were held in Naas and Maynooth, while the Meath event was hosted in Navan.

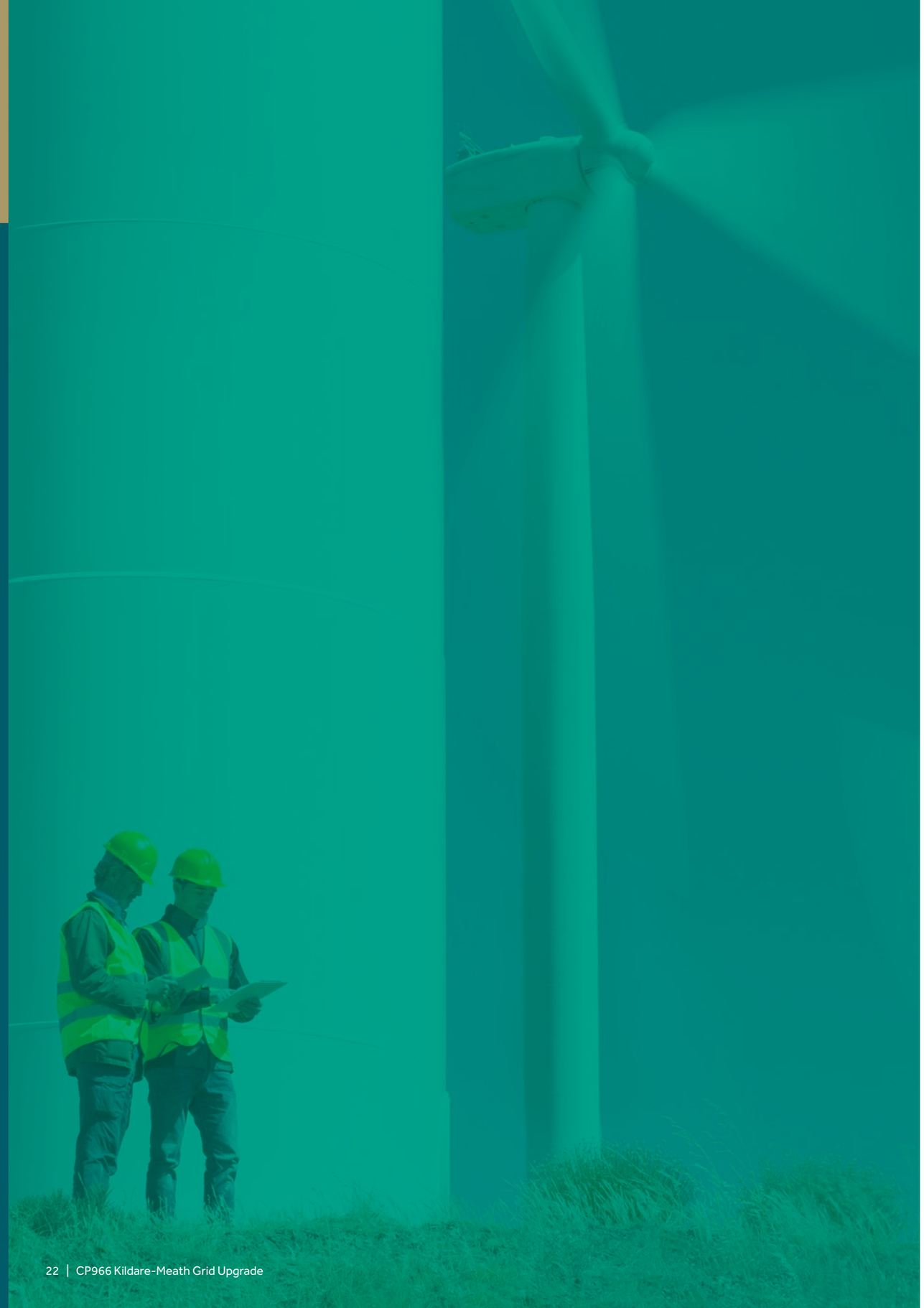
Publicising of these events took place in local print and radio outlets, and across social media channels (facebook, twitter, LinkedIn). In addition, these were publicised through the network of existing stakeholders within these two counties, such as the Public Participation Network, Chambers of Commerce, Local Elected Representatives, East Meath-North Dublin Community Forum and local stakeholders.

See appendix for associated advertising

In addition to the Energy Citizen Roadshows, EirGrid undertook local engagement as part of Engineers Week 2023, which took place from 4th to 10th March.

As part of the Engineers Ireland's STEPS programme, we visited Rathregan NS in Batterstown, Co Meath, to outline the creative and limitless world of engineering to these primary school students, and how engineering is at the heart of the work EirGrid does in developing the electricity grid. The visit consisted of an engineering-focused quiz, a practical engineering challenge were all students made a wind turbine and a presentation from one of EirGrid's senior engineers about engineering as a career.

The Engineers Ireland STEPS Programme is a non-profit outreach programme that promotes interest and awareness in engineering as a future career to students in all communities through a portfolio of projects.



04 Next steps and ongoing engagement

4.1. Next Steps

Having published the Preferred Route Corridor and Option Selection Report in Step 4, the planning and design development process commenced, which included undertaking surveys and investigations within the preferred route corridor, developing the route design, identifying the land take required, junction and access requirements and the completion of a planning and environmental consideration report. During this phase, the project team engaged with landowners and interested parties as part of the design development process.

Having developed the design, and concluded engagement with landowners and interested parties, a planning submission and statutory orders are now ready for publication. A statutory public consultation process will now be undertaken as part of the statutory approval process.

Any person or body may make a submission or observation in writing to the Board in relation to the application. Further information on making a submission / observation in writing to the Board and oral hearing procedures are available from the Board's website www.pleanala.ie. Further information on making a submission / observation in writing to the Board and oral hearing procedures are available from the Board's website www.pleanala.ie.

4.2. Ongoing Engagement

EirGrid will continue to engage with technical stakeholders, the Community Forum and the wider community throughout the planning process and thereafter.

From a technical stakeholder's perspective, members of the EirGrid team have held ongoing and frequent meetings with these stakeholders throughout the development of this project. Technical stakeholders include:

- Meath County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Irish Rail
- Waterways Ireland
- Irish Water
- ESB
- National Parks & Wildlife Service
- Department of Transport
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- National Monuments Services

Should planning permission be granted, the Community Forum will oversee the implementation of a Community Benefit Scheme with the support of the EirGrid Public Engagement team and an independent Community Fund Administrator.

The Community Forum will co-develop a community benefit strategy in conjunction with local stakeholders and will work with EirGrid to ensure the fund administrator aligns the benefit scheme to the strategy. The strategy will align with other local community plans, national policy and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The community benefit is spread across three funding streams including:

- Community - to reinforce community cohesion, wellbeing and education;
- Sustainability - to transform how communities think about, generate and use energy;
- Biodiversity - to leave the biodiversity of an area in a better condition than it was before we built a project.

The wider role of the Community Forum will be to:

- Ensure communities are at the heart of the decision making over the project lifetime;
- Provide relevant input and key local knowledge to assist the project team in decision making;
- Work with community groups and organisations to build trust, identify local needs, grow partnerships and deliver on local projects;
- Receive regular updates from EirGrid team members on project delivery;
- To advise EirGrid on the most effective approach to communicating feedback and key milestones to the wider community.

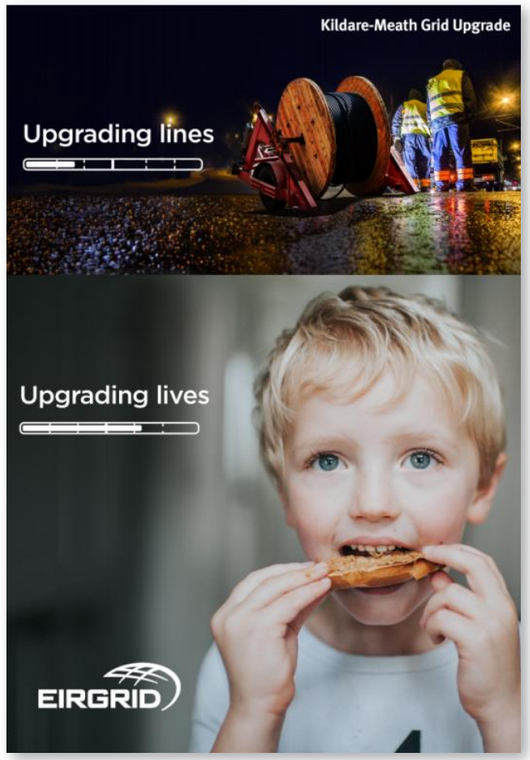
More information on the Community Forum is available here: https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/capital-project-966/community-forum/

At Step 6, EirGrid will work with ESB Networks to minimise the impacts of construction and will engage with landowners and local communities on traffic management and access requirements.

05 Appendices

5.1. Appendix

Step 3 Project Information Leaflet



Your Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

We all know how much better an upgrade can make things. That's why EirGrid is planning to upgrade the Kildare-Meath Grid. It's vital if we are to have the power we need for our growing population and to ensure you have a safe, secure and sustainable supply of electricity for the future. It also means we can bring more renewable energy onto the grid, helping Ireland to reduce carbon emissions.

We're currently looking at five possible ways of doing this, with overhead or underground options. You can find out more at eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath

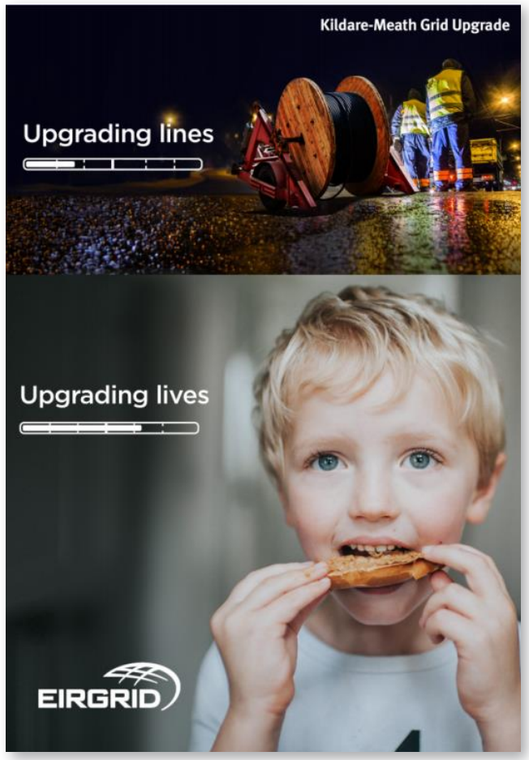
Come and meet us

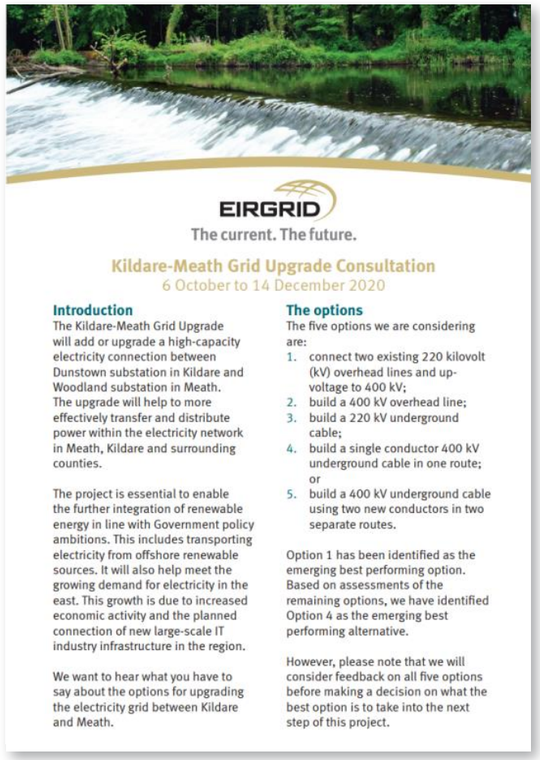
In advance of our public consultation, which will run between September and November, our Mobile Information Unit will be visiting Kildare and Meath in the coming weeks and we'll be happy to answer your questions. Social distancing measures will, of course, be in place and you'll find all the dates, times and locations at eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath You can also call 01 677 1700 or email us at KildareMeath@eirgrid.com to learn more about the project.

EIRGRID

5.2. Appendix

Step 3 Consultation Response Form





EIRGRID

The current. The future.

Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Consultation

6 October to 14 December 2020

Introduction

The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade will add or upgrade a high-capacity electricity connection between Dunstown substation in Kildare and Woodland substation in Meath. The upgrade will help to more effectively transfer and distribute power within the electricity network in Meath, Kildare and surrounding counties.

The project is essential to enable the further integration of renewable energy in line with Government policy ambitions. This includes transporting electricity from offshore renewable sources. It will also help meet the growing demand for electricity in the east. This growth is due to increased economic activity and the planned connection of new large-scale IT industry infrastructure in the region.

We want to hear what you have to say about the options for upgrading the electricity grid between Kildare and Meath.

The options

The five options we are considering are:

1. connect two existing 220 kilovolt (kV) overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV;
2. build a 400 kV overhead line;
3. build a 220 kV underground cable;
4. build a single conductor 400 kV underground cable in one route; or
5. build a 400 kV underground cable using two new conductors in two separate routes.

Option 1 has been identified as the emerging best performing option. Based on assessments of the remaining options, we have identified Option 4 as the emerging best performing alternative.

However, please note that we will consider feedback on all five options before making a decision on what the best option is to take into the next step of this project.

About this consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to gather feedback on the options we are considering for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade. The consultation is live from 6 October 2020 to 14 December 2020.

Where can I find out more?

- View project information and documents online
- View our interactive maps
- Take a virtual tour of our Open Day
- Sign up for webinar
- Arrange to speak to a team member directly

All of this information is available on our website: **www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath**. If you need further guidance or copies of any of our documents, please contact your Community Liaison Officer Gráinne Duffy on: **085 887 4798** or **KildareMeath@eirgrid.com**.

How can I give feedback?

- Complete this questionnaire and submit it by freepost
- Complete the questionnaire online
- Write your own submission and freepost it back to us
- Email your submission to us at KildareMeath@eirgrid.com

Our freepost address is: **Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Consultation, EirGrid plc, Freepost FDN 5312, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Do4 FW28**.

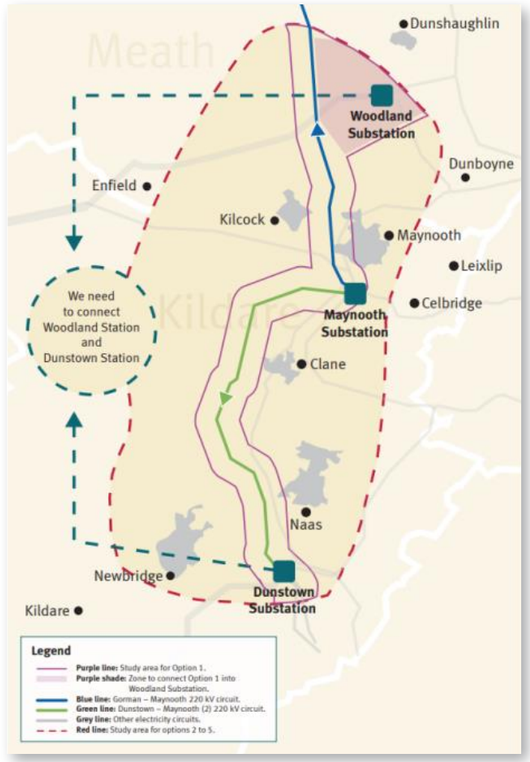
How will my feedback be used?

We will use your feedback alongside our technical assessments to determine the best-performing option to take into the next stage of this important project. Please note we are not considering routes at this time.

About this questionnaire

To assist you in responding to this questionnaire, you may wish to refer to the Step 3 Project Update brochure and a report prepared by consultants working on the project. These documents are available on our website: **www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath**.

All information provided to EirGrid will be held by EirGrid personnel and EirGrid's data processors only, for the purpose of engaging with you in the public consultation process. EirGrid's privacy statement is available at: www.eirgrid.ie/privacy



5.2. Appendix

Step 3 Consultation Response Form

Personal Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

EirCode: _____

Organisation (if any): _____

Contact number: _____

Contact Email: _____

If interested, how would you like to receive further updates on this project?

☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Post

Option 1 has been identified as the emerging best performing option. Based on assessments of the remaining options, we have identified Option 4 as the emerging best performing alternative.

Question 1: Please provide your comments in relation to Option 1: Connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and upvoltage to 400 kV.

Question 2: Please provide your comments in relation to Option 4: Build a new 400 kV underground cable.

Question 3: Please provide your comments on the remaining 3 options (please indicate which of the options you are commenting on):

Question 4: The study area is the proposed area within which the electricity infrastructure for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade would be built.
Please provide any comments you may have relating to the study area for this project such as environmental and biodiversity constraints, cultural and/or heritage considerations.

Question 5: There will be a community fund scheme for communities if the project is granted planning permission. The fund will be made available to community groups in close proximity to the new infrastructure.
Please provide any ideas you have about local projects that this community fund could support or how the community fund could be rolled out.

Question 6: What do you think of the quality of each of the following aspects of the consultation?

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	No opinion/I don't know
Awareness raising and promotion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Publications	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Project Website	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Questionnaire	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 7: How did you first hear about this consultation?
(Tick all that apply)

☐ Newspaper, radio or advertising
☐ Leaflet or letter in the post
☐ Online or social media
☐ Word of mouth
☐ Other (please specify) _____

Question 8: Provide any other comments you may have in relation to this project below:

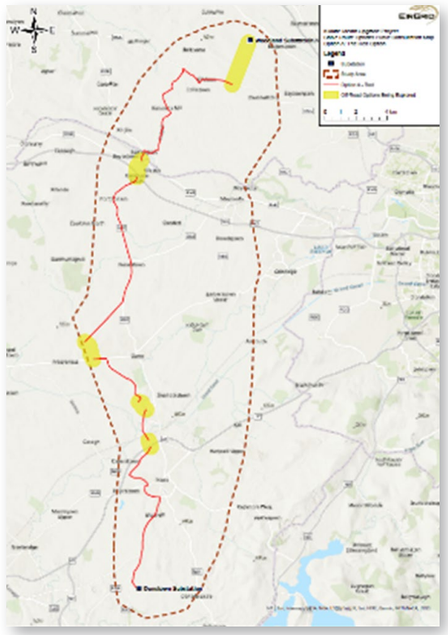
A brief comparison of the 5 options being considered for this project. Find out more at www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath

Consideration	Option 1 Connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV	Option 2 Build a 400 kV overhead line	Option 3 Build a 220 kV underground cable	Option 4 Build a single conductor 400 kV underground cable in one route	Option 5 Build a 400 kV underground cable using two conductors in two separate routes
Outcome of multi-criteria assessments to date	Emerging best performing option	Not emerging as a preferred option	Not emerging as a preferred option	Emerging best performing alternative	Not emerging as a preferred option
Capital cost	€239m	€168m	€372m	€356m	€679m
Environmental impact	Least risk	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Most risk
Potential disruption during construction	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption
Visual difference when construction completed	There will be changes to existing overhead infrastructure with minimal new infrastructure on the existing route. New infrastructure into Woodland station	New overhead infrastructure	New underground infrastructure, mainly under existing roads. No new overhead infrastructure	New underground infrastructure, mainly under existing roads. No new overhead infrastructure	New underground infrastructure, mainly under existing roads. No new overhead infrastructure
Meets technical requirements	Yes	Yes	Not to the same level as other options	Yes	Yes
Other notable points	Uses route along existing overhead lines and maximises use of existing infrastructure			Requires a 4 metre wide cable trench and overall work space of up to 12 metres in places	Requires the same as option 4 but along 2 routes

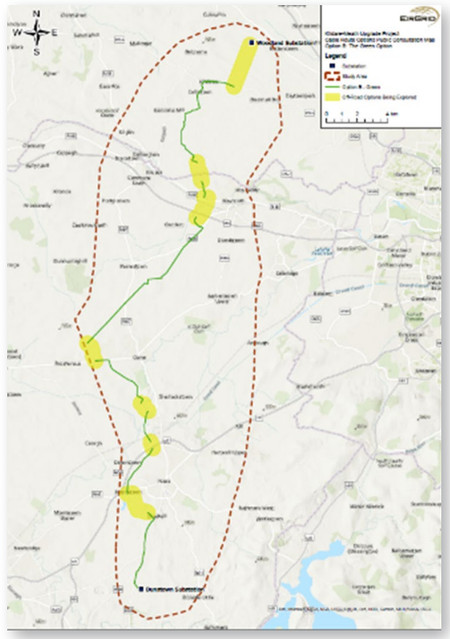
5.3. Appendix

Step 4 Public Consultation Options A-D and Routes Considered Not

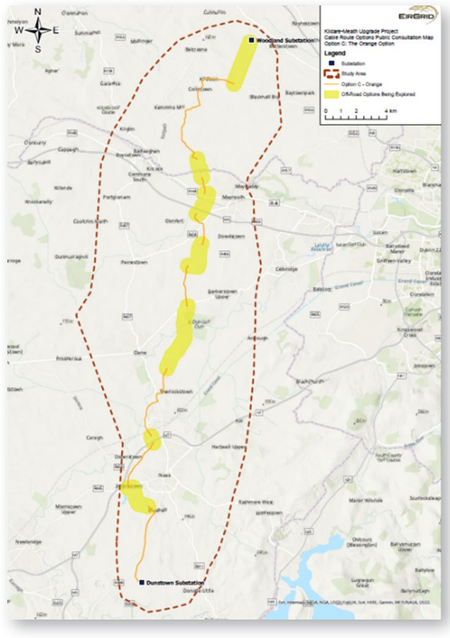
5.3.1. Option A – The Red Route



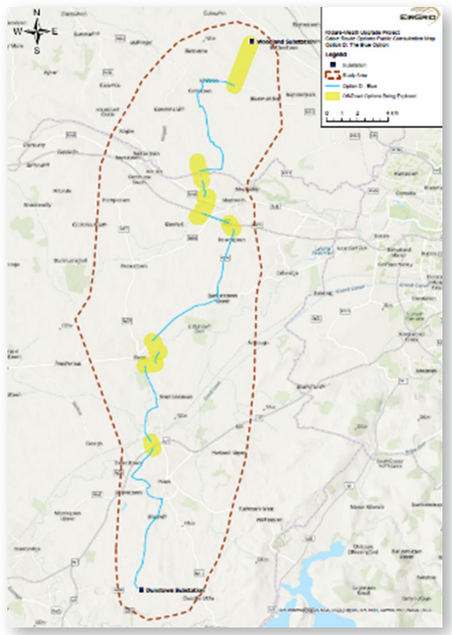
5.3.2. Option B – The Green Route



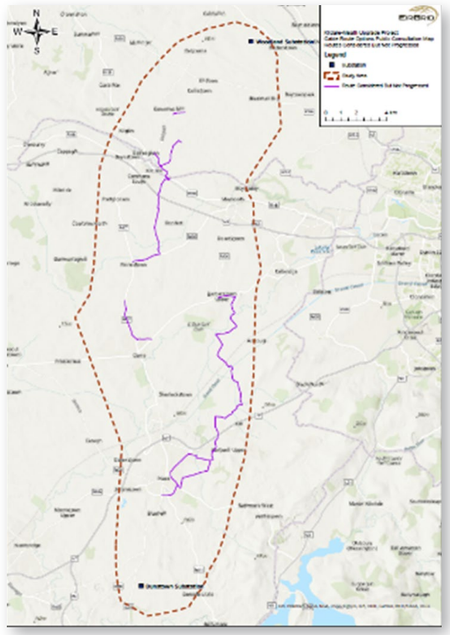
5.3.3. Option C – The Orange Route



5.3.4. Option D – The Blue Route

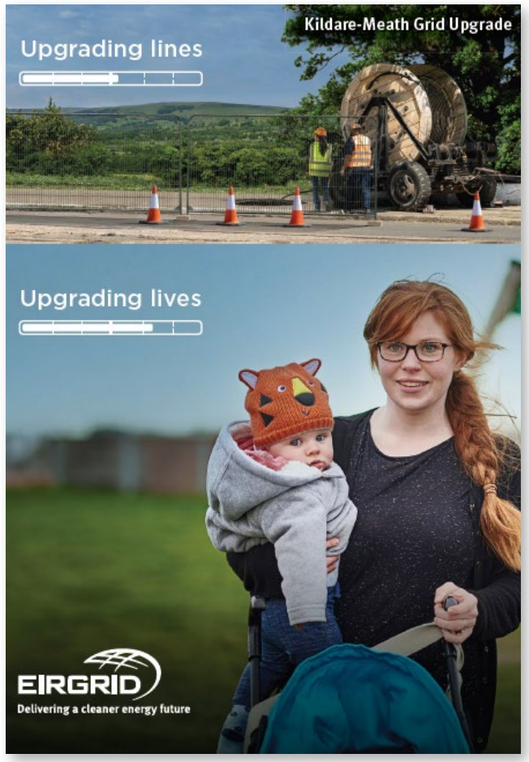


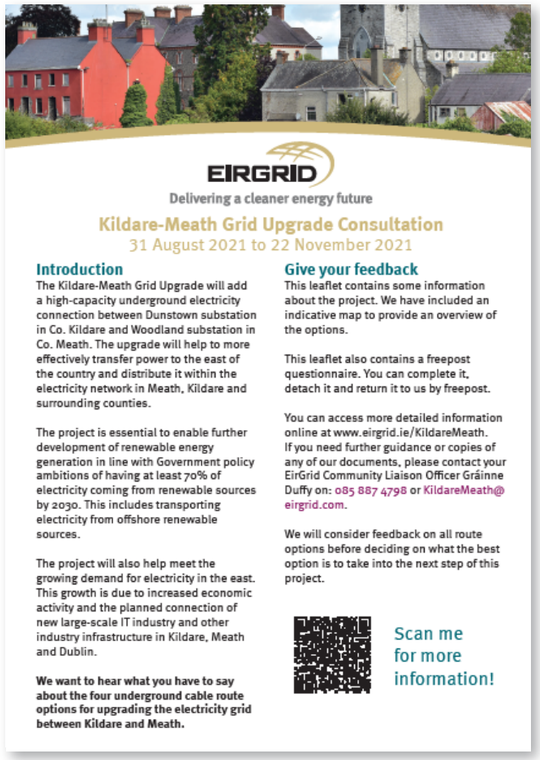
5.3.5. Routes Considered Not Progressed



5.4. Appendix 4

Step 4 Consultation Questionnaire





EIRGRID

Delivering a cleaner energy future

Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Consultation

31 August 2021 to 22 November 2021

Introduction

The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade will add a high-capacity underground electricity connection between Dunstown substation in Co. Kildare and Woodland substation in Co. Meath. The upgrade will help to more effectively transfer power to the east of the country and distribute it within the electricity network in Meath, Kildare and surrounding counties.

The project is essential to enable further development of renewable energy generation in line with Government policy ambitions of having at least 70% of electricity coming from renewable sources by 2030. This includes transporting electricity from offshore renewable sources.

The project will also help meet the growing demand for electricity in the east. This growth is due to increased economic activity and the planned connection of new large-scale IT industry and other industry infrastructure in Kildare, Meath and Dublin.

We want to hear what you have to say about the four underground cable route options for upgrading the electricity grid between Kildare and Meath.

Give your feedback

This leaflet contains some information about the project. We have included an indicative map to provide an overview of the options.

This leaflet also contains a freepost questionnaire. You can complete it, detach it and return it to us by freepost.

You can access more detailed information online at www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath. If you need further guidance or copies of any of our documents, please contact your EirGrid Community Liaison Officer Gráinne Duffy on: 085 887 4798 or KildareMeath@eirgrid.com.

We will consider feedback on all route options before deciding on what the best option is to take into the next step of this project.

Scan me for more information!

About this consultation

We are inviting you to give feedback on the four route options for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade. We want to know what you think about each option. Is there anything else we should be taking account of? Have you any other feedback we should consider?

The consultation period is from 31 August to 22 November 2021. We encourage you to engage with us and have your say as early as possible during the consultation period.

Where can I find out more?

Sign up to a webinar

Arrange to speak to a team member directly

Visit our consultation and information portal

All information relating to this project is available on our website: **www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath**. If you need further guidance or copies of any of our documents, please contact your Community Liaison Officer Gráinne Duffy on: **085 887 4798** or **KildareMeath@eirgrid.com**.

How can I have my say?

Complete this questionnaire and submit it by freepost

Submit your views online at: consult.eirgrid.ie

Email your submission to us at: KildareMeath@eirgrid.com

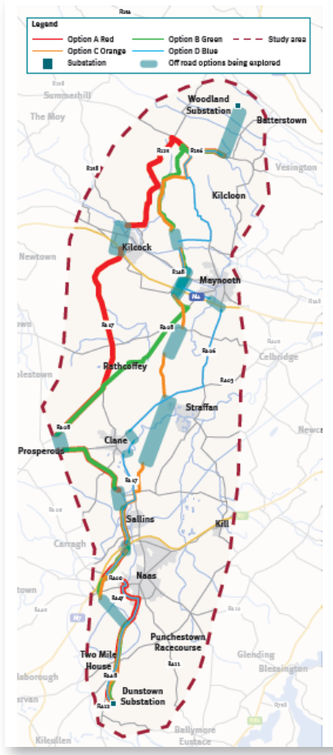
Write your own submission and freepost it back to us

Our freepost address is: **Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Consultation, EirGrid plc, Freepost FDN 5312, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, D04 FW28.**

About the options

We have developed four potential underground cable options for this project. We plan these using principles such as avoiding town and village centres, and maximising the use of local roads. We also consider constraints such as environmental impact, the width of roads and other services in the road such as water, gas and drainage. All routes start in Woodland substation and end in Dunstown substation. All routes cross the Royal Canal and the Grand Canal. Some routes will also need to cross watercourses, railway lines and motorways – however we would propose to drill under these. Please know that we will engage extensively with all relevant bodies, carry out all necessary studies and put in place all risk mitigations before starting these works.

Each option will require some of the cable to be off-road. Where off-road routing is unavoidable, we do not yet know what the exact route may be. For this reason, we highlight a corridor of space on the route map. The off-road section may pass through this corridor. We will determine this after discussing it with the landowners affected. We will avoid agricultural land as far as possible by carefully routing the cable.



Detailed interactive maps are available to view at: consult.eirgrid.ie.

5.4. Appendix 4

Step 4 Consultation Questionnaire

Personal Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

EirCode: _____

Organisation (if any): _____

Contact number: _____

Contact Email: _____

If interested, how would you like to receive further updates on this project? (Tick all that apply)

☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Post

Data Protection and Privacy Statement

☐ I consent to EirGrid processing my data for the purposes of the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade project. All information provided to EirGrid will be held by EirGrid personnel and EirGrid's data processors only, for the purpose of engaging with me in the public consultation process. EirGrid's privacy statement is available at: *www.eirgrid.ie/privacy*

☐ I consent to EirGrid publishing my name with this submission. Otherwise this submission will be published anonymously.

(Optional) Questions about this Consultation Process

The questions in this section help us understand your views in relation to this consultation process and will help us best plan future engagement.

How did you hear about this consultation? (Tick all that apply)

☐ Member of the Community Forum
☐ An Elected Representative
☐ Newspaper, radio or advertising
☐ Leaflet or letter in the post
☐ Online or social media
☐ Word of mouth
☐ Other (please specify)

With which gender do you identify?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say

Age?

☐ Under 18 ☐ 18-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49
☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-64 ☐ 65+

Do you or anyone in your household have specific access needs that you would like us to be aware of?

Feedback Questions

Question 1: Please provide your comments in relation to each route option. Your comments may include route-specific issues that you want us to be aware of or suggestions about alternative routing. Your comments may also express concerns or highlight opportunities.

Option A: Red Option

Option B: Green Option

Option C: Orange Option

Option D: Blue Option

Question 2: Please provide any other comments you have about the approach we have taken on this project.

Question 3: Are there regular or annual major events, festivals or similar in your local area that you would like us to be aware of as we plan the scheduling of this project?

If you need more space, please add an additional page or complete your feedback online at consult.eirgrid.ie

At a glance view of the proposed route options

The following table provides an overview of the four underground cable options we are considering for this project. Find more detail online at eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath.

Please note that the route lengths referenced below are indicative only and will be finalised when a full and detailed route is agreed.

Option	Estimated overall length (km)	Estimated off-road sections (km)	Environmental impact	Social impact and potential disruption during construction	Meets technical requirements	Other notable points
Option A (Red)	51	5	Least risk	Low-moderate	Yes	Travels to the west of Kilcock village, longest route, but it affects the least amount of agricultural land of all options.
Option B (Green)	50	8	Low-moderate	Moderate-high	Yes	Travels through Rathcoffey and Moortown.
Option C (Orange)	47	13	Low-moderate	Moderate-high	Yes	Shortest cable but it affects the most agricultural land of all options.
Option D (Blue)	51	6	Least risk	Low-moderate	Yes	

5.5. Appendix 3

Step 4 Letter to residents living near Woodland Substation

EIRGRID

www.eirgrid.com
An tUdhchruth, 160 Bóthar Shíol Bhroin
Droichead na Dothra, Baile Átha Cliath 4, D04 FW28, Éire
The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road
Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28, Ireland
Fón / Telephone +353 1 677 1700
R-phost / Email info@eirgrid.com

Update: Improvement Works at Woodland Substation September 2022

Dear Resident,

In July 2020 we wrote to you advising that EirGrid were assessing the need for improvement works at Woodland substation in order to meet the growing demand on our electricity grid. We are currently at design and pre-planning stage of these proposed works and want to answer some of the questions which you may have.

1) Why are these improvement works required?

Woodland substation has a pivotal role to play in the transformation of our grid and has been a key piece of the country's electricity network since it was built in the early 1980s. The works required at Woodland are required to improve the functionality and resilience of the substation into the future, while also increasing capacity to accommodate a number of planned strategic projects.

2) What new EirGrid projects will connect to Woodland Substation?

Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade, Capital Project CP0966: This will link Woodland with Dunstown substation in Kildare and will transfer power (including renewables) more efficiently from the south and south west and distribute electricity within the network in Meath, Kildare and Dublin.

East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, Capital Project CP1021: This will connect Woodland to Belcamp substation in north Dublin, to help meet growing demand for electricity in the east of the country and facilitate more renewable electricity, both on and off-shore.

North South Interconnector: This will connect to a new substation in Turleenan in Tyrone, providing a second link between the Irish and Northern Irish electricity grids. It will remove a bottleneck between the two jurisdictions and improve the efficiency of the all-island Single Electricity Market.

3) Are EirGrid building any renewable energy projects here?

No. EirGrid is a state-owned company regulated by The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU). We develop, manage and operate the electricity transmission grid, bringing power from where it is generated to where it is needed throughout Ireland. We do not develop renewable energy projects.

EIRGRID

4) What improvement works are taking place?

The programme of proposed works will include the following;

- Extension of the substation compound and perimeter fencing, within the existing ESB site boundary.
- Installation of new equipment to improve the functionality and resilience of the infrastructure within the substation to meet our future requirements.
- Upgrade of the access roads in and around the station.
- Upgrade and replacement of existing assets within the station that are nearing end of life.

5) Do these improvement works require planning permission?

Yes. EirGrid intend to bring a planning application to Meath County Council by the end of this year and will be engaging with the local authority in the coming months. We will update all residents again when this submission is being made and as always, our Community Liaison Officers are available to meet or discuss any queries you may have in advance of this.

6) Who to contact with queries?

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact your local Community Liaison Officers Gráinne Duffy or Eoghan O'Sullivan. As these projects progress over the coming months and years, we will be holding public information and consultation events. These are important milestones and provide an opportunity to influence how these projects are developed.

Your Community Liaison Officers

Gráinne Duffy
085 887 4798
Grainne.Duffy@eirgrid.com

Eoghan O'Sullivan
087 247 7732
Eoghan.Osullivan@eirgrid.com

5.6. Appendix 4

Step 4 Media Campaign Assets

EirGrid Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade - Best performing route option video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5E2MxpPlaXE

5.7. Appendix 4

Step 5 Media Campaign Assets


EirGrid