

East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Step 4 Engagement and Consultation Summary Report

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East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Step 4 Engagement and Consultation Summary Report

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Executive summary

This report provides a summary of engagement and consultation activities carried out by EirGrid at Step 4 of the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade. The activities included a public consultation, which ran for 12 weeks from 7 September 2022 to the 30 November 2022. EirGrid also convened three focus groups in November 2022 and carried out several other engagement activities, including stakeholder meetings, in person information days and webinars.

EirGrid sought views on four different route options for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade. Feedback was also invited on EirGrid's wider approach to the project and suggestions for any major events and festivals in the area that should be considered in scheduling the project.

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1. Introduction

1.1 About the report

This report provides a summary of engagement carried out during Step 4 of East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade project. Traverse, an independent consultancy specialising in engagement and consultation analysis, was commissioned to report on the findings. Jacobs was subsequently commissioned to audit these findings and prepare this report.

1.2 The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade

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 stations to heavy industry and high-tech users. The grid also supplies the distribution network operated by ESB (Electricity Supply Board) Networks that powers every electricity customer in the country.

This project is a proposed development to reinforce the network between east Meath and north Dublin. Reinforcement of this part of the network is needed to continue to ensure the security of the network feeding the east of Meath and the north of Dublin, between Woodland, Clonee, Corduff, Finglas and Belcamp substations.

The project will help meet the growing demand for electricity in the east of the country due to the increased economic activity and population growth in recent years in Kildare, Meath and Dublin.

It will also enable further development of renewable energy generation in line with Government policy. Renewable energy accounted for 36% of all electricity consumed in Ireland in 2019 and is expected to grow to 70% within 10 years. Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2023 calls for up to 80% of the country's electricity to come from renewable energy sources by 2030.

1.3 Engagement Approach and Background

EirGrid is following a six-step approach to developing the grid. This is set out in full in EirGrid's *Have your say* document:

https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/EirGrid-Have-Your-Say_May-2017.pdf

- 1) Identifying the future needs of the electricity grid;
- 2) What technologies can be used to meet these needs;
- 3) The best option and the areas affected;
- 4) The location of the grid;
- 5) The planning process; and
- 6) Construction, energisation, and benefit sharing.

In 2017 EirGrid confirmed the need for the East Meath – North Dublin Grid Upgrade. It took a shortlist of seven options into Step 2 which comprised of a range of technology options and different station nodes and held a public consultation in 2020.

The options were assessed under the following five categories:

- Technical,
- Economic,
- Environmental,

- Socio-Economic, and
- Deliverability.

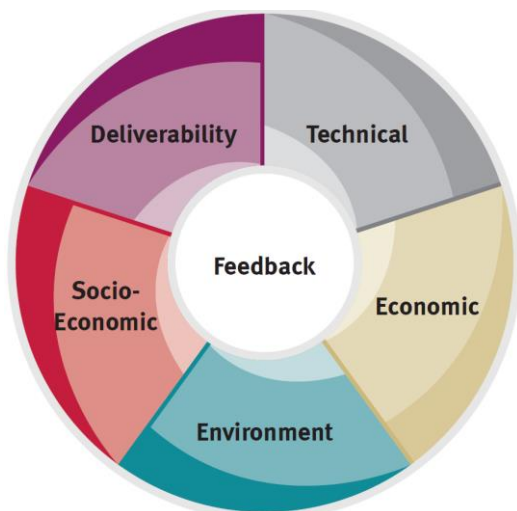


Figure 1: EirGrid's assessment categories

Following the outcome of the multi-criteria assessment (MCA) process and the consultation, EirGrid identified four best-performing technology circuit options to explore in Step 3. In 2021 EirGrid carried out feasibility studies on each of the four options and concluded that only one of those options would be progressed further.

The option taken forward into Step 4 for this grid upgrade, is a 400kV underground cable from Woodland substation in County Meath to Belcamp substation in north Dublin. Four different route options were put forward and these can be seen in figure 2:

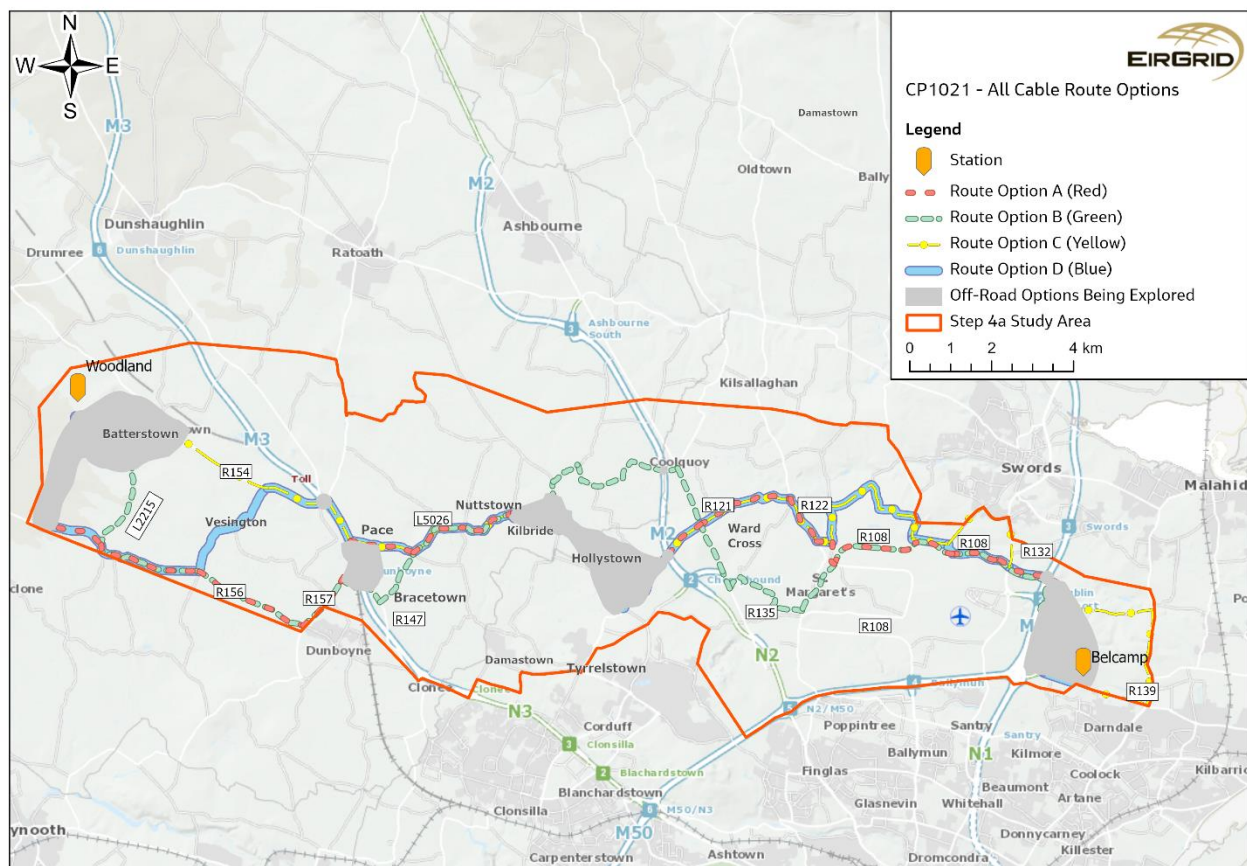


Figure 2: EirGrid's four proposed route options.

1.3.1 Step 4 Engagement and Consultation Plan

The six-step approach to public consultation provides the basis for all communications on East Meath to North Dublin.

The approach to engagement outlined in *Have Your Say* recommends:

- Involving members of the public and stakeholders early in the process so they are more able to influence plans;
- Providing information in plain English, online and in paper form;
- Providing enough time for people to contribute their views;
- Offering clear opportunities for engagement and ways to influence the decision-making process;
- Explaining decisions that need to be taken and factors that influence those decisions; and;
- Communicating with everyone who has taken the time to engage with the project.



Figure 3: EirGrid's six step process to developing the grid.

EirGrid developed a Step 4 Consultation and Engagement Plan. The purpose of engagement at this step is as follows:

- Gain a better understanding of the local area and how the community will be affected by the project;
- Obtain feedback to influence the design;
- Understand which locations for new infrastructure are favoured by local people;
- Harness local knowledge to inform choice of preferred route or site;
- Ensure everyone has an opportunity to make their views known and that the consultation process is clearly understood.

Additionally, specifically for East Meath to North Dublin in Step 4, the purpose of the engagement included:

- To provide information about the project and each of the options under consideration so members of the public and stakeholders can provide informed feedback via engagement and consultation;
- Ensure local communities are part of the decision-making process and understand potential benefits;
- Mitigate risks to project delivery by addressing public concerns;
- Set up engagement methods for future engagement, for example a Community Forum.

2. Step 4 Engagement

This section details the engagement activities undertaken in Step 4.

2.1 Communication Activities

The following activities were carried out by EirGrid to promote the engagement process and raise awareness of the project.

- Email correspondence
- Freepost Questionnaire
- Print and online media
- Radio
- Social and digital media
- Stakeholder Meetings

2.1.1 Freepost Questionnaire

12,000 Freepost Questionnaires were printed and delivered in the first 2.5 weeks of the consultation between 7 and 28 of September 2022 across the study area. This was extended to up to 1km beyond the study area boundary in some areas to capture additional stakeholders and commuters through the study area. For a sample, please see Appendix B.

2.1.2 Radio

Three radio campaign bursts were scheduled on FM104 and LMFM between the launch on the 7 September and the close of the consultation on 30 November 2022. 504 spots in total ran across three bursts (168 per burst). Both FM104 and LMFM provided the best coverage in the target locations in the Study Area.

A Digital Audio campaign ran on Spotify targeting Meath and Dublin area with the overall delivered impressions of 433,494.

Radio Station	Dates
FM104 and LMFM	5 -25 September 2022
FM104 and LMFM	10 – 30 October 2022
FM104 and LMFM	14 – 30 November 2022

2.1.3 Press

21 Newspaper adverts were published across the Dublin People (Northside East, Northside West), Meath Chronicle and the Meath Herald over the 12-week consultation period.

A Press Release was issued to regional media six times over the consultation period and picked up by several regional and local press. For a sample of the press release see Appendix F.

2.1.4 Social Media

EirGrid shared information about the project, feedback mechanisms and the public events on their social media channels, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Social ads ran on Facebook and Instagram (Meta) and Twitter for the duration of the consultation (7 September – 30 November 2022). On Meta, radius targeting was used to target the location within the study area and on Twitter geographical targeting was used to target by county. There were 2,655 link clicks on Meta and 2,707 on Twitter.

EirGrid published 64 posts organically on its social media channels. Of those posts, 32 were made on Twitter, 25 on Facebook and 7 on LinkedIn, reaching a total number of 1,494 engagements (reactions, comments, shares, post clicks).

EirGrid ran digital OOH (Out of Home) in 8 lifestyle screens, Tesco Live, Digitowers and Digihubs with the Study Area from 22 September to the close of the consultation on 30 November 2022. For a sample please see Appendix G.

2.2 Engagement Activities

The following engagement activity was undertaken and all feedback was documented after each engagement activity to feed into the overall findings during the consultation period. An overview of this feedback is provided in section 2.3

2.2.1 Key Stakeholder Meetings

EirGrid hosted seven online meetings with the following key stakeholders:

Stakeholder	Date
ESB	20 September 2022
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	25 October 2022
Ratoath Municipal District	27 October 2022
Fingal PPN Housing, Planning and Transport Linkage Group	27 October 2022
Meath County Council	10 November 2022
Irish Water	24 November 2022
Fingal County Council	10 January 2023

2.2.2 Mobile Information Unit

EirGrid engaged with approximately 40 stakeholders over the course of three days between 15 – 17 November 2022 as they travelled across the study area in a dedicated Mobile Information Unit (MIU). The MIU visited the following areas:

- Tuesday 15 November
 - Caffreys, Trim Road, Batterstown, Co Meath (10am-1pm)
 - Coolquoy Lodge, North Road Old N2, Dublin, Dublin 11 (2pm-5pm)
- Wednesday 16 November
 - Kinsealy Garden Centre, Malahide Road Dublin Co Dublin (10am-1pm)
 - Sweeneys, Kilbride Rd, Priest Town, Co. Meath (2pm-5pm)
- Thursday 17 November - Coachman's Inn, Cloughran, Airport Road Dublin (10am-2pm)

2.2.3 Open Days

EirGrid held six open days from 11am to 7pm at the following venues between 28 September and 27 October 2022:

- Wednesday 28 September – Atrium County Hall, Swords, Co Dublin
- Thursday 29 September – Coolquoy Lodge, North Road old N2, Dublin, Dublin 11
- Wednesday 12 October – Hilton Hotel, Malahide Road, Dublin 17
- Thursday 13 October – Sweeneys, Kilbride Rd, Priest Town, Co. Meath
- Wednesday 26 October – St Margaret's GAA, Ballystrahan, St Margaret's, Co. Dublin
- Thursday 27 October – Caffreys, Trim Road, Batterstown, Co Meath

Members of the EirGrid project team were in attendance to answer any queries from members of the public and interested parties.

2.2.4 Webinars

EirGrid held three webinars for members of the public and stakeholders on 13 September, 12 October, and 17 November 2022. Members of the public could register to attend via an online registration form on the project website.

Webinar	Date
One	Wednesday 14 September 2022
Two	Tuesday 4 October 2022
Three	Thursday 17 November 2022

2.2.5 Door-to-Door Engagement

Door-to-Door Engagement was carried by the EirGrid Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) to coincide with the public consultation that ran from the 7 September and 30 November 2022.

CLO's visited homes in the vicinity of Woodland Substation on the 7 and 8 September 2022. Over 125 homes and residents were visited.

Kilbride Village Door-to-Door Engagement was carried out on 24 November 2022 whereby circa 25 homes were visited. Several residents were recorded as not at home, so brochures were left in their post-boxes.

2.2.6 Community Forum

The East Meath – North Dublin Community Forum was set up at the end of Step 3 with the intention of bringing together people and organisations from across the project area so that stakeholder and community views can be discussed, understood, and carefully considered prior to and during project delivery. In addition, Fingal County Council and Meath County Council were invited to nominate elected representatives onto the forum.

The first Community Forum took place online on 10 August 2022. Four further community forums took place on dates between September and November 2022. Three meetings in September, October & November were online and the first face to face meeting with the group at Coolquay Lodge in October.

Forum	Date
One	10 August 2022
Two	6 September 2022
Three	6 October 2022
Four	17 October 2022
Five	21 November 2022

The forum will continue to meet regularly for the duration of the project to discuss project updates, provide feedback, and ensure two-way communication is ongoing.

2.2.7 Focus Groups

Three focus groups were convened in November 2022 across the study area to gain further insights from members of the local community. Further details can be found in section 2.4.

2.3 Overview of Step 4 Engagement Feedback – General

Feedback in this section represents data and responses collected from stakeholder that attended Community Forum meetings, door-to-door engagements, Open Days and the Mobile Information Unit (MIU) events.

2.3.1 Overview of Opinions

2.3.1.1 General Feedback and Communication

Stakeholders expressed broad support for the project. Some commented that they understood the need for the development due to increasing national demand.

Many praised the information provided at the MIU and the opportunity to have their questions answered. Stakeholders expressed support for the approach taken at the events and EirGrid's willingness to engage with the public.

Conversely, other stakeholders commented that they felt the approach taken for the project was incorrect, although did not supply further detail as to why.

Several expressed an interest in finding out more information about the nature of the project, particularly the construction process and the timeline. Stakeholders also asked for further information about how feedback received to date had been considered.

In addition, stakeholders requested that EirGrid keep them updated and asked for accurate communication throughout the project. Many suggested there was a need for more engagement and communication from EirGrid, including flyers in pubs and garages.

Stakeholders had queries about the impact of electromagnetic fields (EMF) and some commented that the open day events should have had information on EMF and potential health impacts of the project.

A few people also had queries about the routes of the underground cables and general queries but the nature of these was not recorded.

There was confusion amongst stakeholders on the naming conventions and location of Kilreesk Lane and Killeek Lane between Google Maps and local information. EirGrid provided clarification at the Community Forum.

Stakeholders requested information about the status of other EirGrid projects such as the North South Interconnector, including the Louth-Woodland 220 kV uprate.

2.3.1.2 Congestion and Disruption

Stakeholders expressed concerns about disruption, particularly traffic disruption, with one stakeholder questioning whether the construction works would affect the road on which they live close to Kilbride Village. Furthermore, stakeholders expressed concerns about access to their dwellings/ communities during construction.

A number also raised concerns about the impact on traffic on narrow roads, including the L5026 and roads in Kilbride, and on roads described as 'rat runs'. Other stakeholders did not specify roads but also expressed concern that narrow roads might necessitate road closures as well as expressing concerns about general traffic management.

Stakeholders requested details of road layouts and plans. Stakeholders asked that EirGrid avoid using Malahide Road due to its existing congestion issues. Other stakeholders requested that EirGrid avoid using any roads wherever possible.

Feedback was also received about the impact of the project on harvest time which requires the use of trailers.

Stakeholders expressed concerns about any potential impacts of the project on the overall price of electricity and whether it could lead to blackouts.

2.3.1.3 Design

One stakeholder requested the choice of a route which does not impact their land and noted that Irish Water mains were being built on their land.

Some suggested that the route chosen should use the old N3 near Pace.

Stakeholders also commented on the presence of a sewage route from the prison to the M2 southwards.

2.3.1.4 Environment

Stakeholders praised the project for its role in enabling the green agenda.

A number raised concerns about impacts of the project on cultural and heritage sites.

Stakeholders commented that they had experienced previous issues with flooding of the River Boyne and the tributaries of the River Tolka.

2.3.1.5 Utilities

Stakeholders asked whether there had been consideration of joined up thinking around the presence of other ongoing local utilities and renewable construction projects.

Stakeholders commented that there were too many culverts. Some noted the presence of fibre broadband on the R122/R108 after Keelings.

One stakeholder commented that they have an existing wayleave with Statkraft solar farm and requested that the Agricultural Liaison Officer contact them to walk the wayleave and gather data.

2.3.2 Option Specific Feedback

Option A (Red)

Stakeholders raised concerns that Option A would pass close to their properties and farms.

Stakeholders also expressed support for Option A on the basis that there is a new road from Broghan to Dublin Airport.

Stakeholders expressed concerns about potential impacts on traffic on roads on this route.

Option B (Green)

Stakeholders commented that Option B had the potential to impact on land intended for future development near St Margaret's and on their property.

Some commented that previous issues with Mabestown Road had been identified by Transport Infrastructure Ireland during the solar farm application which judged it to be unfit for use to hold cables. They therefore opposed the use of this route for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade.

In addition, stakeholders noted the presence of farm HGVs (Heavy Goods Vehicles) on the green route.

Conversely, other stakeholders supported the green route as it was direct and on a main road.

Option C (Yellow)

Stakeholders raised concerns that Option C would pass close to their properties and farms.

Some expressed concern that this route could impact the health of a local resident with a condition that causes hypersensitivity to magnetic fields.

Stakeholders expressed concerns about potential impacts on traffic on roads on this route.

Option D (Blue)

Stakeholders expressed support for Option D.

A number also raised concerns that Option D would pass close to their properties and farms.

Stakeholders expressed concern that this route could impact the health of a local resident with a condition that causes hypersensitivity to magnetic fields.

2.4 Overview of Step 4 Engagement Feedback – Focus Groups

2.4.1 Context

The aim of the three focus groups is to add a qualitative insight to the consultation running between 7 September and 30 November 2022.

2.4.2 Objectives

The focus group has the following objectives:

- to provide another avenue to gain insight from local community members;
- to ensure insight comes from a diverse range of people;
- to establish what they as members of the community think about the different route options;
- to identify and understand any key issues and concerns related to the proposed options for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade;
- to add qualitative understanding of any issues and concerns that may have arisen through the consultation process;
- to gauge community member awareness of EirGrid and the project; and
- to gain public opinion on the consultation and its method to date.

2.4.3 Methodology

2.4.3.1 Design and Process

Traverse worked with EirGrid to turn the objectives from their Step 4 consultation phase into a process plan with a set of research questions and a discussion guide suitable for qualitative focus group research.

2.4.3.2 Research Questions

1. What awareness of EirGrid and the project do community members have and from what avenues?
2. What comments do community members have and what in their view are the key opportunities and concerns about each of the proposed route options?
3. What do community members think about EirGrid's efforts to communicate and engage the public on these plans?
4. What more could EirGrid do to improve their engagement with communities affected by development of their grid infrastructure?

The focus groups were designed to explore what community members think about the four route options for the East Meath – North Dublin project, as well as EirGrid's efforts to consult the community about the project. To do this, participants were sent the project brochure ahead of the focus groups taking place. They were also introduced to the project, route options and programme of consultation by an EirGrid representative at the start of the event.

Participants were first asked to complete a survey about their initial awareness of EirGrid and the project, and where they have seen information. This was then followed by a group discussion where participants were encouraged to discuss each route option individually and consider any related concerns or opportunities. Lastly, participants were given time to look through EirGrid's consultation materials. This was followed by a discussion on what participants thought of EirGrid's efforts to communicate and engage the public in their plans.

2.4.3.3 Recruitment and Sampling

Traverse worked with a market research recruiter to recruit 36 community members living or working within the project study area or living up to a kilometre outside it (see appendix H for study area map and location spread). Each focus group had representation across the key demographics of gender, ethnicity, age, and principal status (see appendix B for a full demographic breakdown).

2.4.3.4 Delivery

A third-party provider facilitated three 90-minute evening focus groups across two weeks in November 2022 with some participants unable to attend on the night due to unforeseen circumstances:

Focus Group	Date	Place	Number of participants
One	Wednesday 9 November	Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin	11
Two	Thursday 10 November	Blanchardstown, Co. Dublin	11
Three	Tuesday 15 November	Dunboyne, Co. Meath	10

2.4.4 Findings

The findings under each section below are organised from most to least prominent in the focus group discussions.

2.4.4.1 General Feedback

General feedback centred on construction and travel disruption, with comments about the cumulative impacts of the construction of multiple development schemes in the area. Participants gave ideas for mitigation, such as effective communication and joined-up working.

Focus group participants were keen to share concerns about potential travel disruption. Many were particularly concerned about areas with narrow roads. They said that the added traffic associated with construction as well as the size of the construction vehicles could cause difficulties for the communities using these roads.

Focus group two participant "It would be interesting to see how to even fit all construction equipment on it (narrow roads) and they may not carry heavy trucks. It's not just construction on the routes but getting around other traffic routes."

Participants felt clear and timely information about future disruption to their community would help to mitigate some of the inconvenience and frustration. Some said it would also help them plan their journeys in advance, avoiding stress.

Focus group three participant: "What you would need is a plan given to residents about what parts of the roads will be closed, when [those roads will be closed]...residents want to know where they can go and when to go there."

Some participants expressed frustration at the amount of other infrastructure projects going on in the area. They cited traffic concerns as well as safety concerns about dirt on roads associated with construction.

Focus group two participant: "I know from the Amazon building site, they've been here for a lot of years, and the dirt to the road has irritated a lot of us...it's not about our car being dirty but the safety of hitting your brakes. It's been here for years and would drive a lot of us demented if the roads weren't being cleaned properly."

Participants felt that the community would benefit from collaboration and 'joined up thinking' by the parties involved so that disruption could be kept to a minimum.

Focus group one participant: "Why is there not joined up thinking with service providers? Cable is being done under the airport and St Margaret's so why aren't they just doing it together?"

A particular area of focus regarding multiple projects and traffic disruption was Kilbride where all four-route options pass through. Participants said that there has been a lot of construction in that area causing frustration for residents.

Focus group three participant: "Recently there was large construction along there which was awful. what I will say is that the road was narrow and local access was applied but it was an absolute nightmare for 6 weeks."

Some participants were keen to understand how the construction of the project might affect schools in the area. They expressed concern about getting their children to and from school if there was road disruption. A few suggested that work causing disruption near schools would be best planned in the summer while schools are closed.

Focus group two participant: "A lot of the routes are going past schools, and I know it's difficult to plan, but if you're near a school, summertime is the best time. It would reduce the number of annoying people then....even children might have an issue with a lot of noise around the school."

They were also worried about disruption to other utilities that might mean schools would have to close last minute.

Focus group one participant: "Communication is key, I want to know when and which roads will be closed since it happened before where the water was switched off and the school didn't know about it and all the kids were sent home from school in the St. Margaret's area."

A few participants were worried about local effects on the environment. They said that there was a lack of information about this, as well as restoration plans after the work is completed.

Focus group three participant: "Would hedgerows be affected? I live in a nice part of the road and would like to keep it that way... If there was any damage to trees done, would we be able to say the commitment to restoration has been given and not vague, in the future."

2.4.4.2 Option Specific Feedback

Option A (Red) – One participant wanted to draw attention to plans already in place for the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) and County Board near Hollystown Golf club. They wondered if this would affect EirGrid's ability to execute this route.

Option B (Green) – A few participants had concerns about the narrow roads surrounding the Ballymacarney solar farm. Work on the farm was very disruptive as the roads surrounding it had to be completely closed, and large construction vehicles on alternative routes was disruptive. They were also concerned about the effect the solar farm had on biodiversity in the area, from resurfacing roads for better access. However, they suggested this might be an opportunity for EirGrid to use the same access routes, minimising further disruption.

Option C (Yellow) – One participant living on R156 felt that R135 is a busy route but could be better as it is shorter and more direct. Another participant said that if the option through Batterstown would take a significantly shorter amount of construction time, then they felt that most people would be ok with the traffic.

Option D (Blue) – There were no comments about this route specifically.

2.4.5 EirGrid's Consultation Approach

2.4.5.1 Feedback on the consultation process so far

Participants were told about some of the ways EirGrid advertised the project locally. They were also given a chance to review the project brochure, part of EirGrid's consultation and engagement materials, both before and during the session.

Participants were also asked to fill out a survey to capture their initial awareness of EirGrid and the project, as well as where they got their information. Most participants knew a little about EirGrid and this was mostly from leaflets/mail and the EirGrid website. Most had not engaged with EirGrid before or knew anything or little about

the East Meath North Dublin project. What they did know came from leaflets/mail and the EirGrid website (for full survey results see appendix B).

Most participants said the project brochure was informative and had the right level of information and detail.

Focus group two participant: "I like it as I didn't know anything about EirGrid or the project before coming into this room...I liked the bit where it calls out the other points. I like it."

However, a few said that the format of the information they received was much smaller, which made the map harder to see.

Focus group one participant: "The brochure that went through the door was half the size of this brochure which made it difficult to see the maps."

Participants wanted more information on where potential disruption would be and for how long but appreciated that this might be difficult at this stage of the project. However, as a community they expected to be notified when this information becomes available.

Focus group two participant: "It would be nice to know in advance where road closures will be and if I'm driving to the train if I need an extra 15 minutes to get there...knowing how long in advance and for how long before to manage it. It may be annoying but it's better to know in advance"

Some participants shared a sense of distrust. This was towards organisations associated with other infrastructure projects in the area, as well as local/national government. They felt that communication coming from an independent body could help this.

Focus group one participant: "EirGrid has done enough to communicate however we are wary this big company won't actually listen since most common people see a brochure from a large corporation and assume it'll happen and it's been decided for them...there needs to be a more independent body between EirGrid and the Local Council for communication."

2.4.6 Recommendations

Participants were keen to stress that it is easy to miss adverts online and on social media. A few participants said they had never seen project-related information on social media despite using it regularly. They suggested targeting closed, local community groups on social media to make sure the information reaches the right people, as well as local websites.

Focus group three participant: "When you talk about what EirGrid should do is get to the local Facebook groups...get to the people who are actually engaged with the community."

A few thought that information at the national level could be beneficial for those that don't engage with local news.

Focus group three participant: "I mean, even in national newspapers? I highly doubt anyone in this age group would read the Meath Chronicle...the Meath Chronicle comes to my door and I toss it in the bin."

Many were keen for ongoing updates, particularly around potential disruption. They suggested that the project website could have more immediate updates to the project, citing utility company disruption alerts on their websites as an example. They also suggested having smaller more detailed maps available and being supplied with a link to the portal. They suggested information about what will happen in the local area much closer to the time of construction and that this should continue throughout.

Focus group one participant: "Communication should be consistent from now; it shouldn't stop right before construction but there should be an advanced communication."

Offline, participants suggested engaging with schools and groups such as Tidy Towns to spread information and gain feedback. They also suggested depositing leaflets at churches as well as the GAA. Others suggested community radio such as Phoenix FM in Blanchardstown. Some saw an opportunity to enhance the community forum by eliciting deeper engagement with it.

A few participants felt that communicating the benefits of the project to individuals would support more engagement in the community.

Focus group two participant: "It would be great if you could tell the general public that in the long run, these are the benefits...If you had something in your brochure about how it'll benefit individuals, you'll get the general public more interested."

A few participants also suggested that EirGrid should be communicating more about the effects of the project on the environment.

Focus group three participant: "The only thing that doesn't seem to be there is information on environmental impacts. There isn't a lot of information of clear-felling, fish stocks, the general appearance of the area... damage to the general community just doesn't seem to be there."

They suggested having more focus groups about environmental impacts.

Focus group three participant: "We could have another night on the environmental impacts. The loss of trees along the route would be of utmost importance to me."

3. Step 4 Consultation

3.1 About The Consultation

The consultation took place between 7 September and 30 November 2022. EirGrid invited feedback on the 4 route options, on their overall approach to the project and any events or festivals planned that might affect scheduling of the East Meath – North Dublin project.

3.2 Responses Received

A total of 24 responses were received during the consultation period. Table 1 below gives a breakdown of the type of responses received.

Response Type	Count
Online response form & submissions	5
Hardcopy response form	11
Letters and emails	8

Table 1: Breakdown of responses received

Three channels were provided for submission of responses to the consultation:

Online: by using the consultation portal at consult.eirgrid.ie, accessible via the EirGrid website;

Email: by emailing the project's dedicated email address; EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com, administered by the project team at EirGrid;

Post: by sending in a hardcopy response to the address provided by EirGrid.

Published responses to the consultation are available for review on EirGrid's consultation portal:

<https://consult.eirgrid.ie/consultation/east-meath-north-dublin-grid-upgrade-step-4-consultation>

3.3 Data Processing

EirGrid commissioned Traverse, an independent consultancy specialising in consultation analysis, to process and report on the responses received to the consultation.

Submissions received were recorded in a database and categorised into types (for example letter, email or response form). Traverse and EirGrid agreed on processes to ensure that all data was handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The online and hardcopy response forms included statements on data protection, including respondents' rights under GDPR, explaining how data would be used and for what purpose. Though respondents who provided views in other formats did not receive a data protection statement, care has been taken to ensure that no individual respondents are identifiable in this report.

3.4 Overview of Consultation Feedback

3.4.1 Option A (Red)

Several respondents express support for Option A because they view it as the least disruptive and most direct route and because it avoids Hollystown which is regularly congested.

One respondent raises concerns that the narrower R156 used in Option A is less optimal for use than the wider R154.

One respondent expresses concerns that this route would be the most disruptive to agriculture.

One respondent raises concerns that Option A uses Ward Road which has water pipes near the road. They also comment on the presence of sewage pipes on the R135 between Coolquay and Finglas.

One respondent expresses concerns that this route uses the M2 motorway and that there is a proposed solar farm close to the M2 flyover.

One respondent raises concerns that this route is near GAA grounds and requests that EirGrid ensures 24/7 access to the grounds is maintained for both players and emergency services. Furthermore, they ask that access to the walkway around the main pitch is maintained as it provides a site for community exercise.

3.4.2 Option B (Green)

One respondent expresses support for Option B because it is shorter than Options C and D and is near the airport. One respondent praises Option B as the second best option after Option A.

Several respondents raise concerns that Option B includes Broughan Lane which is very small and narrow lane as they believe closure of this road could impact residents along this route. Furthermore, a small number of respondents commented that there is a large agricultural business on this lane which requires 24/7 access which may be limited if there is construction traffic or road closures.

One respondent expresses concern that Option B is near many tillage fields and that farmers would therefore need access to the roads along this route during harvest time to transport their produce.

One respondent expresses concern over potential road closures at R153 and R121 which would directly affect the logistics of staff and deliveries of their business.

3.4.3 Option C (Yellow)

One respondent supports Option C as it is the shortest route to Pace and maximises use of local roads including the recently widened and upgraded R154.

One respondent opposes Option C on the grounds that Batterstown is regularly disrupted by work at Woodlands.

One respondent expresses concern about the potential impact of Option C on local communities and the cost of Option C due to its length.

One respondent suggests that the Option C from Woodland would maximise the use of local roads. Another respondent highlights the route is located near a busy agricultural businesses which has no alternative to but to travel on a narrow lanes.

One respondent raises concerns that Option C uses Kileek Lane which they comment is very narrow. They feel that closure of this road could impact residents living along this route.

One respondent raises concerns that Option C would impact their equine business due to road closures which could limit access to the business and the potential noise disruption which would adversely impact their livestock. They suggest limiting this access could pose an animal welfare risk because of the nature of their business and comment that they require 24/7 access. The respondent also comments that there may be a requirement for EirGrid to access their land during construction and that the noise of the project could represent a safety issue for their clients and their livestock.

One respondent raises concerns that Option C uses Ward Road which has water pipes near the road. They also comment on the presence of sewage pipes on the R135 between Coolquay and Finglas.

One respondent expresses concerns that this route uses the M2 motorway and that there is a proposed sewage farm close to the M2 flyover.

3.4.4 Option D (Blue)

One respondent raises concerns that the narrower R156 used in Option A is less optimal for use than the wider R154.

One respondent expresses concern about the length of Option D compared to the other routes.

One respondent raises concerns that Option D uses Ward Road which has water pipes near the road. They also comment on the presence of sewage pipes on the R135 between Coolquay and Finglas.

One respondent expresses concerns that this route uses the M2 motorway and that there is a proposed solar farm close to the M2 flyover.

3.4.5 General Feedback and Suggestions

3.4.5.1 Congestion and Disruption

Transport Infrastructure Ireland TII comments that grid connection routing proposals which cross the motorway network require Works Specific Deeds of Indemnities, arrangements for third party access or consent from TII. They suggest arrangements for third party access are also likely to be necessary.

TII note a series of general requirements for drilling under a motorway including that:

- Launch and reception pits for the pipeline are located outside the motorway boundary;
- Installation of the pipeline at a depth that does not impact drainage for the motorway;
- Neither the works nor the pipeline damage or impact the motorway;
- Any maintenance or planned upgrades of the pipeline at the crossing location can take place without access to the motorway boundary;
- There are no bolted joints in the section of pipeline within the motorway fence-line; and
- A pre and post-construction survey is necessary along the length of the pipeline over the extents of the motorway boundary.

TII request that consultation is carried out with the relevant maintaining organisations and any access requirements are agreed with them through their third-party protocols. They also ask for consultation with relevant local authorities and National Roads Design Office in relation to the locations of current and future local national road schemes.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) raise concerns about the principle of the route options maximising use of national, regional and local roads. They express concerns about the impact of the route options on their management and maintenance of the national road network. They comment on the following potential impacts:

- Impacts on embankments, bridges, drainage and road furniture infrastructure which could lead to maintenance liabilities in the future;
- Difficulties with future maintenance and operations activities;
- Challenges with future routine network improvements such as pavement overlay and strengthening and installation of new verge-side signs and other road infrastructure;
- Impacts on traffic flow during construction; and
- Difficulties with future on-line upgrades of national roads due to technical challenges and the additional cost of re-routing underground cables to accommodate road improvements.

TII would welcome EirGrid updating route options development principles to remove the reference to maximising use of the national road network to comply with policies relating to safeguarding the capacity and safety of the national road network.

One respondent expresses concerns about road closures during the construction process as they believe this would divert traffic to unsuitable rural roads and could impact the school bus route. They request that EirGrid carry out all works simultaneously and that diversion routes are chosen which include pull in space and minimise disruption for parents of school children.

One respondent raises concerns about the cumulative impact on congestion if the East Meath to North Dublin upgrade is carried out at the same time as proposed upgrades to Dublin Airport. They request that these projects do not take place at the same time.

3.4.5.2 Design

TII expresses support that the current route options do not include laying cable in the national road reservation.

One respondent requests information about any offroad options under consideration for this project.

A few respondents ask that the route chosen avoids the road from Pace to Kilbride which is currently included in every route option. They comment that they have already experienced recent disruptive roadworks which impacted access to their property and resulted in a poor-quality road surface which damaged cars. They express the following concerns about the East Meath to Dublin Upgrade:

- It may impact their daily lives;
- If the road surface is left in inferior quality after construction then it could damage their cars;
- It might impact access for emergency vehicles and school buses; and
- There have been no proposals from EirGrid about how to address disruption to drainage works of properties adjacent to the road which are in place to prevent flooding of the road and properties.

One respondent suggests that EirGrid consider an alternative route using the proposed Westerly Road from the roundabout at the Broughan on the M2 to the M1 North of Swords whilst a few respondents request an alternative route using new roads connecting the R135 to Dublin Airport to avoid impacting existing roads.

3.4.5.3 Environment

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) expresses concern that the aspects of the project such as the construction phase access roads and the laying of cables that could have potentially detrimental impacts on the aquatic habitat where they are near a watercourse. They raise concerns that the development may impact a variety of fisheries waters on the Rivers Pinkeen, Tolka and Ward including areas designated as angling waters, adult holding areas and nursery and spawning waters. To minimise detrimental impacts, IFI suggest that works on rivers, streams and watercourses take place only during July to September and that all works follow IFI guidelines and all relevant environmental directives and legislation.

IFI requests that EirGrid recognises the importance of small channels and seasonal streams and their importance to fisheries. They also request an assessment of the soil type and structure at the proposed turbine locations and along the proposed access roads. IFI expresses concern about the possible impacts of discharge of silt-laden waters on fish, plant and macroinvertebrates and their habitats. They request the introduction of construction methods outlined in a comprehensive plan which minimise discharge of silt and other suspended solids into waters such as covering stockpiles of sand with sheeting when not in use and constructing silt traps. IFI discuss the following points in relation to silt traps:

- Locate silt traps where run-off is intercepted to the drainage network;
- Do not construct traps near natural watercourses;
- Design silt traps to account for particle size and volume of water through the traps; and
- Create a buffer zone between silt traps and watercourses and leave intact natural vegetation.

IFI ask that all natural watercourses impacted during site development are bridged before construction work begins and comment that the crossing of watercourses at fords is unacceptable due to uncontrolled sediment that may be created by their use. If temporary crossing structures are necessary, IFI suggests that EirGrid should

request approval for the specification of the crossing structures and the timing of their installation as these structures must include passage for fish and macroinvertebrates.

They also note that access for angling and commercial fishing may be required and that the implementation of fords by stone and the repositioning of temporary crossing structures are prohibited.

IFI make the following points about the design of temporary crossing structures:

- Preferred option is clear span 'bridge type' structures on fisheries water;
- If clear span structures cannot be used, structures should:
 - use one or more metal or concrete pipes or prefabricated culverts;
 - maintain the existing stream profile;
 - avoid significant alternation of speed or hydraulic characteristics;
 - have capacity to accommodate the full range of flows including flood flows; and
 - be covered with a clean, inert material to enable safe crossing of all items of construction equipment without the cover material being dislodged.
- Design and install the approach and departure routes for drainage to fall away from the watercourse being crossed;
- Provide additional earthwork settlement areas where the fall of ground does not allow sufficient control on drainage;
- Fence with terram to prevent the wind carrying dust to waters;
- Use side armour to make sure machinery cannot drive over the edge of crossings;
- Ensure crossings can accommodate all construction machinery.

IFI comments that their approval is required for the crossing of any key fisheries where the connection from the proposed site occurs with the national grid. They also suggest that EirGrid should engage the Office of Public Works early in the planning and design process about flood risk management.

Regarding permanent crossing structures, IFI makes the following points:

- There should be no damage to fish habitat or blockages to the passage of fish and macroinvertebrates;
- The design and choice of structure should fulfil the requirement to protect spawning and over-wintering areas and maintain angling and commercial fishing access;
- Culverts can result in loss of valuable habitats;
- Clear span bridges are preferred with bridge foundations positioned at least 2.5 metres from the river bank;
- Bottomless culverts may be unsuitable for installation on narrow river channels as they could result in scouring or erosion;
- Pipe culverts are not acceptable on fisheries water;
- Embedded culverts must preserve the natural channel gradient, width and substrate configuration and be buried to a minimum of 500mm below the stream bed at natural gradient whilst box and pipe culverts must maintain the natural stream channel width and be 3 metres in height on angling waters;
- Designs should have capacity for a 1 in 100-year fluvial flood flow and should be in line with requirements from the Office of Public Works;
- Designs should allow maintenance of channel profile and existing gradient and sufficient light penetration;

- Designs should not exceed a slope of 5%; and
- If baffles are used then appropriate capacity provision should be included.

IFI include the following comments on bank protection works required around new structures:

- It is crucial that large enough boulders are used and positioned to ensure they cannot be undercut;
- Boulders should be back filled with a layer of top soil to encourage revegetation;
- The shape of boulders requires consideration to ensure their stability;
- The height of rock armour must account for the protection of the riparian zone and protection of kingfisher and sand martin habitat; and
- Gabions are not a preferred option due to their vulnerability and visual impact.

IFI suggests that natural flow paths should not be interrupted or re-routed to reduce potential for erosion. They request that materials used in road construction should not be crushed by vehicle movements as this could discharge particulates into waters.

IFI requests the use of pre-cast concrete rather than uncured concrete due to the latter's harmful effects on fish and macroinvertebrates. If uncured concrete must be used, they suggest all work should take place in the dry and be isolated from any water that could enter the drainage network. If cement, oils, and fuels are stored on site during the construction period, IFI suggests that they are kept in secure areas when not in use. IFI have the following additional requests about oils and fuels:

- All plant and equipment carry oil and fuel spill kits;
- If temporary fuel driven pumps are used, they should be located within portable temporary bunded units;
- If site works involve discharges of drained water to rivers and streams, then temporary oil interceptor facilities should be installed and maintained; and
- Waste oils and other hazardous materials should be disposed of in accordance with the Waste Management Act 1996.

IFI comments that biosecurity measures should be implemented to mitigate against the introduction of invasive species. They note that no instream works should be carried out without their written approval and that EirGrid should consider the national 'Blue Dots Catchment Programme'.

TII sets out the following recommendations for the preparation of an EIAR (Environmental Impact Assessment Report) which could impact the national road network:

- EirGrid should have regard to the Environmental Impact Statement, TII Publications, TII's Environmental Assessment and Construction Guidelines, any conditions imposed by An Bord Pleanála and any cumulative impacts;
- The EIAR should consider the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 and how the project would affect future action plans by the relevant competent authority;
- A Traffic and Transport Assessment should, where appropriate, be carried out according to relevant guidelines;
- EirGrid should consult TII Publications to decide whether there is a requirement for a Road Safety Audit;
- The EIAR should identify methods proposed for any works in proximity to the national road network and for national road structures there should be early engagement with TII Structures Section;
- Haul routes should be identified and fully assessed. For abnormal weight loads, these may require separate approvals and licences and all structures on the haul route should be checked to ensure they can accommodate proposed abnormal weight loads.

One respondent queries whether the local environment will be improved as part of the schedule of works.

3.4.5.4 Health

One respondent objected to the route passing close to their home as they stated that exposure to electromagnetic radiation would have an adverse effect on a member of the family at risk from epilepsy. They also objected to the route passing close to their home and national school.

3.4.5.5 General

One respondent requests that EirGrid regularly update the community on the programming of construction works and the impacts they may have on residents. They also ask that EirGrid maintain close relations with community groups so that these groups may inform residents of proposed construction activities.

One respondent expresses support for the approach taken on this project without specifying further.

Fingal Chamber support EirGrid's aim to provide a safe, secure, and reliable supply of electricity. They note that their members have concerns surrounding security of electricity supply and request that EirGrid implement the infrastructure necessary to deliver long-term security of electricity supply as quickly as possible.

One respondent believes EirGrid should be aware of the best option and the consultation is 'eyewashing'.

One respondent comments that they were unaware of the Community Forum taking place.

3.4.5.6 Information and Materials

One respondent praises the consultation for providing residents with plenty of information and the opportunity to understand the project and the reasons behind route options development.

A few respondents raise concerns that the maps provided lack detail, particularly the map for Option D which they feel is not detailed enough at Ward Cross for them to identify impacted land. One respondent also comments that the online maps split in their area of interest.

In addition, one respondent feels that the maps provided do not correspond with current construction work and requests information about why that is the case. They suggest that the Pace to Kilbride work currently underway is not an underground route as residents have been told as well as questioning the route to Corduff which they view as 'obscure'.

4. Next Steps

4.1 Step 5 Planning Process

As part of Step 4, we identified four potential underground cable route options and consulted with you, our stakeholders on these.

The expected outcomes of Step 4 are to:

- publish a consultation report on the feedback received,
- announce an emerging best performing route option in spring 2023 and to consult locally with stakeholders on this, and
- a final option in summer 2023, identifying exactly where the project will be built. This step will not include applying for planning permission. This will be completed in Step 5.

Project timelines will be confirmed once Step 4 is complete.

As part of Step 5 EirGrid will submit a planning application to the planning authority – either An Bord Pleanála or the local planning body. They will publish a notice in newspapers when they lodge this application. They will also continue to provide regular project updates.

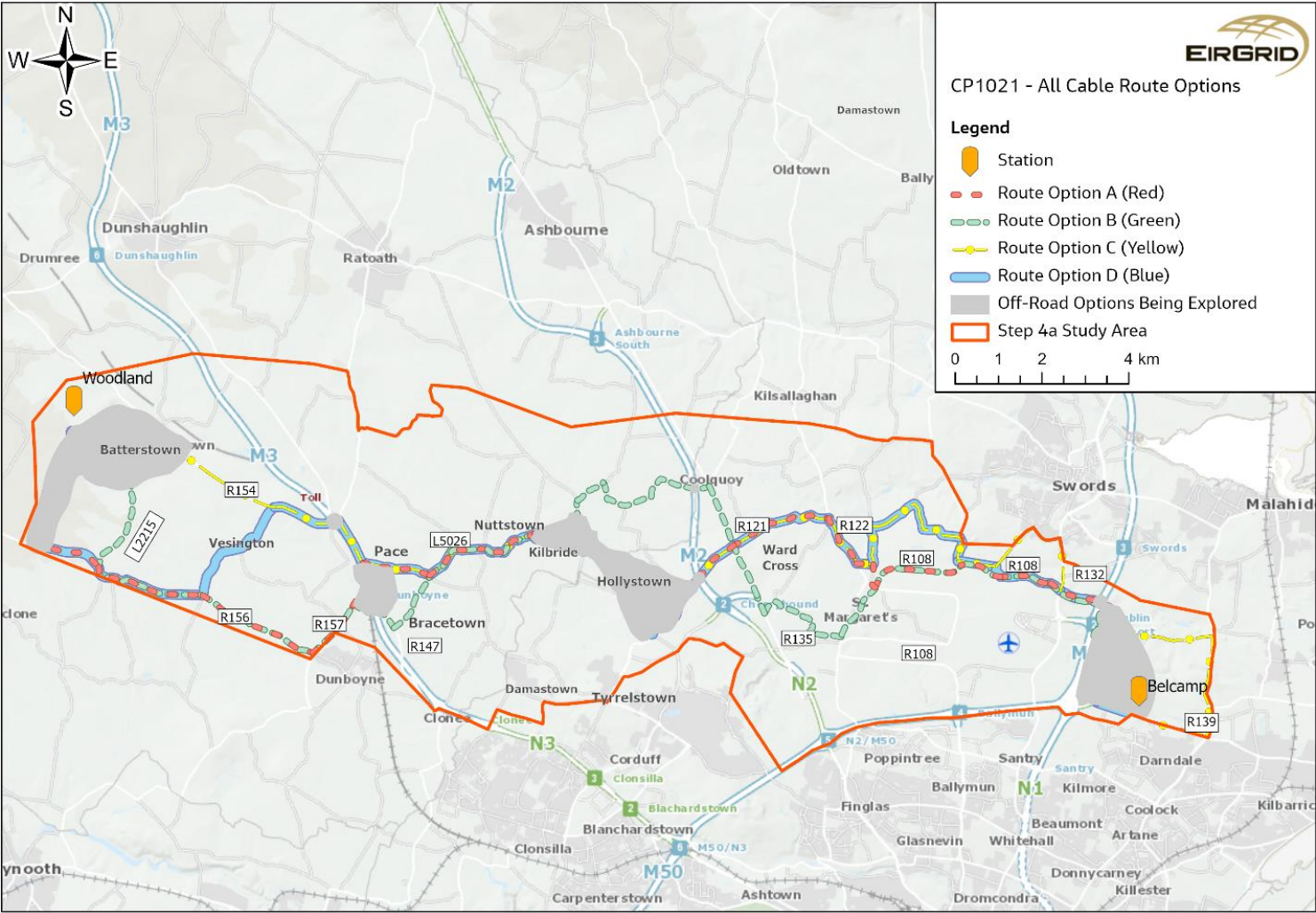
The planning authority will seek views on the application and will ask anybody with an interest in the project to send in a written submission of their views. Once they make an application, An Bord Pleanála may hold an oral hearing. This will give those who submitted a written opinion a chance to share their views about the project.


Where possible, EirGrid will respond to submissions from those who are directly affected by their plans.

At Step 5, EirGrid cannot make fundamental changes to their planning application but can consider small adjustments if they ease your concerns.

The planning authority can grant or refuse permission. It can also grant permission on the basis that EirGrid makes some changes to its application.

Appendix A Study Area Map





EIRGRID
Delivering a cleaner energy future

East Meath – North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation

7 September 2022 to 30 November 2022

The Project
The East Meath–North Dublin Grid Upgrade will add a high-capacity 400 kV (kilovolt) underground cable electricity connection from Woodland substation near Batterstown in County Meath to Belcamp substation near Clonsilla in north Dublin.


Share your feedback
This leaflet contains some information about this project. We have included a map to provide an overview of the route options.

This leaflet also contains a freepost questionnaire for you to complete, detach, and return to us by postcard. You can read more detailed information online at www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin. If you would like more guidance or information, please contact your EirGrid Community Liaison Officers Eoghan O'Sullivan 087 247 7732 or Gráinne Duffy 085 887 4798 or email EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com

We need to upgrade and strengthen the network so:

- address the increased electricity demand in east Meath and north Dublin due to economic development and population growth;
- reduce the use of and reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation;
- facilitate further development of renewable energy generation, onshore and offshore; and
- assist in achieving climate action targets of having up to 80% of electricity coming from renewable sources by 2030.

Scan me for more information




Overview of the proposed route options


The following table provides an overview of the four underground cable options we are considering for this project. 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 to construction	Other points
Option A (Red)	37	9	Low/Moderate	Low/Moderate	Shortest route but affects the most amount of agricultural land of all options.
Option B (Green)	38	7	Low/Moderate	Low/Moderate	Second shortest route and avoids Mullacree.
Option C (Yellow)	43	2	Moderate	Moderate	Largest route. Goes through most of agricultural land, least agricultural land.
Option D (Blue)	41	4	Low/Moderate	Low/Moderate	Second longest route length, second lowest amount of agricultural land. Avoids Kiltree village.

East Meath–North Dublin Grid Upgrade



We're getting ready to upgrade your electricity grid and want to hear what you think.



EIRGRID
Delivering a cleaner energy future

No feedback required

Freepost Address:
East Meath – North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation
EirGrid PLC
Freepost F0N 5312
160 Shelbourne Road,
Ballsbridge,
D04 FW28

East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Step 4 Engagement and Consultation Summary Report

We are inviting you to give feedback on four route options for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade.

The consultation period is from **7 September to 30 November 2022**. We encourage you to engage with us and **have your say** as early as possible during this consultation period.

Where can I find out more?

You can find out more in a number of different ways. All information relating to this project is available on our website: www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin

Arrange to speak to a team member directly

Sign up to a Webinar

Visit our Consultation Portal

Attend an open day

How can I have my say?

There are many ways you can give feedback, including:

Submit your views online at consult.eirgrid.ie

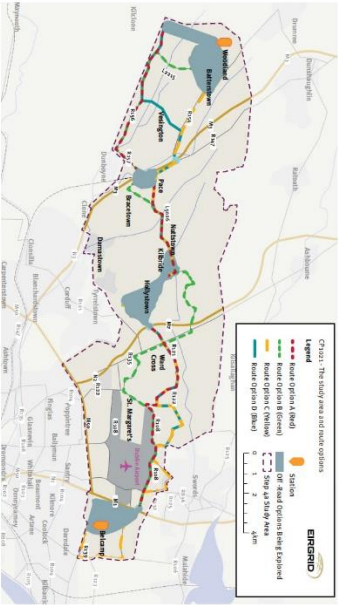
Email your submission to us at EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com

Write your own submission and freepost it back to us

Our Freepost address is: East Meath – North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation, EirGrid plc, Freepost FDN 5312, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, D04 PW28

We have developed four potential underground cable route options for this project. We plan these using routing 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 route options start in the Woodland substation and end at Belcamp substation. All route options cross motorways, however, we propose drilling under these. All route options also have off-road corridors ranging from 3km to 9km in length. 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 maps. We will determine this after discussing it with the landowners affected. Please know that we will engage extensively with all relevant bodies, carry out all necessary studies and risk mitigation measures before starting these works.

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



Feedback Questions

Question 1: Please provide 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.

Route Option A - Red

Route Option B - Green

Route Option C - Yellow

Route Option D - Blue

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

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

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

Personal Information

Name

Address

Eircode

Organisation (if any)

Contact No:

Email:

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

Phone

Email

Post

Data Protection and privacy statement

☐ I consent to EirGrid processing my data for the purposes of the East Meath North Dublin Grid upgrade project. All information provided to EirGrid will be held by EirGrid's personnel and EirGrid's data processors only, for the purposes 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

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? (please tick all that apply)

☐ Member of the Community Forum

☐ Online or social media

☐ An Elected Representative

☐ Word of mouth

☐ Newspaper, radio or advertising

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Leaflet or letter in the post

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+

☐ Prefer not to say

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

Appendix C Newspaper Advert Sample



East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade

We're getting ready to upgrade your electricity grid and want to hear what you think.

At EirGrid, operator of the national grid, we're planning an upgrade to the electricity system in your area - with a new 400kV underground cable, connecting Woodland substation, near Batterstown in East Meath, to Belcamp substation, near Clonsilla in North Dublin.

We have now identified four potential routes for this project, and during the coming weeks we'll be consulting with you to get your views. Your feedback will help us to deliver a safe and secure electricity supply, and bring more renewable energy onto the grid.

Find out more about the possible routes and have your say at eirgrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin

EIRGRID
Delivering a cleaner energy future

Appendix D Sample Stakeholder Email

Dear Stakeholder

EirGrid is responsible for a safe, secure, and reliable supply of electricity – now and in the future. We develop, manage, and operate the electricity transmission grid.

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade involves a transmission network reinforcement centred on strengthening the network between east Meath and north Dublin to improve the transfer of power across the existing transmission network. The project will add a high-capacity 400 kV underground cable connection from Woodland substation near Batterstown in County Meath to Belcamp substation near Clonsaugh in north Dublin. As of 2020, around 40% of the electricity that we use in Ireland each year comes from renewable sources. The government's Climate Action Plan sets out the target to achieve up to 80% of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030. The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade is an important project in reaching this target.

We need to upgrade and strengthen the network to:

- address the increased electricity demand in east Meath and north Dublin due to economic development and population growth
- reduce the use of and reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation
- facilitate further development of renewable energy generation, onshore and offshore

In June 2022, EirGrid consulted with stakeholders on the shortlisted technology options. The 400 kV underground cable option was identified as the best performing option to progress for this project.

In this current phase (Step 4), we have identified four potential underground cable route options to upgrade the electricity grid between East Meath and North Dublin and have identified the study area, the proposed geographical area where the electricity infrastructure for The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade is proposed to be built.

Further detail on the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, the four underground cable route options being considered, including a consultation portal, interactive map, video, and project brochure is available at <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/cp1021/the-project/>

A 12-week public consultation is now underway, and EirGrid are inviting feedback on the study area and four underground cable route options for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade.

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

Please make your submission by Sunday 30 November 2022 via the following:

Email: EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com

Online: [Consult.eirgrid.ie](https://consult.eirgrid.ie)

Questionnaire: <https://consult.eirgrid.ie/content/east-meath-north-dublin-grid-upgrade-consultation>

Post: East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation, EirGrid plc, Freeport FDN 5312, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, D04 FW28.

If submitting online, you can provide feedback through a short questionnaire or upload an online submission once registered on the Project Consultation Portal. We encourage you to engage with us and have your say as early as possible during the consultation period.

All feedback obtained will be reviewed and reflected and published in a post consultation report in the New Year 2023 followed by an Emerging Best Performing Route option in Spring 2023. EirGrid will consult locally with stakeholders on the Emerging Best Performing Route and announce a final route option in Summer 2023 as well as identifying and detailing where the project will be built.

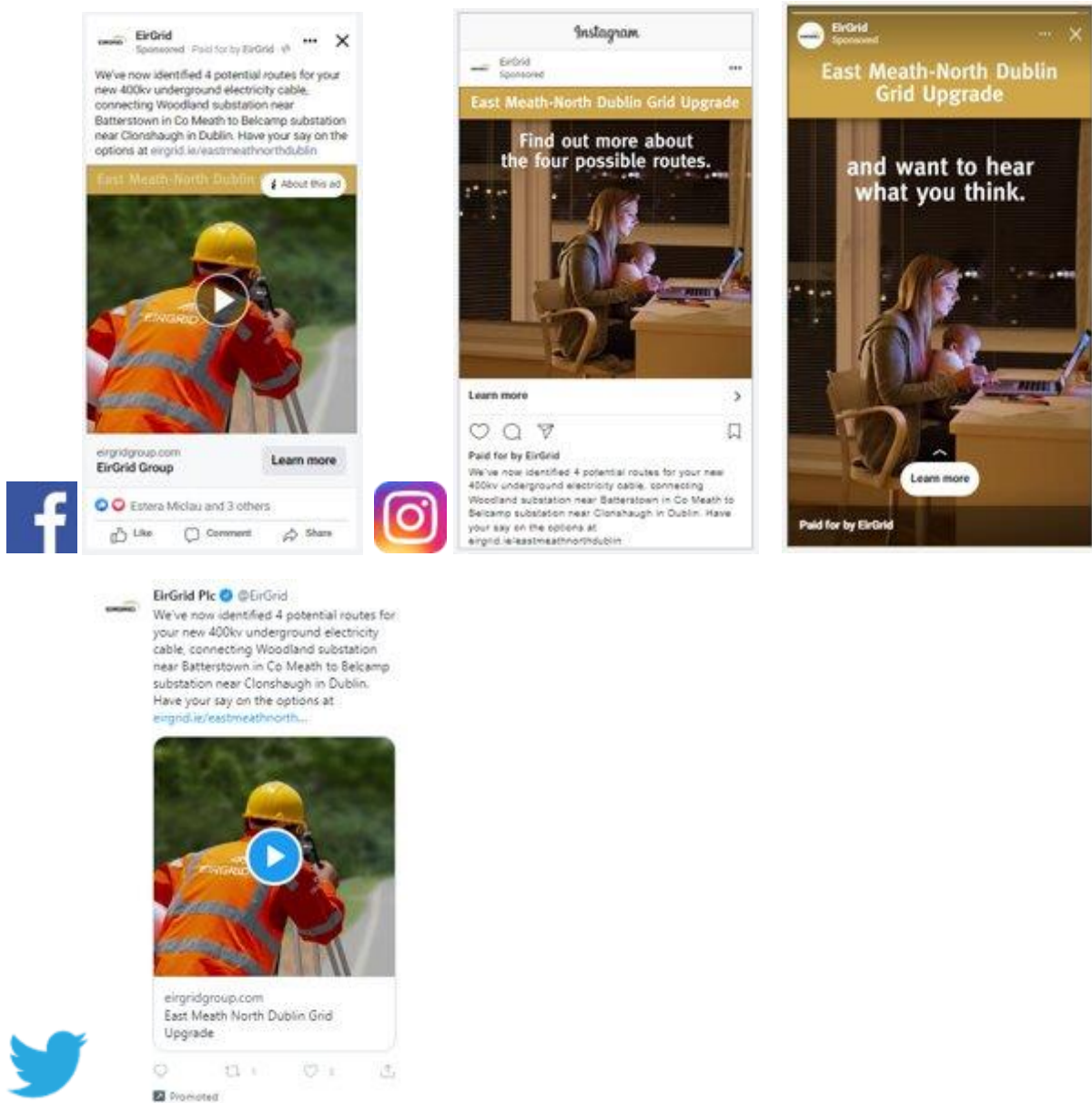
EirGrid fully respects your right to privacy. We will not collect any personal information about you on the public consultation portal without your clear permission. View our updated Privacy Notice at <https://consult.eirgrid.ie/content/privacy-statement> which is in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) effective from 25 May 2018.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to receive a briefing or further information.

Yours sincerely,

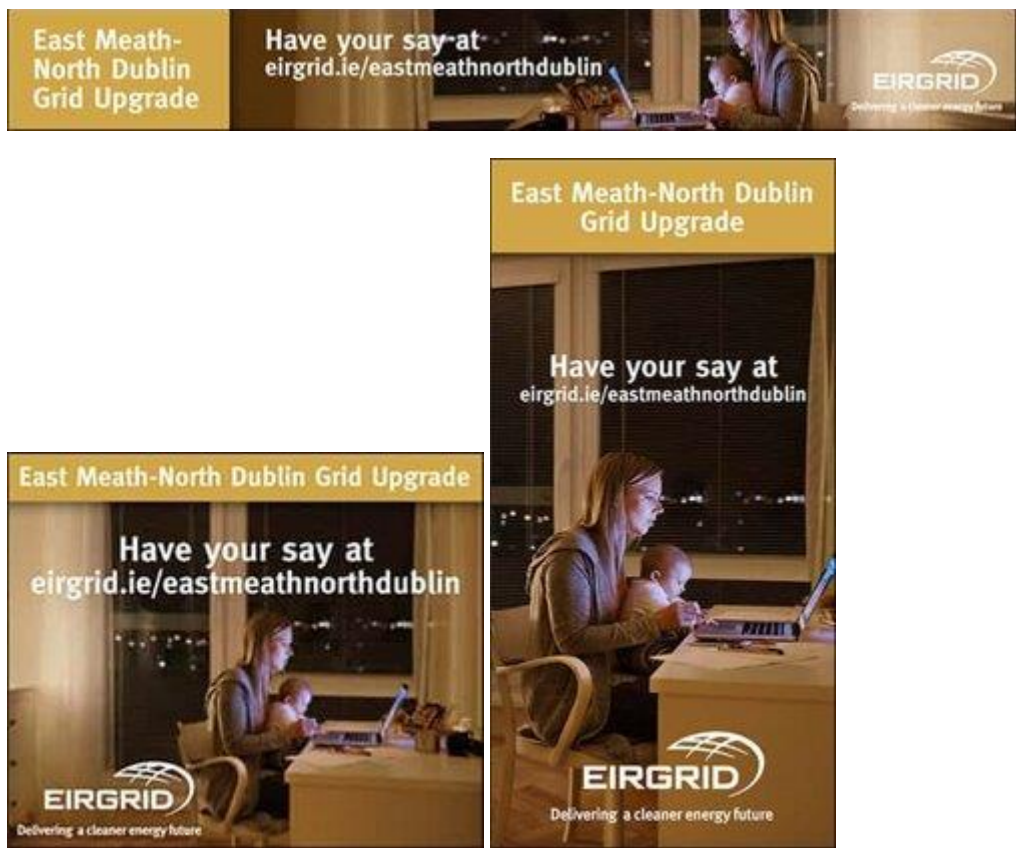
Community Liaison Officer
East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade

Appendix E Social Media and Display Samples



Display:





Appendix F Sample Press Release

Closing date approaches for East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade public consultation

EirGrid is encouraging members of the public to submit their views on the East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade before the public consultation closes on November 30 next.

The operator of Ireland's electricity grid commenced a 12-week public consultation in September, on four routes for the new 400kV underground electricity cable project.

The East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade is a high-capacity electricity connection between Woodland electricity substation, near Batterstown in County Meath, to Belcamp electricity substation, near Clonshaugh in north Dublin.

This project is needed to address the increased electricity demand in east Meath and north Dublin, due to economic activity and population growth, while also reducing the use of fossil fuels for electricity generation and preparing the grid for increased volumes of renewable energy.

The extensive engagement process involved public information days, door-to-door engagement, public webinars and local landowner engagement, which saw the project team visit and speak to communities and stakeholders across the study area.

Briefings of chambers of commerce, local authorities, elected representatives and businesses in both counties took place, along with technical stakeholder briefings.

Speaking about the feedback to date, Michael Mahon, EirGrid Chief Infrastructure Officer said: "Submissions we have received from communities along the proposed routes shows us people want a say in how grid infrastructure is developed, and we are listening."

"The electricity system ultimately exists to serve the needs of communities and wider society, and as such, we believe that communities should be engaged in this process," said Mahon.

Members of the public can find out more about the four proposed route options at eirgrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin, and have their say by making a submission on, or before November 30, at consult.eirgrid.ie.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor

The 400kV underground cable circuit was identified earlier this year as the best-performing technical option.

A community forum has been established for the project and will receive project updates and provide guidance to the EirGrid project team on any relevant community issues. The forum will also oversee the implementation of a community benefit fund and communicate information to a wider group of local stakeholders.

Appendix G OOH Displays



Appendix H Stakeholder List

Stakeholder	Stakeholder Type
OPW	Statutory Body
Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)	Statutory body
NMS	Statutory body
National Parks and Wildlife Services	Statutory body
Teagasc	Statutory body
Fingal Public Participation Network (PPN)	Interest/community group
Meath PPN	Interest/community group
Fingal Chamber of Commerce	Business
Meath Chamber of Commerce	Business
Meath County Councillors	Elected rep
Fingal County Councillors	Elected rep
Individual Stakeholders	Member of public
TDs and other elected Reps	Elected rep
Affected landowners	Landowner
Consumers	Customers
Commission for the Regulation of Utilities	Other
Department Environment Communication and Climate	Other
Pavee Point/local traveller group	Interest/community groups
Community Forum	Interest/community groups
Impacted community assets	Interest/community groups
Media (regional)	Other
Media(national)	Other
Social media users	Other
Trade press	Other
National Broadband Ireland	Other
Sports Clubs	Sporting Organisations
Retail	Business