

DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting: Celtic Interconnector Community Forum

Date: 1st April 2025

Venue: Ballyadam Converter Station Site

Participating:

Irish Rural Link – James Claffey, Brendan Mulry

EirGrid - Michelle Walsh, Shane Cooney, Ronan Lynch

East Cork Community Representatives -

Owen Hurley, Bishop Ahern NS Board of Management, Robert Barry Knockraha Area Community Association, Marguerite Cremin Knockraha Environmental Group, Cllr. Anthony Barry, Cobh MDC, Fred Whelan Curtin, Imogeela Community Sports Hall, Ivor Knowles Ballintotis Area Community Council, Evelyn Forde, Carrigtwohill Community Council, Finbarr Clohessy, Youghal Fishermen Association. Kieran O'Sullivan, Ballintotis Area Community Council, Maria Walsh, Youghal Chamber of Commerce, Jim Barry, Carrigtwohill Historical Society, Carey Joyce, Castlemartyr GAA.

Apologies: Gráinne Furey, Youghal Blue and Green Community Network, Michael de Buitleir Cork County PPN, Ann O'Neill, Killeagh Inch Community Council, Catherine Douglas, Churchtown North Residents Committee

Minutes Compiled by Irish Rural Link

Item	Description
1.	Site Visit from Viewing Platform
	Shane Cooney, Project Manager EirGrid led a site visit from the Viewing Platform inclusive of a wide-ranging Question and Answer session on the specific details of the site. A video presentation of the Claycastle Beach, Youghal Ducting Installation which took place on Sunday March 30 th was also provided.
1.	Introduction and Agenda
	After the site visit James Claffey (Chairperson) opened the formal meeting and introduced the agenda.
2.	Minutes of last Forum Meeting – 10th December 2024

	It was agreed that the Minutes of the last forum meeting be agreed at the next meeting.
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3.	Update on Celtic Interconnector Project Progress - (Presentation Attached)		
	<p>Michelle Walsh (EirGrid) provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Project. Key messages included:</p> <p>Cable Routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HVAC trenching and ducting complete. • HVAC cable pulling ongoing and is almost complete. Final railway line section to be completed. • Refilling of HVAC cable joint bays ongoing and the majority are completed. • Passing bays being reconstructed. These will be replanted with the correct plants at the time when planting is appropriate. • HCDC Section 1 & 2 completed. HVDC section 3 on N25, Killeagh – Youghal ducting has commenced., part of a number of works, in the Youghal Area. Traffic Management will be commencing for a closure on Monday 14th April for the section of the road coming off Summerhill cross towards Claycastle beach. works completed during the holidays particularly to accommodate mobile home access in the park and school buses serving the leisure centre. • Please get in touch with EirGrid for more detailed up to the minute information. A new Liaison officer has also been appointed by Sorensen, the company responsible for this parts of the works, Cillian Quinlan; 086 032 6171 or celticinterconnector@sorensen.ie . <p>Gogganstown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HVDC works continue at Gogganstown 400 kV substation. <p>Converter station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong progress at the Ballyadam converter station as viewed. • External cladding nearing complete. <p>Landfall works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120m ducting laid on beach 30/03/2025 as presented. • Next steps are to complete 120m ducting to out to sea. • Transition joint bay behind to be installed in dunes behind the car park. 		
	<table> <tr> <th data-bbox="256 1673 887 1711">Questions/Comments</th><th data-bbox="887 1673 1394 1711">Answers/Response</th></tr> </table>	Questions/Comments	Answers/Response
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	<table> <tr> <td data-bbox="256 1718 887 2040">Clarification requested on the pending N25 Youghal road closures?</td><td data-bbox="887 1718 1394 2040">Slipway coming from Youghal to Killeagh is currently closed. The next full road closure from Summerfield Cross (with local road access) will likely take two weeks, but a four-week closure will be published. These works will be carried out during school holidays.</td></tr> </table>	Clarification requested on the pending N25 Youghal road closures?	Slipway coming from Youghal to Killeagh is currently closed. The next full road closure from Summerfield Cross (with local road access) will likely take two weeks, but a four-week closure will be published. These works will be carried out during school holidays.
Clarification requested on the pending N25 Youghal road closures?	Slipway coming from Youghal to Killeagh is currently closed. The next full road closure from Summerfield Cross (with local road access) will likely take two weeks, but a four-week closure will be published. These works will be carried out during school holidays.		

4.	Update on Community Benefit Fund	
	<p>Michelle Walsh (EirGrid) provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund. Key messages included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Phase 2 of Community benefit Fund closed to the public 14/03/2025 ➤ €841,013 in funding available to eligible communities and voluntary groups. • Phase 2 Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High number of applications. More applications were received than for Phase 1. There is an increased amount of funding available in Phase 2 as not all of the funding available was allocated in Phase 1 due to a shortfall in Biodiversity themed applications. • Checking underway by SECAD to ensure applications are fully complete. If necessary, applicants will be reached out in this regard. • Evaluation to follow. The expectation is that successful applicants will be notified mid-summer. • The majority of the 29 Successful applicants in Phase 1 have carried out their project works. A small number of necessary extensions have been granted. • SECAD is the best port of call for any additional questions and EirGrid are also happy to answer any questions. SECAD contact number is 021 4613 432 or info@secad.ie. • It is envisaged that Phase 3 will open towards the end of 2026. 	
	Questions/Comments	Answers/Response
	What was the amount of funding available under Phase 1 of the Fund?	€840,000. €120,000 was not allocated as an insufficient number of Biodiversity project applications were received. 40% was the original Phase 1 amount available with 30% for Phase 2 and 30% for Phase 3.
	When will the results of Phase 2 awards be announced?	This will be announced in Summer. SECAD have indicated 28 th June.
		SECAD and the EirGrid Ecologist have carried out a number of Capacity Building consultations and workshops to help address the

		need for an increased number of Biodiversity Project applications. It is hoped that a sufficient number of applications the biodiversity funding stream available in phase 2 have been submitted.
5.	Project Timeline.	
	Michelle Walsh (EirGrid) provided a brief update on the Celtic Interconnector Project Timeline. The project is broadly on track and the significant part of the project works will soon be carried out at sea. At 500km, this is the longest undersea interconnector of its type to be installed to date. French Partner RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité) works mirror EirGrid with some differences especially around the Community Benefit Fund and Community Forum which is unique to EirGrid.	
	Questions/Comments	Answers/Response
	No questions or comments arose.	
6.	French Mayoral visit of 4th-5th June	
	Michelle Walsh (EirGrid) provided a brief update on a planned French Mayoral Visit in early June. This visit is part of the commitment between Ireland and France to further strengthen and deepen bilateral relations around energy. Mayors and regional politicians from affected French Communes (each representing 500-800 approximate populations) will be travelling to Cork for this visit. Plans are currently being developed. EirGrid looks forward to advising details and will be reaching out to the Community Forum for their involvement, as necessary.	
8.	Any Other Business	
	No issues arose.	
9.	Next Steps	
	James Claffey (Chairperson) closed the meeting, thanked members for taking the time to visit the EirGrid site and their ongoing work on the forum. The next Community Forum meeting is provisionally scheduled for June. Date to be confirmed.	