

## Celtic Interconnector Project

Step 3 Consultation Report

August 2019



Co-financed by the European Union  
Connecting Europe Facility



<b>Client</b>	EirGrid
<b>Title</b>	Celtic Interconnector Project
<b>Subtitle</b>	Step 3 Consultation Report
<b>Dates</b>	last published 03/09/2019 last revised 06/09/2019
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Classification</b>	Open external
<b>Project Code</b>	11117
<b>Author(s)</b>	Matt Heath, Eden Foley, Gina Malby, LaShanda Seaman
<b>Quality Assurance by</b>	Dan Barrett, Lucy Farrow
<b>Main point of contact</b>	Matt Reynolds
<b>Telephone</b>	+44 (0)207 2390 7800
<b>Email</b>	matt.reynolds@traverse.ltd

Image: NASA Goddard Space Flight Center from Greenbelt, MD, USA,  
Northwestern Europe at night by VIIRS, CC BY 2.0

The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

t. +44 (0) 207 239 7800 p. 252b Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8XG,  
United Kingdom  
e. info@traverse.ltd w. www.traverse.ltd



# Contents

Executive summary.....	1
1. Introduction .....	3
2. Feedback on the Celtic Interconnector project overall.....	10
3. Feedback on proposed Landfall Locations .....	16
4. Feedback on proposed Converter Station Location Zones.....	18
5. Campaign responses .....	30
6. Feedback on the consultation process .....	36
Appendix A – Codes applied .....	39
Appendix B – Online responses .....	46



## Executive summary

This report provides a summary of the responses received to the Step 3 consultation on the proposed Celtic Interconnector project, undertaken by EirGrid between 11 April and 10 June 2019.

The Celtic Interconnector would enable the transfer of electricity between the south coast of Ireland and the north-west coast of France via approximately 500 km of subsea cable and approximately 75 km of underground cable in Ireland and France. This consultation invited stakeholders and residents to give feedback on a shortlist of three potential Landfall Locations and six potential Converter Station Location Zones for the project in Ireland.

### Consultation process

The consultation was owned and managed by EirGrid Group. Traverse was commissioned to receive, collate and independently analyse responses to the consultation submitted via an online form, by email, by post, and records of engagement completed during local consultation events by EirGrid staff during conversations with project stakeholders.

In total, this consultation received 1,037 responses. Of these, 770 were identified as campaign responses, with or without variations, of which there were five distinct types (or templates). A detailed description of Traverse's approach to the handling, analysis and reporting of responses can be found in Chapter one.

An analysis of the comments made by respondents about the consultation process can be found in Chapter six.

### Consultation responses

This report summarises respondents' views on the overall project, the proposed shortlist of Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones, other proposed infrastructure (for example cables) and the consultation process itself. These responses are separated into benefits, concerns and suggestions, which are then organised by theme (for example environment, community, local economy etc.). Benefits are comments which support or recognise positive implications of the project. Concerns are comments that raise issues that are felt to be negative in relation to the project. An overview of the topics raised can be seen in the coding framework (Appendix A).

The most commonly raised benefits and concerns were:

- **Benefits** about the proposed Celtic Interconnector primarily relate to the overall project, rather than to the shortlisted Landfall Locations or Converter Station Location Zones, with many offering little detail beyond general support for the project and/or recognition of its necessity. Of those supportive responses that offer more detailed justification for their support, the most commonly cited reason is that the project will positively



impact Ireland's energy security, both in terms of increasing its national grid capacity and integrating its energy infrastructure with that of continental Europe, thereby reducing its reliance on the UK. Other positive comments relate to the design of the project, and particularly to EirGrid's proposal to run all associated cables below ground, thereby avoiding the need for pylons and overhead high-voltage power lines.

- **Concerns** about the project are much more common than positive ones and tend to go into much greater detail. Such comments are also more likely to relate to specific locations, although the most frequently raised concerns are largely applicable to the full shortlist of Converter Station Location Zones. The most common concern is that the construction and operation of a new Converter Station in any of the proposed Location Zones would generate significant noise pollution, which respondents said would be harmful given the quiet, rural character of the shortlisted areas. Another, closely related, concern is that a new Converter Station may prove detrimental to residents' health and wellbeing, based on the belief that it will generate noise and air pollution and significant electromagnetic radiation. This, in turn, is related to another commonly cited concern regarding the proximity of the shortlisted Converter Station Location Zones to residential areas, and the potential for impacts on local communities and the environment.

Further details about the wider range of benefits, concerns and suggestions raised by respondents can be found in Chapters two to five of this report.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. *About this report*

This report summarises the responses received to the Step 3 consultation on the Celtic Interconnector project. This consultation sought comments on the shortlisted options for Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones.

## 1.2. *About the Celtic Interconnector Project*

The Celtic Interconnector is a proposed electrical link which will enable the movement of electricity between Ireland and France. EirGrid has been working with its counterpart in France, Réseau de Transport d'Électricité, to develop an interconnector between the two countries.

No decision has been made at this stage to build the Celtic Interconnector. Should the project proceed, a final decision to commence construction would happen around 2021. The interconnector would then go live in 2026.

Further information about the Celtic Interconnector project can be found on the EirGrid website:

[www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/](http://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/)

## 1.3. *About this consultation*

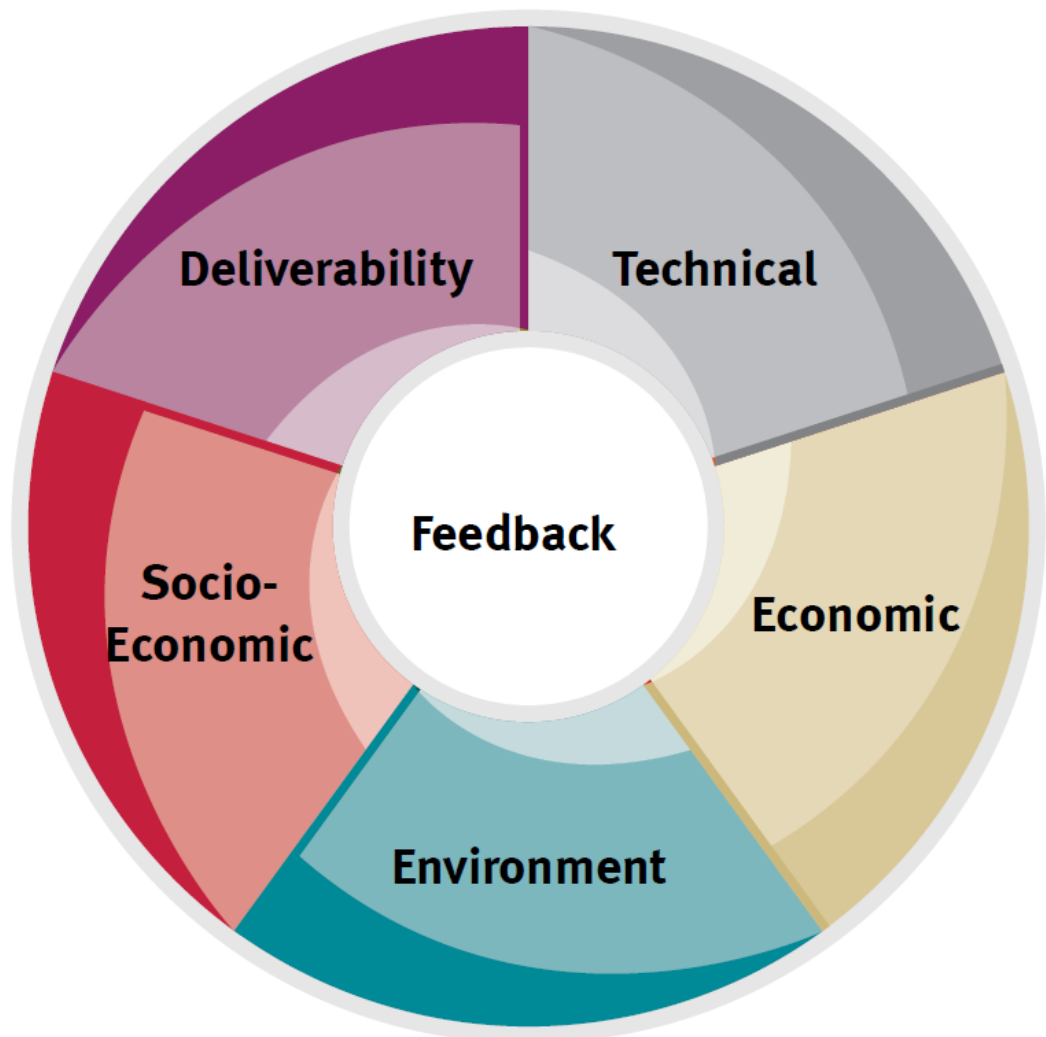
Between 11 April and 10 June 2019, EirGrid consulted on the Celtic Interconnector project, in line with its six-step approach to grid development, shown in Figure 1 below and outlined in EirGrid's *Have Your Say* document<sup>1</sup>.



Figure 1: EirGrid's six step approach to grid development projects

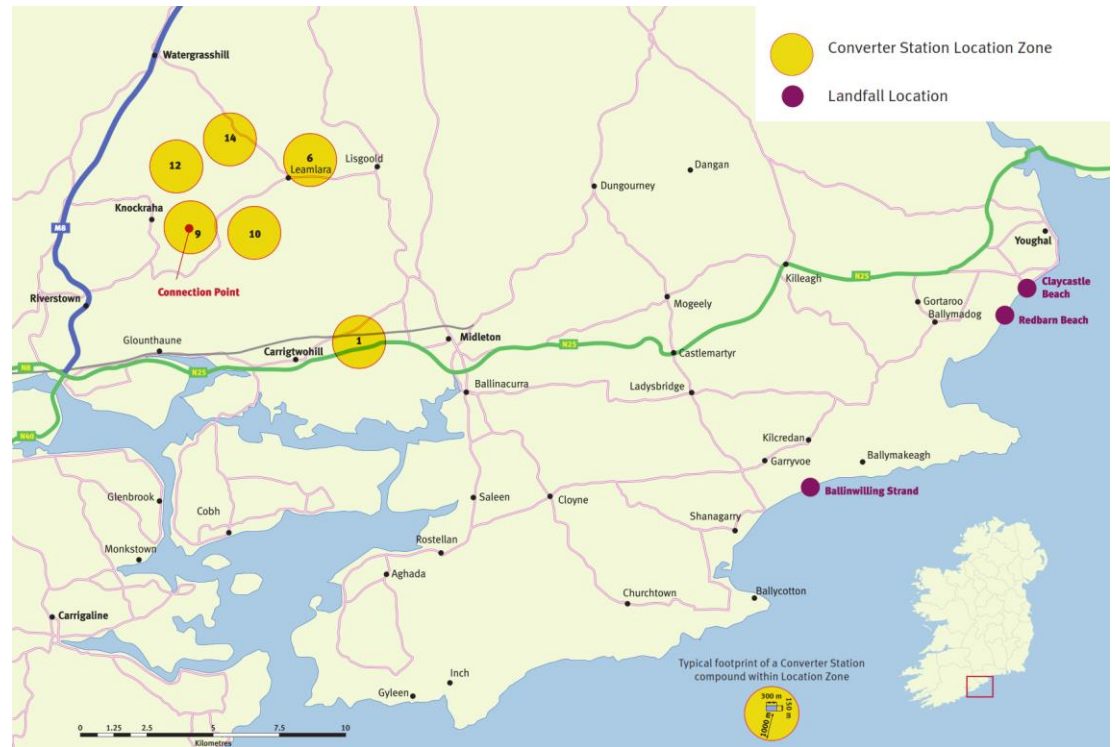
<sup>1</sup> [http://www.eirgridgroup.com/\\_uuid/7d658280-91a2-4dbb-b438-ef005a857761/EirGrid-Have-Your-Say\\_May-2017.pdf](http://www.eirgridgroup.com/_uuid/7d658280-91a2-4dbb-b438-ef005a857761/EirGrid-Have-Your-Say_May-2017.pdf)

This was Step 3 of the consultation and engagement process, following on from studies conducted by EirGrid that explored possible Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones based on the five constraint types, as shown in Figure 2, and stakeholder feedback. EirGrid also carried out marine surveys in order to learn more about the seabed geology off the coast of East Cork to inform the offshore constraints assessment.



**Figure 2: Constraint types considered**

Based on all this information, shortlists for both the Converter Station Location Zone and the Landfall Location were determined following a comparative evaluation of the identified options. This stage of consultation focused on gathering opinions from local communities and stakeholders about the three proposed options for the Landfall Locations and the six options shortlisted as potential Converter Station Location Zones, as shown below in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Location of proposed Converter Station Location Zones and Landfall Locations**

As part of the public consultation process EirGrid:

- wrote to elected representatives, contacts from the project database, and drawing from the records held by the Land Registry, wrote to residents within the converter station location zones and the landfall locations;
- developed a project brochure and updated the Celtic Interconnector webpages;
- held six public information meetings in East Cork at both landfall locations and converter station zones;
- advertised the consultation process in local and national newspapers and on EirGrid's own Facebook and Twitter social media pages;
- hosted an online feedback form, available via [eirgrid.com](http://eirgrid.com);
- presented to the Municipal District Councils of Cobh Glanmire and East Cork; and
- issued a press statement to media.

Consultation responses were received via an online form, as emails, letters, as 'campaigns' (identical pre-written responses submitted by multiple respondents) and through records of conversations at engagement events.

EirGrid appointed Traverse, an independent consultancy, specialising in the delivery of large-scale consultations, to process and analyse the responses received to this consultation and produce this report.





## 1.4. Responses received

In total, this consultation received 1,037 responses. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the types of responses received.

Response type	Total Number of responses received
<i>Online feedback form</i>	17
<i>Records of engagement</i>	113
<i>Letters and emails (excluding campaign responses)</i>	137
<i>Letters and emails (campaign responses)</i>	770
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,037</b>

Table 1: Response Types Received

### Records of Engagement

During the consultation period, EirGrid held a number of events to present the proposals to stakeholders and communities. Conversations with stakeholders at these events were recorded as 'records of engagement'. These were considered as part of the range of responses to this consultation.

### Campaigns

The consultation received responses under five campaigns:

- Zone 6, Leamlara (3-page version)
- Zone 6, Leamlara (1-page version)
- Zone 10, Pigeon Hill
- Zone 14, Ballyvatta and previous Zones 7/8/9/11
- Zones 6, 10 and 14

Some respondents submitted several campaign responses together, most commonly both versions of the Zone 6, Leamlara campaign. Campaigns are responses which use pre-written text or response forms. It is the content of the response that defines it as a campaign rather than the format, so the same campaign may have responses in paper and digital formats. Respondents either add their own contact details or use the pre-written text in an email or letter that they submit. In some cases, the text may be amended or varied by the respondent to better reflect their views.



## 1.5. *Response channels*

There were four official channels through which to submit a response to this consultation:

- **online:** by using the dedicated consultation web form accessible via the EirGrid website;
- **email:** by emailing the project's dedicated email address, [celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com](mailto:celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com), administered by the project team at EirGrid;
- **post:** by sending a hardcopy response to the address provided by EirGrid; and
- **in person:** by attending a local consultation engagement event where members of staff discussed the project and recorded feedback.

## 1.6. *Data processing*

Submissions received were recorded in a database for analysis and categorised into types (for example letter, email or campaign type).

### **Development of the coding framework**

To analyse the open text responses consistently, Traverse developed a coding framework. Each code represents a specific issue, and these are grouped together according to unifying themes and sentiments.

- For example, "Concern – Environment – air quality"

A basic thematic structure was developed following a review of a sample of the submissions received and further codes were added in response to additional issues identified following a detailed review of all consultation responses. The coding framework was adapted as analysis of the responses was undertaken to ensure that it reflected the nuances of the responses.

The detailed coding framework is shown in Appendix A.

### **Using the coding framework**

The coding was used to group together similar comments and summarise them thematically. In this way, this summary report draws on and reflects the responses received and the full range of issues raised by respondents.

## 1.7. *Reporting*

### **Structure of the report**

Chapters two to four present a summary of comments on each of the proposed Landfall Location and Converter Station Location Zone shortlist.

Chapter five contains summaries of the campaign responses received.

Chapter six summarises feedback on the consultation process.



## Responses to closed questions

Charts summarising responses to the closed questions used in the online survey are included in this report at Appendix B. Whilst these responses were valuable, the very low number of responses (17) means that these cannot be considered to be representative. As such, whilst these charts have been included to ensure that the views of those respondents who completed the closed questions were represented in this report, care should be taken in drawing any wider conclusions from the charts.

## Open text responses

The qualitative analysis set out in this report summarises the responses given to open questions in the consultation form and also responses submitted in other formats, such as letters and emails, and the records of engagement.

## Reading the report

Landowners and project stakeholders were invited to participate and there was wide promotion of the consultation to encourage response. However, as with any consultation, it is important to note that responses were ultimately received from those who chose to respond, this is often called a 'self-selecting' response. As such, whilst all responses are invaluable in exploring the views and opinions about the project, these are the views of those who chose to respond and should not be considered in the same light as an opinion poll with a statistically representative sample.

## Numbers in the report

- A small number/a few – comments which were made by around 1 to 6 respondents.
- Some – comments which were made by around 7 to 19 respondents.
- Several – comments which were made by around 20 respondents or more.

It should be noted that the most common responses to this consultation, around three-quarters (770), were campaign responses. This means that the most common responses, by volume, are described in Chapter five. Chapters two to four summarise significantly fewer responses (267). As such, the numbers of times that codes are used across the breadth of the comments made will necessarily be relatively low. The number of times that each code has been used can be seen in the table in Appendix A, the quantifiers used have been based on these figures.

These quantifying terms are intended to provide a sense of scale and proportion, and to help make the report more accessible to readers. Traverse's intention is to reflect accurately the range of issues raised, rather than to attribute weight to the number of respondents raising them.



### **Data protection**

The online and record of engagement forms included statements on data protection, 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. In line with standard practice for public consultation reports, points made by organisations who have not requested confidentiality, have been attributed to them where relevant.



## 2. Feedback on the Celtic Interconnector project overall

### 2.1. Overview

This chapter sets out the comments made by respondents on the project as a whole, discussing first comments that were supportive of the proposals, then those which were opposed to the project and finally responses which made suggestions in relation to the project.

### 2.2. Comments supporting the Celtic Interconnector project

Project	
<b>General support</b>	Some respondents express general support for the overall project, that is, that they can understand why such a project is required and that it represents a positive step for the country – without commenting on any specific aspect(s) of the proposals.
Energy	
<b>Energy security</b>	Several consultation respondents support the Celtic Interconnector project as they believe it will bolster Ireland's energy security by increasing its national grid capacity and integrating its energy infrastructure with that of mainland Europe, with some of these respondents explicitly referring to the need for reduced dependence on UK energy post-Brexit.
Design	
<b>Underground cables</b>	Some made positive comments regarding the proposal to run the AC and DC cables for the Celtic Interconnector project underground, often because they feel this is more suitable than the alternative of pylons and overhead high-voltage power lines. Some of these respondents would like guarantees that only underground cable routing will be considered.



<b>Route</b>	A few respondents support the proposal to have the underground cables align with existing local roads, as they believe this to be less intrusive than any alternative route between a Landfall Location and Converter Station Location Zone.
<b>Undersea cables</b>	A small number of respondents are supportive of the decision to use undersea cables to import energy from France, although they do not provide detailed reasons for their support.
<b>Environment</b>	
<b>Reduced Emissions</b>	A few respondents support the project as they believe that it will help to facilitate Ireland's transition to low carbon energy, therefore leading to reduced emissions and an overall positive effect on the environment.
<b>Mitigation</b>	A small number of respondents are supportive of the various environmental mitigation approaches that have been proposed in order to offset any potentially damaging effects, saying that they are reassured by the presence of such measures in the proposals.
<b>Local Economy</b>	
<b>Investment (FDI)</b>	A small number of respondents support the Celtic Interconnector project on the basis that it will enhance the local infrastructure in County Cork and thus make the area more attractive to foreign direct investment (FDI).

### 2.3. *Comments opposing the Celtic Interconnector project*

<b>Design</b>	
<b>Pylons and power lines</b>	Despite EirGrid's preference for running the cables for the Celtic Interconnector project below ground where feasible, several respondents are concerned that this might allow for the use of overhead high-voltage power lines and pylons along less accessible parts of the route. Such respondents highlight concerns about the visual impact and potential health risks associated with such structures and ask for guarantees that all new power lines will be below ground.



<b>Route</b>	Some respondents raise concerns regarding the routing of cables between Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones, either because they fear that the decision to follow existing roads will cause disruption, or because they wish to see more detailed proposals regarding the possible routes between the various shortlisted Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones.
<b>Cost</b>	Some respondents raise concerns regarding the cost of the project given the complexity and scale of the proposals, with some also concerned that the additional cost of integration into the existing grid and ongoing maintenance has not been considered. Others object based on their view that the development is “extravagant”, given their understanding that it will be financed through public funds.
<b>Maintenance</b>	A few respondents have concerns about the ongoing maintenance of the cables installed as part of the Celtic Interconnector project. Such responses fall into two distinct categories: some refer to the underground section of the route and the potential for any maintenance work to cause significant disruption to local roads and communities, while others argue that undersea cables are easily damaged but difficult to access, making maintenance both more likely in theory and more difficult in practice.
<b>Security</b>	A small number of respondents are concerned that the design of the project means that its security will be compromised. Some respondents feel that burying the cables underground would increase the risk of the valuable materials being excavated and stolen, while others believe that undersea cables, which for safety reasons are marked on all nautical maps, would represent a potential target for a hostile foreign power.
<b>Energy and energy generation</b>	
<b>Energy security</b>	Some respondents oppose the project on the basis that it will undermine Ireland's energy security by making it dependent on France, with some expressing concern that that this could be used against Ireland in the event of any conflict between the two countries.



<b>Exporting energy</b>	A small number of respondents challenge EirGrid's claim that the project would allow Ireland to export energy to continental Europe, arguing that the country does not produce enough energy to cover its own needs and so would not be able to supply the needs of neighbouring countries as well.
<b>Nuclear power</b>	Some respondents are opposed to the proposal to import power from France, based on their belief that the amount of safety precautions required renders nuclear power needlessly expensive, and stating that nuclear power accounts for a significant portion of the French power generation.
<b>Waste disposal</b>	A small number of respondents are concerned about building in an area of the Cork coastline where they believe there are a number of British nuclear waste drums buried.
<b>Project</b>	
<b>General</b>	Several respondents are opposed to the project as a whole and explicitly refute the need case put forward by EirGrid, either because they disagree with the arguments or because they do not feel that the proposals have been adequately justified. Responses of this type typically argue that the Celtic Interconnector is prioritising profit and economic growth over the potential impact on communities and/or the environment.

#### 2.4. *Suggestions relating to the Celtic Interconnector project*

<b>Community Investment &amp; engagement</b>	
<b>Investment – amenities</b>	A few respondents suggest that EirGrid should invest in community amenities. Suggestions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• facilities for families such as a playground;</li><li>• upgrade road surfaces; and</li><li>• employment opportunities for local people.</li></ul>





<p><b>Investment – general</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents ask in general terms that investment be made into local communities.</p> <p>A small number of respondents suggested that the existing overhead cables between Ballyadam and Knockraha could be moved underground in order to enhance the local landscape.</p>
<p><b>Engagement</b></p>	<p>A few people request an opportunity to visit the existing Converter station site for the East West Interconnector in Co. Meath.</p>
<p><b>Route</b></p>	
<p><b>Use existing infrastructure</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents suggest that the underground DC cables should be routed along the proposed greenway along the disused Middleton-Youghal railway line to lessen the impact of the installation on local communities and lower the cost, as well as promoting the development of the proposed cycle route along the old railway line.</p>
<p><b>Avoid roads</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents ask that in choosing the route of the underground cables, roads be avoided as much as possible, citing the level of disruption that occurred when water pipes were installed in the area a few years previously.</p>
<p><b>Underground only</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents state their preference for the cables to be underground, mentioning their dislike of the existing overhead power lines in the Knockraha area and the burden they place on the local community.</p>
<p><b>Above ground only</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents ask that the cables be above ground.</p>
<p><b>Compensation</b></p>	
<p><b>Property and homes</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents request compensation in the event that their property is directly affected by the construction of the Converter Station as they are concerned that the value of their property will be affected.</p> <p>A small number of respondents suggest that they would be willing to allow EirGrid access to their property or would sanction the use of their land as part of the project, in return for compensation.</p>



<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	A small number of respondents ask that compensation is offered to local communities for the project's anticipated effect on health and wellbeing.
<b>Environmental affects</b>	A small number of respondents suggest that local communities be compensated for environmental impact of the proposals that might arise.
<b>Traffic and transport</b>	
<b>Traffic calming measures</b>	A few respondents request that effective traffic management plans are put in place during road works associated with the project.
<b>Transportation of materials</b>	A small number of respondents ask that transportation of materials during construction be carried out via rail, avoiding the use of road-based transport as much as possible.



### 3. Feedback on proposed Landfall Locations

#### 3.1. Overview

This chapter provides a summary of comments which relate to the proposed Landfall Locations. The shortlist of proposed Locations set out as part of the consultation were:

- Claycastle Beach
- Ballinwilling Strand
- Redbarn Beach

#### 3.2. Comments supporting shortlist of Landfall Locations

A small number of respondents express support for the proposed shortlist of Landfall Locations, without referring to any specific Landfall Location(s) or offering any detailed justification for their support.

#### 3.3. Comments opposing shortlist of Landfall Locations

<b>Local amenities</b>	A few respondents raise concerns regarding the shortlist of proposed Landfall Locations as all three beaches are reported to be used extensively by residents for recreational activities, and so any loss of access during construction would have ramifications for the local community.
<b>Tourism and local economy</b>	A small number of respondents are concerned that any loss of access to the beaches shortlisted as Landfall Locations would have a negative effect on tourism in the area, which would in turn have consequences for local businesses that are dependent on tourist revenue.
<b>Coastal erosion</b>	A small number of respondents oppose the shortlist of proposed Landfall Locations due to the coastal erosion that is believed to take place in all three locations every winter, which may render them unsuitable for use in this project.



### 3.4. *Comments regarding specific Landfall Locations*

<b>Claycastle Beach</b>	A few respondents are concerned about the potential use of Claycastle Beach as a Landfall Location, particularly as this might threaten its 'Blue Flag' environmental status. Some of these respondents also reference Claycastle's role as the starting point for the annual 'Ironman' race, which attracts athletes from around the world and provides a significant boost to the local economy, and ask for assurances that access to the beach will not be restricted either during and after construction.
<b>Redbarn Beach</b>	A small number of respondents raise concerns regarding Redbarn Beach's suitability as a potential Landfall Location, as it holds Blue Flag status and is a popular attraction for locals and tourists alike. Such respondents therefore ask for assurances that the beach will not experience any lasting environmental damage should it ultimately be used as the Landfall Location for the Celtic Interconnector.
<b>Ballinwilling Strand</b>	No specific comments were received regarding Ballinwilling Strand as a potential Landfall Location for the Celtic Interconnector project.

### 3.5. *Suggestions relating to Landfall Locations*

<b>Wider system constraints</b>	Bord Gáis Energy believe that the shortlist of Landfall Locations should not be limited to those with the shortest point of connection but also include options which they believe would benefit the wider energy system overall.
---------------------------------	---



## 4. Feedback on proposed Converter Station Location Zones

### 4.1. Overview

This chapter summarises comments on the proposed Converter Station Location Zones. Comments in Section 4.2, 4.3 and 4.5 refer to common themes raised across all feedback on Converter Station Location Zones with specific points highlighted in Sections 4.4 and 4.6. The shortlisted Zones set out in the consultation document were:

- Zone 1, Ballyadam
- Zone 6, Leamlara
- Zone 9, Knockraha
- Zone 10, Pigeon Hill
- Zone 12, Kilquane
- Zone 14, Ballyvatta

### 4.2. Comments supporting proposed Converter Station Location Zones

<b>General</b>	A few respondents express support for the proposed shortlist of Converter Station Location Zones, without referring to any specific Location Zones or providing any detailed justification for their support.
----------------	---



<b>Zone 1 – Ballyadam</b>	<p>A few respondents support locating the proposed Converter Station in Ballyadam. Reasons given by respondents include: perception that the area is already somewhat industrialised, meaning some of the necessary infrastructure for the project is already in place; argument that construction of a Converter Station in this area would have fewer negative impacts than in other proposed locations.</p> <p>These views were reflected by some members of the Municipal District Council of East Cork, on Tuesday 7 May 2019, at which EirGrid made a presentation as part of the consultation process. The minutes of this meeting record that “The Members suggested that site no. 1 at Ballyadam at the former Amgen site would be a more suitable location”.<sup>2</sup></p>
<b>Zone 9 – Knockraha</b>	<p>A few respondents express preference for building the proposed Converter Station in Knockraha given its close proximity to the existing substation.</p>

#### 4.3. *Comments opposing the shortlist of Converter Station Location Zones*

<b>Environment – All Zones</b>	
<b>Sound and noise</b>	<p>Several respondents raise concerns regarding the potential for noise pollution that they feel is likely to result from building a Converter Station in a quiet rural area. Some respondents refer to their experience of noise from existing substations, which they state emit constant, low-frequency noise.</p>
<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	<p>Several respondents are concerned about potentially harmful effects on the health and wellbeing of livestock, and wildlife.</p>

<sup>2</sup> <https://youghal.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/May-2019.pdf>



<p><b>Landscape and visual</b></p>	<p>Several respondents are concerned about the visual impact of a new Converter Station, particularly given the rural character of the shortlisted Zones. The size of the proposed Station is such that respondents believe it will dominate the local skyline and be visible for many kilometres around, thereby fundamentally altering the landscape and the character of the area itself.</p>
<p><b>Wildlife, ecology and biodiversity</b></p>	<p>Several respondents are concerned about the proposal to build the Converter Station in an area that is home to a significant wildlife population, suggesting that its construction would lead to the destruction of habitat and the potential destabilisation of the ecosystem.</p>
<p><b>Water supply and flood risk</b></p>	<p>Some respondents have concerns about the impact of the proposed Converter Station on water levels and quality. As some residents draw their water from underground wells they are concerned that these wells could be lost entirely should the water table be affected by the construction process.</p> <p>Some respondents are concerned about the decision to build such important infrastructure in areas that are regularly affected by flooding.</p>
<p><b>Land quality</b></p>	<p>A few respondents are concerned that land, and particularly agricultural land, in the immediate vicinity of a Converter Station may become sterilised as a result of either the construction or operation of the Station.</p>
<p><b>Air quality</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents raise concerns regarding the impact of emissions from the proposed Converter Station on air quality in its immediate vicinity, and the resultant effect on residents' health.</p>
<p><b>Community – All Zones</b></p>	
<p><b>Health and wellbeing</b></p>	<p>Several respondents express serious concerns about the potential impact of the proposed Converter Station on residents' health and wellbeing. Some of these concerns reflect those covered above in relation to air quality, while others are concerned about how electro-magnetic fields will affect the local population.</p> <p>Users of electronic devices such as pacemakers are concerned as to the effects of electro-magnetic fields on their devices.</p>



<b>Urbanisation and industrialisation</b>	Several respondents are concerned that the shortlisted Converter Station Location Zones are all in rural areas that would be adversely affected by the construction of such a large-scale industrial project and may ultimately open the door for future development and the eventual urbanisation of the area.
<b>Disruption during construction</b>	Some respondents are concerned about the potential for significant disruption to local communities during the construction of the proposed Converter Station in any of the shortlisted Zones.
<b>Amenities and recreation</b>	Some respondents raise concerns regarding the perceived impact of the proposed Converter Station on local amenities such as schools and sports clubs, as well as on recreational activities such as walking. These concerns are usually in relation to other related issues such as transport (to and from amenities) and health (of those using amenities). Concerns relating to specific Zones are discussed below.
<b>Historic environment</b>	Some respondents are concerned that the shortlisted Location Zones for the proposed Converter Station are home to numerous sites of significant historical and archaeological interest, from Celtic ringforts to cemeteries. Again, concerns relating to specific Zones are discussed below.
<b>Disruption once operational</b>	A few respondents are concerned that any disruption to surrounding communities will not cease once the Converter Station is operational and may in fact worsen given the level of activity in and around the Zone, as well as issues covered above, such as constant noise pollution.
<b>Developmental boundary – All Zones</b>	
<b>Property and homes</b>	Several respondents are concerned that the shortlisted Converter Station Location Zones are too close to residential areas and will therefore impact negatively on residents' quality of life, given the size of the proposed Converter Station and the perceived potential for constant noise pollution. This concern is raised for every Location Zone.





<b>Land take</b>	Some respondents raise concerns regarding the amount of land required for the proposed Converter Station, arguing that much of the land in the shortlisted Zones is actively used for agricultural purposes and therefore its loss would have direct economic repercussions.
<b>Traffic and transport – All Zones</b>	
<b>Local roads</b>	Some respondents are concerned that the local road network in the shortlisted Converter Station Location Zones would be inadequate for the number and type of vehicles that will require access to the Zone both during and after construction, due to their narrow, single-lane character and, in many areas, the lack of tarmacked surfaces.
<b>Traffic Congestion</b>	Some respondents raise concerns regarding the potential for increased congestion, and the accompanying disruption for locals, should any of the shortlisted Location Zones be chosen to host a development of this scale and character.



<b>Local Economy – All Zones</b>	
<b>Agriculture</b>	Some respondents are concerned that the construction and operation of a Converter Station in any of the shortlisted Location Zones would have a negative impact on agriculture, given the number of farms and other agricultural businesses in these areas. These concerns specifically relate to increased noise pollution and restricted access, which, it is argued, could adversely affect livestock welfare and business operations, leading to reduced revenue for such businesses and, ultimately, damage to the local economy.
<b>Property values</b>	Some respondents raise concerns regarding the potential for a new Converter Station in any of the proposed Location Zones to negatively affect property values in the surrounding areas, which may become less desirable to potential buyers if access is restricted and picturesque views permanently altered by the construction and operation of the Station.
<b>Tourism</b>	A few respondents raise concerns that the construction and operation of a Converter Station in any of the shortlisted Location Zones would negatively impact tourism in this part of County Cork. Fáilte Ireland reference their 2018 report, 'Overseas Holidaymakers' Attitudes to Ireland' in their response, which ranks 'beautiful scenery' and 'natural attractions' as the third and fourth most common reasons for recreational visits to the country.

#### 4.4. *Comments opposing specific Converter Station Location Zones*

<b>Zone 1 – Ballyadam</b>	
<b>Access for residential property</b>	A small number of respondents are concerned that the use of Zone 1, Ballyadam for a new Converter Station would negatively impact their ability to access their homes and/or property, given their proximity to the Zone and the perceived likelihood of increased traffic, both in size and number of vehicles.



<p><b>Access for business premises</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents raise concerns regarding the potential for the construction and operation of a new Converter Station in Zone 1, Ballyadam to restrict access to and from their business premises. Respondents refer to several local farms.</p>
<p><b>Impacts on existing projects</b></p>	<p>A few respondents state that they would object to the use of Zone 1, Ballyadam for a new Converter Station, as the proposed Zone is in the N25 route protection corridor and would therefore presumably necessitate the diversion of any future motorway between Cork and Waterford, or may even prevent such a project from getting off the ground.</p>
<p><b>Impact on Land quality</b></p>	<p>A small number of respondents raise concerns regarding the suitability of the existing Amgen site at Ballyadam, Zone 1, for a new Converter Station, as they understand that the site was previously abandoned due to problems with the installation of building foundations. It should be noted, however, that these respondents acknowledge the anecdotal character of these reports.</p>

<p><b>Zone 6 – Leamlara</b></p>	
<p><b>Access to residential properties</b></p>	<p>A few respondents are concerned that the presence of a Converter Station in Zone 6, Leamlara would restrict access to their residential property, due to their proximity to the Zone and the perceived inadequacies of the local road network.</p>
<p><b>Access to business premises</b></p>	<p>Some respondents raise concerns regarding the potential for the construction and operation of a Converter Station in Zone 6, Leamlara to restrict access to nearby business premises due to their reliance on a local road network that they feel is already inadequate and overloaded.</p>
<p><b>Amenities and recreation</b></p>	<p>Some respondents are concerned that the selection of Zone 6, Leamlara for a new Converter Station would negatively affect a range of amenities in the immediate vicinity, due to transport and health impacts (see above), including two schools, two nursing homes, a church and a sports club.</p>
<p><b>Historic environment</b></p>	<p>A few residents raise concerns regarding the suitability of Zone 6, Leamlara for the proposed Converter Station</p>



	due to the existence of multiple sites of historical and archaeological significance in the immediate vicinity, including three Celtic ringforts, as well as its proximity to the estate of Garrett Standish Barry (site code 1064), a proposed natural heritage area.
<b>Impact on existing projects</b>	<p>Some respondents are concerned that the construction and operation of a Converter Station in Zone 6, Leamlara would lead to problems with other existing projects in the surrounding area, including planning permission for up to 10 dwellings within the boundary of Zone 6, and another 20 acres of Zoned land for further residential development in Leamlara village.</p> <p>Some members of the Municipal District Council of East Cork, expressed their concern in relation to the proposed location of Leamlara for the provision of the convertor station, as the area “has been subjected to large planning applications over the last few years.”<sup>3</sup></p>
<b>Land ownership</b>	A small number of respondents raise concerns regarding issues of land ownership in the vicinity of Zone 6, Leamlara, where a significant amount of land is thought to be intestate or under probate.
<b>Landscape and visual impacts</b>	A small number of respondents are concerned that Zone 6, Leamlara is located on a ridge of heights up to 170m above sea level and could therefore dominate the local landscape and fundamentally alter the character of an area popular with walkers and tourists.

### Zone 9 – Knockhara

<b>Access to business premises</b>	A small number of residents are concerned that the use of Zone 9, Knockhara for a Converter Station would restrict access to several local farms, which would negatively impact their operations.
------------------------------------	---

<sup>3</sup> <https://youghal.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/May-2019.pdf>



<b>Historic environment</b>	Some respondents are concerned that the construction and operation of a Converter Station in Zone 9, Knockraha would negatively impact numerous areas of historical and archaeological significance, including the remains of a grenade casing foundry dating back to the Irish War of Independence, as well as the Celtic ringforts at Knockraha East and Lisheenroe, from which Knockraha is thought to derive its name, "Hill of the Forts".
<b>Amenities and recreation</b>	A small number of respondents raise concerns regarding Zone 9, Knockraha's suitability for a structure of this scale, given the topography of the area and the potential impact on essential services such as mobile phone coverage and broadband.
<b>Sound and noise</b>	Some respondents object to the use of Zone 9, Knockraha for a new Converter Station due to concerns about the noise pollution that such a structure could produce, which, in conjunction with the noise from the existing substation in the area, respondents fear could be overwhelming.

<b>Zone 10 – Pigeon Hill</b>	
<b>Access to residential properties</b>	A small number of residents are concerned that the construction and operation of a Converter Station in Zone 10, Pigeon Hill will restrict access to their home and/or land, due to their proximity to the proposed Location Zone and the inadequacy of the existing road network.
<b>Access to business premises</b>	A small number of residents are concerned that the use of Zone 10, Pigeon Hill for a Converter Station would restrict access to local business premises,



<b>Zone 12 – Kilquane</b>	
<b>Historic environment</b>	<p>Some respondents are concerned that the use of Zone 12, Kilquane for a new Converter Station would have a significant negative impact on nearby sites of historical and archaeological significance, including Sing Sing Prison in Kilquane Forest, known locally as the 'Rae', which was used as a prison and burial ground for British soldiers during the War of Independence, and regarded locally as a burial ground of historic significance. Furthermore, some residents are concerned about any potential impact on St Cuain's Holy Well, located in nearby Gogganstown</p>
<b>Land ownership</b>	<p>A few respondents raise objections to the construction and operation of a Converter Station in or near Kilquane Forest, as, due to the heritage outlined above, there is reported to be a longstanding agreement among residents that the forest is not to be built on or farmed.</p>

<b>Zone 14 – Ballyvatta</b>	
<b>Existing projects</b>	<p>Some respondents are concerned that Ballyvatta is not a suitable location for a Converter Station, as planning permission has already been granted for a large solar farm development adjacent to the nearby forest. Such respondents are concerned that the presence of two such developments in such a small, rural area would have a negative impact on locals' wellbeing and way of life.</p>
<b>Landscape and visual</b>	<p>A few respondents are concerned that the proposed Converter Station Location Zone 14, Ballyvatta is located on a ridge of heights up to 180 m above sea level and could therefore dominate the local landscape to an unacceptable degree.</p>



#### 4.5. *Suggestions regarding shortlist of Converter Station Location Zones*

<b>Use existing infrastructure</b>	<p>A few respondents request that the Converter Station is built in a location with existing infrastructure rather than in a rural location, with industrial areas and quarry sites being put forward as potential options.</p> <p>A small number of respondents suggest that an area with existing noise pollution such as one near a motorway should be chosen rather than a place with very little noise pollution.</p>
<b>Landscape and visual</b>	<p>Some respondents ask that the visual impact of the Converter Station on local communities and the surrounding landscape be minimised, with some highlighting the visibility of Knockraha Substation and a wish to avoid re-creating this</p> <p>Specific suggestions put forward by respondents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the use of screening around the Converter Station;</li><li>• building it in a sheltered area with a natural dip;</li><li>• using a forested area; and</li><li>• choosing colours for the Converter Station that blend into the surrounding area.</li></ul>
<b>Sound and noise</b>	<p>A small number of respondents request that noise mitigation be put in place to limit noise pollution from the Converter Station.</p>
<b>Water supply and flood risk</b>	<p>A small number of respondents suggest measures to protect ground water such as the construction of swales, underground attenuation and the use of permeable tarmac.</p>



#### 4.6. *Suggestions regarding specific Converter Station Location Zones*

<b>Zone 1 – Ballyadam</b>	<p>Some respondents ask that Zone 1, Ballyadam be selected as the location for the Converter Station, suggesting that it should be constructed on the currently disused Amgen site as this would make use of existing infrastructure and renew commercial interest in the site.</p> <p>Other reasons given by respondents include Ballyadam's large road network and the presence of an existing railway line, both of which, it is argued, would help facilitate the installation of cables. This view was echoed by members of the Municipal District Council, East Cork at their meeting of 7 May, 2019.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Additionally, a small number of respondents suggest that fewer local residents would be affected in Ballyadam than in some of the other shortlisted Zones and that the visual impact would be limited in this area.</p>
<b>Zone 9 – Knockraha</b>	<p>A small number of respondents request that Zone 9, Knockraha be chosen so that the new Converter Station could be build next to the existing Substation.</p>
<b>Alternative</b>	<p>A few respondents suggest alternative locations for the Converter Station such as in a forest in Coolquane, the 'Fota Retail Park at Carrigtwohill, Elfordstown or in a levelled quarry near Watergrasshill as they feel these locations would benefit from redevelopment.</p>

<sup>4</sup> <https://youghal.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/May-2019.pdf>



## 5. Campaign responses

### 5.1. Overview

The consultation received template responses from five different campaigns. Campaigns are defined as multiple responses containing pre-written, identical text. The text may be provided by a third party, such as a representative body, or developed by a group or community to reflect their views and submitted by all members of the group as individual responses.

In some cases, individuals may add additional comments or change the content slightly, these are still recognised as campaigns when the majority of the response reflects the standard campaign response, but the additional material is noted and analysed.

Campaign responses are valued equally to independent submissions, as each reflects the views of the individuals who submit them. However, because they represent a different type of response, they are reported separately in this section. The content of each of the campaigns received are summarised below and, where respondents added additional comments or amended the content, these variations are noted. The five campaigns received were:

- Zone 6, Leamlara (3-page version)
- Zone 6, Leamlara (1-page version)
- Zone 10, Pigeon Hill
- Zone 14, Ballyvatta and previous Zones 7/8/9/11
- Zones 6, 10 and 14

### 5.2. Summary of campaign responses

#### 5.2.1. Zone 6, Leamlara (3-page version)

130 respondents participated in a coordinated campaign by Lisgoold Leamlara Alliance Against Converter Station to “vehemently object to” the proposed location of the CSLZ6 Converter Station in Zone 6, Leamlara. They are against the inclusion of this Zone in future proposals and state that they will resist any attempt to locate the Station here for the following reasons:

#### **Inadequate infrastructure**

Respondents as part of the campaign comment on the perceived inadequacy of the local road network and express concern that traffic movements would cause public safety issues, which would be exacerbated by HGVs using the same roads to access a local quarry.



### **Environmental impacts**

The campaign outlines concerns about the visual impact of the proposed Station along the High Value Landscape Scenic Route S43 and ecological and heritage impacts to the adjacent Estate of Garrett Standish Barry of Leamlara (Site Code 1064 – Leamlara Woods) resulting from any tree felling in the area.

### **Other impacts**

Other reasons given for opposition to the use of Zone 6, Leamlara are similar to those outlined in earlier chapters:

- concerns about noise pollution and its impacts on residents, livestock and pets' health and wellbeing;
- visual pollution affecting the character of the Leamlara/Lisgoold area and potentially affecting property prices;
- potential impacts of electro-magnetic fields and radiation on local geology, soil, livestock, wildlife and ecology including protected species and migrating birds, fish, mammals and insects; and
- damage to wells from construction and operation and resultant effects on drinking water in the area;
- negative impacts on tourism and recreation;
- the possibility of future upgrades to the Station or other future developments; and
- the sterilisation of land close to the facility.

### **5.2.2. Zone 6, Leamlara (1-page version)**

143 respondents participated in a coordinated campaign by Lisgoold Leamlara Alliance Against Converter Station, submitting an abridged version of the above campaign relating to Zone 6, Leamlara. They challenge the inclusion of Zone 6 in any future proposals on the following grounds (as these concerns have been covered in previous chapters, they are summarised only briefly here):

- the potential impact of the construction and operation of a Converter Station in this area on the health and wellbeing of residents, livestock, and wildlife;
- the visual impact of the proposed Converter Station, which it is argued would be significantly larger than other buildings in the vicinity, and would therefore dominate the skyline and fundamentally alter the local landscape;
- the impact of noise and possible vibration from both the construction and operation of the proposed Converter Station, which respondents believe is



likely to be constant and they suggest will be very noticeable due to the quiet, rural nature of the area;

- the local road network in Leamlara is thought to be unsuitable for both the quantity and type of traffic that will require access to the Zone during construction and once the Station is operational;
- the potential contamination of the local water supply, which is drawn from the hill on which the proposed Converter Station would be built;
- the use of pylons and overhead high-voltage lines in areas where the installation of underground cables would not be feasible; and
- the rural character of the area, which respondents feel would be fundamentally altered by the presence of such a large industrial development.

### **5.2.3. Zone 6, Leamlara (3-page version and 1-page version combined)**

13 respondents submitted both the 3-page and 1-page versions of the Zone 6, Leamlara campaign within the same response.

### **5.2.4. Zone 10, Pigeon Hill**

129 respondents participated in a coordinated campaign opposing the proposed development of a Converter Station in Zone 10, Pigeon Hill, due to the negative impact on residents and landowners in the area. They urge EirGrid to remove Zone 10 from any future proposals for the following reasons.

#### **Community impacts**

The campaign highlights the proximity of dwellings to a site, assumed to be a site being considered, within the proposed Zone. In this case the closest residence is 60m away from this assumed site with two others also nearby. Three active farms are also adjacent to the assumed site, causing concern about the potential negative effects on the animals and subsequent damage to the viability of the farms. Additionally, respondents express concern about the visibility of the Station on the skyline several kilometres away, including from Glanmire.

#### **Unsuitability of the Zone**

Respondents who participated in this campaign raise concerns about the limited size of the forested area within the proposed Zone, they believe that the 20 acres of forestry in this zone is the smallest of within any potential Zone, limiting the amount of space available for screening and buffering and the potential for future extension of the Station. They also believe the assumed site is unsuitable due to its location in a designated A3 Green Belt Area in the County Development Plan and because they feel that the wet land makes it inappropriate for the forestry road. Furthermore, they say, the exposed nature of the assumed site and unstable root system of the forestry is



demonstrated by previous levelling caused by high winds, and because the adjacent area has been identified as suitable for wind farming.

### **Other concerns**

Other reasons for opposition to the use of Zone 10, Pigeon Hill, are similar to those outlined in earlier chapters and are summarised briefly here:

- noise pollution and the perceived impacts on residents, animal and livestock health and wellbeing;
- potential negative effects on water and potential damage to wells;
- perceived wildlife and ecology impacts to wide number of species including badgers, bats and several species of bird and destruction of habitat;
- the argued insufficiency of the road network and impact on traffic, especially during construction;
- other community impacts such as potential effects on local amenities and recreation and unknown health risks; and
- risking the potential of future planning permissions being granted, argued to be particularly affecting children and farmers in the area.

### **5.2.5. Zone 14, Ballyvatta and previous Zones 7/8/9/11**

314 respondents participated in a coordinated campaign to challenge the inclusion of Zone 14, Ballyvatta in any future proposals, and to retroactively object to previous Zones 7, 8, 9 and 11<sup>5</sup>. These respondents believe that the construction and operation of a new Converter Station in Zone 14 (or any of the aforementioned previous Zones) would be “of huge detriment to our residents and community”, and formally state their objection on the following grounds.

#### **Technical Constraints**

Respondents who participated in this campaign are concerned that Ballyvatta lacks the requisite infrastructure to support a new Converter Station and any advantage of such infrastructure would be outweighed by its negative visual impact. Furthermore, they argue, the local roads are not wide enough to house both AC and DC cable circuits, and, even if that were not the case, the disruption caused by digging up these roads would have a significant negative impact on the day-to-day lives of local residents.

#### **Community impacts and local economy**

Respondents in this campaign are concerned that the construction and

---

<sup>5</sup> Respondents are referring to potential Converter Station Zones which were longlisted by EirGrid at an earlier step of the process but not brought forward to consultation at step 3.



operation of a Converter Station in Zone 14 would discourage people from moving to the area and may, in the worst instance, force existing residents to leave to preserve their current lifestyle. This could well lead to a contraction of the local economy, the closure or downsizing of local businesses, and ultimately a loss of jobs in the area.

### **Other Concerns**

Other reasons for opposition to the use of Zone 14, Ballyvatta are similar to those outlined in earlier chapters, and so are summarised only briefly here:

- Respondents in this campaign raise concerns regarding the impact of the proposed Converter Station on the local community, particularly regarding their health and wellbeing in light of their potential proximity to electromagnetic radiation, and the perceived likelihood of a resultant rise in medical insurance costs for locals.
- Residents are concerned that their lifestyle would be adversely affected by any loss of access to such local amenities as Moanbaun Wood and Watergrasshill GAA Club and believe that the construction and operation of such a large structure may irrevocably alter the rural character of the area.
- Respondents are concerned that the proposed development boundary for Converter Station Location Zone 14 necessitates the purchase of an unnecessary amount of land, is potentially too close to existing residential properties, and will impact on other existing projects in the area, including a large solar farm development and the potential reopening of a major quarry.
- Respondents are concerned about the potential for a Converter Station in Zone 14 to lead to the destruction of invaluable habitat and the resultant loss of protected species such as red squirrels, hen harriers, and buzzards. Concerns are also raised regarding the potential sterilisation of surrounding land, the contamination of water supplies, and the visual impact of such a large structure.
- Respondents raise concerns pertaining to the impact on the local economy in Ballyvatta, particularly with regard to property prices, the agricultural industry, and tourism.
- Respondents raise concerns regarding the suitability of local roads for the quantity and type of traffic that they believe will require access to the Zone during both the construction and operation of the new Converter Station.
- Respondents raise concerns regarding the information and materials provided by EirGrid, arguing that they are biased towards EirGrid's preferred outcome and that crucial information – particularly concerning the potential impact on the local economy – has been deliberately omitted.



### **5.2.6. Zones 6, 10 and 14**

Forty-one respondents participated in a coordinated campaign by Lisgoold Leamlara Alliance Against Converter Station opposing the proposed development of a Converter Station at Zone 6, Leamlara, Zone 10, Pigeon Hill and Zone 14, Ballyvatta due to the perceived negative impact on residents and the community. They strongly urge EirGrid to remove the stated Zones from any future proposals and also object to the reconsideration of any former Zones within Leamlara/Lisgoold parish and surrounding areas (Zones 5/7/8/9/11). Their reasons include:

- adverse effect on the local community and potential health risks;
- potential noise pollution and effects on human, livestock and animal health and wellbeing;
- perceived negative visual impact of the proposed facility;
- potential negative impact on local amenities, recreation and property values;
- risk to water, air quality, nature and ecology;
- concerns about sterilisation of land adjacent to the proposed facility;
- increased traffic and a road network believed to be insufficient; and
- potential for further upgrades to the Station and other future developments.

## 6. Feedback on the consultation process

### 6.1. *Summary of comments*

#### 6.1.1. **Comments supporting consultation process**

##### **Process**

Several respondents express support for the consultation process itself, either because they say that they recognise the level of work that has gone into providing such detailed analysis, or simply because they welcome being provided with an opportunity to comment on the proposals.

##### **Information and materials**

Several respondents praise the information and materials provided by EirGrid during the consultation process, due to the thoroughness and/or clarity of the consultation materials.

##### **Events**

A few respondents make positive comments regarding the usefulness of the various public events hosted by EirGrid during the consultation process, and, in some cases, the helpfulness of the staff on hand at these events.

##### **Publicity and promotion**

A small number of respondents make supportive comments about EirGrid's promotion of the consultation process, saying that they were made aware of the project well in advance and given ample opportunity to comment.

#### 6.1.2. **Comments opposing consultation process**

##### **Information and materials**

Several respondents argue that the information and materials received from EirGrid are inadequate or inaccurate in some way. Complaints of this type include, but are not limited to:

- the absence of specific figures regarding pollution and emissions from the proposed Converter Station;
- a lack of detail concerning the potential impact of such developments on health and wellbeing;
- a perceived failure to account for wider system constraints (raised by Bord Gáis Energy with specific reference to their network)
- additional hidden costs;
- the impact of unrelated development projects;
- the illegibility of maps produced by EirGrid, due to the use of 1:50,000 scale and the addition of overlays to mark the proposed Location Zones; and



- a failure to provide concerned parties with official project maps, instead referring them to freely available Google maps, which lack the requisite detail.

### **Process**

Several respondents raise concerns regarding the consultation process itself. Some of these concerns are practical, such as the belief that an eight-week window for community feedback is too restrictive, while others are based on negative perceptions of EirGrid's assumptions and motivations. The two most common complaints of this type are that EirGrid is thought to prioritise economic concerns over matters of community or environment, and that the outcome of the consultation is predetermined and thus the consultation is little more than a public relations exercise.

### **Publicity and promotion**

Several respondents feel that the consultation has not been adequately publicised and promoted, which, in conjunction with the timeframe addressed above, has led to a perception that EirGrid wishes to stifle negative feedback. Most such complaints suggest that notification letters were randomly distributed, with suggestions that many near the shortlisted Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones did not receive any correspondence from EirGrid and instead learnt of the proposals from neighbours or residents of areas further away from the affected locations. Furthermore, a common suggestion by these respondents is that EirGrid should have made better use of local newspapers, national television and radio in promoting the consultation.

### **Events**

Several respondents make negative comments regarding the events hosted by EirGrid as part of the consultation process. Some say that staff could not satisfactorily answer attendees' questions. Other respondents complain about a lack of consultation events in areas that may be affected by the project, such as Ballinwilling Strand.

## **6.1.3. Requests for further engagement**

### **Regular updates**

Some respondents ask that they be kept up to date with the proposals and want to know as soon as possible when further decisions are made, particularly concerning the chosen location of the Converter Station.

A small number of respondents wish to know whether there will be further engagement or if this is the final stage of consultation.

### **Specific documents**

Several respondents request detailed maps showing the Zones shortlisted for the Converter Station and the routes that cables would take from the Landfall Location to the Converter Station for each location.





Other requests made by respondents are for further information, in the form of:

- A simulation or illustration of the appearance of the Converter Station;
- A quantitative risk assessment for Zone 6; and
- A comprehensive assessment of the ecological impact of the proposals.

There are also requests for specific EirGrid documents such as the Onshore Constraint report and the EirGrid 'Electricity Grid and your Health' document.

### **Requests for further information on topics**

Some respondents request more information about the route chosen for the cables to travel from the Landfall Location to the Converter Station Location Zone and the existing substation. Respondents wish to know more detail about the shortlisted locations and the criteria for selecting the eventual location of the Station.

Other topics include:

- The health and environmental impact of the Converter Station;
- Noise levels near the Converter Station;
- Whether the proposals will cause radio interference;
- Requests for more information about Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) and Electromagnetic Interference (EMI);
- Requests for more information about the proposed fibre optic cable; and
- Whether the cables will definitely be underground.

### **Requests for further information on locations**

Several respondents ask for precise locations where the Converter Station would be built within the shortlisted Zones with Zone 6, particularly for Leamlara, Zone 9, Knockraha and Zone 14, Ballyvatta.

A few respondents request precise locations for the proposed Landfall Locations.

### **Requests to extend or broaden consultation**

Several respondents request that further measures be undertaken as part of the consultation process.

Measures respondents request are:

- The gathering of electro-smog data from around existing Irish power Stations;
- Further consultation with local communities;
- A Q&A session for interested parties; and
- An extension of the consultation process.

## Appendix A – Codes applied

The tables below show the codes which were used in the analysis of open responses to identify and group the issues and topics raised in responses.

The numbers show the number of times that the specific code was used, giving a broad indication of how frequently that issue or topic was raised. Please note that as responses are qualitative in nature, and each response is individual, these numbers should always be seen as approximate.

It should also be noted that the frequency of an issue being raised does not necessarily correlate with its importance or validity. A frequently raised comment may indicate a commonly held, but incorrect belief, whilst a comment made infrequently may reflect an important issue that may not be widely known.

### Concern codes

Code	Total	Campaign	Non-campaign
Access – business premises	<b>136</b>	129	7
Access – residential property	<b>6</b>	0	6
Community – amenities	<b>498</b>	484	14
Community – disruption (construction)	<b>603</b>	586	17
Community – disruption (operation)	<b>592</b>	586	6
Community – health and wellbeing	<b>815</b>	770	45
Community – historic environment	<b>152</b>	143	9
Community – security	<b>1</b>	0	1
Community – urbanisation/industrialisation	<b>807</b>	770	37
Consultation – events	<b>7</b>	0	7
Consultation – information/materials	<b>343</b>	314	29



Consultation – process	<b>28</b>	0	28
Consultation – publicity/promotion	<b>4</b>	0	4
Design – HV lines/pylons	<b>163</b>	156	7
Design – maintenance	<b>2</b>	0	2
Design – route	<b>3</b>	0	3
Design – underground	<b>1</b>	0	1
Design – undersea cables	<b>1</b>	0	1
Development boundary – land grab	<b>320</b>	314	6
Development boundary – property/homes	<b>368</b>	314	54
Development boundary – existing projects	<b>459</b>	443	16
Environment – air quality	<b>187</b>	184	3
Environment – climate change	<b>4</b>	0	4
Environment – coastal erosion	<b>1</b>	0	1
Environment – exposure/wind	<b>445</b>	443	2
Environment – general	<b>1</b>	0	1
Environment – land quality	<b>504</b>	498	6
Environment – landscape/visual	<b>810</b>	770	40
Environment – nuclear power	<b>8</b>	0	8
Environment – sound/noise	<b>819</b>	770	49
Environment – waste disposal	<b>2</b>	0	2



Environment – water supply/flood risk	<b>800</b>	770	30
Environment – wildlife/ecology/biodiversity	<b>806</b>	770	36
Local economy – agriculture	<b>742</b>	729	13
Local economy – property values	<b>508</b>	498	10
Local economy – tourism	<b>462</b>	457	5
Location – Converter Station Location Zone shortlist – unsuitable	<b>24</b>	0	24
Location – Landfall Location shortlist – unsuitable	<b>2</b>	0	2
Location – specific – land ownership	<b>3</b>	0	3
Location – specific – unsuitable	<b>689</b>	627	62
Other – cost	<b>319</b>	314	5
Other – oppose all plans	<b>20</b>	0	20
Other – reliance on foreign energy	<b>8</b>	0	8
Other – unrealistic to export	<b>1</b>	0	1
Traffic and transport – congestion	<b>198</b>	184	14
Traffic and transport – local roads	<b>788</b>	770	18

**Benefit codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Campaign</b>	<b>Non-campaign</b>
Consultation – events	<b>3</b>	0	3
Consultation – information/materials	<b>9</b>	0	9
Consultation – process	<b>9</b>	0	9
Consultation – publicity/promotion	<b>1</b>	0	1
Design – route	<b>2</b>	0	2
Design – underground	<b>8</b>	0	8
Design – undersea cables	<b>1</b>	0	1
Environment – mitigation efforts	<b>1</b>	0	1
Environment – reduced emissions	<b>3</b>	0	3
Local economy – investment (FDI)	<b>2</b>	0	2
Location – Converter Station Location Zone shortlist	<b>2</b>	0	2
Location – Landfall Location shortlist	<b>1</b>	0	1
Location – specific	<b>5</b>	0	5
Project – general	<b>13</b>	0	13
Project – improved capacity	<b>7</b>	0	7
Project – less reliance on UK	<b>6</b>	0	6
Support with caveats	<b>10</b>	0	10



### Suggestion codes

Code	Total	Campaign	Non-campaign
Community – engagement/investment	<b>10</b>	0	10
Compensation – environment	<b>1</b>	0	1
Compensation – health/wellbeing	<b>1</b>	0	1
Compensation – property/homes	<b>1</b>	0	1
Consultation – further engagement needed	<b>21</b>	0	21
Consultation – request information – location	<b>18</b>	0	18
Consultation – request information – topic	<b>34</b>	0	34
Consultation – request specific document(s)	<b>23</b>	0	23
Consultation – request updates	<b>47</b>	0	47
Design – (avoid) specific location	<b>2</b>	0	2
Design – above ground	<b>1</b>	0	1
Design – avoid roads	<b>1</b>	0	1
Design – leave to experts	<b>2</b>	0	2
Design – money no object	<b>1</b>	0	1
Design – underground	<b>3</b>	0	3
Design – use existing infrastructure (route)	<b>317</b>	314	3
Development boundary – allow access/purchase	<b>1</b>	0	1
Environment – landscape/visual	<b>15</b>	0	15



Environment – pursue alternative energy sources	<b>10</b>	0	10
Environment – sound/noise	<b>3</b>	0	3
Environment – water supply/flood risk	<b>2</b>	0	2
Location – alternative	<b>13</b>	0	13
Location – general – use existing infrastructure	<b>14</b>	0	14
Location – specific – use existing infrastructure	<b>414</b>	399	15
Traffic and transport – traffic calming measures	<b>3</b>	0	3
Traffic and transport – transportation of materials	<b>1</b>	0	1



## Other codes

Code	Total	Campaign	Non-campaign
Respondent context	<b>341</b>	314	27
Correspondence	<b>419</b>	415	4
Editor's note	<b>2</b>	0	2
No comment	<b>5</b>	0	5
Neutral	<b>5</b>	0	5



## Appendix B – Online responses

The charts shown in this section summarise the information provided by respondents to the online questionnaire. The feedback outlined below is incorporated within the main report.

**As the number of respondents to the online questionnaire represented only a small proportion of the overall responses, these charts should not be considered to be representative of the views of the wider respondents but are included to show the views of those who did provide a response to these questions.**

### Landfall Location

This chart summarises the responses to questions on the Landfall location, which asked consultees for views on the importance of a number of aspects when choosing a landfall location.

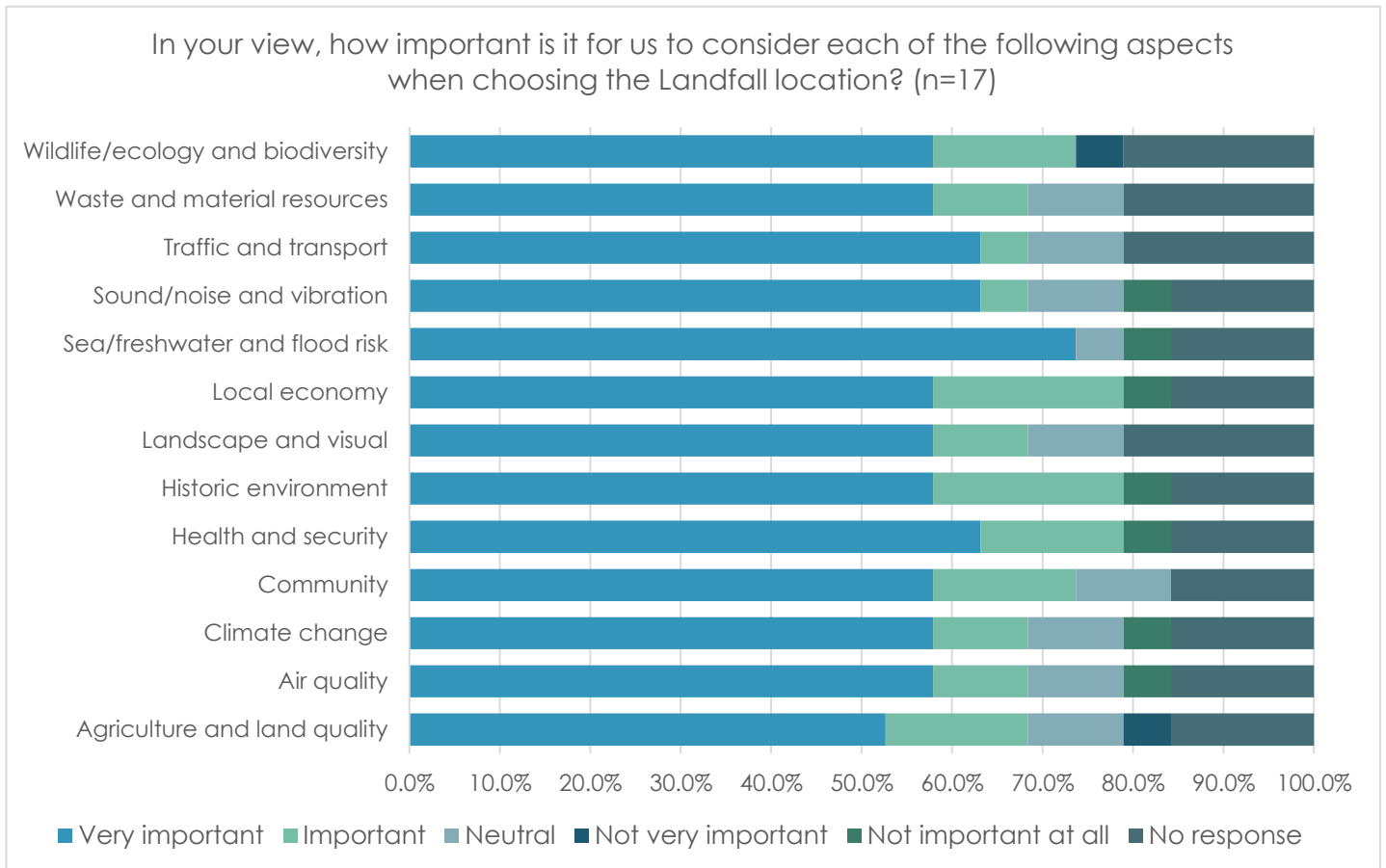


Figure 4: Importance of different aspects when choosing the Landfall Location

The chart below shows the views expressed on the short list of landfall locations identified.

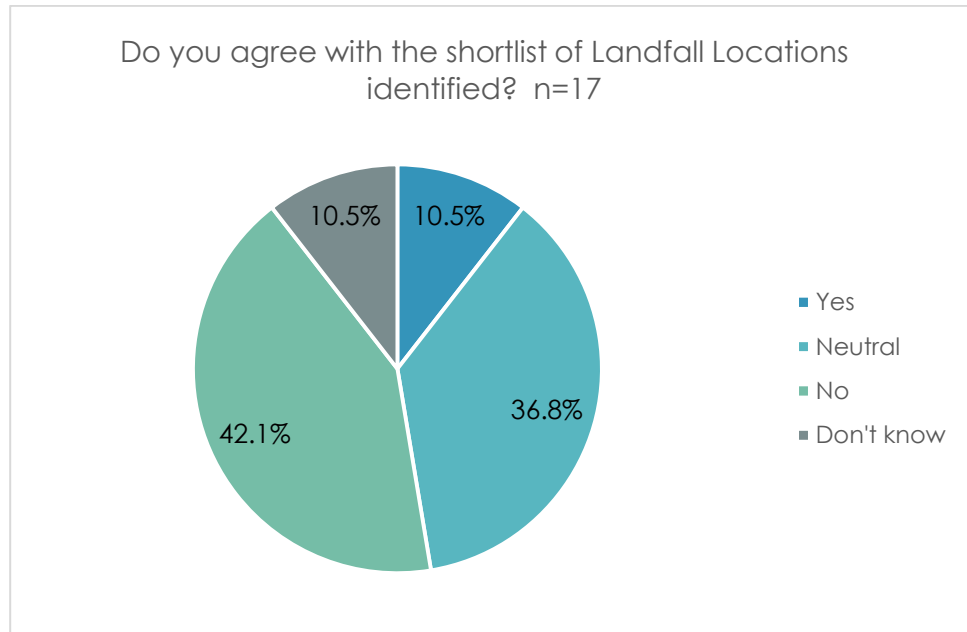


Figure 5: Views about the shortlist of Landfall Locations identified

### Converter Station Location Zone

This chart summarises the responses on the Converter Station Location Zone, which asked for views on the importance of a number of aspects when choosing the Converter Station Location Zone.

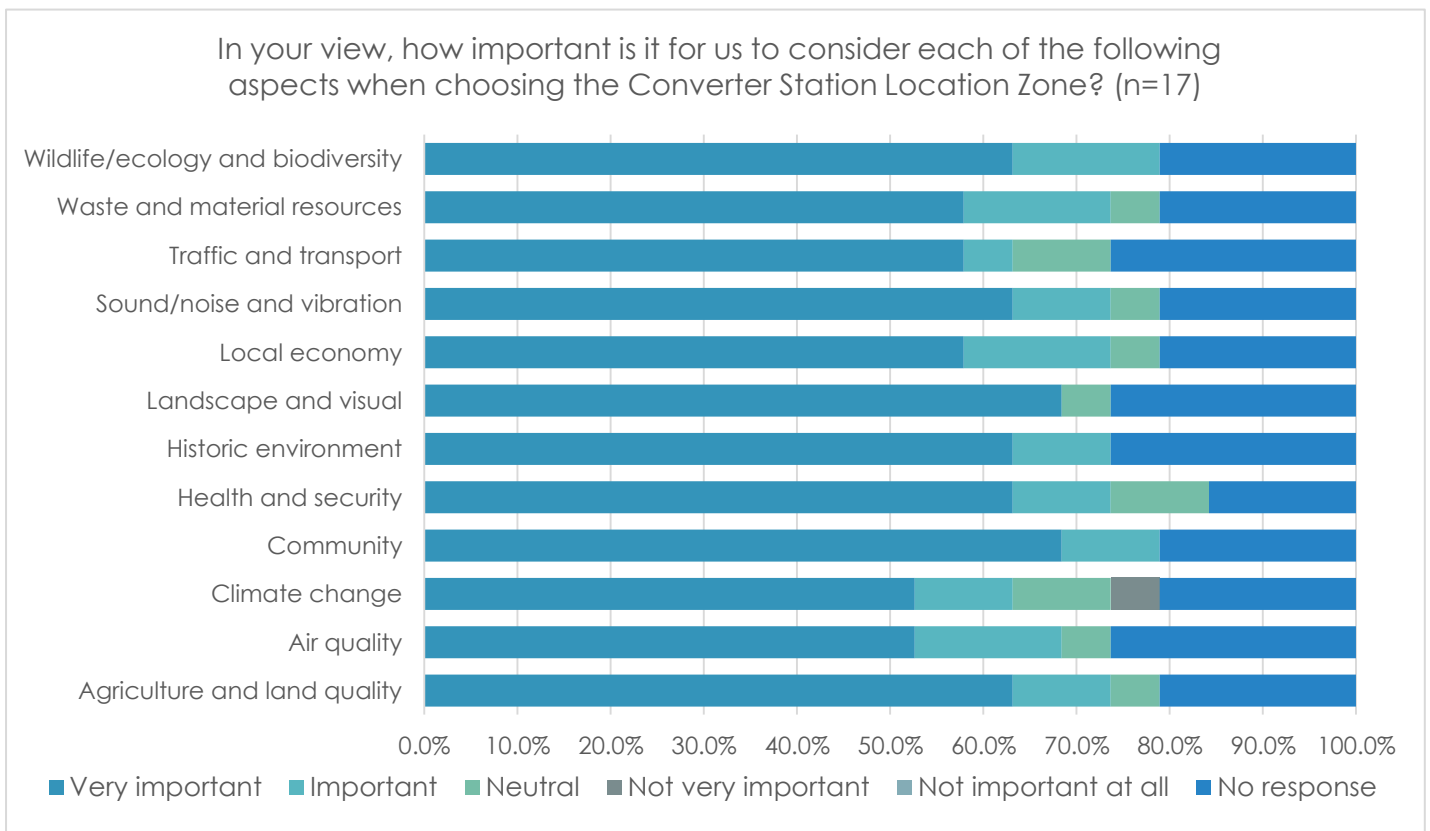


Figure 6: Importance of different aspects when choosing the Converter Station Location Zone

The chart below shows the views expressed on the short list of Converter Station Location Zones.

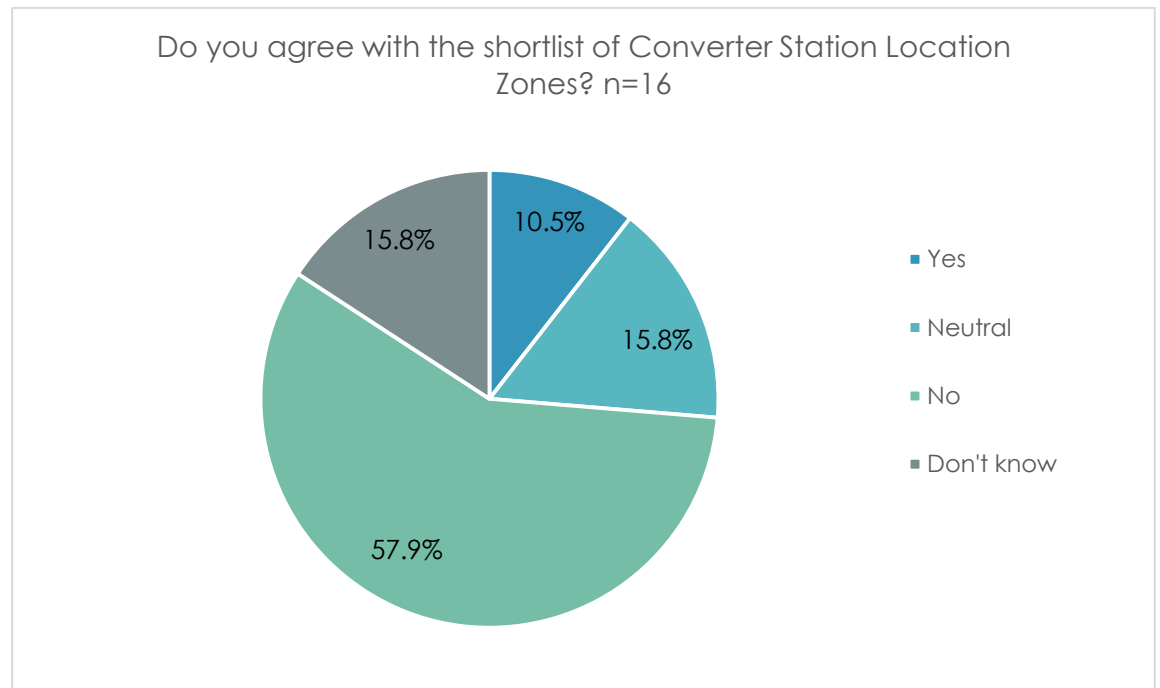


Figure 7: Views about the shortlist of Converter Station Location Zones identified

### General

This question asked respondents for their views on the Celtic Interconnector project as a whole.

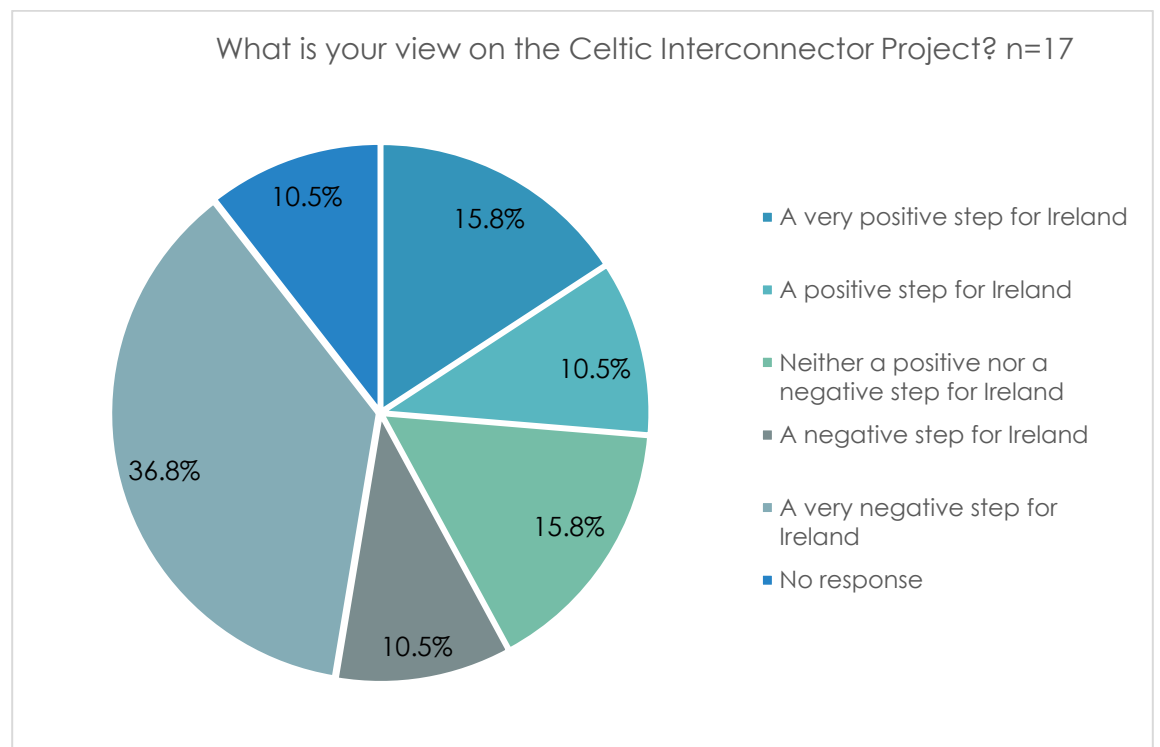


Figure 8: Views about the Celtic Interconnector project overall



### Consultation

The chart below shows responses given by respondents when asked to provide views on the quality of the consultation activity materials.

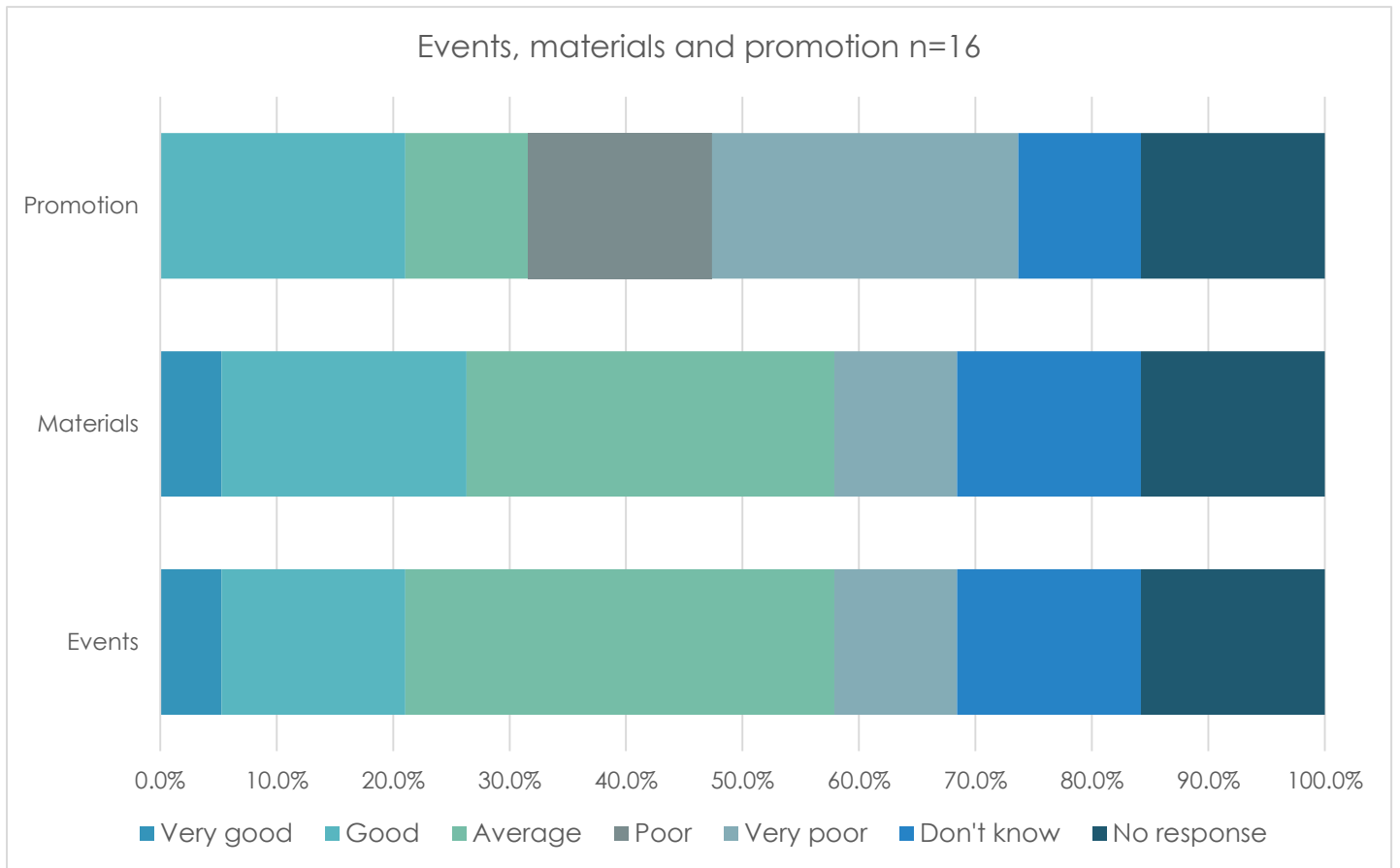


Figure 9: Views on the quality of the consultation events, materials and promotion



The chart below shows the responses given when respondents were asked how they first heard about the consultation.

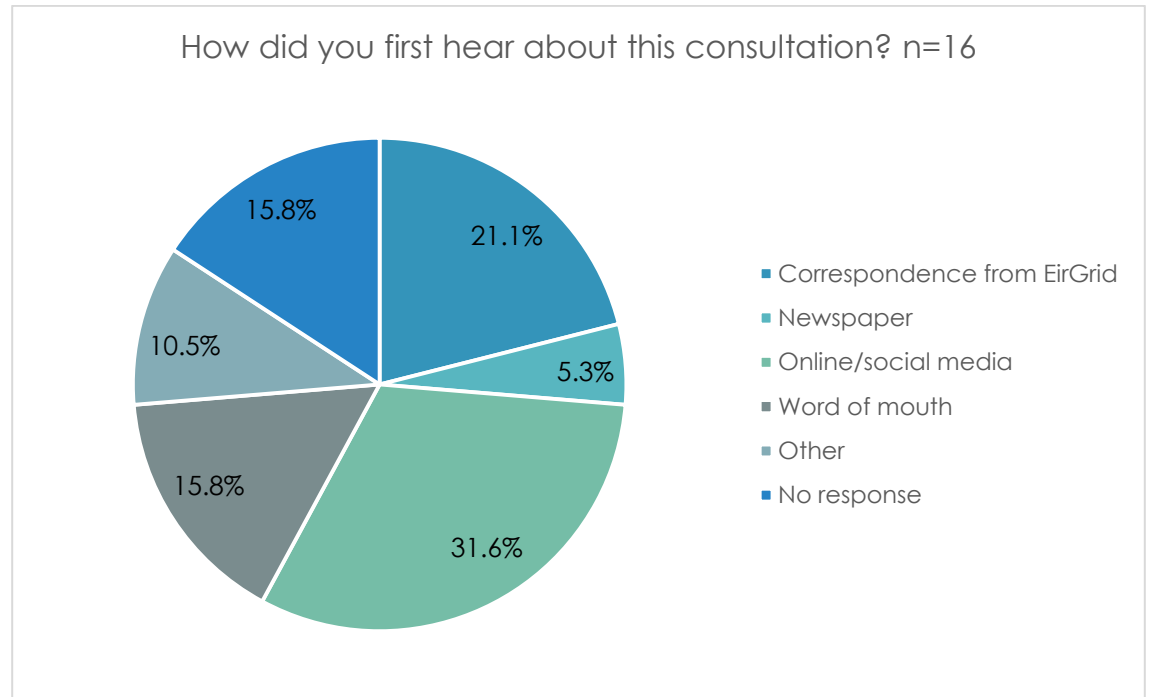


Figure 10: How respondents first heard about the consultation



**If you would like a large text version of this document,  
please contact us.**

The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

t. +44 (0)207 239 7800  
p. 252b Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8XG, United Kingdom  
e. [info@traverse.ltd](mailto:info@traverse.ltd)  
w. [www.traverse.ltd](http://www.traverse.ltd)



Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**