

POWERING UP DUBLIN

Reporting on Feedback from Dublin Community Forum #1

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1 INTRODUCTION

EirGrid convened two consultation forums to inform the development of the Powering Up Dublin project. Both meetings were held on 22nd November 2022 in Dublin city centre.

A Business Forum meeting was held in Fumbally Stables at 11am to 1pm, where business leaders and the Lord Mayor of Dublin attended. This was facilitated by independent Facilitator Audry Deane. In summarising the event the participants described it as positive, challenging, informed, engaged and said they hoped they were listened to.

A Community Forum was held in the Tara Building, Dublin 2 at 7pm to 9pm, at which 12 members of residents associations, community groups and Elected Members from local authorities provided feedback. This meeting was facilitated by independent facilitator Paul O'Raw

At both events, EirGrid presented a series of six maps; one showing all five engagement zones in Dublin and then five individual maps of the five zones showing existing electricity lines across the five areas that the Powering Up Dublin project is focusing on.

Participants were encouraged to consider any issues / benefits / constraints they would like the design team to consider in designing proposals for the new project.

The majority of feedback elicited at both events focused on constraints and issues during construction; and on opportunities that could be gained if EirGrid engages with those pursuing other infrastructure developments in Dublin when planning and building this project.

The feedback received from the Community Forum is outlined below. The feedback from the Business Forum can be found on EirGrid's website www.EirGrid.ie/dublin.

The feedback is presented in alphabetical order. Issues highlighted regarding specific streets/communities is also compiled in alphabetical order and provided in a series of tables.

This feedback will be considered by the EirGrid project team in progressing the project.

2 COMMUNITY FORUM

2.1 Communications

It was stated that there is no communications from elected public representatives regarding this project; and that both Elected Representatives and Council executives are key to engagement. It was stated that EirGrid should make efforts to engage with both. It was suggested that EirGrid also involves the PPNs.

Participants said that EirGrid should “consider the socio-economic backgrounds”, including education levels and languages of people in each area when preparing communications and consulting on the project.

Reference was made in the East Wall & North Wall zone to the need to communicate with asylum seekers living in the area at The Address Hotel in East Wall.

Schools were suggested as appropriate venues for meetings / consultations with the communities, including Samuel Becket School in Carrickmines. Specifically, in Carrickmines and Dolphins Barn it was said that people do not feel engaged with and that EirGrid should do all it can to communicate with and involve local people.

2.1.1 Public Consultation

While people welcomed the opportunity to engage, they said EirGrid should be aware of a sense of “public consultation fatigue” circulating in Dublin due to the many projects underway including offshore renewable developments, Bus Connects, DART+, and many others.

Participants expressed a wish for EirGrid to make it possible to provide feedback at all times throughout the project development and delivery.

They further expressed that they would like the opportunity to continue engagement where EirGrid’s Community Liaison Officers are “front and centre”.

2.2 Community Benefit

In terms of a Community Benefit Fund, it was requested for EirGrid to not “make promises to communities that are unattainable”.

In the Finglas zone, it was claimed that the Tolka Park Group could be interested in EirGrid’s Community Benefit fund. It was further claimed that they had previously tried to sell their land.

In the Inchicore zone, it was suggested that Dolphins Barn House be covered in solar panels to minimise electricity bills to residents.

2.3 Cyclists and Pedestrians

Participants asserted strong view about the need to ensure that both pedestrians and cyclists are facilitated and not disrupted during construction of the project.

Views in this regard included that many children are walking to school; children, students and adults are cycling in larger numbers every day; and there is low car-ownership in the inner city.

It was said that footpaths should be maintained for walkers; and that cycle lanes should not be dug up.

2.4 Environment and Nature

It was asked that EirGrid follow “best environmental practice” and “be ecologically aware” in undertaking all aspects of the project.

It was suggested from the Finglas zone that EirGrid could meet with Environmental Groups first as they can go back to the community with information.

2.4.1 Carrickmines zone

Protection of wildlife was raised as a concern. Residents discussed that there are underground streams and rivers, the Ballyogan River is in the area.

Constraints raised included the Dublin mountains and that the bedrock geology of the area is made up of granite. This could pose issues from a construction point of view; this is from Dundrum / Enniskerry. The slope of the Dublin mountains pose stability issues; and residents discussed that there is methane in the soil.

2.4.2 Finglas zone

There are many streams and rivers throughout this area and a previous controversy involving the Tolka River was mentioned.

Works near the Royal Canal could be challenging it was maintained, due to public opposition. A “lack of trust” in Waterways Ireland was stated in this zone due to previous issues regarding the Royal Canal works.

Environmental concerns regarding how the project might impact the new Greenway were also raised.

2.5 Flooding

Flooding was raised as a constraint to be considered most notably in the Dundrum and Lansdowne / Ringsend areas.

2.6 Future Developments

It was stated that there is “no joined up thinking” in planning major projects.

It was suggested that the EirGrid team should look at planning applications, with An Bord Pleanála, Local Authorities, Park Developments, Land Development Agency (LDA) proposals and Strategic Housing Developments.

The new Local Development Plans should be considered by EirGrid and it was said that the local authorities should be consulted with to avoid overlap and to mitigate issue.

The Dodder Greenway; Tolka Cycle Scheme (underway); Royal Canal Greenway and Grand Canal Greenway were all referenced; along with Bus Connects, LUAS Extension Metro and DART+ (Docklands, Coastal, Glasnevin, Inchicore).

2.6.1 Inchicore zone

A large proposed ‘City Edge’ Development was raised as a major infrastructure development that could impact EirGrid’s work.

Other planned developments cited for consideration by EirGrid are on Davitt Road; and apartments on Herberton Road; Cork Street; and the Guinness Quarter.

It was said that all Dublin Brown sites were being considered for development over the coming years.

2.6.2 East Wall & North Wall zone

Dublin Port’s plans to move many logistics and facilities to a new location in the future were highlighted. It was also questioned whether an expansion of Dublin Port would impact these works.

The Point Village Roundabout Improvement Scheme was cited as another project that could impact commuters alongside this EirGrid project. This project was on hold but may commence in 2023.

Plans for a new hotel and residential development at Clonliffe College were cited.

2.6.3 Ringsend zone

DCC’s Dublin District Heating Scheme from the Poolbeg Peninsula is a key constraint cited in this zone.

Development of the Glass Bottle site by Ronan Group in Irishtown should be considered as a constraint in terms of traffic management.

There are plans for new bridges in the Ringsend area that could be impacted by this EirGrid project. One bridge will be built from Capital Dock towards Tom Clark Bridge for public transport and cycling.

It was mentioned that there may be another bridge built from East Link to Dublin Port for exclusive port access. This may lead to increased traffic constraints.

2.7 Green Spaces

People asked if EirGrid could be sensitive when working in green spaces and “take every precaution” to ensure they are not destroyed by the project.

Maintaining access to and use of green spaces should be a priority for the project team. Participants said that in their view, significant opposition would result if there were an impact on people’s access to or use of green spaces because of the project.

Mountjoy Park was highlighted in the East Wall & North Wall zone as being of particular popularity with the Roma community.

2.8 Heritage

In the Carrickmines zone protected structures were highlighted – Carrickmines Castle, River and Wall.

The architectural and historical heritage of Dublin city was said to be a key consideration in the project. Participants suggested that DCC Historian Cathy Scufflil should be engaged with.

2.9 Hospitals

It was pointed out that there are five major hospitals in the Inchicore zone and that the project needs to liaise with them to avoid any impact to emergency services and supply of power. It was also noted that the new National Children’s Hospital will be completed by the time these EirGrid cables will be laid.

In East Wall & North Wall participants pointed out the Primary Care Centre in Summerhill and the Mater Hospital as locations to avoid disrupting.

In Ringsend and Carrickmines zones the Blackrock Clinic, the Beacon Hospital, Laura Lynn Hospice and St Vincent’s Hospital were highlighted.

2.10 Integration with other Organisations and Projects

Participants suggested that EirGrid consults and liaises with other key organisations to optimise the activity in line with other projects underway. It was felt that there is an “overload of works” underway across Dublin at present and that people cannot bear any more.

The following organisations were suggested for EirGrid to engage with:

- Dublin City Council (DCC) Active Travel Unit
- Dublin City Council (DCC) Area Committees
- Office of Public Works (OPW)
- Inland Fishers Ireland (IFI)
- Metro North
- NTA / BusConnects.

Suggestions were made for EirGrid to integrate its works schedule with BusConnects including at Nutley Lane, Merrion Road and the N11; and some of the new Greenway schemes including the Tolka.

It was further stated that EirGrid should wait at least 6-8 months after the BusConnect consultation as it could be too much for the community to bear otherwise.

2.11 Location

It was put forward that EirGrid should develop this new project “entirely on publicly owned lands”.

Construction schedules and routing of the project should “take into account the return to the office”. This includes the need for the cables in particular areas in terms of how they can facilitate employment. It also includes the scheduling of construction work to minimise its impact on traffic; and to consider “office days” when more people are walking / cycling to work and using public transport.

Participants asked that freshly laid cycle lanes are not dug up for this project.

2.12 Population

The needs of local populations should be considered across all zones.

Many ageing populations live in the East Wall & North Wall zone and in the Ringsend zone it was stated; and these should be carefully considered in terms of interruption when planning the project. Their needs include living alone and relying on others for shopping; mobility issues; general disruption.

It was further stated that where there is a very high concentration of elderly people families / carers will need to be provided with Access Passes if roads are going to be closed during construction.

School-going children and college students should be considered too, including in terms of impact on public transport, footpaths for walking, and cycle lanes. The timing of works should also take into account the needs of schools and universities, it was asserted.

Hospital patients and visitors should also be considered.

Participants asked for reassurance that EirGrid would consult the CSO’s new census to inform their plans.

2.13 Project Need

It was mentioned by participants in the Ringsend zone that, although these projects will disrupt commuters in Dublin, they want these projects to happen. They especially support the charging for electric infrastructure with renewable energy. The participants mentioned they are pushing for projects such as DART+ and Bus Connects to be delivered as well.

2.14 Public Transport

Disruption / delays to Bus routes, LUAS and DART were cited as being of grave concern – at construction stage. It was said that public transport routes should be protected during the construction of this project; and that this would be a major concern to people.

Future planned development of the LUAS line was highlighted as something the design team should be cognisant of, in particular in Inchicore.

It was asserted that the Bus Connects and DART+ project (Docklands) have similar timelines to EirGrid.

Concerns regarding the impact of works on the number 47 bus were cited in discussions in both the Carrickmines and Ringsend zones.

2.15 Restoration

The need for adequate restoration of areas after the works are completed was said to be very important for the public.

2.16 Timing

Participants would prefer if construction phases were as quick as possible with as little disruption as possible.

People said they hoped that by citing other major projects in the zones that EirGrid will link up with those developers to reduce the disruption times and ensure efficiency.

It was asked if EirGrid could provide a guaranteed timetable of restoration for the impacted areas (after construction).

People said they would like the work to be delivered in the evenings and weekends to minimise disruption.

It was raised by attendee's that local elections are to be held around the time the project plans to go to public consultation, and that this might not be a suitable time as people may be preoccupied.

2.17 Traffic Management

Impacts on roads and traffic congestion during construction stage were highlighted by many participants as being of major concern to them.

A cumulative impact on local roads and increased traffic congestion as a result of ongoing roads maintenance works and other projects, combined with Powering Up Dublin, was cited as being of concern.

It was put forward that the public preference is priority be given to maintaining active travel routes rather than vehicular traffic if disruption is to be experienced.

2.17.1 Carrickmines zone

An opportunity was suggested in the Carrickmines zone where it was said that the NTA reserves an Eastern Bypass corridor - a wide piece of land - which stretches from the Sandford Roundabout to the coast.

2.17.2 Inchicore zone

In the Inchicore zone, it was stated that large volumes of traffic on Herberton Bridge would prevent work mid-week; and that Irish Water is currently working there at evenings and weekends only.

2.17.3 East Wall & North Wall zone

Regarding the East Wall & North Wall zone Forum Members identified Grace Park Road, the Swords Road and North Circular Road as "busy commuter roads". They felt that works on these roads would cause "significant disruption" to traffic. The impact on traffic of the new DART+ to the Docklands should be considered.

2.17.4 Ringsend zone

It was felt that there are already major traffic problems on the M11, M50, several LUAS and DART crossings in the Ringsend and Carrickmines zones. It was further asserted that works along such main road arteries into the city centre, would cause severe disruption for commuters.

It was highlighted that closure of the Merrion Gates for DART+ works may already disrupt DART commuters and traffic in the area; and that the DART+ project has a similar timeline to EirGrid.

2.18 Summary of issues raised regarding specific communities / landmarks in EirGrid's five zones

2.18.1 Carrickmines

Feedback provided primarily from two residents who have been living in the area for 30 years, they are part of a local resident's association and therefore, have a strong knowledge of the area. Key themes that emerged included environment, engagement, traffic management and transport.

In addition to the specific areas below, other notable features mentioned included the Dublin Mountains, British Ambassador's Residents, golf courses, a reservoir and protected structures. It was suggested that a bridge to Westwood could be opportunity to reduce current traffic constraints - South County Business Park, this is owned by Horse Racing Ireland.

Dublin Business Forum and Citizens Forum #1

Primary schools mentioned were Holy Trinity and Educate Together. Local residents suggested that EirGrid could host meetings in school halls.

Specific Area	Comment
Ballyogan Landfill	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
Ballyogan River	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
Blacklion Road	Current roadworks causing major disruption
British Ambassador Residence	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
Carrickmines Castle	Conscious of protected structure
Carrickmines Park / Carrickmines Retail Park	Highlighted that this is located in the study area and includes VHI clinic, offices, vast area of retail outlets
Cherrywood	Avoid - large residential and office area; shopping centre planned
Dublin Mountains	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
Educate Together Schools	In the area (not specific where)
Holy Trinity	School in the area (not specific where)
Laura Lynn	Highlighted that this children's hospice is located in the study area
Leopardstown Racecourse	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
M11	Impact on traffic
M50	Impact on traffic
Samuel Beckett Community Centre	Local community centre
Sandyford Roundabout (Eastern Bypass)	Corridor reserved for NTA
Sandyford Village	Current roadworks causing major disruption
South County Business Park	Heavy traffic

2.18.2 Finglas

Traffic congestion on Drumcondra Road was highlighted in this area.

Dublin Business Forum and Citizens Forum #1

It was claimed that the Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church is going to be removed and replaced with a housing development.

Specific Area	Comment
Bohemian FC	Asked EirGrid to avoid this sports club
Dalymount Park	Asked EirGrid to avoid this sports grounds
Drumcondra Road	Heavy traffic
Finglas Road	Questioned if / how the route could go through this major road
Griffith Avenue	Avoid as it is an important amenity
Na Fianna GAA Club	Sensitive due to previous infrastructure projects
Royal Canal	Locals may challenge works done near here
Tolka River	Said to be many streams and rivers

2.18.3 East Wall & North Wall

Key themes raised were traffic and permeability; the impact of works on dependent communities, specifically older people and asylum seekers; and the cumulative impact of several projects and developments being underway across Dublin at the same time.

Participants highlighted that current works on North Strand Road at Fairview are a huge concern for residents in the area and that these are causing issues as far as East Point. It was noted that the impact of these works worsens when there are events in Croke Park and that EirGrid should take this into account when planning the cable route.

Maintaining footpaths for walking to school was deemed to be essential and schools mentioned included St. Joseph's in East Wall and St Vincent's.

Specific Area	Comment
Clonliffe College	Plans for mixed-use development
Croke Park	Consider when events are on
Dublin Port	Plan to move to a new location in the future
East Point	Current works are a concern for residents
Grace Park Road	Busy commuter roads
Mater Hospital	'No-go' areas
Mount Joy Park	Popular for gatherings

Dublin Business Forum and Citizens Forum #1

North Circular Road	Busy commuter roads
Parnell Street	Be conscious of places of worship
Primary Care Centre (Summerhill)	'No-go' areas
St. Josephs School	Ensure students are able to walk to school
Swords Road	Busy commuter roads
The Address Hotel	Conscious that asylum seekers are being housed here
Vincent's School	Ensure students are able to walk to school

2.18.4 Inchicore

Key themes raised were traffic management and public transport; impact on hospitals; the need for green spaces to be protected and available during works; and the cumulative impact on residents of additional works, delays to public transport, traffic congestion, etc.

It was asserted that there are proposals for a cycle lane development on the Suir road to Thomas Street and down the Grand Canal.

Specific Area	Comment
Davitt Road	Developments need to be considered
Drumcondra Road	Proposed cycle lane
Guinness Quarter	Consider future developments
Herberton Bridge	Heavy traffic
Herberton Road	Potential large-scale development on this road
Suir Road	Advised EirGrid to avoid this natural resource
Thomas Street	Proposed cycle lane
Various other brownfield sites	Being considered for development

2.18.5 Ringsend

Key themes raised regarding this zone were consideration for all residents including elderly people, disruption to commuters and the need for EirGrid to link with nearby projects being delivered in the area in order to align the works schedules.

It was said that the original cable route crosses the DART line three times and may cause disruption to DART commuters during the construction phase.

Many major infrastructure projects are planned / underway in the area (see above).

Dublin Business Forum and Citizens Forum #1

Suggestions were made that EirGrid considers combining two of the cable crossings into one at Lansdowne / Grand Canal in order to minimise disruption to DART users.

Local facilities that need to be considered (in addition to those listed below) include the the River Dodder; and Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Specific Area	Comment
Capital Dock	Conscious of new plans to build bridges & traffic constraints
Dodder Greenway	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
Dublin Port	Conscious of new plans to build bridges & traffic constraints
Dun Laoghaire Harbour	Underdeveloped and underutilised
East Link	Conscious of new plans to build bridges & traffic constraints
Glass Bottle Development	May impact traffic in the area
M11	Works will cause disruption to commuters
M50	Works will cause disruption to commuters
Merrion Gates	If closed due to works, can disrupt DART commuters
Merrion Road	Work alongside Bus Connects project to minimise commuter disruption
N11	Works will cause disruption to commuters
N11	Work alongside Bus Connects project to minimise commuter disruption
New Strand Road	Current works are a concern for residents
Nutley Lane	Work alongside Bus Connects project to minimise commuter disruption
Point Village Roundabout	Improvement scheme may impact commuters alongside EirGrid project
Ringsend Mens Shed	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
Ringsend Sailing Club	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
River Dodder	Highlighted that this is located in the study area
St. Vincent's Hospital	'No-go' Zone

2.19 Questions raised

1. Can discussions take place with urban planning team?

Yes, we are engaging with the Planning (including urban planning teams) for each Local Authority.

2. Can the PDF maps shown at the meeting be shared with the community?

Yes, we will share the presentation which includes the maps on our website (eirgrid.ie/Dublin) along with the meeting report shortly.

3. Why can't EirGrid go through the Finglas Road?

We are currently carrying out studies to help identify route options. Before we make a decision on an underground cable route, we will work closely with local communities and stakeholders.

4. Is there an easy route you could take down the Canal?

We are currently carrying out feasibility studies to assess the route options. We are planning to finalise route options in Q1 2023.

5. Will this EirGrid project impact / delay the Royal Canal Greenway?

No, we are working closely with DCC to investigate any opportunities and efficiencies and have proposed that our construction activities can be performed whilst the greenway works are ongoing.

6. Will laying new cables affect footpaths?

Our targeted approach is to use roads rather than footpaths where feasible, although we may need to consider the use of limited sections of greenways and footpaths in highly congested and constrained areas.

7. What standard of quality is required by DCC for reinstatement of roads / paths (after the works)?

Road reinstatement requirements will be agreed with Local Authorities and will follow the Road Management Office guidelines.

8. What will happen to the old cables once the new ones are installed.?

The existing cables will be decommissioned. They are then buried directly into the ground, which was the standard construction practice when these cables were installed. These cables are likely to remain in the ground for the time being. However, it is expected they will be drained of any fluids and capped.

9. How much disruption will there be for non-car users?

Traffic management will consider both pedestrian, vehicular access and public transport. We will have more information as the design process develops.

10. What impacts will it have on existing substations (locations) and what upgrades will be needed to facilitate the project?

Powering Up Dublin's scope covers all infrastructure required to facilitate the programme and realise the benefits, therefore upgrading Dublin's substations is required. The cables themselves will not have an impact on the substations other than limited works to connect into the existing infrastructure within the stations.

11. How are cables going to be laid?

There are three stages to installing cables. The first stage is to dig the trench and joint bays and lay the plastic ducting into it. The ducts are laid in specialist aggregate materials (like sand and concrete) to maintain safe and optimal cable performance. Warning markers are installed in the proximity of the ducts to alert construction workers to the presence of the services during any excavations near the cables in future. Joint bays are installed below the below ground to allow for joining different sections of the cables at approximately 500m intervals. The surfaces will be reinstated once this work is complete.

The second stage is installing the cable in the ducts. The cables are delivered to site on cable drums and two working areas are set up at each end of the trench where joint bays have been constructed. At one site, there will be a cable drum and at the other site there will be a winch that pulls the cable through.

The third stage is jointing the cable connections. The cables will be pulled through in sections and are connected into one continuous circuit in a process called jointing. Specifically trained technicians carry out the jointing in an environmentally controlled jointing enclosure which will fit over the underground joint bay.

12. Management of traffic and careful road restoration plans are carefully executed to ensure a safe, secure and sustainable supply of electricity at all times. Can tunnels be used to lay the cables (underground works instead of overground)?

We are currently looking at all options, including tunnelling and we will be engaging with local communities and stakeholders as we develop our plans.

13. How / where will it cross the Liffey?

Exact locations are yet to be determined but the currently proposals are east of the Tom Clarke Bridge/R131. We are collaborating with landowners and utilities in the area to determine the feasible and optimal crossings.

14. What size is a proposed cable?

The cable is laid into ducting which has an outer diameter of approximately 225mm and is intended to be laid in a flat formation in trenches up to 1.1m wide. The cables within each duct is approximately 180mm outer diameter and is 2500mm² surface area.

15. Why can't the new cable go on top of / alongside the existing cable?

The existing cables are buried directly into the ground (i.e. no ducting) meaning new civils/construction is required for the ducts within the cables will run.

Construction works near existing high voltage cables introduces a risk to health and safety and/or interruption in supply as a result of an unintentional utility strike within the existing cable.

Lengthy runs of parallel cable can negatively impact the performance of the cables.

Access to and available space in the ground is significantly different to that when the original cables were installed meaning that many more stakeholders would likely be impacted.

Combining these facts, the cables need to be buried with a specific depth (at which existing cables are buried) meaning that consideration of new routes is required.

16. Will BusConnects services be affected?

We are engaging with the National Transport Authority and the BusConnects team through our Dublin Infrastructure Forum.

17. Can work be undertaken in the evenings and weekends to minimise disruption to commuters / schools?

Technically this is feasible however EirGrid will liaise with the local consenting and planning organisations to secure a construction schedule that minimises impact to stakeholders, balancing the timings of work against the durations of the works. In any case, stakeholder requirements and impacts will be considered when the traffic management plans are developed as part of the construction works.