





North-South 400kV Interconnection Development

An Bord Pleanála Reference: PCI001

Concept for Public Participation July 2014





Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative













TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTR	INTRODUCTION AND LAYOUT6			
	1.1	INTROE	DUCTION	6	
	1.2	Layou	T OF THE REPORT	8	
	1.3	DEFINI	TIONS	9	
	1.4	WHERE	THE REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 347/2013 ARE ADDRESSED IN THIS REPORT	[.] .11	
2	DESI	GNATIO	N OF THE PROJECT AS A PCI AND REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION		
	347/2	013		20	
	2.1	Introe	DUCTION	20	
	2.2	PCI NO	TIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT	21	
	2.3	TRANS	PARENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 347/2013	21	
		2.3.1	General Principles	21	
		2.3.2	Information to be included in Concept for Public Participation	22	
		2.3.3	Public Consultation before submission of the Application File	22	
		2.3.4	Website	23	
		2.3.5	Other Appropriate Information Means	24	
	2.4	AN BOF	RD PLEANÁLA MANUAL OF PERMIT GRANTING PROCEDURES	25	
	2.5	TRANS	BOUNDARY CONSULTATION	27	
		2.5.1	Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment	27	
		2.5.2	European Commission Guidance on Transboundary Projects	28	
	PART	1		.30	
3	CON	CEPT AN	ID GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS	31	
	3.1	GENER	RAL	31	
	3.2	INTERN	IATIONAL BEST PRACTICE IN RESPECT OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION	31	
	3.3	CONCE	EPTS AND PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ADOPTED	32	
		3.3.1	Principle 1: Accessible Consultation	32	
		3.3.2	Principle 2: Meaningful Consultation	36	
		3.3.3	Principle 3: Accountable Consultation	38	
		3.3.4	Project Roadmap	40	
	PART	2		.46	
4	PUBL		SULTATION AND PARTICIPATION TO DATE	47	
	4.1	INTROE	DUCTION	47	
	4.2	CONSU	LTATION UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD 2007 TO 2010	48	
		4.2.1	Statutory Consultation Period - 2010	55	
	4.3	CONSU	LTATION UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD 2011 TO PRESENT DAY	56	
	4.4	THE PR	ELIMINARY RE-EVALUATION PHASE (2010 – 2011)	57	

		4.4.1	Terms of Reference for the Preliminary Re-evaluation Consultation Sta	age 57
		4.4.2	Participation Methods	58
		4.4.3	Measures Adopted for Consultation during Preliminary Re-evaluation F	Phase58
	4.5	THE FI	NAL RE-EVALUATION PHASE (2011 – 2013)	60
		4.5.1	Terms of Reference for Public Engagement on the Final Re-evaluation	n
			Report	61
		4.5.2	Participation Methods	61
		4.5.3	Measures Adopted for Public Engagement during Final Re-evaluation	Phase62
	4.6	PREFE	RRED PROJECT SOLUTION REPORT (2013)	66
		4.6.1	Terms of Reference for Consultation during the Preferred Project Solution	tion
			Phase	66
		4.6.2	Participation Methods	66
		4.6.3	Measures Adopted for Consultation during Preferred Project Solution F	Phase67
	4.7	THE F	INAL PROJECT PROPOSAL PHASE (2013 TO PRESENT DAY)	72
	4.8	CONSL	JLTATION ON AN UNDERGROUND OPTION	72
	4.9	LANDC	OWNER CONSULTATION	75
	PART	3		78
		•		
5	INFO	RMATIO	N REQUIREMENTS UNDER ANNEX VI(4)	79
	5.1	GENER	RAL	79
	5.2	PUBLIC	C CONSULTATION TO DATE	79
		5.2.1	The Stakeholders Concerned and Addressed	79
		5.2.2	The Measures Envisaged, Including Proposed General Locations and	Dates
			of Dedicated Meetings	85
		5.2.3	Timeline	86
		5.2.4	Human Resources	88
	5.3	FURTH	ER PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN PERMIT GRANTING PROCESS	91
		5.3.1	The Stakeholders Concerned and Addressed	91
		5.3.2	The Measures Envisaged, Including Proposed General Locations and	Dates
			of Dedicated Meetings	92
		5.3.3	Timeline	96
		5.3.4	Human Resources	97
6	PUBL	IC CON	SULTATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 9 AND THE ASSOC	IATED
	GUID	ELINES	IN ANNEX VI GUIDELINES OF REGULATION 347/2013	98
		6.1.1	Article 9 Paragraph 4 and Annex VI (5)	98
		6.1.2	Article 9 Paragraph 5	104
		6.1.3	Article 9 Paragraph 6	104
		6.1.4	Article 9 Paragraph 7	105
7	CON	CLUSIO	Ν	110

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1:	EirGrid's Distinct Strands for Consultation and Engagement for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development
Figure 3.2	Indicative Roadmap Image published in the Community Update brochure (April 2009)
Figure 3.3	Roadmap Image published in the Community Update brochure for the Preliminary Re- evaluation Phase (May 2011)
Figure 3.4	Roadmap Image published in the Community Update brochure for the Final Re- evaluation Phase (April 2013)
Figure 3.5:	Roadmap Image published in Preferred Project Solution Community Update Brochure July 2013
Figure 4.1:	EirGrid's Phased Approach to Landowner Engagement for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development
Figure 5.1:	North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development - Team Structure

LIST OF TABLES

each of them	List of Terms and Synonyms referred to within this Report alongside what is meant by in the context of the Concept for Public Participation for the North-South 400 kV n Development
Table 1.2:	Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Transparency and Public Participation12
Table 1.3: Participation	Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Guidelines for Transparency and Public
	An Bord Pleanála - Projects of Common Interest Manual of Permit Granting Process lay 2014)
Table 3.1:	Project Roadmap40
	Summary of the Public Consultation and Landowner Engagement Methods Adopted by the Lodgement of the Previous Application in 2009

Table 4.3:Information on Brochures, Leaflets and Reports Produced and Made Available to thePublic Prior to the Lodgement of the Previous Application in 200951

Table 4.5:PressReleasesIssuedbyEirGridtoLocalandNationalMediaasPartofCommunicationsActivity for thePublicising of thePreliminaryRe-evaluation of theNorth-South400kVInterconnectionDevelopment60

Table 4.7:Press Releases Issued by EirGrid to Local Media as part of Communications Activityfor the Promotion of the Final Re-evaluation Stage64

Table 4.8:Details of Print Advertisements placed by EirGrid as Part of Final Re-evaluationEngagement on the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development64

Table 4.9:Details of Open Day Venues, Dates and Times undertaken by EirGrid for the Final Re-
evaluation Stage65

Table 4.10Summary of Communications Activities Undertaken by EirGrid during the Course ofPublic (and Landowner) Engagement on the Findings of the Preferred Project Solution Report67

 Table 4.12:
 Names of Media Outlets Issued with Press Releases by EirGrid as Part of Public

 Consultation on the Preferred Project Solution Report
 69

Table 4.13:List of Advertisements placed by EirGrid as Part of Public Consultation on thePreferred Project Solution Report69

Table 4.14:Summary of Public Information Materials Available in Hard Copy/Printed Paper Formatat the Open Days and throughout the Consultation Period on the Preferred Project Solution Report.71

Table 4.15:Overview of Alternative Options Studied (2007 – 2013)73

Table 5.3:Advertising schedule for Promotion of Information Centre Opening Hours during
Statutory Public Consultation93

 Table 6.2:
 Summary of Communications Activities Undertaken by EirGrid during the Course of Public and Landowner Engagement on the Findings of the Final Re-evaluation Report

 107

Table 6.3:Summary of Information Publications and Communications Activities Undertaken byEirGrid during the Course of Public and Landowner Engagement on the Findings of the PreferredProject Solution Report108

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	INFORMATION BROCHURE PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER 2007
APPENDIX B	COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, MAY 2011
APPENDIX C	COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, APRIL 2013
APPENDIX D	COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, JULY 2013
APPENDIX E	COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, DECEMBER 2013
APPENDIX F	COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, JULY 2014
APPENDIX G	LANDOWNER BROCHURE, JULY 2013
APPENDIX H	BROCHURES AND FAQS 2007 - 2010

1 INTRODUCTION AND LAYOUT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

EirGrid plc (EirGrid) and System Operator Northern Ireland Ltd¹ are jointly planning a major crossborder electricity transmission development between the existing high-voltage transmission networks of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The overall interconnection project (which is termed the 'proposed interconnector') for the purposes of this report), is a 400 kV overhead line circuit linking the existing 400 kV substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone. The North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development (the 'proposed development') comprises that portion of the proposed interconnector located within Ireland in counties Meath, Cavan and Monaghan.

This document sets out a Concept for Public Participation for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development, which is a designated Project of Common Interest (PCI) under European Regulation 347/2013. This Concept for Public Participation is submitted to An Bord Pleanála (the Board) in accordance with Article 9(3) of Regulation 347/2013 following the process outlined in the Board's *Manual of Procedure for the Permit Granting Process* (May 2014) and in accordance with *Annex VI of Regulation 347/2013* which sets out the *Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation* in respect of projects designated as Projects of Common Interest.

Chapter 3 outlines the principles adopted for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development with the aim of creating dialogue with the public, landowners and stakeholders about the project.

Article 9(3) of the Regulation states that the competent authority (in this case, An Bord Pleanála) shall take into consideration any form of public participation and consultation that took place before the start of the permit granting process, to the extent that such public consultation has fulfilled the requirement of this Article. This document therefore includes details of the consultation that has taken place prior to the start of the permit granting process, i.e. between 2007 and lodgement of the previous planning application in 2009/2010 as well as the consultation that took place following the decision by EirGrid to re-evaluate the project in 2010. In this regard **Chapter 4** describes the extensive public consultation activities that have taken place since 2007. Parallel to this formal public consultation process, EirGrid has engaged directly with landowners, and/or landowner representative groups as appropriate, and throughout has reviewed and considered requests by landowners.

¹ The planning of that portion of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland was originally undertaken by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE). However, NIE was obligated by the European Commission to transfer its investment planning function (the "Planning Function") to SONI. The SONI transmission system operator licence (the "Licence") was amended on 28th March 2014 to take account of the transfer of the Planning Function following a consultation process by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR). The Licence amendments took effect on 30thApril 2014. Accordingly, responsibility for the pursuance of the planning application in respect of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland has been transferred from NIE to SONI.

Extensive public participation and consultation has therefore already been undertaken to date for this project which EirGrid considers far exceeds the minimum requirements under Regulation 347/2013 for public consultation before the submission of the final and complete application file.

As is described in this document, in accordance with the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI (3)(a), stakeholders affected by a project, including relevant national, regional and local authorities, landowners and citizens living in the vicinity of the project, landowner representative groups, the general public and their associations, organisations or groups, have been *"extensively informed and consulted at an early stage, when potential concerns"* could and/or can still be taken into account and in an open and transparent manner. The extensive public consultation and engagement covered all subject matters relevant to the particular stage in the process in conformity with the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI (3)(b). Furthermore, comments and objections were *'admissible from the beginning of the public consultation until the expiry of the deadline'* for each public consultation also in accordance with the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI (3)(c).

This document contains not only details of public consultation to date but future public consultation to be carried out where the principles contained in the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI(3) will also be observed. Public consultation is an integral part of the Strategic Infrastructure Development process which will apply to the proposed North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development. This is described in more detail in **Chapter 5** of this report and represents activities to be implemented in subsequent stages up to and including an anticipated oral hearing facilitated and managed by the Board in its capacity as the competent authority under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2014 and specifically the *Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006.* The *Planning and Development Act 2000* (the 2000 Act), which relate to the provision of electricity transmission and gas infrastructure development. Section 182A of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) provides that where a person (the *'undertaker'*) intends to carry out a "*development comprising or for the purposes of electricity transmission",* an application, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and / or Natura Impact Statement (NIS) shall be prepared and submitted to the Board for statutory approval of the development.

The Concept for Public Participation has also had regard to the Aarhus Convention (*Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*), the Espoo Convention, Consolidated EIA Directive and Irish legislative requirements, all of which are reflected in the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI of Regulation 347/2013.

As advised by the Board's Manual of Procedures, due regard has been given to the requirements of the Data Protection Acts 1988 – 2003.

1.2 LAYOUT OF THE REPORT

For the purposes of assisting the Board the report is laid out as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Layout

Chapter 2: Designation of the Project as PCI – Acknowledges and sets out the requirements for the project in terms of the PCI Regulation (347/2013).

PART 1: CONCEPT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chapter 3: Concept and Guiding Principles for Public Consultation Process – This firstly sets out the international best practice upon which all of the consultation for the project is based. It also outlines how these principles were adopted for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development with the aim of creating dialogue with the public, landowners and stakeholders about the project.

PART 2: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TO DATE

Chapter 4: Public Consultation and Participation Process to date – This chapter sets out the chronology of consultation events that have taken place for this project, as well as detailing the measures adopted, key dates and stakeholders and timelines involved. This is divided into two phases: the first concerned with the consultation undertaken for the previous application, the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development; the second section concerned with the consultation undertaken for the current proposed application for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development².

² Throughout the reference material provided in this report, the project is also referred to as the Cavan-Tyrone project. This is derived from the counties through which the transmission line will traverse (i.e. from the vicinity of Kingscourt, located in County Cavan to the town land of Turleenan, located in Co. Tyrone (Northern Ireland)). This project, in conjunction with the *'Kingscourt – Woodland 400kV Development'*^[1] (TENE reference E210/06), is also on occasion collectively referred to as the North East projects, due to their geographical location on the island of Ireland. It was advised by An Board Pleanála that both projects should be combined into one project and planning application, hence forth, the Projects are referred to the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development when dealing with matters of Planning.

PART 3: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATION (EU) NO. 347/2013

- Chapter 5: Information Requirements under Annex VI(4) Information Requirements This lists guidelines set out in of Annex VI(4) and assesses how the public engagement and consultation undertaken to date and the further/future engagement and consultation complies with same.
- Chapter 6: Information Requirements under Article 9 and Associated Annex VI Guidelines of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 – This outlines the remaining requirements of the regulation which must be met by the public consultation process for this project. It assesses how the consultation already engaged in and due to be engaged in complies with same.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

1.3 **DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of clarity, the following terms and synonyms referred to within this report are defined within **Table 1.1**:-

Table 1.1:List of Terms and Synonyms referred to within this Report alongside what ismeant by each of them in the context of the Concept for Public Participation for the North-
South 400 kV Interconnection Development

Term / Synonym	Meaning
Consultation ³	The dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups, based upon a genuine exchange of views, with the clear objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action.
Affected Party	Refers to the Contracting Party or Parties, in the context of the Espoo Convention, that are likely to be affected by the transboundary impact of a proposed activity (Convention, Art. 1(iii)) or a Party or Parties to this Protocol likely to be affected by the transboundary environmental, including health, effects of a plan or programme (Protocol, Art. 2.4).
Consultee	The individual or organisation that responds to a consultation or participates in consultation exercises.
Engagement and Community Engagement	The process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the wellbeing of those people.
Stakeholder	An individual, group or party that either affects or is affected by an organisation, policy, programme or decision. In the case of this report, it refers to those individuals, groups or parties that are affected by the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development.
Terms of Reference	This refers to the parameters within which the scope of consultation / engagement is defined. These are clearly set out at the start of any period of focused public engagement and consultation so that stakeholders clearly understand what input they can have and how they can participate within the process of consultation / engagement.
Participation	Participation is the proactive facilitation of an environment that is conducive to consultation and refers to the involvement of stakeholders within the consultation and / or engagement processes.
	Public Participation for the project was also drawn up by EirGrid with cognisance to the UNECE "Access to Information, Public Participation in

³ Jones, Rhion and Gammell, Elizabeth (2009). The Art of Consultation – Public Dialogues in a Noisy World.

Term / Synonym	Meaning
	Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters".4
Community	1. People living in a defined geographical area, or who share similar interests and concerns.
	2. A community is a specific group of people who all hold something in common. Community has tended to be associated with two key aspects: firstly people who share locality or geographical place; secondly people who are communities of interest.
Transboundary Consultation	Refers to the process of consultation with cross border countries in the context of Member States with projects that are common to one or more countries. In the context of this project, transboundary consultation refers to consultation that has been undertaken / will be undertaken with Northern Ireland e.g. the Northern Ireland Department of the Environment (DoENI).
Transparency	 Ensuring that all aspects of a consultation, from the information given to the reporting of the conclusions and their effects, are clearly accessible to all stakeholders. Transparency is assisted with the provision of clear, documented Terms of Reference for the consultation or engagement, as was that practice implemented by EirGrid on its consultation for the project to date.

1.4 WHERE THE REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 347/2013 ARE ADDRESSED IN THIS REPORT

Table 1.2, Table 1.3 and Table 1.4 are intended to assist the Board in navigating this Concept for Public Participation document and where the relevant requirements of Regulation 347/2013, the *Guidelines* set out in *Annex VI of Regulation 347/2013* and the Board's *Manual of Procedure for the Permit Granting Process* (May 2014).

⁴ Available at <u>http://www.unece.org</u>

Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
Article 9(3) "The project promoter shall, within an indicative period of three months of the start of the permit granting process pursuant to Article 10(1)(a), draw up and submit a concept for public participation to the competent authority,	This Concept for Public Participation has been submitted to ABP within three months of the acknowledgement of the notification by An Bord Pleanála (2 nd July 2014).
following the process outlined in the manual referred to in paragraph 1	It follows the process outlined in ABP's <i>Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures for Projects of Common Interest.</i> Refer to Table 1.4 and Section 2.4 of this report.
and in line with the guidelines set out in Annex VI"	It is line with the <i>Guidelines</i> of Annex VI. Refer to Table 1.3 .
Article 9(4) "At least one public consultation shall be carried out by the project promoter, or, where required by national law, by the competent authority, before submission of the final and complete application file to the competent authority pursuant to Article 10(1)(a).	The number of public consultation events held in respect of the project (5 No.) far exceeds the minimum of one required by the Regulation. Refer to Chapter 4 and Section 6.1.1 of this report.
This shall be without prejudice to any public consultation to be carried out after submission of the request for development consent according to Article 6(2) of Directive 2011/92/EU. [statutory consultation period after submission of application and EIS]	Noted.
The public consultation shall inform stakeholders referred to in Annex VI.3(a)	Refer to Table 1.3 and section 5.2.1 of this report for details on the stakeholders addressed which includes stakeholders referred to in Annex VI.3(a).
about the project at an early stage	Refer to section 4.2 which details the public consultation for the project which commenced in 2007 at an early stage in the project. Also following the withdrawal of the 2009 application EirGrid commenced a comprehensive re-evaluation of the project during which all of the key decisions made in formulating that 2009 application were subject to review and public consultation, refer to section 4.4 .

Table 1.2 Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Transparency and Public Participation

Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
and shall help to identify the most suitable location or trajectory	Refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the public consultation for the project that has occurred in the period 2007 – 2014, including consultation focusing on route and site selection.
and the relevant issues to be addressed in the application file.	Refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the public consultation for the project that has occurred in the period 2007 – 2014, including focusing on issues to be addressed in the application file.
The minimum requirements applicable to this public consultation are specified in Annex VI(5).	Refer Table 1.3 .
Article 9(5) "For project crossing the border of two or more Member States, the public consultations pursuant to paragraph 4 in each of the Member States concerned shall take place within a period of no more than two months from the date on which the first public consultation started"	This provision of the Regulation is not applicable. Discussed in section 2.1 and section 6.1.2 of this report.
Article 9(6) "For projects likely to have significant adverse cross-border impacts in one or more neighbouring Member States, where Article 7 of Directive 2011/92/EU and the Espoo Convention are applicable [where there are transboundary environmental impacts], the relevant information shall be made available to the competent authority of the neighbouring Member States. The competent authority of the neighbouring Member States shall indicate, in the notification process where appropriate, whether it, or any other authority concerned, wishes to participate in the relevant public consultation procedures."	This is a matter for An Bord Pleanála as competent authority. Discussed in section 2.5 and section 6.1.3 of this report.

Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
Article 9(7) "The project promoter, or, where national law so provides, the competent authority, shall establish and regularly update a website with relevant information about the project of common interest,	A project website has been maintained since 2007 - refer to section 2.3.4, Table 4.1, Table 4.4, Table 4.6, Table 4.10, Table 5.1, section 5.3.2.9. Compliance with this requirement is summarised in section 6.1.4 and with reference to Table 6.1, Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 of this report.
which shall be linked to the Commission website and	The project website is linked to the Commission website. Refer to section 2.3.4 and 6.1.4 of this report.
which shall meet the requirements specified in Annex VI(6).	Refer to Table 1.3 .
Commercially sensitive information shall be kept confidential.	Noted.
Project promoters shall also publish relevant information by other appropriate means to which the public has open access."	The project has adopted multiple communication tools to ensure the public has opportunities to access information. Refer to section 3.3.1.2, Chapter 4 (in particular Table 4.1 – Table 4.4, Table 4.6 and Table 4.10). Compliance with this requirement is summarised in section 6.1.4 and with reference to Table 6.1, Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 of this report.

Table 1.3	Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Guidelines for Transparency and
Public Participation	

Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
Annex VI(3) "To increase public participation in the permit granting process and ensure in advance information and dialogue with the public, the following principles shall be applied:	
(a) The stakeholders affected by a project of common interest, including relevant national, regional and local authorities, landowners and citizens living in the vicinity of the project, the general public and their associations, organisations or groups shall be extensively informed and consulted	Refer to section 5.2.1 of this report for details on the stakeholders addressed, including those set out in VI(3)(a) of the <i>Guidelines</i> .
at an early stage, when potential concerns by the public can still be taken into account	Refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the public consultation for the project which commenced in 2007 at an early stage when potential concerns by the public could still be taken into account in accordance with item VI(3)(a) of the <i>Guidelines</i> . Also following the withdrawal of the 2009 application EirGrid commenced a comprehensive re-evaluation of the project during which all of the key decisions made in formulating that 2009 application, refer to section 4.4 .
and in an open and transparent manner.	Refer to sections 3.3.1, 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 which outline the mechanisms used by the project to achieve accessible, meaningful and accountable consultation. Also refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the public consultation for the project that has occurred in the period $2007 - 2014$ in accordance with item VI(3)(a) of the <i>Guidelines</i> .
Where relevant, the competent authority shall actively support the activities undertaken by the project promoter.	This is a matter for An Bord Pleanála as competent authority.
(b) Competent authorities shall ensure that public consultation procedures for projects of common interest are grouped together where possible.	This is a matter for An Bord Pleanála as competent authority.

Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
Each public consultation shall cover all subject matters relevant to the particular stage of the procedure, and one subject matter relevant to the particular stage of the procedure shall not be addressed in more than one public consultation;	Refer to sections 3.3.2 , 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 which outline the mechanisms used by the project to achieve meaningful and accountable consultation, including the project roadmap in accordance with item VI(3)(b) of the <i>Guidelines</i> . Also refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the distinct focused public consultation phases for the project that has occurred in the period 2007 – 2014.
however, one public consultation may take place in more than one geographical location	Public consultation events for the project took place in more than one geographical location in accordance with item VI(3)(b) of the <i>Guidelines</i> . Refer to section 3.3.1.2 which outlines the mechanisms used by the project to achieve accessible consultation. Also refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the open day events occurred in the period 2007 – 2014.
The subject matters addressed by a public consultation shall be clearly indicated in the notification of the public consultation.	The subject matter addressed by the various public consultation events for the project was clearly indicated in the communication tools used to notify the public, including published material in accordance with item VI(3)(b) of the <i>Guidelines</i> Refer to sections 4.2 to 4.8 which detail the public consultation for the project that has occurred in the period $2007 - 2014$.
(c) Comments and objections shall be admissible from the beginning of the public consultation until the expiry of the deadline only.	Feedback from the focused consultation events is in accordance with item VI(3) of the <i>Guidelines</i> . Refer to section 3.3.1.2 which outlines the mechanisms used by the project to achieve accessible consultation. Also refer to sections 4.2 to 4.9 which detail the distinct focused public consultation phases for the project that has occurred in the period 2007 – 2014 in accordance with item VI(3) of the <i>Guidelines</i> .
Annex VI(4) "The concept for public participation shall at least include information about:	
(a) the stakeholders concerned and addressed;	Refer to section 5.2.1 for details on the stakeholders concerned and addressed for public consultation activities in respect of the project.

Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
(b) the measures envisaged, including proposed general locations and dates of dedicated meetings;	Refer to section 5.2.2 for an overview of the measures which were envisaged, and then adopted for each of the five public consultation events.
(c) the timeline;	Refer to section 3.3.4 and section 5.2.3 for details on the project timeline and roadmap for the project and how this was enacted.
(d) The human resources allocated to the respective tasks."	Refer to section 5.2.4 for details on the human resources allocated to the respective tasks.
Annex VI(5) <i>"In the context of the public consultation to be carried out before submission of the application file, the relevant parties shall at least:</i>	
 (a) publish an information leaflet of no more than 15 pages, giving in a clear and concise manner, an overview of the purpose and preliminary timetable of the project, the national grid development plan, alternative routes considered, expected impacts, including of a cross-border nature, and possible mitigation measures, which shall be published prior to the start of the consultation; The information leaflet shall furthermore list the web addresses of the transparency platform referred to in Article 18 and of the manual of procedures referred to in point (1); 	Compliance with this guideline is addressed in section 6.1.1. Also refer to the brochures, newsletters and other published material used to notify the public about the project as described in sections 4.2 to 4.9.
(b) inform all stakeholders affected about the project through the website referred to in Article 9(7) and other appropriate information means;	Refer to section 6.1.1 and Table 6.1 , Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 .
(c) Invite in written form relevant affected stakeholders to dedicated meetings, during which concerns shall be discussed."	Refer to section 6.1.1 and Table 6.1, Table 6.2 and Table 6.3.

Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 347/2013 - Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation	Response and Where it is Addressed in this Report
Annex VI(6) <i>"The project website shall make available as a minimum the following:</i>	
(a) the information leaflet referred to in point (5);	Refer to section 6.1.1.
(b) a non-technical and regularly updated summary of no more than 50 pages reflecting the current status of the project and clearly indicating, in case of updates, changes to previous versions;	The website includes such a summary in both online and report format, refer to section 2.3.4 section 5.3.2.9 and section 6.1.4.
(c) the project and public consultation planning, clearly indicating dates and locations for public consultations and hearings and the envisaged subject matters relevant for those hearings;	Refer to section 6.1.1. Also refer to the brochures, newsletters and other published material used to notify the public about the project as described in sections 4.2 to 4.9 and Table 5.2 .
(d) contact details in view of obtaining the full set of application documents;	These contact details will be provided in due course on lodgement of the application.
(e) Contact details in view of conveying comments and objections during public consultations."	Refer to section 6.1.1.

Table 1.4An Bord Pleanála - Projects of Common Interest Manual of PermitGranting Process Procedures (May 2014)

An Bord Pleanála - Projects of Common Interest Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures (May 2014)	Response and Where it is addressed in this Report
Section 5.3 – Public Participation Before Submission of the Application File	
<i>"Annex VI(5) of the Regulation sets out what, at least, the relevant parties shall provide".</i>	Refer to Table 1.3 .
"An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority), during pre-application procedure stage will expect the project promoter to provide details of having complied with the foregoing."	Noted.

An Bord Pleanála - Projects of Common Interest Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures (May 2014)	Response and Where it is addressed in this Report
The Public Participation Concept	
"Article 9.3 of Regulation 347/2013 provides that a project promoter shall, within an indicative period of three months of the start of the permit granting process under Article 10(1)(a) draw up and submit a concept for public participation to An Bord Pleanála.	This Concept for Public Participation has been submitted to ABP within three months of the acknowledgement of the notification by An Bord Pleanála (2 nd July 2014).
Within three months of receipt of the concept, An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority) shall request modifications or approve the concept. An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority) will seek an opinion of other relevant authorities concerned with the project.	This is a matter for ABP as competent authority.
Annex VI(4) of the Regulation provides details of what the concept shall at least include."	Refer to Table 1.3 .
"Generally, An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority) intends, where it has approved a public participation concept for a specific project, to require the project promoter to publish the approved public participation concept on the project website as a further means of enhancing transparency and public participation.	Refer to section 2.4 of this report. EirGrid will comply with this stipulation, if required by An Bord Pleanála.
In addition, An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority) considers that all submissions received as part of the public consultation process should be published on the project website unless the submitter has provided reasonable reasons for the consideration of An Bord Pleanála, as Competent Authority, for wishing that their submission be received in confidence. Project promoters should be aware of their responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 in relation to personal information such as addresses and contact details."	This has not been the practice to date as private individuals who made submissions were not informed in advance that their submissions might be published. However if it is a requirement of the Board in the future that submissions be made public then stakeholders will be advised of this in advance and submissions can then be made in that knowledge. EirGrid will then publish the submissions while also maintaining compliance with the Data Protection Acts. Also refer to section 2.4
Section 5.5	
"An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority) will expect that the website is maintained by the project promoter concerned and that all changes to the website content are documented so that An Bord Pleanála (Competent Authority) can trace what information was made available to the general public at specific times."	Refer to section 2.3.4 and 6.1.4 of this report.

2 DESIGNATION OF THE PROJECT AS A PCI AND REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 347/2013

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Regulation (EU) No. 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Guidelines for Trans-European Energy Infrastructure) was adopted on 21st March 2013 and entered into force on 1 June 2013. Under Article 3(4) of the Regulation, the European Commission was empowered to adopt delegated acts to establish the union list of projects of common interest which list form an Annex to the Regulation. In this regard, Commission Delegated Regulation 1391/2013, issued on the 14th October 2013 which identified the projects forming part of the first union list of projects of common interests (PCI's). The Annex to the Delegated Regulation under the heading *"2. Priority corridor North-South electricity interconnections in Western Europe ("NSI West Electricity")"* lists at no. 2.13:

2.13.1. Ireland – United Kingdom interconnection between Woodland (IE) and Turleenan (UK – Northern Ireland)

This is the overall interconnection project and requires two separate applications; one application by EirGrid for the part of the project in Ireland and a separate application for that portion of the project in Northern Ireland.

The planning of that portion of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland was originally undertaken by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE). However, NIE was obligated by the European Commission to transfer its investment planning function (the "Planning Function") to the System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI). The SONI transmission system operator licence (the "Licence") was amended on 28th March 2014 to take account of the transfer of the Planning Function following a consultation process by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR). The Licence amendments took effect on 30th April 2014. Accordingly, responsibility for the planning application in respect of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland has been transferred from NIE to SONI.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), in its capacity as competent authority for PCI in the United Kingdom, has confirmed that the SONI application in the North can avail of the transitional provisions of Article 19 of Regulation 347/2013 and therefore does not require to comply with Chapter III of the Regulation which includes the submission of a concept for public participation.

An Bord Pleanála (the "Board") has determined that the transitional provisions (Article 19) of the PCI Regulation (347/2013) do not apply to that portion of the overall interconnection project within Ireland, i.e. the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development. Therefore, the provisions of Chapter III of Regulation No. 347/2013 Regulation apply in respect of the development within Ireland, specifically

Article 9 relating to Transparency and Public Participation and Annex VI "*Guidelines for Transparency* and *Public Participation*".

2.2 PCI NOTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

EirGrid submitted a notification under Article 10.1(a) of Regulation 347/2013 to the Board on 3rd June 2014 in respect of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development.

An acknowledgement of the notification was received by EirGrid from the Board, on 2nd July 2014 which confirmed that the Board considers the project as being "*mature enough to enter the permit granting process*".

2.3 TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 347/2013

Article 9 of the Regulation is entitled *"Transparency and Public Participation"*, while Annex VI is entitled *"Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation"*. The requirements in respect of these matters are described below.

2.3.1 General Principles

Article 9(2) of the Regulation states that without prejudice to any requirements under the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions and relevant Union law, all parties involved in the permit granting process shall follow the principles for public participation set out in the *Guidelines* in Annex VI(3).

Annex VI(3) provides that to increase public participation in the permit granting process and ensure in advance information and dialogue with the public, the following principles shall be applied:

(a) The stakeholders affected by a project of common interest, including relevant national, regional and local authorities, landowners and citizens living in the vicinity of the project, the general public and their associations, organisations or groups, shall be extensively informed and consulted at an early stage, when potential concerns by the public can still be taken into account and in an open and transparent manner. Where relevant, the competent authority shall actively support the activities undertaken by the project promoter.

(b) Competent authorities shall ensure that public consultation procedures for projects of common interest are grouped together where possible. Each public consultation shall cover all subject matters relevant to the particular stage of the procedure, and one subject matter relevant to the particular stage of the procedure shall not be addressed in more than one public consultation; however, one public consultation may take place in more than one

geographical location. The subject matters addressed by a public consultation shall be clearly indicated in the notification of the public consultation.

(c) Comments and objections shall be admissible from the beginning of the public consultation until the expiry of the deadline only.

As will be described later in this document, these principles have been met by EirGrid in the public consultation to date and will continue to be abided by throughout the permit granting process.

2.3.2 Information to be included in Concept for Public Participation

Annex VI(4) of Regulation 347/2013 stipulates that the concept for public participation shall at least include information about:

- (a) The stakeholders concerned and addressed -
- (b) The measures envisaged, including proposed general locations and dates of dedicated meetings
- (c) The timeline
- (d) The human resources allocated to the respective tasks.

This document includes all the above information. The details of the public consultation process already undertaken and also due to be undertaken are described for each of these requirements in **Chapters 4** and **5**.

2.3.3 Public Consultation before submission of the Application File

Article 9(4) of the Regulation states:

"At least one public consultation shall be carried out by the project promoter, or, where required by national law, by the competent authority, before submission of the final and complete application file to the competent authority pursuant to Article 10(1)(a). This shall be without prejudice to any public consultation to be carried out after submission of the request for development consent according to Article 6(2) of Directive 2011/92/EU. The public consultation shall inform stakeholders referred to in Annex VI.3(a) about the project at an early stage and shall help to identify the most suitable location or trajectory and the relevant issues to be addressed in the application file. The minimum requirements applicable to this public consultation are specified in Annex VI.5".

Annex VI (5) of the *Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation states* that in the context of the public consultation to be carried out before submission of the application file, the relevant parties shall at least:

(a) publish an information leaflet of no more than 15 pages, giving, in a clear and concise manner, an overview of the purpose and preliminary timetable of the project, the national grid development plan, alternative routes considered, expected impacts, including of cross-border nature, and possible mitigation measures, which shall be published prior to the start of the consultation; The information leaflet shall furthermore list the web addresses of the transparency platform referred to in Article 18 and of the manual of procedures referred to in point (1);

(b) inform all stakeholders affected about the project through the website referred to in Article *9*(7) and other appropriate information means;

(c) invite in written form relevant affected stakeholders to dedicated meetings, during which concerns shall be discussed.

As is detailed in this document, the public consultation which has taken place to date, has gone beyond the above minimum requirements. Three stages of public engagement were carried out since the withdrawal of the previous application in June 2010, in addition to further rounds undertaken prior to that withdrawal. At all stages of the focused periods of consultation and public participation, information leaflets of less than 15 pages were published in advance of the consultation period. The consultation was widely publicised to ensure all stakeholders affected were aware of the consultation, and written submissions were sought from relevant stakeholders at each consultation stage.

2.3.4 Website

Article 9(7) states that the project promoter, or, where national law so provides, the competent authority, shall establish and regularly update a website with relevant information about the Project of Common Interest, which shall be linked to the Commission website and which shall be in accordance with Annex VI(6). Commercially sensitive information shall be kept confidential.

Annex VI(6) of the *Guidelines for Transparency and Public Participation* states that project website shall make available as a minimum the following:

(a) the information leaflet referred to in point (5);

(b) a non-technical and regularly updated summary of no more than 50 pages reflecting the current status of the project and clearly indicating, in case of updates, changes to previous versions;

(c) the project and public consultation planning, clearly indicating dates and locations for public consultations and hearings and the envisaged subject matters relevant for those hearings;

(d) contact details in view of obtaining the full set of application documents;

(e) contact details in view of conveying comments and objections during public consultations.

EirGrid published details of the project on a project specific webpage on its own website as far back as 2007. It has been regularly updated as the project has evolved. The website includes a nontechnical and regularly updated summary of no more than 50 pages (now in both on-line and report format) reflecting the current status of the project and clearly indicating, in case of updates, changes to previous versions. In addition, EirGrid has in the past and will continue in the future ensure that the matters contained in (c) to (e) are stated on the website when they arise. The current state of the project website is in compliance with the applicable requirements set out above.

2.3.5 Other Appropriate Information Means

The second paragraph of Article 9(7) states that project promoters shall also publish relevant information by other appropriate information means to which the public has open access.

EirGrid has published information by a diverse range of means which include:

- Detailed reports on the project proposals and public consultation at each consultation stage
- Press Releases
- Local and National Press Advertisements
- Local Radio Advertisements
- Community Update Brochures
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Leaflets
- Video explaining the Project
- Leaflets on technical matters (e.g. EMF)

To demonstrate accordance with the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI of the Regulation, refer to Part 2 and Part 3 of this report.

2.4 AN BORD PLEANÁLA MANUAL OF PERMIT GRANTING PROCEDURES

An Bord Pleanála ('the Board') was appointed the competent authority for PCI in Ireland, and thus became responsible under Article 9(1), in collaboration with other authorities concerned, to "publish a manual of procedures for the permit granting process applicable to projects of common interest". Article 9(1) states that the competent authorities' manual "shall be updated as necessary and made available to the public. The manual shall at least include the information specified in Annex VI.1. The manual shall not be legally binding, but it may refer to or quote relevant legal provisions". This manual was required to be published by 16th May 2014 and a Manual of Procedures was duly published by the Board on that date.

Public Participation is addressed in Section 5 of the Manual. Section 5.1 cites the principles for public participation set out in Annex VI(3) and notes that the Board shall operate by those principles. The Manual notes at section 5.2 that the Board will be requesting project promoters to inform and consult with the general public at the earliest possible time which may include the time prior to the project promoter formally notifying the Board. As noted EirGrid has extensively informed and consulted with the public with respect to the proposed North South Interconnector development prior to the formal notification of the project to the Board.

Section 5.3 concerns Public Participation before Submission of the Application File and cites Article VI(5) as to the details which relevant parties are required to provide. Again details of compliance with the same are contained in this document.

Section 5.4 is entitled "The Public Participation Concept" and cites Annex VI(4) as to the details which the concept shall at least include. Attention is drawn to the requirements of the *Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.* As noted earlier EirGrid has had due regard to these requirements.

The Manual further states at section 5.4 that the Board generally intends to require the project promoter to publish the approved public participation concept on the project website as a further means of enhancing transparency and public participation. In the event that the Board approves EirGrid's public participation concept, EirGrid will comply with this stipulation, if required by the Board.

It is further stated that the Board considers that all submissions received as part of the public consultation process should be published on the project website unless the submitter has provided reasonable reasons for wishing that their submission be received in confidence. As regards the public consultations which have been carried out by EirGrid to date it may be noted that following each stage of consultation, the report produced for the subsequent consultation. Private individuals who made submissions were not informed that their submissions would be published on the project website and therefore copies of submissions were not published on the website or elsewhere, but

instead all issues raised during the consultation were identified and stated in the report. These reports were published on the EirGrid website.

Section 5.5 concerns the Project Website and cites the requirements of Annex VI(6). It is further stated that the Board will expect that the website is maintained by the project promoter concerned and that all changes to the website content are documented so that the Board (competent authority) can trace what information was made available to the general public at specific times. The project website is maintained and updated by EirGrid on a regular basis and this will continue to be the case through the statutory permit granting process.

Section 5.6 concerns the statutory permit granting procedure and notes that as the competent authority under the Collaborative Scheme, the role of An Bord Pleanála is mainly to co-ordinate the issuing of the comprehensive decision and to ensure that it is made within the period set out in the Regulation. It further notes that insofar as a project comes before the Board as a planning application, the Board will follow its own public participation procedures. At Section 5.6.1 it refers to the *Guide to Public Participation in Strategic Infrastructure Development*.

As stated in the formal notification of the North South Interconnector project to the Board, the proposed development has separately been the subject of pre-application consultation (now formally closed) between EirGrid and the Board under the provisions of Section 182E of the *Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended* – An Bord Pleanála Ref. PL02.VC0054 applies. The notification further stated that EirGrid acknowledges that consent is required for the project as a strategic infrastructure project and that such an application will be lodged with the Strategic Infrastructure Division of An Bord Pleanála. This follows from the decision of An Bord Pleanála published on the 6th February 2014, finding that:

- the proposed development constitutes strategic infrastructure development,
- that an EIS is required to accompany the application, and
- that significant effects are likely on the environment in a trans-boundary state (Northern Ireland).

A separate parallel consenting process is currently being undertaken in Northern Ireland in respect of that portion of the overall Interconnector within that jurisdiction. The letter of notification further stated that other than these (but without prejudice to other matters should they prove necessary and/or is required and/or desirable), EirGrid does not currently anticipate that other Statutory permits/approvals and licences, such as waste or foreshore licences, are required to realise the proposed North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development as per An Bord Pleanála Ref. PCI001.

2.5 TRANSBOUNDARY CONSULTATION

As noted Article 9(2) of the Regulation states that without prejudice to any requirements under the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions and relevant Union law, all parties involved in the permit granting process shall follow the principles for public participation set out in of Annex VI.3. Article 9(6) further states that for projects likely to have significant adverse cross-border impacts in one or more neighbouring Member States, where Article 7 of Directive 2011/92/EU and the Espoo Convention are applicable, the relevant information shall be made available to the competent authority of the neighbouring Member States. The competent authority of the neighbouring Member States shall indicate, in the notification process where appropriate, whether it, or any other authority concerned, wishes to participate in the relevant public consultation procedures.

2.5.1 Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment

The basic requirement of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process is to ensure that, before development consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are made subject to an assessment with regard to their effects. This requires an assessment of effects regardless of their location or of national borders.

As early as 1972, at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the international community recognised that States are responsible for ensuring that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond their control. This was followed by work by an experts' group and the drafting of a Convention on EIA in a transboundary context, which was adopted at Espoo in Finland in 1991 (and amended in 2001 and 2004). The Espoo Convention entered into force on 10 September 1997 and has been ratified by the European Union, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Indeed, the provisions of the Espoo Convention are reflected to amendments which have been made to the EIA Directive and to national legislation. The Convention sets out the obligations of Parties to assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning. It also lays down the general obligation of States to notify and consult each other on all major projects under consideration that are likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact across boundaries.

The Espoo Convention is aimed at preventing, mitigating and monitoring environmental damage by ensuring that explicit consideration is given to transboundary environmental factors before a final national decision is made as to whether to approve a project.

The Convention defines the country in which the proposed activity takes place as the "Party of Origin" and the countries that are impacted as an "Affected Party". Because of the nature of the North South Interconnector as a transboundary project, Northern Ireland (UK) and the Ireland are both Parties of Origin and Affected Parties.

For most projects involving transboundary impacts, the ES/EIS that is prepared as part of the respective planning application fulfils the purposes of the Espoo Convention, insofar as the cumulative impacts are assessed and all parties are properly informed of the applications in the respective jurisdictions.

2.5.2 European Commission Guidance on Transboundary Projects

In May 2013, the European Commission published *Guidance on the Application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure for Large-scale Transboundary Projects* (herein referred to as the 'EU Transboundary Guidance document'). The aim of the EU Transboundary Guidance document was to build on "*experience and the good practices identified so far*" in the EIA field and to provide greater clarification as to how to approach "*large-scale transboundary projects*". These types of project are defined in the EU Transboundary Guidance document as those which are "*physically located in more than one country*" (such as the North South Interconnector project).

The EU Transboundary Guidance document describes seven key steps in a Transboundary EIA for large-scale 'transboundary projects':

- "1. Notification and transmittal of information;
- 2. Determination of the content and extent of the matters of the EIA information scoping;
- 3. Preparation of the EIA information/report by the developer;
- 4. Public participation, dissemination of information and consultation;
- 5. Consultation between concerned Parties;
- 6. Examination of the information gathered and final decision; and,
- 7. Dissemination of information on the final decision." (Page 4)

The EU Transboundary Guidance document further states:

"For large-scale transboundary projects, the developer must comply with the requirements of the national EIA requirements of each country in which the project will be implemented. The developer should prepare individual national EIA reports and a joint environmental report that covers the whole project and assesses its overall effects, in particular cumulative and significant adverse transboundary effects. (page 10)

While the EU Transboundary Guidance document states that it *"in no way creates any obligation for the Member States or project developers"* (page i), it is considered a useful consolidation of current best practice for projects such as the North South Interconnector.

On project commencement, EirGrid and NIE established a project steering committee in order to facilitate the delivery of the project as efficiently as possible. The committee established close coordination in terms of design and consideration of impacts of the project and ensured an integrated approach was undertaken.

The relevant competent authorities for the project are the Planning Service in Northern Ireland and An Bord Pleanála in Ireland. Through pre-application consultations and discussions with these bodies, it was determined that an EIA would be required to be submitted with the application for development consent in each jurisdiction. Each competent authority was informed of the transboundary nature of the project and the potential for effects (as set out by the Espoo Convention and the EIA Directive as transposed into national legislation). These consultations, therefore, established that both jurisdictions were Parties of Origin and Affected Parties (as defined by the Espoo Convention).

As part of the process leading to the preparation of the ES and EIS, a review of all environmental aspects was undertaken by EirGrid and NIE's team of specialist advisors. The scoping process was confirmed by the Planning Service and the Board, whereby the respective authorities provided opinions as to the information to be provided in the ES and EIS respectively. In Northern Ireland, this was undertaken through the Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) process with Planning Service. In Ireland, this was undertaken by the provision of a formal Scoping Opinion by the Board. (December 2013)

In addition to the Environmental Statement (ES) and EIS, a Joint Environmental Report, has also been prepared and will be lodged as part of the planning application. This approach fully satisfies all recommendations in the EU Transboundary Guidance document.

PART 1 The Concept for Public Participation

3 CONCEPT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 GENERAL

This chapter commences with an overview of the international best practice consultation principles adopted by EirGrid. These principles, based on the provisions of *The Aarhus Convention*, seek to achieve transparent and accessible public participation which is in line with the requirements of Annex VI(3). It then outlines how these principles were adopted for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development with the aim of creating dialogue with the public, landowners and stakeholders about the project. It further considers the statutory requirements for consultation under the same principles. Finally it outlines the project road map.

3.2 INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE IN RESPECT OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public engagement and consultation is an important component of successful infrastructure development worldwide. Ensuring that stakeholders have appropriate access to relevant information and can influence the decision making process serves to broaden available knowledge / expertise and leads to higher quality decisions. Public consultation also provides stakeholders with the opportunity to access information providing a more transparent and robust project development process.

International experience points toward a number of principles of public consultation that lead to successful public participation. Recognition of the societal benefit of these principles is reflected in their adoption into the laws of many jurisdictions, most significantly through *The Aarhus Convention*. The Convention sets out three pillars:

- Access to information;
- Public participation in decision making; and
- Access to justice.

While these principles place responsibility on the relevant authorities (governments, regulators etc.) there is an onus placed on developers to ensure public consultation forms a part of developments and that information is fairly disseminated to all stakeholders.

Successful developers proactively engage in meaningful public consultation and seek to provide stakeholders with opportunities to influence the decision making process at key junctures. This process can only be effective when stakeholders are sufficiently knowledgeable to provide informed opinion; accordingly, the provision of appropriate information in the appropriate format and at the appropriate level, is crucial. Furthermore, there is a need to demonstrate the legitimacy of the

consultation process in order to be able to provide confidence to stakeholders, regulators and the general public that the process undertaken has been genuine.

International best practice therefore points to a need for public consultation to be accessible, meaningful and accountable to all stakeholders.

These principles are reflected and consistent with best practice approaches undertaken and promoted by the international transmission energy industry. In this regard, reference is made to CIGRE, the Council on Large Electric Systems (an international association for sharing knowledge and joining forces to improve electric power systems) Working Group B2.15 Report entitled *Consultation Models for Overhead Line Projects (June 2005).*

3.3 CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ADOPTED

EirGrid's underlying or foundation pillars for consultation for the project are compatible with the requirements of Annex VI(3), *The Aarhus Convention* and industry best practice. All of the consultation activities to date were drawn up to adhere to each of these three pillar concepts and aimed to ensure that the public participation activities devised for the project were:-

- Accessible;
- Meaningful; and
- Accountable.

What is meant by each of these terms and an overview of the mechanisms by which they were / are and will be achieved, by EirGrid and as provided for in the statutory planning process, is provided in the following sections.

3.3.1 Principle 1: Accessible Consultation

3.3.1.1 Meaning of Accessible Consultation

In the context of the project, accessible consultation aims to provide and make project information and key project messages available to the public, public concerned, landowners and other stakeholders.

Accessibility in any consultation is key to its success. With the implementation of the methods devised for this project, the accessibility of the consultation process can be described and evaluated in terms of:-

• The level of awareness about the project and the project information that can be accessed;

- Utilisation of multiple communications tools to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to access information, irrespective of where they live and what their level of literacy or online capabilities are;
- Materials are accessible and information is presented in a way that is clear and meaningful, but uncomplicated; and
- Physical accessibility (i.e. appropriate access to all venues used by EirGrid including geographic locations and access for wheelchair users).

3.3.1.2 Mechanisms Adopted to Achieve Accessible Consultation

The consultation approach for each stage of the project was drawn up in accordance with the guiding principles for achieving ready accessibility to information for all stakeholders, particularly on the environment, as required under *The Aarhus Convention* and *Espoo Conventions*. These are in accordance with the requirements of Article 9 of Regulation 347/2013.

To achieve this, a variety of mechanisms were used as follows:-

- Provision of project information in a wide variety of formats and locations, including the following:
 - A project website that was regularly updated in particular prior to the announcement of each stage of the project development process. This enabled ready access to maps, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), brochures and press releases summarising activity and reports in a digital format to those who required or preferred that method;
 - Hard copy information was also available to those who may not have internet access or those who prefer to receive hard copies of information, be that maps or reports. To this end, the information offices were open within the study area, initially in 2008 in two locations (Carrickmacross and Navan) and a third office location was added subsequent to requests from stakeholders for both events and an office at Kingscourt (April 2013). This request was facilitated in an effort to increase accessibility to those potentially affected or interested in the project;
 - Information Open Days were held around each of the consultation phases;
 - To assist those to locate events, information centres and access to information on the project, a dedicated project lo-call project phone line (1890 25 26 90), which commenced in 2007 and which remains open to this day, was available between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday to field calls from stakeholders and to answer their queries;
 - A dedicated email service was included on all consultation literature and widely publicised through press releases to the media. Prior to the withdrawal of the 2009 application two dedicated and region specific email addresses were advertised, these

were <u>meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com</u> and <u>cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com</u>. Since then a single combined email address <u>northsouth@eirgrid.com</u> has been advertised. The old email addresses are still operable and emails that are received there are automatically forwarded to the new address;

- Direct mailings;
- One-to-one meetings on request;
- Small group meetings; and
- Strategic stakeholder meetings (elected representatives, action groups, etc.)
- Going forward to the statutory consultation phase, the website will be updated to contain information about the application process and a link to the Board's website from where the documents can be viewed and downloaded.

3.3.1.3 Statutory Process

The requirements of the planning approval process under the *Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2014*, make provision for '*accessible consultation*' during the statutory process in the following ways:-

Awareness of the Project

There are statutory provisions in place to ensure public notification of when an application for approval is being lodged. In this regard, an applicant is required to publish notice of the application in at least one National newspaper and one newspaper circulating in the area and site notices will also be required.

These notices will indicate *inter alia* the nature and location of the proposed development, the times and places where the application can be inspected, and that submissions may be made to the Board by the public and others e.g. prescribed bodies. The Board will also include notice of receipt of the application in its weekly list of new cases and post it on its website.

As it has been determined that the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development will have significant transboundary effects on Northern Ireland, measures to notify and inform the Department of the Environment (DOE) Planning Northern Ireland, will be implemented.

In cases where further information is sought in the course of consideration of the application by the Board, further public notification procedures again apply to ensure the public and prescribed bodies are fully aware of any revised proposals or additional information provided in the course of the application process.

Use of Multiple Communications Tools

While the statutory notification requirement is to publish newspaper notification of the lodgement of the application, it is also the case in most applications that site notices will also be required. It is the intention in the case of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development that site notices will also be erected.

The statutory process provides for the lodgement of written submissions to the Board. However the legislation also makes provision for the holding of an oral hearing and in the case of strategic infrastructure proposals these are generally convened. When making a written submission, third parties have the right to request that the Board hold an oral hearing. When an oral hearing is held, parties have the right to make oral submissions and at the discretion of the inspector to put questions to the applicant.

Physical Accessibility

EirGrid will make a hard copy of the application and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) available for inspection and for purchase (for the reasonable cost of making the copy) for a period of at least six weeks. The documents will be available at the Board's offices and those of the planning authorities in whose jurisdictions the proposed development will be located (i.e., Monaghan, Cavan and Meath County Councils). EirGrid also intends to make it available to view in its Project Information Centres in counties Monaghan, Cavan and Meath.

A dedicated website will be set up for the statutory application process and will include all the planning application documentation submitted to the Board. All information will be available for view and download. In the case of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development there will be a link to this new website provided from the project webpage on the EirGrid website which hosts all of the information on the project and consultation to date. Application documentation, such as the EIS, will also be available on the dedicated website in the Irish language.

Information is Clear, Meaningful and Uncomplicated

The information provided on the public notices must follow a specified format and provide essential information to clearly inform the public of how they make submissions, and within what timeframe, to the Board.

The content of the application itself will comprise clear drawings/ maps of the proposal and will be supported by an EIS, Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and other documentation. While the EIS is a technical document there is a statutory requirement that it contain a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) which will explain the likely and significant impacts of the proposed development in non-technical and unambiguous language.

3.3.2 Principle 2: Meaningful Consultation

3.3.2.1 Definition of Meaningful Consultation

This means providing clarity to members of the public on what aspects of the project are open for consultation, what was/may be subject to change, and what decisions have already been taken. Being clear with what "*is on the table*" allows stakeholders to understand the level and type of input they can realistically have in the project as it develops.

3.3.2.2 Mechanisms Adopted to Achieve Meaningful Consultation

Consultation was devised and implemented by EirGrid to be meaningful at key junctures within the project's timeline. At each stage of the engagement and consultation process, EirGrid devised Terms of Reference (ToR) to inform the public and landowners about what aspects of the project were open for consultation, what was subject to change, and what decisions had already been taken. Being clear with what "*is on the table*" allows stakeholders to understand their role in the project as the project develops and to manage their expectations. Meaningful consultation also requires that the submissions and views of stakeholders are taken into account and this has been the case with the public consultation held to date.

Therefore, ToRs, along with a conceptual project road map (described later in this chapter), were provided to help guide the consultation process and to show how it feeds into the technical development of the project. The ToRs were widely available so that at all stages members of the public were kept fully aware of what stage the project was at. This is in accordance with the requirements of Article 9 of Regulation 347/2013.

The consultation undertaken for the project has comprised two separate but parallel strands:

- 1: Consultation focussed on the public, project stakeholders, media and elected representatives and community groups; and
- 2: Consultation focussed on landowners potentially affected by the proposals and methods designed to encourage them to participate in the process and take part in the dialogue on the design, given EirGrid's stated intention to minimise potential impact on agriculture, land holdings and farm management practices.

3.3.2.3 Statutory Process

The requirements of the planning approval process under the *Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2014*, make provision for '*meaningful consultation*' during the statutory process in the following ways:-

Distinct Periods of Consultation

There are distinct statutory requirements for consultation during both the application preparation and the application consideration periods. These apply in different ways to different stakeholders.

Pre-Application Consultation

In the application preparation period, there are various statutory provisions for pre-application consultation. For the purposes of the EIS process and the planning approval process there is a requirement to consult with the Board, prescribed bodies, statutory agencies, interested parties, the public and other representative organisations. This consultation stage provided the consultees with details of the proposal and it provides them with an opportunity to inform the nature and extent of the proposed development, the scope of the environmental assessment process and the nature of the documentation which will ultimately support a planning application for approval.

In this regard, EirGrid has actively engaged in pre-application consultation in respect of the proposed development. This has taken the form of *inter alia* consultation during the previous application for approval (which was subsequently withdrawn), the publication of the *Reevaluation Report* and *Preferred Project Solution Report*, undertaking an informal scoping exercise (part of the ToR of the latter report), transboundary consultation and a range of correspondences, briefings, meetings and open days which focused on both public and landowner consultation.

It is also noted that the Board consulted with various parties (including local and prescribed bodies and certain statutory agencies in Northern Ireland) pursuant to a formal request from EirGrid to provide a scoping opinion in respect of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development.

Consultation during the Application Consideration Period

Prior to lodgement of the application there is a requirement for the applicant to advise prescribed bodies that the application is to be lodged, to provide them with copies of the EIS and application documentation, and to advise them that they may make submissions on the application to the Board when it is lodged and within a specified time period. EirGrid will meet these requirements in due course.

When lodged any interested parties may make submissions to the Board on the proposed development within a specified time period (as clearly set out in the statutory public notices). These submissions can relate to the principle of the development or to details of the proposal. They may also relate to the detail of the information provided with the application.

In cases where significant further information is sought and received the Board in the course of its consideration of the application, a further period of public consultation and submissions will be provided for.

3.3.3 Principle 3: Accountable Consultation

3.3.3.1 Definition of Accountable Consultation

Accountable project decision making ensures that the project has taken on board issues, as appropriate, and the project only moves forward once each phase has been appropriately dealt with.

3.3.3.2 Mechanisms to Achieve Accountable Consultation

Consultation for the project was defined within three distinct strands that aimed to maximise the awareness and subsequent participation of the public and landowners in the process and this is presented graphically in **Figure 3.1**.

Feedback provided by stakeholders during each phase of public consultation was captured and recorded by the project team in a dedicated project database. This information was disseminated and reviewed to ensure that it was considered by the project team as part of the decision making process.



Figure 3.1: EirGrid's Distinct Strands for Consultation and Engagement for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development

The project team, therefore, were able to account for the information received from the public and project stakeholders at each consultation phase and demonstrate how it was reviewed and considered as part of subsequent reporting published for the project. This provided for clear and accountable consultation throughout. This will continue to be achieved in the final planning application to be prepared for the project where the issues raised by stakeholders will be addressed and responded to as part of the application documents.

3.3.3.3 Statutory Process

The requirements of the planning approval process under the *Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2014*, make provision for 'accountable consultation' during the statutory process in the following ways:-

There are a number of stages within the consideration and decision making process by the Board which support the principle of accountable consultation.

As an application is being considered by the Board there will be a period in which submissions may be lodged by prescribed bodies and various interested parties. The Board also have the authority to request additional information in respect of the application from the applicant in the course of its consideration. Where additional information is sought and received the Board will advise all parties who have made submissions that such information has been lodged and that it is available for inspection and that further submissions may be made. These measures will ensure that all submissions in the course of the statutory consultation are given appropriate consideration and responses as appropriate by the applicant

The Board has procedures in place for transparent decision making which will also account for consultation during the statutory process. In the first instance, the inspector will prepare a detailed report of all submissions, further information and responses received in the course of the decision making period. The inspector will also prepare a report on the oral hearing if held. Again this will also provide detail on issues of concern raised by any interested parties and the applicant. The report will contain a detailed assessment of the development proposed and the supporting documentation. It will also contain a recommended decision, reasons for same and conditions of the approval as appropriate.

The report and recommendations of the inspector (including details of all issues raised in the statutory consultation process) will in turn be considered by the Board members and the proposal will be determined. On foot of their decision the Board will issue a Direction for the determination of the application. The final decision of the Board must state the main reasons and considerations on which the decision was based. While the Board must have regard to the report and recommendation of its

inspector, it is not obliged to accept the recommendation. In any case where the Board does not accept a recommendation to grant or refuse, it is required to state the reason(s) for not doing so.

3.3.4 Project Roadmap

EirGrid has consistently used graphical roadmaps to present the timeline of the project to the public and other stakeholders in a simplified and accessible manner. Publishing roadmaps ensures transparency insofar as members of the public and stakeholders have a clear idea of the proposed stages of the process for the project from inception to completion. The use of roadmaps within the project has been iterative and in this respect refer to **Figures 3.2 - 3.6.** which provide details of how the timeline has been visually communicated over the duration of the project to date:

Figure	Roadmap Iteration
Figure 3.2	The roadmap image as published in the Community Update brochure in April 2009
Figure 3.3	The roadmap image published for the preliminary re- evaluation phase (May 2011)
Figure 3.4	The image used in the brochure for the final re- evaluation phase (April 2013)
Figure 3.5	The roadmap published in the preferred project solution phase brochure (July 2013)
Figure 3.6	The roadmap published in the most recent Community Update brochure in July 2014

These figures demonstrate how throughout the project lifecycle, at each phase of consultation clarification was provide to stakeholders on how the specific stage of consultation related to the overall timeline.

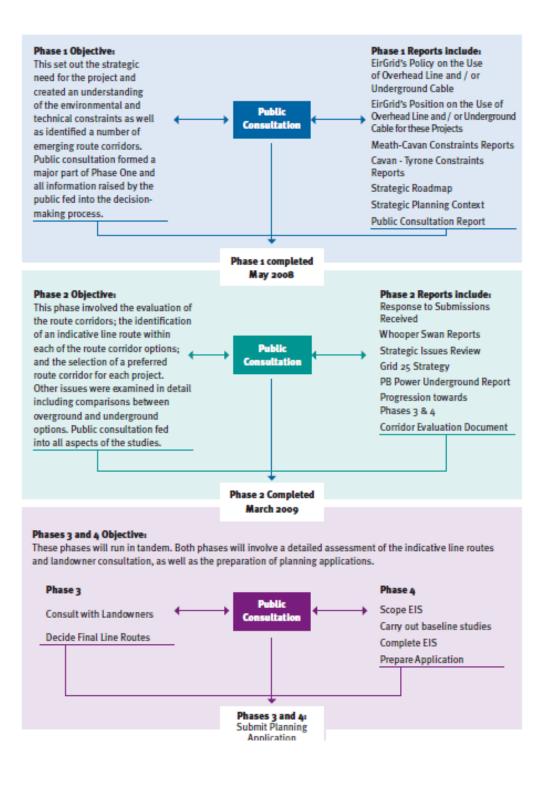


Figure 3.2 Indicative Roadmap Image published in the Community Update brochure (April 2009)

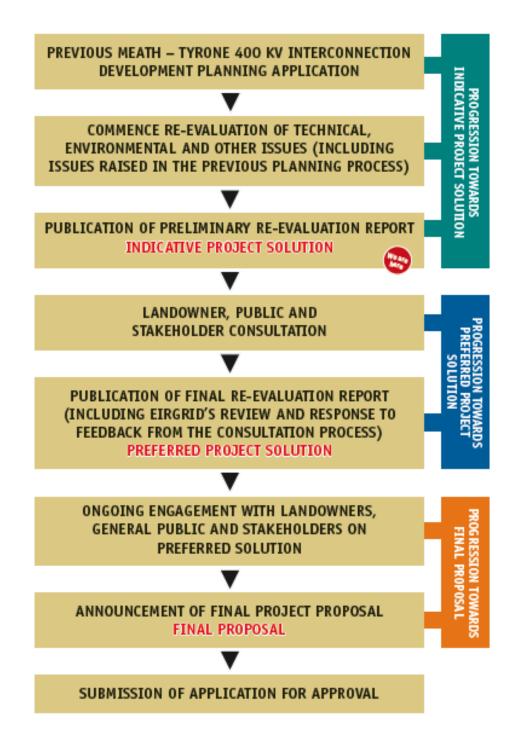


Figure 3.3 Roadmap Image published in the Community Update brochure for the Preliminary Re-evaluation Phase (May 2011)



Figure 3.4 Roadmap Image published in the Community Update brochure for the Final Reevaluation Phase (April 2013)

RPS



Figure 3.5:

Roadmap Image published in Preferred Project Solution Community Update Brochure July 2013

RPS

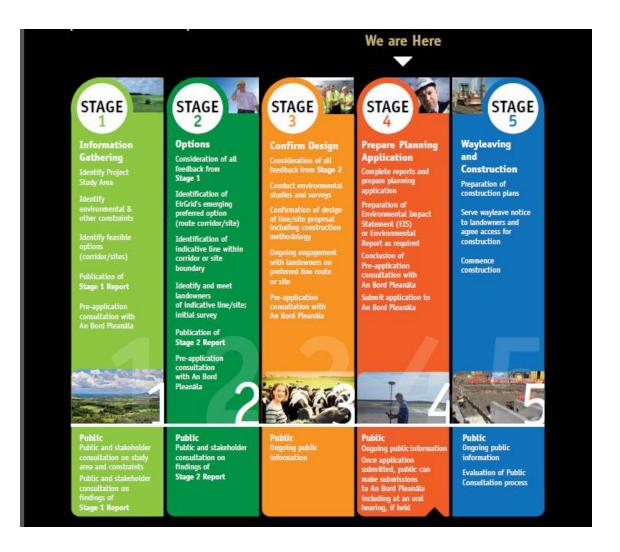


Figure 3.6 Roadmap image published in Community Update Brochure July 2014

PART 2 Public Consultation and Participation to Date (2007 - 2014)

4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION TO DATE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the public consultation and public participation events which were undertaken in respect of the project since 2007.

It firstly outlines the project development, route and technology selection and consultation processes undertaken prior to the submission of the application for planning approval of the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development and subsequently in respect of that previous application. This was undertaken between 2007 and 2010. In December 2009, EirGrid submitted an application to An Bord Pleanála ('the Board") for development consent of that portion of the proposed interconnector located within Ireland under An Bord Pleanála Ref. VA0006. In May 2010, the Board commenced an oral hearing in respect of the proposed development. However, in June 2010, the EirGrid application was withdrawn.

The chapter then describes the project re-evaluation, project development and refinement and consultation undertaken during the period from 2011 to the present. It therefore outlines the activities undertaken following the withdrawal of the original application to the Board.

The chapter also describes the re-evaluation process adopted by EirGrid. This re-evaluation process used all of the information available, including most significantly the outcome of previous public consultation and participation. This public consultation was an integral part of the re-assessment of the project. This in turn has and will inform the proposed application.

As provided for under Article 9(3) of the Regulation, the Board shall take into consideration any form of public participation and consultation that took place before the start of the permit granting process, to the extent that such public consultation has fulfilled the requirement of Article 9. In this regard and with reference to the particular evolution of this project, the consultation and public participation undertaken from 2007 to 2014 is of relevance.

This includes the consultation with prescribed bodies including the three local authorities that occurred prior to the submission of the application for planning approval of the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development and that has also occurred in respect of the proposed application; however, it is not specifically detailed in this report.

4.2 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD 2007 TO 2010

Various pre-application consultation and public engagement phases were undertaken to inform the application made to the Board in December 2009.

Two series of open day events were undertaken in October 2007 and November 2007.

The purpose of the first series in October 2007 (3 No open days – details in **Table 4.2** below) was to introduce the public to the project, the route corridor options and how they were decided upon (with reference to constraints). It sought to provide the public with information on the project, to identify concerns of the public and stakeholders, and to allow stakeholders to provide feedback on the three identified 1km wide corridor options for consideration by the project team.

A second series of open day events was held in November 2007 (3 No. open days – details in **Table 4.2** below) in response to stakeholder feedback for more events. It is noted that concerns regarding opposition to the project resulted in some of the local hotels in Meath and Cavan subsequently cancelling the event bookings and so two events were held in County Monaghan in November 2007.

In addition to these two main series of public events, a further series of small group meetings were held in January 2008 to accommodate any stakeholders who had attended the open day events in October and November 2007 but who were unable to engage due to the very large crowds.

A public information brochure was published in October 2007 in advance of the open days. This brochure provided maps of the three identified 1km wide corridor options. It included a feedback form inviting stakeholders to submit their written comments and responses in relation to the proposed development. The brochure provided details for submissions to be made in hard copy via post or via e-mail. Verbal submissions or further information could be obtained at open day events or via a lo-call phone line (1890 25 26 90), details of which were also provided on the brochure. A copy of the brochure published in October 2007 is provided in **Appendix A** of this report. A range of other written documentation was published during the pre-planning stage of the 2009 application in various formats to ensure wide accessibility to the public.

A summary of the measures adopted for the public consultation and participation on the previous application is presented in **Table 4.1** below. **Table 4.2** provides details of the open day and group meeting events held in October and November 2007 and January 2008. **Table 4.3** provides information on the brochures, leaflets and reports produced and made available to the public prior to the lodgement of the previous application in 2009.

Table 4.1:Summary of the Public Consultation and Landowner Engagement MethodsAdopted by EirGrid Prior to the Lodgement of the Previous Application in 2009

Method	Consultation
Lo-Call Phone Line	The Lo-Call Phone Line for the project was set up in September 2007 and aimed to provide an accessible means of communication for members of the public to request information on the project or raise their queries. The phone line number was included on all consultation literature and widely publicised through press releases to the media.
Email Service	Two project specific email addresses were established for members of the public to submit their queries or request information on the project (meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com) and cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com). These email addresses were included on all consultation literature and widely publicised through press releases to the media.
Postal Address	EirGrid provided a postal mailing address to which members of the public could direct their written correspondence and/or submissions on the project. This address was included on all consultation literature (including brochures) and widely publicised through press releases to the media.
Brochures and Leaflets	Numerous brochures and leaflets were produced and disseminated by EirGrid to stakeholders over the course of the consultation process.
Open Day Events	Five public consultation events were held which aimed to provide a forum for members of the public and landowners to meet directly with the EirGrid project team, and to request and/or obtain further information and to issue feedback.
Meetings	Round table meetings were held between members of the public and the EirGrid Project Team.

Method	Consultation
	During the early stages of consultation, EirGrid met with stakeholders in public venues or at their homes. In recognising the need for a designated base for such meetings within the study area, EirGrid opened two staffed information centres, the Navan Information Centre and the Carrickmacross Information Centre, both of which opened in July 2008.
Information centres	All project information materials, including reports and mapping, were available at each of these offices and staff were available on specified days to meet with members of the public, record their feedback and manage their queries. This service was provided as a means of facilitating an accessible form of consultation for members of the public while ensuring their privacy. This facilitated open and frank discussion between the public and the EirGrid project team to ensure substantial feedback from the public as work progressed towards a preferred 1km wide corridor.
Website	EirGrid used its website (<u>www.eirgrid.com</u>) as a medium for the provision of access by stakeholders to all relevant information (including booklets and leaflets, project reports and brochures).
Publications	Numerous publications (including project reports) were produced by EirGrid to provide stakeholders with responses to their queries raised (Frequently Asked Questions) and technical reports on the project.

Table 4.2Details of Open Day and Group Meeting Events Held in October and November2007 and January 2008 in respect of the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development

Event	Date	Purpose
	Open Da	lys
		Three open days were held to introduce people to the proposal. This had the following aims:-
Open Days, Series 1	October 2007	 Provide the public with information on the project and to facilitate public participation with an opportunity to have questions answered by the EirGrid project team who attended the events.
		 Identify concerns surrounding the project;
		 Allow stakeholders to provide feedback for consideration by the project team.
		Information m a t e r i a l s were provided at these events and included mapping and brochures, display panels of the 1km identified corridor options and how they were derived and other project information.

Event	Date	Purpose
Open Days, Series 2	November 2007	Three open days were scheduled, although only two events took place due to hotels cancelling the bookings, These again sought public participation on three identified 1km wide corridor options, in addition to their views on overhead lines versus underground cables and health concerns.
		The aims of these events were the same as those for Series 1 and the events took the same format. In addition, small "Break Out" sessions on the following topics were hosted:
		Health; and
		 Over ground versus underground power lines.
	Meeting	js
Small Group Meetings	January 2008	As it was not possible to accommodate all interested stakeholders at the open days (series 2), EirGrid arranged a series of small round table meetings to facilitate those who were unable to attend the open days.
		These meetings were held between members of the public and the EirGrid project team.

Table 4.3Information on Brochures, Leaflets and Reports Produced and Made Availableto the Public Prior to the Lodgement of the Previous Application in 2009

Publication Name	Date Issued	Purpose
Brochures and Leaflets		
Proposed Route Corridor Options Brochure	October 2007	This brochure introduced the project to the public and included a feedback form where members of the public could submit their comments and responses.
		This brochure provided maps of the three identified 1km wide corridor options, as well as general introductory information on the power lines.
Leaflet for Householders	November 2007	This leaflet was distributed as a follow up to the brochures issued in October 2007.

Publication Name	Date Issued	Purpose
EMF Booklet	November 2007	In response to public participation and queries raised in respect of potential health impacts, EirGrid produced a booklet addressing the topics of EMF and health. The booklet identified technical details of electric and magnetic fields and in particular the various field strengths that occur on different overhead lines and underground cables. It identified and discussed the findings of recent studies on EMF and concluded with EirGrid's commitment to safeguard public health. These booklets were available at the information centres and distributed to members of the public at meetings and open day events.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	January 2008	EirGrid produced an FAQ document which aimed to respond to common queries raised by members of the public and to clarify some aspects of the project which had raised concerns with the public. The FAQ document was posted to members of the public in February 2008 and also made available on EirGrid's website.
PB Power Preliminary Briefing Note	February 2008	EirGrid produced a <i>Preliminary Briefing Note</i> <i>Overhead and Underground Energy</i> <i>Transmission Options</i> prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff. The briefing note was available at the information offices, on the EirGrid website and posted on request to stakeholders.
Phase 1 Publications	May 2008	Reports were issued by EirGrid on technical issues and letters were sent to stakeholders to advise them of the publication of these reports. This included the Cavan-Tyrone Constraints Report and Meath-Cavan Constraints Report which detailed corridor options for an overhead line route in both study areas, including baseline studies of key environmental constraints such as socio economic, land use, landscape, flora & fauna, water, soils and cultural heritage.
Project Information Offices	August 2008	EirGrid opened project information centres in Navan and Carrickmacross to give local people the opportunity to discuss plans for the proposed 400 kV power line.

Publication Name	Date Issued	Purpose
Phase 2 Publications	December 2008	Reports were issued by EirGrid which responded to issues raised by stakeholders. These reports were made available on the EirGrid website at information offices and provided to stakeholders on CD request.
Response to Submissions and Reports Received since May 2008	December 2008	EirGrid published a number of reports in relation to Phase 2 of the 400 kV project including a <i>Response to Submissions and Reports received since May 2008</i> .
PB Power Summary Brochure	February 2009	EirGrid produced a summary of the PB Power Report (<i>Comparison of High Voltage</i> <i>Transmission Options Report</i>) following an extended series of public consultation meetings at the information offices and following extensive research by EirGrid.
		This report provided the public with a non- technical summary of the report to clarify some misunderstandings and discrepancies arising in the undergrounding debate.
		The PB Power Report and the Summary was available at the information offices, on the EirGrid website and posted on request to stakeholders.
Moving to Phases 3 and 4 Brochure	April 2009	EirGrid produced this brochure which announced the preferred route corridors and indicative line routes to the public and was entitled <i>EirGrid Progresses 400 kV Power</i> <i>Line Projects to Next Phase.</i>
		In this brochure, EirGrid provided details on how the preferred route corridor was decided upon, the technical criteria used and how the consultation process informed the conclusion.
		The brochure included a full map of the preferred 1km corridor and indicative line route. EirGrid sought public and landowner participation on this route and invited stakeholders to continue to engage with EirGrid in its consultation process.
EirGrid Position on NEPP Askon Study	June 2009	EirGrid issued a report entitled <i>EirGrid</i> <i>Position on Askon Study,</i> which was a response to the NEPP-commissioned <i>Study</i> <i>on the Comparative Merits of Overhead</i> <i>Lines and Underground Cables as 400 kV</i> <i>Transmission Lines for the North-South</i> <i>Interconnector Project</i> (Askon Study). The EirGrid response report was made available on the EirGrid website and publicised via an EirGrid press release. The aim of this EirGrid Report was to provide stakeholders with a full review of the Askon Study.

Publication Name	Date Issued	Purpose
Railroad Report	July 2009	The Locating 400 kV cables in or Adjacent to Rail Beds report (Railroad Report) was released in July 2009 in response to queries from stakeholders on the possibility of using disused railway lines to provide a route for an underground cable.
		The publication of this report was publicised through a media press release issued by EirGrid, was made available online and in addition was emailed to stakeholders.
Close of Phases 3 and 4 Brochure	July 2009	EirGrid produced this brochure entitled <i>EirGrid is moving Towards the Final</i> <i>Preparation of the Planning Application</i> and invited public participation so that the opinions of the public concerned could be considered and taken into account, where appropriate, prior to the preparation and submission of the planning application.
		In addition, this brochure summarised the 'Questions and Answers' document issued in July 2009 and provided answers to new questions on the following:-
		The planning process;
		Undergrounding;
		 Indemnification and compensation;
		Property; and
		Construction.
Questions and Answers	July 2009	This document was produced by EirGrid and provided written responses to a large volume of correspondence received from stakeholders concerning issues which included heritage, bloodstock and angling.
		EirGrid encouraged stakeholders to avail of a face-to-face meeting with the project team to answer any further queries they may have.
Questions and Answers	January 2010	This document was produced by EirGrid and provided written responses to 'follow up' questions that seek clarification on some of the answers given in the FAQs (July 2009).

4.2.1 Statutory Consultation Period - 2010

The application for planning approval for the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development (An Bord Pleanála Reference VA0006) was lodged on 18th December 2009. The details of the application were on public display during the period January – March 2010 (for a 10 week period) at the offices of the Board, the offices of the relevant County Councils (Meath, Cavan and Monaghan), at the project information offices at Navan and Carrickmacross, and on a dedicated web page.

Stakeholders, the general public and other interested parties had until the 12th March 2010 to make submissions / observations on:-

- The implications of the proposed development on the proper planning and sustainable development of the area; and
- The likely effects on the environment of the proposed development if carried out.

In addition, as part of the statutory consultation process, a number of prescribed bodies made observations on the content of the application for approval (including the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)) to the Board.

In total, approximately 940 written submissions or observations were received in respect of the application.

In May 2010, the Board commenced an oral hearing in respect of the proposed development. Both prescribed bodies and interested parties (to include new parties to the application) had the opportunity to make an oral submission to the Hearing.

In June 2010, the EirGrid application was required to be withdrawn. Therefore, the application for planning approval was not determined by the Board.

Following the withdrawal of the application in 2010, EirGrid produced a document entitled *"Circumstances Leading to the Withdrawal of the Planning Application for the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development*" which was made available on the EirGrid website in September 2010.

4.3 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD 2011 TO PRESENT DAY

Following the withdrawal of the previous application, the evolution and consultation for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development has comprised three key stages as follows:-

- **The Preliminary Re-evaluation Phase** 1st stage of a two stage Re-evaluation approach. The formal consultation period was from 9th May 2011 to 1st July 2011.
- **The Final Re-evaluation Phase** 2nd stage of a two stage Re-evaluation approach. The formal engagement period was from 16th April 2013 to 27th May 2013.
- **The Preferred Project Solution Phase** Consultation on the preferred project solution. This consultation period was from 16th July 2013 to 9th September 2013.

All of these three stages are in accordance with EirGrid's Concept for Public Participation as set out in **Chapter 3** of this document and comply with the principles for public participation set out in the *Guidelines* in Annex VI(3) insofar as they ensured in advance information and dialogue with the public. In this respect:

- The stakeholders affected by a Project of Common Interest, including relevant national, regional and local authorities, landowners and citizens living in the vicinity of the project, the general public and their associations, organisations or groups, were extensively informed and consulted at an early stage, when potential concerns by the public could still be taken into account and in an open and transparent manner.
- Each public consultation stage covered all subject matters relevant to the particular stage of the process.
- Feedback was admissible from the beginning of the focused period of consultation until the expiry of any deadline.

To address the specific concerns of landowners, a separate and tailored parallel consultation process for landowners was provided by EirGrid.

In addition to these three stages of public engagement EirGrid also published a *Final Project Proposal* in December 2013.

The measures adopted for each of these phases, including events held are outlined in brief in the following sections.

4.4 THE PRELIMINARY RE-EVALUATION PHASE (2010 – 2011)

The preliminary re-evaluation of the project was commenced by EirGrid in 2010 with the objective to ascertain whether the scope, content, conclusions, and proposal of the previous application for approval of the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development remain relevant for the purposes of informing and shaping a new application for approval. EirGrid published the findings of its review in a *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* in 2011 which was presented to the public for consultation from 9th May 2011 to 1st July 2011. The report also brought forward an 'Indicative Line Route' within an emerging 'Preferred Route Corridor'. As part of the public consultation, the public were afforded an opportunity to make submissions on the proposed indicative line.

The *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* identified the three route corridor options which had previously been drawn up in the detailed route and technology selection process undertaken between 2005 and 2008 in advance of the 2009 application. These three route corridor options were re-evaluated and re-assessed as was the technology proposed. The findings of this re-evaluation and re-assessment exercise were published in the report along with the identification of an emerging preferred route corridor route and indicative line route.

A round of consultation was undertaken on foot of this re-evaluation process and the public were consulted on their opinions in relation to this re-evaluation of the route options and its findings (see Terms of Reference (ToR) below).

4.4.1 Terms of Reference for the Preliminary Re-evaluation Consultation Stage

The TOR for consultation on the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report were:-

- Has EirGrid considered all relevant criteria in determining that the optimum technical solution for this project is an overhead line? If not, what additional information should EirGrid consider or what viable, cost-effective alternative would you suggest?
- Have all other environmental criteria been appropriately considered and is there was anything else that they thought should be looked at?
- Are there any other key issues that EirGrid need to consider before submitting a new planning application?

Members of the public and stakeholders were therefore invited to make submissions on the issues raised in the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report*. The period for making submissions was between 9th May 2011 and 1st July 2011.

4.4.2 Participation Methods

The consultation stage was publicised via EirGrid's website, press releases, press advertisements, and direct mail to identified and interested stakeholders.

The locations and opening hours of the information offices located at Navan and Carrickmacross were advertised. The advertising also directed people to the EirGrid website for information on the project. A Community Update leaflet was also produced in May 2011 which described the proposed development and the purpose of the consultation phase. It provided details of how submissions could be made via written submission, e-mail, or verbal submission at information centres, via the project locall phone line or organised one-to-one meetings if requested.

4.4.3 Measures Adopted for Consultation during Preliminary Re-evaluation Phase

Table 4.4 provides a summary of measures adopted for consultation during the preliminary reevaluation stage.

Table 4.4:Summary of Communications Activities Undertaken by EirGrid during Publicand Landowner Consultation on the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report

Method	Communications Activity
Press Releases	Press releases were issued by EirGrid to media to ensure that the public concerned (and landowners) were aware of the opportunities to participate in the consultation process.
Advertising	Advertisements were placed in local media to heighten awareness of the consultation.
Lo-Call Phone Line	The Lo-Call project phone line (1890 25 26 90) was staffed by members of the Project Communications Team who recorded details of incoming feedback / requests received from the public and referred these in turn to the EirGrid Project Team ⁵ .
Information centres	Information centres at Navan and Carrickmacross (which had been used for the previous application) re-opened to the public in May 2011.
Proactive engagement	Proactive engagement with stakeholders was undertaken to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible were aware of the public consultation and the various opportunities and methods to engage.
Meetings	Meetings were held during this period of consultation with Monaghan County Council.

⁵ The Lo-Call project phone remains in place to this present day.

Method	Communications Activity
Consultation / Information Brochure	A Community Update brochure / leaflet was prepared and issued by EirGrid in May 2011 and contained details of the findings of the <i>Preliminary Re-evaluation Report</i> , its key findings and the TOR for the consultation.
Poster	A poster was prepared with the aim of promoting awareness of the preliminary re-evaluation consultation stage and was circulated in the study area.
Letters/Mail-out	Letters and the Consultation Brochure were issued in a mail-out to stakeholders.
Website	All project information was provided on one new website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/NorthSouth400kVInterconnectionDevel opment/

Community Update Brochure (May 2011)

This information leaflet was a total of 9 pages, including covers and route corridors insert. It provided a clear and concise description of the background and context of the proposal and the current status of the project. It outlined how the project and associated consultation would progress from the preliminary re-evaluation to the submission of an application. It identified the key milestones and consultation phases along the way.

It included a map of the indicative line route and preferred corridor being considered, including how it would link with that part of the overall interconnector located in Northern Ireland.

The information brochure outlined the findings of the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report*. It invited feedback on any of the findings of the report and also specifically requested feedback on three key questions as outlined in the ToR at **section 4.4.1** above. Details of the EirGrid website were provided along with a dedicated project e-mail address, Lo-call phone number, postal address and locations and opening hours of information centres at Navan and Carrickmacross.

This information provided accords with the requirements of Annex VI 5(a).

A copy of the brochure is provided in **Appendix B** of this report.

Media Activity and Advertising

To enhance awareness and public participation in the consultation for the preliminary re-evaluation consultation, EirGrid issued a number of news releases that are listed in **Table 4.5**.

Table 4.5:Press Releases Issued by EirGrid to Local and National Media as Part ofCommunications Activity for the Publicising of the Preliminary Re-evaluation of the North-
South 400 kV Interconnection Development

Date	Title	
09 May 2011	EirGrid Begins Consultation for 400 kV North-South Interconnection Development	
16 May 2011	EirGrid Reports Significant Response to North-South Public Consultation	
17 June 2011	EirGrid Extends Public Consultation for North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development	

Project Information Centres

The Project Information Centres in Navan and Carrickmacross (which had been used for the previous application) were re-opened to the public in May 2011. These were each open for one day a week – Tuesdays and Wednesdays respectively. Copies of the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* and the Community Update Brochure were available at the information centres for public viewing and EirGrid staff were on hand to respond to any queries of stakeholders and to record any verbal submissions stakeholders wished to make as a formal submission on the consultation phase. Hours of opening were 1pm to 7pm to facilitate people both during and outside of normal working hours.

Landowners were directly engaged with during this period. Details are contained in **section 4.8** below.

4.5 THE FINAL RE-EVALUATION PHASE (2011 – 2013)

All submissions, both verbal and written, received from the public and landowners and other key stakeholders on foot of the preliminary re-evaluation phase were considered by the project team between 2011 and 2013. Also taking place during this period was a review initiated by Government. This commenced in July 2011 with the appointment of an Independent Expert Commission (IEC) to consider the case for and cost of undergrounding all or part of the Meath-Tyrone 400kV line, including a review of all of the other reports carried out in respect of the North-South Project. The findings of the IEC were published in January 2012 and were then the subject of a consultation managed by the Joint Oireachtas Committee. The Government review culminated in July 2012 with the publication of a policy statement on the importance of energy infrastructure.

Technical and environmental aspects of the project were also further considered by EirGrid in this period, and the 'Indicative Line Route' and 'Preferred Route Corridor' were refined. This final reevaluation process again included a review of the previous application in order to ascertain whether the identified need, scope, alternatives considered (including technology alternatives), content and conclusions of that previous application remained applicable for the purposes of informing and shaping the new application for approval. It also comprised a review of all issues and submissions concerning the previous application, and information received and issues arising since June 2010.

A *Final Re-evaluation Report* was published by EirGrid in April 2013 which identified and described the revised and refined project proposals. The report outlined the nature and extent of the feedback which had been received and how it had been addressed in the revised proposals, as appropriate.

The findings and proposals presented in this *Final Re-evaluation Report* were in turn subject to a further round of public participation from 16th April 2013 to 27th May 2013.

4.5.1 Terms of Reference for Public Engagement on the Final Re-evaluation Report

The ToRs were:

- To comment on the content and findings of the *Final Re-evaluation Report*
- Had EirGrid considered all relevant issues as part of the re-evaluation process? If not what other issues do you think EirGrid should consider?
- To provide feedback on how best to adopt community gain within transmission project developments and the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development.

Members of the public and stakeholders were invited to make submissions on the information presented in the *Final Re-evaluation Report* during the period of public engagement from 16th April 2013 to 27th May 2013.

4.5.2 Participation Methods

The public engagement was publicised via EirGrid's website, press releases, press advertisements, and direct mail to identified and interested stakeholders.

Public open days in Monaghan, Cavan and Meath with venues and dates were advertised, as were the locations and opening hours of the Project Information Offices in Navan and Carrickmacross as well as a new office in Kingscourt. The advertising also directed people to the EirGrid website for information on the project. An information leaflet was also produced which described the proposed development and the purpose of the public engagement. It provided details of the public open days to be held and how submissions could be made via written submission, e-mail, or verbal submission at project information centres, public open days, via the project lo-call phone line or organised one-to-one meetings if requested.

4.5.3 Measures Adopted for Public Engagement during Final Re-evaluation Phase

Table 4.6 provides a summary of the measures adopted for public engagement on the *Final Re-evaluation Report.*

Table 4.6Summary of Communications Activities Undertaken by EirGrid during theCourse of Public (and Landowner) Engagement on the Findings of the Final Re-evaluationReport

Method	Communications Activity		
Press Releases	Press releases were issued by EirGrid to media to ensure that the public and landowners were aware of the publication of the <i>Final Re-evaluation Report</i> and of the opportunities to engage in the Final Re-evaluation engagement stage.		
	Seven advertisements were placed in local press and 80 advertisements were aired on local radio stations to heighten awareness of the Final Re-evaluation engagement.		
Advertising	EirGrid placed additional advertisements in May 2013 to inform the public and landowners of additional open days to be held in local venues in County Monaghan arising from a request from the County Monaghan Anti Pylon Committee for additional events.		
Lo-Call Phone Line	Continuation of the project Lo-Call phone line service.		
Information centres	EirGrid re-opened the two project information centres in Navan and Carrickmacross from 16 April 2013 and also opened an additional information centre at Kingscourt, Co. Cavan.		
Open Day Events	A total of nine open day events were undertaken during this stage. Details of these events are included in Table 4.9 below.		
Proactive engagement	Proactive engagement with stakeholders was undertaken to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible were aware of the engagement and of the various opportunities and methods to engage with the Project Team.		
	Meetings were held during this period of engagement with a number of stakeholder groups including:		
	Monaghan County Council on 4 June 2013;		
Meetings	 Monaghan Anti-Pylon Group in Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan on 12 April 2013; 		
	 North East Pylon Pressure Group (NEPP) in Trim, Co. Meath on 3 April 2013; 		
Community Update Brochure	A Community Update Brochure was prepared and issued by EirGrid which included details of the findings of the <i>Final Re-evaluation Report</i> , its key findings and the Terms of Reference for the engagement.		
	EirGrid produced an updated FAQ on the project website, in April 2013, on the project which addressed the following issues:		
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	1. The North South 400 kV Interconnection Development		
	2. Current situation		
	3. Timeline and design		

Method	Communications Activity	
	4. EirGrid and Grid25	
	5. Why is the project needed?	
	6. Public consultation	
	7. Economic downturn	
	8. Renewable energy	
	9. Moyhill substation	
	10. Overhead v underground	
	11. Substation, lines and tower types	
	12. Technical information	
	13. EMF	
	14. Local impact	
	15. Landowner access and compensation	
Letters/Mail-out	Letters and the Community Update Brochure were issued in a mail-out to stakeholders	

Community Update Brochure, April 2013

This information leaflet was a total of 7 pages, including covers and map insert It provided a clear and concise description of the background and context of the proposal, progress so far (including the Independent Expert Commission review) and the current status of the project. It identified the project drivers and the need for the development. It outlined an overview of the entire project progression from the preliminary re-evaluation to the submission of an application, and where the project sat at that time. It identified the key milestones and consultation phases along the way.

It included a map of the indicative line route and preferred corridor being considered, including how it would link with that part of the interconnector to be located in Northern Ireland.

The information brochure outlined the findings of the *Final Re-evaluation Report*. It invited feedback on any of the findings of the report. Details of 6 No. open days to be held including location, dates and times were provided. Contact details were given for written submissions, email, website, information centres at Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt.

A copy of this brochure is provided at **Appendix C** of this report.

Media Activity and Advertising

EirGrid issued a number of press releases prior to the commencement of the engagement on the *Final Re-evaluation Report*. Details of the press releases issued are listed in **Table 4.7**.

Table 4.7:Press Releases Issued by EirGrid to Local Media as part of CommunicationsActivity for the Promotion of the Final Re-evaluation Stage

Date	Title
16 April 2013	EirGrid Publishes Key New Report on Proposed North South Interconnector
20 May 2013	EirGrid holds Additional Information Days

The press releases were issued to the Irish Farmers Journal, Irish Times, Irish Independent, Irish Examiner, Meath Chronicle, Anglo Celt, Northern Standard, RTE, LMFM and Northern Sound.

A total of seven advertisements were placed in local press by EirGrid to inform members of the public (and landowners) with details of the *Final Re-evaluation Report*, the stage of the project and how the public could participate in the public engagement on the *Final Re-evaluation Report*. Refer to **Table 4.8**.

Table 4.8:Details of Print Advertisements placed by EirGrid as Part of Final Re-evaluationEngagement on the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development

Date	Media Outlet
20 and 27 April 2013	Irish Farmers Journal
20 and 27 April 2013	Meath Chronicle
18 and 25 April 2013	Northern Standard
18 April 2013	Anglo Celt

In addition, 80 advertisements were placed by EirGrid on local radio stations, LMFM and Northern Sound at this time of the project.

Project Information centres

As part of the public engagement on the *Final Re-evaluation Report*, EirGrid opened a third project information centre in Kingscourt, Co. Cavan. This centre was located within a room at the Dún a Ri House Hotel located on Station Road in Kingscourt, and opened for one day per week (Thursdays). The information centres at Navan and Carrickmacross continued to open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays respectively. Hours of opening were 12 noon to 7pm to facilitate people both during and outside of normal working hours.

Open Day Events

A series of public open day events were held during which details of the project were made available and the concerns of the public could be discussed. Technical specialists and the project team were on hand to discuss the issues of concern with stakeholders.

A list of the open day events held by EirGrid during the engagement on the final re-evaluation is provided in **Table 4.9**.

Table 4.9:Details of Open Day Venues, Dates and Times undertaken by EirGrid for theFinal Re-evaluation Stage

Venue	Date and Time	
Town Hall, Cavan Town	Tuesday, 23 April 2013, 1.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.	
Town Hall, Cavan Town	Wednesday, 24 April 2013, 1.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.	
The Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross	Thursday, 25 April 2013, 1.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.	
The Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross	Friday, 26 April 2013, 1.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.	
Navan Education Centre, Athlumney, Navan	Monday, 29 April 2013, 1.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.	
Navan Education Centre, Athlumney, Navan	Wednesday, 1 May 2013, 1.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.	
Additional Open Days		
Cremartin GAA Centre, Castleblayney	Tuesday, 21 May 2013, 4.30 p.m. – 8.30 p.m.	
Aughnamullen GAA Social Centre, Carrickmacross	Wednesday, 22 May 2013, 4.30 p.m. – 8.30 p.m.	
Corduff-Raferagh Community Centre, Carrickmacross	Thursday, 23 May 2013, 4.30 p.m. – 8.30 p.m.	

Proactive Engagement with Stakeholders

Organisations were contacted to inform them about the engagement on the *Final Re-evaluation Report* and information was again circulated to the County librarians for dissemination.

4.6 PREFERRED PROJECT SOLUTION REPORT (2013)

Following review of all feedback received during the re-evaluation periods, EirGrid published a *Preferred Project Solution Report (PPSR)* in July 2013. It identified the detailed proposals for the project with preferred line route and proposed tower locations included. Details of indicative access routes for construction purposes were also identified. EirGrid held an eight-week period of formal public consultation (between Tuesday 16th July 2013 and Monday 9th September 2013).

During this stage, EirGrid also engaged with landowners and landowner representative groups as appropriate, on the detail of the preferred line route, proposed tower locations and indicative construction access routes. A process was put in place to assess and manage landowner modification requests received. Engagement with landowners is described separately at **section 4.9** below.

4.6.1 Terms of Reference for Consultation during the Preferred Project Solution Phase

The ToR during this stage of public engagement were:

- To comment on the content and findings of the *Preferred Project Solution Report*, in particular the following:
 - Line design methodology;
 - Construction and access routes methodology;
 - Provide feedback on environmental matters to be considered in the EIS; and
 - Provide any other feedback or comments or other issues relating to the project.

Members of the public and stakeholders were therefore provided with an opportunity to make submissions on the matters addressed in the *Preferred Project Solution Report* during the consultation period from 16th July 2013 to 9th September 2013.

4.6.2 Participation Methods

The consultation stage was publicised via EirGrid's website, press releases, press advertisements, and direct mail to identified and interested stakeholders.

Public open days with venues and dates were advertised, as were the locations and opening hours of the information offices located at Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt. The advertising also directed people to the EirGrid website for information on the project. A Community Update brochure was also produced which described the proposed development and the purpose of the consultation phase. It provided details of the public open days to be held and how submissions could be made via written submission, e-mail, or verbal submission at project information centres, public open days, via the project lo-call phone line or organised one-to-one meetings, if requested.

4.6.3 Measures Adopted for Consultation during Preferred Project Solution Phase

Table 4.10 below provides a summary overview of the measures adopted for consultation during the preferred project solution phase.

Table 4.10Summary of Communications Activities Undertaken by EirGrid during theCourse of Public (and Landowner) Engagement on the Findings of the Preferred ProjectSolution Report

Method	Communications Activity	
Press Releases	Press releases were issued by EirGrid to media to ensure that the public and landowners were aware of the publication of the <i>Preferred Project</i> <i>Solution Report</i> and of the opportunities to engage in the consultation period.	
Advertising	8 No. advertisements were placed in local press to heighten awareness of the Preferred Project Solution engagement phase. Radio advertising was also undertaken.	
Lo-Call Phone Line	Continuation of the project Lo-Call phone line service from 9am to 5pm Monday - Friday.	
Information centres	EirGrid re-opened the three project information centres in Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt.	
Open Day Events	A total of three open day events were undertaken during this stage.	
Proactive engagement	Proactive engagement with stakeholders was undertaken to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible were aware of the engagement and of the various opportunities and methods to engage with the Project Team.	
Meetings	Meetings were held during this period of engagement with a number of stakeholder groups.	
Community Update Brochure	A Community Update Brochure July 2013 was prepared and issued by EirGrid which included details of the findings of the Preferred Project Solution Report and the Terms of Reference for the engagement.	
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	EirGrid produced an updated FAQ on the project website, in July 2013. It was made available on the project website and in hard copy format at the open days, information centres and to those who phoned to request copies of information.	
Letters/Mail-out	Letters and the <i>Community Update Brochure</i> were issued in a mail-out to stakeholders	
Website	The project website was updated with information to reflect the publication of the <i>Preferred Project Solution Report</i> .	
Preferred Project Solution Report	In addition to being available on the website, at project information offices and at Public Open Day Events, copies of the <i>Preferred Project Solution</i> reports were also disseminated to the County Librarians for public display and to any interested stakeholders on request (i.e. maps and reports).	

Community Update Brochure (July 2013)

This information leaflet was a total of 6 pages, including covers. It provided a clear and concise description of the background and context of the proposal, progress so far and the current status of the project. It identified the project drivers and the need for the development. It outlined EirGrid's Project Development and Consultation Roadmap and where the project sat at that time.

The information brochure requested feedback on the issues addressed in the *Preferred Project Solution Report.* Details of 3 No. open days to be held including location, dates and times were provided. Contact details were given for written submissions, email, website, information centres at Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt.

A copy of this brochure is provided at **Appendix D** of this report.

Landowner Brochure (July 2013)

A Landowner Brochure was also prepared and issued by EirGrid which focused on issues of particular relevance to landowners such as how they could influence line route and tower movements and providing an explanation of the construction methodology for the project.

A copy of this brochure is provided at **Appendix G** of this report.

Media Activity and Advertising

A list of the news releases and advertisements placed by EirGrid is provided in **Table 4.11** below.

Table 4.11:Press Releases Issued by EirGrid to Local and National Media as part ofCommunicationsActivity for the Promotion of the Preferred Project Solution ReportConsultation stage

Date	Title
16 July 2013	North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development

Table 4.12:Names of Media Outlets Issued with Press Releases by EirGrid as Part of PublicConsultation on the Preferred Project Solution Report

Media Outlet Name		
Local Press	National Press	
Anglo Celt	Irish Examiner	
Meath Chronicle	Irish Independent	
Northern Standard	Irish Times	
	Irish Farmers Journal	
Local Radio	National Radio	
LMFM	RTE	
Northern Sound		

A list of the advertisements placed by EirGrid is provided in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13:	List of Advertisements placed by EirGrid as Part of Public Consultation on the
Preferred Proj	ect Solution Report

Date	Media Outlet
18.07.13	Anglo Celt - Public Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Open Days
18.07.13	Northern Standard - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Open Days
25.07.13	Anglo Celt - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Open Days
25.07.13	Northern Standard - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Open Days
27.07.13	Meath Chronicle - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Open Days
05.09.13	Anglo Celt - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Ending Soon
05.09.13	Northern Standard - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Ending Soon
07.09.13	Meath Chronicle - Consultation on Preferred Project Solution Report Ending Soon

Information Service

EirGrid continued to operate an information service during this time. This service was available:

- Through the project phone line, (Lo-call 1890 25 26 90), which continued to be operated between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday;
- Online to northsouth@eirgrid.com; and
- Via traditional mail to <u>c/o EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business</u> <u>Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin</u>.

Proactive Engagement

Letters were issued by EirGrid to all of the stakeholders for whom mailing information was available. In addition, where contact details were available, organisations and elected members were contacted by phone or email. Both the North East Pylon Pressure (NEPP) and the County Monaghan Anti-Pylon Committee (CMAPC) were briefed by EirGrid in advance of the publication of the *Preferred Project Solution Report*.

Project Information Centres

The three project information centres at Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt were open to the public during the consultation period on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays respectively. Hours of opening were 12 noon to 7pm to facilitate people both during and outside of normal working hours.

Open Days

EirGrid held three open days during the preferred project solution engagement period.

The specific purpose of the open days held during the consultation on the 'Preferred Project Solution Report' was to:

- Indicate to stakeholders the proposed locations of towers within the preferred line route;
- Build an understanding of the methodologies and approach for siting and constructing towers;
- Reinforce to stakeholders that the project is progressing towards a planning application;
- Encourage stakeholders, including the public concerned, to participate in the process by providing feedback on the *Preferred Project Solution Report*;
- Encourage stakeholders to provide feedback on environmental topics to be covered in the EIS;
- Explain the history of the project; and
- Reinforce the need for the project.

Concerns were raised by stakeholders in County Cavan during the public open day on the *Final Re-evaluation Report* (23 April and 24 April 2013) in relation to the location of the open day in Cavan, which had been held at the Town Hall in Cavan Town. Stakeholders considered that the event should have been held closer to the proposed line route. In response to this, EirGrid sourced an alternative venue in Kingscourt in which an open day event for the consultation on the *Preferred Project Solution Report* was held. This venue was located on the Main Street of Kingscourt in close proximity to shopping and community amenities with ample car parking available.

Table 4.14:Summary of Public Information Materials Available in Hard Copy/Printed PaperFormat at the Open Days and throughout the Consultation Period on the Preferred ProjectSolution Report

Title	Date of Publication
EirGrid Publication	
The Preferred Project Solution Report	July 2013
Community Update Brochures	April and July 2013
Landowner Information Brochure	July 2013
North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development Project FAQs	July 2013
The Final Re-evaluation Report.	April 2013
The Preliminary Re-evaluation Report.	May 2011
'EMF and You' Public Information Guide.	2011
Grid25 Implementation Programme 2011-2016 and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).	May 2012
EirGrid's "Approach to the Development of Electricity Transmission Infrastructure".	2012
EirGrid's Ecology Guidelines for Electricity Transmission Projects.	2013
External Publications of Relevance to	the Project
Cavan-Tyrone and Meath-Cavan 400 kV Transmission Circuits. Technology and Costs Updates. PB Power Report. Addendum to the 2009 Report and Supplementary Note. Parsons Brinckerhoff.	July 2013
IEC Review for the case for, and undergrounding all or part of the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development.	January 2012
Joint Oireachtas Commission Review by the IEC.	June 2012
Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of	July 2012

Title	Date of Publication	
EirGrid Publication		
Transmission and other Energy Infrastructure.		
Cavan-Tyrone and Meath-Cavan 400 kV Transmission Circuits. Technology and Costs Updates. 2011 Parsons Brinckerhoff.	2009	
ESB/IFA Code of Practice for Survey, Construction and Maintenance of Overhead Lines in Relation to the Rights of Landowners.	October 1985	
McGill Research on EMF and Dairy Cattle: Summary of Findings and Significance of Results.	December 2008	

4.7 THE FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL PHASE (2013 TO PRESENT DAY)

In December 2013 following the public consultation with respect to the *Preferred Project Solution Report* EirGrid published on the project website, its *Final Project Proposal* which is intended to form the basis for an application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála. A Community Update Newsletter was also issued in December 2013 (**Appendix E** of this report) to publicise this and to advise stakeholders on how they could view and seek information on the details of the Final Project Proposal.

EirGrid has also recently published a further Community Update brochure in July 2014 (**Appendix F** of this Report) to ensure continued awareness of the project prior to the lodgement of the application. It advises on the timelines associated with the PCI notification procedures currently being undertaken by EirGrid and the lead up to an application lodgement. This brochure also contains an overview of the project and the national grid development strategy (Grid25) and identifies key areas of potential impact of the project and associated mitigation measures and provides the web addresses of the EU Commission's transparency platform and An Bord Pleanála's Manual of Permit Granting Procedures.

4.8 CONSULTATION ON AN UNDERGROUND OPTION

A further element of the public consultation process is that since the commencement of the project numerous studies have been undertaken regarding options for overhead lines (OHL) and underground cables (UGC). The studies are:

Study	Year	Remit	Consultant	Commissioned by
Cavan-Tyrone Constraints Report and Meath-Cavan Constraints Report And associated Addendum	2007 and 2008	Corridor options for an overhead line route in both study areas, including baseline studies of key environmental constraints such as socio economic, land use, landscape, flora & fauna, water, soils and cultural heritage.	ESBI Socoin and Tobin Consulting Engineers	EirGrid
Ecofys Study: Comparative Merits of Overhead Electricity Transmission Lines Versus Underground Cables	2008	Its stated objective was "to contribute in a constructive way to the on-going discussions between the various stakeholders in Ireland related to specific projects (Tyrone – Cavan - Meath connection)". It includes a technical, economic and environmental comparison of the options.		Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources (DCENR)
TEPCO Technical Study	2009	A system wide study that considered the implications, for transmission system reliability and stability, of incorporating very long lengths, and large quantities, of High Voltage Alternating Current (HV AC) UGC transmission infrastructure on the all-island AC transmission network.	Tokyo Electric Power Company of Japan (TEPCO)	EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity
PB Power Report	2009	To 'apply a set of environmentally based routing principles to identify at least one corridor within which the use of Underground Cable (UGC) could be technically and environmentally feasible as an alternative to the proposed OHL'.	PB Power, now Parsons Brinckerhoff	EirGrid & Northern Ireland Electricity
TransGrid Study	2009	A system wide study that considered the implications for transmission system reliability and stability of incorporating HVDC circuits into the integrated all-island AC transmission network.	TransGrid Solutions, Canada	EirGrid & NIE
International Expert Commission	2012	A review of the case for and cost of undergrounding all or part of the Meath-Tyrone 400kV line, including a review of all of the other reports	Mr. Bo Normark, Chair (Sweden);	Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources

Study	Year	Remit	Consultant	Commissioned by
(IEC) Report		carried out in respect of the North- South Project.	Mr. Odd- Håkon Hoelsæter (Norway); Mr. Ronnie Belmans (Belgium)	(DCENR)
PB Power Technology and Costs Update Report	2013	Update of the initial 2009 PB Power study, in line with other recent publications in the UK and the IEC report; and updated comparative costs for UGC and OHL.	PB Power	EirGrid & Northern Ireland Electricity

It is of note in this regard that in January 2014 the Government appointed an Independent Expert Panel to review EirGrid's evaluation of underground routes for the proposed Grid West and Grid Link projects. On 07th May 2014 the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) published Terms of Reference drawn up by the Independent Expert Panel (the Panel) which are to be applied by EirGrid in its consideration of the "*most suited*" overhead line and underground cable options for the proposed Grid Link (GL) and Grid West (GW) projects. It was also announced at that time that the Panel "*would provide an opinion to the Minister on the compatibility of the methodologies to be employed on the GW and GL projects with what has already been done*" on the proposed North-South 400kV Interconnection Development (referred to as the N/S project by the Panel).

On 01 July 2014 DCENR published a statement by the Panel on the matter. It stated that "the Panel is unanimously of the opinion that, in all material respects, what has already been done on the N/S project is compatible with the methodologies now being employed on the GW and GL projects. While the Panel acknowledges that no two grid infrastructure projects are identical, and that some non-comparabilities are likely to arise when assessing the potential environmental impacts, technical efficacy and cost factors, the Panel is of the opinion that no material differences in the methodologies arise".

The statement also noted that this overall interconnector "is part of an on-going process which, the Panel expects, will be subjected to a rigorous assessment as part of the planning processes in both jurisdictions (Ireland and Northern Ireland). It is also the case that such planning processes allow potential objectors to the N/S project to register their objections and to have them considered by the planning authorities". It concluded by stating that "the Panel has now completed its consideration of the N/S project".

4.9 LANDOWNER CONSULTATION

EirGrid devised a separate and parallel consultation strategy to consult with landowners affected by the proposal.

EirGrid commenced engagement with landowners on the indicative route in May 2011 in parallel with the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* consultation phase. As part of this round of engagement all landowners were issued letters that enclosed a landowner ToR for landowner engagement for this project. Further phases of landowner engagement occurred in parallel with the following consultation phases for the project.

The ToR set out the three phased approach to landowner engagement and explained the opportunities for landowners to participate in each phase of project development. The three phases are shown in **Figure 4.1**.

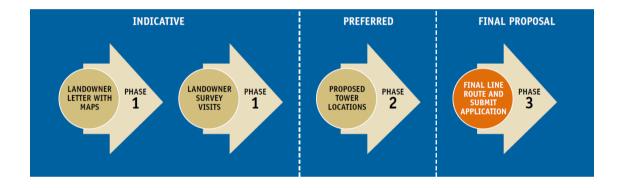


Figure 4.1: EirGrid's Phased Approach to Landowner Engagement for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development

4.9.1.1 Overview of Landowner Consultation Approach

Phase 1- Indicative Route

EirGrid commenced engagement with landowners in May 2011 by sending them letters and maps informing them of the project and how it might impact on their lands and advising them that an EirGrid appointed landowner agent would be calling on them to discuss the project further. Phase 1 was completed by July 2011.

As part of that phase, all landowners were issued with maps showing the indicative route of the line as then envisaged on their property.

A proactive approach to landowner engagement was undertaken as part of this round of engagement and landowner agents attempted to visit each landowner on the indicative line route. The team made at least three attempts to visit / meet with each landowner. Where this was not successful, a letter detailing the visit / meeting attempts was issued to the landowner in question requesting that they contact the landowner team.

The objectives of this proactive engagement was to meet with each landowner to obtain their feedback, confirm ownership, discuss the line route and possible positioning of towers and gain access for environmental and/or technical surveys where applicable.

Phase 2 – Preferred Line Route

This phase commenced in July 2013 with the publication of the *Preferred Project Solution Report*, whereby EirGrid issued landowners with detailed maps of the preferred route, proposed tower locations, indicative temporary access routes and work areas for construction.

The following were the objectives of this phase of engagement:

- Confirm landholdings;
- Request access to survey land;
- Request feedback on the preferred line route, tower locations and access routes;
- Seek landowner feedback in order to minimise impact on farming practices;
- Understand matters of local importance, interests, concerns; and
- Identify any local constraints not already known.

During this phase, landowners were provided with updated maps of i) the preferred route and proposed tower locations and ii) indicative access routes.

Each landowner was also sent a Landowner Information Brochure (See **Appendix G** of this report) which set out the following information:

- Background and context;
- The landowner engagement TOR;
- Information on the progression of the project towards a new planning application, including details of the current stage, at that time which was the identification of the preferred project solution, and information on the *Preferred Project Solution Report*.
- Details of the open days and information centres where landowners could meet the project team;
- Details of the guidelines for the design of overhead lines and tower positioning;
- Compensation;
- The guidelines for the identification of construction access routes;
- Graphic illustration of the indicative construction methodology for the project;

- Details of the preferred tower types proposed;
- Details of how landowners could engage with EirGrid to influence the line design and tower positioning process. This was accompanied by a "Landowner Change Request Form".
- Contact information for EirGrid and ways that landowners could contact the project team;
- The offer of an agricultural adviser to discuss landowner concerns and to carry out an assessment of the impact that the proposal may have on their farm practice
- Reference to the removal of limits of deviation from the proposal;
- Reference to the movement of towers from hedgerows;

EirGrid also proactively engaged with the identified landowners along the route to get their inputs on the preferred proposal and to carry out further environmental surveys. This resulted in approximately 60 change requests in relation to line design and access routes being submitted by individual landowners, of which, over 50% were incorporated into the final design.

The landowner information brochure invited all landowners to engage with EirGrid during this phase using a variety of methods as follows:

- Contacting a dedicated landowner agent details of which were provided in their landowner letter;
- Submitting a change request via the change request form provided in the brochure;
- Attending a public open day event for the general public and landowners to provide their feedback;
- Attending one of the project information centres located at Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt; and
- Submitting their feedback via post or by email.

Phase 3 – Final Proposal

In Phase 3, following the assessment of all of the modification requests received, landowners were informed (in writing) of the Final Line Design, tower locations and proposed temporary access routes as appropriate to their landholding that EirGrid was intending to submit to the Board for approval. These letters were issued on 12th December 2013 by certified post.

In the case of those landowners who had submitted a change request the letters advised whether or not the request had been accommodated. Where a change request could not be accommodated an explanation was provided and the landowners were invited to contact their landowner agent if they required further explanation.

PART 3

Overall delivery of public consultation requirements under Article 9 and *Guidelines* in Annex VI of Regulation 347/2013

5 INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER ANNEX VI(4)

5.1 GENERAL

Paragraph 4 of Annex VI of the Regulations, sets out the minimum amount of information which shall be included in the Concept for Public Participation document:

- (a) The stakeholders concerned and addressed
- (b) The measures envisaged, including proposed general locations and dates of dedicated meetings.
- (c) The timeline
- (d) The human resources allocated to the respective tasks.

Information in respect of the above four matters are contained throughout this document. However for the sake of clarity (albeit at the risk of repetition) it is proposed to address each of these four matters in this chapter in terms of:

1. Public consultation and participation undertaken to date in respect of the Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development and the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development; and

2. Further public consultation to be undertaken in respect of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development during the permit granting process.

Much of the details relating to public consultation have been described in the previous **Chapter 4** and so specific regard may be had to that chapter.

5.2 PUBLIC CONSULTATION TO DATE

5.2.1 The Stakeholders Concerned and Addressed

There are a number of key stakeholder groups that have been encouraged to participate in the nonstatutory and statutory consultations to date, in relation to the previous application for approval (2007-2010), and the current proposed application which re-commenced with the re-evaluation process in 2010 (2011 – 2014). At all stages of the project, EirGrid has maintained a database of stakeholders and this database is updated on a regular basis.

These stakeholders include national, regional and local authorities, landowners and people living in the vicinity of the project, the general public and their associations, organisations and groups in accordance with the requirements of Annex VI(3)(a). The stakeholder groups include:

Landowners;

- Landowner Representative Groups;
- Previously Affected Landowners (of the previous application and of preliminary and working versions of the current proposal) who are no longer affected by the final project solution;
- Landowners with a property boundary within 50m of the preferred line route;
- Stakeholders within 5km of the preferred line for the project;
- Elected Representatives and Strategic Stakeholders;
- Local Authorities;
- Regional Authorities;
- Statutory Stakeholders;
- SI Observers from the previous planning application; and
- General Public.

By identifying and including stakeholders in a comprehensive, appropriate, and timely manner during the development of the project, EirGrid sought to maximise awareness of the project. In this regard:

- Information was and is provided to the public and landowners in an accessible and appropriate format;
- A better understanding of the issues relevant to decision-makers and stakeholders could be facilitated;
- Impact on local communities was minimised, early public and community participation thought to help EirGrid understand matters of local importance, interest or concern, and identify constraints not already identified.

The stakeholder groups and means of engaging with them are described in further detail below. In this regard, while the focus is on more recent consultation i.e., post 2010, it remains the fact that EirGrid commenced engagement with all stakeholders during the route selection and line design process in respect of the previous application i.e., the Meath – Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development, between 2007 – 2010. This is addressed in **Chapter 4**.

5.2.1.1 Landowners

These are landowners who are directly affected by the routing of the line, or whose lands are traversed by access routes. At all stages of the project, EirGrid has kept a database of landowners which continues to be updated on a regular basis. Throughout the process some landowners were removed from the database and others were added, due to revisions in the indicative line along with land purchases and sales.

EirGrid commenced engagement with landowners during the route selection and line design process in respect of the Meath – Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development. Refer to **Chapter 4**.

In the more recent phase of the project (i.e. pre-application project development stage of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development) landowner engagement took place on publication of the indicative line route (May 2011). As part of that round of engagement, all landowners were issued with letters that enclosed a ToR for landowner engagement. This set out a three-phased approach to this landowner engagement and explained the opportunities for landowners to participate in each phase.

At final re-evaluation stage the landowners were provided with maps showing the indicative route of the line as then envisaged, along with the *Community Update Brochure April 2013*. At the preferred project solution phase they were again issued with detailed maps of the preferred route, tower locations, temporary access routes and work areas for construction. At this time they were also issued with a *Landowner Information Brochure July 2013* which set out the context of the application and its progression towards a planning application along with details of design issues, agronomist assessments, construction information and the process for making and assessing line design change requests.

Landowners were issued this information directly by mail, unless EirGrid was requested by the landowner that they not be contacted directly, but rather through a landowner representative group. In such cases any correspondence for these individual landowners was undertaken through the representative group and only statutory or other formal notices relating to the landowners lands were sent directly to the landowner (see **section 5.2.1.2**).

EirGrid identified a landowner agent within the project team for each landowner affected to deal directly with them and to meet with them as appropriate, and having regard to the requests of the individual landowner with regard to representative groups. Landowner agents called to each landowner affected unless specifically requested not to do so.

EirGrid also made an agronomist available to meet with concerned landowners and to discuss any issues affecting specific landholdings.

5.2.1.2 Landowner Representative Groups

There are two groups which represent a number of landowners in the study area as follows:-

- North East Pylon Pressure Committee / North East Pylon Campaign Limited (NEPP); and
- County Monaghan Anti-Pylon Landowners Group/Co. Monaghan Anti-Pylon Limited (CMAPLG).

EirGrid commenced engagement with landowner representative groups during the route selection and line design process in respect of the Meath – Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development. Refer to **Chapter 4**.

More recently, as a result of forms of authority and legal instructions, EirGrid and its agents were precluded from having direct communications with landowners who were represented by these two landowner representative groups. As a consequence of this, EirGrid only provided statutory or other formal notices relating to their lands directly to these landowners. All other communications had to be issued via NEPP or via the solicitors appointed by CMAPCLG and thus EirGrid could not proactively contact landowners represented by these groups during the consultation. These representative groups were briefed in advance of the publication of the *Final Re-evaluation Report* and *Preferred Project Solution Report*.

During phase 3 of the landowner engagement, EirGrid received and accommodated a request from NEPP to provide duplicate copies of the letters and / or maps to be issued to their landowners. Copies of the letters and maps in respect of this request were issued by EirGrid in December 2013 in accordance with the instruction by the relevant landowners.

5.2.1.3 Previously Affected Landowners

As modifications were made to the originally proposed Meath – Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development line design, both prior to and during the re-evaluation process, a number of previously affected landowners were no longer on the route. However, they were informed of the project updates.

5.2.1.4 Landowners within 50m of the line

There are a small number of people who own land within 50 metres of the indicative route but who are not directly impacted by the proposal. This group of people have been identified as "landowners" in order to cater for the possibility that the route might be modified and affect their landholding or to accommodate activities such as hedge-trimming. A landowner pack was sent to these landowners and a landowner agent called to them to discuss the project.

5.2.1.5 Stakeholders within 5km of the Preferred Line Route for the Project

EirGrid defined a 10km catchment in the vicinity of the project and proactively contacted relevant community organisations within that area providing information at re-evaluation and preferred project solution phases. They were advised of how they could access information, meet with the project team and participate in the consultation process if wished. They were provided with details of the information centres, website, phoneline, open days, offers of a briefing and supporting information (e.g. copies of maps, reports etc).

5.2.1.6 Elected Representatives and Strategic Stakeholders

Throughout the consultation process and for each key phase of the project, EirGrid has made direct contact with elected representatives and strategic stakeholders within the areas affected and provided them with information on the proposed development. EirGrid also issued invitations to elected representatives and strategic stakeholders in the region to meet and be briefed by the project team.

5.2.1.7 Local Authorities

Throughout the project and as part of the consultation process for each key phase of the project, EirGrid has contacted the local authorities within the project area and offered peer-to-peer briefings to relevant county council staff.

In respect of the North – South 400 kV Interconnection Development a number of key topics were agreed with the particular county council in advance and the briefings specifically sought to address concerns raised in each of their submissions made to the previous oral hearing. The engagement then focused on the following key questions:

- How EirGrid set the issues out in the EIS that accompanied the 2010 application;
- What remaining concerns county council had; and
- How they might be addressed in the next application.

5.2.1.8 Regional Authority

Since the inception of this project both the Border Regional Authority and the Greater Dublin Area Regional Authority have been provided with information on the project.

5.2.1.9 Statutory Stakeholders

Statutory stakeholders were involved in the project consultation in accordance with the European EIA Directive (85/337/EEC as amended by 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC). Since the commencement of this project the following stakeholders have been provided with information and have been met with as requested and appropriate:

- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (including NPWS)
- Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (National Monuments Service)
- The National Roads Authority
- Failte Ireland
- The Heritage Council
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Irish Wildlife Trust
- Railway Safety Commission
- Iarnrod Eireann
- An Taisce
- Geological Survey of Ireland
- Health Services Executive
- Health and Safety Authority
- Teagasc
- Irish Farmers Association
- Commission for Energy Regulation
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- BirdWatch Ireland
- Environmental Protection Agency

5.2.1.10 SI Observers from the Previous Planning Application

EirGrid contacted all stakeholders who made a submission to the Board (either written as part of the statutory consultation phase or who made a submission at the oral hearing) in respect of the Meath – Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development in order to give them the opportunity to engage with the EirGrid Project Team about the concerns they raised and how these have progressed since the oral hearing.

A standard letter, together with the first Community Update Brochure in respect of the re-launched North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development, was sent to each person shortly after the project was re-launched in May 2011. The letter offered the stakeholder the opportunity to meet with the project team in order to discuss their concerns. EirGrid made every effort to reach out to these stakeholders, to provide them with access to experts, as necessary, and attempted to address their issues.

5.2.1.11 General Public

Throughout the project and as part of the consultation process for each key phase of the project, the general public were invited to access project information and participate in the consultation process at open days, project information centres, through the information telephone line and in written correspondence (mail or email). They were made aware of the project through advertisements in local media, interviews with senior EirGrid personnel on local radio, press releases to local media, posters in the communities and the project website.

5.2.2 The Measures Envisaged, Including Proposed General Locations and Dates of Dedicated Meetings

The measures which were adopted at each of the five consultation phases to date are outlined in greater detail in **Chapter 4**. The main measures however which have been adopted for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development since 2011 are summarised in **Table 5.1** below.

Table 5.1:Summary of the Consultation and Engagement Tools Used by EirGrid in theNorth-South 400 kV Interconnection Development

ΤοοΙ	Detail
Brochures	EirGrid issued an information leaflet at each of the three consultation phases – A <i>Consultation Brochure</i> at the beginning of the process (Preliminary Re- evaluation phase and a <i>Community Update Brochure</i> at each of the following stages (Final Re-evaluation Phase and Preferred Project Solution Phase).
Phone line	EirGrid operated a project phone line (1890 25 26 90) from the commencement of the first phase of consultation where members of the public and public concerned could request information and/or contact the Project Team. This has remained open to the public from 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday since 2007.
Email and Postal Address	EirGrid provided a project email address (northsouth@eirgrid.com) and postal address (c/o EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin). These contact details are provided on all information documentation issued.
Web	EirGrid has maintained a project website where all key project materials, including reports and maps, could be accessed, since the commencement of the project. Recently the format of the information presented on the website has been modified to ensure compliance with the detail of website information presentation requirements of the Regulation.
Information centres	EirGrid opened local information centres where the public and landowners could drop in or set up appointments to meet with the EirGrid Project Team and to receive project information. The information centres were supported by the lo- call phone line, email service, and written service. Initially there were two centres provided, at Navan and Carrickmacross, but a third was added at final re-evaluation engagement and consultation phase in 2013.

Tool	Detail
Media	EirGrid kept the public informed about the project through media releases and advertising and radio interviews at key project milestones. Print and radio media were both used extensively.
Reporting	EirGrid reported on project progress of the project through its publications, including the <i>Preliminary Re-evaluation Report</i> (May 2011), <i>Final Re-evaluation Report</i> (April 2013) and the <i>Preferred Project Solution Report</i> (July 2013).
Briefings	For interested stakeholders, EirGrid provided technical briefings and presentations to present information on the project.

Throughout each consultation phase a range of meetings were held with various stakeholders in respect of both the proposal in general and also the particular consultation phase underway at the time. These ranged from one-on-one meetings with landowners and other interested members of the public and public representatives to meetings with community groups and landowner representative groups. It also included meetings with local authorities and prescribed bodies. Meetings were arranged to suit the consultee and were held, if appropriate, in the project information offices or some alternative suitable agreed location. In the case of landowners, meetings were often held on site.

The main dedicated public events however were the open days held at both the re-evaluation phase and also the preferred project solution phase. These are discussed in **Chapter 4**.

5.2.3 Timeline

5.2.3.1 Project Roadmaps

As noted in **Chapter 3**, EirGrid has used graphical roadmaps to present timeline and the context of the project to the public and other stakeholders in a simplified and accessible manner. The essential purpose of the roadmaps published has been to demonstrate the evolution of the project within a clear and structured process. Publishing roadmaps ensures transparency insofar as a member of the public and stakeholder have a clear idea of the proposed stages of the process for the project from inception to completion. In keeping with the Guidelines set out in Annex VI of Regulation 347/2013, this approach facilitates transparency for project stakeholders in terms of understanding the progress of evolution of a project, and the issues and feedback that has shaped the development. In addition, **Table 5.2** provides a summary of the periods of consultation for the project since 2007, however, it should be noted that in between these focused periods of consultation EirGrid was always engaging and open to take calls and meet people on request

Table 5.2:Timelines of Project Development, Consultation and Public Engagement (2007-2014)

Stage	Dates	Purpose
Proposed Route Corridor Options Brochure	October 2007 – November 2008	This phase introduced the public to the project, the route corridor options and how they were decided upon (with reference to constraints). It sought to provide the public with information on the project, to identify concerns of the public and stakeholders, and to allow stakeholders to provide feedback on the three identified 1km wide corridor options, as well as on the principle of overhead lines (OHL) versus underground cables (UGC) for consideration by the project team.
Moving to Phases 3 and 4	March 2009	This phase focused on the announcement of the preferred route corridors and indicative line routes to the public.
Preliminary Re- evaluation	9 May 2011 – 1 July 2011	A review of the previous proposal, previous consultation and feedback from public and stakeholders was undertaken 2010 - 2011. This included a re-evaluation of technical, environmental and cost- effectiveness of the proposals. Preliminary draft development proposals were generated and the draft proposals and review process were published in a <i>Preliminary Re-evaluation Report</i> . A formal consultation phase between May 2011 and July 2011 was held in respect of <i>The Preliminary Re-evaluation Report</i> published in May 2011, which detailed the proposal and re-evaluation process. Public and stakeholder feedback was sought.
Final Re- evaluation	16 April 2013 – 27 May 2013	On foot of the feedback from the preliminary re-evaluation, further environmental and technical assessments with key stakeholders the re-evaluation stage was finalised and the design proposals modified. This occurred between July 2011 and April 2013. A further period of formal engagement and public participation which sought feedback on the findings of <i>The Final Re-evaluation Report</i> took place from April 2013 to May 2013.
Preferred Project Proposal	16 July 2013 – 9 September 2013	From May 2013 to July 2013 the proposals for the project were further refined on foot of the final re-evaluation consultation phase, and EirGrid published a <i>Preferred Project Solution Report</i> in July 2013. An 8 week consultation period was then held between July 2013 and September 2013.
Final Project Proposal	December 2013	The landowner engagement and public consultation which occurred during the preferred project proposal consultation allowed for the final refinement and modification of the proposals. The final project proposal was published in December 2013 and forms the proposal on the basis of which the EIS and planning application documentation will be completed.
Current Activities – PCI Notification and Submission of Concept for Public Participation	June 2014 - Ongoing	Following the decision of An Bord Pleanála on the 22nd May 2014 that the transitional provisions of Regulation 237/2013 did not apply to project in the South, EirGrid issued a Notification under Article 10.1(a) to An Bord Pleanála on 3 rd June 2014 and an acknowledgement of the notification was received by EirGrid from the Board on 2 nd July 2014. An Bord Pleanála will consider this concept for public participation and approve or modify as appropriate. An Bord Pleanála

Stage	Dates	Purpose
		will identify the scope of material and level of detail of information to be submitted by EirGrid and will further issue to EirGrid a schedule for the permit granting process.
Submission of Application to An Bord Pleanála		The date of submission of the application will be determined on foot of the response of An Bord Pleanála and its schedule for the permit granting process.

5.2.4 Human Resources

In accordance with the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI,(4)(d) of Regulation 347/2013, that the concept for public participation shall include information about "*the human resources allocated to the respective tasks*", the following information may be noted:

There are three distinct work streams that have 'owners,' in terms of responsibility. These are:

- Public Affairs, Press, and Media EirGrid;
- Landowner Engagement EirGrid with Landowner Agents from ESB International and Tobin Consulting Engineers; and
- Public / Stakeholder Engagement RPS Project Communications.

Figure 5.1 sets out the objective of each work-stream and where the disciplines interact.

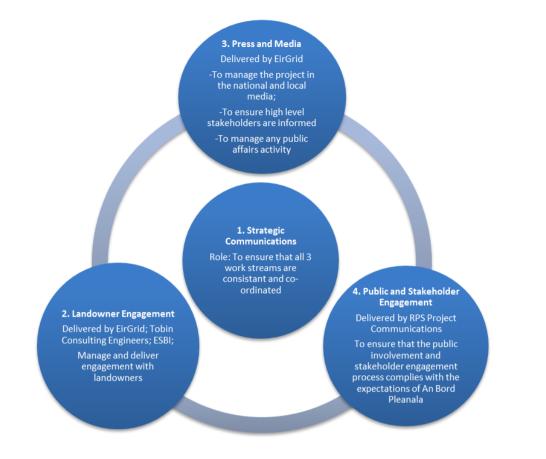


Figure 5.1 North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development - Team Structure

5.2.4.1 Public Affairs, Press, and Media

EirGrid has a dedicated communications team to deal with all matters of public affairs, press and media associated with the project. This has ensured that the consultation phases undertaken for this project have received considerable press and media coverage, thereby maximising public knowledge and awareness of the consultation process.

5.2.4.2 Landowner Engagement

Landowner engagement has been led by EirGrid personnel with supporting Landowner Agents from ESB International and Tobin Consulting Engineers.

ESB International and GNFE with Tobin Consulting Engineers as sub-contractor are the designers of the scheme and have managed the specialist environmental assessments being undertaken. They are therefore in an ideal situation to liaise directly with landowners to ensure a direct and clear channel of communication between landowner, designers and environmental assessors. This has maximised the opportunities to address and accommodate change requests, if and as, appropriate. EirGrid as the proposer of the project deals with landowners on all legal and statutory issues.

5.2.4.3 Public / Stakeholder Engagement

A dedicated team within RPS Project Communications has been responsible for the management and co-ordination of public and stakeholder engagement. They have been responsible for the preparation of public information documentation including the Consultation Brochure and Community Updates. They have co-ordinated and issued correspondence to landowners and other interested stakeholders. RPS Project Communications has been responsible for establishing and managing a database of stakeholders, including any submissions received, from the outset of the consultation process.

Project Information offices and public open days were staffed by personnel from EirGrid and RPS Project Communications and were supported as appropriate and necessary at these events by technical and environmental specialists.

5.2.4.4 Human Resources at Open Day Events

Members of the EirGrid Project Team were available at each open day to directly engage with members of the public concerned (and landowners) and to answer any queries or questions that arose. Technical specialists in the fields listed below answered questions from participants who attended the open days:

- Technology options;
- Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) (provided interactive EMF demonstrations);
- Planning;
- Various environmental specialisms including ecology and archaeology;
- Line design; and
- Landowner and farming considerations.

5.2.4.5 Human Resources at Information Centres

Members of the RPS Project Communications' team manned the local project information centres, in Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt. These team members provided information to the public, landowners and other stakeholders, answered queries and recorded verbal submissions. In the event that a stakeholder had a detailed or technical query in respect of the project which required the response of a technical member of the project team the query was relayed to, and subsequently responded to, by the appropriate technical person. As necessary and as relevant, technical members of the team also attended the information centres for pre-arranged meetings with stakeholders. This included line designers and environmental specialists as well as EirGrid personnel.

5.3 FURTHER PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN PERMIT GRANTING PROCESS

5.3.1 The Stakeholders Concerned and Addressed

Further public consultation will take place in the context of the requirement and procedures for the proposed strategic infrastructure application. In addition, EirGrid will also focus on providing factual information and briefings relating to the application particulars and process.

5.3.1.1 Prescribed Bodies

All prescribed bodies will be advised of the application lodgement in advance as required under the Planning legislation and Regulations applicable to strategic infrastructure applications. These are:

- Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Meath County Council
- Cavan County Council
- Monaghan County Council
- National Roads Authority
- An Chomhairle Ealaion / The Arts Council
- Fáilte Ireland
- An Taisce
- The Heritage Council
- The Irish Aviation Authority
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Health Service Executive
- Commission for Energy Regulation
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Iranród Eireann
- Coras Iompair Eireann
- Railway Procurement Agency
- Railway Safety Commission
- Border Regional Authority
- Mid-East Regional Authority
- Irish Water
- BirdWatch Ireland
- Irish Peatland Conservation Council
- Department of Environment (Northern Ireland)

5.3.1.2 Key Stakeholders

A number of strategic stakeholders will be briefed on the planning application prior to its lodgement. These include the DCENR, CER, ESRI, IFA, ICA, SEAI, ICMSA, Macra na Feirme, Teagasc and Udarás na Gaeltachta. This is in addition to the invitation to make written submissions to the Board in respect of the application, once submitted.

5.3.1.3 Politicians

EirGrid will brief the special advisor to the Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources prior to the submission of the planning application.

Political representatives from the constituencies of Meath East, Meath West and Cavan-Monaghan; local Senators and MEPs; and members of the Oireachtas Sub-Committee on Communications, Energy & Natural Resources will be advised by EirGrid in the days before the application is being submitted.

County Councillors from Cavan, Meath and Monaghan will also be contacted by EirGrid and briefed on the application prior to its lodgement.

5.3.1.4 Persons / Bodies who have Previously Engaged in Consultation for the Project

All those who have engaged with the project and provided their contact details will be issued with a letter advising of the latest update on the project and this will be accompanied by a community update brochure that will include a guide to the statutory process and how they can participate.

5.3.1.5 General Public

The general public will be advised of the lodgement of the application through the statutory notification process and through a media and advertising campaign.

5.3.2 The Measures Envisaged, Including Proposed General Locations and Dates of Dedicated Meetings

There are no dedicated meetings or public consultation events proposed by EirGrid during the statutory consultation process. However, it is a matter for the discretion of the Board as to whether to hold an oral hearing and/or other meetings for any strategic infrastructure development application which would include the proposed North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development. EirGrid will however adopt a number of measures to ensure widespread awareness of the application, how and where it may be viewed, what the statutory process will involve and how and when submissions may be made to the Board. A number of different measures are proposed to be implemented by EirGrid to achieve this. They are described below along with timings relative to the lodgement date as appropriate.

5.3.2.1 Statutory Notice

The statutory notice for the application will appear in the local newspapers, a national newspaper and an Irish language newspaper, specifically:

- The Irish Independent on a Wednesday (or the Wednesday before the application is lodged);
- The Meath Chronicle & Anglo Celt on a Wednesday (or the Wednesday before the application is lodged);
- The Northern Standard on a Thursday (or the Thursday before the application is lodged);
- "Seachtain" (Irish language newspaper published with the Irish Independent) on a Wednesday (or the Wednesday before the application is lodged).

5.3.2.2 Advertising

Additional local print and radio advertising promoting the project information centres (where the application will be made available for public viewing) will be placed over four weeks from the start of the statutory consultation phase to the end, to ensure that the public is aware of the availability of the documents in the centres and the opening hours of same. **Table 5.3** details the proposed radio advertising schedule.

Table 5.3:Advertising schedule for Promotion of Information Centre Opening Hoursduring Statutory Public Consultation

Week 1 – Opening of Information centres (or the week before the Info Centres open)	Week 2 – 3 (or the week that the info centres open)	Week 4	Week 5 - 6
 Anglo Celt Northern Standard Meath Chronicle 	 LMFM Northern Sound Anglo Celt Northern Standard Meath Chronicle 	 Anglo Celt Northern Standard Meath Chronicle 	 LMFM Northern Sound Anglo Celt Northern Standard Meath Chronicle

5.3.2.3 Media

The submission of the planning application by EirGrid to the Board will be notified to the media to ensure full awareness among the wider public who are not engaged with the project.

EirGrid will provide material to local radio and newspapers in Meath, Cavan and Monaghan. Media interviews will be facilitated upon request.

The press material will comprise:-

- A press release announcing that the planning application has been submitted to the Board; where it is on view; and how and when to make submissions.
- A new community update brochure.

The press release will also be issued to the national media.

5.3.2.4 Access to the Application

In addition to the statutory requirements for public display of the application file, it will also be available to view by the public in the following ways:

- Placing the application on view in the project information centres in Monaghan, Cavan, Meath (i.e. Kingscourt, Navan, and Carrickmacross) and with staff on hand to assist stakeholders to locate information within the application;
- Requests from stakeholders for printed / CD copies of the EIS Non-Technical Summary (NTS) to be met at no charge;
- Publishing a link to the dedicated planning website (www.eirgridnorthsouthinterconnector.ie) from the EirGrid North-South project webpage;
- Posting a community update brochure to guide stakeholders through the application (posted to circa 1,300 stakeholders, County Councillors and the County Managers of the three local authorities);
- Providing Monaghan Anti-Pylon Commitee (MAPC) and the North-East Pylon Pressure Group (NEPP) with copies each of the application which they can display locally to their members.

The above measures will ensure all stakeholders who have engaged in consultation thus far and have an interest in the project are provided with easy and full access to the project information.

5.3.2.5 Project Information Centres

The project information centres in Navan, Carrickmacross and Kingscourt will be re-opened and the application will be on public display in each throughout the statutory consultation period.

The centres will each open for two full weeks (Monday – Friday, 12 noon to 7pm); the week after the planning application has been lodged and the week before the statutory consultation closes.

Outside of those two weeks, the centres will open for the other five weeks of the consultation period for one day per week each (12 noon to 7pm) as follows:

- Tuesdays: Navan;
- Wednesdays: Carrickmacross; and
- Thursdays: Kingscourt.

Each information centre will be staffed by one RPS staff member to facilitate discussion, take notes and manage the database, and one member of the project team from EirGrid and/or the technical consultants who is familiar with the mapping and can efficiently direct stakholders to appropriate sections of the application and particular areas/maps of interest.

During the two weeks when the centres are open fulltime they will be staffed by technical consultants, EirGrid and RPS, i.e. 3 personnel.

5.3.2.6 Community Update Brochure

A community update brochure will be produced as a user's guide to the application. The brochure will draw upon information contained within the approved NTS of the EIS and will include the following:

- A map of the final line design submitted to the Board, along with a brief description of the line, tower locations and a description of the process and rationale for how the final line was completed;
- A guide to the application and the statutory process being undertaken;
- Details on how to make submissions or observations to the Board with details of the closing date;
- Details of where and when the application and EIS are on display;
- Summary of the EIS, including proposed mitigation measures;
- Information centre opening hours, dates, locations; and
- How to obtain a digital copy of the application.

The community update brochure will be uploaded to the project website and copies will be available at the project information centres.

A letter with the brochure will be issued to all project stakeholders, including landowners.

5.3.2.7 EIS Non-technical Summary

The full planning application is likely to be a substantial printed document that will need to be charged for, if stakeholders request a hard copy. However, a CD of the full planning application will be available free of charge and additional copies, if requested, will be charged at €5 each.

5.3.2.8 Application for Planning Approval Website

A copy of the application will be made available on a new and dedicated website which will contain all public documentation in relation to the statutory process. This will be updated in the course of the application process if any further information requests are issued / responded to. Web page content, and application documentation, including the EIS will also be provided in Irish.

5.3.2.9 Project Website

The existing project information webpages hosted on the EirGrid website will continue to be accessible and will be updated in respect of the status of the project. It will provide a link to the dedicated planning website (www.eirgridnorthsouthinterconnector.ie).

5.3.3 Timeline

It is not possible to give a specific date for the date of lodging the application as this will depend on the completion of the pre-application procedures under Regulation 347/2013. The exact dates of activities to be undertaken will depend on this lodgement date. The relevant timelines for each of the measures to be adopted have been outlined above as relevant.

Regulation 347/2013 sets out certain maximum periods during which certain procedures must be completed. Article 9(3) provides that the competent authority shall request modifications or approve the concept for public participation within three months. Furthermore, Article 10(1)(b) states that the statutory permit granting procedure, covering the period from the date of acceptance of the submitted application file until the comprehensive decision is taken, shall not exceed one year and six months. In addition, Article 10(2) states that the combined duration of the pre-application procedure and the statutory permit granting procedure shall not exceed a period of three years and six months.

The display period requirements (of the application for public inspection) will be established in consultation with the Board. The documentation is to be made available for a minimum of seven weeks at least 5 days after the date of the publication of the statutory notice. However, it is agreed, subject to the Board's approval, that the documentation will be made available from a Monday in order to maximise the opportunity for promoting the project information centre opening hours (as the local press is published on Wednesdays and Thursdays).

While it is not possible to say when the proposed strategic infrastructure application will be determined by the Board there are a number of provisions of section 182A and 182B of the Act which have implications for the duration of the decision making process. These are as follows:-

- Initial display / submission period minimum 6 weeks. In this case it will be placed on display for 7 weeks.
- The Board may under section 182A(5) seek further information on effects on the environment or the proper planning and development of the area or may seek revisions / alterations to be made to the project proposal and accordingly also to the accompanying EIS / NIS as appropriate.
- In the event that further information or revised proposals are deemed to be significant by the Board it may request the applicant to publish a new newspaper notice and place the additional information / revised EIS on public display for a period of not less than 3 weeks. Submissions may be made by the public during this period again.
- The Board may also decide to hold an oral hearing in respect of the project. In this case it is considered to be a likely scenario.

These various statutory functions and provisions of the Board in the course of the decision making process will influence the length of time in which a decision will ultimately be made.

5.3.4 Human Resources

As with the consultation process undertaken to date, there will again be three work streams that have different owners within the overall project team:

- Public Affairs, Press, and Media EirGrid will prepare and issue press release and advertise the project information centres, as described above.
- Landowner Engagement Technical staff from ESB International and Tobin Consulting Engineers will be available at information centres, as described above.
- Public / Stakeholder Engagement RPS Project Communications will prepare and issue a community update brochure and notify stakeholders on the lodgement of the application.
 RPS and technical team members will also staff information centres during the statutory consultation period to assist stakeholders in finding information in the documents.

6 PUBLIC CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 9 AND THE ASSOCIATED GUIDELINES IN ANNEX VI GUIDELINES OF REGULATION 347/2013

Paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 set out specific requirements for the nature of the public participation process to be undertaken for PCI projects. These have been considered and applied through this document and regard may be had to this document as a whole. However, again for the sake of clarity and by way of summary it is proposed to consider each of these items below and assess their application to the current project and how the consultation undertaken to date on the current project complies or otherwise with these requirements.

6.1.1 Article 9 Paragraph 4 and Annex VI (5)

Article 9 Paragraph 4 sets out a number of requirements. These are discussed in turn hereunder.

"At least one public consultation shall be carried out by the project promoter, or, where required by national law, by the competent authority, before submission of the final and complete application file to the competent authority pursuant to Article 10(1)(a)"

"The public consultation shall inform stakeholders referred to in Annex VI.3(a) about the project at an early stage and shall help to identify the most suitable location or trajectory and the relevant issues to be addressed in the application file."

As outlined in summary in **Chapter 4**, EirGrid has undertaken 5 No. main phases of consultation for the project since 2007. Each of the phases of development has comprised multiple events and engagement methods for extended periods of time, ensuring accessible, meaningful and accountable consultation throughout. EirGrid is of the view that the public consultations carried out exceed this minimum requirement.

In this regard, a roadmap for the entire consultation process was set out and advised to the public and to all relevant stakeholders to ensure widespread understanding of how the project would be developed and the critical periods along the way in which stakeholders could engage.

In respect of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development the preliminary re-evaluation stage of the project commenced in 2010 and a *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* was published in 2011. Consultation has been on-going across three key stages in total as the project became more defined and a detailed design emerged.

A description of the stakeholders which have engaged in the public participation process to date is contained in **section 5.2.1** of this report. These include relevant national, regional, and local authorities, landowners and citizens living in the vicinity of the project, the general public and their associations, organisations or groups in accordance with the guiding principle in Annex VI(3)(a).

"The minimum requirements applicable to this public consultation are specified in Annex VI.5"

In this regard, the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI.5 require that the promoter shall:

"Publish an information leaflet of no more than 15 pages, giving, in a clear and concise manner, an overview of the purpose and preliminary timetable of the project, the national grid development plan, alternative routes considered, expected impacts, including of cross-border nature, and possible mitigation measures, which shall be published prior to the start of the consultation; the information leaflet shall furthermore list the web addresses of the transparency platform referred to in Article 18 and of the manual of procedures referred to in point (1);"

During all stages of the project EirGrid has published information about the project. Consultation / information / community update brochures sought to ensure members of the public were fully aware of the project and sought to encourage them to provide feedback on the relevant stage in the project's development, or in relation to any other queries. These were supplemented by published FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) which provided answers to the most commonly asked questions on the project.

During the initial phase (2007 – 2009) the following brochures / information leaflets were published by EirGrid in respect of the proposed development. These addressed matters such as the role of EirGrid, alternative route options, constraints and impacts and the important role of careful route corridor selection to mitigate same.

- Proposed Route Corridor Options, Public Consultation (October 2007);
- FAQ's Leaflet (January 2008);
- Community Update Brochure (April 2009) in relation to the route corridor selection process and identification of preferred route corridors;
- Community Update Brochure (July 2009);
- North East Power Line Projects FAQ's (July 2009);
- Community Update Brochure (December 2009) in relation to submission of planning application to An Bord Pleanála.; and
- North East Power Line Projects FAQ's (January 2010)

Each brochure listed above (also included in **Appendix H)** includes specific detail relevant to the specific phase of the project and the stakeholders concerned. The 2007 consultation brochure on route corridor options for example provided detail on the approach and methodology adopted to determine specific route corridors including a description of the types of constraints considered and specific maps for each route option. A Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) leaflet in 2008 provided feedback on a range of issues raised during the 2007 consultation process to allow quick access to issues raised; these included health and EMF, approach and mitigation against potential impact on farmland and overhead versus undergrounding. Subsequently, additional publications were released as appropriate and as listed above.

Consultation since the withdrawal of the previous application addressed the following stages of the project:

- The Preliminary Re-evaluation Phase
- The Final Re-evaluation Phase
- The Preferred Project Solution Phase

Community Update information leaflets were published by EirGrid in connection with each of the three key phases of consultation. EirGrid also published advertisements in connection with each stage of the consultation. A main report was also produced at each of these stages which detailed the reviews undertaken to that time, project progression, indicative / preferred routes, consultation events and feedback.

Following the formal consultation phases a Newsletter was published in December 2013 which presented information on the Final Project Solution which is the proposal for which EirGrid intends to seek planning approval from An Bord Pleanála (the "Board").

EirGrid has also published a recent Community Update brochure in July 2014 to ensure continued awareness of the project prior to the lodgement of an application.

The information leaflets produced at each of the stages for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development are described in the relevant sections of **Chapter 4**. The content of each of these are assessed hereunder with reference to the *Guidelines* set out in of Annex VI(5)(a).

Community Update Brochure May 2011 – The Preliminary Re-evaluation Phase.

This brochure which comprised 9 pages provided an overview of the purpose and preliminary timetable of the project. It outlined the background and context of the project, the findings of the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* regarding the need for the project, the best identified technical

solution and conclusion of the preferred corridor. It included a programme for the project development and associated consultation phases up to lodgement of an application, but did not have defined dates attached to this. The brochure noted that the project was part of the Grid25 development strategy and that the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* concluded that each of the three previously identified route corridors remained viable options for the development but identified a route within both the Meath Study Area and the Cavan Monaghan Study Area which would achieve the best balance against all assessment criteria.

Community Update Brochure April 2013 - The Final Re-evaluation Phase

This brochure which comprised 7 pages provided a clear and concise description of the background and context of the proposal, progress so far and the current status of the project. It outlined the entire project progression from preliminary re-evaluation to the submission of an application. The brochure identified that the project was part of the Grid25 development strategy and its key drivers including the objective to enhance security of supply throughout the island of Ireland and to improve efficiency and competition of the all-island electricity market. The brochure also referred to the Independent Expert Commission (IEC) report which had been commissioned by the Government in relation to the possibility of undergrounding this project. The brochure noted that the *Preliminary Re-evaluation Report* had included identification of corridor options and a preferred corridor as well as an indicative line within that corridor. It also identified how the indicative line route differed from the previously proposed route which had been the subject of the previous application to the Board. This brochure also sought feedback on how best to adopt community gain within transmission projects. The brochure outlined details for the public open days and other methods for engaging with EirGrid and its project team in respect of this phase of the project.

Community Update Brochure July 2013 – Preferred Project Solution Report

This brochure which comprised 6 pages outlined the reasons for the project and the key project drivers. It explained the history of the project, how it had progressed recently and what was happening during the current round of consultation. The brochure set out EirGrid's Project Development and Consultation Roadmap and identified where the progress of the project currently sat in the context of this roadmap. The brochure identified that the project was part of the Grid25 development strategy. The brochure also noted that the *Preferred Project Solution Report* had now identified a preferred line design for the project along with proposed locations for towers and sought feedback on this. The brochure also identified that the *Preferred Project Solution Report* included an outline of the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIS which would accompany the future application for planning approval with reference to legislation and relevant guidelines. In this regard, the public were also invited to identify environmental issues that should be considered in the EIS. The brochure outlined details for the public open days and other methods for engaging with EirGrid and its project team in respect of this phase of the project.

Landowner Brochure (July 2013)

This Landowner Brochure which comprised 7 pages focused on issues of particular relevance to landowners such as how they could influence line route and tower movements and providing an explanation of the construction methodology for the project. It also provided information on the guidelines for overhead line design, tower positioning and identifying construction access routes. It provided information on how landowners could engage with EirGrid and its project team and included a landowner request form in respect of landowner proposals to modify the line route / tower locations.

Community Update Brochure July 2014

This brochure provides a concise description of the development and its current status. It outlines the reasons for the project and the key project drivers. It explains the history of the project, how it has progressed through route and technology selection to a final proposed solution. It advises that EirGrid is now preparing an EIS in accordance with the scoping opinion that was provided by An Bord Pleanála and which was informed by the feedback received during public consultation and participation. It also provides an update on the opinion of the Independent Expert Panel (IEP) that the work completed to date on the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development is compatible with the methodologies now being employed on the Grid West and Grid Link projects. The brochure sets out EirGrid's updated Project Development and Consultation Roadmap and identifies the stage which has currently been reached in terms of the roadmap. The brochure also describes the Project of Common Interest (PCI) procedures being undertaken by EirGrid in association with the Board prior to the lodgement of an application.

Future Community Update Brochure

A Community Update Brochure will be prepared to inform stakeholders of the lodging of the planning application with An Bord Pleanála. This brochure will be produced as a user's guide to the application and will draw upon information contained within the non-technical summaries of the EIS inclduing information relating to impacts and mitigation measures.

In conclusion, overall these information leaflets address the content requirements of the *Guidelines* set out in Annex VI(5) and furthermore the purpose of such leaflet as envisaged under Annex VI(5). They reflect the extensive project development process which has applied and applies to this project. This process commenced a considerable number of years prior to the publication of Regulation 347/2013). Therefore even if the format for the provision of information in these leaflets which were published prior to the public consultations may not have been precisely the same as if it were contained in a single information leaflet (if this is envisaged under Annex VI(5)) although it noted that it does not specify the same), it is clear that the substance and purpose of Annex VI(5) has been satisfied. In this regard it should further be observed that Annex VI(5) is contained in Annex VI which

is entitled "*Guidelines* for Transparency and Public Participation" which implies an element of flexibility in meeting the substantive requirements. However overall it is considered that the work undertaken to date has ensured that the intent of Annex VI (5) is met and exceeded. In this respect attention may again be drawn to Article 9, Paragraph 3 where it states that: "*the competent authority shall take into consideration any form of public participation and consultation that took place before the permit granting process, to the extent that such public participation and consultation has fulfilled the requirement of this article*".

"Inform all stakeholders affected about the project through the website referred to in Article 9(7) and other appropriate information means;"

Since 2007, EirGrid has used the project webpages of its website (<u>www.eirgrid.com</u>) as a medium for publishing information on the project online, these project specific webpages can be accessed at <u>http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/NorthSouth400kVInterconnectionDevelopment/</u>. This project website has been used since 2007 to "make available" *inter alia*: summary updates to stakeholders on the changing status of the project; Community Update Brochures, newsletters and leaflets; details and locations of public open days and other public consultation and engagement activities; contact details for obtaining further documentation / information on the project and contact details for providing feedback during public consultation periods. In this regard, it is also in accordance with the guidelines set out in Annex VI(6).

"Invite in written form relevant affected stakeholders to dedicated meetings, during which concerns shall be discussed."

EirGrid proactively contacted in written form stakeholders, stakeholder groups, landowners and elected members to offer them briefings on the project. The information centres were opened to also cater for those who would like to come into the office in person and meet to discuss the project.

EirGrid hosted and attended a significant number of meetings to discuss and present the project. Information on the key open day events held is provided in **Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5** above.

"The project promoter shall prepare a report summarising the results of activities related to the participation of the public prior to the submission of the application file, including those activities that took place before the start of the permit granting process. The project promoter shall submit that report together with the application file to the competent authority. Due account shall be taken of these results in the comprehensive decision."

This requirement is for the purposes of the application file to be submitted to the Board and so it does not arise at the juncture. It is not therefore a requirement of this concept plan. Nevertheless, it is noted that **Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5** of this concept document records a comprehensive description of all consultation activities undertaken to date. In due course EirGrid shall submit a report summarising the results of activities related to the overall consultation process for the project together with the application file to the competent authority.

6.1.2 Article 9 Paragraph 5

Article 9 Paragraph 5 requires that:

"For projects crossing the border of two or more Member States, the public consultations pursuant to paragraph 4 in each of the Member States concerned shall take place within a period of no more than two months from the date on which the first public consultation started."

The portion of the proposed North-South Interconnector which is located in Northern Ireland falls within the scope of the transitional provision contained in Article 19 of the Regulations and so it is not subject to the Chapter III requirements, which includes the public consultation requirement contained in paragraph 4. This arises from the fact the application file was submitted in Northern Ireland before 16 November 2013, having been submitted to the Planning Service in 2009 (refer to DECC's *Manual of Procedures: The Permitting Process for Projects of Common Interest in the UK* (May 2014)). Moreover, the application in Northern Ireland has gone beyond any equivalent pre-application stage. This provision is therefore not applicable.

6.1.3 Article 9 Paragraph 6

Paragraph 6 of Article 9 relates to projects likely to have significant adverse cross-border impacts in one or more neighbouring Member States, where Article 7 of Directive 2011/92/EU and the Espoo Convention are applicable. It requires that:

"The relevant information shall be made available to the competent authority of the neighbouring Member States. The competent authority of the neighbouring Member States shall indicate, in the notification process where appropriate, whether it, or any other authority concerned, wishes to participate in the relevant public consultation procedures."

This is addressed in Chapter 2. As noted, consultation has taken place with both the Planning Service of Northern Ireland and An Bord Pleanála in Ireland. Through pre-application consultations and discussions with these bodies, it was determined that an EIA would be required in each jurisdiction. Each competent authority was informed of the transboundary nature of the project and the potential for effects (as set out by the Espoo Convention and the EIA Directive as transposed into

national legislation). As part of the process leading to the preparation of the ES and EIS, a review of all environmental aspects was undertaken by EirGrid and NIE's team of specialist advisors. The scoping process was confirmed by the Planning Service and An Bord Pleanála, whereby the respective authorities provided opinions as to the information to be provided in the ES and EIS respectively. In Northern Ireland, this was undertaken through the Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) process with the Planning Service. In Ireland, this was undertaken by the provision of a formal Scoping Opinion by An Bord Pleanála (December 2013). In addition to the ES and EIS, a Joint Environmental Report, is being prepared and will be lodged as part of the planning application. This approach fully satisfies all recommendations in the EU Transboundary Guidance document.

With reference to the specific provision of paragraph 6 as noted above, the Planning Service of Northern Ireland did not request to participate in the public consultation procedures in Ireland. An Bord Pleanála did not participate in the public consultation procedures undertaken in Northern Ireland.

6.1.4 Article 9 Paragraph 7

Paragraph 7 has two main requirements.

"The project promoter, or, where national law so provides, the competent authority, shall establish and regularly update a website with relevant information about the project of common interest, which shall be linked to the Commission website and which shall meet the requirements specified in Annex VI.6."

EirGrid has operated a website for the project since 2007 and used it as a forum to provide information about the project, including all of the project updates, information and publications (e.g. Community Update Brochures, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Reports) were available for viewing and download and all of the information uploaded to date for the project remains accessible via the web link provided below:

http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/NorthSouth400kVInterconnectionDevelopment/

The project website is linked to the Commission website as appropriate and as required under Article 9(7).

"Project promoters shall also publish relevant information by other appropriate information means to which the public has open access"

Information during the pre-application consultation phases has been provided in hard copy format at various locations throughout the study area and also on-line on the project website. Information issued has been tailored as required in the course of this process to the relevant stakeholders being addressed, and in line with the level of information that they requested. EirGrid has also endeavoured to ensure maximum awareness of each stage of the consultation process and advice on locations and access to information by way of a comprehensive advertising schedule which involved both print media and radio.

A summary of the methods of information publication and issue for each of the three consultation phases is provided in **Table 6.1**, Table **6.2** and **Table 6.3** hereunder.

Table 6.1:Summary of Information Publications and Communications ActivitiesUndertaken by EirGrid during Public and Landowner Consultation on the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report

Method	Communications Activity
Press Releases	Press releases were issued by EirGrid to media to ensure that the public concerned (and landowners) were aware of the opportunities to participate in the consultation process.
Advertising	Advertisements were placed in local media to heighten awareness of the consultation.
Lo-Call Phone Line	The Lo-Call project phone line (1890 25 26 90) was staffed by members of the Project Communications Team who recorded details of incoming feedback / requests received from the public and referred these in turn to the EirGrid Project Team.
Information centres	Information centres at Navan and Carrickmacross (which had been used for the previous application) re-opened to the public in May 2011.
Consultation Brochure	A Consultation Brochure was prepared and issued by EirGrid and contained details of the findings of the <i>Preliminary Re-evaluation Report</i> , its key findings and the Terms of Reference for the consultation.
Poster	A poster was prepared with the aim of promoting awareness of the preliminary re-evaluation consultation stage and was circulated in study area.
Letters/Mail-out	Letters and the <i>Consultation Brochure</i> were issued in a mail-out to stakeholders.
Website	All project information was provided on one new website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/NorthSouth400kVInterconnectionD evelopment/

Table 6.2Summary of Communications Activities Undertaken by EirGrid during theCourse of Public and Landowner Engagement on the Findings of the Final Re-evaluationReport

Method	Communications Activity
Press Releases	Press releases were issued by EirGrid to media to ensure that the public and landowners were aware of the publication of the <i>Final Re-evaluation Report</i> and of the opportunities to engage in the Final Re-evaluation engagement stage.
Advertising	Seven advertisements were placed in local press and 80 advertisements were aired on local radio stations to heighten awareness of the Final Re- evaluation engagement.
Advertising	EirGrid placed additional advertisements in May 2013 to inform the public and landowners of additional open days to be held in local venues in County Monaghan arising from a request from from the County Monaghan Anti Pylon Committee for additional events. for additional events.
Lo-Call Phone Line	Continuation of the project Lo-Call phone line service.
Information centres	EirGrid re-opened the two project information centres in Navan and Carrickmacross from 16 April 2013 and also opened an additional information centre at Kingscourt, Co. Cavan.
Open Day Events	A total of nine open day events were undertaken during this stage.
Community Update Brochure	A Community Update Brochure was prepared and issued by EirGrid which included details of the findings of the Final Re-evaluation Report, its key findings and the Terms of Reference for the engagement.
	All project information was provided on one new website:
Website	http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/NorthSouth400kVInterconnectionDev elopment/
	EirGrid produced an updated FAQ on the project website, in April 2013, on the project which addressed the following issues:
	1. The North South 400 kV Interconnection Development
	2. Current situation
	3. Timeline and design
	4. EirGrid and Grid25
Frequently Asked	5. Why is the project needed?
Questions (FAQ)	6. Public consultation
	7. Economic downturn
	8. Renewable energy
	9. Moyhill substation
	10. Overhead v underground
	11. Substation, lines and tower types
	12. Technical information

13. EMF
14. Local impact
15. Landowner access and compensation

Table 6.3Summary of Information Publications and Communications ActivitiesUndertaken by EirGrid during the Course of Public and Landowner Engagement on theFindings of the Preferred Project Solution Report

Method	Communications Activity	
Press Releases	Press releases were issued by EirGrid to media to ensure that the public and landowners were aware of the publication of the <i>Preferred Project</i> <i>Solution Report</i> and of the opportunities to engage in the consultation period.	
Advertising	Advertisements were placed in local press to heighten awareness of the Preferred Project Solution engagement phase. Radio advertising was also used	
Lo-Call Phone Line	Continuation of the project Lo-Call phone line service from 9am to 5pm Monday - Friday.	
Information centres EirGrid re-opened the three project information centres in N Carrickmacross and Kingscourt from the week of 16 July 2013.		
Open Day Events	A total of three open day events were undertaken during this stage.	
Community Update Brochure	A <i>Community Update Brochure July 2013</i> was prepared and issued by EirGrid which included details of the findings of the <i>Preferred Project Solution Report</i> , its key findings and the Terms of Reference for the engagement. A Landowner Brochure was also prepared and issued by EirGrid which focused on issues of particular relevance to landowners such as how they could influence line route and tower movements and providing an explanation of the construction methodology for the project.	
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	EirGrid produced an updated FAQ on the project website, in July 2013. It was made available on the project website and in hard copy format at the open days, information centres and to those who phoned to request copies of information.	
Letters/Mail-out	tters/Mail-out Letters and the <i>Community Update Brochure</i> were issued in a mail-out stakeholders	
Website	site The project website was updated with information to reflect the publication of the <i>Preferred Project Solution Report</i> .	
Preferred Project Solution Report	In addition to the being available on the website, at Information Offices and at Public Open Day Events, copies of the <i>Preferred Project Solution</i> reports were also disseminated to the County Librarians for public display and to any interested stakeholders on request (i.e. maps and reports).	

The application file itself will be available in hard copy at the offices of the Board and the offices of the county councils of Meath, Cavan and Monaghan.

It will also be available for viewing on the dedicated project application website, EirGrid project website and at each of EirGrid's public information centres, where staff will be on hand to assist stakeholders to obtain the information that they wish to view.

For those who wish to view the application file through the Irish language, the application documents will be posted online in the Irish language.

7 CONCLUSION

Having regard to the foregoing, EirGrid is of the view that the extensive public consultation which has taken place meets the public engagement requirements under Regulation 347/2013 which are required to take place before the submission of the final and complete application file. In particular EirGrid is of the view that the public consultation undertaken in respect of the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development, both on its own and also in conjunction with the consultation undertaken prior to the submission of the previous Meath-Tyrone 400 kV Interconnection Development proposal, achieves, and indeed well exceeds, these requirements under Regulation 347/2013

This document also outlines further public engagement which will be carried out by EirGrid in particular as part of the proposed strategic infrastructure application in respect of the project

More generally it is submitted that matters described in this document reflect EirGrid's Concept for Public Participation as set out in **Chapter 3** of this document, and satisfies the requirements under the Regulation.





North-South 400kV Interconnection Development

An Bord Pleanála Reference: PCI001

Concept for Public Participation APPENDICES July 2014





Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative













LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A INFORMATION BROCHURE PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER 2007

APPENDIX B COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, MAY 2011

APPENDIX C COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, APRIL 2013

APPENDIX D COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, JULY 2013

APPENDIX E COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, DECEMBER 2013

APPENDIX F COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, JULY 2014

APPENDIX G LANDOWNER BROCHURE, JULY 2013

APPENDIX H BROCHURES AND FAQS 2007 - 2010

APPENDIX A

INFORMATION BROCHURE PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER 2007





CAVAN-TYRONE 400KV POWER LINE New North-South Interconnector

Proposed Route Corridor Options, Public Consultation October 2007





Who is EirGrid?

EirGrid plc, a state owned company, is the independent electricity Transmission System Operator in Ireland and the Market Operator in the wholesale electricity trading system. EirGrid's role is to deliver quality connection, transmission and market services to generators, suppliers and customers utilising the high voltage electricity system, and to put in place the grid infrastructure required to support the development of Ireland's economy. EirGrid develops, maintains and operates a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system. EirGrid is playing a key role in establishment of the new All-Island Market for Electricity, as well as developing a second North-South Interconnector.

What's Happening?

EirGrid is planning two projects to facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity, promote better competition and to ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East. The 2 projects are:

Sokm long Cavan Tyrone 400kV Power Line – the new North-South Interconnector

58km Woodland (Co Meath) to Kingscourt (Co Cavan) 400kV Power Line.

A new 80km long 400kV Interconnector between Cavan and Tyrone will more than double the current power transfer capacity between the North and the South, 35km approximately will be in Northern Ireland and the remaining 45km approximately will be in the Republic of Ireland, routed from a proposed new substation near Kingscourt in Co Cavan, through Co Monaghan to a proposed new substation in Co Tyrone. This project is being undertaken in co-operation with Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE).

Following extensive studies, route corridor options have been developed and are presented overleaf.

Benefits

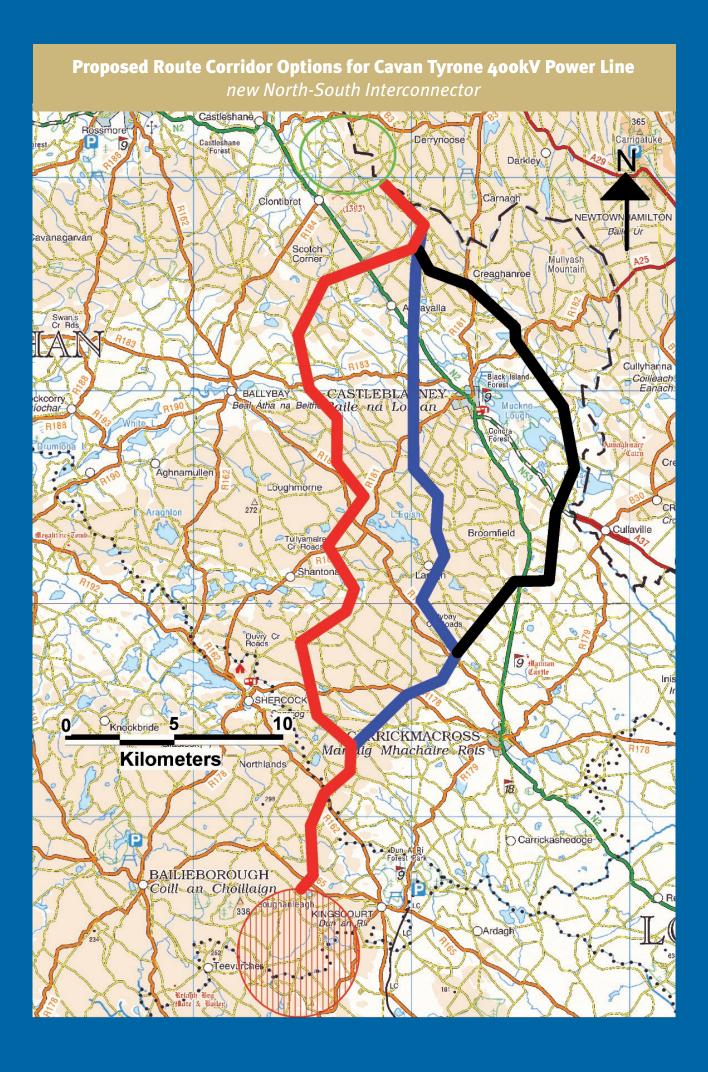
- Support growth and development
- Boost existing industry in Cavan, Monaghan and N. Ireland when competing for business and inward development in the area.
- Ensure security of supply for the future
- Comply with European Union policy which states that links between electricity systems are a key way of ensuring secure and competitively priced electricity markets into the future.
- Facilitate the Single Electricity Market due to come into effect in Ireland later this year.
- Promote competition and better sharing of generation resources between North and South
- Fuel savings
- Fewer emissions
- Facilitate integration of wind generated energy
- Make more bulk high quality power available for the North East

How were the route corridors decided upon?

Seven key criteria were taken into account by the consultants when choosing possible route corridors for the power lines:

Visual Impact:	An assessment of the of the visual impact of the proposal on the environment was carried out in order to minimise the impact
Community:	an assessment of the local villages and communities was undertaken to reduce the proximity of the power lines to them and ensure minimal impact on lifestyles of those living and working in nearby communities
Ecology:	A review of conservation designated areas, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Area (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) was completed.
Cultural Heritage:	Architectural and archaeological heritage sites, including recorded archaeological monuments and places, protected structures, and national monuments, were assessed in an attempt to minimise any impact.
Landscape:	A review of County Development Plans was undertaken in order to assess the numbers of scenic views, scenic routes, and vulnerable landscapes in the area.
Geology:	Soil, subsoil and bedrock was used to determine significant types and their benefits and drawbacks.
Water:	The surface water features were reviewed, as lakes are to be avoided and river crossings minimised.

All of the above constraints were taken into account in order to ensure that the route options were sited in the best possible location.



Route Corridor Options

Cavan - Tyrone Route Corridor A

- Route corridor option A connects with the NIE proposal east of Clontibret
- From this point it crosses the N2 north of Annayalla and proceeds to cross the R183 west of the village of Doohamlet
- It continues in a south-easterly direction and crosses the R180 northwest of Lough Egish
- It then crosses the R181 between Lough Egish and Shantonagh to circumvent Shantonagh Lough
- It crosses the R178 approximately 3 kilometers east of Shercock to navigate around the lakes at Northlands and to cross the Cavan County Boundary
- Once it crosses the County Boundary along the R162, it travels in a southerly direction to finally cross the R165 and navigate towards the proposed 400kV substation to the west of Kingscourt Co. Cavan.

Route Corridor B

- Route corridor option B travels in a north-south direction crossing the N2 to meander around Laragh Lough
- It proceeds in a southerly direction to cross the R183 and R161 approximately 3km west of Castleblayney
- It then passes to the east of Lough Egish ,Laragh and west of Lisdoonan.
- It crosses the R180 approximately 4 km from Carrickmacross and travels southwesterly to cross the R178 to reconnect with the proposed route corridor Option A, east of Northlands.

Route Corridor C

This proposed corridor deviates from the proposed route corridor A and B and traverses in the south-easterly direction around Lough Muckno to cross the N53 west of Crossmaglen

It would then cross the N2 before reconnecting with the proposed route corridor B option, south of Lisdoonan

Your views are important to us

We welcome all suggestions and queries. All submissions made and feedback collected during the public consultation on route selection will be used by the technical project teams to inform their decision on selecting the most appropriate route. All queries and submissions made will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Please study the maps and tell us your views on the proposed route corridor options you may use the enclosed feedback form or additional pages if you wish. All correspondence will be dealt with confidentially.

What Happens Next?

- Following public consultation in October 2007, submissions made by the public, businesses and other organisations will be taken into account, and along with further technical and other studies, will help to determine a Preferred Route.
- It is hoped that a Preferred Route will be ready for presentation to the public in early 2008, after which it will likely undergo further studies before a planning application is prepared.
- The planning application will include preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and consultation with landowners and the local community. The Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) will assess the impact of the project on the local areas as it is a process for anticipating and, possibly, preventing, negative effects on the environment that may be caused by a proposed development or project.

Keep informed

EirGrid is committed to ensuring that all members of the public are fully aware of the project and encourage you to participate in public consultation. If you would like to discuss the project or to meet with a member of the project team, please contact us by either telephone or email. Otherwise, keep an eye on the website for regular updates.

www.eirgrid.com Tel: 1890 25 26 90 email: CavanTyroneInterconnector@eirgrid.com

Feedback

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

The Project Manager Cavan-Tyrone 400kV Power Line EirGrid 27 Lower Fitzwilliam St Dublin 2, Ireland

What are your views?



APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, MAY 2011



North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development Community Update May 2011





Part Funded by the EU TEN–E Initiative

EirGrid Commences Non Statutory Consultation





The Re-Evaluation Process

Background and Context

EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) are jointly planning a cross-border project to facilitate sharing of electricity and to promote better competition. In addition EirGrid is seeking to improve the security of electricity supply throughout the north-east area.

EirGrid submitted an application to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for the section of this project in the Republic of Ireland at the end of 2009 however that application was withdrawn in June 2010.

Since then, EirGrid has entered a process of re-evaluation in which the project has been thoroughly re-examined. This includes issues raised by stakeholders and the general public during the previous application process.

What is Happening Now?

EirGrid has now published a Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report and is engaging in a six week period of non-statutory consultation providing all interested stakeholders with an opportunity to give feedback on the indicative project solution, before submitting a fresh application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála.

EirGrid would like to hear your views

Please submit your views on the report or development to the Project Team by 17th June 2011. Consultation questions and a feedback form can be found in this brochure. The Preliminary Re-evaluation Report is available on **www.eirgrid.com** or by contacting the Project Team.





Towards a New Planning Application

The diagram below illustrates the current re-evaluation process that will ultimately lead to the submission of a new application to ABP.



Project Roadmap Definitions

Indicative Project Solution

This project has a history of almost four years and a significant amount of research and public consultation has been carried out. This allows EirGrid to bring forward an indicative project solution which, unlike other projects, has the significant benefit of the information gathered and learnings from the previous planning process.

Landowner, Public and other Stakeholder Consultation

EirGrid is holding a six week consultation, seeking feedback on the conclusions contained in the Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report, as well as any new insights on the project that interested stakeholders may have. This is an opportunity to make submissions or observations to EirGrid regarding the nature and location of the project.

Preferred Project Solution

EirGrid will examine the feedback from the Landowner, Public and Stakeholder consultation and make a decision on whether to adopt (with any modifications) the 'Indicative Project Solution' as the 'Preferred' solution, or whether new information has come to light that requires additional technical and environmental evaluation.

North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development Community Update May 2011

...definitions continued

Ongoing Engagement with Affected Landowners, General Public and Other Stakeholders on Preferred Project Solution The terms of reference for the engagement with stakeholders will focus on the refinement of the 'Preferred' solution having regard to localised constraints and other criteria.

Final Proposal

Following all of the environmental studies and stakeholder engagement, EirGrid will publish the final project proposal, which will form the basis for a new application to An Bord Pleanála.

Report Findings

The Preliminary Re-evaluation Report documents the reassessment of high level issues that form the basis of this project. The report contains the following preliminary findings:

1. There is still a clear and immediate need for enhanced interconnection with Northern Ireland. This will provide significant benefits for the people of Ireland:

- Improve competition in the electricity market;
- Improve security of supply; and
- Support the development of renewable power generation.

2. There remains a need to reinforce the transmission network in the north-east area of the Republic of Ireland.

3. The best technological solution for this project is a 400 kV Overhead Line (OHL), running from the existing Woodland Substation in Meath to the proposed Turleenan Substation in Tyrone.

4. Undergrounding of short sections of the line is feasible but no new areas that would warrant additional undergrounding have been identified to date.

5. The previously planned intermediate substation (in the vicinity of Kingscourt), is not now expected to be required within the next decade. This will therefore be subject to a separate application to An Bord Pleanála when that need arises.

6. Each of the previously identified route corridors remains viable as a routing option for the proposed Development.

7. Route 3B in the Meath Study Area and Route A in the Cavan-Monaghan Study Area remain the corridors that strike the best balance between all criteria. The indicative line route is broadly similar to the line proposed in the previous application (see map insert).





Project Evolution

What changes have been made to the project as a result of the Preliminary Re-evaluation Process?

The Preliminary Re-evaluation Report has reconfirmed most of the original conclusions for this project. However, some modifications have been made, which include:

- Removal of the previously proposed Moyhill Substation near Kingscourt and certain modifications associated with this;
- Local modification to avoid new houses.

We Welcome Your Feedback

EirGrid is seeking feedback from all interested stakeholders on the findings of the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report, which is available at www.eirgrid.com and the project information centres (See details of location at the back of this brochure).

If you have any feedback on the findings in this report, EirGrid would like to hear your views. EirGrid is keen to learn of any new insights on aspects of the project before a new application for planning approval is submitted. Submissions will be recorded and considered by the project team as the project moves forward. The assessment and response to feedback received as part of this process will be published with the Final Re-evaluation Report.

We would greatly appreciate your comments and views on the following key questions:

1. Has EirGrid considered all relevant criteria in determining that the optimum technical solution for this project is an overhead line? If not, what additional information should EirGrid consider or what viable, cost-effective, technically appropriate and environmentallysensitive alternative would you suggest?

2. Have all environmental criteria been appropriately considered? Is there anything else that you think should be looked at?

3. Are there any other key issues that EirGrid should consider before submitting a new application to ABP.

There is a tear-off feedback form on the last page of this brochure. You can also provide feedback through email, on the phone line, or by meeting with a member of the project team.

A six week non-statutory consultation process will now commence; please submit your views to the Project Team by 17th June 2011.

North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development Community Update May 2011

Contact Us

Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Phone: Lo-Call 1890 25 26 90 (9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday)

Visit: Navan Information Centre 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath (Please note our new address) Open Tuesdays, 1:00 – 7:00 pm or by appointment

Carrickmacross Information Centre

Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan Open Wednesdays, 1:00 – 7:00 pm or by appointment

Web: www.eirgrid.com

Post: C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland



Feedback

Name					
Address					
Telephone					

Email

Return to: **C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager**, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland

What are your views?





Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Phone: **Lo-Call 1890 25 26 90** (9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday)





www.eirgrid.com

APPENDIX C

COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, APRIL 2013





North-South 400kV Interconnection Development

Community Update

April 2013



Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative



 H_{H}

Re-evaluation of the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development concludes with the publication of the Final Re-evaluation Report



Overview

EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) are jointly planning a major cross-border electricity scheme. This scheme is a 400kV overhead line linking the existing 400kV substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone and will provide a second high capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and Northern Ireland. The scheme consists of two separate but related and complementary projects. EirGrid will in due course apply for planning approval for that part of the scheme located in Ireland called the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development.

Project Drivers

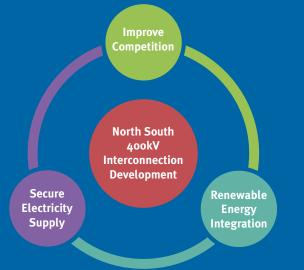
The key drivers for this project are to:

- Improve competition in the electricity market This project will improve the efficiency of the all-island electricity market
- Ensure a secure supply of electricity for the island of Ireland

This project will enhance the security of the electricity supply throughout the island of Ireland which is essential for economic growth, the creation of jobs and improving the standard of living and quality of life for all

• Help Ireland meet its 40% renewable electricity target

This project will allow more renewable energy to be connected to the network, reducing our production of greenhouse gases and our reliance on imported fossil fuels



While each of these key drivers on their own creates a definite need for the project, combined they create an overwhelming and urgent need.

What has happened so far?

This project was first launched in autumn 2007 and an application for planning approval was submitted to An Bord Pleanála in December 2009. This application was withdrawn in July 2010.

Since the withdrawal of the application, EirGrid has been engaged in the process of undertaking a comprehensive re-evaluation of the project. This involved, among other things, a thorough re-examination of the previous application, including issues raised during the previous application process. In May 2011, EirGrid published its interim findings as set out in a Preliminary Re-evaluation Report, which was subject to consultation.

The consultation requested feedback on the content and findings of the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report and included engagement with the public and landowners on the indicative line route.

The consultation on the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report included:

- The strategic need for the project.
- Technology options for the project.
- Project study area.
- Environmental and other constraints.
- Identification of corridor options.
- Identification of the preferred corridor.
- Identification of an indicative line route within the preferred corridor.

Government Review

A separate review process was undertaken by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR), whereby an International Expert Commission (IEC) reported on the case for, and cost of, undergrounding the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development.

This report was published in January 2012 and recommended the interconnector should not be undergrounded using Alternating Current (AC) cable. However, this report also stated that if undergrounding is to be used, the best technology option currently available is Direct Current (DC). The report estimated that using this technology would cost up to three times more than the standard overhead line solution.

Following a period of consultation, a Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure was published in July 2012. This policy statement recognised this project as one of a group of projects that are "vital developments for the regions and for the economy and society as a whole". It also emphasised the importance of early and ongoing consultation to help identify appropriate mitigation measures such as the reconfiguring or rationalising of existing networks, and the development of a community gain programme.

Conclusion of EirGrid's project re-evaluation

EirGrid has completed its re-evaluation process and published the Final Re-evaluation Report. The re-evaluation process has considered and responded to the following:

- Stakeholder feedback from the previous planning application.
- Stakeholder feedback from the Preliminary Re-evaluation Report consultation.
- The outcome of the Government Review.

The key findings of the project re-evaluation are, that there remains an urgent strategic need for the project. Following EirGrid's consideration of the findings in the IEC report, using DC technology would be technically inferior for this project compared to a standard AC overhead line solution and EirGrid agrees with the IEC that this option would be vastly more expensive.

On this basis EirGrid is proposing that the new Interconnector circuit will generally take the form of a single circuit 400kV AC overhead line. The indicative line route for this overhead line is broadly similar to the previously proposed line route, but incorporates localised modifications as follows:

- Modifications to the line route in order to take account of the construction and granting of permission for new houses occurring since the preparation and submission of the previous application in December 2009.
- Modification arising as a result of the decision not to proceed with an intermediate substation (in the area to the west of Kingscourt) as part of this forthcoming application for approval of the Interconnection Development.
- Modifications arising from technical and environmental considerations during the re-evaluation process.

EirGrid welcomes your views

EirGrid is fully committed to engaging extensively with landowners, members of the public and other interested parties on all aspects of the project at any time. It is vital that everyone has an opportunity to provide feedback on the information presented and decisions that are made as the project progresses towards a planning application.

We encourage you to participate by writing to us, calling us, dropping into one of our information centres



or attending a project open day in Meath, Cavan or Monaghan. We welcome your comments on the Final Re-evaluation Report and your views on whether all issues have been considered as part of the re-evaluation process. If not what other issues do you think EirGrid should consider?

All feedback and submissions will be reviewed and considered by the project team and where appropriate will be incorporated into later stages of the project. To enable this, all feedback should be received by Monday, May 27th 2013.

EirGrid is also seeking your feedback on how best to adopt community gain within transmission project developments and the Grid25 programme in general. You can give your views on community gain by contacting the project information service or using the dedicated feedback form attached to this brochure.

What's happening now?

EirGrid is holding a series of information days on the project. We invite all interested members of the public and other stakeholders to attend these open days to meet with the project team, learn more about the project and give your feedback.

	Date	Time	Location
*	Tuesday April 23rd 2013	1pm – 8pm	Town Hall Cavan Town Co. Cavan
	Wednesday April 24th 2013	1pm – 8pm	Town Hall Cavan Town Co. Cavan
	Thursday April 25th 2013	1pm – 8pm	The Workhouse Shercock Road Carrickmacross Co. Monaghan
	Friday April 26th 2013	1pm – 8pm	The Workhouse Shercock Road Carrickmacross Co. Monaghan
	Monday April 29th 2013	1pm – 8pm	Navan Education Centre Athlumney, Navan Co. Meath
	Wednesday May 1st 2013	1pm – 8pm	Navan Education Centre Athlumney, Navan Co. Meath

What happens next?

Following the completion of this period of consultation, EirGrid will consider all feedback received before finalising its preferred project solution. The preferred project solution will be published in the coming months, which will be the subject of a further period of public consultation.

This consultation will focus on the:

- Preferred line design, this will include the line route, preferred structure and tower locations.
- Methodology for siting and construction of towers.
- Environmental issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).



Feedback -Community Gain



The **Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure** published in July 2012 "underlines the imperative [...] and the appropriateness of building community gain consideration into project planning and budgeting and as an intrinsic part of the ongoing consultation with local communities and local authorities."

EirGrid is currently considering how best to adopt community gain within transmission project development and the Grid25 programme in general. EirGrid is seeking your views on the following:

Who Who should receive community gain?

Who should be included in the "community" on transmission projects?

What What initiatives should be eligible for community gain support ie. sports, arts, education?

What do you define as "gain" for your community e.g. mitigation measures such as compensatory undergrounding* or a fund for local community groups?

- When At what point in a project should community gain be considered? At what point in a project should community gain be available?
- **How** How should community gain be managed?

How should community gain be distributed, what criteria should be used and who should define that criterion?

Submit Your Views

You are welcome to submit your views on additional pages.

Return to : c/o Grid25 Manager, Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

* Compensatory undergrounding is the undergrounding of lower voltage lines in an area where an overhead high voltage circuit is planned.



About EirGrid

EirGrid, a state-owned company, is the national operator of the electricity transmission grid.

The national transmission grid is an interconnected network of high voltage power lines and cables, comparable to the motorways, dual carriage ways and main roads of the national road network. It is operated at three voltage levels; 400kV, 220kV and 110kV and is approximately 6,400km in overall length within Ireland.

It is the backbone of Ireland's electricity system and is vital to ensuring that all industrial, commercial and residential customers from both rural and urban areas have a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient electricity supply.

Contact Details

Write: c/o EirGrid NS Project Manager,

Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Phone: Lo-call **1890 25 26 90** (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)

Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/ northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment

Visit Information Centres:

Navan Every Tuesday from 12 noon to 7pm 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath.

Carrickmacross

Every Wednesday from 12 noon to 7pm Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

Kingscourt

Every Thursday from 12 noon to 7pm Dun A Ri House Hotel, Station Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan.





www.eirgridprojects.com

Grid25 is EirGrid's ongoing development plan to deliver a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, business and industries. Grid25 will also help us meet our target of 40% of our energy supply coming from sustainable Irish sources.

APPENDIX D

COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, JULY 2013





North-South 400kV Interconnection Development

Community Update

July 2013



Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative



EirGrid Publishes Preferred Project Solution Report for Stage 3 Consultation



The Project

EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) are jointly planning a major cross-border electricity transmission scheme.

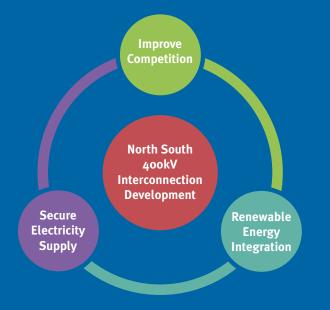
This scheme is a 400kV overhead line linking the existing 400kV substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone and will provide a second high capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and Northern Ireland. EirGrid will in due course apply for planning approval for that part of the scheme located in Ireland called the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development.

Project Drivers

The key drivers for this project are to:

- Improve competition This project will improve the efficiency of the all-island electricity market
- Ensure a secure supply of electricity This project will enhance the security of the electricity supply throughout the island of Ireland which is essential for economic growth, the creation of jobs and improving the standard of living and quality of life for all
- Help Ireland meet its 40% renewable electricity target

This project will allow more renewable energy to be connected to the network, reducing our production of greenhouse gases and our reliance on imported fossil fuels



NIE has already applied to the competent authority in Northern Ireland for approval for the part located in Northern Ireland.

What has happened recently?

In April 2013, EirGrid published a Final Re-evaluation Report, which provided a comprehensive review of the project and was the subject of a six-week period of public engagement. Stakeholders, including members of the public and landowners, were invited to provide feedback on the content and findings of the report.

Stakeholders provided feedback on the Final Re-evaluation Report at nine open days in Meath, Cavan and Monaghan. Further feedback was received, through the project information service, which included telephone, email, post and face to face meetings with the project team during April and May 2013. This feedback has been considered and responded to by the project team and forms part of a new publication called the Preferred Project Solution Report.

What is happening now?

The Preferred Project Solution Report for the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development documents the line design process and provides detailed information on the line route. An eight-week public consultation on the Report is underway from Tuesday 16th July to Monday 9th September 2013.

This is the final formal consultation period prior to the submission of an application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála.

The preferred project solution is a 400kV overhead power line linking the existing 400kV substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone.

The Report provides detailed information on the line route, including

- Maps showing the preferred line route for the project and the proposed locations of the towers.
- Description of the methodologies for siting and constructing towers.
- An outline of the environmental issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which will accompany a future application for planning approval.

In developing the line design for this project, previously received landowner and stakeholder feedback has been considered.

EirGrid will not seek permission in its application to An Bord Pleanála to move tower positions post-planning. This was previously referred to as "micro-siting".



EirGrid's Project Development & Consultation Roadmap

The North-South 400kV Interconnection Development has entered Stage Three: Confirm Design phase of the EirGrid Project Development & Consultation Roadmap.

The roadmap is a structured framework of project development that provides a clear and transparent process to all stakeholders.

During this phase feedback from stakeholders informs decisions made by EirGrid with regard to the specific nature, extent and location of the project.

EirGrid will seek to engage with landowners on the proposed route in order to ensure that any concerns

or matters regarding siting of the proposed towers are addressed.

Following the close of this 8-week consultation period, EirGrid will review and consider all stakeholder and landowner information received.

During this time, EirGrid will also undertake technical and environmental studies which will also inform the final project proposal.

EirGrid will then prepare a planning application, including EIS, for the proposed development, which will then be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for EIA and planning approval.



We are Here

EIRGRID WELCOMES YOUR VIEWS

EirGrid is seeking your views on the topics covered in the Preferred Project Solution Report, particularly on the following:

- Preferred line design.
- Construction methodology.
- Topics to be considered and/or addressed in the EIS.
- Any other feedback or comments on other issues relating to the project.

You can make a submission through the feedback form on the last page of this brochure, at the project open days or information centres, or through the project information service.

All feedback and submissions will be reviewed and considered by the project team and, where appropriate, will be incorporated into the proposed development which will be the subject of an application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála. To facilitate this process all feedback should be received by 5pm on Monday 9th September 2013.

Meet the Project Team

EirGrid extends an invitation to all interested members of the public and other stakeholders to attend information days on the project to meet the project team, learn more about the project and give feedback.

Information days

Location	Date	Time
Co Meath: Education Centre Athlumney Navan	Tuesday 30th July 2013	1pm – 8pm
Co. Monaghan: The Workhouse Shercock Road Carrickmacross	Wednesday 31st July 2013	1pm – 8pm
Co. Cavan: Murtaghs Function Room, Main Street Kingscourt	Thursday 1st August 2013	1pm – 8pm

The Environmental Impact Statement

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES THAT WILL BE CONSIDERED IN THE EIS

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be conducted by An Bord Pleanála that will identify, describe and assess the direct and indirect effects of the proposed North-South 400kV Interconnection Development on the environment.

A key element of this EIA process will include the submission by EirGrid of an EIS with the application, for review by An Bord Pleanála.

Legislation and relevant guidelines require the potential impacts on the following environmental topics to be addressed in an EIS:

- Human Beings & Population.
- Flora & Fauna.
- Soil (Geology).
- Air.
- Water.
- Climatic factors.
- Landscape.
- Material Assets, including architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage.
- The inter-relationship between the above factors.

If you would like to identify issues and environmental topics that you feel should be addressed during this process, please participate in this consultation.

IN DETERMINING THE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIS, CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Legislative (EU and Irish) requirements and relevant guidelines.
- Issues of concern to the public and other stakeholders.
- Baseline studies and surveys.
- Alternatives considered.
- Likely significant impacts, e.g. visual impact of overhead power lines.

Feedback Form



Return to:
C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager,
Block 2, Floor 2,
West Pier Business Campus,
Dún Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin,
Ireland.

What are your views?





About EirGrid

EirGrid, a state-owned company, is the national operator of the electricity transmission grid.

The national transmission grid is an interconnected network of high voltage power lines and cables, comparable to the motorways, dual carriageways and main roads of the national road network. It is operated at three voltage levels; 400kV, 220kV and 110kV and is approximately 6,400km in overall length within Ireland.

It is the backbone of Ireland's electricity system and is vital to ensuring that all industrial, commercial and residential customers from both rural and urban areas have a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient electricity supply.

Contact Details

Write: C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Phone: Lo-call 1890 25 26 90 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)

Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/ northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment

Visitor Information Centres open as follows until 5th September 2013 or by appointment:

Navan

Every Tuesday from 12 noon to 7pm 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath.

Carrickmacross

Every Wednesday from 12 noon to 7pm Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

Kingscourt

Every Thursday from 12 noon to 7pm Dun A Ri House Hotel, Station Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan.





www.eirgridprojects.com

Grid25 is EirGrid's ongoing development plan to deliver a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, business and industries. Grid25 will also help us meet our target of 40% of our energy supply coming from sustainable Irish sources.

APPENDIX E

COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, DECEMBER 2013

North-South 400kV Interconnection Development Community Update Newsletter – December 2013



The Project

EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) are jointly planning a major cross-border electricity transmission scheme. This scheme is a 400kV overhead line linking the 400kV substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone and will provide a second high-capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and Northern Ireland. EirGrid will shortly apply for planning approval for that part of the scheme located in Ireland called the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development.

What has happened recently?

In July 2013 EirGrid published its "Preferred Project Solution Report". This was then followed by an eight-week period of public consultation during which time EirGrid invited stakeholders to provide feedback on the topics covered in the report and for their views on issues and environmental topics to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will accompany the application for planning approval.

Numerous requests were received from stakeholders, mostly from landowners, for changes to the line design. These have been assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in the "Preferred Project Solution Report" and many have been accommodated. Where appropriate, this has resulted in a change to the line design.

What is happening now?

EirGrid has now published its proposed final line route which alignment will form the basis of an application for planning approval which will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála. This takes account of the changes arising from the modifications requests. Landowners will receive maps showing how the proposal affects their landholdings.

Maps showing the proposed final line route are also available for viewing by all stakeholders on the project website at **www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/NorthSouth400kVInterconnectionDevelopment**

EirGrid has asked An Bord Pleanála to provide a scoping opinion on what topics should be addressed in the EIS. This is a formal process which requires An Bord Pleanála to review the proposal as set out in the Preferred Project Solution Report and to seek input from relevant prescribed bodies on what should be included in the EIS.

It is expected that following receipt of the EIS scoping opinion from An Bord Pleanála EirGrid will be in a position to submit the EIS and the application for planning approval in early 2014.

Before the application is submitted EirGrid will place planning notices in national and local newspapers to inform the public of its intention to do so. These notices will also advise of the locations and times when the application can be inspected. Members of the public and landowners may make submissions directly to An Bord Pleanála during this same period.

An Bord Pleanála is the competent authority that will complete the Environmental Impact Assessment and determine the outcome of the planning application.

For further information on the project, you may contact us in the following ways:

Write: c/o EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor, 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland

Phone: Lo-call 1890 25 26 90 Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kVinterconnectiondevelopment

Make an appointment to visit us at our local information centres which are available by appointment:

Navan

10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath. Carrickmacross Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. Kingscourt Dun A Ri House Hotel, Station Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan.



www.eirgridprojects.com

APPENDIX F

COMMUNITY UPDATE BROCHURE, JULY 2014







North-South 400kV Interconnection Development

Community Update

July 2014





Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative



Update on recent developments and next steps for the project



Overview

EirGrid and System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI) are jointly planning a major cross-border electricity transmission development. EirGrid is preparing a planning application for An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for the portion of the overall development within Ireland, which runs from a substation at Woodland, Meath to the border at Lemgare, Monaghan. The planning of that portion of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland was originally undertaken by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE). The NIE planning function has since been transferred to SONI.

Project Drivers

Improve competition

This project will improve the efficiency of the all-island electricity market.

Ensure a secure supply of electricity

This project will enhance the security of the electricity supply throughout the island of Ireland which is essential for economic growth, the creation of jobs and improving the standard of living and quality of life for all.

Help Ireland meet its 40% renewable electricity target

This project will allow more renewable energy to be connected to the network, reducing our production of greenhouse gasses and our reliance on imported fossil fuels.

Project Update

An Bord Pleanála (ABP)

In August 2013, EirGrid requested ABP to provide a scoping opinion on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the development. ABP consulted with various parties, including the local and prescribed authorities, as well as statutory agencies in Northern Ireland, before providing its scoping opinion to EirGrid on 11th December 2013 - see http://www.pleanala.ie/casenum/VS0002.htm

Following meetings between EirGrid and ABP to determine whether the project is or is not strategic development, ABP published its decision on the 6th February 2014, finding that:

• the proposed development constitutes strategic infrastructure development,

- an EIS is required to accompany the application, and
- significant effects are likely on the environment in a trans-boundary state (Northern Ireland).

Project of Common Interest

In October 2013, the European Commission designated the overall cross-border development as a Project of Common Interest (PCI). The project is now subject to a new EU regulation that is designed, among other things, to facilitate a faster and more efficient permit granting process. ABP has been designated as the competent authority for managing the PCI process in Ireland and will draw up a schedule for the permit granting process in accordance with the regulation. The pre-application procedure associated with the PCI process commenced on July 2nd 2014 and EirGrid will in due course submit an application for planning approval to ABP.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

EirGrid is now preparing an EIS. This involves a large number of specialists evaluating how the proposed development would interact with the human and natural environment, including any issues of a cross-border nature. As part of this process, potential impacts across a wide range of environmental areas are identified.

The evaluation requires that in the case of each of the identified areas, the baseline conditions be recorded, potential impacts assessed and, where possible, mitigated against using best international practice. For example, the routing of any infrastructure is guided by the principle of mitigation by avoidance. The EIS is being prepared in accordance with the scoping opinion that was provided by ABP. It will also be informed by the feedback received during the public consultation of July to September 2013.

Independent Expert Panel

In January 2014 the Government appointed an Independent Expert Panel to review EirGrid's evaluation of underground routes for the Grid West and Grid Link projects. In addition, the panel was asked to provide an opinion on "the compatibility of the methodologies to be employed on the Grid Link and Grid West projects with what has already been done on the North South Transmission Line project." In July 2014 the panel provided its opinion which is that the work completed to date on the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development is compatible with the methodologies now being employed on the Grid West and Grid Link projects.





EirGrid's Project Development & Consultation Roadmap

The North-South 400kV Interconnection Development is currently in Stage Four: Prepare Planning Application phase of the EirGrid roadmap.

We are Here







Grid25 – Overview of the National Grid Development Strategy

Grid25 is EirGrid's strategy to develop Ireland's electricity transmission system. The strategy aims to support economic growth and job creation.

It facilitates a reliable supply of electricity for all consumers, providing the infrastructure to enable Ireland to realise its renewable potential and achieve the challenging target of delivering 40% of electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020.

The Government policy statement on the *Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure 2012* specifically endorses and supports the Grid25 development strategy. It reaffirms that Grid25 is Government policy and in the national interest.

The Development

The proposed interconnector is a 400kV overhead line linking a substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone. Given its location across two jurisdictions, the proposed interconnector consists of two related and complementary developments:

- 1) The SONI proposal for that portion of the project located in Northern Ireland
- 2) A development being proposed by EirGrid for that portion of the project located in Ireland.



In Ireland the development comprises

- A new single-circuit 400kV overhead transmission line in Monaghan, Cavan and Meath
- A new 400kV circuit along the unused northern side of the existing Oldstreet to Woodland 400kV double circuit line
- Associated works in and adjacent to the Woodland substation in Meath
- An associated temporary construction material storage yard in County Monaghan
- Associated permanent and temporary construction and excavation works





Alternative Routes Considered

In December 2013 EirGrid published its final line route for the project that will form the basis of a planning application that will be submitted to ABP. The final route took account of requests from stakeholders - mostly landowners - for localised changes to the line design. These were evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in the Preferred Project Solution Report, published in July 2013, and many were accommodated.

This was the final instalment in a process dating back to 2007, when EirGrid first published a number of route corridor options. Two years later, in April 2009, following a review of all project documentation, including consultants' studies, reports, and consultation feedback, EirGrid nominated one preferred route corridor for further study.

The preferred route corridor struck the best balance between the competing priorities of community concerns, environmental issues and the technical aspects of the project. The indicative line route in the preferred route corridor was then taken forward to the next phase of project development, involving discussions with landowners, further studies and stakeholder engagement.

Following the withdrawal of an earlier planning application in 2010, EirGrid commenced a comprehensive review of the project. The preliminary findings of the review were published in May 2011 in a Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report. The report included a review of key project documentation, including consultants' studies, reports and feedback from earlier public consultation - including submissions made to ABP. It identified an indicative project solution, which substantially followed the route which formed the basis of the original application.

Underground Options

Since the project commenced numerous studies have been undertaken regarding options for overhead lines and underground cables, including an International Expert Commission, appointed by the Government.

- Ecofys Study (2008)
- TEPCO Technical Study (2009)
- PB Power Report (2009)
- TransGrid Study (2009)
- International Expert Commission Report (2012)
- PB Power Technology and Costs Update Report (2013)

In July 2014, a Government-appointed Independent Expert Panel provided its opinion on whether EirGrid had adequately examined an underground option for the interconnector. The panel compared the work to date on the project with its recently formulated terms of reference for EirGrid's Grid West and Grid Link projects. It found that, in all material respects, the studies and work undertaken on the interconnector project is compatible with the methodologies now being employed on the Grid West and Grid Link projects.





About EirGrid

EirGrid is a state-owned company and is the national operator of the electricity grid. The national grid is an interconnected network of high-voltage power lines and cables, comparable to the motorways, dual carriageways and main roads of the national road network. It is operated at three voltage levels; 400kV, 220kV and 110kV and is approximately 6,400km in overall length. It is the backbone of Ireland's power system and is vital to ensuring that all customers; industrial, commercial and residential from both rural and urban areas have a safe, secure, reliable, affordable and efficient electricity supply. EirGrid and SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) are jointly proposing this new high capacity electricity interconnector between the electricity networks of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Currently there is only a single such interconnector between the two networks and a second interconnector is now proposed.

EirGrid also owns SONI Limited (SONI), the System Operator of Northern Ireland. SONI is the applicant for planning approval for that part of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland. The Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) is the market operator of the all-island wholesale electricity trading system. SEMO is a joint venture between EirGrid and SONI. EirGrid operates and develops the national electricity grid power system, providing services to all users of the electricity transmission system. This includes all generators, suppliers, and high voltage customers.

Contact Details

For further information on the project, you may contact us in the following ways:

Write: c/o EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor, 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland

Phone: Lo-call 1890 25 26 90 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)

Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/ northsouth400kVinterconnectiondevelopment

Make an appointment to visit our information centres:

Navan: 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath

Carrickmacross: Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan

Kingscourt: Dun a Ri House Hotel. Station Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan

Information on the PCI Process

An Bord Pleanála, the competent authority for managing the PCI process in Ireland, has published a Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures which can be viewed at http://www.pleanala.ie/publications/index.htm The EU Commission PCI website can be accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/pci/pci_en.htm.

For information on the Regional Group Meetings please go to https://circabc.europa.eu. Then select (in sequence) Browse Categories, Energy, 13 Regional Group Meetings and Library.



Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative





www.eirgridprojects.com

Grid25 is EirGrid's ongoing development strategy to deliver a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, business and industries. Grid25 will also help us meet our target of 40% of our energy supply coming from sustainable Irish sources.

APPENDIX G

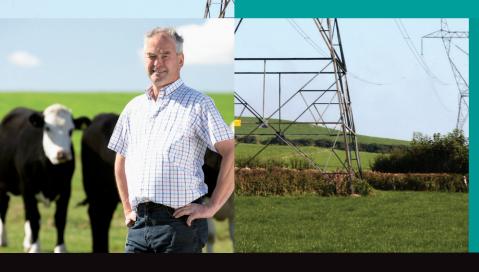
LANDOWNER BROCHURE, JULY 2013





North-South 400kV Interconnection Development

Landowner Information Brochure July 2013





Phase 2 of Landowner Consultation is now commencing



EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity are jointly planning a major cross-border electricity transmission scheme.

This scheme is a 400kV overhead line linking the existing 400kV substation in Woodland, County Meath with

a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone and will provide a second high capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and Northern Ireland. EirGrid will in due course apply for planning approval for that part of the scheme located in Ireland called the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development.

EirGrid is commencing the second phase of its landowner engagement strategy



EirGrid is committed to providing an accessible, meaningful and accountable consultation process. The engagement process has three phases:

Phase 1- Indicative Route (Completed)

Phase 1 of the landowner engagement process took place from May to July 2011. In this phase, all landowners were issued with maps showing the **Indicative Route** of the line as then envisaged on their property. EirGrid agents also sought to meet with each landowner to obtain feedback, confirm ownership, discuss the possible positioning of towers and gain access for environmental and/or technical surveys, where applicable.



Phase 2 - Preferred Line Route (Current Phase)

The second phase of landowner consultation is now commencing on the **Preferred Line Route**, **proposed tower locations**, **construction access routes**, and other matters related to the project. All affected landowners, have been issued with updated maps outlining the above information and they will have an opportunity to comment and suggest changes to certain aspects of the proposal.

The consultation period will run for a period of eight weeks, from Tuesday, 16th July 2013 to Monday, 9th September 2013. This is the final formal consultation period prior to the submission of an application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála.

There are several ways for you to engage with EirGrid:

- Contact your dedicated landowner agent (contact details are provided in your landowner letter).
- A **Change Request Form** is provided with this brochure, see page seven for further details.
- EirGrid is hosting a series of **Open Days** for the general public and landowners to provide their feedback on the project. For details of the Open Days planned in your area, please refer to the Community Update Brochure.
- Our Navan Information Centre is open every Tuesday from 12 noon to 7pm, our Carrickmacross Information Centre every Wednesday from 12 noon to 7pm and our Kingscourt Information Centre every Thursday from 12 noon to 7pm.
- Feedback can also be provided by post to: C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, by email to northsouth@eirgrid.com or by phone to 1890 25 26 90 (Mon-Friday 9am to 5pm).

EirGrid will assess all feedback received during Phase 2 and, where possible, incorporate feedback into the proposal to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval.

Note: EirGrid will not be seeking permission in its application to move tower positions post-planning (previously referred to as "micro-siting").

Phase 3 - Final Proposal

In Phase 3 landowners will be informed of the final proposal that EirGrid is submitting to An Bord Pleanála for approval. Landowners will receive maps and information confirming the route and tower locations included in the application for approval as well as information on the statutory consultation phase.



Compensation

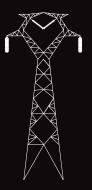
In the event that the proposed development receives planning approval and proceeds to construction, losses incurred by the owner of lands on which the line is constructed will be compensated by means of a statutory compensation process, where appropriate.

Preferred Project Solution

EirGrid has now published the Preferred Project Solution Report for the project. The report is available on the project website: **www.eirgridprojects.com** or alternatively by contacting any member of the project team. Contact details are provided on the back page of this brochure.

Overhead Line Design

As stated in the Preferred Project Solution Report, the new interconnector circuit shall generally take the form of a single circuit 400kV AC (alternating current) overhead line (OHL). An overhead transmission line is made up



Intermediate or Suspension Tower

These support the conductors (wires) on straight sections of the line route.

Typical Height: 27 - 43m

Footprint Range: **6.4 x 6.4m to 11 x 11m**



Angle/Tension Tower

These are used where the line route changes direction.

Typical Height: 24 - 37m

Footprint Range: **7.4 x 7.4m to 12 x 12m**



Transposition Tower

Only two of these are proposed. They are required in order to improve the operating performance of the line.

Typical Height: **37 - 56m**

Footprint Range: **5.5 x 5.5m to 8.5 x 8.5m** of a number of elements, including conductors (wires), shieldwires, insulators and supporting structures. There are three types of towers proposed for this project. The height and footprint of each tower is dependent upon the tower type and the terrain over which the line passes. If you would like additional information on the size of the towers, if any, currently proposed for your land, please contact your dedicated landowner agent.

At 400kV, the conductors are required to be a minimum of 9 metres above ground. The distance between towers is known as the "span", and the length of the span is dependent on the terrain over which the line is to cross. The average span will be about 350 metres.

The preferred line route will also utilise nine existing double circuit towers on the approach to Woodland substation. These towers can carry two separate circuits and one side is currently unused and available for the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development.

Guidelines for Overhead Line Design and Tower Positioning

The current preferred line route is designed in accordance with national and international standards and best practice.

In designing the preferred line route, landowner considerations, as well as technical and environmental constraints, have been considered. The guiding principles for positioning the towers are explained in detail in the Preferred Project Solution Report. Some of the considerations are outlined below. As part of this phase of landowner consultation, EirGrid is seeking your feedback on the line route and proposed tower locations.

Landowner Considerations

• Minimise disturbance to current land use, farm and land management practices.

Technical Considerations

- Meet the line design requirements and technical limits of the proposed tower, such as span length and clearance height.
- Avoid sharp changes in direction in the line and minimise the number of angle towers required where possible.

Environmental Considerations

- Avoid known ecologically sensitive areas where possible. (e.g. SAC/cSAC/pNHA/NHA/SPAs).
- Cause least disturbance and minimise impacts to natural heritage interests (including watercourses) and cultural heritage interests.
- Avoid sites of potential ecological importance, e.g. hedgerows and wetlands. Only site towers on hedgerows if the impact can be assessed by survey and appropriate mitigation measures identified.
- Integrate the line into the landscape where possible.
- Where possible, achieve a lateral clearance of 50m from the centre line to nearest dwelling and, on the grounds of general amenity, avoid routing close to residential areas.

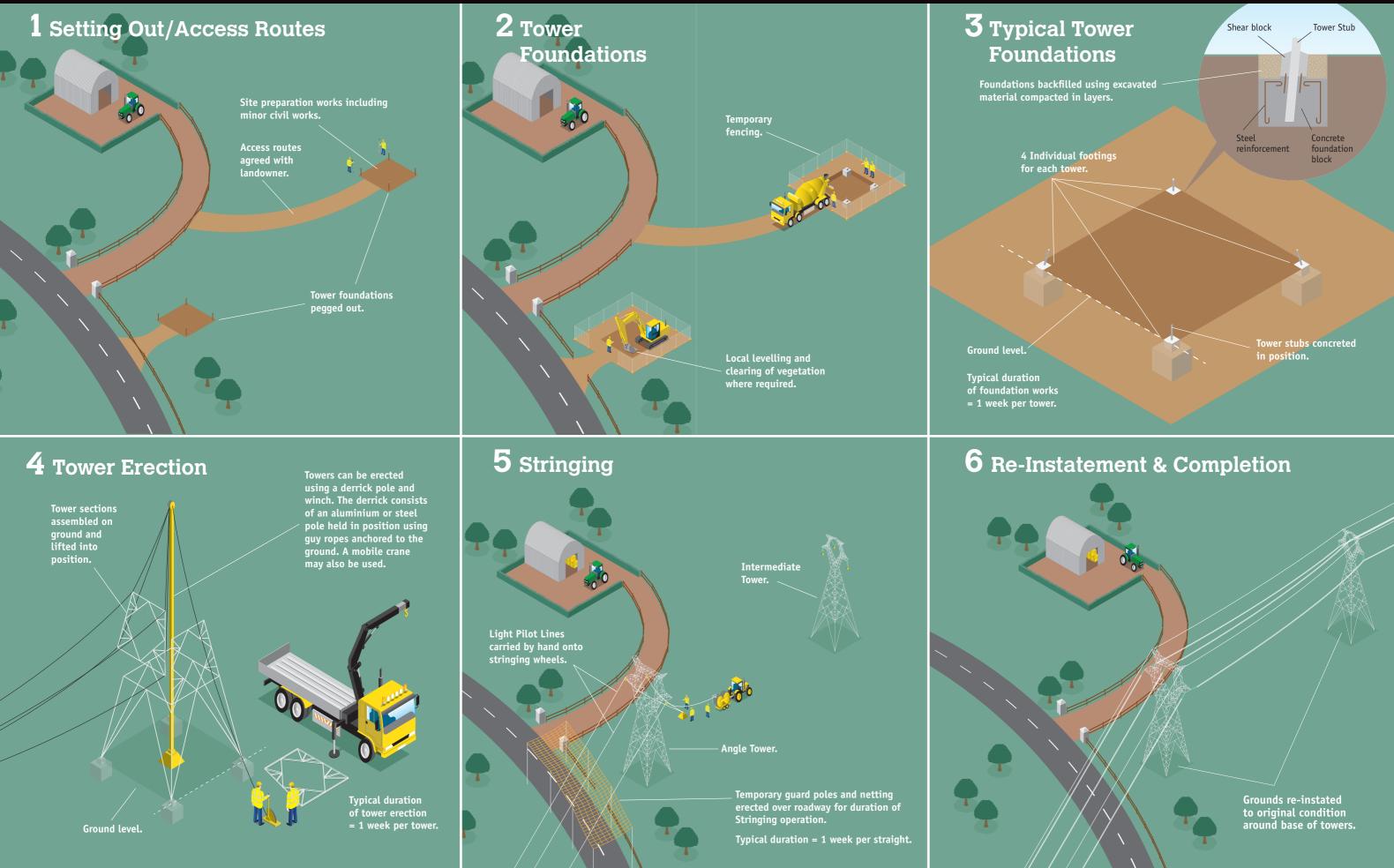


(For illustrative purposes only)

It should be noted that the construction methodology outlined below is indicative only and is based on EirGrid's and ESB Networks' experience of similar transmission line projects. Where there are site specific issues, for example poor ground conditions or unique planning conditions, then alternative methodologies are likely to be required.

In all cases, EirGrid will work with landowners to agree access routes and to minimise disruption.

Individual tower sites will be separated by an average of 350m and access to the sites will be required for short periods during each phase of construction.



Guidelines for Identifying Construction Access Routes

In identifying indicative construction access routes EirGrid seeks to minimise the environmental impact and the impact on farm and land management practices. These indicative temporary access routes will be approximately 4 metres in width to cater for the construction vehicles. Where possible, landowner preferences will be accommodated and existing access routes will be utilised.

The guiding principles used in the identification of access routes are explained in detail in the **Preferred Project Solution Report** and a summary is provided below.

Landowner Considerations

- Minimise disturbance to current land use and farm and land management practices.
- Take appropriate precautions to protect animal welfare and crop fertility by avoiding the spreading of diseases and noxious and invasive plants between farms.

Technical Considerations

- Maximise use of existing farm entrances, farm tracks/ roads and bridges, where possible.
- The use of private accesses to residential properties should be avoided wherever possible for safety and amenity reasons.

Environmental Considerations

- Avoid sensitive areas where possible (e.g. SAC/cSAC/pNHA/NHA/SPAs).
- Cause least disturbance, and minimise impacts, to natural heritage interests (including watercourses) and cultural heritage interests.
- Minimise the amount of new temporary entrances, and access tracks/roads, where possible.
- Minimise intrusion and disturbance to the surrounding area and local communities.

Where applicable, an aerial map(s) detailing the proposed indicative access routes for construction purposes are included in your landowner pack. As part of this phase of landowner consultation we are seeking your feedback on the suitability of these indicative access routes.

How You Can Influence the Line Design

EirGrid is seeking to minimise disturbance to current land use and farm management practices and is seeking your feedback. You can provide feedback to your designated landowner agent or by contacting our dedicated project information service or in writing using the Change Request Form provided on page seven of this brochure.

In addition, if you would like an agricultural advisor to meet with you in order to carry out an assessment of the impact that the proposal may have on your farm practice, please advise through one of the methods listed above.

In order for your proposed modification to be adopted it must:

- Meet general line design requirements.
- Not create greater impact for adjoining dwellings/ sensitive receptors, and
- Tower and line movements should be confined to the landowner property, where possible unless otherwise agreed with adjoining landowners.

All reasonable line route and tower movement requests will be considered and assessed. A balanced judgement will be made, based on technical and environmental considerations and the results of this assessment will be communicated to you.

Approved change requests will be incorporated into the final proposed development which will be submitted for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála. As indicated previously EirGrid will not be seeking flexibility in the application to move tower positions post-planning.

Please submit your feedback to the Project Team by 9th September 2013.



Landowner Change Request Form



Reference Number:					(As Issued by EirGrid)
Name:					
Address:					
Telephone:			Email:		
Preferred Method of Contact:	a) post	b) phone			
	c) email	d) visit			
1. Is the extent of your land hole Yes			-		e maps you have received? bace provided for feedback below)
2. Would you like to meet direct	ly with EirGrid?				
Yes	No				
3. Would you like an agricultural Yes	advisor to carry o	out an assess	ment of th	e impact	the proposal may have on your farm practices?
4. Would you allow access for an	environmental fi	eld survey of	your prope	erty so th	at EirGrid can assess any change request made?
Yes	No				
5. Do you have any feedback on	the proposed line	e route, tower	locations	or indicat	tive access routes detailed on the map?
Yes (Plea	se provide details	in the space	provided	below)	
No					
Feedback/Details of Proposed Ch	ange(s):*				
Reason(s) for Requested Change((s):				

* (Note – If you wish, please return the landowner map included with your pack, marked with your proposed modification. A copy of the map will be reissued to you upon receipt)

Return to : C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

About EirGrid

EirGrid, a state-owned company, is the national operator of the electricity transmission grid.

The national transmission grid is an interconnected network of high voltage power lines and cables, comparable to the motorways, dual carriageways and main roads of the national road network. It is operated at three voltage levels; 400kV, 220kV and 110kV and is approximately 6,400km in overall length within Ireland.

It is the backbone of Ireland's electricity system and is vital to ensuring that all industrial, commercial and residential customers from both rural and urban areas have a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient electricity supply.

Contact Details

Write: C/O EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Phone: Lo-call 1890 25 26 90 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)

Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

Website: http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/ northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment

Visitor Information Centres open as follows until 5th September 2013 or by appointment:

Navan Every Tuesday from 12 noon to 7pm 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath.

Carrickmacross

Every Wednesday from 12 noon to 7pm Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

Kingscourt Every Thursday from 12 noon to 7pm Dun A Ri House Hotel, Station Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan.



Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative



www.eirgridprojects.com

Grid25 is EirGrid's ongoing development plan to deliver a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, business and industries. Grid25 will also help us meet our target of 40% of our energy supply coming from sustainable Irish sources.

APPENDIX H

BROCHURES AND FAQS 2007 - 2010





MEATH-CAVAN 400KV POWER LINE

Proposed Route Corridor Options, Public Consultation October 2007



Part funded by EU TEN-E Initiative

Who is EirGrid?

EirGrid plc, a state owned company, is the independent electricity Transmission System Operator in Ireland and the Market Operator in the wholesale electricity trading system. EirGrid's role is to deliver quality connection, transmission and market services to generators, suppliers and customers utilising the high voltage electricity system, and to put in place the grid infrastructure required to support the development of Ireland's economy. EirGrid develops, maintains and operates a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system. EirGrid is playing a key role in establishment of the new All-Island Market for Electricity, as well as developing a second North-South Interconnector.

What's Happening?

EirGrid is planning two projects to facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity, promoting better competition and to ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East. The 2 projects are:

Bokm long 400kV Interconnector between Cavan and Tyrone

=58km Woodland (Co Meath) to Kingscourt (Co Cavan) 400kV Power Line.

The 58km Woodland, Co Meath to Kingscourt, Co Cavan 400kV Power Line is necessary to strengthen the existing power supply in the North East due to recent increased development in the region. This project will connect the existing sub-station in Woodland, Co Meath to a proposed new sub-station near Kingscourt in Co Cavan.

Following extensive studies, route corridor options have been developed and are presented overleaf.

Benefits

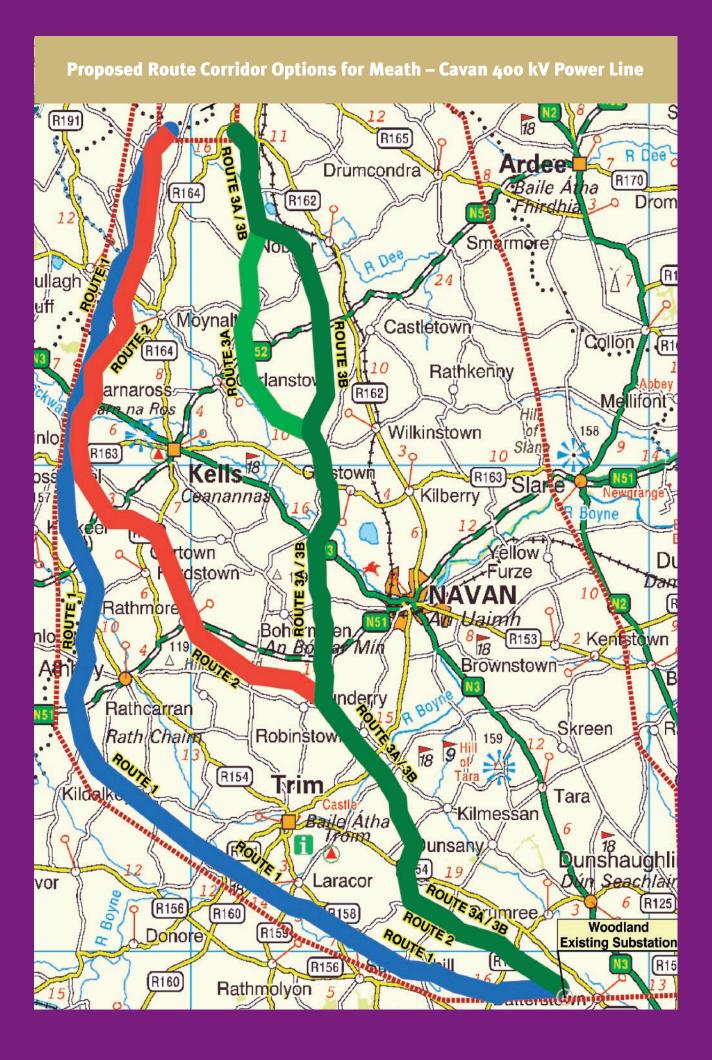
- Provide high quality bulk power supply for the North East
- Support growth in the region and ensure continuing reliability of supply.
- Boost existing industry in the North East when competing for business and inward development in the area.
- Guarantee security of supply for future decades if nothing is done now, by 2012/13 there is likely to be insufficient network capacity required to supply demand in the North East
- Increase competition and therefore reduce the cost of electricity to customers.
- Increase reliability for the local network in the North East and for all electricity customers.

How were the route corridors decided upon?

Seven key criteria were taken into account by the consultants when choosing possible route corridors for the power lines:

Visual Impact:	An assessment of the of the visual impact of the proposal on the environment was carried out in order to minimise the impact
Community:	an assessment of the local villages and communities was undertaken to reduce the proximity of the power lines to them and ensure minimal impact on lifestyles of those living and working in nearby communities.
Ecology:	A review of conservation designated areas, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Area (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) was completed.
Cultural Heritage:	Architectural and archaeological heritage sites, including recorded archaeological monuments and places, protected structures, and national monuments, were assessed in an attempt to minimise any impact.
Landscape:	A review of County Development Plans was undertaken in order to assess the numbers of scenic views, scenic routes, and vulnerable landscapes in the area.
Geology:	Soil, subsoil and bedrock was used to determine significant types and their benefits and drawbacks.
Water:	The surface water features were reviewed, as lakes are to be avoided and river crossings minimised.

All of the above constraints were taken into account in order to ensure that the route options were sited in the best possible location.



Route Corridor Options

Meath-Cavan Route Option 1

Route Option 1 runs to the western part of the study area, staying to the west of the towns of Trim, Athboy and Kells and approximately 5km north of the town of Ballivor and approximately 1km east of the town of Mullagh.

Route Option 2

Route Option 2 runs between the central and western section of the study area, staying to the east of the town of Trim and Athboy, west of the town of Kells and then runs parallel to Route Option 1, running approximately 2.5km to the east of the town of Mullagh

Route Option 3

Route Option 3 follows Route Option 2 initially before running in a due north direction, running to the west of the town of Navan and to the east of the town of Kells. Approximately 6km north of the N3, this route option splits into two options 3A and 3B, before joining together west of Whitewood Lough.

Your views are important to us

We welcome all suggestions and queries. All submissions made and feedback collected during the public consultation on route selection will be used by the technical project teams to inform their decision on selecting the most appropriate route. All queries and submissions made will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Please study the maps and tell us your views on the proposed route corridor options you may use the enclosed feedback form or additional pages if you wish. All correspondence will be dealt with confidentially.

What Happens Next?

- Following public consultation in October 2007, submissions made by the public, businesses and other organisations will be taken into account, and along with further technical and other studies, will help to determine a Preferred Route.
- It is hoped that a Preferred Route will be ready for presentation to the public in early 2008, after which it will likely undergo further studies before a planning application is prepared.
- The planning application will include preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and consultation with landowners and the local community. The Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) will assess the impact of the project on the local areas as it is a process for anticipating and, possibly, preventing, negative effects on the environment that may be caused by a proposed development or project.

Keep informed

EirGrid is committed to ensuring that all members of the public are fully aware of the project and encourage you to participate in public consultation. If you would like to discuss the project or to meet with a member of the project team, please contact us by either telephone or email. Otherwise, keep an eye on the website for regular updates.

www.eirgrid.com Tel: 1890 25 26 90 email: meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com

Feedback

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

The Project Manager Meath-Cavan 400kV Power Line EirGrid 27 Lower Fitzwilliam St Dublin 2, Ireland

What are your views?



UPDATE

frequently asked questions

CAVAN - TYRONE 400kV POWERLINE - New North-South Interconnector MEATH - CAVAN 400kV POWERLINE

NEED FOR THE PROJECT & COST

What's happening?

EIRGRI

EirGrid is planning two projects to facilitate cross-Border sharing of electricity, promote better competition and to ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East. The two projects are:

- The Cavan-Tyrone 400kV Power Line

 the new North-South
 Interconnector, approximately
 80km in length.
- The Woodland (Co Meath) to Kingscourt (Co Cavan) 400kV Power Line, approximately 58km in length.

Why are these new Power lines needed?

- To increase the security and reliability of electricity supply to all households, businesses and other customers throughout the island of Ireland. To support growth and boost existing industry in the region and ensure continuing reliability of supply.
- To facilitate the use of even more renewable energy such as from wind farms, wave, tidal and biomass, to connect to the electricity network. The Irish government has set out an ambitious target of 33% renewable generation by 2020.
- The North-South Interconnector (Cavan-Tyrone 400kV line) will allow the new all-island wholesale electricity market to work efficiently. This will allow for increased competition in electricity supply thereby offering consumers choice and competitive prices.
- The Meath-Cavan 400kV Power Line is necessary to strengthen the existing power supply in the North East due to recent increased development in the region, and to ensure there is enough capacity to transmit bulk supplies of power in order to meet energy demand in the coming years. Demand is growing on average 4% per year so if nothing is done in the next number of years there will not be enough high voltage infrastructure to bring power to these areas.



NEED FOR THE PROJECT & COST (Continued)

How much will these projects cost?

- The Cavan-Tyrone Interconnector will cost approximately €180 million.
- The Meath-Cavan Power Line will cost approximately €100 million.

These approximate figures are initial estimates for the total project.

Who pays for the project?

- The European Union Trans-European Network for Energy has funded 50% of the stage 1 phase (i.e. to Planning) for both the Meath-Cavan Power Line and the Cavan-Tyrone Interconnector.
- 2) The remainder of the cost of the stage 1 phase for the Meath-Cavan Power Line will be funded by EirGrid and is ultimately funded by the electricity consumer.
- 3) The remainder of the cost of the stage 1 phase for the Cavan-Tyrone Interconnector will be funded jointly by EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity and is ultimately funded by the electricity consumer in both jurisdictions.

ESB is the Transmission Asset Owner (TAO), while EirGrid is responsible for the development of the transmission

system. These activities are funded ultimately by all electricity customers through transmission use of system charges to generators and suppliers. The amount that EirGrid and ESB (TAO) can recover is regulated by the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) through five yearly price controls that determine appropriate levels of capital and operating expenditure.

What is EirGrid's role?

EirGrid plc, a state owned company, is the independent electricity Transmission System Operator in Ireland and the Market Operator in the wholesale electricity trading system.

- EirGrid's role is to deliver quality connection, transmission and market services to those who generate electricity, suppliers and customers utilising the high voltage electricity system, and to put in place the grid infrastructure required to support the development of Ireland's economy.
- EirGrid develops, maintains and operates a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient system to transmit electricity.
- EirGrid is playing a key role in establishing the new All-Island Market for Electricity, as well as developing a second North-South Interconnector.

ROUTE CORRIDOR OPTIONS

How were route corridors decided upon?

Seven key criteria were taken into account when choosing possible route corridors for the power lines:

- Visual Impact: An assessment of the visual impact of the proposal on the environment was carried out in order to minimise the impact
- Community: an assessment of the local villages and communities was undertaken to reduce the proximity of the power lines to them to ensure minimal impact

on the lifestyles of those living and working in nearby communities

- Ecology: A review of conservation designated areas, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) was completed
- Cultural Heritage: Architectural and archaeological heritage sites, including recorded archaeological monuments and places, protected structures, and national monuments, were assessed in order to minimise any impact

ROUTE CORRIDOR OPTIONS (Continued)

- Landscape: A review of County Development Plans was undertaken in order to assess the numbers of scenic views, scenic routes, and vulnerable landscapes in the area
- Geology: Soil, subsoil, and bedrock were used to determine significant types and their benefits and drawbacks
- *Water:* The surface water features were reviewed, as lakes are to be avoided and river crossings minimised

What is the preferred route?

All of the route corridors that have been prepared are possibilities. EirGrid will announce the preferred routes early in 2008 and the public will have further opportunities to consider and comment on them.

What is the length of the Meath-Cavan 400kV Powerline?

The route from Kingscourt to Woodland is approximately 58km; the line connects an existing substation at Woodland to a proposed new substation at Kingscourt.

What will happen at the new substation in Kingscourt?

The main purpose of a substation is to connect together various transmission lines. This includes converting (transforming) voltage from the powerlines into a lower voltage that ultimately is supplied, via other substations, to customers' homes, businesses, etc.

What is the length of the North-South Interconnector?

The route length from Kingscourt to the Border crossing point near Clontibret, Co. Monaghan, is approximately 45km in the Republic of Ireland.

Where will the substation be located?

A substation will be located near Kingscourt, Co. Cavan close to the existing Flagford-Louth 220kV line. EirGrid is presently trying to acquire a site is this area. The station size will be approximately 240m x 220m (approximately 13 acres) in size and additional lands will be used for access and landscaping purposes.

What impact will these projects have on the environment?

An Environmental Impact Assessment will be undertaken by EirGrid and this is an essential requirement of planning law and must accompany the application for planning permission.

There will be some impact on the environment but EirGrid will keep this to a minimum through a careful route selection process which takes into account all of the environmental and technical constraints.



HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES

What is the function of the overhead powerlines?

The power lines carry electricity from the generators (such as Moneypoint, Poolbeg, Huntstown, wind farms etc.) into a substation where the electricity is transformed into a lower voltage that ultimately is supplied to customers' homes, businesses, etc. The power lines are supported by pylons.

How were route corridors decided upon?

- The high voltage transmission system in Ireland is composed of 110kV, 220kV and 400kV lines, cables and substations.
- There are approximately 6,000km of high voltage lines in Ireland at present.
- It is proposed that the new transmission lines for these projects in the North East will be operated at a voltage of 400kV.
- There are currently 439km of 400kV lines in Ireland, running from Moneypoint in Co. Clare to Woodland in Co Meath and Dunstown in Co. Kildare.
- There are four existing 400kV substations -Moneypoint, Oldstreet, Dunstown and Woodland.

Why use 400kV transmission lines?

These projects will link into the existing 400kV system. Demand for electricity is growing at 4% per annum and so significant additional electricity transmission capacity is needed to meet this demand. Given the required volume of power transfer required, a 400kV line was chosen because it:

- Can carry large quantities of power and so is more efficient than lower voltage lines
- Has strategic benefits and the ability to best meet technical and economic criteria
- Provides additional capacity that can be exploited at a later date by other users, thus avoiding the need for further expansion in future planning horizons

- Shows potential developers and industrialists that there is room for generator capacity in this area, which will enable and encourage further local development
- Will maximise power transfer in the Dublin to Louth corridor and therefore fully leverage interconnection with Northern Ireland, increasing the amount of power that can be accessed by either system operator on both sides of the border
- Opens up the network to competition, allowing producers in Northern Ireland and the UK to access to the Irish electricity supply market

Where will the power come from?

The power ultimately comes from the generators i.e. the power generation stations and renewable energy sources such as wind, wave, biomass, etc. Generators are located throughout the island of Ireland such as in Poolbeg and Moneypoint.

Will powerlines and pylons be built over my house?

No, power lines will not be built over houses. The pylons will be kept as far as possible from houses for amenity reasons i.e

- Visual ImpactCommunity
- - GeologyWater.

Landscape

- Ecology
- Cultural Heritage

What are the standards for pylon/line distances from towns, villages, schools, etc?

One of the main constraints in route selection of overhead lines is avoiding existing residential developments such as houses, schools and hospitals, especially in light of extensive recent development. EirGrid aims to build the powerlines a minimum distance of 50 to 60 metres from existing dwellings to the centre of the line. In the vast majority of cases a much greater distance than 50-60 metres is achieved.

HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES (Continued)

What type of support structures are being used to carry the power lines?

EirGrid is looking at using a variety of new steel lattice pylons with a view of choosing one which has a low visual impact on the environment. They will range from 28-43 metres high.

What size is a pylon?

The pylons have a foot print (ground area) of about 10m x 10m up to 16m x 16m and range from 28 - 43 metres high.

How far apart are the pylons spaced?

The maximum distance between 400kV pylons is 500 metres. On average 400kV lines are spaced an average of 350 metres from each other.

What is the clearance above ground of the lines?

- Generally speaking the clearance (smallest distance) between the line and the ground is more than 11 metres.
- In the very worst case the clearance between the line and the ground is no more than 9 metres, and no more than 10 metres over major roads/railways, based on the maximum line operating temperature of 80 degrees Celsius coinciding with the least favourable weather case.

Is there any noise from the lines?

There will be some noise from the line; however for the most part the noise will be below the existing level of background noise even in houses near the line. Projected noise levels will be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared for the planning application.

OVERHEAD V UNDERGROUND

Why not build underground lines for these projects?

Undergrounding all or part of a Transmission Network presents problems for the secure and reliable operation of that network. The location and repair of faults on underground cables can take a number of weeks, depending on the type of fault and its location. For such an integral part of the transmission system, such a compromise to the security of supply would be unacceptable.

Industries are attracted to a region for many reasons, one of them being a dependable supply of electricity. New industries locating in Ireland discuss with EirGrid the terms, conditions, security of supply and the quality of the power being delivered. A Transmission System based on circuits of underground cable would not provide the continuity or quality of supply necessary to attract the high quality type of industry being sought by the local development agencies such as the IDA.

Are there any underground lines in Ireland?

In line with utilities worldwide, Ireland's transmission system is predominantly based on overhead lines. At present, the transmission system in Ireland is an AC (alternating current) system and comprises about 6,000km of overhead line and 100km of underground cable (of short individual lengths).



OVERHEAD V UNDERGROUND (Continued)

Why are the majority of powerlines in Ireland overhead?

There are a number of reasons why the transmission system is predominantly based on overhead lines. These include:

- An overhead line has several advantages compared with an underground cable, as an overhead line is faster and easier to maintain and repair plus it is not subject to damage from digging activities.
- Underground cable circuits are also more vulnerable to outside construction activities such as local building/road works and farming activities, which can result in excavation damage.
- An underground cable fault can take significantly longer to repair. Firstly, if the fault is not caused by a third party - or the third party has left the scene - the location of the fault has to be identified. An underground cable fault can therefore take weeks to repair as it can be difficult to locate the position of the fault and the repair process itself is slow. Such a situation could not be tolerated on major high voltage systems.
- If cables are laid under agricultural land or crosscountry, the trench for the cables has an environmental and agricultural impact. Farming activities would be impeded and habitats across which the cable was laid would be disrupted. It would also be necessary to maintain permanent year round access for the heavy machinery needed to facilitate emergency fault repair. Even so access would be difficult when cables are under waterlogged fields in wintertime and this would further increase the repair time.
- There are two methods of connecting an overhead line section to an underground AC (alternating current) cable section interface compounds or direct mounting on special interface towers.

Interface compounds would consist of large fenced compounds, with a ground-mounted electrical plant, such as cable sealing ends, surge arresters, highfrequency line traps and communications coupling equipment. Large portal structures would also be required to take the connections from the overhead line end masts. These compounds would be far more visually intrusive than an overhead line mast.

- In certain cases it is possible to mount all of the cable interface hardware as described above on the overhead line pylon itself. Nonetheless, this still leads to a greater visual impact than the normal overhead line structures.
- If underground cables are laid along existing roadways instead of cross-country, traffic delays can occur due to construction during the trenching process and afterwards if repairs are required. After installation, high voltage underground cables cannot be disturbed and this could make it more difficult for road widening or other works.
- Underground high voltage AC (alternating current) cables are typically many times more expensive than the equivalent overhead line and electrically they present many technical difficulties. Maintenance costs are higher for an underground cable than an overhead line. Large amounts of AC underground cable would require reactive compensation to be installed to prevent excessive system voltages.

What are the implications for the system of using underground cables?

Industrial and domestic customers require that the transmission system operates to very high levels of availability. One of the ways that EirGrid achieves this on our overhead line networks is by High Speed Auto Reclosing.

What is High Speed Auto Re-closing?

In case of overhead lines, the majority of faults (over 90%) are of a transient nature usually caused by lightning. In the event of a lightning strike, protection schemes at both ends of the line detect the fault and open the switches (breakers) to clear the fault. The breakers are then re-closed and the circuit switched back into service. All of this takes place in less than half a second and is called High Speed Auto Reclosing.

OVERHEAD V UNDERGROUND (Continued)

- If the fault remains when the circuit is re-closed then the switches open again and stay open until the line is patrolled and the cause of the fault is identified and repaired.
- With underground cables all faults are permanent and the majority of faults are caused by third party activity usually somebody digging into the cable.
- Therefore when a fault is detected on an underground cable, the breakers open the circuit as in the case of overhead lines but do not re-close i.e. no attempt is made to return the cable to service. This is to prevent further damage and for safety reasons - EirGrid do not want to apply full voltage to somebody who may be in contact with the cable.
- Therefore in the case of any underground cable fault, EirGrid switch out the circuit and do not switch it back again until the circuit has been patrolled, the cause of the fault identified and repairs carried out.

In Dublin there are a number of 220kV underground transmission cables connecting the generation stations on the Poolbeg peninsula to the rest of the system. Reclosing as described above is not allowed on these circuits and if a fault does occur the circuit stays out of service until the fault has been found and repaired. Repairs to underground transmission system cables are highly specialised work and it is not uncommon for faulted circuits to be unavailable for several weeks. Similar situations apply in Cork.

When and why are underground cables installed?

EirGrid uses underground cables where there is no other option e.g. in built-up areas or where it is the only practical option, for example on the proposed East-West (Ireland-Wales) undersea connection.

Under certain conditions EirGrid permit short underground cable sections at the end of an overhead transmission line, such as when one end of the underground cable must terminate in a transmission station. While this does have an impact on the circuit availability, the impact is limited because if the underground cable is at one end and a fault occurs on the circuit (the connection between transmission substations), modern protection equipment can be programmed to discriminate whether the fault is on the line or on the underground cable section. For a fault on the overhead line section reclosing is permitted while if it is on the underground cable section reclosing is blocked.

Is there an EU Directive banning overhead lines of this nature due for introduction in 2008?

No plans for any EU Directive banning overhead line construction have been announced or proposed by the European Commission. The reason why an overhead line is proposed here is because it will deliver the most reliable and economic method of transporting power for electricity customers. Overhead lines are the method used for 97 per cent of on-shore high voltage electricity transmission lines in Europe.

What is the Ireland-Wales East-West project?

It is a link between two separate power systems, from Ireland to Wales under the Irish Sea using DC (direct current) technology. This will involve very expensive pieces of infrastructure, called converter stations, at both ends as well as the use of submarine cables.

Why is EirGrid planning AC Overhead lines for the North East projects?

The proposed Meath-Cavan and Cavan-Tyrone 400kV projects will be integral to the All Ireland transmission system. Overhead line AC technology is used everywhere in the world. AC underground is not technically feasible for the length of 400kV line proposed for these projects and would cost many times more.

Direct Current technology would not appropriate for these projects because it doesn't fulfil the function required; DC technology is not suitable for future system development and is expensive.

Given that the costs of completing theses projects is ultimately borne by the consumers, EirGrid is responsible for ensuring that these projects are implemented in the most technical, economical, and reliable means possible taking into account the criteria mentioned detailed elsewhere in this document (see Route Corridors Options section).



HEALTH & EMF

What is EirGrid's position on health and power lines?

A debate about the possible effect on human and animal health of electric and magnetic fields (EMF) has continued since the 1970s. Since then, many thousands of studies have been undertaken all over the world to assess any potentially harmful effects from power lines, electrical appliances and domestic wiring.

EirGrid is satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that extremely low frequency (ELF) electromagnetic fields (EMF) do not have any adverse effect on health. The Irish network is in full compliance with the most up-to-date international and EU guidelines and recommendations relating to public and staff EMF exposure. The proposed new lines will also be in full compliance.

What independent research has been carried out about EMF?

- Extensive worldwide research (at a cost of over €440m) has found no conclusive evidence to date proving that electric and magnetic fields from power lines [i.e. extremely low frequency (ELF) EMF] are harmful.
- A study carried out by the World Health Organisation (WHO) EMF Task Group concluded in 2007 that there are no substantive health issues related to Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) Electro Magnetic Fields (EMFs) at levels generally encountered by members of the public.
- The Irish Department of Communications reported independently on this issue and its conclusions were consistent with the above independent bodies.

Are the guidelines used by WHO ten years old and therefore out of date?

The guidelines by WHO are reviewed regularly by that organisation's International Committee on Non-Ionising Radiation and no change has been made to the guidelines. See www.who.int for further information. All Irish power lines comply with the WHO levels and, in fact, the levels of EMF from power lines in Ireland are far lower than those levels from appliances commonly used in homes throughout the country.

The Draper Report is being quoted as conclusive proof that electromagnetic fields cause serious health risk. Is this true?

International research reviewed by the World Health Organisation, EU and Irish Government has shown that the levels of EMF which anyone in Ireland could be exposed to are safe. The researchers who produced the Draper Study in England and Wales stated that their results indicating a higher risk of childhood leukaemia were not supported by convincing laboratory data or any accepted biological mechanisms. No change in international EMF limits has been implemented as a result of the Draper Report.

What is EirGrid doing about EMF?

EirGrid recognises that some individuals are genuinely concerned about issues regarding EMF and health and we are committed to addressing these concerns by continuing to:

- Design and operate the transmission system in accordance with the most up-to-date recommendations and guidelines of the various expert and independent international bodies.
- Closely monitor engineering and scientific research in this area.
- Provide advice and information to staff and the general public on this issue.

Where can I find out more about EMF?

For more information you can download our brochure 'Information on Electric and Magnetic Fields' from www.eirgrid.com.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Who will EirGrid apply to for planning permission for these projects?

Applications for planning approval for both projects with accompanying Environmental Impact Statements will be made directly to An Bord Pleanála in 2008, under the Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006.

Everybody, including state and semi-state bodies, seeking permission for strategic infrastructure projects of national importance must first apply to the Strategic Infrastructure Division of An Bord Pleanála for a decision on whether the particular project is of strategic importance. EirGrid has already held pre-application consultations with the Strategic Infrastructure Division of An Bord Pleanála in respect of these projects and they have confirmed that they are of strategic importance and fall under the remit of the Strategic Infrastructure Act. Therefore EirGrid will apply to An Bord Pleanála for this approval.

Will the public be consulted before a planning application is made?

The public, the local authorities and interested stakeholders are being consulted and their views will be taken into account in respect of the application that is submitted.

A preferred route for each project will be chosen in early 2008. Public consultation will continue on these projects until planning applications are made later in 2008 to the independent planning authorities who will in turn examine all issues.

Has EirGrid already applied for planning permission to build these overhead lines?

We will not be applying for planning permission until later in 2008, so all concerned people will have information to enable them to make submissions or objections as a part of the independent planning permission process.

Can the public make submissions to the planning authorities?

Members of the public have seven weeks to make submissions to the planning authority from the date of the application. More information on the planning process is available on www.pleanala.ie or at www.eirgrid.com.

What is the Strategic Infrastructure Act?

The Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006 amended the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide for the introduction of a 'strategic consent process' for strategic infrastructure of national importance provided by statutory bodies and private promoters. The Act provides a service for all stakeholders, infrastructure providers, state bodies and general public through:

- a single stage process of approval of projects
- a rigorous assessment of all projects including their environmental input
- full public consultation

The application must be made by way of the full completion of the application form to An Bord Pleanála. The sequencing of the application process and the content of the public notice as set out at section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and article 214 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2006.

Will the public be able to make submissions to An Bord Pleanala?

- An Bord Pleanála requires as a minimum that the public notice of the application would be in two newspapers circulating in the area to which the proposed development relates.
- The documentation relating to the application is to be available for public inspection at the offices of the relevant public authority, the offices of An Bord Pleanála and the offices of the applicant.



THE PLANNING PROCESS (Continued)

- An Bord Pleanála also requires the prospective applicant (EirGrid) to provide a stand alone website containing all of the application documentation. The documentation on the website should be in a read only format whereby members of the public can download/view information in relation to the application.
- The time period for making submissions by the public is to be at least seven weeks from the date the documents become available for inspection. An Bord Pleanála requires that the public notice must indicate the time and date deadline for making submissions to them

Where can I find out more information about the planning process?

More information on the planning process is available on www.pleanala.ie

What permission does EirGrid need to enter land?

As agreed for transmission system reinforcements, ESB carries out the construction works in accordance with the planning approval obtained by EirGrid. ESB's entry onto lands is covered by the Irish Electricity Supply Acts (1927 and subsequent amendments). These acts contain a legal right for ESB to enter onto lands to erect overhead lines subject to a requirement to inform the landowner in advance of construction by a statutory wayleave notice giving ESB's intention to erect an overhead line across their lands. The right of landowners for compensation and access to the Property Arbitration Court was confirmed in the 1985 amendment.

What process will be followed if the proposed route goes through my land?

- In practice, landowners are made aware of the proposed line during the consultative/planning process and the survey/design stage.
- Wayleave notices and a six inch map of the area showing structure locations are formally issued to landowners following receipt of a final grant of planning approval for the overhead line project.
- The wayleave notice must be served on every landowner and on every occupier of land crossed by the proposed line, even if there is no structure on their land.

What compensation will I receive?

Compensation is paid to landowners on whose property the overhead line is erected. This is done in accordance with long established agreements with the Irish Farmers Association.

All agreements with landowners are negotiated individually since the effect of the transmission line on each landowners' property will vary from landowner to landowner. EirGrid will endeavour to complete negotiations with each landowner prior to construction.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

EirGrid would not be making an overhead line proposal for these projects if it was not convinced that this method was the best way to ensure supplies of safe, reliable, secure and economic power for many years ahead in the North East. The proposal is subject to public consultation and the final decision on the project will be made - not by EirGrid - but by independent planning authorities who will examine all issues.

There are many ways for any interested individual or group to raise their concerns and EirGrid is committed to ensuring that all members of the public are fully aware of the project. We encourage everyone to participate in public consultation. There are a number of methods available:

Website

Up-to-date information on both projects is available on EirGrid's website, www.eirgrid.com. This site will be updated regularly to keep everyone informed of the progress of the project.

Email & Phone

Dedicated email addresses (meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com and cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com) and a phone line (1890.25.26.90) have been set up to deal with any queries or issues people may have.

Feedback Form

Fill out the feedback form (available at the Open Days or at www.eirgrid.com) and return it, highlighting your queries / concerns.

Meetings

If you would like to talk directly to the project team regarding either project, we would be happy to arrange such a meeting. Please use any of the above communication methods to make such an appointment.

Elected Members Meetings

EirGrid has made a series of presentations with the elected members of Meath, Cavan, and Monaghan. This was an opportunity for the local representatives to be made fully aware of the project, after which they were able to advise their local stakeholders on the benefits and drawbacks of the projects.

We are keeping in regular contact with Elected Members are providing briefings and information/materials to them as required.

Planning Process

A preferred route for each project will be chosen in early 2008. Public consultation will continue on these projects until planning applications are made later in 2008 to the independent planning authorities who will in turn examine all issues. Subject to planning permission, construction would not take place until 2009. Members of the public have seven weeks to make submissions to the planning authority from the date of the application. More information of the planning process is available on page 9 of this leaflet or visit www.pleanala.ie



Meath-Cavan and Cavan-Tyrone 400kV Power Line Projects

Community Update

EirGrid progresses 400kV power line projects to next phase

Following a review of all project documentation, including consultants' studies, reports, and consultation feedback, EirGrid has nominated one preferred route corridor for each 400kV power line project for further study.

The preferred route corridors are:

Route Corridor 3B for the Meath-Cavan project Route Corridor A for the Cavan-Tyrone project

The preferred route corridors strike the best balance between the often competing priorities of community concerns, environmental issues and the technical aspects of the projects.

To get to this point, EirGrid carried out studies to assess the feasibility of an indicative line route within each route corridor. The indicative line routes in the preferred route corridors will now be taken forward to the next phase of project development, involving discussions with landowners as a priority, further studies and stakeholder engagement.

No decisions can be made on the final line routes until this has been completed. EirGrid remains open to reviewing its position regarding the best solutions for the projects, based on the outcome of this work.

Once all relevant studies, including the Environmental Impact Statement, are complete, EirGrid will bring the final line routes to the Strategic Infrastructure Board in An Bord Pleanála. An Bord Pleanála is the independent statutory body that will ultimately decide if the project can go forward.



Project co-financed by the European Union from the trans-European transport budget

Inside

- Route Corridor Selection Process
- Why Corridors 3B and A?
- Maps of Preferred Route Corridors
- What Next?
- Indicative Project
 Roadmap

Route Corridor selection process

The selection process which has led to EirGrid identifying its preferred route corridors is outlined below. All reports relating to the key phases of the project can be found at www.eirgrid.com.

Technical and Environmental Analysis

To determine the most suitable location for the power lines, the consultants on these projects started by conducting a detailed strategic technical and environmental analysis on the entire study area. A number of initial route corridors were mapped and a desktop study was undertaken to determine the key community, physical, environmental and heritagerelated constraints which would have a bearing on the route corridors.

Key constraints which were considered in identifying potential route corridors included:

- location of dwellings and buildings
- areas designated for nature conservation
- architectural and archaeological heritage sites
- landscapes sensitive to visual impact
- soil type

These constraints were mapped and, from this, three potential route corridor options were refined for both the Meath-Cavan and the Cavan-Tyrone projects.

Further assessment, corridor route drives and site visits were conducted on these possible route corridors to supplement existing desktop information. This activity led to further modification of the corridors and the identification of an indicative line route within each of the corridors.

Consultation

EirGrid has been consulting with the local community, as well as statutory and non-statutory stakeholders in the area and beyond. The primary purpose of this consultation has been to address the public's concerns and issues and to obtain feedback on the project, the various route corridor options, and the consultants' reports. Verbal and written feedback has been recorded during meetings and Open Days, and in correspondence via email, letter and phone.

Information received through consultation has been investigated by EirGrid and, together with information from desktop and site studies, has informed the route corridor evaluation process. All relevant issues raised by the community have either been addressed now or will be addressed at a more appropriate stage of the project when more detailed environmental assessments are carried out.

Why are Route Corridors 3B and A the preferred route corridors?

The preferred route corridors strike the best balance between the often competing priorities of community concerns, environmental issues and the technical aspects of these projects.

The following criteria were used in evaluating all corridor options: **Community Criteria: Technical Criteria: Environmental Criteria**: **Other Criteria:** Planning and land use Water Safety Compliance with Community severance Construction / operation Flora & fauna current planning and Number of dwellings Design (including line Visual amenity and development policy within the 1km wide route length) landscape guidelines corridor Other technical Archaeology, culture Project programme and Number of dwellings considerations and local heritage deliverv Electrical and magnetic
Economic feasibility and other residential accommodation near fields Compliance with best

indicative line routes

public amenities (such

Potential impact on

as schools)

- Air quality
- international practice
- Adaptability for future development

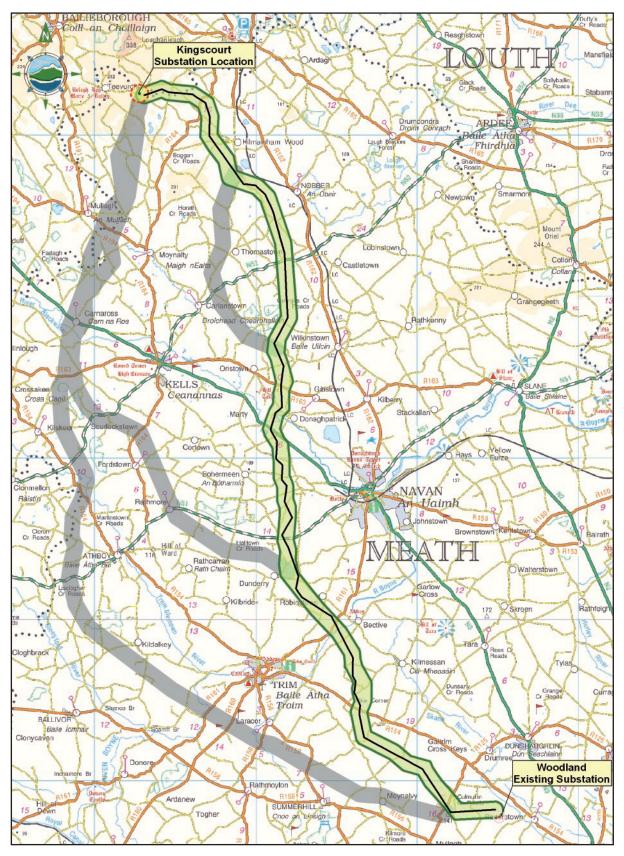
The potential route corridor options for each of the projects were assessed in respect to these selection criteria. For many criteria, in particular technical criteria and others, such as planning and land use, there was little differentiation between the route corridor options. However Corridors 3B and A emerged as having the lowest overall impact when all selection criteria were taken into account.

 Why Route Corridor 3B (Mean Strength Strengt Strength Strengt Strength Strength Strength Strength Strength	 Environmental Criteria Least impact on visual amenity and the surrounding landscape Low impact on protected and designated habitats Low impact on Recorded Monuments and Places (RNPs), and national monuments 	Technical Criteria Shortest line route
Why Corridor A (Cavan-Tyro Community Criteria	ne): Environmental Criteria	Technical Criteria
Least number of dwellings and occupied buildings within the corridor and within proximity of the indicative line route to lower	 Least visual amenity and landscape impact Largely avoids designated areas Avoids sensitive rivers 	No outstanding differences between each of the route corrido options

- the indicative line route to lower possible impacts on communities
- Avoids sensitive rivers

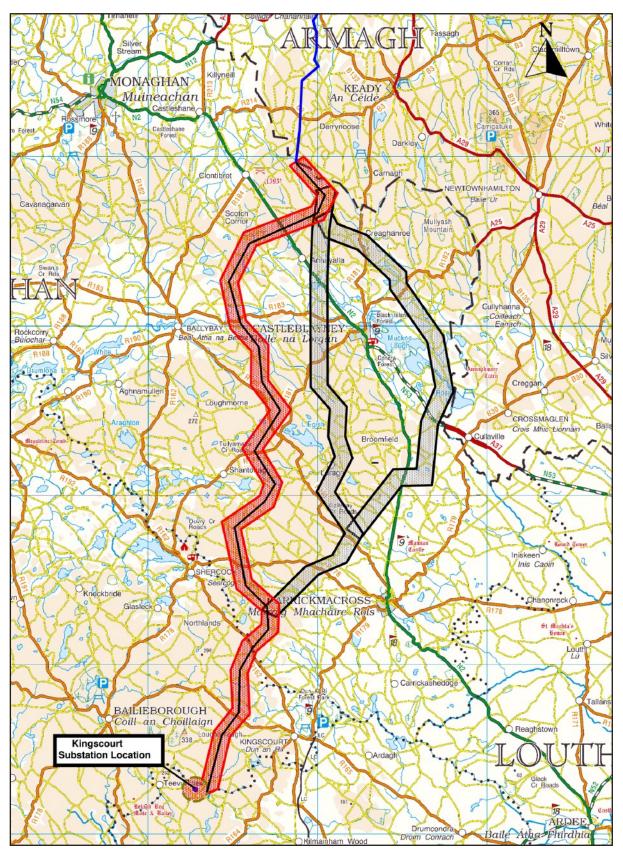
Meath – Cavan: Route Corridor 3B

Route Corridor 3B is outlined in green in the below map. The indicative line route, marked in black, is approximately 58 kilometres in length. It extends from the planned substation in the vicinity of Kingscourt, Co. Cavan to the existing substation at Woodland, near Batterstown, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath. To view more detailed maps please contact your local information centre.



Cavan – Tyrone: Route Corridor A

Route Corridor A is outlined in red in the below map. The indicative line route, marked in black, is approximately 45 kilometres long. Crossing the border at a point northeast of Clontibret, Co. Monaghan, it runs south to a proposed new substation near Kingscourt, Co. Cavan. To view more detailed maps please contact your local information centre.



Preferred Route Corridors - Conclusions

Landscape / visual impacts and community impacts (including proximity of infrastructure to dwellings and amenities) can be managed through careful route corridor selection. Route Corridors A and 3B are considered the best corridors in this regard. Potential impacts associated with ecology, water and cultural heritage can be successfully mitigated when selecting the actual line route the power lines take within the preferred route corridors. Further site investigations on the indicative line routes and consultation will help determine the best line routes.

What next?

Progression to Phases Three and Four

Discussions with landowners will help EirGrid and landowners understand the issues and benefits that relate to the projects. These discussions will enable the landowners to suggest possible mitigation options that may be available.

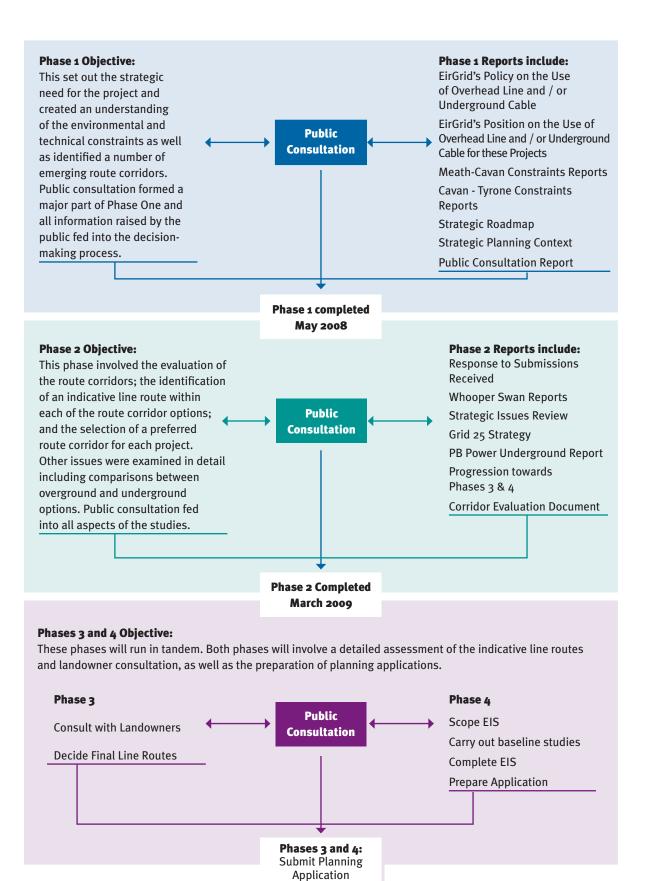
For More Information:

See:	www.eirgrid.com
Lo-call:	1890.25.26.90
Email:	meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com or
	cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com

Arrange a meeting in our Information Centres:

Navan Information Centre	Carrickmacross Information Centre
Number 1, Newbridge, Athlumley,	Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock
Navan, Co. Meath.	Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.
Open Mondays and Tuesdays,	Open Wednesdays and Thursdays,
10:00 am to 5:00 pm or upon request.	10:00 am to 5:00 pm or upon request.
Ring us at 1890.25.26.90 to make an appointment.	Ring us at 1890.25.26.90 to make an appointment.

Indicative Project Roadmap



Project Background

EirGrid is planning two projects to facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity, promoting better competition and to ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East. The two projects are:

- Approximately 80km long 400kV Interconnector between Co. Cavan and Co. Tyrone; and
- Approximately 58km Woodland (Co. Meath) to Kingscourt (Co. Cavan) 400kV Power Line.

Need for Project

- Provide high quality bulk power supply for the North East.
- Support growth in the region and ensure continuing reliability of supply.
- Boost existing industry in the North East when competing for business and inward development in the area.
- Guarantee security of supply for future decades if nothing is done now, by 2012/13 there is likely to be insufficient network capacity to supply demand in the North East.
- Increase competition and therefore reduce the cost of electricity to customers.
- Increase reliability for the local network in the North East and for all electricity customers.
- Allow more renewable energy (mostly wind generation) to be connected to the electricity network, reducing our dependency on fossil fuels.

Overhead and Underground Technologies

- >> EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity commissioned a comprehensive, site-specific study on the feasibility of undergrounding by independent experts, PB Power.
- >> Published in February 2009, PB Power's report established there would be significant technical issues involved in putting these projects underground. Underground cables of this capacity and this length have never been used anywhere else in the world.
- >> The estimated costs for underground cables would be seven times more expensive than going overhead
 -€588 million, compared with €81million. Electricity customers will have to pay for the power lines through their bills. Underground cables are also more expensive to run.
- >> The Ecofys Report, commissioned by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, also found that overhead technology was the best solution for these projects.
- >> EirGrid concludes that overhead lines would provide customers with the best value for money and also give residents of the North East a high quality supply of electricity that will promote the continued growth and development of the region.





North East 400kV Power Line Projects

Community Update, July 2009

EirGrid is moving towards the final preparation of the planning application.

In April 2009, following a rigorous route selection process, EirGrid progressed the Meath-Cavan and Cavan-Tyrone power line projects to the next phase and announced two preferred route corridors for further study. These corridors are:

Route Corridor 3B for the Meath-Cavan Project

Route Corridor A for the Cavan-Tyrone Project

Following this announcement, EirGrid and its consultants, Tobin Consulting Engineers and ESBI, began non-statutory consultation with landowners on the indicative line routes. Consultation with all other stakeholders also continued as normal through the Information Centres, phone line, written and email services.

Many people have taken the opportunity to meet with the EirGrid Project Team and have provided useful feedback. All of this feedback has been carefully considered and, where possible, these suggestions will be accommodated in the final line route that is submitted to An Bord Pleanála.

The current consultation is voluntary and does not prevent people from making a planning submission with respect to any aspect of the project during the formal planning process. Engaging with EirGrid at this point means that issues voiced during consultation can be considered and accommodated where feasible, before the line is determined for the purposes of making a planning application.

EirGrid is now close to determining the line route and will be completing the Environmental Impact Statement and planning application shortly for submission to An Bórd Pleanála. We encourage you to engage with us prior to the finalisation of the planning application. The EirGrid Project Team can be contacted at our local Information Centres in Navan and Carrickmacross, via phone (1890.25.26.90) or email (*meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com* / *cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com*). Please see the back page of this brochure for full contact details.



Project co-financed by the European Union from the trans-European transport budget

The North East power line projects will:

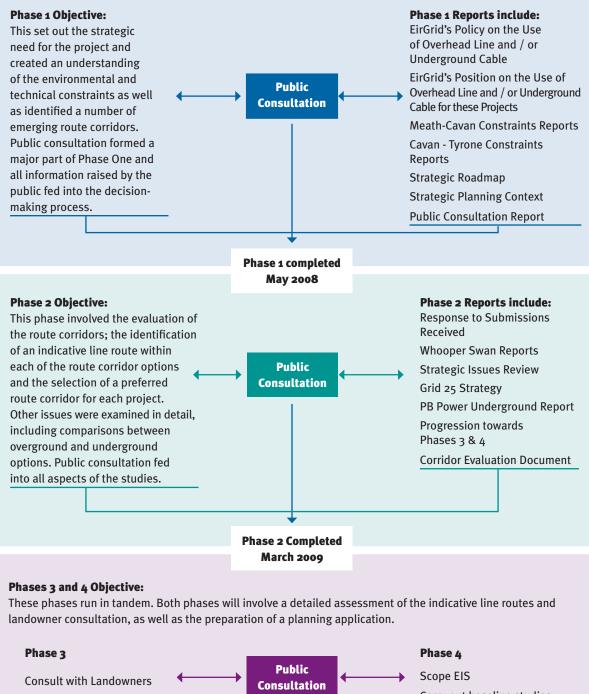
- facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity
- promote better competition
- ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East

Inside

- Indicative Project
 Road Map
- Frequently Asked Questions
 Planning Process
 Undergrounding
 Indemnification and Compensation
 Property
 Construction
- Contact Us

Indicative Project Road Map

Below is the Indicative Project Road Map, which demonstrates where the project has been and where it will go next. EirGrid is currently near the end of Phases 3 and 4 and is moving towards the submission of a planning application.





Frequently Asked Questions

EirGrid has received a number of questions from landowners and members of the public in relation to the power lines. Some of these are answered below, the remainder can be found at *www.eirgrid.com*. If you have more questions, we encourage you to meet with EirGrid. Please see the final page for contact details.

Planning Process

What stage is the project at now?

The project is proceeding along the sequential development timeline. We are currently in Phases 3 and 4, which involve landowner consultation, leading to the determination of the line and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and planning application.

The planning application for this project will be submitted shortly to An Bord Pleanála, the independent national board responsible for planning applications and appeals in Ireland. The application to An Bord Pleanála is specifically governed by the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006.

How can I have my say in the formal planning process?

A submission can be made to An Bord Pleanála within the period specified in the planning notice (minimum 6 weeks). Notice of planning will be placed in local newspapers and on the EirGrid website. A submission typically outlines the implications of a proposed development on the environment, planning and sustainable development of an area. An Bord Pleanála charges a fee of \in 50 for making an initial submission.

What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

Electricity transmission projects such as these require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be included as part of the planning application. An EIS is a document that sets out the possible impact that a proposed development may have on an area. An EIS firstly assesses the current situation in the area with regard to health, noise, ecology, visual amenity, air quality, flora, and fauna. It will then examine the possible impacts a proposed development might have on each of these and put forward design or other measures that can be taken to avoid or to reduce these effects to acceptable levels.

Where do I view the planning application and EIS?

In line with statutory requirements, EirGrid will make the application and the EIS available for inspection and for purchase for a period of at least six weeks. The documents will be available to view at the Navan and Carrickmacross Information Centres and in the Meath, Monaghan, and Cavan Local Authority offices. They will also be on view at the An Bord Pleanála Head Offices. EirGrid will publish notice of the proposed application in local newspapers before submitting the application to An Bord Pleanála.

Will there be an Oral Hearing?

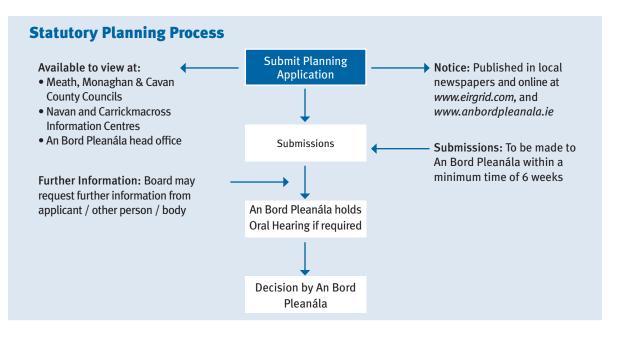
If An Bord Pleanála decides to hold an Oral Hearing, both the applicant and those who have made submissions or observations will be alerted and will be given the chance to put their case before the Board during the Oral Hearing process. Generally, an Oral Hearing is held when it will help the understanding of a case that is particularly complex or where there are significant national or local issues involved.

How will I know when a decision has been made on the planning application?

Once a decision has been made, An Bord Pleanála will notify all those who participated in the formal planning process by post.

Can a person appeal the Board's decision?

The Planning Acts state that the Board's decision cannot be questioned other than by way of application to the High Court for judicial review (generally within eight weeks from when the decision was made). A judicial review can only be made on procedural or legal grounds. The Court will not revisit the planning aspects of the case; it will simply review the way in which the decision was made to ensure it was not unconstitutional.



Undergrounding

I heard that EirGrid has drafted a Response to Askon Report; what did it say?

EirGrid's *Response to Askon Report* identifies a number of inaccurate fundamental assumptions made in the Askon Study that resulted in flawed calculations and conclusions. The key errors identified were on the following topics:

- Power losses calculation
- Financial analysis
- Safety issues
- Operating and reliability standards
- Environmental impacts
- Underground cable reliability

EirGrid, with the assistance of its team of international experts, carried out a comprehensive review of the Askon report and also spent two days with the authors of the report. Based on this, EirGrid concluded that a) Askon does not make a valid case in favour of the use of underground cable; and b) for these projects an overhead line is appropriate and consistent with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a 'safe, reliable, secure and cost effective transmission system, while having due regard for the environment'. The full report is available from *www.eirgrid.com* or by request from the Project Team.

What is the situation in Denmark? Is it true that they are putting all lines underground?

EirGrid has consulted with its counterpart in Denmark and can confirm that this is incorrect. The strategy for the future development of Denmark's 400kV network has been misunderstood and misrepresented by people outside of Denmark, who are opposed to the construction of 400kV overhead lines in their own countries.

Denmark needs to strengthen the 'backbone' of its 400kV network and proposes to do this by constructing a new double circuit 400kV overhead line. This project is expected to be completed by 2020. Beyond that, they have expressed an aspiration that 'non-backbone' 400kV power lines be placed underground and, to investigate the feasibility of this, have commissioned a 10-year research and development programme, in association with Danish universities, to investigate the feasibility of this. The proposed power lines for the North East of Ireland can be considered 'backbone' infrastructure. Full details of the strategy for the expansion and undergrounding of the Danish electricity transmission grid can be found on the website of the Danish transmission system owner: *www.energinet.dk*.

Why did PB Power not look at the railway corridor for a possible underground cable?

One of the aims of the PB Power report was to find an underground cable route that is technically and environmentally feasible, at the least cost. This was done for the purpose of establishing a realistic cost and environment impact comparison between an underground cable alternative and the proposed overhead line. Following a review of various criteria, including the Meath County Development Plan and Transport 21, it was found that railway lines, either in-service or disused, would not constitute the optimum route option for the underground alternative.

Why is the East-West Interconnector from Rush to Woodlands being placed underground?

The proposed Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuits are required to provide further interconnection between the transmission grids of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. These transmission grids already operate as a single 'synchronous' HVAC (high voltage, alternating current) system. HVAC is the most appropriate technology for such circuits. The proposed East-West Interconnector is required to provide further interconnection between the transmission system on the island of Ireland and that on the island of Great Britain. These two transmission systems are required to operate independently of each other and are therefore two 'asynchronous' HVAC systems. HVDC (as is used for the existing Moyle Interconnector) is most appropriate technology for providing interconnection between asynchronous systems. EirGrid's long-standing policy and practice for the use of HV underground cable (UGC) and overhead line (OHL) guides the decision on whether to use OHL or UGC whenever a new project is proposed. It is EirGrid's policy that UGC will only be used if all of the following four conditions apply:

- a) An OHL is not feasible
- b) A technically and environmentally acceptable route for UGC can be found.
- c) The effect that the electrical characteristics of UGC have on the transmission network is acceptable and the relatively poorer 'availability' of underground cable is tolerable.
- d) The relatively high cost of the UGC can be justified.

In the case of the proposed 400kV North East Power Lines, EirGrid is of the opinion that OHL is environmentally, technically and economically feasible. As a result EirGrid is obliged to proceed with an OHL proposal for these circuits. In the case of the East-West Interconnector, all of the above four conditions apply and UGC is therefore the appropriate solution.

Indemnification and Compensation

I have heard rumours about possible health effects from the power lines; will EirGrid indemnify my family, guests and me against these possible effects?

EirGrid and ESB are companies, owned by the State. They jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that overhead transmission lines proposed for use do not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of indemnification in respect of perceived health effects does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

Will EirGrid be willing to compensate farmers for health effects on their livestock? If so, what will be the basis for calculating such compensation?

As per above, EirGrid and ESB are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that overhead transmission lines proposed for use do not have any adverse effect on animal health. Accordingly, the issue of compensating for perceived animal health effects does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

ESB Networks will take every care during the erection and subsequent work on the line to ensure that farmers' operations, including livestock operations, are not impacted. ESB Networks, after consultation with the landowner, shall take all necessary precautions to prevent the straying of livestock and shall compensate the landowner for all loss, damage or claims arising from the loss of such animals and pay compensation for injury or death or loss of the animals where such straying is clearly due to any act or omission on the part of the Board. The Board shall ensure that the local District Veterinary Officer is informed of the entry of ESB vehicles onto a farm with a disease problem and that the Epidemiology Unit of the Department of Agriculture is made aware of ESB activities in TB affected areas.

Property

I am concerned that my house may lose value as a result of the new power lines. How will EirGrid measure property devaluation?

EirGrid will ensure that every reasonable effort is made to minimise the impact of the 400kV overhead lines on adjacent householders, whether in relation to visual amenity or any perceived environmental emissions. In the case of visual impact this will include, among other things:

- the use of a less visually intrusive pylon design than was used in the past;
- the careful positioning of pylons in agreement with landowners where possible
- the implementation of any other reasonable mitigation measures that are agreed with potentially affected property owners.

In circumstances where these potential impacts will be mitigated, EirGrid does not perceive that there will be any significant depreciation in the value of property in the vicinity of the proposed overhead lines, over and above the depreciation in the property market generally. Where land or wayleaves are required in order to facilitate the construction and operation of the proposed overhead line, a scheme of compensation has been put in place for the assessment of any loss in the value of lands affected.

What are EirGrid's powers in relation to entering property, prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála? Cite any relevant legislation or Court decisions.

Without prejudice to such rights, EirGrid is not proposing to rely on statutory powers to enter land 'prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála'. Rather, entry onto lands is being approached on a voluntary basis. While EirGrid is endeavouring to meet landowners prior to the application, this is primarily to hear landowner views to ascertain whether and how the proposed overhead line might impact upon them. Talking with landowners at this stage will enable mitigation measures to be appropriately identified and, where possible, included in the planning application.

Construction

What are the average, minimum, and maximum distances between each pylon tower?

The placement of pylons across the landscape is dependent on many factors, some of which are:

- Terrain
- Design constraints
- Landowner input into location
- Environmental considerations

The draft design for the Cavan-Tyrone 400kV power line has a maximum distance between pylon towers of 498m, a minimum of 206m, and an average of 365m. The corresponding distances between pylon towers for the Meath-Cavan 400kV power line are 450m, 200m, and 330m respectively.

Who is responsible for a ring fence to be placed around the base of each tower?

ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line. During the construction period it may be necessary, from time to time, to place temporary fencing around a pylon site for safety reasons. The erection, maintenance and removal of this fencing will be the responsibility of ESB Networks.

Once construction is complete and the line is in service, it is not normal practice to have permanent fencing around pylons. Farm animals can, and do, graze in between the legs of pylons. On occasion however, particularly where pylons are located in stud farms, a landowner has requested that a fence be placed around a specific pylon and EirGrid and ESB Networks have accommodated such requests. Such a fence is erected by ESB Networks, while the landowner is responsible for its subsequent maintenance.

Has my land been assessed physically and evaluated as suitable land for towers?

EirGrid's consultants, ESBI and Tobin Consulting Engineers, have utilised a variety of techniques to assess the land, including aerial photography, drive-by land reviews, submissions from the public and site visits. Every effort is made to ensure that landowners have agreed in advance to a site visit.

Contact Us

EirGrid is committed to engaging with the local community and all interested stakeholders at every stage in the project's development. Please get in touch if you would like to meet with the project team or have any further queries.

Information Centres:

Navan Information Centre Number 1, Newbridge, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath.

Open: Tuesdays, 1 pm to 7 pm or outside these hours upon request.

Drop in, or call 1890.25.26.90 to make an appointment.

Carrickmacross Information Centre Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

Open: Wednesdays 1pm to 7pm or outside these hours upon request.

Drop in, or call 1890.25.26.90 to make an appointment.

See: www.eirgrid.com Lo-call: 1890.25.26.90 Email: meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com or cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com





North East Power Line Projects

Frequently Asked Questions July 2009

This document outlines answers to questions sent to EirGrid by landowners and the local community in relation to the North-East Power Line Projects.

Most of the questions have been received since the preferred route corridor announcement in April 2009 and relate to such issues as route selection, undergrounding, compensation, construction, power line design, and environmental impact.

1. Why are EirGrid not consulting with householders directly impacted by the proposed overhead lines and pylons route?

EirGrid welcomes the opportunity to consult with any stakeholder who wishes to input into the projects.

EirGrid's consultants, ESBI and Tobin Consulting Engineers, have been visiting, and consulting with, the landowners on whose property the proposed 400kV overhead line will be built. In the case of all other landowners, householders and residents it is not possible to know intuitively which of them considers themselves to be, or not to be, 'impacted by the proposed overhead lines and pylons route'. As a result EirGrid advertised its intentions extensively in the media and invited all interested parties to consultation. To date this has resulted in over 11,000 people contacting EirGrid. EirGrid has also consulted extensively with community groups, such as NEPP, who claim to represent over 45,000 residents.

The invitation to consultation, to all persons who consider themselves to be impacted by EirGrid's proposals, remains open. Any stakeholder who wishes to consult with EirGrid on these projects can do so in any of the following ways:

A) Meeting

EirGrid is hosting meetings at our local information centres. These meetings provide stakeholders with an opportunity to talk with EirGrid's experts about general project issues. Please call 1890.25.26.90 if you would like to attend one of these meetings.

B) Information Centre

EirGrid have public Information Centres in both Navan and Carrickmacross. These have been open since August 2008, and are there to facilitate engagement with the local community. Please drop into one of these centres, or call us to make an appointment at the below contact details:

Navan Information Centre Number 1, Newbridge, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath.

Open: Tuesday, 1:00 to 7:00 P.M. Ph: 046.902.7855, or 1890.25.26.90 *Carrickmacross Information Centre* Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

Open: Wednesday, 1:00 to 7:00 P.M. Ph: 046.969.0000 or 1890.25.26.90

C) Lo-Call phone line

The EirGrid Project Team can be contacted on 1890.25.26.90, Mondays to Fridays from 9 am to 5 pm.

D) Written Communication

If you wish to engage in written correspondence, please direct your queries to Tomás Mahony at our Navan Information Centre address, or email: <u>meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com</u>.

2. I cannot get insurance against EMF damage to my health, will EirGrid provide me with this as I will be living within close proximity to the proposed lines?

EirGrid and ESB jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies (including the World Health Organisations) that the balance of evidence is that the EMF, emanating from overhead transmission lines, does not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of insurance in respect of EMFs does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

3. My house is so close to the pylons that I will probably never be able to sell it. How will EirGrid measure property devaluation and how do I claim?

Reliable, secure and economic supplies of electricity are vital to all of us in our daily lives, as householders, in agriculture, industry and employment. It is no coincidence that areas with strong overhead electricity networks have proven to be economically successful, attracting and retaining essential high technology industries. Where lands or wayleaves are required in order to facilitate the construction and operation of the proposed overhead line, a scheme of compensation has been put in place for the assessment of any loss in the value of lands affected. See answer to Question 7 for further detail.

4. What are EirGrid going to do about the noise from the pylons for anyone living beside these monstrous specimens?

Appropriate materials and construction practices will be utilised to minimise the 'noise' that can occur during periods of high humidity. It should be noted that projected noise levels, along with mitigation measures will be studied as part of the EIS, which will be submitted alongside the planning application.

5. Why did EirGrid choose the route with the most dwellings and the most people living in close proximity to the lines?

EirGrid has not yet, as of July 2009, finalised a route within the preferred corridors. It should also be noted that neither of EirGrid's preferred corridors contains the "*most dwellings and the most people living in close proximity to the lines*".

In February 2009 EirGrid announced its preferred candidate corridors (Corridor A in the case of Cavan-Tyrone and Corridor 3b in the case of Cavan-Meath) within which a route can be found. At that time EirGrid published a Corridor Evaluation Document (available for viewing on the project pages of EirGrid's website at <u>www.eirgrid.com</u>). In this document the methodology applied to the evaluation of the various route corridor options is described. The methodology involved a qualitative evaluation of the corridor options against twenty two different criteria (two of which considered the issue of proximity to dwellings) and from this a conclusion was drawn as to which option should become the preferred candidate corridor.

The Corridor Evaluation Document concluded that while the evaluation process found that each option had pros and cons the preferred candidate corridors announced by EirGrid "constitute the most appropriate balance between the various technical, environmental and community evaluation criteria, notwithstanding the fact that potential constraints are identified for all corridors".

The Corridor Evaluation Document explains that Phase 2 of the route identification process concluded with the announcement of the preferred corridors. While Phase 3 of the process (which is currently underway) involves "more detailed technical and environmental studies, and ongoing Statutory, non-Statutory and public consultation, with the purpose of identifying a preferred route for the overall transmission infrastructure project within the identified preferred corridor".

6. Why did EirGrid not consider putting the proposed infrastructure along either the M3 or the proposed rail line? Were there meetings held with the NRA and larnród Eireann to consider such a proposal?

EirGrid has consulted with both the NRA and larnród Éireann regarding these projects.

As both EirGrid, and its environmental consultants, recognise the merits of utilising shared infrastructure corridors for linear developments (such as roads, railways, canals, pipelines and power lines etc.) the possibility of locating the proposed development alongside the new motorway and the disused railway line was considered as follows -

Overhead line along the M3 motorway

Locating the proposed overhead line alongside the motorway was ruled out because, in the opinion of the environmental consultant, to do so, would not be environmentally sustainable. This opinion was based on, among other things, the stated intention of the planning authority to protect *"landscapes of exceptional value and sensitivity and in particular to protect the rural character, setting, amenity and archaeological heritage of Brú na Bóinne and the Hill of Tara, and of the surrounding areas including the area in the vicinity of the proposed M3 motorway and its related interchanges"*.

Underground Cable along the M3 motorway

Locating a 400kV underground cable within the reserve of the motorway was ruled out primarily because in EirGrid's opinion it would not be appropriate to use 400kV underground cable in place of 400kV overhead line, for this project, as this would not be in compliance with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective transmission network while having due regard for the environment. This conclusion is supported by the findings of the PB Power Report (commissioned by EirGrid and NIE) and the ECOFYS Report (commissioned by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources).

In addition the NRA has advised that a 400kV underground cable would only be permitted within the motorway reserve if "indemnities regarding damage, disruption, costs, etc" acceptable to both NRA and the PPP (public-private partnership) company, that will construct and operate the motorway, were received. In EirGrid's opinion, even if underground cable was a viable option, this requirement introduces such complexity, uncertainty and risk that it would render this route, a less favourable underground cable route than a direct cross county route, such as that identified in the PB Power Report.

Overhead line along the route of the disused railway lines

Locating the proposed overhead line alongside the route of the disused railway lines was ruled out because it would direct the development into areas of population, in particular Navan Town, but also a number of villages and hamlets along the route. In the opinion of the routeing experts there were better and less constrained route options available elsewhere.

Underground cable along the route of the disused railway lines

Locating a 400kV underground cable within the reserve of the disused railway was ruled out primarily because in EirGrid's opinion it would not be appropriate to use 400kV underground cable, instead of the proposed 400kV overhead line, for this project as this would not be in compliance with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective transmission network while having due regard for the environment. This conclusion is supported by the findings of the PB Power Report and the ECOFYS Report.

In addition PB Power was requested, for their report, to find a route corridor within which a technically and environmentally feasible route for underground cable (UGC) could be found. This was to be done for the purpose of establishing a realistic cost and environmental impact comparison between an underground cable option and the proposed overhead line option. Prior to carrying out the study, PB Power and EirGrid/NIE, agreed a set of 'Strategic Cable Routeing Criteria' to be applied by PB Power's cable routeing experts in their quest for a suitable UGC route. During these discussions it was concluded that there would be no advantage to routeing the UGC via the disused rail lines, while taking a more direct route across country would result in a shorter route and involve less uncertainty and risk. It was therefore agreed that the 'Strategic Routeing Criteria' should identify the railway lines, both in service and disused, under the category 'Avoid if Possible'. NOTE – further elaboration on this issue can be found in the answer to Question 29.

7. Will I as an adjacent householder whose land/property is not traversed be compensated for the proposed unsightly infrastructure and its emissions?

EirGrid will ensure that every reasonable effort is made to minimise the impact of the 400kV overhead line on adjacent householders, whether in relation to visual amenity or any perceived environmental emissions. In the case of visual impact this will include, among other things –

- the use of a less visually intrusive pylon design than was used in the past.
- the careful positioning, where possible in agreement with landowners, of the pylons.
- the implementation of any other reasonable mitigation measures that are agreed with potentially affected property owners.

In the case of potential 'emissions' minimisation of any impact will include, among other things -

- compliance with EU Guidelines on the exposure of persons to electric and magnetic fields.
- use of appropriate materials and construction practices to minimise the 'noise' that can occur during periods of high humidity.

In circumstances where these potential impacts will be mitigated, EirGrid does not perceive that there will be any significant depreciation in the value of property in the vicinity of the proposed overhead line over and above the depreciation in the property market generally.

8. Will I be indemnified by potential claims by visitors to my property?

Landowners, including persons present on their land with their permission are indemnified by the Electricity Supply Board (ESB). The full details of this cover are detailed in the "ESB/I FA Code of Practice for Survey, Construction Maintenance of Overhead Lines in relation to the Rights of Landowners" (October 1985) states the following:-

"The Board shall indemnify and keep indemnified the landowner, his servants, agents, licensees and invitees against all sums in respect of loss or damage, claims, demands, costs and expenses which the landowner shall become legally liable to pay as compensation for any illness or accidental bodily injury or accidental loss of or damage to property where such injury or damage is caused by, arises from, is traceable or connected with the works or equipment other than in consequence of any malicious act or omission on part of the landowner. The Board shall pay compensation to the landowner, his servants, agents, licensees and invitees in respect of any illness or bodily injury or loss or damage to material property suffered by him or them (together with all consequential loss arising there from) where that same is caused by, arises from, is traceable to or connected with the works, or equipment other than in consequence of any malicious or criminally reckless act or omission of the landowner and except insofar as the same has been made good by the Board without loss to the landowner. The above is without prejudice to the Board's and Landowners' Statutory and Common Law rights. Illness in this context is understood to mean damage to the personal health and well being of the landowner or his animals or his agents, servants, licensees and invitees. It is noted and agreed that the ESB will issue, to any individual landowner requiring same, a letter of acknowledgement that the Board's wayleave over his land is subject to the provisions of the code of practice, including specifically the indemnity clause."

9. What is the minimum distance committed by EirGrid that the 400kV lines or pylons will be placed nearest to a dwelling?

There is no specified 'minimum distance' other than that required to ensure safety from electrocution. The Electricity Supply Act however requires that any person intending to construct a building within 25 yards (approximately 23 metres) of an existing overhead line must notify ESB in advance. This is required so that ESB Networks can ensure that the works can be carried out safely and that the future safe operation and maintenance of the overhead line, and the proposed building, is ensured.

For the proposed 400kV lines EirGrid expects to achieve a minimum clearance distance that is much greater than 23 metres. The actual distance however will not be known until the design is finalised.

10. Will my family or their offspring be indemnified for any potential ill health effects?

EirGrid and ESB are companies, owned by the State. They jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that overhead transmission lines proposed for use do not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of indemnification in respect of perceived health effects does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

11. What are EirGrid's powers in relation to entering property prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála? Cite any relevant legislation or Court decisions.

Without prejudice to such rights, EirGrid is not proposing to rely on statutory powers to enter land 'prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála'. Rather, entry onto lands is being approached on a voluntary basis. While EirGrid is endeavouring to meet landowners prior to application, this is primarily to hear landowner views at this early stage so that mitigation measures can be appropriately identified and included in the planning application. Through landowner site visits, EirGrid wishes to ascertain whether and how the proposed overhead line might impact upon landowners.

12. What permission, if any, does EirGrid need to enter on land to complete their Environmental Impact Study? Cite any relevant legislation or Court decisions.

Clearly, it will be of benefit to landowners and EirGrid alike if as much access is given as possible so that all landowner concerns and specific issues that will affect the project can be identified as early as possible and fed into the process of preparing the EIS. To the extent that access is refused and cannot otherwise be obtained, the EIS will record this together with alternative measures adopted to ensure that the EIS is as comprehensive as possible.

13. If a landowner does not grant permission to EirGrid to enter lands, does it mean that EirGrid cannot proceed through my property with overhead lines and Pylon towers?

In circumstances where planning permission is granted for the proposed lines, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall endeavour to agree access arrangements with individual landowners. In the event that such arrangements cannot be agreed, then in order to implement the construction of structures and installation of lines so permitted, and only where necessary, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall rely upon statutory powers of entry in this regard.

It should be noted, however, that while EirGrid does not generally use statutory powers, EirGrid reserves its statutory rights in this regard in individual cases where a need to enter upon lands is necessary and a landowner is not willing to facilitate EirGrid in this regard.

14. Will EirGrid be willing to compensate farmers for health effects on their livestock? If so, what will be the basis for calculating such compensation?

EirGrid and ESB are companies owned by the State. They jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that overhead transmission lines proposed for use do not have any adverse effect on animal health. Accordingly, the issue of compensating for perceived animal health effects does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

ESB Networks will take every care during the erection and subsequent work on the line to ensure that farmers' operations, including livestock operations, are not impacted. ESB Networks, after consultation with the landowner shall take all necessary precautions to prevent the straying of livestock and shall compensate the landowner of such livestock for all loss, damage or claims arising from the loss of such animals and pay compensation for injury or death or loss of the animals where such straying is clearly due to any act or omission on the part of the Board. The Board shall ensure that the local District Veterinary Officer is informed of the entry of ESB vehicles onto a farm with a disease problem and that the Epidemiology Unit of the Department of Agriculture is made aware of ESB activities in TB affected areas.

15. Will EirGrid be legally responsible for any ill-health effects to farming families/farming employees who would constantly be exposed to EMFs while attending to stock?

EirGrid and ESB are companies owned by the State. They jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that overhead transmission lines proposed for use do not have any adverse effect on human health. Accordingly, the issue of compensating for perceived human health effects does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

16. Can you give me details of EirGrid's insurance and indemnity policy for claims against the company or a landowner arising from ill health effects of EMF?

EirGrid and ESB jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that the EMF, emanating from overhead transmission lines, does not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of insurance or indemnification in respect of EMFs, or any perceived health effects arising from EMFs, does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

17. How will EirGrid indemnify me against third party claims both for property devaluation and health damages?

EirGrid will ensure that every reasonable effort is made to minimise the impact of the 400kV overhead line on adjacent properties. In circumstances where any potential impacts on property will be mitigated, it is not envisaged that there will be any significant depreciation in the value of property in the vicinity of the proposed overhead line over and above the depreciation in the property market generally. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that any "third party" claims will arise.

EirGrid and ESB are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies (including the World Health Organisation) that the balance of evidence is that the overhead transmission lines proposed for use do not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of indemnification in respect of perceived health effects does not arise in the context of the proposed lines. Therefore, it is not anticipated that any valid "third party" claims will arise in this regard.

18. Why has EirGrid not factored in an underground cable route as part of the original proposed route corridors?

EirGrid always considers the use of underground cables when proposing a new high voltage transmission circuit but does so in accordance with its policy on the matter. In the case of the Cavan-Meath and Cavan-Tyrone 400kV projects the extent of this consideration is described in the document 'EirGrid's Position on the use of Overhead Line and/or Underground Cable for these Projects', a copy of which can be viewed on project pages of EirGrid's website at <u>www.eirgrid.com</u>.

In addition to the above EirGrid is required to prepare an EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) in support of its application for Planning Permission. The EIS must contain a section that describes the applicant's consideration of alternatives. In this section of the EIS EirGrid will fully describe its consideration of alternative solutions, including technical alternatives such as the use of underground cable.

19. Can you confirm that all new transmission lines in Denmark will be undergrounded?

EirGrid has consulted with its counterpart in Denmark and can confirm that this is not correct. The strategy for the future development of Denmark's 400kV network has been misunderstood and misrepresented by persons, outside of Denmark, who are opposed to the construction of 400kV overhead lines in their own countries.

Denmark needs to strengthen the 'backbone' of its 400kV network and proposes to do this by constructing a new double circuit 400kV overhead line (replacing an existing single circuit 400kV overhead line) down through the centre of Jutland and across the border into Germany. This project will be carried out in three phases and is expected to be completed by 2020. Beyond that they have expressed an aspiration that all 'non-backbone' 400kV circuits be achieved using underground cable. This will however require the installation of some long lengths of underground cable and they are uncertain as to whether this is technically possible. As a result they have instituted a research and development programme, in cooperation with Danish universities. The programme consists of a number of PhD research projects and, depending on the results, may involve the installation of a long (greater than 60kM) underground cable as a test case. They hope to complete the research and development programme within the next ten years and if successful will then proceed with plans to underground all existing and future 'non-backbone' 400kV circuits.

Full details of the strategy for the expansion and undergrounding of the Danish electricity transmission grid can be found on the website of the Energinet.dk, the Danish transmission system owner, at www.energinet.dk.

20. Why is EirGrid not putting all proposed new 110kV lines underground, as this is technically feasible?

"Putting all proposed new 110kV lines underground" would not be in compliance with EirGrid's statutory obligation to provide Ireland with a 'safe, reliable and cost effective electricity transmission system while having due regard for the environment'. This position is fully explained in EirGrid's 'Policy on the use of Overhead Line and/or Underground Cable' a copy of which can be seen on this Project's web-pages on EirGrid's website at www.eirgrid.com.

21. Does EirGrid have an existing and specific code of practice with the Irish Farmer's Association (IFA) for 400kV lines being placed on their member's lands?

No but ESB, in its role as the Transmission Asset Owner, is responsible for the construction of overhead transmission lines and has such an agreement with the IFA for all overhead lines of '110kV and above'.

22. Does EirGrid have an existing and specific code of practice with the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers' Association (ICMSA) for 400kV transmission lines being placed on their member's lands?

No.

23. Why has EirGrid taken such an intransigent approach to undergrounding, by stating that overhead lines are its "absolute preference"?

The words "absolute preference" are from EirGrid's Corridor Evaluation Document that was published in February 2009. The words are used in the following context - as addressed in more detail in the Strategic Issues Review, it is EirGrid's policy for the use of overhead line infrastructure in carrying out rural linear transmission projects such as is planned in this instance, in <u>absolute preference</u> to underground cable systems.

The Corridor Evaluation Document goes on to state that this policy is consistent with the conclusions of the Ecofys *Study on the Comparative Merits of Overhead Electricity Transmission Lines Versus Underground Cables*, of May 2008 prepared by order of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, which notes that:- *"Until now, 400 kV to 500 kV AC cables for transmission are nearly exclusively used in short sections in urban areas and only rarely in open country"* (p.38), and that *"Up to now, construction and operation of an EHV UGC in Ireland with a length of up to 100 km would not be backed by any experience worldwide"* (p.44). The Study concludes that *"With more than 50 years of experience OHL are state-of-the-art and are the reference technology for transporting large amounts of electric power over distances of several hundreds of kilometres"* (p.53).

NOTE – The Strategic Issues Review and the Corridor Evaluation Document are both available for viewing on this Project's web-pages at <u>www.eirgrid.com</u>.

24. Why has EirGrid rejected without foundation the findings of the ASKON Reports? Can you forward me a copy of the ASKON Reports?

EirGrid welcomed the Askon Report and acknowledged its contribution to the consultation process. EirGrid, with the assistance of its team of international experts, carried out a comprehensive review of the Report and published the findings of this review in the document 'EirGrid Position on NEPP Askon Study'.

In summary EirGrid agrees with the following findings in the Askon Report -

- There have been significant developments in HV UGC (underground cable) technology in the past twenty years.
- HVDC (high voltage direct current) technology is not appropriate for these projects.

- Two UGC circuits would be required to replace the proposed single 400kV OHL (overhead line).
- The installation of two independent UGC circuits would alleviate some of the disadvantages associated with HV UGC circuits.
- It would not be appropriate to install an UGC circuit, of the magnitude required for these projects, under the public roads of Meath, Cavan, Monaghan, Armagh and Tyrone.
- There are no UGC circuits, anywhere in the world, of the type and length that would be required for these projects.
- The capital cost of an HV UGC circuit is many times that of the cost of an equivalent OHL circuit.
- Both UGC and OHL circuits emit magnetic fields. UGC circuits do not emit electric fields.

Some of the more remarkable errors of assumption, errors of understanding and errors of calculation in the Askon Report are as follows –

- There is no basis for the assertions that UGC circuits are safer than OHL circuits. Both technologies are used by EirGrid and both are designed and operated so as to meet all relevant national and international safety criteria. **UGC and OHL circuits are equally safe**.
- Askon has greatly over estimated the quantity of electrical power (in megawatt hours) that will flow through the overhead line during its lifetime. This is a fundamental error and invalidates Askon calculations of electrical losses and assumptions on 'whole of life' operating costs. The laws of physics determine that a lightly loaded UGC will have higher electrical losses than an equivalent lightly loaded OHL while a <u>heavily</u> loaded UGC will have lower losses than a heavily loaded OHL. In its role as operator of the transmission network EirGrid knows that the proposed 400kV circuits will operate relatively 'lightly loaded', in the region of 35% capacity, throughout their life. It should be noted that the proposed circuits are required to have a large spare capacity as a contingency in case of short duration emergencies.
- Askon has acknowledged that the capital cost of UGC is considerably more than that of OHL. But then tried to make a financial case for UGC on the basis that the UGC would have a lower 'whole of life' operating cost than that of the OHL. As stated in the previous bullet point this is based on an error of assumption and the reverse is in fact the case. Askon's conclusion that a UGC circuit *"could well work out the lower coast option over the whole life cycle"* is simply not correct.
- Askon's comparison of the environmental impacts is inadequate. It is not enough to just point out the obvious advantages that UGC has over OHL. A balanced approach is required. Comparing OHL with UGC circuits across the full range of environmental criteria shows overhead lines perform better under many of the categories. This was the conclusion of the ECOFYS Report commissioned by the Department of Energy.
- Askon's UGC cost estimates were prepared by a team with no apparent local knowledge and no practical experience of installing HV underground cables. The civil engineering estimates were based on information received from a "German power supplier". This has resulted in errors of omission and errors of under estimation that together add up to an under estimation of over €80 million in their estimate for a 56km 400kV UGC circuit in County Meath. To

put the extent of this error in perspective, it is twice the magnitude of Askon's estimate for the total cost of an equivalent 400kV OHL.

• There are many 'system wide' technical problems that would arise with the installation of such long HV UGC circuits on Ireland's relatively small and isolated transmission grid. Askon failed to consider these and only looked at this from a 'localised' grid perspective. EirGrid has to consider the impact on the system as a whole.

EirGrid circulated the report to three separate teams of experts for review over a number of months and also spent two days with the authors of the reports. Based on all of the foregoing EirGrid concluded (i) that Askon has not made a valid case in favour of the use of underground cable and (ii) that for these 400kV projects an overhead line solution is appropriate and consistent with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a 'safe, reliable, secure and cost effective transmission system while having due regard for the environment'.

Regarding your request for a copy of the Askon Reports - EirGrid cannot provide these as the study was commissioned by NEPP and the resulting reports are copyright protected. Copies should be requested from NEPP.

25. Was a tender process carried out in relation to the recently published underground cable study eventually carried out by PB Power?

The PB Power Report was commissioned jointly by EirGrid and Northern Ireland Electricity and was done so in compliance with all European Union and national laws and regulations.

26. When was PB Power awarded the contract for this study?

November 2007.

27. What were the terms of reference given to PB Power for the study?

The full report, including the terms of reference, can be found on www.eirgrid.com.

28. What was the cost of the PB Power study?

This information is commercially sensitive and subject to contractual duties of confidentiality.

29. Did EirGrid instruct PB Power not to examine the existing rail line as a corridor option? If not, then why was the rail line option not analysed by PB Power?

No, PB Power was requested to find a route corridor within which a technically and environmentally feasible route for underground cable (UGC) could be found. This was to be done for the purpose of establishing a realistic cost and environmental impact comparison between an underground cable option and the proposed overhead line option. Prior to carrying out the study, PB Power and EirGrid/NIE, agreed a set of 'Strategic Cable Routeing Criteria' to be applied by PB Power's cable routeing experts in their quest for an optimum and least cost UGC route which is technically and environmentally feasible (see Section 7.3 of the PB Power Report). During the discussions on the routeing criteria the following points, regarding the use of the disused railway lines, were raised –

- It is government policy (Transport 21) to re-establish a rail link from Dublin to Navan and this will most likely follow, substantially, the route of the disused railway line from Clonsilla to Navan. This had previously been a single track line but a double track would be required for the new service. The initial service would operate using light diesel powered trains (Arrow type) but provision would be made for future electrification (DART type). An extensive redevelopment of the existing railway reserve, consisting of its widening and construction of new bridges and underpasses would therefore be required. Construction will commence, at the earliest, in 2012, with a three year construction period.
- The Meath County Development Plan states an objective of maintaining "the reservation of the former Dublin-Navan rail line free from development".
- If the two sets of 400kV underground cables that would be required for this project were to be installed within the reserve of the disused section of the Dublin-Navan rail line, or even outside but adjacent, prior to its redevelopment it would inhibit the extensive works required to bring the railway back into service. This situation would also apply to the disused Navan-Kingscourt line and any other disused rail line.
- If 400kV UGC was installed within the rail way reserve after the rail line was brought back into service then it would have to be done in such a way that its operation would not interfere with the safe operation of the rail service and vice versa. Permanent vehicular access would be required along the entire length of the UGC. The railway could not be used for this as that would disrupt the service therefore a road would have to be constructed alongside the railway for its entire length. This would also require that both sets of cables be placed on the same side of the rail tracks so that the road would provide access to both sets of cables and avoid the need to have vehicles crossing the rail tracks. larnród Éireann does not require this access road and would therefore not be expecting to make space provision for one. The UGC would also have to be set back far enough from the rail line to enable mechanical excavators, cranes, cable laying equipment and concrete trucks to operate safely without interfering with the train service. Space provision must also be made for excavated spoil. There are also technical difficulties that must be considered, such as the shielding of the railway signalling system from interference from the HV UGC. Future major works by larnród Éireann on the rail route, such as the works required for the proposed electrification and works required for the construction of any new railway stations along the route would be impeded by the presence of the cables. This would be particularly the case if the two sets of cables were placed on either site of the rail tracks.
- The disused rail line passes through the centre of Navan town. Following the route of the old railway line with 400kV UGC would therefore bring this development into a congested urban area.
- Even if it was decided that the disused rail lines were never to be brought back into service, and larnród Éireann was prepared to relinquish its rights, it is noted that the routes are not entirely intact and there has been encroachment of development in places. The railway reserve is also too narrow in many places for the two sets of UGC and the required haul road.

Additional land take would therefore be required at these locations. It is not known whether the required additional lands could be obtained. Particular difficulties are likely to arise where the rail line passes through Navan Town and the villages and hamlets along the route.

Based on these discussions it was concluded that there would be no advantage to routeing the UGC via the disused rail lines. While taking a more direct route across country would result in a shorter route and involve less uncertainty and risk. It was therefore agreed that the 'Strategic Routeing Criteria' should identify the railway lines, both in service and disused, under the category 'Avoid if Possible'.

30. PB Power estimate an overhead lines capital cost of €81 million for the project, compared with a €280 million projected cost by EirGrid. Can you explain the major cost conflicts between EirGrid and PB Power?

The Eirgrid/NIE estimate of €280 million is for the entire project and includes provision for the 140kM of 400kV overhead line as well as the substations, 220kV overhead lines, land acquisition, landowner compensation etc.

The purpose of the PB Power Report was to establish a realistic cost and environmental impact comparison between an underground cable option and the proposed overhead line option. In preparing their costs estimates it was therefore not necessary for PB Power, to make provision for items that are common to both options in order to establish the cost difference between the two options.

PB Power estimated that the 400kV overhead line would cost €81 million while the underground cable would cost €588 million. The important conclusion to be drawn from this is that, if underground cable is used instead of overhead line, the project will cost an <u>additional €507 million</u>.

31. If a landowner does not grant permission to EirGrid to enter lands, does it mean that EirGrid cannot proceed through my property with overhead lines and pylon towers?

In circumstances where planning permission is granted for the proposed lines, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall endeavour to agree access arrangements with individual landowners. In the event that such arrangements cannot be agreed, then in order to implement the construction of structures and installation of lines so permitted, and only where necessary, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall rely upon statutory powers of entry in this regard.

32. What statutory or other legal provisions is EirGrid relying on to allow them or their agents to enter my property?

EirGrid is not relying on statutory powers to enter land during the pre-planning stage. Rather, entry onto lands is being approached on a voluntary basis. While EirGrid is endeavouring to meet landowners prior to application, this is primarily to hear landowner views at this early stage so that mitigation measures can be appropriately identified and included in the planning application. Through landowner site visits, EirGrid wishes to ascertain whether and how the proposed overhead line might impact upon landowners.

It should be noted, however, that while EirGrid does not generally use statutory powers, EirGrid reserves its statutory rights in this regard in individual cases where a need to enter upon lands is necessary and a landowner is not willing to facilitate EirGrid in this regard.

33. Will EirGrid indemnify landowners against civil claims by employees and/or visitors to the lands in respect of adverse health effects from being present on the land?

EirGrid and ESB jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that the overhead transmission lines do not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of indemnification in respect of civil claims by employees and/or visitors does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

34. What is EirGrid's position if farmers cannot get health insurance, public liability insurance, or employer's liability insurance due to proximity of living and working close to EMFs?

EirGrid and ESB jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that the EMFs emanating from overhead transmission lines do not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of health insurance, public liability insurance or employer's liability insurance does not arise in the context of the proposed lines

35. Does EirGrid accept that high voltage transmission lines negatively affect land and property values?

In circumstances where any potential impacts from HV transmission lines will be mitigated, EirGrid does not perceive that there will be any significant depreciation in the value of property in the vicinity of the proposed overhead line over and above the depreciation in the property market generally.

36. Has EirGrid factored in a cost for such devaluations into their Grid25 transmission system planned costings? What baseline criteria has it used for such evaluations?

GRID 25 is a strategy for the development of Ireland's electricity transmission system between now and 2025, rather than a detailed plan. The quoted estimates of capital investment for each region should therefore not be considered as 'planned costings'. They are instead high-level, top-down, estimates that were calculated by applying 'typical rates' to an estimate of the extent of the works required in each region. The 'typical rates' were determined from the actual cost of similar type projects that have been completed in the recent past with the addition of a provision for contingency and inflation. The actual cost of a recently completed overhead line project would include the cost of any landowner compensation payments in respect of wayleave acquisition that were made during the course of that project.

37. What standard operating procedures and decision criteria are used by EirGrid for deploying taxpayers' money in relation to landowners' compensation offers for pylons placed on their property? Can you forward the specific procedures in the interests of transparency?

Although EirGrid is a company wholly owned by the State, neither it nor its activities are funded directly by 'taxpayers' money'. EirGrid, in its role as Ireland's TSO (Transmission System Operator), has a statutory obligation to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective electricity transmission system while having due regard for the environment. Its activities in this regard are regulated by the Commission for Energy Regulation and are primarily, and ultimately, funded by the electricity consumers of Ireland. It is within this regulated environment that EirGrid will negotiate levels of compensation with landowners. NOTE - the current phase of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV projects is also partially funded by an EU grant.

Compensation is paid to landowners on whose property the overhead line is erected. This is done in accordance with long established agreements with the Irish Farmers Association. All agreements with landowners are negotiated individually since the effect of the transmission line on each landowners' property will vary from landowner to landowner. EirGrid will endeavour to complete negotiations with each landowner prior to construction

A landowner or rights holder who is dissatisfied with the amount of compensation offered has the statutory right to have the compensation amount assessed by an independent arbitrator.

38. Will EirGrid compensate landowners for the long term effects such as crop damage, low milk yields, etc. and, if so, how will such compensation be calculated?

EirGrid design and operate the network in compliance with all national and international guidelines. We are satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that Electric and Magnetic Field (EMF) do not have any adverse, long-term effect on public or animal health.

The ESB will take every care during the erection and subsequent work on the line to ensure that farmers' operations are not impacted. Compensation will be paid for crop loss and physical disturbance to lands during construction, by individual agreement with landowners, following the IFA code of practice. ESB, after consultation with the landowner shall take all necessary precautions to prevent the straying of livestock and shall compensate the landowner of such livestock for all loss, damage or claims arising from the loss of such animals and pay compensation for injury or death of/loss of the animals where such straying is clearly due to any act or omission on the part of the Board. The Board shall ensure that the local District Veterinary Officer is informed of the entry of ESB vehicles on farm with a disease problem and that the Epidemiology Unit of the Department of Agriculture is made aware of ESB activities in TB affected areas. It is not accepted that there will be any issue in relation to lower milk yields as a result of the operation of the proposed lines.

39. Why is the East-West Interconnector from Rush to Woodlands being placed underground?

The Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV Circuits must use HVAC Technology

The proposed Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuit is required to provide further interconnection between the transmission grids of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. These transmission grids already operate as a single or 'synchronous' HVAC (high voltage, alternating current) system. The proposed Meath-Cavan 400kV circuit has two objectives, to provide capacity support to north-south power flows and to reinforce the existing HVAC electricity supply to the North-East Region of the Republic. As a result the most appropriate technology for the proposed Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuits is HVAC.

The East-West Interconnector must use HVDC Technology

The proposed East-West Interconnector is required to provide further interconnection between the transmission system on the island of Ireland and that on the island of Great Britain. These two transmission systems are required to operate independently of each other and are therefore two 'asynchronous' HVAC systems. The existing island-to-island interconnector, that is the Moyle Interconnector, utilises HVDC (high voltage, direct current) technology. This technology is the most appropriate for providing interconnector, that is, the East-West Interconnector must therefore also use HVDC technology.

EirGrid's Policy on the use of UGC and/or OHL

EirGrid is statutorily obliged to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective electricity system while having due regard for the environment. As a consequence of this obligation EirGrid has developed a long standing policy and practice for the use of HV underground cable (UGC) and overhead line (OHL) in Ireland. Whenever a new HV circuit is proposed this policy guides the decision on whether to use OHL or UGC.

In terms of the policy an UGC will only be used if <u>all</u> of the following four conditions apply -

- a) An OHL is not feasible.
- b) A technically and environmentally acceptable route for UGC can be found.
- c) The effect that the electrical characteristics of UGC have on the transmission network is acceptable and the relatively poorer 'availability' of underground cable is tolerable.
- d) The relatively high cost of the UGC can be justified.

In the case of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuits EirGrid is of the opinion that OHL is environmentally, technically and economically feasible. As a result EirGrid is obliged to proceed with an OHL proposal for these circuits.

It should be noted that although EirGrid's policy on the use of HV UGC and HV OHL was drawn up with HVAC circuits in mind it can also be applied to HVDC circuits. In the case of the East-West Interconnector an underground cable is proposed for that part of the HVDC circuit between Rush and Woodland, and is being proposed because all four conditions of the policy, where applicable, are satisfied, as explained below –

a) Obviously the sea crossing from Wales to Ireland cannot be an overhead line and must be an insulated undersea cable. There are numerous environmental and development constraints on the overland route between Rush and the existing Woodland substation that would prevent the construction of an HV overhead line. Although there are sections of the 45km overland route where OHL would be possible, on balance it would not be advantageous to have a number of short sections of OHL in, what is primarily, a long (260km) UGC circuit. This is because (i) a mini-compound, requiring additional land take, would be required at each UGC/OHL interface, (ii) a hybrid UGC/OHL circuit requires more complex protection systems than an entirely UGC circuit and (iii) for this project the cost advantage of installing these short sections of OHL would be too small to negate the disadvantages of points (i) and (ii).

- b) A technically and environmentally acceptable route for the HVDC UGC was found, details of which can be found on the EWIC project website at www.interconnector.ie.
- c) This 'condition' of the policy does not fully apply to the East-West Interconnector. The electrical characteristics of a HVDC UGC are very different to those of a HVAC UGC. Long HVDC UGC circuits, unlike long HVAC UGC circuits, do not have a significant impact on the electrical characteristics of the HVAC transmission network as a whole.

As discussed above only a very limited part of the 260km HVDC circuit route can accommodate OHL. Installing HVDC UGC in these sections would have a statistically insignificant impact on the overall circuit 'availability'.

d) It is clear that HVDC technology must be used for the East-West Interconnector. Two DC to AC converter stations are required, one at each end of the HVDC circuit. These converter stations are expensive and account for an unavoidably large percentage of the overall project cost. Because of obvious route constraints most of the HVDC circuit connecting the two converter stations must be via UGC. Installing UGC in those sections of the route that can accommodate OHL results in a relatively small increase in overall project cost. It should also be noted that HVDC cable, on a metre for metre basis, is much cheaper to install than an equivalent HVAC cable.

40. Why is the East-West Interconnector being placed alongside roads instead of over land? Why does the PB Power study propose the North-South project going over land instead of alongside roads of rail lines?

The East-West Interconnector Project – HVDC UGC under and along roads

The HVDC underground cable for the East-West Interconnector will consist of two separate cables, laid side by side, in a trench approximately 1m wide by 1.2m deep. Accommodating this development under and alongside the roads of north County Dublin and south County Meath is feasible and practical. Further details on the works associated with the installation of the HVDC cable can be found on the East-West Interconnector's project website at www.interconnector.ie.

The North-South Projects – HVAC UGC under and along roads

In the case of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV Projects PB Power found that if HVAC underground cable is to be used in place of the proposed 400kV overhead lines it would require six separate cables, laid in two sets of three, in two trenches, each trench being approximately 1.8m wide by 1.3m deep, with a 5 metre spacing between the trenches. The regional roads of Meath, Cavan, Monaghan, Armagh and Tyrone are simply not wide enough to accommodate such a development. While the national roads in these five counties may be sufficiently wide, in places, the extent of the works would be such that it would require an effective demolition and rebuild of the entire road. The disruption to the local communities during these works is unlikely to be acceptable. Based on this it was concluded that if an underground cable circuit, of this magnitude, is to be installed in a rural area, the most optimum route from a cost and ease of installation perspective, would be a direct cross country route rather than following public roads.

The North-South Projects – HVAC UGC under and along rail lines

This is addressed in the answer to Question 29.

41. Should EirGrid be successful in obtaining planning approval from the Strategic Infrastructure Board are there any statutory or other legal provisions you may rely on to enter property? Cite relevant legislation or Court decisions.

In circumstances where planning permission is granted for the proposed lines, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall endeavour to agree access arrangements with individual landowners. In the event that such arrangements cannot be agreed, then in order to implement the construction of structures and installation of lines so permitted, and only to the extent necessary, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall rely upon statutory powers of entry in this regard.

42. Does EirGrid acknowledge that it has no legal right to enter on lands for any purpose without the landowner's agreement and that there is no legal provision that requires a landowner to give such permission?

EirGrid is not relying on statutory powers to enter land at the pre-planning stage. Rather, entry onto lands is being approached on a voluntary basis. While EirGrid is endeavouring to meet landowners prior to application, this is primarily to hear landowner views at this early stage so that mitigation measures can be appropriately identified and included in the planning application. Through landowner site visits, EirGrid wishes to ascertain whether and how the proposed overhead line might impact upon landowners.

It should be noted, however, that while EirGrid does not generally use statutory powers, EirGrid reserves its statutory rights in this regard in individual cases where a need to enter upon lands is necessary and a landowner is not willing to facilitate EirGrid in this regard.

In circumstances where planning permission is granted for the proposed lines, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall endeavour to agree access arrangements with individual landowners. However, EirGrid/ESB Networks may avail of statutory powers of entry. In the event that access arrangements cannot be agreed, then to the extent necessary, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall rely upon those statutory powers of entry.

43. Can EirGrid guarantee that 50m is the absolute closest distance from dwellings that the proposed overhead lines route will pass? If not, what is the minimum distance that EirGrid will guarantee?

EirGrid cannot give such a guarantee at this stage as the design has not yet been finalised. See answer to Question 9 for further information.

44. Does EirGrid accept that only much wider distances are allowed in other European countries?

Some countries, or as is more likely the case, regions within countries, may have adopted regulations which specify a minimum distance between dwellings and overhead transmission lines. Most of the countries of the EU however have, like Ireland, adopted EU Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC. Overhead transmission lines come in many shapes and sizes, with different voltage levels, different power carrying capacities and different configurations. The EU Guidelines recognise this and instead of specifying a minimum clearance distance the Guidelines specify 'Basic Restriction Levels' for the exposure of the general public to electric and magnetic fields. As the strength of the EMF is at its highest in the immediate vicinity of the live wire and decreases rapidly with growing distance from the overhead line a minimum clearance distance that satisfies the Guidelines can be derived for every type and size of HVAC overhead line.

In the case of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV overhead lines EirGrid can guarantee that the overhead line will be sufficiently far enough away from dwellings to ensure that the resulting EMFs will be lower than the restriction levels specified in the EU Guidelines. In fact it can be expected that for those existing dwellings that are closest to the proposed overhead line the resulting EMF levels will be comparable with the 'background' levels already existing in those dwellings. The 'background' levels are caused by the electrical wiring installed in the building as well as the types of electrical appliances in use in that building.

45. Does EirGrid accept that other European countries apply voluntary EMF thresholds ranging up to 250 times lower than EirGrid's threshold of 100 microtesla?

There is much misinterpretation and misunderstanding about this 'threshold of 100 microtesla'. The guidelines on this matter were developed by ICNIRP (the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) and have been endorsed by the World Health Organisation and the EU Commission. The ICNIRP Guidelines specify a 'basic restriction level' for the exposure of the public to time-varying electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields. In the case of magnetic fields the 'basic restriction level' is 360 microtesla. The figure of 100 microtesla is ICNIRP's threshold, below which compliance with the Guidelines can be assumed. A calculated value above 100 microtesla does not mean non-compliance but rather that further investigation is required. The ICNIRP Guidelines form the basis of EU Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC which has been accepted by Ireland and therefore by EirGrid.

It is correct that some countries, or as is more often the case, regions within countries, have adopted a lower threshold than that of ICNIRP. The ECOFYS Report (commissioned by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources) mentions a level of 0.2 microtesla for the Tuscany Region of Italy. Such low levels however are not based on scientific logic as they are lower than the background levels that would typically exist in a building with low voltage mains electricity. They are also significantly lower than the 'background' levels that typically arise in city streets and in many high-rise buildings due to the close proximity of heavily loaded HV cables.

46. Will EirGrid agree to independent, ongoing monitoring of EMF levels?

There are two components to EMF, namely the electric field and the magnetic field. The strengths of these are at their highest in the immediate vicinity of the live wire and decrease rapidly with growing distance. Continuous monitoring is however not necessary as the maximum possible value of both components, at any given position relative to an overhead line, can be calculated if one knows the maximum voltage, the maximum electric current that can flow through the wires and the spatial arrangement of the live wires. These three characteristics, maximum voltage, maximum current carrying capacity and spatial arrangement are key criteria for the design of the overhead line and are fixed once the design is finalised.

In the case of the proposed 400kV overhead lines the maximum design voltage is 420kV, the maximum current is 2,165 amps (based on 1,500 MVA at 400kV) and the spatial arrangement of the wires is fixed by the physical dimensions of the pylons. The EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) that will accompany the application for planning permission will contain graphs that show the maximum calculated value of the electric field and the maximum calculated value of the magnetic field between a distance of zero and 50 metres from the centre line of the overhead line. The overhead line however will not operate continuously at maximum voltage and maximum load therefore these maximum calculated values must only be considered as 'short duration' values. The actual 'long duration' values will be lower, and in the case of the magnetic field significantly lower, than these.

In the case of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV overhead lines EirGrid can guarantee that the overhead line will be sufficiently far enough away from existing dwellings to ensure that even the maximum or 'short duration' EMF will be significantly lower than the restriction levels specified in the EU Guidelines. In fact it can be expected that for those existing dwellings that are closest to the proposed overhead line the resulting 'long duration' EMF levels will be comparable with 'background' levels already existing in those dwellings. The 'background' levels result from the electrical wiring installed in the building walls as well as the types of appliances in use.

Notwithstanding the above, in the interests of openness and good neighbourliness, any occupant of an existing dwelling that will be less than 100 metres from the 400kV overhead line can, during the consultation process, request that 'before' and 'after' measurements of the EMF be taken at their dwelling. EirGrid will arrange for these measurements to be carried by an independent contractor.

47. Will EirGrid agree to have an independent base line study conducted of the health profile of the population along the proposed route and further agree to have a full re-evaluation annually?

The carrying out of such an epidemiological study would not be the basis of best practice because the population density in the region is too small to provide data with appropriate statistical significance. Similar type studies have however been carried out, and continue to be carried out, in other more densely populated parts of the world.

The results of these studies, and all other EMF related studies, are continually monitored and assessed by agencies such as the World Health Organisation and ICNIRP (the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection). It is from the totality of these studies that ICNIRP developed its 'Guidelines for limiting exposure to time-varying electric, magnetic and electromagnetic field (up to 300GHz)'. Both the World Health Organisation and the European Commission have endorsed these guidelines. They form the basis of EU Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC which describes the EU Guidelines. EirGrid designs and operates the Irish transmission network in accordance with the EU Guidelines.

48. In EirGrid's opinion, what will be the safe distance within which I conduct farming operations near pylon towers?

ESB Networks will own the overhead line. In its role as the TAO (Transmission Asset Owner) ESB Networks produces an excellent booklet that deals with all aspects of safety from electricity hazards on the farm. It includes a section that deals with the care that should be taken in relation to overhead lines. The booklet *'Farm Well... Farm Safely'* can be downloaded from the ESB Networks website at www.esb.ie/esbnetworks.

49. What are the average, minimum, and maximum distances between each pylon tower?

The placement of pylons across the landscape is dependant on many factors, some of which are:

- Terrain
- Design constraints
- Landowner input into location
- Environmental considerations

The draft design for the Cavan – Tyrone 400kV overhead line has a maximum span of 498m, a minimum span of 206m and an average of 365m while the corresponding figures for the Meath-Cavan overhead line are 450m, 200m and 330m respectively.

50. What is the noise output in decibels from 400kV overhead transmission lines?

It is not possible to answer this question without knowing the distance between the proposed overhead line and your reference location, the extent of the screening between the reference location and the overhead line as well as the level of background noise at the reference location. It should be noted however that projected noise levels, along with mitigation measures will be studied as part of the EIS, which will be submitted alongside the planning application.

51. Why are EirGrid visiting landowners and not contacting adjacent property owners to discuss their concerns and fears?

EirGrid welcomes the opportunity to consult with any stakeholder who wishes to input into the projects.

EirGrid's consultants, ESBI and Tobin Consulting Engineers, have been visiting, and consulting with, the landowners on whose property the proposed 400kV overhead line will be built. In the case of all other stakeholders it is not possible to know intuitively who has "concerns and fears". As a result EirGrid advertised its intentions extensively in the media and invited all interested parties to consultation. To date this has resulted in over 11,000 people contacting EirGrid. EirGrid has also consulted extensively with community groups, such as NEPP, who claim to represent over 45,000 residents.

The invitation to consultation, to all persons who have "concerns and fears" due to EirGrid's proposals, remains open. Any stakeholder who wishes to consult with EirGrid on these projects can do so in any of the following ways:

A) Meeting

EirGrid is hosting meetings at our local information centres. These meetings will provide stakeholders with an opportunity to talk with EirGrid's experts about general project issues. Please call 1890.25.26.90 if you would like to attend one of these meetings.

B) Information Centre

EirGrid have public Information Centres in both Navan and Carrickmacross. These have been open since August 2008, and are there to facilitate engagement with the local community. Please drop into one of these centres, or call us to make an appointment at the below contact details:

Navan Information Centre Number 1, Newbridge, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath.

Open: Tuesday, 1:00 to 7:00 P.M. Ph: 046.902.7855, or 1890.25.26.90 Carrickmacross Information Centre Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

Open: Wednesday, 1:00 to 7:00 P.M. Ph: 046.969.0000 or 1890.25.26.90

C) Lo-Call phone line

The EirGrid Project Team can be contacted on 1890.25.26.90, Mondays to Fridays from 9 am to 5 pm.

D) Written Communication

If you wish to engage in written correspondence, please direct your queries to Tomás Mahony at our Navan Information Centre address, or email: <u>meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com</u>.

52. Does EirGrid need the agreement of all landowners on the proposed route prior to submitting plans to the Strategic Infrastructure Board?

No. EirGrid however is currently endeavouring to meet with all landowners on the indicative route line prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála. This is primarily to understand landowner views at this early stage, in order that any necessary mitigation measures can be appropriately identified and included in the planning application.

53. Does EirGrid have to submit individual site and pylon specific plans to the Strategic Infrastructure Board?

It is the intention of EirGrid to identify the proposed locations of each structure in the EIS. Of course, whether due to discussions with landowners or otherwise, EirGrid reserves its position in relation to minor alterations in respect of the exact location of any proposed structure.

54. What is EirGrid's position in relation to the safe erection and operation of the pylon towers, including children climbing up these towers and being involved in an accident, and will you be prepared to give written guarantees and indemnities?

ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line. In fulfilling this responsibility, ESB Networks will comply with all health and safety legislation and with all regulations governing safety on construction sites.

Where there is a risk at any given location (e.g., school or playing field) of children climbing the pylons, anti-climbing barriers can be installed. However, it is not envisaged that such barriers would be placed on all pylons as there may be a potential impact on visual amenity at certain locations. Any landowner or resident who has a particular concern in this regard can raise it with EirGrid during the preconstruction consultation and EirGrid can then give due consideration to the issue with ESB Networks.

In addition to the above ESB Networks, in its role as the TAO (Transmission Asset Owner) routinely conducts educational campaigns in the media highlighting the dangers of electricity and the dangers of climbing pylons. Similar campaigns, aimed specifically at children, are run, from time to time, through the school system, for further information on this see the 'Education' section of ESB Networks' website at www.esb.ie/esbnetworks.

55. Who is responsible for a ring fence to be placed around each base of pylon towers for safety reasons?

ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line. During the construction period it may be necessary, from time to time, to place temporary fencing around a pylon site for safety reasons. The erection, maintenance and removal of this fencing will be the responsibility of ESB Networks.

Once construction is complete and the line is in service it is not normal practice to have permanent fencing around pylons. Farm animals can, and do, graze in between the legs of pylons. On occasion however, particularly where pylons are located in stud farms, a landowner has requested that a fence be placed around a specific pylon and EirGrid and ESB Networks have accommodated such requests. Such a fence is erected by ESB Networks while the landowner is responsible for its subsequent maintenance.

Any landowner or resident who has a particular concern in this regard can raise it with EirGrid during the pre-construction consultation and EirGrid can then give due consideration to the issue with ESB Networks.

56. Why has my land been chosen to be traversed by high voltage wires and have pylons placed upon it?

EirGrid has published a Corridor Evaluation Document (available for viewing on the project pages of EirGrid's website at <u>www.eirgrid.com</u>). In this document the methodology applied to the evaluation of the various route corridor options is described and from this a conclusion is drawn as to which option should become the preferred candidate corridor. The methodology involved a qualitative evaluation of the corridor options against twenty two different criteria.

The Corridor Evaluation Document concluded that while the evaluation process found that each option had pros and cons the preferred candidate corridors announced by EirGrid (Corridor A in the case of Cavan-Tyrone and Corridor 3b in the case of Cavan-Meath) "constitute the most appropriate balance between the various technical, environmental and community evaluation criteria, notwithstanding the fact that potential constraints are identified for all corridors".

The Corridor Evaluation Document explains that Phase 2 of the route identification process concluded with the announcement of the preferred corridors. While Phase 3 of the process (which is currently underway) involves "more detailed technical and environmental studies, and ongoing Statutory, non-Statutory and public consultation, with the purpose of identifying a preferred route for the overall transmission infrastructure project within the identified preferred corridor".

57. List in detail the specific criteria that have been used in choosing my land.

A number of environmental, technical and community criteria were used in the selection of the preferred route corridor options for the power lines. The criteria used in the comparative evaluation of the potential route corridor options are detailed in Corridor Evaluation Document (available for viewing on the project pages of EirGrid's website at <u>www.eirgrid.com</u>).

They are summarised here as follows -

Technical

- Safety
- Construction / operation
- Design
- Other technical considerations

Environmental

- Human beings
- EMF
- Flora and Fauna
- Visual amenity and landscape
- Archaeology, culture and local heritage
- Water
- Air quality

Community Criteria

- Planning and land use
- Community
- Number of dwellings within 1km wide corridor
- Number of dwellings and other residential accommodation within 100 metres of indicative routes
- Landowner consent
- Potential impact on public amenities

Other

- Compliance with current planning and development policy and guidelines
- Project programme and deliverability
- Economic feasibility
- Compliance with international practice
- Adaptability for future development

58. Has my land been assessed physically – walked through and evaluated as suitable land for pylons? If so, who carried out this evaluation and under what authority?

EirGrid's consultants, ESBI and Tobin Consulting Engineers, have utilised a variety of techniques to assess the land, including aerial photography, drive-by land reviews, submissions from the public, and, site visits. Every effort is made to ensure that landowners have agreed in advance to a site visit.

59. Why was I not made aware of such activities and/or visits that potentially assess my land for the above?

See answer to Question 58.

60. What power has EirGrid got to evaluate my land for such proposed infrastructure on my land, prior to EirGrid contacting me?

EirGrid's role as Ireland's independent electricity Transmission System Operator is to operate and develop the national grid. The North East region has been identified as an area for development. In order to complete this development, the land must be evaluated. EirGrid's consultants, ESBI and Tobin Consulting Engineers, have utilised a variety of techniques to assess the land, including aerial photography, drive-by land reviews, submissions from the public, and, site visits. Every effort is made to ensure that landowners have agreed in advance to a site visit.



Meath-Tyrone 400kV Interconnection Development

Community Update Brochure, December 2009

EirGrid Submits Planning Application to An Bord Pleanála.

What's Happening?

EirGrid is submitting the planning application and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to An Bord Pleanála, which is the independent authority responsible for planning applications governed by the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act, 2006. The planning application is accompanied by an EIS, which sets out the possible impact that the proposed development may have on the area.

As the application is being submitted so close to Christmas, EirGrid has proposed that the period for public consultation be extended to ten weeks, commencing in the New Year. The application and EIS will be on view at An Bord Pleanála's Head Offices, the Meath, Cavan, and Monaghan Local Authority Offices, as well as online and at EirGrid's Navan and Carrickmacross Information Centres.

The public consultation period will begin on 4 January 2010 and runs for ten weeks, until 12 March 2010, during which time members of the public and organisations can make submission to An Bord Pleanála for consideration.

This brochure gives you a summary of the planning process and documents EirGrid is submitting to An Bord Pleanála. If you wish to make a submission in relation to this phase of the project, you may contact An Bord Pleanála directly. You can do so in the following ways:

Post: 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: 1890.275.175 Email: bord@pleanala.ie



Get Your Copy of the Application and EIS

- 1. Download for free at www. eirgridnortheastprojects.com.
- 2. Meet the Project Team and have them explain the EIS at the Navan and Carrickmacross Information Centres.
- Visit An Bord Pleanála's Head Offices or the Meath, Cavan, or Monaghan Local Authority Offices to view the EIS.

Volume 1

Volume 1 of the EIS is an overview of the complete project, from Co. Meath to Co. Tyrone.

Volume 1 of the EIS is broken down as follows:

Chapter 1: General Introduction Chapter 2: The Strategic Need for the Project Chapter 3: Public Consultation Chapter 4: Transmission and Technology Alternatives Chapter 5: Route and Substation Alternatives Chapter 6: Overview of Impacts

Chapter 1, the General Introduction, provides the overall context to the Interconnection Development Project, while Chapter 2, the Strategic Need for the Project, reviews the European, National, and Regional policies that have long-recognised the need for improved interconnection and transmission infrastructure such as that provided by the proposed Meath-Tyrone 400kV Interconnection Project.

Chapter 3 details the Public Consultation that EirGrid has engaged in since September 2007. EirGrid remains committed to listening to the concerns of the interested stakeholders, answering any queries that arise, and ensuring that relevant project information is provided to the public when it becomes available.

Throughout the project's development, EirGrid has remained committed to exploring all realistic alternatives in order to arrive at the best conclusion for where and how the needs of the North East can be met. Chapters 4 and 5, the Transmission and Technology Alternatives and Route and Substation Alternatives, detail the various options explored by EirGrid prior to finalising the planning application and EIS.

Finally, in Chapter 6, an overview of all potential impacts is explained.

Volume 2: Part A

Woodland, Co. Meath to Moyhill, Co. Meath

Part A of Volume 2 reviews the technical and environmental aspects of the project that have allowed the consultants to arrive at the proposed line route that has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála. Socoin / Tobin Consulting Engineers were the appointed consultants for the portion of the line that runs from Woodland, Co. Meath to the proposed new substation at Moyhill, Co. Meath.

The key focus of Part A, is to review the main environmental topics, findings, and mitigation measures. The key issues investigated include:

- Human Beings
- Flora and Fauna
- EMF
- Geology and Soils
- Water
- Climate and Air
- Noise
- Traffic
- Landscape
- Cultural Heritage

Navan Information Centre Number 1, Newbridge, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath. See: www.eirgridnortheastprojects.com Lo-call: 1890.25.26.90 Email: meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com

Volume 2: Part B

Moyhill, Co. Meath to Lemgare, Co. Monaghan (Border)

Similarly to Part A of this Volume, Part B reviews the technical and environmental aspects of the project that have allowed the consultants to arrive at the proposed line route that has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála. ESBI were the appointed consultants for the portion of the line that runs from the proposed new substation at Moyhill, Co. Meath to the Border with Northern Ireland at Lemgare, Co. Monaghan.

The key focus of Part B is to review the main environmental topics, findings, and mitigation measures that were identified, which included:

- Human Beings
- Flora and Fauna
- EMF
- Geology and Soils
- Water
- Climate and Air
- Noise
- Traffic
- Landscape
- Cultural Heritage

Carrickmacross Information Centre Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. See: www.eirgridnortheastprojects.com Lo-call: 1890.25.26.90 Email: cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com

EIS Structure

This Brochure summarises and clarifies the key points of the EIS document.

The EIS is laid out as follows:

Common Chapters	
Volume 2 Part A	Volume 2 Part B
Woodland – Moyhill 400kV Transmission Line	Moyhill – Border (Lemgare) 400kV Transmission Lin
Main EIS Text	Main EIS Text
Volume 3 Part A	Volume 3 Part B
Woodland – Moyhill 400kV Transmission Line	Moyhill – Border (Lemgare) 400kV Transmission Lin
Figures	Figures
Volume 4 Part A	Volume 4 Part B
Woodland – Moyhill 400kV Transmission Line	Moyhill – Border (Lemgare) 400kV Transmission Lin
Appendices	Appendices
Volume 5 Part A	Volume 5 Part B
Woodland – Moyhill 400kV Transmission Line	Moyhill – Border (Lemgare) 400kV Transmission Lin
Non-Technical Summary	Non-Technical Summary

Non-Technical Summary

Volume 1 is an overview of the complete project. Part A of all Volumes is in relation to the Woodland, Co. Meath to Moyhill, Co. Meath section of the Project, while Part B in all Volumes relates to the Moyhill, Co. Meath to Lemgare, Co. Monaghan (Border) portion of the Project. Volume 6 is a non-technical summary of the full EirGrid EIS.

All portions of the Project in Northern Ireland are detailed in the Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) EIS. Details of this report can be found on the NIE website at www.nie.co.uk.

Project Background

EirGrid, in association with NIE, is planning a joint project to facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity, promote better competition, and to reinforce the electricity supply to the North East region.

The project is:

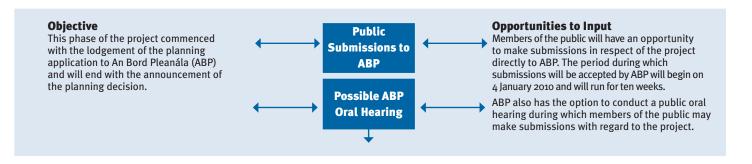
- An approximately 140 kilometre long 400kV overhead electricity interconnection development.
- It will run from a proposed new substation at Turleenan, Co. Tyrone, all the way to the existing Woodland 400kV substation, near Batterstown, Co. Meath.
- The proposed development includes a new substation in the vicinity of Kingscourt, Co. Cavan (specifically at Moyhill, Co. Meath) and the diversion of the nearby 220kV overhead line into this new substation.

The application is being made under the title *the Meath-Tyrone 400kV Interconnection Development*, going from Woodland, Co. Meath to Turleenan, Co. Tyrone.

The Benefits of the Project

The proposed project will bring a variety of benefits to the North East, including:

- Facilitating cross-border sharing of electricity.
- Providing high quality bulk power supply for the region.
- Supporting growth in the region and ensuring continued reliability of supply.
- Boosting existing industry in the North East when competing for business and inward development.
- Guaranteeing security of supply for future decades.
- Increasing competition and, therefore, reducing the cost of electricity to customers.
- Increasing reliability for the local network in the North East and for all electricity customers.
- Allowing more renewable energy to be connected to the electricity network, thereby reducing Ireland's dependency on fossil fuels.





See: www.eirgridnortheastprojects.com Lo-call: 1890.25.26.90 **Email:** *meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com* or *cavantyroneinterconnector@eirgrid.com*



North East Power Line Projects

Frequently Asked Questions January 2010

This document outlines answers to questions sent to EirGrid by landowners and the local community in relation to the North-East Power Line Projects.

The questions have been received in response to a Frequently Asked Questions document that was issued by EirGrid in July 2009. The original document contained sixty questions with answers. The new questions in this document are 'follow-up-questions' that seek clarification on some of the answers given in July 2009. For clarity the original question and answer is included here along with its relevant 'follow-up-question'.

1. Original Question - Why are EirGrid not consulting with householders directly impacted by the proposed overhead lines and pylons route?

EirGrid welcomes the opportunity to consult with any stakeholder who wishes to input into the projects.

EirGrid's consultants, ESBI and Tobin Consulting Engineers, have been visiting, and consulting with, the landowners on whose property the proposed 400kV overhead line will be built. In the case of all other landowners, householders and residents it is not possible to know intuitively which of them considers themselves to be, or not to be, 'impacted by the proposed overhead lines and pylons route'. As a result EirGrid advertised its intentions extensively in the media and invited all interested parties to consultation. To date this has resulted in over 11,000 people contacting EirGrid. EirGrid has also consulted extensively with community groups, such as NEPP, who claim to represent over 45,000 residents.

The invitation to consultation, to all persons who consider themselves to be impacted by EirGrid's proposals, remains open. Any stakeholder who wishes to consult with EirGrid on these projects can do so in any of the following ways:

A) Meeting

EirGrid is hosting meetings at our local information centres. These meetings provide stakeholders with an opportunity to talk with EirGrid's experts about general project issues. Please call 1890.25.26.90 if you would like to attend one of these meetings.

B) Information Centre

EirGrid have public Information Centres in both Navan and Carrickmacross. These have been open since August 2008, and are there to facilitate engagement with the local community. Please drop into one of these centres, or call us to make an appointment at the below contact details:

Navan Information Centre	Carrickmacross Information Centre
Number 1, Newbridge,	Carrickmacross Workhouse,
Athlumney,	Shercock Road,
Navan,	Carrickmacross,
Co. Meath.	Co. Monaghan.
Open: Tuesday, 1:00 to 7:00 P.M.	Open: Wednesday, 1:00 to 7:00 P.N

Ph: 046.902.7855, or 1890.25.26.90 Ph: 046.969.0000 or 1890.25.26.90

Λ.

C) Lo-Call phone line

The EirGrid Project Team can be contacted on 1890.25.26.90, Mondays to Fridays from 9 am to 5 pm.

D) Written Communication

If you wish to engage in written correspondence, please direct your queries to Tomás Mahony at our Navan Information Centre address. or email: meathcavanpower@eirgrid.com.

Follow Up Questions - With reference to the statement that over 11,000 people contacted EirGrid can you tell me how many of these were:

- Requests for information

Objections to the pylons proposal

EirGrid has submitted its planning application and associated EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) to An Bord Pleanála. Please refer to Chapter 3, Volume 1 of the EIS for details of the pre-application public consultation process.

The Application and EIS are publically available -

- On the project website at <u>www.eirgridnortheastprojects.com</u>
- At the Navan and Carrickmacross Information Centres (details above)
- At the offices of An Bord Pleanála and
- At the offices of the Meath, Cavan and Monaghan Local Authorities.

2. Original Question - I cannot get insurance against EMF damage to my health, will EirGrid provide me with this as I will be living within close proximity to the proposed lines?

EirGrid and ESB jointly design, construct, operate and maintain the electricity transmission network. They do this in compliance with all national and international guidelines and in accordance with 'best practice'. They are jointly satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies (including the World Health Organisations) that the balance of evidence is that the EMF, emanating from overhead transmission lines, does not have any adverse effect on public health. Accordingly, the issue of insurance in respect of EMFs does not arise in the context of the proposed lines.

Follow Up Question - This response refers to 'EirGrid and ESB Jointly'. Please state exactly what is the role and responsibility of the ESB in relation to the two proposed Projects, namely the Meath –Cavan powerline and Cavan-Tyrone interconnector?

EirGrid is the operator of the transmission system while ESB is the owner of the transmission system. Their respective roles, in this regard, are defined in Statutory Instrument 445 of 2000 as follows –

Section 8, paragraph 1 states that the role of the Transmission System Operator (that is EirGrid) is "to operate and ensure the maintenance of and, if necessary, develop a safe, secure, reliable, economical, and efficient electricity transmission system and to explore and develop opportunities for interconnection of its system with other systems, in all cases with a view to ensuring that all reasonable demands for electricity are met and having due regard for the environment".

Section 19 (a) states that the transmission system owner (that is ESB Networks) "shall as asset owner, maintain the transmission system and carry out construction work in accordance with the transmission system operator's" (that is EirGrid's) development plan.

In the case of this Development therefore ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line while EirGrid will be responsible for obtaining the consents required for the construction. These 'consents' consist of, among other things, the planning permission and any required landowner consents.

Follow Up Question - Why has ESB not been in contact with me in relation to this?

ESB Networks has no involvement in the project during the pre-planning stage and has therefore no reason to contact any landowners on these matters prior to the receipt of planning permission.

Follow Up Question - Will ESB be in contact with me in relation to these proposed projects?

After receipt of planning permission ESB Networks may need to contact a landowner on whose land it intends to carry out work however such contact will be in partnership with EirGrid as it is EirGrid's responsibility to obtain the required landowner consents.

Follow Up Question - If ESB are involved in the project, how can their subsidiary ESBIE be a consultant to EirGrid and NIE on the project? Is this not a conflict of interest?

ESB Networks is a member of the ESB Group of companies and as stated previously has no involvement in the project at this stage. ESBI (ESB International) is also a member of the ESB Group. ESBI is tasked with managing the non-regulated businesses of the ESB Group both nationally and internationally. It is in this role that ESBI provides consultancy services to EirGrid. This does not constitute a conflict of interest.

Follow Up Question - Are EirGrid and ESB prepared to recommend to the government that they implement in full their Expert Group on EMF Report from March 2007 prior to making an application for planning approval?

EirGrid is aware of the Government's intention to amend the statutory powers of the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII) to include responsibility for matters relating to non-ionising radiation including EMF and its intention to establish a national research programme to undertake further scientific research in Ireland on the health effects of exposure to EMF. EirGrid however does not advise the Government on these matters.

3. Original Question - My house is so close to the pylons that I will probably never be able to sell it. How will EirGrid measure property devaluation and how do I claim?

Reliable, secure and economic supplies of electricity are vital to all of us in our daily lives, as householders, in agriculture, industry and employment. It is no coincidence that areas with strong overhead electricity networks have proven to be economically successful, attracting and retaining essential high technology industries. Where lands or wayleaves are required in order to facilitate the construction and operation of the proposed overhead line, a scheme of compensation has been put in place for the assessment of any loss in the value of lands affected. See answer to Question 7 for further detail.

Follow Up Questions - Please furnish me with a copy of the 'Scheme of compensation' that 'has been put in place' 'for the assessment of any loss in the value of lands effected' where lands or way leaves are required in order to facilitate the construction and operation of the proposed overhead line.

Does this response refer to 1985 ESB/IFA Code of Practice (COP)?

Arising from the statement regarding 'the assessment of any loss in the value of lands affected' in the 1985 ESB /IFA COP do you acknowledge that a scheme of compensation covers loss of agricultural output as well as loss in the value of lands?

How should any such loss of output or loss in the value of lands be assessed? By and independent board of assessors?

The original response is referring to the ESB/IFA Code of Practice. This document, along with other associated documents, is available for viewing on the IFA website at <u>www.ifa.ie/CrossSectors/infrastructure</u> and these address the issues raised in your follow up questions.

4. Original Question - What are EirGrid going to do about the noise from the pylons for anyone living beside these monstrous specimens?

Appropriate materials and construction practices will be utilised to minimise the 'noise' that can occur during periods of high humidity. It should be noted that projected noise levels, along with mitigation measures will be studied as part of the EIS, which will be submitted alongside the planning application.

Follow Up Questions - What are the existing international, EU and Irish standards in relation to noise levels from overhead lines?

Will you commit to supporting the immediate introduction of an Irish standard for noise emissions from overhead power lines?

Will you agree to regular ongoing monitoring of noise levels over the lifetime of the project?

In Ireland, there are no statutory guidelines relating to noise limits for the construction or operation of overhead lines. However, the "Guidance Note for Noise in relation to Scheduled Activities", 2nd edition, EPA 2006, is used as a guideline to assess the predicted and measured noise levels during the construction and operation phases of the development. Chapter 11, Volume 2 of the EIS deals with this issue in detail.

"Ongoing monitoring of noise levels over the lifetime of the project" is neither necessary nor practical. There are over 6,600 km of transmission lines, as well as over 5,500 km of 38kV overhead lines, in Ireland, all of which has the potential to emit noise. ESB therefore relies on the public to point out locations where noise is causing annoyance. Although many tens of thousands of people live in proximity (within 500 metres) to these overhead lines complaints due to noise are rare. When complaints are received they are investigated by the asset owner, which is ESB Networks. When found to be genuine there is usually an underlying cause which can be rectified and the annoyance eliminated.

5. Original Question - Why did EirGrid choose the route with the most dwellings and the most people living in close proximity to the lines?

EirGrid has not yet, as of July 2009, finalised a route within the preferred corridors. It should also be noted that neither of EirGrid's preferred corridors contains the "*most dwellings and the most people living in close proximity to the lines*".

In February 2009 EirGrid announced its preferred candidate corridors (Corridor A in the case of Cavan-Tyrone and Corridor 3b in the case of Cavan-Meath) within which a route can be found. At that time EirGrid published a Corridor Evaluation Document (available for viewing on the project pages of EirGrid's website at <u>www.eirgrid.com</u>). In this document the methodology applied to the evaluation of the various route corridor options is described. The methodology involved a qualitative evaluation of the corridor options against twenty two different criteria (two of which considered the issue of proximity to dwellings) and from this a conclusion was drawn as to which option should become the preferred candidate corridor.

The Corridor Evaluation Document concluded that while the evaluation process found that each option had pros and cons the preferred candidate corridors announced by EirGrid "constitute the most appropriate balance between the various technical, environmental and community evaluation criteria, notwithstanding the fact that potential constraints are identified for all corridors".

The Corridor Evaluation Document explains that Phase 2 of the route identification process concluded with the announcement of the preferred corridors. While Phase 3 of the process (which is currently underway) involves "more detailed technical and environmental studies, and ongoing Statutory, non-Statutory and public consultation, with the purpose of identifying a preferred route for the overall transmission infrastructure project within the identified preferred corridor".

Follow Up Questions - You state that *'EirGrid has not yet, as of July 2009, finalised a route within the preferred corridors.'* When <u>exactly</u> does EirGrid propose to announce a finalised route and submit a planning application? Have you carried out an EIS for all three route corridor options?

EirGrid submitted its planning application and associated EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) to An Bord Pleanála on 18th December 2009.

6. Original Question - Why did EirGrid not consider putting the proposed infrastructure along either the M3 or the proposed rail line? Were there meetings held with the NRA and larnród Eireann to consider such a proposal?

EirGrid has consulted with both the NRA and larnród Éireann regarding these projects.

As both EirGrid, and its environmental consultants, recognise the merits of utilising shared infrastructure corridors for linear developments (such as roads, railways, canals, pipelines and power lines etc.) the possibility of locating the proposed development alongside the new motorway and the disused railway line was considered as follows -

Overhead line along the M3 motorway

Locating the proposed overhead line alongside the motorway was ruled out because, in the opinion of the environmental consultant, to do so, would not be environmentally sustainable. This opinion was based on, among other things, the stated intention of the planning authority to protect "landscapes of exceptional value and sensitivity and in particular to protect the rural character, setting, amenity and archaeological heritage of Brú na Bóinne and the Hill of Tara, and of the surrounding areas including the area in the vicinity of the proposed M3 motorway and its related interchanges".

Underground Cable along the M3 motorway

Locating a 400kV underground cable within the reserve of the motorway was ruled out primarily because in EirGrid's opinion it would not be appropriate to use 400kV underground cable in place of 400kV overhead line, for this project, as this would not be in compliance with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective transmission network while having due regard for the environment. This conclusion is supported by the findings of the PB Power Report (commissioned by EirGrid and NIE) and the ECOFYS Report (commissioned by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources).

In addition the NRA has advised that a 400kV underground cable would only be permitted within the motorway reserve if "indemnities regarding damage, disruption, costs, etc" acceptable to both NRA and the PPP (public-private partnership) company, that will construct and operate the motorway, were received. In EirGrid's opinion, even if underground cable was a viable option, this requirement introduces such complexity, uncertainty and risk that it would render this route, a less favourable underground cable route than a direct cross county route, such as that identified in the PB Power Report.

Overhead line along the route of the disused railway lines

Locating the proposed overhead line alongside the route of the disused railway lines was ruled out because it would direct the development into areas of population, in particular Navan Town, but also a number of villages and hamlets along the route. In the opinion of the routeing experts there were better and less constrained route options available elsewhere.

Underground cable along the route of the disused railway lines

Locating a 400kV underground cable within the reserve of the disused railway was ruled out primarily because in EirGrid's opinion it would not be appropriate to use 400kV underground cable, instead of the proposed 400kV overhead line, for this project as this would not be in compliance with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective transmission network while having due regard for the environment. This conclusion is supported by the findings of the PB Power Report and the ECOFYS Report.

In addition PB Power was requested, for their report, to find a route corridor within which a technically and environmentally feasible route for underground cable (UGC) could be found. This was to be done for the purpose of establishing a realistic cost and environmental impact comparison between an underground cable option and the proposed overhead line option. Prior to carrying out the study, PB Power and EirGrid/NIE, agreed a set of 'Strategic Cable Routeing Criteria' to be applied by PB Power's cable routeing experts in their quest for a suitable UGC route. During these discussions it was concluded that there would be no advantage to routeing the UGC via the disused rail lines, while taking a more direct route across country would result in a shorter route and involve less uncertainty and risk. It was therefore agreed that the 'Strategic Routeing Criteria' should identify the railway lines, both in service and disused, under the category 'Avoid if Possible'. NOTE – further elaboration on this issue can be found in the answer to Question 29.

Follow Up Questions - With reference to contacts with both larnród Éireann and NRA, state the following in respect of each of those companies:

- How many meetings took place?
- On what dates?
- Who attended from each company?
- Was a record kept of each meeting?
- Was there any exchange of correspondence?
- Were any technical or feasibility studies conducted?
- Will EirGrid publish the correspondence, written records and documents emanating from these contacts or provide them to NEPP and public representatives?

Why would the EU commission recommend in favour of collinear development of this type of infrastructure if there are supposed to be difficulties over indemnities?

Details of the pre-planning consultation with prescribed Statutory Bodies, such as larnród Éireann and NRA, is included in Chapter 3, Volume 1 of the EIS which accompanies the planning application. The consideration of the M3 corridor and disused railway lines as route alternatives is dealt with in Chapter 5 of Volume 1.

In this case the issue of collinear development and 'indemnities' has nothing to do with either the EU Commission or EirGrid. It arises as a result of the agreement between the NRA and the PPP that will construct and operate the M3 motorway. When the EU Commission proposed the concept of collinear development it was with particular reference to the trans-European telecommunications network. The conclusions of the Commission's report 'Trans-European networks: Towards an integrated approach' relates to telecommunications networks and not to the undergrounding of electricity transmission lines, which although mentioned as an idea, is not given any priority. Indeed it states in this regard that these "suggestions do not replace the immediate need to interconnect the national high-voltage networks, but are a proposal for finer meshing of the national electricity systems over a longer time span matching the time it takes to complete the major infrastructure projects."

EirGrid agrees with the concept of collinear development but recognises that each situation has to be considered on its own merit. In the case of the Meath-Tyrone 400kV Interconnection Development project; EirGrid can find no advantage of collinear development with ongoing, or planned, road or rail projects.

7. Original Question - Will I as an adjacent householder whose land/property is not traversed be compensated for the proposed unsightly infrastructure and its emissions?

EirGrid will ensure that every reasonable effort is made to minimise the impact of the 400kV overhead line on adjacent householders, whether in relation to visual amenity or any perceived environmental emissions. In the case of visual impact this will include, among other things –

- the use of a less visually intrusive pylon design than was used in the past.
- the careful positioning, where possible in agreement with landowners, of the pylons.
- the implementation of any other reasonable mitigation measures that are agreed with potentially affected property owners.

In the case of potential 'emissions' minimisation of any impact will include, among other things -

- compliance with EU Guidelines on the exposure of persons to electric and magnetic fields.
- use of appropriate materials and construction practices to minimise the 'noise' that can occur during periods of high humidity.

In circumstances where these potential impacts will be mitigated, EirGrid does not perceive that there will be any significant depreciation in the value of property in the vicinity of the proposed overhead line over and above the depreciation in the property market generally.

Follow Up Questions - You state that 'EirGrid does not perceive that there will be any significant depreciation in the value of property in the vicinity of the proposed overhead line over and above the depreciation in the property market generally' Does EirGrid concede that there will be <u>some</u> depreciation even if you don't agree that it is significant?

Who decides what 'significant' depreciation is?

Will EirGrid agree to accept independent assessments and studies on this?

What is your response to the many international reports that link severe devaluation of property to proximity to pylons and overhead lines?

The proposed development is in the statutory phase of the planning process. While EirGrid does not believe that property values are a planning matter EirGrid is of the opinion that reliable, secure, and economic supplies of electricity are vital to all of us in our daily lives, as householders, in agriculture, industry, and employment, and as such, supports the common good. Furthermore it is no coincidence that Regions with strong overhead electricity networks have proven to be economically successful, attracting and retaining important high technology industries. This in turn results in an increase in living standards with corresponding increases in average property values in those regions.

8. Original Question - Will I be indemnified by potential claims by visitors to my property?

Landowners, including persons present on their land with their permission are indemnified by the Electricity Supply Board (ESB). The full details of this cover are detailed in the "ESB/I FA Code of Practice for Survey, Construction Maintenance of Overhead Lines in relation to the Rights of Landowners" (October 1985) states the following:-

"The Board shall indemnify and keep indemnified the landowner, his servants, agents, licensees and invitees against all sums in respect of loss or damage, claims, demands, costs and expenses which the landowner shall become legally liable to pay as compensation for any illness or accidental bodily injury or accidental loss of or damage to property where such injury or damage is caused by, arises from, is traceable or connected with the works or equipment other than in consequence of any malicious act or omission on part of the landowner. The Board shall pay compensation to the landowner, his servants, agents, licensees and invitees in respect of any illness or bodily injury or loss or damage to material property suffered by him or them (together with all consequential loss arising there from) where that same is caused by, arises from, is traceable to or connected with the works, or equipment other than in consequence of any malicious or criminally reckless act or omission of the landowner and except insofar as the same has been made good by the Board without loss to the landowner. The above is without prejudice to the Board's and Landowners' Statutory and Common Law rights. Illness in this context is understood to mean damage to the personal health and well being of the landowner

or his animals or his agents, servants, licensees and invitees. It is noted and agreed that the ESB will issue, to any individual landowner requiring same, a letter of acknowledgement that the Board's wayleave over his land is subject to the provisions of the code of practice, including specifically the indemnity clause."

Follow Up Questions - You refer to 'Landowners, including persons present on their land with their permission, are indemnified by the ESB. The full details of this cover are detailed in the "ESB/IFA Code of Practice..." Please clarify exactly whose legal responsibility it is to indemnify landowners? Is it EirGrid, ESB or a combination of both?

Have either EirGrid or ESB had contacts with IFA or ICMSA in relation to the indemnities and compensation that would arise from your proposed projects? Does EirGrid (either separately or jointly with ESB) intend to negotiate a new Code of Practice with IFA or ICMSA relating to the North-South projects and / or Grid 25?

This reply quotes extensively from the ESB/ IFA 1985 COP referring to compensation for injury or damage to property arising from the placing of *works or equipment on property*. Do you acknowledge that the term *'works or equipment'* includes pylons or overhead wires placed permanently across the land?

It is the responsibility of the asset owner to indemnify landowners and to maintain appropriate public liability insurance. Under current legislation the proposed power line will be owned by ESB Networks.

EirGrid (formerly ESB National Grid) and ESB Networks have long standing contacts with the IFA on general matters relating to the construction and operation of overhead transmission lines on farm land. Neither party has had contact with the IFA or the ICMSA in relation to indemnities and compensation arising out of this particular project.

EirGrid and ESB Networks do not have any plans, and currently do not anticipate any reason, to negotiate another Code or Practice with the IFA or ICMSA.

The ESB/IFA Code of Practice has regard to all works (survey, construction and maintenance) associated with the placing of overhead lines, with a rating of 110kV or higher, on private land. In the statement of indemnity the term 'works or equipment on property' refers to all activities associated with the overhead line, including those listed above as a well as its operation and eventual decommissioning and to the equipment (masts, conductors etc.) which forms the overhead line. The indemnity is 'held' by the asset owner, which is currently ESB Networks, for the entire life cycle of the asset.

9. Original Question - What is the minimum distance committed by EirGrid that the 400kV lines or pylons will be placed nearest to a dwelling?

There is no specified 'minimum distance' other than that required to ensure safety from electrocution. The Electricity Supply Act however requires that any person intending to construct a building within 25 yards (approximately 23 metres) of an existing overhead line must notify ESB in advance. This is required so that ESB Networks can ensure that the works can be carried out safely and that the future safe operation and maintenance of the overhead line, and the proposed building, is ensured.

For the proposed 400kV lines EirGrid expects to achieve a minimum clearance distance that is much greater than 23 metres. The actual distance however will not be known until the design is finalised.

Follow Up Questions - You state that there is no specified minimum distance from pylons and that you '*expect*' to achieve a minimum clearance distance much greater that 23 metres. Please state definitively the minimum clearance distance you propose for these projects?

What is your response to the many international reports that link proximity to pylons and overhead lines to detrimental effects on human and animal health?

The distance between the line and adjacent dwellings is detailed in the EIS submitted to An Bord Pleanála as part of the planning application.

The issue of EMF is dealt with in detail in Chapter 6, Volume 2 of the EIS.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original Question 10.

11. Original Question - What are EirGrid's powers in relation to entering property prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála? Cite any relevant legislation or Court decisions.

Without prejudice to such rights, EirGrid is not proposing to rely on statutory powers to enter land 'prior to submitting plans to An Bord Pleanála'. Rather, entry onto lands is being approached on a voluntary basis. While EirGrid is endeavoring to meet landowners prior to application, this is primarily to hear landowner views at this early stage so that mitigation measures can be appropriately identified and included in the planning application. Through landowner site visits, EirGrid wishes to ascertain whether and how the proposed overhead line might impact upon landowners.

Follow Up Questions - Why does EirGrid adopt a different approach to the ESB with regard to entry onto lands? Under their COP with the IFA, ESB agree that they will not seek to enter lands until after they have received planning permission.

Do you acknowledge that there have been circumstances where EirGrid personnel or your agents have entered onto lands despite being unable to get permission from the relevant landowner?

If ESB is prepared to wait the outcome of planning applications before attempting entry onto lands, why will you not do the same? Are you preempting the outcome of the planning process and acting already as if the determination is in your favour? Will you agree to align EirGrid's approach with that of the ESB and cease all attempts at entry onto lands until after the planning process has been exhausted?

As explained in the answer to Question 2 above ESB Networks does not have a role in transmission projects until after planning permission has been received. ESB Networks has therefore no reason, in the case of this project, to enter lands prior to the receipt of planning permission.

In the case of transmission projects it is desirable that a preliminary survey be carried out prior to the submission of the planning application. The ESB/IFA Code of Practice states in this regard that *"During the Preliminary Survey the Board's staff examine the terrain in a general manner to identify obstacles and to find the most suitable route. Contact with landowners is minimal. The Board staff responsible (Engineers or* Surveyors) shall identify themselves if requested by landowners, who are met in the course of surveying and shall indicate the general nature of their business on the property." Reference to 'Board' in this statement means Electricity Supply Board or more precisely ESB Networks. It should be noted that, in accordance with Statutory Instrument 445 of 2000 and the associated Infrastructure Agreement between EirGrid and ESB, responsibility for carrying out 'Preliminary Surveys' has now passed to EirGrid. In the case of this project EirGrid and/or its agents have entered lands for the purpose of carrying out a Preliminary Survey and have done so in accordance with the Code of Practice. Neither EirGrid nor its agents have however entered lands where prior permission to do so was expressly refused by the relevant land owner.

EirGrid agrees to be bound by the terms of the ESB/IFA Code of Practice in so far as they apply to EirGrid's roles and responsibilities. The alignment however of "EirGrid's approach with that of the ESB" is not possible as both parties have entirely different roles with regard to transmission projects.

12. Original Question - What permission, if any, does EirGrid need to enter on land to complete their Environmental Impact Study? Cite any relevant legislation or Court decisions.

Clearly, it will be of benefit to landowners and EirGrid alike if as much access is given as possible so that all landowner concerns and specific issues that will affect the project can be identified as early as possible and fed into the process of preparing the EIS. To the extent that access is refused and cannot otherwise be obtained, the EIS will record this together with alternative measures adopted to ensure that the EIS is as comprehensive as possible.

Follow Up Questions - Why is it necessary in the EIA to 'record' your failure to enter lands because of the with holding of permission to do so by a landowner?

Is this not a gross disrespect of a landowner's legal right to not allow entry at this stage if that is their wish?

Do you intend to specifically record the names and addresses of landowners who do not agree to your entry on to your land prior to any granting of planning approval?

The guidelines for the preparation of an EIS require that any difficulties encountered in compiling the impact assessment, and any measures applied to mitigate these difficulties, be described. This has occurred in respect of the current EIS; measures which mitigate the need to access lands of the proposed development were available, and these ensured the carrying out of an adequate environmental assessment.

EirGrid fully acknowledges and respects the legal rights of landowners. The methodology of EirGrid and its consultants in carrying out the EIA, including seeking to access the lands of the proposed development, is in accordance with established best practice, and in no way shows "disrespect of landowner's legal rights".

All correspondence that relates to the consultation process for the proposed development will be kept on file. This applies not only to correspondence received form landowners but also correspondence received form An Bord Pleanála, Statutory and non-Statutory Bodies, Planning Authorities and other stakeholders including the general public.

13. Original Question - If a landowner does not grant permission to EirGrid to enter lands, does it mean that EirGrid cannot proceed through my property with overhead lines and Pylon towers?

In circumstances where planning permission is granted for the proposed lines, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall endeavour to agree access arrangements with individual landowners. In the event that such arrangements cannot be agreed, then in order to implement the construction of structures and installation of lines so permitted, and only where necessary, EirGrid/ESB Networks shall rely upon statutory powers of entry in this regard.

It should be noted, however, that while EirGrid does not generally use statutory powers, EirGrid reserves its statutory rights in this regard in individual cases where a need to enter upon lands is necessary and a landowner is not willing to facilitate EirGrid in this regard.

Follow Up Questions - I believed up to now that this is an EirGrid Project and planning application, yet you now refer jointly to 'EirGrid/ESB Networks' as a <u>combined</u> entity. In earlier responses on this topic you refer only to EirGrid.

Please clarify exactly the relationships and the legal responsibilities of EirGrid and ESB in relation to these projects?

Please refer to the answer given to the follow up questions associated with Question 2 above.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original questions numbered 14 to 23.

24. Original Question - Why has EirGrid rejected without foundation the findings of the ASKON Reports? Can you forward me a copy of the ASKON Reports?

EirGrid welcomed the Askon Report and acknowledged its contribution to the consultation process. EirGrid, with the assistance of its team of international experts, carried out a comprehensive review of the Report and published the findings of this review in the document 'EirGrid Position on NEPP Askon Study'.

In summary EirGrid agrees with the following findings in the Askon Report -

- There have been significant developments in HV UGC (underground cable) technology in the past twenty years.
- HVDC (high voltage direct current) technology is not appropriate for these projects.
- Two UGC circuits would be required to replace the proposed single 400kV OHL (overhead line).
- The installation of two independent UGC circuits would alleviate some of the disadvantages associated with HV UGC circuits.
- It would not be appropriate to install an UGC circuit, of the magnitude required for these projects, under the public roads of Meath, Cavan, Monaghan, Armagh and Tyrone.

- There are no UGC circuits, anywhere in the world, of the type and length that would be required for these projects.
- The capital cost of an HV UGC circuit is many times that of the cost of an equivalent OHL circuit.
- Both UGC and OHL circuits emit magnetic fields. UGC circuits do not emit electric fields.

Some of the more remarkable errors of assumption, errors of understanding and errors of calculation in the Askon Report are as follows –

- There is no basis for the assertions that UGC circuits are safer than OHL circuits. Both technologies are used by EirGrid and both are designed and operated so as to meet all relevant national and international safety criteria. UGC and OHL circuits are equally safe.
- Askon has greatly over estimated the quantity of electrical power (in megawatt hours) that will flow through the overhead line during its lifetime. This is a fundamental error and invalidates Askon calculations of electrical losses and assumptions on 'whole of life' operating costs. The laws of physics determine that a lightly loaded UGC will have higher electrical losses than an equivalent lightly loaded OHL while a heavily loaded UGC will have lower losses than a heavily loaded OHL. In its role as operator of the transmission network EirGrid knows that the proposed 400kV circuits will operate relatively 'lightly loaded', in the region of 35% capacity, throughout their life. It should be noted that the proposed circuits are required to have a large spare capacity as a contingency in case of short duration emergencies.
- Askon has acknowledged that the capital cost of UGC is considerably more than that of OHL. But then tried to make a financial case for UGC on the basis that the UGC would have a lower 'whole of life' operating cost than that of the OHL. As stated in the previous bullet point this is based on an error of assumption and the reverse is in fact the case. Askon's conclusion that a UGC circuit *"could well work out the lower coast option over the whole life cycle"* is simply not correct.
- Askon's comparison of the environmental impacts is inadequate. It is not enough to just point out the obvious advantages that UGC has over OHL. A balanced approach is required. Comparing OHL with UGC circuits across the full range of environmental criteria shows overhead lines perform better under many of the categories. This was the conclusion of the ECOFYS Report commissioned by the Department of Energy.
- Askon's UGC cost estimates were prepared by a team with no apparent local knowledge and no practical experience of installing HV underground cables. The civil engineering estimates were based on information received from a *"German power supplier"*. This has resulted in errors of omission and errors of under estimation that together add up to an under estimation of over €80 million in their estimate for a 56km 400kV UGC circuit in County Meath. To put the extent of this error in perspective, it is twice the magnitude of Askon's estimate for the total cost of an equivalent 400kV OHL.
- There are many 'system wide' technical problems that would arise with the installation of such long HV UGC circuits on Ireland's relatively small and isolated transmission grid. Askon failed to consider these and only looked at this from a 'localised' grid perspective. EirGrid has to consider the impact on the system as a whole.

EirGrid circulated the report to three separate teams of experts for review over a number of months and also spent two days with the authors of the reports. Based on all of the foregoing EirGrid concluded (i) that Askon has not made a valid case in favour of the use of underground cable and (ii) that for these 400kV projects an overhead line solution is appropriate and consistent with EirGrid's mandate to provide Ireland with a 'safe, reliable, secure and cost effective transmission system while having due regard for the environment'.

Regarding your request for a copy of the Askon Reports - EirGrid cannot provide these as the study was commissioned by NEPP and the resulting reports are copyright protected. Copies should be requested from NEPP.

Follow Up Questions - Why does EirGrid consider public roads in North County Dublin and south county Meath to be suitable for underground cables, but you will not consider the M3 motorway or similar roads in counties Meath, Cavan and Monaghan? Have you carried out a detailed study of the M3 motorway option?

EirGrid has given consideration to the suitability of the M3 motorway for accommodating 400kV underground cables; see Chapter 5, Volume 1 of the EIS that accompanies the planning application.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original questions numbered 25 to 35.

36. Original Question - Has EirGrid factored in a cost for such devaluations into their Grid25 transmission system planned costings? What baseline criteria has it used for such evaluations?

GRID 25 is a strategy for the development of Ireland's electricity transmission system between now and 2025, rather than a detailed plan. The quoted estimates of capital investment for each region should therefore not be considered as 'planned costings'. They are instead high-level, top-down, estimates that were calculated by applying 'typical rates' to an estimate of the extent of the works required in each region. The 'typical rates' were determined from the actual cost of similar type projects that have been completed in the recent past with the addition of a provision for contingency and inflation. The actual cost of a recently completed overhead line project would include the cost of any landowner compensation payments in respect of wayleave acquisition that were made during the course of that project.

Follow Up Questions - Arising from your statement that 'The actual cost of a recently completed overhead line project would include the cost of any landowner compensation payments in respect of wayleave acquisition that were made during the course of the project', please state your estimate of the cost of compensation for:

- (a) Way leaves,
- (b) Loss of agricultural output,
- (c) Devaluation of properties?

The budgetary provision for payments to landowners, arising from compensation for which they will be eligible, is commercially sensitive and cannot be released.

37. Original Question - What standard operating procedures and decision criteria are used by EirGrid for deploying taxpayers' money in relation to landowners' compensation offers for pylons placed on their property? Can you forward the specific procedures in the interests of transparency?

Although EirGrid is a company wholly owned by the State, neither it nor its activities are funded directly by 'taxpayers' money'. EirGrid, in its role as Ireland's TSO (Transmission System Operator), has a statutory obligation to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective electricity transmission system while having due regard for the environment. Its activities in this regard are regulated by the Commission for Energy Regulation and are primarily, and ultimately, funded by the electricity consumers of Ireland. It is within this regulated environment that EirGrid will negotiate levels of compensation with landowners. NOTE - the current phase of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV projects is also partially funded by an EU grant.

Compensation is paid to landowners on whose property the overhead line is erected. This is done in accordance with long established agreements with the Irish Farmers Association. All agreements with landowners are negotiated individually since the effect of the transmission line on each landowners' property will vary from landowner to landowner. EirGrid will endeavour to complete negotiations with each landowner prior to construction

A landowner or rights holder who is dissatisfied with the amount of compensation offered has the statutory right to have the compensation amount assessed by an independent arbitrator.

Follow Up Questions - Arising from your statement that 'All agreements with landowners are negotiated individually...' does this mean that you do not intend to negotiate another code of practice with IFA or ICMSA?

What procedures will be followed in the conduct of these negotiations with individual landowners?

Since the existing Code of Practice is between ESB and IFA how can it be binding on EirGrid?

As the current code of practice is working well neither EirGrid nor ESB can see any reason for making changes.

EirGrid and ESB staff will adhere to their respective codes of practice in relation to access to land/premises when entering or negotiating entry onto private property. Copies of the Codes of Practice are available for viewing on both the EirGrid and ESB websites.

The ESB/IFA code of practice was established for the mutual benefit of all parties concerned. As EirGrid, and not ESB, is now responsible for obtaining the land owner consents (both before and after planning permission) required for the construction of transmission infrastructure it is appropriate that EirGrid should also comply with the relevant sections of the code of practice.

38. Original Question - Will EirGrid compensate landowners for the long term effects such as crop damage, low milk yields, etc. and, if so, how will such compensation be calculated?

EirGrid design and operate the network in compliance with all national and international guidelines. We are satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that Electric and Magnetic Field (EMF) do not have any adverse, long-term effect on public or animal health.

The ESB will take every care during the erection and subsequent work on the line to ensure that farmers' operations are not impacted. Compensation will be paid for crop loss and physical disturbance to lands during construction, by individual agreement with landowners, following the IFA code of practice. ESB, after consultation with the landowner shall take all necessary precautions to prevent the straying of livestock and shall compensate the landowner of such livestock for all loss, damage or claims arising from the loss of such animals and pay compensation for injury or death of/loss of the animals where such straying is clearly due to any act or omission on the part of the Board. The Board shall ensure that the local District Veterinary Officer is informed of the entry of ESB vehicles on farm with a disease problem and that the Epidemiology Unit of the Department of Agriculture is made aware of ESB activities in TB affected areas. It is not accepted that there will be any issue in relation to lower milk yields as a result of the operation of the proposed lines.

Follow Up Question - Once again, there is complete confusion in this response between the respective roles and responsibilities of EirGrid and ESB. Can you state these clearly?

EirGrid is the operator of the transmission system while ESB is the owner of the transmission system. Their respective roles, in this regard, are defined in Statutory Instrument 445 of 2000 as follows –

Section 8, paragraph 1 states that the role of the Transmission System Operator (that is EirGrid) is "to operate and ensure the maintenance of and, if necessary, develop a safe, secure, reliable, economical, and efficient electricity transmission system and to explore and develop opportunities for interconnection of its system with other systems, in all cases with a view to ensuring that all reasonable demands for electricity are met and having due regard for the environment".

Section 19 (a) states that the transmission system owner (that is ESB Networks) "shall as asset owner, maintain the transmission system and carry out construction work in accordance with the transmission system operator's" (that is EirGrid's) development plan.

Follow Up Question - Do you intend to adopt the indemnities contained in the ESB / IFA COP or negotiate new ones?

The responsibility for indemnities resides with the transmission system owner. ESB Networks is the transmission system owner.

39. Original Question - Why is the East-West Interconnector from Rush to Woodlands being placed underground?

The Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV Circuits must use HVAC Technology

The proposed Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuit is required to provide further interconnection between the transmission grids of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. These transmission grids already operate as a single or 'synchronous' HVAC (high voltage, alternating current) system. The proposed Meath-Cavan 400kV circuit has two objectives, to provide capacity support to north-south power flows and to reinforce the existing HVAC electricity supply to the North-East Region of the Republic. As a result the most appropriate technology for the proposed Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuits is HVAC.

The East-West Interconnector must use HVDC Technology

The proposed East-West Interconnector is required to provide further interconnection between the transmission system on the island of Ireland and that on the island of Great Britain. These two transmission systems are required to operate independently of each other and are therefore two 'asynchronous' HVAC systems. The existing island-to-island interconnector, that is the Moyle Interconnector, utilises HVDC (high voltage, direct current) technology. This technology is the most appropriate for providing interconnector, that is, the East-West Interconnector must therefore also use HVDC technology.

EirGrid's Policy on the use of UGC and/or OHL

EirGrid is statutorily obliged to provide Ireland with a safe, reliable and cost effective electricity system while having due regard for the environment. As a consequence of this obligation EirGrid has developed a long standing policy and practice for the use of HV underground cable (UGC) and overhead line (OHL) in Ireland. Whenever a new HV circuit is proposed this policy guides the decision on whether to use OHL or UGC.

In terms of the policy an UGC will only be used if <u>all</u> of the following four conditions apply -

- a) An OHL is not feasible.
- b) A technically and environmentally acceptable route for UGC can be found.
- c) The effect that the electrical characteristics of UGC have on the transmission network is acceptable and the relatively poorer 'availability' of underground cable is tolerable.
- d) The relatively high cost of the UGC can be justified.

In the case of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV circuits EirGrid is of the opinion that OHL is environmentally, technically and economically feasible. As a result EirGrid is obliged to proceed with an OHL proposal for these circuits.

It should be noted that although EirGrid's policy on the use of HV UGC and HV OHL was drawn up with HVAC circuits in mind it can also be applied to HVDC circuits. In the case of the East-West Interconnector an underground cable is proposed for that part of the HVDC circuit between Rush and Woodland, and is being proposed because all four conditions of the policy, where applicable, are satisfied, as explained below –

a) Obviously the sea crossing from Wales to Ireland cannot be an overhead line and must be an insulated undersea cable. There are numerous environmental and development constraints on the overland route between Rush and the existing Woodland substation that would prevent the construction of an HV overhead line. Although there are sections of the 45km overland route where OHL would be possible, on balance it would not be advantageous to have a number of short sections of OHL in, what is primarily, a long (260km) UGC circuit. This is because (i) a mini-compound, requiring additional land take, would be required at each UGC/OHL interface, (ii) a hybrid UGC/OHL circuit requires more complex protection systems than an entirely UGC circuit and (iii) for this project the cost advantage of installing these short sections of OHL would be too small to negate the disadvantages of points (i) and (ii).

- b) A technically and environmentally acceptable route for the HVDC UGC was found, details of which can be found on the EWIC project website at www.interconnector.ie.
- c) This 'condition' of the policy does not fully apply to the East-West Interconnector. The electrical characteristics of a HVDC UGC are very different to those of a HVAC UGC. Long HVDC UGC circuits, unlike long HVAC UGC circuits, do not have a significant impact on the electrical characteristics of the HVAC transmission network as a whole.

As discussed above only a very limited part of the 260km HVDC circuit route can accommodate OHL. Installing HVDC UGC in these sections would have a statistically insignificant impact on the overall circuit 'availability'.

d) It is clear that HVDC technology must be used for the East-West Interconnector. Two DC to AC converter stations are required, one at each end of the HVDC circuit. These converter stations are expensive and account for an unavoidably large percentage of the overall project cost. Because of obvious route constraints most of the HVDC circuit connecting the two converter stations must be via UGC. Installing UGC in those sections of the route that can accommodate OHL results in a relatively small increase in overall project cost. It should also be noted that HVDC cable, on a metre for metre basis, is much cheaper to install than an equivalent HVAC cable.

Follow Up Question - Would your statement that 'numerous environmental and development constraints on the overland route between Rush and the existing Woodland substation that would prevent the construction of an HV overhead line', not apply with equal force to the proposed routes from Woodland to Turleenan?

An evaluation of the environmental and development constraints along the proposed routes from Woodland to Turleenan was carried out as part of the environmental impact assessment, the details of which can be found in the EIS which accompanies the application for planning permission. The outcome of the evaluation is that these routes are suitable for the construction of the proposed 400kV overhead line.

Follow Up Question - In the light of your comment regarding the comparative cost of HVDC versus HVAC, would you agree to construct the North-South interconnector as an underground HVDC project, consistent with the East-West interconnector?

A HVDC option is not appropriate for this development. This opinion is explained in Chapter 4, Volume 1 of the EIS.

Follow Up Question - In View of the sharply reduced forecasts for electricity consumption for the foreseeable future, would the projected needs be more appropriately met by a combination of the new East-West interconnector and strengthening of the existing 220kV circuits North-South?

The strategic justification and rationale behind the Meath-Tyrone 400kV Interconnection project is presented in Chapter 2, Volume 1 of the EIS. The analysis of the capacity requirements for the proposed development is based on up to date data (September 2009), details of which can be found in Chapter 4, Volume 1 of the EIS.

The existence of an East-West Interconnector in no way lessens the need for a 2nd North-South Interconnector.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original questions numbered 40 to 43.

44. Original Question - Does EirGrid accept that only much wider distances are allowed in other European countries?

Some countries, or as is more likely the case, regions within countries, may have adopted regulations which specify a minimum distance between dwellings and overhead transmission lines. Most of the countries of the EU however have, like Ireland, adopted EU Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC. Overhead transmission lines come in many shapes and sizes, with different voltage levels, different power carrying capacities and different configurations. The EU Guidelines recognise this and instead of specifying a minimum clearance distance the Guidelines specify 'Basic Restriction Levels' for the exposure of the general public to electric and magnetic fields. As the strength of the EMF is at its highest in the immediate vicinity of the live wire and decreases rapidly with growing distance from the overhead line a minimum clearance distance that satisfies the Guidelines can be derived for every type and size of HVAC overhead line.

In the case of the Meath-Cavan-Tyrone 400kV overhead lines EirGrid can guarantee that the overhead line will be sufficiently far enough away from dwellings to ensure that the resulting EMFs will be lower than the restriction levels specified in the EU Guidelines. In fact it can be expected that for those existing dwellings that are closest to the proposed overhead line the resulting EMF levels will be comparable with the 'background' levels already existing in those dwellings. The 'background' levels are caused by the electrical wiring installed in the building as well as the types of electrical appliances in use in that building.

Follow Up Question - What type of 'guarantee...' will EirGrid provide? Will it be in writing? Will you publish a draft of it for consideration and evaluation?

The assessment of the environmental impact of the EMF is presented in Volume 2 of the EIS that accompanies the application for planning permission. The EIS will be considered by An Bord Pleanála during its decision making process. Should the application be successful compliance with the submitted 'plans and particulars' will be a stated condition of the planning permission.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original questions numbered 45 and 46.

47. Original Question - Will EirGrid agree to have an independent base line study conducted of the health profile of the population along the proposed route and further agree to have a full re-evaluation annually?

The carrying out of such an epidemiological study would not be the basis of best practice because the population density in the region is too small to provide data with appropriate statistical significance. Similar studies have, however, been carried out, and continue to be carried out, in other more densely populated parts of the world. The results of these studies, and all other EMF related studies, are continually monitored and assessed by agencies such as the World Health Organisation and ICNIRP (the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection). It is from the totality of these studies that ICNIRP developed its 'Guidelines for limiting exposure to time-varying electric, magnetic and electromagnetic field (up to 300GHz)'. Both the World Health Organisation and the European Commission have endorsed these guidelines. They form the basis of EU Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC which describes the EU Guidelines. EirGrid designs and operates the Irish transmission network in accordance with the EU Guidelines.

Follow Up Questions - I totally reject your response to Question 47 as having no scientific basis. The North East is where you propose to build these lines, so why not agree an epidemiological study in the precise areas affected?

Would you agree to a base line epidemiological study and ongoing monitoring in the North East to be included in your application for planning approval?

The answer to Question 47 states that "an epidemiological study would not be the basis of best practice". It did not state that it would have no scientific basis. Epidemiology uses statistical analysis in its studies. A sufficiently large sample is required for statistical analysis to provide meaningful results. The population density along the route of the overhead line is, on its own, too small for a meaningful epidemiological study.

EirGrid does not carry out epidemiological studies. The Government however has announced its intention to establish a national research programme to undertake scientific research in Ireland on the health effects of exposure to EMF. We will continue to rely on the work of the World Health Organisation and ICNIRP (the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) for guidance on this issue and continue to comply with the relevant EU Guidelines.

48. Original Question - In EirGrid's opinion, what will be the safe distance within which I conduct farming operations near pylon towers?

ESB Networks will own the overhead line. In its role as the TAO (Transmission Asset Owner) ESB Networks produces an excellent booklet that deals with all aspects of safety from electricity hazards on the farm. It includes a section that deals with the care that should be taken in relation to overhead lines. The booklet *'Farm Well... Farm Safely'* can be downloaded from the ESB Networks website at www.esb.ie/esbnetworks.

Follow Up Questions - You state that *'ESB Networks will own the overhead line'*. What are the operational and legal implications of the current plan by the minister for Energy to transfer ownership of the transmission assets from ESB to EirGrid?

These issues are the subject of analysis and discussion by a committee established by the Minister. As the Committee has not yet completed its work it is not possible to answer this question.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original questions numbered 49 to 53.

54. Original Question - What is EirGrid's position in relation to the safe erection and operation of the pylon towers, including children climbing up these towers and being involved in an accident, and will you be prepared to give written guarantees and indemnities?

ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line. In fulfilling this responsibility, ESB Networks will comply with all health and safety legislation and with all regulations governing safety on construction sites.

Where there is a risk at any given location (e.g., school or playing field) of children climbing the pylons, anti-climbing barriers can be installed. However, it is not envisaged that such barriers would be placed on all pylons as there may be a potential impact on visual amenity at certain locations. Any landowner or resident who has a particular concern in this regard can raise it with EirGrid during the preconstruction consultation and EirGrid can then give due consideration to the issue with ESB Networks.

In addition to the above ESB Networks, in its role as the TAO (Transmission Asset Owner) routinely conducts educational campaigns in the media highlighting the dangers of electricity and the dangers of climbing pylons. Similar campaigns, aimed specifically at children, are run, from time to time, through the school system, for further information on this see the 'Education' section of ESB Networks' website at www.esb.ie/esbnetworks.

Follow Up Questions - In what way will 'ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line'?

In accordance with current legislation, specifically Statutory Instrument 445 of 2000 and the associated Infrastructure Agreement between EirGrid and ESB, ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line while EirGrid will be responsible for obtaining the consents required for its construction. These required 'consents' consist of, among other things, the planning permission and landowner consents.

Being 'responsible for the construction of the overhead line' means that ESB Networks will be responsible for among other things the detailed design work, procurement of materials, delivery of materials to site, control of work crews on site (whether these are its own staff or contractor's staff) and commissioning. ESB Networks will also be designated as the 'Client' in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations.

Follow Up Question - Given that you are in receipt of EU funds for these projects, is it not a requirement that their construction requires a tendering process?

ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction. Regardless of the source of the project funding Clause 18 (3) (b) of Statutory Instrument 445 of 2000 states that when ESB Networks outsources construction work on the transmission system then the *"outsourcing contractors shall be duly selected in accordance with the law relating to public procurement and, without prejudice to such law, shall be on a list agreed between the Board and the transmission system operator."* For the purpose of this clause the 'Board' is ESB and the transmission system operator is EirGrid.

Follow Up Question - You state that '...EirGrid can give due consideration to the issue with ESB Networks'. Who exactly is or will be legally responsible for the safety of pylons and overhead wires?

The asset owner will be legally responsible for issues of heath and safety during the construction phase and during the subsequent operational lifetime of the overhead line. Under current legislation ESB Networks will be the asset owner.

55. Original Question - Who is responsible for a ring fence to be placed around each base of pylon towers for safety reasons?

ESB Networks will be responsible for the construction of the overhead line. During the construction period it may be necessary, from time to time, to place temporary fencing around a pylon site for safety reasons. The erection, maintenance and removal of this fencing will be the responsibility of ESB Networks.

Once construction is complete and the line is in service it is not normal practice to have permanent fencing around pylons. Farm animals can, and do, graze in between the legs of pylons. On occasion however, particularly where pylons are located in stud farms, a landowner has requested that a fence be placed around a specific pylon and EirGrid and ESB Networks have accommodated such requests. Such a fence is erected by ESB Networks while the landowner is responsible for its subsequent maintenance.

Any landowner or resident who has a particular concern in this regard can raise it with EirGrid during the pre-construction consultation and EirGrid can then give due consideration to the issue with ESB Networks.

Follow Up Question - Will you agree to be bound by and to implement fully any recommendations from the investigations into the recent tragedy at a 38kV pylon in County Cork?

In its role as owner of the electricity transmission system, ESB Networks will be responsible for all matters of safety related to the asset. ESB's Safety Policy can be viewed on the 'Safety' pages of the ESB website at <u>www.esb.ie</u>.

NOTE: There were no follow up questions related to the original questions numbered 56 to 60.