

East Meath – North Dublin Grid Upgrade

Community Forum

7pm, 6th September 2022, via Zoom

Attending (members): Helena Merriman (St. Margaret’s Parish Hall Committee), Walter Moran (Dunboyne AFC), Sheelagh Morris (St Margarets Action Committee), Liam O Gradaigh (St. Margaret’s GAA), Cllr Damien O’Reilly (Meath Co. Co), Pearse Sutton (St. Margaret’s The Ward), Alan Tobin (Meath Chamber), Rob Webb (Tyrrelstown Residents Community Council)

Apologies: Gerardine Doyle (Craobh Chiarain GAA club),

In attendance (EirGrid): Grainne Duffy (Community Liaison Officer), Christie Elliott (Project Management Office), Ailbhe Farrell (Senior Engagement Specialist), Jason Kenna (Project Management Office), Eoghan O’Sullivan (Community Liaison Officer), Avril Wilson (Senior Engagement Specialist)

Facilitation: Harriet Emerson

All slide presentations are attached to these minutes and are available on the [Project web page](#).

[Propose that all links are to the “what’s happening now” page, as it will typically have the most relevant as we step through this project.](#)

[Link:](#)

[What's Happening Now? \(eirgridgroup.com\)](http://eirgridgroup.com)

Welcome & Agenda

Harriet welcomed everyone and, since there were some new faces attending, suggested people introduce themselves and the organisation they are representing briefly. After completing this, it was agreed that in future introductions would not be necessary amongst Forum members, [unless a new member joins](#). No additional items had been put forward to add to the agenda and it was agreed to proceed according to the draft (pre-circulated).

Minutes of Meeting 10th August 2022

The Draft minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated to all Forum members. An amendment indicating that Cllr Damien O’Reilly had submitted his apologies was noted. No other errors or omissions were raised and the amended minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. Harriet asked whether the level of detail in the minutes was appropriate and there was [general consensus](#) that this was satisfactory.

It was also agreed that members are prepared to share their contact emails within the Forum, so that subsequent emails will be addressed to all members rather than “blind carbon copied”.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

It was noted that at the previous meeting a question was asked of EirGrid staff about whether contact had been made with the Dublin Airport Authority as they are significant stakeholders. [Forum members were interested to know whether there was an update on this situation.](#) In response, [it had been indicated that](#)

~~EirGrid outlined that contact has been made and a had made contact~~ EirGrid staff indicated that a meeting with the senior management in infrastructure in the DAA has been arranged and will be taking place within the next two weeks.

~~but not yet spoken to the relevant department. Forum members were interested to know whether there was an update on this situation. EirGrid staff indicated that a meeting with the senior management in infrastructure in the DAA has been arranged and will be taking place within the next two weeks.~~

EirGrid presentation on Four Route Options to be published 7th September 2022

~~EirGrid staff presented~~ The EirGrid staff present took the Forum members through a slide presentation of information on the publication of the four proposed routes for the grid upgrade that are to be published on the 7th September. This presentation set out the purpose of the proposed Grid Upgrade; reviewing how the initial need had been identified, the different ways in which the upgrade could be delivered were explored, and then assessed, so that a number of feasible options could be developed. These routes are now being published so that the communities in the study area and other stakeholders can make an input and inform the further evaluation of these options before the preferred Best Performing route ~~optimal~~ option is identified, known as the emerging best performing route option. Further assessments will then be undertaken ahead of the best performing option being announced. The best performing option will be taken in to Step 5 of the grid development process, when a planning application will be made. That final proposed route will then be submitted for planning permission.

A number of principles that EirGrid consider in planning underground cable route options were outlined; these are intended to minimise damage or disruption to communities, road traffic, urban centres and concentrations of economic activity, as well as sensitive, valuable or protected natural or built heritage, and clusters of other services in the road.

Each of the four proposed route options (red, green, yellow and blue) were set out, all start at the Woodland substation and finishes at the Belcamp substation. Each also crosses the M1, M2 and M3 motorways and include some elements of off-road corridors. It was pointed out that the final route may involve elements of one or more of the four proposed routes presented. The estimated overall length of the route ranges from 37-43km, with off-road elements of between 2km and 9km. A number of other observations about the different routes were also set out.

The EirGrid staff went on to explain the type of underground cabling being proposed, how this would be installed, and the ways in which disruption would be mitigated. This included a brief video on how construction would be carried out along roadways which is available on the [project website](#).

This grid upgrade was identified as supporting a number of economic, environmental benefits as well as improving security of electricity supply and generating benefits for communities that facilitate the project infrastructure.

Lastly, the details of the consultation stage were outlined. This involves a 12-week consultation (7th September – 30th November 2022) where the four proposed routes will be presented and explained to communities in the project area. A detailed media plan including traditional press, social media and targeted initiatives in the geographical area, such as digital message boards and sports club hoardings, etc. will be rolled out to ensure that there is widespread awareness of the proposals for the grid upgrade and the opportunities to input and comment on these. Each household (some 12,000) in the project area will receive a leaflet setting out the details of the project. There will then be local events to invite responses from the public, including:

- 6 open days (Swords, Coolquay, Batterstown, Kilbride, St.Margarets & Malahide Road)
- 5 mobile information units
- 3 webinars (1/month Sept., Oct., Nov.)

- Meath County Council Energy Expo
- Fingal Public Participation Network
- Public Representatives briefings

There are a variety of ways to make an input to the consultation, as follows:

- Make a submission or complete the questionnaire at: consult.eirgrid.ie
- Send an email to EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com
- Send your submission by post:
East Meath North Dublin Grid Upgrade,
EirGrid, Freepost FDN 5312,
160 Shelbourne Road,
Ballsbridge, D04 FW28
- Contact your Community Liaison Officer: Eoghan O'Sullivan 087 2477732

Questions & Discussion following Presentation

Dublin Airport

All the proposed routes track to the North of Dublin airport rather than the South and Forum members were interested to know whether there is a reason for this. EirGrid staff explained that they conducted a constraint analysis on the longlist of route options originally considered. The border to the South of the project area is the M50 motorway and the area between the airport and this southern limit of the M50 is ~~restricted~~ constrained. It was difficult to find any viable route through ~~there~~ the southern area of the Airport and the area to the North of the airport is less constrained and more feasible.

There was a question as to what will be discussed in EirGrid's meeting with the Dublin Airport Authority (DAA). EirGrid staff anticipate that various items are likely to arise such as interactions with traffic, access for emergency vehicles and service providers etc. They will be interested to learn how the DAA operates and any impacts that the grid upgrade installation would have. This initial meeting is a fact-finding mission discussion and will ultimately be one of many meetings in the same way that EirGrid will have to consult with many other stakeholders for example like Irish Water and Bord Gais.

In response to a query about whether the DAA could participate in this Forum, it was made clear that the Community Forum is for community organisations that are members of the relevant Public Participation Network (PPN), with representation involvement from elected representatives and chambers of commerce only. EirGrid staff stressed that all the inputs received will be gathered into a consultation report which will be available for all to view. In addition, they clarified that the proposed routes are all on public roads in the vicinity of the airport and none on DAA land.

Route selection

EirGrid staff were asked about the extent to which planning and proposed development is considered in route selection, with reference made to the ongoing "stop/go" disruption at the Hollystown roundabout, associated with development there. It was confirmed that this is included as part of the constraints analysis when routes are considered, with EirGrid looking at Local Area Plans, new, builds, where solar / renewable infrastructure is planned, and the infrastructure they require. They engage with Local Authorities to understand development plans and minimise disruption.

Direction of power supply and junctions along the route

It was clarified that the majority of the energy flow along the route will be from the Woodland substation to the substation station at Belcamp, particularly with the intention of reinforcing the supply to the East Meath and North of the Greater Dublin area. This West to East direction of supply is likely to be dominant, reflecting the source and concentration of demand. However, it is possible for the flow to be reversed if when needed.

In response to a question, it was explained that the route between Woodland and Belcamp substations will be a closed circuit, only connecting the two end points and no other "connection" points along the route are planned.

Provision of Detailed Local Information

EirGrid staff were asked whether more detailed maps than those displayed at the meeting would be available, specifically for local residents to look at details of stretched of the route. They indicated that there will be an interactive map with the option to zoom in to see greater detail on the website. The Forum were informed they can also request more material in the form of A0 maps etc. for studying/mapping at further forum meetings. These may assist if the forum wish to make a joint consultation. can also request more materials if they feel these are needed, and these will be considered for community sessions.

Contact with landowners

EirGrid staff were asked whether they are or will be in contact with all landowners potentially effected, specifically in relation to off-road sections of the route. It was confirmed that all landowners have been identified using folio maps and are being engaged with by EirGrid Agricultural Liaison Officers. They are also free to participate in the Community Forum through a local community group if they wish to do so.

Community Forum Terms of Reference

While those who had been able to review the proposed Draft Terms of Reference for the Community Forum had not identified any issues with it, not everyone present had looked through the document. It was agreed to postpone final consideration of this until the next meeting.

Next meeting

The Forum members agreed that it would be desirable to meet again in 3-4 weeks time when residents will have received information on the route proposals, be making their views known, and be looking for further information. Groups represented in the Forum expressed the need to be able to feed back to, and communicate with,awith, their wider communities as soon as possible. It was also considered helpful to have the EirGrid staff present and able to respond to questions at the next meeting.

The date of the Thursday 6th October at 7pm was proposed, with the EirGrid staff to confirm their availability, and the subsequent week (Tuesday 11th October) be a fall-back option if needed. Rob kindly undertook to find out whether it would be possible to hold the meeting in the Tyrrelstown Community Centre.

As there was no further business, everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting ended at 8.30pm.