



# East Meath- North Dublin Grid Upgrade

**CP1021** | Summary of Engagement with the Public  
and Stakeholders (steps 1-5)



March 2024





# Executive Summary

In order to strengthen the electricity network in the east of Meath and the north of Dublin, EirGrid is proposing to develop a high-capacity 400 kV underground electricity cable between Woodland substation, near Batterstown in Co. Meath, and Belcamp substation, near Clonshaugh in north Dublin. This project is referred to as the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, or CP1021.

The upgrade will improve the transfer of power across the existing transmission network and will help to meet the increasing electricity demand in east Meath and north Dublin. It is also key to achieving Ireland's renewable energy targets and reducing reliance on fossil fuels by enabling the grid to transfer increased levels of renewable energy from where it is generated to where it is needed. The project is considered essential to meet the Government of Ireland's Climate Action Plan target of 80% renewable energy generation, onshore and offshore, by 2030.

Following extensive technical analysis and public consultation between 2017 and 2023, EirGrid is now submitting a planning application to An Bord Pleanála for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, with the aim to commence construction once planning is successfully granted. This report provides a summary of the project development and all the public and stakeholder engagement carried out in line with EirGrid's 6-step approach to developing the Irish electricity grid.

To summarise, the key activities have included:

- Step 1 (2017)** ● EirGrid confirmed the need for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade.
- Step 2 (2018-2020)** ● A number of potential technical solutions were analysed and reduced to four options including a mix of overhead lines and underground cables.
- Step 3 (2021-2022)** ● The Woodland-Belcamp 400kV underground cable circuit was chosen as the Best Performing Technical Option for this project and an 8-week public awareness campaign about the project was conducted.
- Step 4 (2022-2023)** ● Four route options were shortlisted for the Woodland-Belcamp underground cable circuit and a 12-week public consultation took place. The Emerging Best Performing Option (EBPO) was announced, and the public was given a further opportunity to provide feedback on the route. Following final refinements, EirGrid announced their Best Performing Option (BPO) in September 2023.
- Step 5 (2024)** ● EirGrid will submit a planning application to An Bord Pleanála for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade.



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# 01 Introduction

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. About EirGrid

EirGrid is the state-owned operator of Ireland's electricity transmission grid and is responsible for a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity in Ireland. Since 2006, EirGrid has operated and developed the national high voltage electricity grid and wholesale market in Ireland. The grid moves wholesale power around the country, by bringing energy from where it is generated to heavy industry and high-tech users. The grid also supplies the distribution network operated by ESB Networks that powers every electricity customer in the country.

EirGrid is leading the secure transition of Ireland's electricity grid to a low carbon renewable future. Work carried out now will help create a more sustainable future for the next generation.

#### 1.1.1. EirGrid's Statutory Role

EirGrid is the national electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) for Ireland. The role and responsibilities are set out in Statutory Instrument No. 445 of 2000 (as amended); in particular, Article 8(1)(a) gives EirGrid, the exclusive statutory function:

**"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."**

Furthermore, as TSO, EirGrid is statutorily obliged to offer terms and enter into agreements, where appropriate, and in accordance with regulatory direction, with those using and seeking to use the transmission system. Upon acceptance of connection offers by prospective network generators and demand users, they must develop the electricity transmission network to ensure it is suitable for those connections.

#### 1.1.2. Regulatory Targets

Part of EirGrid's responsibility is to develop the electricity transmission grid in accordance with the future needs of society. Careful analysis of different future energy scenarios specific to the area took place to establish that the transmission system is in compliance with the Transmission System Security Planning Standards (TSSPS).

### 1.2. About the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade (also referred to as Capital Project 1021) is intended to add a high capacity 400kV underground electricity cable from Woodland substation, near Batterstown in County Meath, to Belcamp substation, near Clonsaugh in north Dublin. The upgrade will strengthen the electricity grid in the east of Meath and the north of Dublin and improve the transfer of power



across the existing transmission network.

It will be a key enabler in meeting the growing demand for electricity in the east region that is resulting from increased economic activity, the planned connection of new large-scale energy users, and population growth in the region, by improving the capacity of this region's network.

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade will also prepare the grid for the delivery of more renewable electricity from sources such as wind, solar, and hydro, in line with Government policy. A significant number of Ireland's wind farms and modern, conventional generators are located in the South and South-West regions of the country. This power needs to be transported to where it is used in highly populated areas in the east of the country. The project is considered essential to meet the Government of Ireland's Climate Action Plan target of 80% renewable energy generation, onshore and offshore, by 2030, and will help reduce Ireland's reliance on fossil fuels.

For more information about the project visit the EirGrid website <https://www.eirgrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin>.

### 1.3 EirGrid's 6-Step Approach to Developing the Electricity Grid

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade development followed EirGrid's established 6-step approach to developing the electricity grid as outlined in EirGrid's **Have Your Say** document.

Each step has a distinct purpose with defined deliverables and collectively they represent the lifecycle of a grid development project from conception through to energisation. At each step, a series of activities are carried out in order to inform, engage and consult with stakeholders and to facilitate their participation in the project development process.

This approach helps EirGrid to explore options fully and make more informed decisions. It is driven by EirGrid's commitment to putting the public at the heart of decision-making and to work towards solutions that have better landowner and public support.

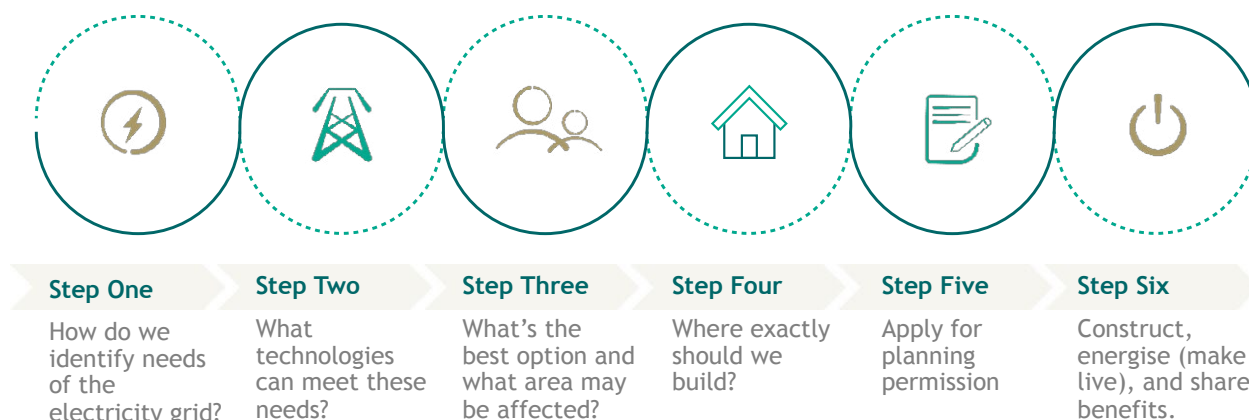


Figure 1: EirGrid Six-Step Grid Development Process







# 02 Step 1 (2017):

## 2. Step 1 (2017): How Do We Identify the Future Needs of the Electricity Grid?

The purpose of Step 1 is to identify the future needs of the electricity grid by considering future energy scenarios through a process of analysis.

### 2.1. Project Developments

During Step 1 for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, EirGrid identified a number of factors that highlight the need for increased energy capacity in the North Dublin area. These included:

1. Increased energy demand in North Dublin due to the changing nature of economic activity, new data centre demand, and population growth.
2. Low energy generation within the Dublin Area and the need to transport renewable energy generated outside of Dublin into the areas where it is needed most.

EirGrid conducted future energy scenarios for the area in question, choosing the year 2025 for analysis to assess the long-term strategic needs of the system and to design reinforcement options to address those needs. This process of scenario testing identified a shortage of capacity to transfer power along a corridor of 220 kV transmission lines between the Woodland 400kV substation to the northwest of Dublin, the key load and generation centres at Finglas, Corduff and

Belcamp 220 kV stations, and load and generation in the city centre at Poolbeg and Shellybanks 220 kV stations. Analysis of the transmission network indicated that there were a number of issues that may be in breach of EirGrid's Transmission System Security Planning Standards (TSSPS) that must be addressed, which confirmed the need to reinforce the network.

Several options were explored for how additional capacity could be added to the North Dublin corridor, including additional circuits, upgrading existing circuits, and reducing demand in the area. The full details of this analysis and findings were published in a **Needs Report**<sup>1</sup> in November 2017.

### 2.2. Stakeholder Engagement

During Step 1, EirGrid held discussions with the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), Local Authorities, elected representatives and the EirGrid National Advisory Committee.

1 <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/CP1021-Step-1-Needs-Report.pdf>





# 03 Step 2

## 3. Step 2 (2018-2020): What Technologies Can Meet These Needs?

The purpose of Step 2 is to look at the range of technical options that can meet the grid reinforcement need or needs, confirmed in Step 1, and to narrow this down to a short-list of options to bring forward for further investigation and evaluation in Step 3.

### 3.1. Project Developments

For the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, a “long-list” of 21 viable and technically acceptable grid reinforcement options was identified early in Step 2. This list was then refined twice during Step 2. Step 2 was therefore broken down into a two-part approach - Part A and Part B.

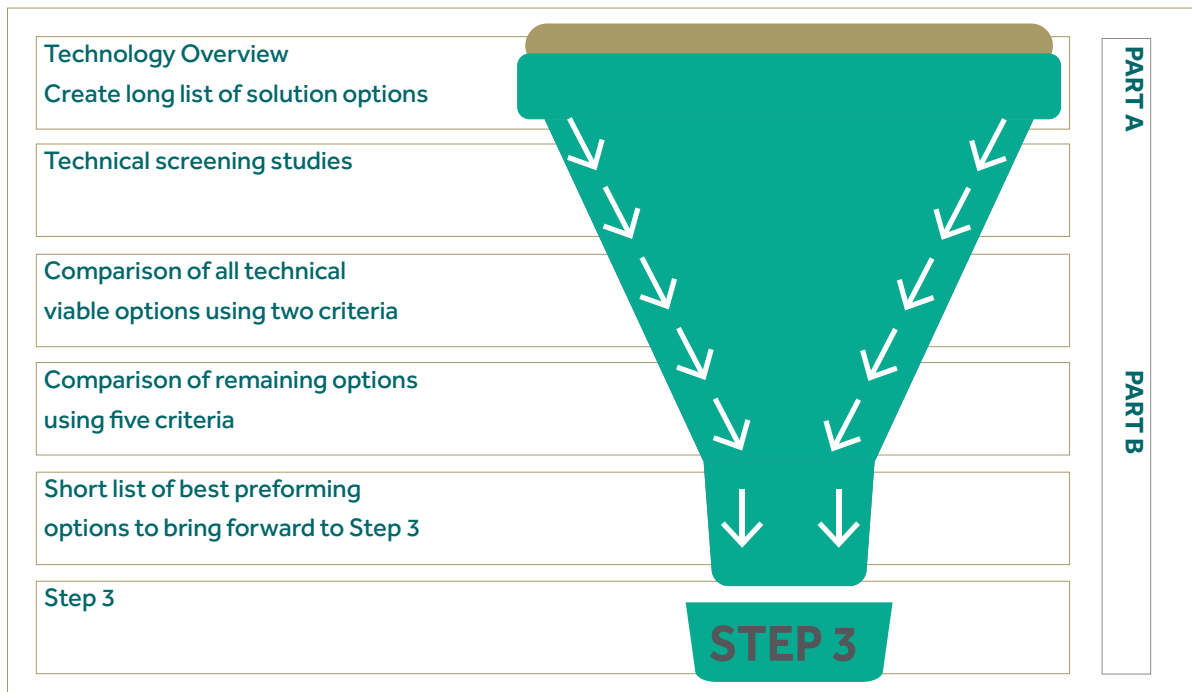


Figure 2. Illustration of the process of developing options in Step 2



### 3.2. Part A Project Developments

During Part A, EirGrid explored a range of solutions that would address the transmission issue identified in Step 1, namely the need to increase grid capacity into north Dublin. An initial list of 21 viable technology options were considered including overhead lines (OHL) and underground cables (UGC), alongside suitable voltage levels and potential grid connection points.

These 21 options were then compared and evaluated based on their technical performance and economic performance, and the list was narrowed down to seven best performing technical options to be brought forward for further investigation in Part B. All options involved a new connection commencing at Woodland 400/220 kV station and reaching in towards the Northern outskirts of Dublin:

1. Woodland – Corduff New 400 kV OHL Circuit
2. Woodland – Corduff New 400 kV UGC Circuit
3. Woodland – Corduff New 220 kV OHL Circuit
4. Woodland – Finglas New 220 kV OHL Circuit
5. Woodland – Finglas New 400 kV UGC Circuit
6. Woodland – Finglas New 400 kV OHL Circuit
7. Woodland – Belcamp New 400 kV OHL Circuit

In September 2019, the **Step 2 Part A Options Report<sup>2</sup>** was published.

### 3.3. Part A Stakeholder Engagement

Between November 2019 and January 2020, EirGrid identified and met with strategic stakeholders in the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade study area. The purpose of this stakeholder engagement was to build an understanding of the spatial and economic planning that was underway at local and regional levels and to identify the potential needs of large energy users in the future. It also allowed EirGrid the opportunity to brief

key stakeholders in the area, to listen to their views about the opportunities and challenges of the project, and to receive feedback on chosen technologies and the refined short-list.

Stakeholders engaged included:

- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC)
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU)
- Meath County Council Chief and Senior Executives
- Fingal County Council Chief and Senior Executives
- IDA Ireland
- Enterprise Ireland
- Eastern Regional Assembly
- Midlands Regional Assembly
- Meath Chamber of Commerce
- Fingal Chamber of Commerce

### 3.4. Part B Project Developments

During Part B, a broad study area was defined as the area investigated for the possible installation of any of the reinforcement options, paying special attention to the M50 corridor and the highly urban and built-up area south of it including; Dublin International Airport; significant towns and settlements such as Dunboyne, Blanchardstown, Swords and Malahide; environmental constraints such as Malahide Estuary; the need to take the shortest and straightest route possible, and to stay within the public road network wherever possible for the underground cable.

<sup>2</sup> <https://cms.eirgrid.ie/sites/default/files/publications/CP1021-Step-2-Part-A-Options-Report.pdf>

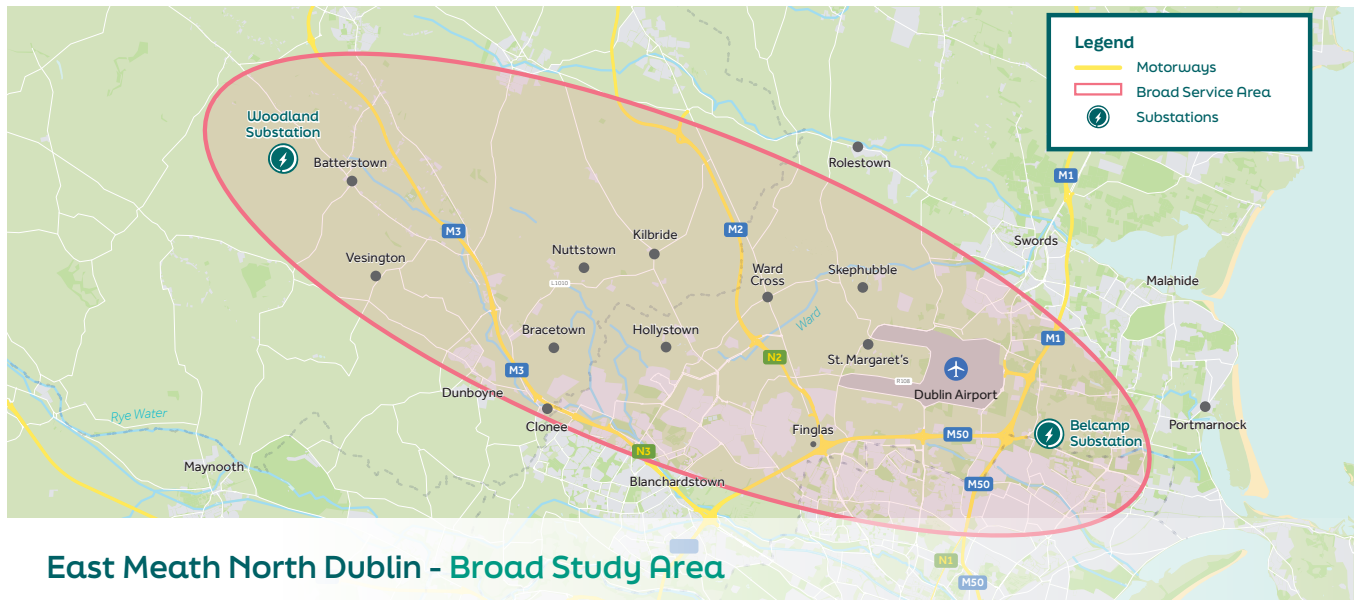


Figure 3: Step 2B East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Broad Study Area

The seven technical options, shortlisted in Step 2A, were then further evaluated using EirGrid's Multi-Criteria Assessment framework. This comprehensive and consistent multi-criteria analysis facilitated a balanced consideration of the following assessment criteria relating to the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade:

- **Environment.** This criterion assesses the potential environmental impact of an option on the following:
  - biodiversity;
  - geology and soils;
  - surface water and flood risk;
  - planning policy and land use;
  - landscape and visual impact;
  - cultural heritage;
  - noise & vibration; and
  - air quality.
- **Socio-economic.** This criterion assesses the potential social and economic impact and level of social acceptability of an option. Relevant considerations include:
  - traffic & transport;
  - amenity, such as overall pleasantness or attractiveness of surroundings;
  - human health;
  - employment and economy;
  - agriculture (including equine); and
  - utilities and critical infrastructure.
- **Technical.** This criterion assesses the technical performance of an option with reference to the security of supply and efficiency standards including
  - system reliability;
  - headroom and ratings;
  - maintainability;
  - operational risk; and
  - repeatability.



- **Deliverability.** This criterion assesses the ability to construct and deliver an option within an acceptable period of time. Relevant considerations include:
  - design complexity;
  - traffic disturbance;
  - dependence on other service providers;
  - permits and wayleaves; and
  - implementation timelines.
- **Economic.** This criterion assesses economic performance which considers investment costs and lifecycle costs.

The options were assessed on an equal basis with no weighting applied for any of the criteria.

### 3.5. Part B Public Engagement

During Part B, public engagement took place to communicate the findings to date with the general public, local communities and their elected representatives, and to receive feedback on chosen technologies and the refined short-list.

The initial focus of stakeholder engagement in Part B took place between August and December 2020. Engagement activities included:

- The launch of a dedicated East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade [webpage](#) which included project information, updates, and project reports,
- The development of a [project brochure](#) which explained why the project was needed, EirGrid's project development process, the technologies under consideration, and the narrowing of the initial 21 technical options to seven.

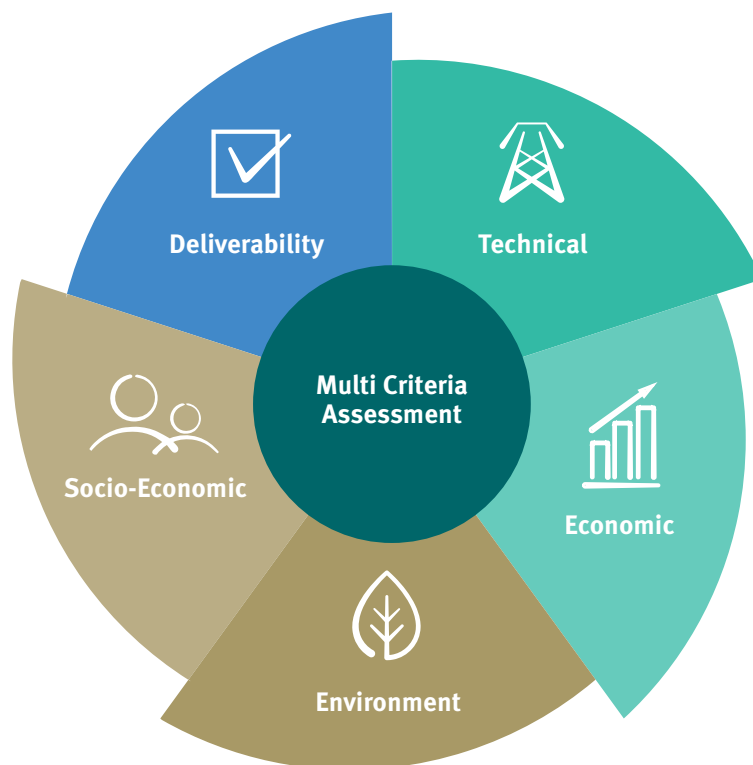


Figure 4: EirGrid's assessment categories

- A door-to-door letter drop to all residents within a 2 km radius of Woodland Substation in August 2020 which provided an introduction to CP1021 East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade plus information on the status of the North-South 400kV Interconnector project (CP0466) and the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade (CP0966)
- Briefings offered to the Ratoath and Ashbourne councillors; Sword/Lusk/Balbriggan Area Committees, Meath and Fingal County Council Management Teams as well as TD's and Senators in the Meath East, Dublin Fingal, and Dublin West Dail constituencies.
- A press release to local media.
- Re-engagement with stakeholders from Part A.

### 3.6. Stakeholder Feedback

All stakeholders were invited to provide feedback in relation to the assessment carried out to date and the solutions to be brought forward for further consideration in Step 3. A small number of responses were submitted, largely with queries about the relationship between the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade and other ongoing projects around the Woodland substation, including the Kildare-Meath Grid Update (CP0966) and the North-South 400kV Interconnector project (CP0466). Many stakeholders reported that they welcomed the opportunity for early engagement.

### 3.7. Outcomes of Step 2

In January 2021, EirGrid published an **Options Report Part B3** which detailed the evaluation and analysis of the seven grid refinement options, brought forward from Part A, using EirGrid's multi-criteria assessment.

The outcome of the multi-criteria assessment in Step 2 was that the options that connect Woodland

to Finglas and Belcamp performed the best overall. The three options which connected Woodland to Corduff were removed from the shortlist as well as the Woodland to Finglas 220 kV OHL.

It was deemed prudent to include a UGC version of the Belcamp to Woodland 400 kV OHL option in Step 3. This solution had been set aside in Step 2A as overall it provided a less favourable combined technical and economic performance compared to other options. The reasons and justification for bringing the option back into the assessment were to take on board stakeholder feedback during Part A, as well as feedback from other new circuit developments, and to allow for the fact that the new grid development will traverse a mix of urban and rural environments to connect the two substations where underground cable is deemed necessary.

Our best performing technical options, using both overhead and underground technologies to link two substations, were brought forward to Step 3 for more detailed evaluation and analysis:

- **Option 1:** Woodland to Finglas 400 kV overhead line
- **Option 2:** Woodland to Finglas 400 kV underground cable
- **Option 3:** Woodland to Belcamp 400 kV overhead line
- **Option 4:** Woodland to Belcamp 400 kV underground cable



Table 1: East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Step 2 Options Refinement

Step 2 the 'long list'	Step 2A refined list list brought to Step 2B	2B refined list list brought to Step 3
1. Woordland - Corduff new 220 kV UGC circuit	1. Woodland - Corduff new 400kV OHL Circuit	Option 1: Woodland - Finglas new 400 kV OHL circuit
2. Woodland - Corduff new 220 kV OHL circuit.	2. Woodland - Corduff new 400 kV UGC Circuit	Option 2: Woodland - Finglas new 400 kV UGC circuit
3. Woodland - Corduff new 400 kV UGC circuit	3. Woodland - Corduff new 220 kV OHL Circuit	Option 3: Woodland - Belcamp new 400 kV OHL circuit
4. Woodland - Corduff new 400 kV OHL circuit	4. Woodland - Finglas new 220 kV OHL Circuit	Option 4: Woodland - Belcamp new 400 kV UGC circuit
5. Corduff - Gorman new 220 kV OHL circuit	5. Woodland - Finglas new 400 kV UGC Circuit	
6. Corduff - Poolbeg new 220 kV UGC circuit.	6. Woodland - Finglas new 400 kV OHL Circuit	
7. Corduff - Inchicore new 220 kV UGC circuit.	7. Woodland - Belcamp new 400 OHL Circuit	
8. Corduff - Maynooth new 220 kV UGC circuit.		
9. Corduff - Castlebagot new 220 kV UGC circuit.		
10. Corduff - Carrickmines new 220 kV UGC circuit.		
11. Corduff - Poolbeg - Carrickmines 220 kV UGC circuit.		
12. Corduff - Steelstown (New station) new 220 kV UGC circuit.		
13. Corduff - Castelbagot - Steelstown (New station) new 220 kV UGC circuit		
14. Woodland - Belcamp new 220 kV UGC circuit.		
15. Woodland - Belcamp new 220 kV OHL circuit.		
16. Woodland - Belcamp new 400 kV UGC circuit.		
17. Woodland - Belcamp new 400 kV OHL circuit.		
18. Woodland - Finglas new 220 kV UGC circuit.		
19. Woodland - Finglas new 220 kV OHL circuit.		
20. Woodland- Finglas new 400 kV UGC circuit.		
21. Woodland - Finglas new 400 kV OHL circuit		

**Key:**

**Green:** technical options that progressed from Step 2 the 'long list' to Step 2A the refined list.

**Gold:** technical options that progressed from Step 2 the 'long list, to Step 2A and subsequently to Step 2B the refined list.

**Blue:** technical option that was brought straight from Step 2 the 'long list' to Step 2B refined list.







# 04 Step 3

## 4. Step 3 (2021-2022): What's The Best Option and What Area May Be Affected?

The purpose of Step 3 is to consider the technology options in more detail, and to look at the broad study areas where possible routes or sites may be located. At Step 3, the range of people and organisations consulted with is broadened, and the public have the opportunity to influence the choice of technology and where the project may be built. At the end of Step 3, a preferred option and refined study area is generally identified.

### 4.1. Project Development

In 2021, four technical reinforcement options were brought forward from Step 2 Part B for more detailed analysis in Step 3. They represent two different technologies - overhead lines (OHL) and underground cables (UGC) – which could connect Woodland 400 kV substation and either Belcamp 220 kV substation or Finglas 220 kV substation.

In Step 3, these four options were reassessed against the five criteria of EirGrid's multi-criteria assessment framework (described in Step 2 Part B). As a result, EirGrid identified Option 4, which would connect two existing substations, namely Woodland substation in Co. Meath and Belcamp substation in Co. Dublin, as the best performing technical option. This would strengthen the network between the two existing substations by a new 400 kV underground cable. This

option had not initially been proposed by EirGrid during Step 2 Part A but had been added to the short-list following engagement with key stakeholders during Step 2.

A number of feasibility studies and assessments were then conducted to refine the study area. These considered a wide variety of factors including stakeholder and community feedback, technical requirements of the project, road networks, settlements, presence of existing electrical utilities, physical constraints e.g. motorway, river or rail crossings, and environmental constraints.

A refined study area was proposed which reflected:

- The removal of the area south of the M50 due to the proliferation and density of existing utilities, residential and industrial buildings and the significant disruption of traffic flows and congestion that would likely occur during construction.
- The removal of the area south of the N2 where it encroaches on the M50 for the same reasons.
- The omission of the M50 itself given that it is a protected road route which would not be feasible for accommodating grid infrastructure.
- The inclusion of the towns of Swords and Malahide to investigate the feasibility of bringing an OHL between the towns in order to avoid Dublin International Airport and its exclusion zone.

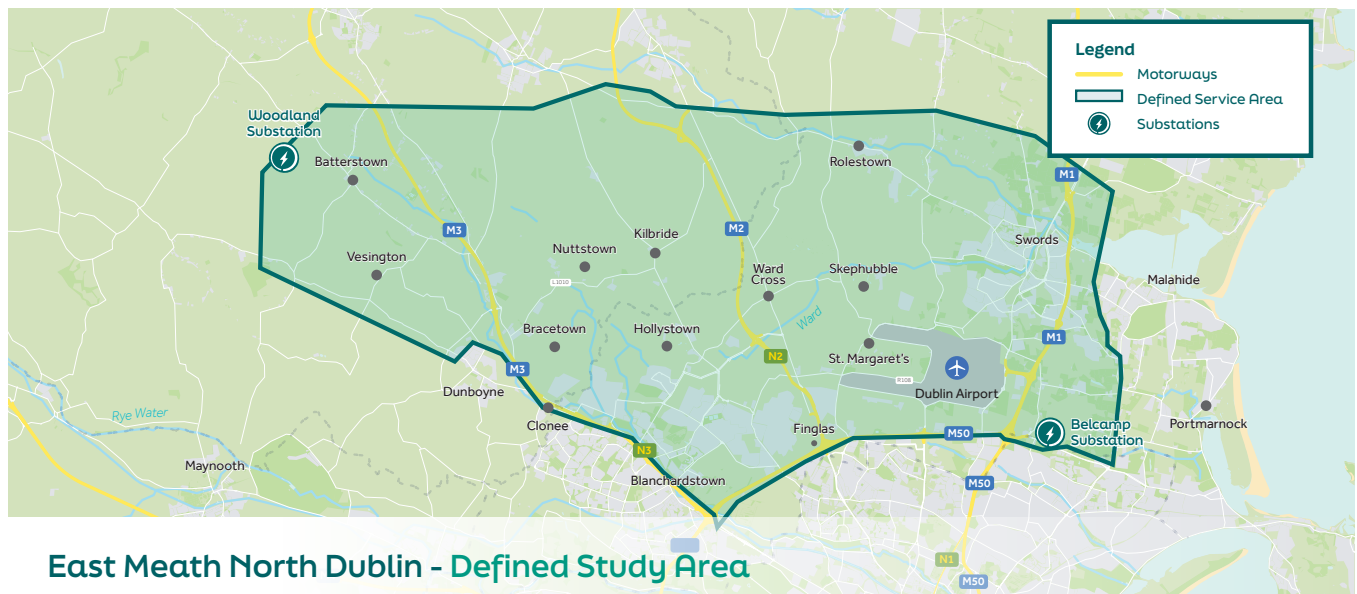


Figure 5: Step 3 East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Defined Study Area

## 4.2. Stakeholder Engagement

An 8-week public awareness and engagement campaign took place between May and June 2022 to present the Woodland to Belcamp 400 kV underground cable as the Emerging Best Performing Technical Option for this grid development project to all stakeholders within the chosen study area. This campaign aimed to:

- Build awareness of the project and ensure local communities understood the potential benefits of the project;
- Learn more about the local area and potential issues that could restrict options in the study area, and to understand any issues of public concern around the project;
- Inform stakeholders of the 12-week consultation period that would occur in Step 4 and to provide information about the project to enable informed feedback;

All stakeholders were invited to provide feedback in relation to the Emerging Best Performing Technical Option.

### 4.2.1. Awareness Raising

EirGrid's media campaign was live from 4<sup>th</sup> May - 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Communication activities included:

- Campaign advertising in print media including Meath Chronicle, The Herald, Irish Daily Mirror, The Star, Dublin Gazette, and the Dublin People.
- Bespoke letter-drop to over 10,000 residents within the study area outlining information about the project and how stakeholders could find out more.
- Radio advertising on LMFM, Radio Nova and Sunshine 106.8.
- Digital advertising on various hubs including Applegreen and SuperValu.
- Online digital media advertising on platforms including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

### 4.2.2. Stakeholder and Public Engagement

Key stakeholders, including local authorities, councillors, TDs, Public Participation Networks and Chambers of Commerce, were offered meetings to receive an update and as an opportunity to provide feedback on the project. Multiple public engagement



activities were also undertaken to reach the wider public, including:

- A **public webinar** to provide project updates to attendees and offer the opportunity to engage in the Q&A sessions with the project manager on this grid development project.
- Open days where members of the public could drop in to learn more about the project within the study area including Tyrrelstown, Kinsealy Garden Centre, St. Margaret's GAA Club, Dunboyne, Kilbride, Airport Road in Fingal and Batterstown, Co Meath, and Swords County Hall.
- Attendance at the Fingal PPN Plenary meeting where over 80 community organisations were present.
- A presentation to members of the Fingal PPN housing, Planning and Transport linkage group.
- Door-to-door contact in the vicinity of the two substations at Woodland and Belcamp.

#### **4.2.3. East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Community Forum**

During Step 3, a community forum was established for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade by EirGrid. The purpose of community forums is to bring together people and organisations from across grid infrastructure project areas so that stakeholder and community views can be discussed, understood, and properly considered prior to and during project delivery. Led by independent chairs, they create the opportunity for dialogue between EirGrid and stakeholders with diverse and direct interest in the project and allow for valuable local insights and knowledge to inform project delivery.

An information evening was held in July 2022 which invited members of local community groups with an interest in joining the forum to learn about the purpose, benefits, and scope of the forum. Expressions

of interest for participation were invited and the forum was established in early August 2022.

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Community Forum is chaired by an independent facilitator and is composed of members of the local community who represent and have reach into a wider network of people.

Members include:

- Fingal County Council
- Meath County Council
- Meath Chamber of Commerce
- Fingal Chamber of Commerce
- Tyrrelstown Residents Community Council
- St. Margarets Action Group
- Dunboyne AFC
- Blackhall GAA Club
- St. Margaret's GAA
- Croabh Ciarans GAA
- St. Margaret's The Ward
- St. Margaret's Parish Hall Committee
- Dunboyne Community Centre
- Kilbride Tidy Towns
- Scoil Bhride Kilbride Parents Association
- Grange Neighbours Group
- St. Peter's G.A.A. Club Dunboyne
- Batterstown Village Enhancement Association

The first meeting took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 2022. The forum meets as regularly as required during the development of the project. It will continue to meet 3-4 times per year for the duration of construction to receive project updates, provide feedback, and ensure two-way communications is ongoing. All forum meetings are minuted and published on the **EirGrid website**.

### 4.3. Summary of Feedback

A wide range of feedback was captured and assessed through the engagement activities during Step 3. This feedback included:

- Concerns about potential disruption during project construction to lives and businesses, especially from road closures and traffic diversions.
- Concerns about the possible negative impacts the project could have on the local environment.
- Questions about potential impacts of the project on Dublin Airport.
- Questions on how the grid upgrade is connected to other EirGrid projects in the area and how they might affect each other.
- Positive feedback regarding the early engagement with the public ahead of the Step 4 Consultation.
- Positive feedback in relation to high level of staff knowledge during engagement events.
- Support for the decision to route the cables underground and for the route to be road based.

This feedback was assessed and used to inform the route options developed and presented to the public for consultation during Step 4.

### 4.4. Outcomes of Step 3

Following the technical assessment and stakeholder engagement which took place in Step 3, the **Woodland to Belcamp 400kV underground cable option** was selected as the best performing technical option in terms of the choice of technology and end node substations and was approved for progression to the next step.

The study area was further refined to confirm the area within which a number of route options would be developed and brought to public consultation during Step 4.

A Step 3 **technical report**<sup>4</sup> was published on the project webpage in August 2022 which detailed the process of evaluating the options using the multi-criteria assessment tool, and the stakeholder and public engagement activities undertaken.

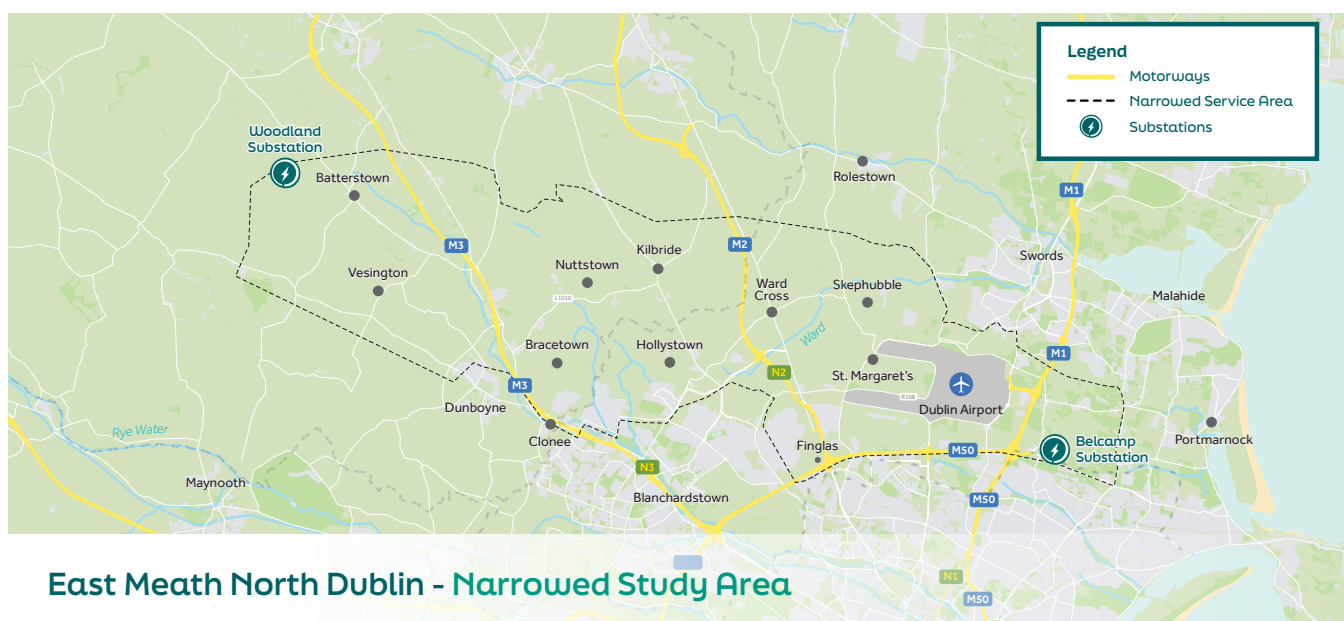


Figure 6: East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Narrowed Study Area

4 [https://www.eirgrid.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/CP1021\\_Step-3-Report\\_FINAL-for-publication.pdf](https://www.eirgrid.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/CP1021_Step-3-Report_FINAL-for-publication.pdf)







# 05 Step 4

## 5. Step 4 (2022-2023): Where exactly should we build?

The purpose of Step 4 is to assess exactly where is the most appropriate place to build a project. At this step EirGrid works closely with local stakeholders, including landowners, who will be directly affected by the project. The aim is to understand which locations for new infrastructure are preferred by local people, and to collaborate on the development of an agreed route or site.

### 5.1. Project Developments

Step 4 began with a refinement of the study area, as shown in Figure 7, which allowed EirGrid to identify a long-list of possible route options between the

Woodland and Belcamp substations, taking into account the mapped constraints. These route options were then assessed against EirGrid's routing principles which include:

- Avoid motorways;
- Maximise the use of regional and local roads;
- Avoid town centres and industrial estates;
- Avoid going off-road, through private land and through agricultural land where possible;
- Avoid sensitive natural and built heritage locations;
- Minimise impact on communities where possible; and
- Minimise the overall length of the route

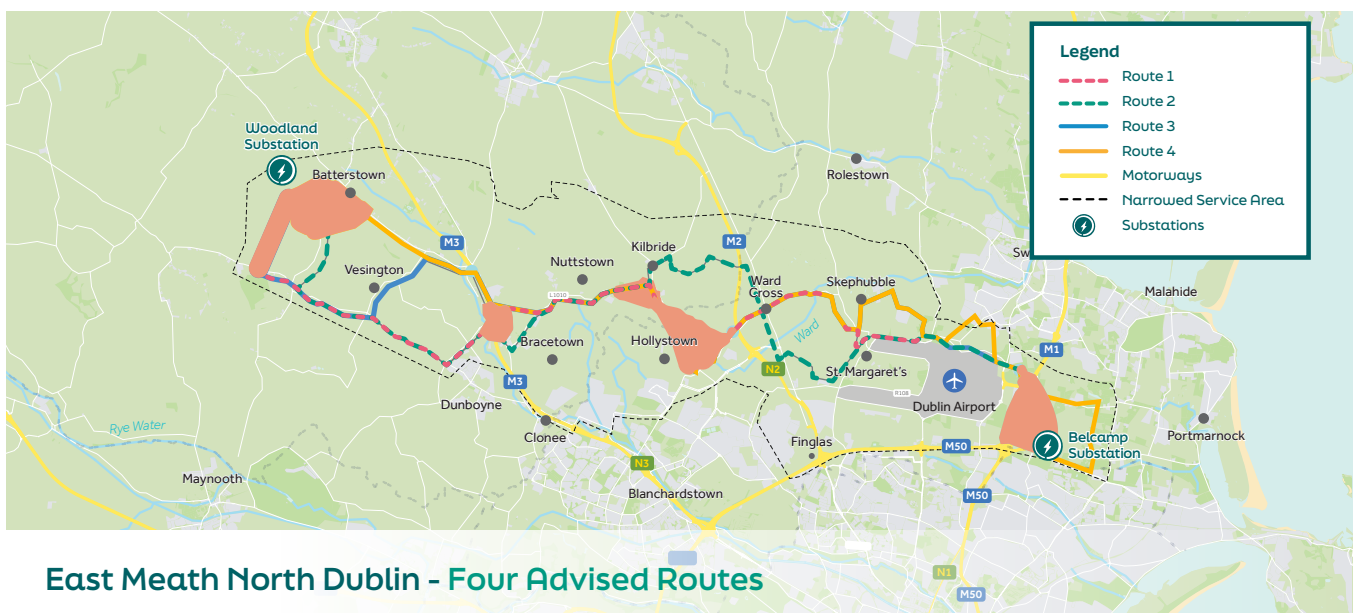


Figure 8: Step 4 East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Four Advised Routes

This assessment allowed EirGrid to develop a short-list of four end-to-end route options, each of which scored highly against the routing principles. An **interactive map**<sup>5</sup> of these route options was shared with stakeholders and published to the project website.

## 5.2. Step 4 Stakeholder and Public Engagement

These 4 routes were then brought to the public for feedback. A range of communication and engagement activities took place to reach the public with information about the project plans and about the ways to submit consultation responses and provide project feedback.

### 5.3. Public Consultation Period

#### 5.3.1. Communications and Awareness Raising

Communications activities started at the end of August 2022, two weeks before the consultation opened, and continued for the duration of the consultation period. These included:

- A media campaign in regional press and radio, social media (paid and organic), locally targeted advertising on digital screens and ad-boards;
- GAA pitch sponsorship (3-year agreement) for 6 local pitches; St. Colmcille's GAA Club, Fingallian's GAA Club, Kilbride GAA Club, Innisfails, St Peters Dunboyne GAA Club, and Ballymun Kickhams;
- An **informational video**<sup>6</sup> about the project which was shared on social media; and
- 12,000 Freepost Questionnaires which were printed and delivered across the project study area plus a 1km buffer zone beyond.

#### 5.3.2. Public Consultation

From the 7<sup>th</sup> September – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, a 12-week public consultation took place where the public and other stakeholders were invited to give feedback on the four short-listed route options, as well as views and insights on project information more broadly such as major events and festivals in the area that should be considered in scheduling the project.

Three channels were provided for submission of responses to the consultation:

- **Online:** by using the consultation portal<sup>7</sup>
- **Email:** at the project's dedicated email address; **EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com**, administered by the project team at EirGrid.
- **Post:** by returning the freepost questionnaire delivered to all homes and businesses along the route, or by sending a letter to the freepost address provided by EirGrid.

An **updated project brochure**<sup>8</sup> was developed, which was published on EirGrid's website and shared with stakeholders to give a summary of project updates and developments and to invite participation in the consultation.

A broad range of communications and engagement activities were used to promote the consultation to as wide an audience as possible.

#### 5.3.3. Stakeholder Engagement

Strategic stakeholder engagement during Step 4 included meetings and/or written communications with:

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
- Local Authorities (Meath County Council, Fingal County Council)
- Ratoath and Ashbourne Municipal District and three

5 <https://jacobs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=00995c220d5b4a3081a5eb68e0933c2a>

6 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7FvDlxXHYs>

7 <https://consult.eirgrid.ie/>

8 <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/210538-EirGrid-East-Meath-North-Dublin-Step-4-Consultation-v14.pdf>



#### Dublin Area Committees

- Irish Water
- ESB Networks
- Meath Chamber of Commerce
- Meath PPN
- Fingal PPN Housing, Planning and Transport Linkage Group

#### 5.3.4. Public Engagement

Multiple in-person public engagement activities were undertaken to reach the wider public and to direct them to the consultation portal, including:

- Six Open Days at Swords, Dublin 11, Dublin 17, Priest Town, St Margaret's and Batterstown;
- Mobile Information Unit (MIU) events, visiting Batterstown, Dublin 11, Malahide Road, Priest Town, Cloughran;
- Door-to-door engagement with 150 homes visited in the vicinity of the Woodland substation and in Kilbride Village;
- Three webinars for members of the public and stakeholders in September, October, and November;
- Participation at the Meath Energy Expo in Navan.

#### 5.3.5. Focus groups

In order to add qualitative insights to the consultation, three focus groups were convened in November 2022. The focus groups were designed to explore what community members thought about the four route options for the East Meath–North Dublin Grid Upgrade, as well as EirGrid's efforts to consult the community about the project. To do this, 36 community members living and working within the project area were recruited with the help of a market research recruiter. Each group had representation across the key demographics of gender, ethnicity, age and socio-economic status of household.

Participants were sent the project brochure before attending one of three 90-minute evening sessions facilitated by an independent facilitator across two weeks. They were firstly asked to complete a survey about their initial awareness of EirGrid and about the project, as well as outlining the information sources they most commonly used to acquire such information. Participants were then presented with information about the project, route options and programme of consultation by an EirGrid representative. This was then followed by a group discussion where participants were encouraged to provide feedback on each route option individually and to consider any related concerns or opportunities.

Lastly, participants were given time to review EirGrid's consultation materials and to provide feedback on EirGrid's approach to communicating information on the East Meath–North Dublin Grid Upgrade Project and their efforts to engage the public.

The key research questions asked were:

1. What awareness of EirGrid and the project do community members have and from what avenues?
2. What comments do community members have and what, in their view, are the key opportunities and concerns about each of the proposed route options?
3. What do community members think about EirGrid's efforts to communicate and engage the public on these plans?
4. What more could EirGrid do to improve their engagement with communities affected by development of their grid infrastructure?

#### 5.3.6. Community Forum Meetings

During Step 4, four community forum meetings were held in the lead-up to, and during, the public consultation period, aligning with the purpose of these forums – to facilitate the discussion, understanding

and careful consideration of stakeholder and community views before and during project delivery. Meetings were held on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and 21st November 2022.

At the outset of each forum meeting, the EirGrid team delivered a presentation on recent project developments, including proposed route options and the assessment findings that influenced these decisions. EirGrid also outlined the planned media, PR and engagement activities for the consultation period and later the emerging themes from the public consultation.

During the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 meeting, Forum members actively participated in providing detailed feedback on the proposed route options. They carefully analysed and commented on each section of the four routes, contributing valuable local insights related to roads, residential, agricultural, and commercial areas.

The Forum members played an important role in providing feedback on EirGrid's communications activities and offered advice on enhancing local awareness of the project, the public consultation and ongoing engagement activities such as Open Days and MIUs.

Additionally, Forum members emphasised the importance for EirGrid in collaborating with other stakeholders involved in the delivery of large infrastructure projects, such as County Development and Local Area Plans or new road developments. EirGrid confirmed its commitment to engaging key stakeholders to align the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade route selection and construction timing with other proposed developments and hence minimise disruption.

During the discussions, Forum members shared important local information, including the temporary relocation of Tyrrelstown Community Centre to Hollystown Golf Club. This information proved valuable

in ensuring that scheduled project site investigations were not disrupted.

**Meeting minutes**<sup>9</sup> are available on the project website.

## 5.4. Summary of Feedback – Consultation Period

A total of 24 consultation responses were received during the consultation period. This was indicative of the low level of objection to the proposed solution and the high level of acceptance following the public engagement campaign.

Table 2: Step 4 Consultation Responses

Response Channel	Volume
Online submissions	5
Hardcopy response form	11
Letters and emails	8

A high-level summary of positive comments from across the engagement activities, including stakeholder meetings, consultation submissions and focus groups, included:

- Broad support for the project and an understanding of the need for the upgrade due to increase in demand;
- Positive feedback for clarity of information available at MIUs and Open Days;
- Praise for the project's role in enabling the green transition in Ireland; and
- Satisfaction at the level of engagement publicity during the consultation process, including advertisements in regional newspapers.

Some stakeholders expressed concerns over disruption to local communities and businesses, particularly as a result of increased traffic movements.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.eirgrid.ie/community/projects-your-area/east-meath-north-dublin-grid-upgrade>

Among the concerns raised were the following:

- Concerns about traffic associated with construction as well as the size of the construction vehicles, especially on narrow roads;
- Potential safety issues arising from Electromagnetic Fields (EMF);
- Concerns about the impact of the project on culture and heritage sites as well as the local environment; and
- Requests for joined up thinking with ongoing local utility and renewable construction projects.

During the focus groups, feedback centred on construction and travel disruption, with concerns about the cumulative impacts of the construction with other development schemes taking place in the area. Participants gave ideas for mitigation, such as effective communications and joined up working.

Following the consultation period, EirGrid published a **Step 4 Public Consultation and Engagement Report<sup>10</sup>**.

This report maps detailed feedback received across all the community and stakeholder engagement.

A summary of the queries received throughout Steps 3 and 4 and the responses provided are included in the appendix.

## 5.5. Project Developments – Post Consultation Period

Combining the technical analysis, consultation responses and stakeholder and public feedback from engagement events during the consultation period, Option A: The Red Route, was selected as the Emerging Best Performing Option (EPBO) in March 2023. The route map was then refined further to reduce any wider areas (corridors) and to provide more certainty on the specific location of the route. Five corridors then remained, all of which involved off-road sections that required further discussions with relevant stakeholders and landowners. Technical surveys and assessments identified several areas where minor route changes would result in an improved route, as they would reduce potential environmental impacts or avoid private lands.

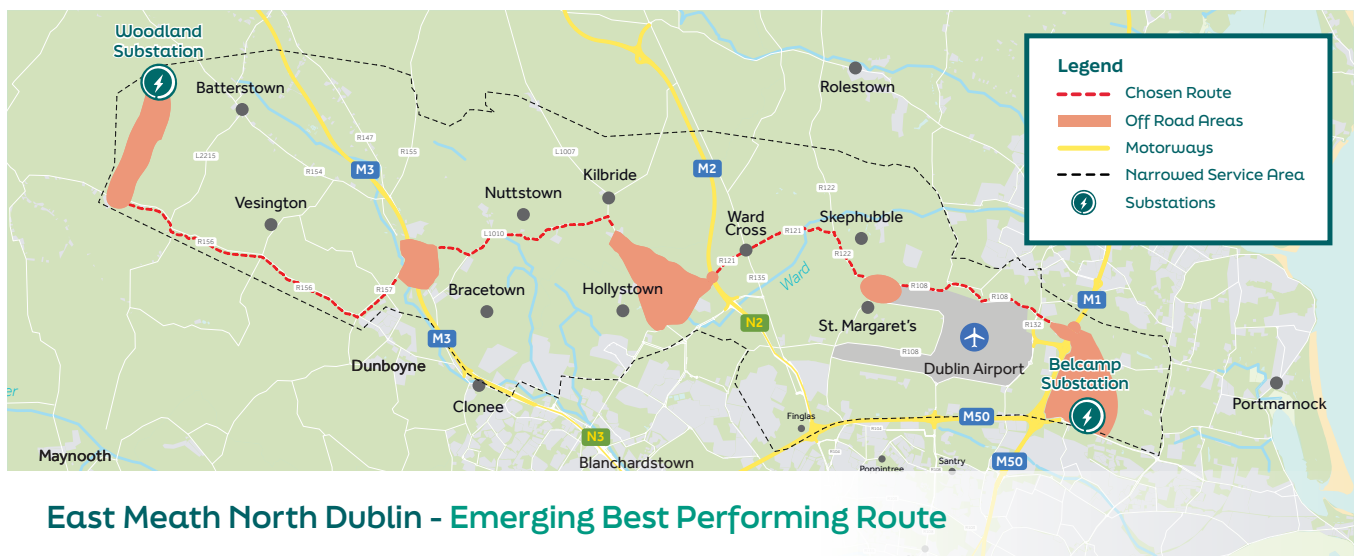


Figure 9: Step 4 Map of the Emerging Best Performing Route Option (EBPO)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/CP1021\\_EastMeath\\_NorthDublin\\_Grid-Upgrade\\_PublicConsultationAndEngagementReport\\_Final.pdf](https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/CP1021_EastMeath_NorthDublin_Grid-Upgrade_PublicConsultationAndEngagementReport_Final.pdf)



## 5.6. Stakeholder Engagement - EBPO

The EBPO was announced to the public in March 2023. This was accompanied by a 6-week public and stakeholder engagement period between March and May 2023. The purpose of this engagement was to inform stakeholders and local communities of the EPBO route and to provide opportunities for feedback. Engagement activities included:

- Landowner engagement to agree access to lands for walkover surveys and ground investigation works; and to refine routes through private lands;
- Meetings with Municipal Districts, County Councils and Local Area Committees;
- Media and PR awareness campaign including local and regional press and radio channels, as well as social media;
- Door-to-door engagement in and around Hollystown and Belcamp;
- Four Open days: at the Clayton Hotel Dublin Airport, St Margarets GAA Club, Scoil Bhríde, Kilbride and The Hatchet Inn, Summerhill Road;
- Mobile Information Unit (MIU) events in Dunboyne AFC, Caffrey's Batterstown, The Coachman's Inn (Dublin Airport) and Sweeneys of Kilbride; and
- Engagement with three local schools as part of Engineers Week in March: Scoil Bride NS Kilbride Co. Meath, St Margarets NS in St Margarets, Co. Dublin and Rathregan NS, Batterstown Co. Meath.

Feedback from stakeholders and the public highlighted that most stakeholders were happy with the information presented and communicated on the project, that the need for the project was clearly understood and that EirGrid's level of engagement across the project phases had been satisfactory.

No new queries or areas of concern arose during the EBPO engagement activities that had not been previously addressed during the consultation phase.

## 5.7. Outcomes - EBPO

Continued assessments, design surveys and feedback from the EBPO engagement period allowed EirGrid to confirm Option A: The Red Route as the Best Performing Option (BPO). EirGrid published a **Step 4B Route Options and Evaluation Report**<sup>11</sup> in September 2023, which outlined the Best Performing Route Option in detail.

Following the EBPO engagement period, EirGrid also published a **Step 4 Emerging Best Performing Option Engagement Summary Report**<sup>12</sup>. The report provides details of the engagement activities and the feedback received.

## 5.8. Stakeholder Engagement – BPO

The BPO was announced to the public in September 2023. Step 4 then concluded with a four-week information period of communications and engagement activities to ensure that stakeholders and communities were aware of the developments of the project plans and the BPO route and to provide a final opportunity for feedback or queries before the project moved into Step 5.

Information and engagement activities included:

- Media and communications materials presented and published in both English and Irish language across local radio and press;
- A social media campaign with video assets about the BPO shared across Facebook and Instagram;
- Door-to-door engagement with residents from Kilbride to Hollystown and in St Margarets;
- Mobile Information Unit (MIU) events in Hollystown, St Margarets and Dunboyne;

11 <https://cms.eirgrid.ie/sites/default/files/publications/EMND-4B-Report-September-2023.pdf>

12 <https://cms-prd.eirgrid.dept.ie/sites/default/files/publications/East%20Meath-North%20Dublin%20Grid%20Upgrade%20Engagement%20Summary%20Report%20STEP%204%20Emerging%20Best%20Performing%20Option.pdf>

- A digital feedback form was introduced to offer stakeholders a new and accessible way of providing feedback across the various in-person and online engagement activities; and
- Stakeholder meetings with local authorities, public representatives and local schools.

Feedback from stakeholders and the public was very positive about the project during the BPO engagement. Traffic disruptions due to project construction was the most frequently raised concern and questions were posed to the engagement team about joined up thinking when laying services and the reinstatement of roads are due.

Several stakeholders and members of the public expressed that real trust had been built between EirGrid and local people and businesses in the area through ongoing engagement and communications since the project began.

### 5.9. Best Performing Option: Red Route

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade BPO is the refinement of the chosen route along the project corridor, which crosses the River Tolka, the railway at

M3 Parkway, along with the M1, M2 and M3 motorways. The proposed project route has an overall length of approximately 38 kilometres and an off-road section of approximately 11 kilometres. Feedback captured across engagement activities during the public consultation and EBPO periods, helped inform the refinements of the project route. Stakeholder and public feedback, combined with technical assessment and design surveys, led to the shortening of the total length of the cable by 1.2 kilometres and an increase of the off-road length from 8.7 to 10.8 kilometres, leading to a reduction of possible disruption during the project construction phase.

An updated **East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade** project brochure was developed which outlined the EBPO refinements and the Best Performing Option route, was published on the website in September 2023.

Following a period of additional engagement with landowners, the Community Forum, infrastructure owners and other key stakeholders, the BPO was taken into Step 5.

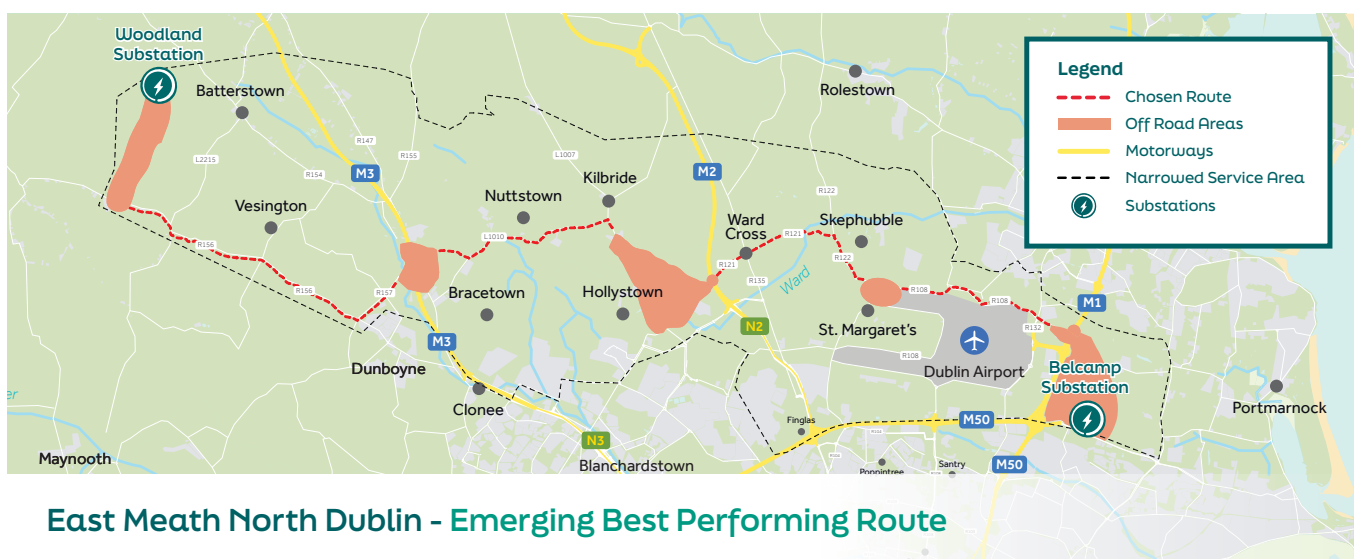


Figure 10: Step 4 East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Chosen Route (BPO)





# 06 Step 5

## 6. Step 5 (2024): Apply for planning permission.

The purpose of Step 5 is to prepare the planning application that will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála.

### 6.1. The Planning Process

Having published the Route Options and **Evaluation Report**<sup>13</sup> in Step 4, the planning and design development process commenced. This included undertaking surveys and investigations within the preferred route corridor, developing the route design, identifying the land take required, junction and access requirements and the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report. During this phase, the project team engaged with landowners and interested parties as part of the design development process.

Having developed the design, engaged substantively with landowners and interested parties, a planning submission and statutory orders are now ready for publication.

A statutory public consultation process will now be undertaken as part of the statutory approval process. Any person or body may make a submission or observation in writing to the Board in relation to the application. Further information on making a submission / observation in writing to the Board and oral hearing procedures are available from the Board's website [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie).

### 6.2. Stakeholder Engagement

During Step 5 there has been ongoing engagement with stakeholders.

A community forum meeting was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February to inform the members of project updates. Community Forum meetings will be ongoing throughout Step 5 in preparation for Step 6: Construction, Energisation and Benefit Sharing.

As part of 2024 Engineers Week, which took place from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, EirGrid undertook local engagements as part of the Engineers Ireland's STEPS programme. The Engineers Ireland STEPS Programme is a non-profit outreach programme that promotes interest and awareness in engineering as future career to students in all communities through a portfolio of projects.

EirGrid visited Rathbeggan National School, in Dunsoughlin, Co Meath, and Rathregan National School in Batterstown, Co Meath, to engage over 100 students from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class and to discuss the exciting and creative work of engineering. A presentation from one of EirGrid's senior engineers outlined how engineering is at the heart of the work EirGrid does in developing the electricity grid and all students took part in an interactive quiz.

13 EMND-4B-Report-September <https://cms.eirgrid.ie/sites/default/files/publications/EMND-4B-Report-September-2023.pdf> (eirgrid.ie)



# 07 Step 6

## 7. Next Steps and Ongoing Engagement

### 7.1. Ongoing Engagement and Project Updates

Updates on the project will be available on the 'project website'<sup>14</sup> section of the project webpage for the lifecycle of this project. EirGrid will continue to engage with technical stakeholders, the Community Forum and the wider community throughout the project planning process and thereafter.

The technical stakeholders who have been engaged throughout the development of the project, and will continue to be engaged going forward, include:

- Meath County Council
- Fingal County Council
- Dublin Airport Authority
- Industrial Development Authority
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Irish Rail
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Uisce Eireann
- Gas Networks Ireland
- ESNB

- National Parks & Wildlife Service
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- National Monuments Services

At Step 6, EirGrid will work with ESB Networks to minimise the impacts of construction and will engage with landowners and local communities on traffic management and access requirements.

### 7.2. Community Forum and Benefit Fund

EirGrid recognise the importance of local communities and businesses who facilitate the upgrading of the electricity transmission network and the community benefit fund reflects this.

Should planning permission be granted and the project enters Step 6: Construction, Energisation and Benefit Sharing, the Community Forum will continue to play an important role throughout construction. A dedicated community benefit fund for the East Meath-North Dublin Upgrade area will be made available to provide direct benefits to communities who are closest to the grid development. This fund, which is proportional to the scale of the project, supports local good causes and help communities transform their area. The Community Forum will help support the implementation of the Community Benefit Scheme with the support of the EirGrid Public Engagement team and an independent Community Fund Administrator.

14 <https://www.eirgrid.ie/community/projects-your-area/east-meath-north-dublin-grid-upgrade>



The Community Forum will endorse the fund strategy developed by the Fund Administrator in conjunction with input from local stakeholders and will work with EirGrid to ensure fund administration alignment between the benefit scheme and the strategy. The strategy will also align with other local community plans, national policy, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The community benefit is spread across three funding streams including:

- **Community** – to reinforce community, cohesion, wellbeing and education;
- **Sustainability** – to transform how communities think about, generate and use energy;
- **Biodiversity** – to leave the biodiversity of an area in a better condition than it was before we built a project.

## Further Information

For updates and further information on this project you can go to the project page:

<https://www.eirgrid.ie/community/projects-your-area/east-meath-north-dublin-grid-upgrade>



# 08 Appendices

## 8.1 Step 3 Letter to residents living within the East Meath-North Dublin study area



[www.eirgrid.com](http://www.eirgrid.com)

An tUibhchruth, 160 Bóthar Shíol Bhroin  
Droichead na Dothra, Baile Átha Cliath 4, D04 FW28, Éire

The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road  
Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28, Ireland

Fón / Telephone +353 1 677 1700  
R-phost / Email [info@eirgrid.com](mailto:info@eirgrid.com)

May 2022

### RE: East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade

Dear Resident,

I am writing to you from EirGrid, the semi-state company that is responsible for developing, managing and operating the electricity transmission system in Ireland (the "grid").

We are currently developing a project, known as the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade, that will provide a 400kV underground electricity link from Woodland substation in County Meath to Belcamp substation in north Dublin. The project will involve the laying of an underground cable between these substations.

#### Why are we contacting you?

We want to make contact with all stakeholders within the study area to ensure you are aware of the development, give you an update on the project and inform you of ways you can engage with us.

#### What is the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade?

The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade will strengthen the electricity network in the east of Meath and the north of Dublin to improve the transfer of power across the existing transmission network.

The project will add a high-capacity 400 kV underground cable electricity connection from Woodland substation near Batterstown in County Meath to Belcamp substation near Clonsbaugh in north Dublin.

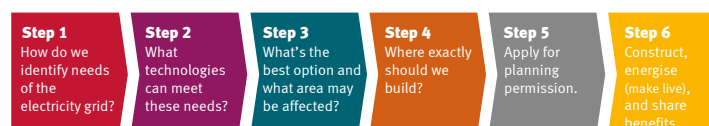
#### Why do we need to upgrade the network?

- address the increased electricity demand in East Meath and north Dublin;
- reduce the use of fossil fuels for electricity generation in Dublin;

Broadly speaking, the project will support securing the electricity supply and strengthening the network in anticipation of the future development of renewable energy, onshore and offshore.

#### What is our six-step approach to developing the electricity grid?

We have a six-step approach to developing the electricity grid and gathering and understanding our stakeholders' views during this process.



STIÚRTWÓIRÍ: Brendan Tuohy *Cathaoiríleach*  
An Dr Theresa Donaldson *Leaschothanríleach* • Mark Foley *Príomhghéidhneannach*  
Shane Brennan, Tom Coughlan, Lynne Crowther, Michael Hand, Eileen Maher  
Liam O'Halloran, John Trethowan • Martin Corrigan *Rúnaí Cuideachta*  
Seoladh Clárálthe: EirGrid c/o, An tUibhchruth, 160 Bóthar Shíol Bhroin, Droichead na Dothra,  
Baile Átha Cliath 4, D04 FW28, Éire • Uimhir Chláraithe na Cuideachta No. 338522

DIRECTORS: Brendan Tuohy *Chair*  
Dr Theresa Donaldson *Deputy Chair* • Mark Foley *Chief Executive*  
Shane Brennan, Tom Coughlan, Lynne Crowther, Michael Hand, Eileen Maher  
Liam O'Halloran, John Trethowan • Martin Corrigan *Company Secretary*  
Registered Address: EirGrid Plc, The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge,  
Dublin D04 FW28, Ireland • Company Registration No. 338522



This project is now in Step 3. Working in collaboration with all key stakeholders, we plan to move to Step 4 in Autumn 2022, where we will examine different route options to decide exactly where to put the underground electricity cables. We will hold a public consultation to get your views on the various route options being assessed. We will also establish a community forum to ensure that the concerns and views of local community, resident and business groups are heard.



#### What has happened so far?

**Step 1:** In 2017, we confirmed the need for the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade.

**Step 2:** In 2020, we compiled a shortlist of seven technical options and held a public consultation on these.

The seven options were:

- Woodland – Corduff 400 kV overhead line circuit
- Woodland – Corduff 400 kV underground cable circuit
- Woodland – Corduff 220 kV overhead line circuit
- Woodland – Finglas 220 kV overhead line circuit
- Woodland – Finglas 400 kV underground cable circuit
- Woodland – Finglas 400 kV overhead line circuit
- Woodland – Belcamp 400 kV overhead line circuit

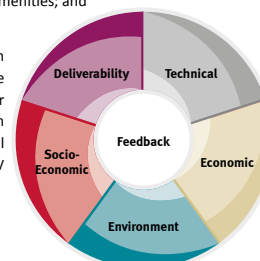
We assessed these options further under the following five categories:

1. Technical aspects; Compliance with Electricity Standards/ Operational Aspects,
2. Economic factors; Project Implementation costs,
3. Environmental factors; Biodiversity / habitats/ ground conditions/ archaeology,
4. Socio-economic factors – such as the local economy and local amenities; and
5. Deliverability factors – such as timeline and potential risks.

Based on the evaluation and on feedback from consultation held in 2020, the best performing options at this stage of the project were the 400 kV options that connect Woodland substation to Finglas or Belcamp substations. As our standard practice is to examine both overhead and underground cable options, we added an additional option to the shortlist – a new Woodland to Belcamp 400 kV underground cable circuit.

In 2021, we published this assessment report on our project website, and it can be found at

[www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin](http://www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin).



At the end of Step 2, we shortlisted four best-performing technical options to examine further in Step 3. These were:

- Woodland to Finglas 400 kV overhead line
- Woodland to Finglas 400 kV underground cable
- Woodland to Belcamp 400 kV overhead line
- Woodland to Belcamp 400 kV underground cable



**Step 3:** In 2021, we carried out feasibility studies on the four best-performing technology options identified in Step 2. These were finalised in March 2022.

The studies found that three of the four technical options involved significant challenges and are not being progressed further. These include:

- **In Finglas** – There is not enough physical space at the existing station to support the additional equipment required for either a 400 kV overhead line or underground cable. The restricted physical space on this brownfield site impacts both this and future developments at this location. Also, using Finglas would require lengthy equipment outages which are difficult to grant while ensuring security of power supply to the Dublin area.
- **In Belcamp** – There were a number of constraints identified at this station. From an environmental perspective, an overhead line would have to cross the Malahide Estuary, a special area of conservation and special protection area.

**We will proceed into Step 4 with the Woodland – Belcamp 400 kV underground cable circuit.** In Step 4, we will examine the route options for this cable. We will hold a public consultation in Autumn 2022 to get your feedback on these.

#### What is the study area?



#### What is the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Community Forum?

The purpose of the Forum is to ensure that stakeholder and community views are understood and properly considered during project delivery, ensuring that the voices of the local communities and those impacted most by our infrastructure are listened to. The Forum provides for open dialogue between stakeholders with interests in the project and the project team.

We are preparing to set up an East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Community Forum. The Forum will be independently chaired.

#### Membership of the Forum:

Membership of the Forum will consist of representatives from local resident and community associations, along with voluntary and sporting organisations in the project area. Membership is also extended to local public representatives.



The forum will act as a consultative body during the project and will advise us on:

- how we communicate and engage with the public;
- what we need to consider when developing the route options; and
- what benefits we can provide for local communities along the route (for example, walkways, playing pitches, playgrounds, and so on).

#### Can I join the community forum?

We will hold an information meeting about the community forum in June 2022. We will then seek expressions of interest from potential forum members publicly and promote this through local media, our website and the public participation networks (PPNs) in Meath and Fingal.

PPNs are networks of community and voluntary groups in each local authority area. If your group is not already a member of your local PPN, we can help you to register with them. If you would like to be kept informed about this, please email [EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com](mailto:EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com)



Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or queries.

We look forward to engaging with you as the project progresses.

Yours sincerely,

*Jason Kenna*

Jason Kenna  
Project Manager  
East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade Project

## 8.2 Media Campaign Assets



### East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade See the Emerging Best Performing Route Option

Thank you for taking part in EirGrid's recent public consultation. Having completed further studies and listened to your feedback, we now have an Emerging Best Performing Route Option for the new 400kV underground electricity cable, connecting Woodland substation in Co. Meath to Belcamp substation in North Dublin. This will help us to deliver a secure electricity supply and bring more renewable energy onto the electricity grid.

We'll keep you up to date as we work to finalise the route. Find out more at [EirGrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin](https://eirgrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin) or scan the QR code above.





## East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade



**We're getting ready to upgrade your electricity grid and want to hear what you think.**

At EirGrid, operator of the national grid, we're planning an upgrade to the electricity system in your area - with a new 400kV underground cable, connecting Woodland substation, near Batterstown in East Meath, to Belcamp substation, near Clonshaugh in North Dublin.

We have now identified four potential routes for this project, and during the coming weeks we'll be consulting with you to get your views. Your feedback will help us to deliver a safe and secure electricity supply, and bring more renewable energy onto the grid.

Find out more about the possible routes and have your say at [eirgrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin](http://eirgrid.ie/eastmeathnorthdublin)

  
**Delivering a cleaner energy future**



## 8.3. Step 4 Consultation Response Form / Questionnaire

### East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade

**We're getting ready to upgrade your electricity grid and want to hear what you think.**

**EIRGRID**  
Delivering a cleaner energy future

**Freepost Address:**  
East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation  
EirGrid plc, Freepost FDN 5312  
160 Shebburne Road,  
Ballsbridge,  
Dublin 4 D04 T928

**Do Not Stamp Here**

Option	Estimated overall length (km)	Estimated overhead span (km)	Estimated potential impact during construction	Other points
Option A (Red)	37	9	Low/Moderate	Shoreport area but affecting the land of all options.
Option B (Green)	38	7	Low/Moderate	Shoreport area but affecting the land of all options.
Option C (Yellow)	43	2	Moderate	Shoreport area but affecting the land of all options.
Option D (Blue)	41	4	Low/Moderate	Shoreport area but affecting the land of all options.

**Overview of the proposed route options**

The following table provides an overview of the four underground cable options we are considering in this consultation. The route options are shown in the map on the right. The route options are shown in the map on the right. The route options are shown in the map on the right.

### East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation

7 September 2022 to 30 November 2022

**The Project**  
The East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade will add a high-capacity 400 kV (kilovolt) underground cable electricity connection from Woodland substation near Ballymore in County Meath to Ballymore substation near Clonsilla in north Dublin.

This upgrade will strengthen the electricity network in the east of Meath and the north of Dublin to improve the transfer of power across the existing transmission network.

We need to upgrade and strengthen the network to:

- address the increased electricity demand in east Meath and north Dublin due to economic development and population growth;
- reduce the use of and reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation;
- facilitate further development of renewable energy generation, onshore and offshore, and;
- assist in achieving climate action targets of having up to 80% of electricity coming from renewable sources by 2030.

This project was identified as one of the candidate solutions in the Shaping Our Electricity Future Roadmap which was published in November 2021.

**Share your feedback**  
This leaflet contains some information about this project. We have included a map to provide an overview of the route options.

This leaflet also contains a freepost questionnaire for you to complete, detach, and return to us by freepost. You can read more detailed information online at [www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin](http://www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin). If you would like more guidance or information, please contact your EirGrid Community Liaison Officer: Eoghan O'Sullivan 087 247 7732 or Gráinne Duffy 085 887 4798 or email [EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com](mailto:EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com).

We will consider feedback on all route options before deciding on what the best option is to take into the next step of this project.

Scan me for more information

We are inviting you to give feedback on four route options for the East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade.

The consultation period is from 7 September to 30 November 2022. We encourage you to engage with us and have your say as early as possible during this consultation period.

**Where can I find out more?**

You can find out more in a number of different ways. All information relating to this project is available on our website: [www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin](http://www.eirgrid.ie/EastMeathNorthDublin)

Arrange to speak to a team member

Sign up to a webinar

Visit our Consultation Portal

Attend an open day

**How can I have my say?**

There are many ways you can give feedback, including:

Submit your views online at [consult.eirgrid.ie](http://consult.eirgrid.ie)

Email your submission to us at [EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com](mailto:EastMeathNorthDublin@eirgrid.com)

Write your own submission and freepost it back to us

Our freepost address is: East Meath - North Dublin Grid Upgrade Consultation, EirGrid plc, Freepost FDN 5312, 160 Shebburne Road, Ballsbridge, D04 TW28

We have developed four potential underground cable route options for this project. We plan these using routing principles such as avoiding town and village centres and maintaining the use of local roads. We also consider constraints such as environmental impact, the width of roads and other services in the road such as water, gas and drainage. All route options start in the Woodland substation and end at Ballymore substation. All route options cross the River Dodder. However, we propose drilling under the river in some options and have off-road corridors ranging from 10m to 100m in width. Where off-road routing is unavoidable, we do not yet know what the exact route may be. In this regard, we highlight a number of options in the route maps. We will determine this after discussing it with the landowners affected. Please know that we will engage extensively with all relevant bodies, carry out all necessary studies and risk mitigation measures before starting these works.

Detailed interactive maps are available to view at [consult.eirgrid.ie](http://consult.eirgrid.ie)

### Feedback Questions

Question 1: Please provide comments in relation to each route option. Your comments may include route-specific issues that you want us to be aware of or suggestions about alternative routing. Your comments may also express concerns or highlight opportunities.

Route Option A - Red

Route Option B - Green

Route Option C - Yellow

Route Option D - Blue

Question 2: Please provide comments you have about the approach we have taken on this project

Question 3: Are there regular or annual major events, festivals in your local area that you would like us to be aware of as we plan the scheduling of this project

If you need additional space, please add an additional page or complete your feedback online at [consult.eirgrid.ie](http://consult.eirgrid.ie)

### Personal Information

Name:

Address:

Eircode:

Organisation (if any):

Contact No:

Email:

If interested, how would you like to receive further updates on this project? (please tick all that apply)

Phone ☐ Email ☐ Post ☐

**Data Protection and privacy statement**

☐ I consent to EirGrid processing my data for the purposes of the East Meath-North Dublin Grid Upgrade project. All information provided by me will be held by EirGrid in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

☐ I consent to EirGrid publishing my name with this submission. Otherwise this submission will be published anonymously.

The questions in this section help us understand your views in relation to this consultation process and will help us build future engagement.

How did you hear about this consultation? (please tick all that apply)

☐ Member of the Community forum ☐ Online or social media

☐ An Elected Representative ☐ Word of mouth

☐ Newspaper, radio or advertising ☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Leaflet or letter in the post ☐

With which gender do you identify?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say

Age:

☐ Under 18 ☐ 18-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-64 ☐ 65+

☐ Prefer not to say

Do you or anyone in your household have specific access needs that you would like us to be aware of?

## 8.4. Mapping Journey

