



**EirGrid highlights ongoing commitment to public consultation by opening two new information centres along emerging preferred route corridor**

*~ Grid West Information Centres in Ballina and Ballaghaderreen to open from 13<sup>th</sup> January ~*

EirGrid has today, 10th January 2013, announced its plans to open two new information centres for the Grid West project along the recently announced Emerging Preferred Route Corridor. The information centres at Bury Central, Bury Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo and The Square, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon will open from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January with project members available to meet with members of the general public and provide information in relation to the project.

EirGrid recently published the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor, a 1km wide corridor to accommodate a new high capacity power line, running from north west of Moygownagh in Co. Mayo to Flagford in Co. Roscommon. By connecting the electricity generated by the region's huge renewable energy resources, the project will facilitate significant job creation and investment as well as contributing to national recovery and growth. The Grid West project is part of EirGrid's Grid25 plan to upgrade the national grid between now and 2025 to deliver a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, businesses and industries.

The Ballina information centre will be open to members of the public from 10am-6pm every Monday and Tuesday, and the Ballaghaderreen information centre from 10am-6pm every Wednesday and Thursday. The existing Grid West information centre at Linenhall St., in Castlebar will remain open to members of the public team by appointment only.

Commenting on the announcement, Grid West Project Manager Sean Meagher said: *"Since the launch of the Grid West project in May 2012, EirGrid has engaged in a process of extensive public consultation. At each stage of the project, the project team has hosted a number of open days to engage directly with the public and local communities. We also established a number of direct communication channels including a dedicated website, email, lo-call telephone number and text update service.*

*We are pleased with the level of public engagement on the project to date. Today we announce that we will be opening two new information centres at key locations along the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor. We want to further encourage members of the public to come in and talk to us and to find out more about our plans for the project and next steps."*

This next stage of the project involves consultation with landowners within 50m of the proposed indicative line route in order to identify the best line route. EirGrid is encouraging landowners to engage in this consultation process, as it now has an opportunity to take on board the views of individual landowners and to consult directly on how the indicative line may affect their property and if there is a better line route or tower locations.

Following this process, the Stage 2 Report will identify the Indicative Line Route with substation and tower locations. This report will be subject to extensive public consultation and will be published in mid 2014. Feedback from the Stage 2 consultation will then influence the final design, which will form part of the planning application we aim to submit to An Bord Pleanála in early 2015.

Ends