



Irish Sea survey for electricity link completed

Routes for undersea cable identified

Tuesday 27th May: A marine survey to map a route for high voltage electricity cables between Wales and the Republic of Ireland has just been completed. Initial results now confirm technically feasible routes from Rush, Co. Dublin to North Wales.

The East West Interconnector is being developed by EirGrid, which is the independent electricity transmission system operator in Ireland, and will enable two-way transmission of power under the Irish Sea from 2012.

EirGrid's East West Interconnector will connect the transmission systems in the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. Grid connection points have been secured in both countries. When completed, the East West Interconnector will be a great benefit to Ireland and will provide potential for growth of renewable energy through access to the greater British energy market for both imports and exports of energy.

The Interconnector is likely to be approximately 250 km long and will carry 500 megawatts of electricity. With the demand for energy estimated to grow at an average yearly rate of between 2.7% and 3.6% over the next 7 years, the planned East West Interconnector will contribute to securing energy supply in Ireland.

“The completion of this marine survey marks an important step forward for this project. It involved taking samples of the sea bed in order to test and measure its suitability for cable installation.

We have already secured a UK Interconnector license and grid connection points in Woodland, Co. Meath and Deeside, in North Wales which were key milestones for this project and we are satisfied that we now have the information to progress the project to the next stage” said EirGrid's East West Interconnector project director John Fitzgerald.

“During this comprehensive survey, geophysical and geotechnical samples were taken along our preferred route corridor from Rush Bay to the vicinity of Prestatyn in north Wales. Three separate landfalls at Rush and two landfalls at the Welsh coast were

investigated with the corridor width extending to 1 kilometre at some points. While samples are now sent away for laboratory analysis, we have commissioned a separate environmental survey to supplement our overall route selection which we expect to announce early this summer”.

Mr Fitzgerald added that “EirGrid will continue to ensure that the public is kept fully informed of progress on this line.”

Ends.

Editor’s note

EirGrid plc is the independent electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) 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. It is a state-owned company.

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 an East-West Interconnector and a second North-South Interconnector.

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