CP966 Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

Step 3 Consultation

Summary Report

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1.   Executive summary

This report provides a summary of responses received to the Step 3 consultation on the proposed Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade, undertaken by EirGrid between 6 October and 14 December 2020. The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade project is intended to add or upgrade a high-capacity electricity connection between Dunstown substation in Kildare and Woodland substation in Meath.

EirGrid explored three technology options (up-voltage an existing line, overhead line and underground cable) that would address the need to upgrade the grid in the area, and assessed five different options against multiple criteria. As a result, EirGrid identified Option 1, which would use existing route corridors and infrastructure as much as possible to create a 400 kV overhead line, as the emerging best performing option. Option 4, which would involve building a new 400 kV underground cable, was identified as the emerging best performing alternative.

Feedback on all five options, together with views on the proposed study area and community fund related to this project, were sought during the Step 3 consultation period.

1.1.   Consultation process

The consultation was owned and managed by EirGrid Group. Traverse, an independent consultancy specialising in consultation analysis, was commissioned to analyse responses to the consultation and report on the findings.

EirGrid promoted the consultation through multi-channel advertisements, a microsite and virtual project exhibition, project webinars and the distribution of leaflets and questionnaires. Further details on the consultation promotion can be found in Chapter 2.

1.2.   Consultation responses

In total, this consultation received 178 responses. Responses to the consultation were submitted via an online form, by email and by post. The consultation received 48 online responses, 124 hardcopy responses and 6 letters and emails.

Every response received was analysed and coded using a coding framework and then reported on. A detailed description of Traverse's approach to the handling, analysis and reporting of responses can be found in Chapter 2.

The views and personal opinions outlined in this report are those of the people who responded to this consultation and are reported as they were expressed. It should be noted, in common with all consultations, responses are from a self-selecting sample of respondents and so may not be reflect the views of the wider population.

Views on Option 1

Many respondents express support for Option 1, often saying that they do so because this option would make use of existing infrastructure. Some respondents feel that this option would be less disruptive to the environment and to local people and communities than other options.

Opposition to and concerns about Option 1 focus on the presence of overhead lines. Some respondents express concern that electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) from overhead lines might have a negative impact on the health of local people, that overhead lines could be placed too close to properties or affect their value, and that overhead lines could have a negative impact on the local landscape.

Views on Option 4

Many respondents express support for Option 4, with respondents frequently saying that they prefer underground cables to overhead lines. Some respondents believe that Option 4 would be safer for human health, saying that they believe that there would be less of an impact on local people from EMFs, and that cables would be less vulnerable to damage from storms. Some respondents also support Option 4 because they feel it would have less of an impact on the environment than the other options.

Some respondents express opposition to Option 4 without providing additional details. Several respondents express concern about the cost of this option, while several others raise fears about its deliverability and performance, saying that it could incur delays or cost overruns, or be difficult to maintain. Several respondents express concern about the possible disruption this option could cause to local people and communities, and a small number of those who responded say that this option could potentially impact upon the local environment.

Views on Options 2, 3 and 5

A small number of respondents express support for Option 2, largely because they believe that it offers better value for money compared to other options. Comments expressing opposition to Option 2, or concerns about the option, centre on the presence of an overhead line, with respondents worrying that it would be visually unpleasant and vulnerable to extreme weather, and that EMFs from the line would be hazardous.

A few respondents express support for Option 3, saying that the cost of this option is reasonable or that it would have a low impact on the environment. Some respondents express opposition to Option 3, while a small number of respondents say that it is too expensive. A few other respondents claim that it does not offer a long-term solution, that future maintenance could be challenging, and that this option could cause traffic disruption.

A small number of respondents express support for Option 5 and describe it as the best long-term solution, due to the perceived benefits of having two lines. Comments in opposition to this option focus on the perception that it

over-delivers against requirements, or that having a single conductor is better than having two. Several respondents feel that Option 5 is very costly, while a few others express concern about the potential negative impact of this option on the environment and on local people and communities.

Views on the study area and the project generally

A small number of respondents express general support for the study area and say that they have confidence that EirGrid will carry out adequate assessments and undertake works appropriately. Concerns expressed about the study area centre on the perceived impact of the project on the environment and on local people and communities. Environmental concerns, raised by several respondents, focus on the potential impact of the project on wildlife and biodiversity, while comments about local people and communities, also raised by several respondents, include concerns about potential disruption to the electricity supply, businesses and traffic, potential health impacts from EMFs, and considerations about sites of historic or archaeological interest in the study area. Some respondents say that they are concerned about the visual impact of electricity infrastructure in the area.

Several respondents also comment positively on the project in general, saying that the project is necessary for a sustainable energy future or for economic reasons. General concerns about the project include comments from a few respondents about the cost of the project, and comments from a small number of respondents critical of EirGrid's decision-making process as regards the project.

Several respondents also express a general preference for putting cables underground, or general opposition to overhead lines. A small number of respondents indicate their support for either of the emerging best performing options, saying that they agree with EirGrid's assessment that these are the best options available.

Views on the community fund

A few respondents indicate general support for the community fund, while a small number of respondents say that they are opposed to a community fund. Those who express opposition mainly argue that no amount of money could mitigate the perceived impacts of the project, with a smaller number claiming that the fund represents an attempt by EirGrid to influence local opinion. A few others say that the community will benefit from the improved grid infrastructure, and that money should go towards this improvement instead of local projects. A similar number of respondents comment that money for a community fund should not be spent unnecessarily, or that the fund is too small relative to the perceived impact of the proposals on the rural character of the area.

Many respondents offered suggestions for how the fund could be spent, including:

- Community projects and amenities, including cultural and sporting initiatives,
- Energy or broader utility infrastructure, with a focus on sustainability,
- Environmental initiatives, including habitat preservation,
- Mitigation of the project's potential impacts on the locality.

Views on the consultation process

Some respondents express general support for the consultation process. A few of them praise specific elements of the process, such as quality of the information provided, the project website, and how the consultation was promoted.

Comments about the consultation process also include concerns about the cost of sending out materials, and the perceived lack of accuracy or detail of some of the consultation materials.

Some respondents also make specific suggestions about the process and the materials, while a few others request information or clarification on specific issues.

2.   Introduction

2.1.   About this report

This report summarises the responses to the Step 3 Consultation for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade project. This consultation requested feedback on five proposed options for a high-capacity electricity connection between Dunstown substation in Kildare and Woodland substation in Meath, including the emerging best performing option and the emerging best performing alternative. The consultation also sought feedback on the study area, ideas for the proposed community fund, and the consultation process.

2.2.   About the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

EirGrid brings power from where it is generated to where it is needed throughout Ireland. The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade will add or upgrade a connection that will more effectively transfer power to the east of the country.

The project is intended to enable further renewable energy generation in line with Government policy ambitions, including transporting electricity from offshore renewable sources. It will also help meet the growing demand for electricity in the east. This growth is due to increased economic activity and the planned connection of new large-scale IT industry infrastructure in the region

At the end of Step 3, EirGrid will have identified the emerging best performing option.

For more information about the project, visit the EirGrid website:

http://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/capital-project-966/the-project/

2.3.   About this consultation

From 06 October to 14 December 2020, EirGrid consulted on the project. This consultation is part of EirGrid's six step approach to grid development which is outlined below in Figure 1.
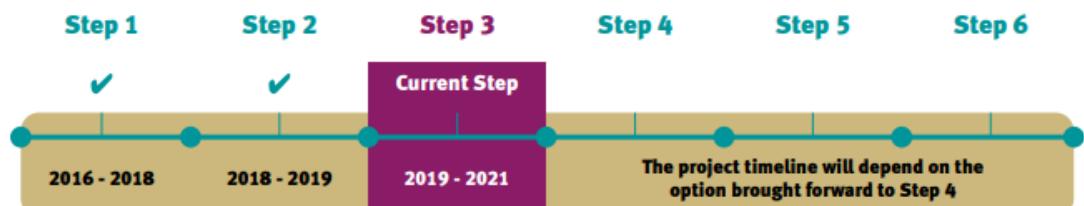
Figure 1: EirGrid's six step approach to grid development projects

During Step 3 EirGrid investigated the four short-listed options for the proposed grid upgrade consulted on in Step 2. Following investigation of Option 4, it was determined that the cable would perform differently

depending on its construction, so Option 5 was added to the existing four options. These options were assessed on the five criteria shown below in Figure 2.

EirGrid have also developed a study area within which the electricity infrastructure for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade would be built.

Figure 2: EirGrid's assessment categories

Consultation promotion

Information phase

EirGrid put in place a pre-consultation phase of information-giving, from 21 July 2020 to 05 October 2020, using a range of engagement methods. These are outlined below, together with information on reach or potential reach.

- **Newspaper advertising** for the consultation phase included 5 weeks of advertising in 2 newspapers in Kildare and Meath (see below). The total weekly readership of the newspapers was 78,307.

  - Leinster Leader
  - Meath Chronicle

- **Radio advertising** for the consultation phase included 4 weeks of advertising across two regional radio stations in Kildare and Meath. A total of 224 adverts were aired over the two stations. The opportunity to hear, which is the number of chances that the average listener has to hear the advertisement, was 11.9.

  - Kildare FM (daily reach: 49,000, weekly reach: 89,000, population cover: 183,000)

- Louth Meath FM (daily reach: 62,000, weekly reach: 166,000, population cover: 245,000)

- **Out of Home** advertising included digital display advertising on forecourts, supermarkets and bus stops across the study area, and covered a total of 4 weeks.
- The **social media** video about the project was viewed over 38,000 times on Facebook and Twitter.
- EirGrid.com Website traffic analytics include:

  - Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade "What's happening now" page was **the most visited page on the EirGrid website** during this phase.
  - Kildare Meath Grid Upgrade pages accounted for 15.5% of EirGrid website traffic).
  - Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade consistently had between **100 and 200 visitors per day** throughout the phase.

- Jacobs developed a project-specific **microsite**, although Google Analytics are not available for this site during this phase. https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c7ec4696b65846feb1a384b85d39dde2
- The project team delivered 2 **webinars** in August with members of the public.
- **Project brochures** were distributed to local libraries in the study area.
- **Information leaflet** distributed to all homes in the study area (approximately 57,000), see Appendix C.

Consultation Phase

Throughout the consultation phase, from 6 October to 14 December, EirGrid shared further information on which they were consulting.

This included the **Kildare-Meath Virtual Exhibition Portal**, provided by BECG: https://kildaremeath.consultation-online.com/

This portal was launched mid-way through the consultation phase and was live from 16 November 2020 to 14 December 2020.

- 194 users visited the online exhibition (17.5% returning and 82.5% new/not returning).
- Average time on portal was just over 4 and a half minutes.
- From data available to BECG based on third party cookies and Google usage, the majority of users were under the age of 35 (27.5% aged 18 to 24, 33.5% aged 25 to 34). The sample size for this data is however smaller than the full set of site users.

Other methods of engagement and promotion from this phage are outlined below, together with information on reach or potential reach; this information comes from EirGrid's Phd media campaign results.

- **Newspaper advertising** for the consultation phase included 5 weeks of advertising across 5 newspapers in Kildare and Meath (see below). The total weekly readership of the newspapers was 107,283. The newspapers were:

  - Leinster Leader
  - Meath Chronicle
  - Kildare Nationalist
  - Liffey Champion
  - Meath Topic

- **Radio advertising** for the consultation phase included 5 weeks of advertising across two regional radio stations in Kildare and Meath. A total of 238 adverts were aired over the two stations.

  - Kildare FM (daily reach: 54,000, weekly reach: 88,000, population cover: 183,000)
  - Louth Meath FM (daily reach: 64,000, weekly reach: 133,000, population cover: 245,000)

- **Out of Home** advertising included digital display advertising on forecourts, supermarkets and bus stops across the study area and covered a total of 2 weeks.

- The **social media** video about the project was viewed over 27,500 times on Facebook and Twitter.
  Storymap microsite: A project-specific microsite was developed: (https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c7ec4696b65846feb1a384b85d39dde2) This site had 499 unique users, with an average time of 3 minutes and 52 seconds per visit. Usage peaked between late October and early November.

- EirGrid.com Website traffic analytics include:

  - Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade "What's happening now" page was **the eighth most visited page on the EirGrid website** during this phase.
  - Kildare Meath Grid Upgrade pages accounted for 3.5% of EirGrid website traffic).
  - Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade received **28 visitors per day** throughout the phase.

- The project team delivered 2 **webinars** in October with members of the public.

- The project team delivered briefings on the project with the following organisations to inform them of the proposals and encourage their engagement with the consultation:

  - Kildare County Council (public representatives and management)
  - Meath County Council (public representatives and management)
  - Kildare Public Participation Network
  - Meath Public Participation Network

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- County Kildare Chamber
- County Meath Chamber

- The **project questionnaire** was distributed to all homes in the study area (approximately 57,000).

2.4. *Landowner engagement*

EirGrid engaged with registered landowners along the existing overhead line to gather feedback on the project options. Feedback from these landowners is outlined below.

Option 1	Many landowners comment positively about Option 1. Landowners who prefer this option do so on the condition that the pylons are sited in the same locations as before, with some flexibility for micro-siting (up to 5 meters / minimal movement).
Option 2	No landowners expressed a preference for Option 2.
Underground Options	Some landowners express support for underground options. Landowners who prefer these options do so because of their concerns about the potential impacts of Option 1, as they believe that Option 1 would result in an increased exposure to electric and magnetic fields and noise. Devaluation of their property and the possibility of constraints on future development were also of concern.
No preference given	A few landowners do not express a preference for any option.

Table 1: Landowner preferences

2.5. *Responses received*

In total, this consultation received 178 responses. The table below gives a breakdown of the type of responses received.

Response type	Total number of responses received
Online response form	48
Hardcopy response forms	124
Letters and emails	6
TOTAL	**178**

Table 2: Breakdown of responses received

Four responses were received too late to be analysed and reported on in this report. EirGrid reviewed these responses and found that none of them raised issues that were not already raised by other respondents.

2.6. Response channels

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

- **online:** by using the consultation webform accessible via the EirGrid website;
- **email:** by emailing the project's dedicated email address, kildaremeath@eirgrid.com, administered by the project team at EirGrid; and
- **post**: by sending in a hardcopy response to the address provided by EirGrid.

2.7. Data processing

EirGrid commissioned Traverse, an independent consultancy specialising in consultation analysis, to process, analyse and report on the responses received to the consultation.

Submissions received were recorded in a database for analysis and categorised into types (for example letter, email or response form).

Data protection

Traverse and EirGrid agreed processes to ensure all data was handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The online and hardcopy response forms included statements on data protection, including respondents' rights under GDPR, explaining how data would be used and for what purpose. Though respondents who provided views in other formats did not receive a data protection statement, care has been taken to ensure that no individual respondents are identifiable in this report.

Development of the coding framework

In order to consistently analyse open text responses, Traverse developed a coding framework. An experienced analyst reviewed an early sample of responses and designed an initial framework of codes. The framework was then adapted as analysis of further responses was carried out to ensure it reflected the themes raised across all the responses.

Each code represents a particular issue and these are grouped according to unifying themes and sentiments.

The full coding framework is shown in Appendix A.

Using the coding framework

The coding was used to group together similar comments and summarise them thematically. In this way, the summary report draws on and reflects the responses received and the full range of issues raised by respondents.

A small number of respondents provided feedback about the options in an

order different to the one proposed on the questionnaire, for example referring to the options in consecutive order. In all cases, respondent feedback was captured using the appropriate code for the option referred to, and has been reported below in the relevant chapter (e.g. comments about Option 4 in response to question 4 were coded with a code from the theme for Option 4, and reported on as such).

2.8. Reporting

Structure of the report

Chapter 3 summarises the feedback about Option 1

Chapter 4 summarises the feedback about Option 4.

Chapter 5 summarises the feedback about Options 2, 3, and 5.

Chapter 6 summarises the feedback about the study area, as well as general feedback on the project.

Chapter 7 summarises the feedback on the proposed community fund.

Chapter 8 summarises the feedback about the consultation process.

Responses to closed questions

Charts summarising the responses to closed questions included in the consultation questionnaire can be found in Chapter 8.

Open text responses

The qualitative analysis set out in this report summarises the responses given to open text questions in the consultation form and also responses in other formats, such as via letters and emails.

Reading the report

While EirGrid undertook activities to encourage people to participate, particularly those groups most likely to be affected, it is important to note that the consultation was ultimately self-selecting. As such, the views of the respondents cannot be taken to constitute those of a representative sample of the population. The views expressed are based on the beliefs, feelings and understanding of those responding. Nevertheless, the responses offer a valuable insight into views and opinions about the proposals even if these may not be factually accurate in some cases.

Quantifiers

In summarising the responses to open questions, the following quantifiers are used:

- A few – comments made by approximately 1 to 5 respondents.
- A small number – comments made by approximately 6 to 10 respondents.
- Some – comments made by approximately 11 to 20 respondents.
- Several – comments made by approximately 21 to 40 respondents.

- Many – comments made by more than 40 respondents.

These quantifiers are designed to provide a sense of the frequency with which issues have been raised in relation to other issues to give a sense of proportion and balance. This approach follows good practice in reporting qualitative data from open questions. Traverse's intention is to reflect accurately the range of issues raised, rather than to attribute weight to the number of respondents raising them.

3. Feedback about Option 1: Connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV

3.1. Overview

This chapter summarises comments on Option 1, the emerging best performing option, which is to connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV.

3.2. Comments expressing support for Option 1

General	
Support	Many respondents express support for Option 1. Amongst them, several respondents express support in general terms, describing this option as "sensible" or "reasonable", while some respondents say that they support the option because it would make use of existing infrastructure.
	Some respondents feel that Option 1 will cause less disruption to the environment or to local people and communities because it would make use of existing infrastructure and would not necessitate digging trenches, while a few respondents feel it is positive that this option follows the existing line route.
	A few respondents believe that Option 1 will mean that the line will be cheaper and more accessible to repair and maintain, compared to underground cables.
	A similar number of respondents comment positively on the cost of Option 1, saying for example that the cost is "reasonable" or "good".
	A few respondents feel that Option 1 is less likely to raise objections amongst the public, and a few others highlight that this option addresses the technical requirements and energy supply needs of the area.
	A similar number of respondents say that Option 1 is "efficient", while others believe this option would have the least impact on landowners of all the available options.

Support but prefer other	A small number of respondents express qualified support for Option 1, while also stating that they prefer a different option. A few of them explicitly say that Option 1 is their second preference. Others comment positively on certain aspects of the option, such as cost and efficiency in making use of existing infrastructure, while also expressing concern about an overhead line.

3.3. Comments expressing concern about Option 1

General	
Oppose	Several respondents express opposition to Option 1, many of whom comment negatively on overhead lines in general.
	A small number of respondents express opposition to the up-voltage of existing overhead lines, and a similar number of respondents believe that Option 1 is not an appropriate choice in the long term.

Concern	
Cost	A small number of respondents express concern about the cost of Option 1, saying that it is not clear why the cost of this option is higher than the cost of Option 2.
	A few respondents believe that pursuing Option 1 will cost more in the long term, saying that cables may need to be undergrounded in future, while others say that this option seems costly given that existing infrastructure will be re-used.
Deliverability and operation	A few respondents comment on the deliverability or performance of Option 1, saying that it is likely to receive objections, that there may be delays and budget overruns, that severe weather might interfere with the line, or that it will not provide the required capacity.
Environment	A small number of respondents express concern about the perceived impact of Option 1 on the environment. A few of these respondents refer to the potential disruption that this option might have on the local countryside, including the topping or cutting down of trees and hedges under the power lines, as well as the possible risk

	that high-voltage overhead lines pose to migrating birds. A few respondents feel there is a risk of animal diseases being brought on to farms by the line maintenance staff.
People & communities	Several respondents feel concerned about the potential impact of Option 1 on local people and communities. Some of them express concern that electric and magnetic fields from overhead lines may impact on the health of local people, while some respondents are worried about the safety of overhead lines during storms. A few respondents express concern about the potential health risks of pylons in general, while others highlight the risk of accidents involving livestock or farmers. A similar number say the proximity to pylons might have a negative impact on the mental health of local people. A small number of respondents feel concerned about the proximity of the proposed line to people's homes, while a few respondents are concerned about the potential impact of this option on the value of their property. A few respondents express concern about the noise caused by electric lines "buzzing", while a similar number say that the presence of pylons might cause farmland to be subject to planning restrictions by the authorities, thereby limiting the land's use.
Visual & landscape	Some respondents are concerned that the proposals for Option 1 will have a negative impact on the landscape or will be visually unpleasant.

3.4. Suggestions about Option 1

General
Suggestion   A small number of respondents make suggestions relating to Option 1, which include: • Moving pylons away from specific properties, • Building a new route in the same corridor as the existing lines, • Ensuring the resilience of the infrastructure used, including its ability to withstand extreme weather events,

4. Feedback about Option 4: Build a new single conductor 400 kV underground cable in one route

4.1. Overview

This chapter summarises comments on Option 4, the emerging best performing alternative, which is to build a new single conductor 400 kV underground cable in one route.

4.2. Comments expressing support for Option 4

General	
Support	Many respondents express support for Option 4 - around half in general terms, while others explicitly say that they prefer electric cables to be underground.
	Some respondents support Option 4 because they believe it will have less impact on the environment than the other options. A few of them specify that this option would minimise the potential impact on biodiversity.
	Some respondents perceive Option 4 to be generally safer than other options, sometimes saying that they feel this option would be safer for human health, while others say that it would be less vulnerable to storms and extreme weather.
	A small number of respondents feel that Option 4 will be less visually disruptive than the other options, while a similar number of respondents believe this option will be better in the long term.
	A small number of respondents comment positively on the cost of Option 4, describing it as "worth it", "fair" or "reasonable". A similar number feel that this option would be cost efficient in the long term.
	A few respondents say they favour Option 4 because it will provide new infrastructure or additional capacity, while others say that this option will reduce electric and magnetic fields.
	A similar number of respondents feel that Option 4 might be the least disruptive of all options or say that this option is less likely to raise concerns amongst the public.

Support but prefer other	A small number of respondents express support for Option 4 as an alternative to their preferred option.

4.3. Comments expressing concern about Option 4

General	
Oppose	Some respondents express opposition to Option 4 in general terms, or saying that it is less appealing than Option 1.

Concern	
Cost	Several respondents feel concerned about the cost of Option 4, referring to this option as "costly" or "too expensive".
Deliverability and operation	Several respondents express concern about the deliverability or performance of Option 4, believing that this option could incur delays or cost overruns, for example due to surveying requirements or frozen land.
	A small number of respondents express concern about underground lines being more difficult to maintain and repair.
	A few respondents feel that this option would not be sufficiently resilient, as there would only be a single cable, while a few others express concerns that the width and depth of the trenches during construction might not be adequate.
Environment	A small number of respondents express concern about the potential impact of Option 4 on the environment and local wildlife. A few of them say that a full environmental assessment would be necessary.
People & communities	Several respondents raise concerns about the potential impact of Option 4 on local people and communities, either in general terms, or in relation to disruption to traffic. A few respondents express the specific concern that Option 4 would represent a risk to their health.
Visual & landscape	A few people say that this option would negatively impact on the visual appearance of the area.

4.4.   Suggestions about Option 4

General	
Suggestion	A small number of respondents have suggestions relating to Option 4, which include: • Reconsidering the route of the underground line, particularly to avoid traffic disruption. • Assessing the potential environmental impact of the proposal. • Removing the existing 220kV overhead lines or some of the existing pylons if Option 4 is selected. • Building any new roads as "smart roads". • Improving the quality of the electric conductors.

5.   Feedback about Options 2, 3 and 5

5.1.   Overview

This chapter summarises comments on Options 2, 3 and 4, which are:

- Option 2: Build a 400 kV overhead line;
- Option 3: Build a 220 kV underground cable;
- Option 5: Build a new 400 kV underground cable using two new conductors in two separate routes.

5.2.   Comments expressing support for Option 2

General	
Support	A small number of respondents express support for Option 2, most of whom refer to cost as a reason for their support. A few respondents feel that Option 2 provides the required additional capacity at a better value than other options, while others feel this option offers the advantage of adding new infrastructure, which might be easier to maintain.
Support but prefer other	A few respondents consider Option 2 as an alternative to the other options, most of whom refer to cost as the main reason for their support. A few other respondents specify that this option should only be considered if there are cost restraints.

5.3.   Comments expressing concern about Option 2

General	
Oppose	Several respondents express opposition to Option 2, some saying that they are opposed to overhead lines. A small number of respondents comment negatively on the construction of new infrastructure, saying that doing so is "unnecessary", while a few others feel that there is already a lot of overhead infrastructure in their area. A few respondents feel that Option 2 will meet opposition amongst the local population, without providing further details, while others say that this option entails "more risk" than Option 1.

Concern	
Deliverability and operation	A few respondents feel that Option 2 could be challenging to implement, while others say that overhead lines are vulnerable, or that the lower cost of the option could indicate that it would be delivered to a lower quality than the other options.
Environment	A few respondents comment negatively on the potential environmental impact of Option 2, without providing further detail.
People & communities	A few respondents express concern about the perceived impact of Option 2 on local people and communities, with reference to health, safety, proximity of the line to properties, and general disruption. A similar number of respondents feel that the potential impact of extreme weather on the electric lines could be dangerous, and that there could be potential health issues linked to the exposure to electric and magnetic fields.
Visual & landscape	A few respondents feel that Option 2 would be visually unpleasant, a few of whom describe this option as "unsightly".

5.4. Comments expressing support for Option 3

General	
Support	A few respondents express support for Option 3. They raise diverse reasons for their support, including cost, low impact on the environment, and resistance to storms.

5.5. Comments expressing concern about Option 3

General	
Oppose	Some respondents express opposition to Option 3. A small number of them feel that this option does not meet the technical requirements, particularly the need to up-voltage the line. A few respondents say that they do not favour an underground cable.

Concern	
Cost	A small number of respondents feel that Option 3 is too expensive.
Deliverability and operation	A few respondents express concern that Option 3 does not offer a long-term performance solution, while a similar number of respondents perceive this option to be weaker on technical grounds. A few respondents feel that Option 3 might lead to future maintenance challenges as it is an underground option.
People & communities	A few respondents believe Option 3 could potentially have an impact on local people and communities. They refer specifically to traffic disruption during construction and general safety concerns.

5.6. Suggestions about Option 3

General	
Suggestion	A few respondents suggest that although undergrounding cables on existing roads could cause disruption, this approach could be applied to new roads built in the future.

5.7. Comments expressing support for Option 5

General	
Support	A small number of respondents express support for Option 5. In their comments, their refer to Option 5 as the best long-term option, and to the perceived benefits of having two lines. A few respondents comment positively on Option 5, saying that it does not raise concerns relating to health or the visual impact on the landscape.

5.8. Comments expressing concern about Option 5

General	
Oppose	A small number of respondents express opposition to Option 5 generally. In their comments, a few of them say that this option provides more capacity than is required, while others feel that having a single conductor is better.

Concern	
Cost	Several respondents express concern about the cost of Option 5 describing it as "very costly" or "not best value". A few respondents feel that the benefits of having two conductors at an additional cost are not clear, while a few others feel this is a waste of resources, particularly when Option 5 is compared to Option 4.
Deliverability and operation	A few respondents perceive Option 5 as "complicated" or are concerned about the extent of the works.
Environment	A few respondents believe Option 5 could generally have a negative impact on the environment.
People & communities	A few respondents feel that Option 5 could be disruptive to local people and communities, including possible traffic disruptions.

6. Feedback on the study area and the project generally

6.1. Overview

This chapter summarises feedback on the study area, which is the proposed area within which the electricity infrastructure for the grid upgrade would be built, as well as feedback on the project generally, not relating to any specific option.

6.2. Comments expressing support for the study area

General	
Support	A small number of respondents express support in general terms for the study area, sometimes saying that the area is appropriate for the proposed project. A few of these respondents say that they have confidence that EirGrid will carry out adequate assessments and undertake works appropriately.

6.3. Comments expressing support for the project generally

General	
Support	Several respondents express support for the project in general terms. Sometimes these respondents say that they believe the project is necessary, and often they say that the project will allow Ireland to make increased use of renewable energy, meeting national commitments on climate change, and building a sustainable energy future. A few respondents call for the work to be completed as soon as possible, while a similar number suggest that a secure energy supply might boost the local economy.
Support recommended options	A small number of respondents say that they can understand why Options 2, 3 and 5 are not favoured by EirGrid, or state that options that do not meet technical requirements should not be considered. A few respondents indicate their support for either of the emerging best performing options, saying that they agree with EirGrid's assessment that these are the best options available.

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6.4. Comments expressing concern about the study area

Concern	
Environment	Several respondents express concern about the environmental impacts of the project generally, including its potential impacts on biodiversity and wildlife.
	Respondents sometimes say that the environmental impact should be considered a priority in decision-making about the project, with appropriate mitigation put in place, and any particularly sensitive areas avoided.
	A few respondents provide comments on specific environmental features of the study area, saying that the proposed area includes agricultural land and bogland such as Mouds Bog. They say that the study area includes locations with notable wildlife, including along the canals and in the area around Dunstown, which is home to wild deer.
Existing infrastructure	A few respondents express concern about the potential impacts of the proposed works on the local electricity supply, or on existing infrastructure such as Dunstown substation, or the cables at Harristown Common.
People & communities	Several respondents comment on the potential impacts of the project on local people and communities, including facilities and businesses, often calling for minimum disruption to the locality.
	Some respondents hope that sites of historic or archaeological importance will be avoided or otherwise adequately protected. One respondent points out that Summerhill has some historic buildings of significance.
	A small number of respondents express concern about the potential health impacts on local people from electric and magnetic fields, sometimes specifically saying that they are worried about an increased risk of cancer.
	A few respondents express concern that local property prices may be affected by the proposals, with one respondent stating their belief that EirGrid will have to pay substantial compensation to farmers.
	A few respondents give specific concerns relating to the construction of the project, saying that there could be

	traffic impacts, that impacts on paths and cycle lanes should be minimised, and that workers should be considerate on roads. Other respondents say that the flight path to Dublin Airport may be disrupted, that the local electricity and water supply will be limited because of the usage of data centres, and that data centres do not lead to local employment.
Visual & landscape	Some respondents object to the visual impact of pylons, saying that they are unsightly in the local setting.

6.5.   Comments expressing concern about the project generally

Concern	
Cost	A few respondents comment on the cost of the project, either to say that they believe EirGrid will choose a cheap option, to express the hope that money has been allocated and that work will be delivered within budget, or to say that the project is a waste of public money.
Current service	A few respondents comment on EirGrid's current service, operations or infrastructure. These respondents say that existing pylons are too close to their property, that there are too many power cuts, that the inspection helicopters are disruptive, and that maintenance requiring heavy vehicles should be carried out in the summer months when the ground is more likely to be dry.
Decision-making	A small number of respondents comment on the way decisions about the project have been, or will be, made. These respondents say that it is not clear why Option 2 was ruled out, that Option 4 has only been included to satisfy environmentalists, that options that do not meet technical requirements should not be consulted upon, and that mistakes in the maps demonstrate that the decisions will be made on false premises. A few of these respondents query elements of the business case for the project, claiming that overhead lines would likely have to be undergrounded in the future, or saying that potential impacts on residents should be given priority in making decisions about the project.

Deliverability	A few respondents express their hope that the project will be delivered to the expected timeline and cost, without overruns or interference.
Obstruction	A few respondents say that they hope that objections will not obstruct progress on the project.

General	
Prefer undergrounding (general)	Several respondents express their general preference for putting cables underground, or against overhead lines, often saying that undergrounding is "better" and offers long-term benefits.
	A small number of respondents believe that underground cables would have less of an impact on the environment and landscape, or on the health of local people.
	A few respondents indicate that they think that Ireland has too many overhead lines, and that overhead lines are outmoded, while others say that underground cables will be easier to install and less liable to be damaged in storms.

6.6. *Suggestions about the study area*

General	
Suggestion	A small number of respondents make suggestions about the study area, primarily calling for environment and heritage impacts to be minimised, although a few respondents are keen that decision-making should not be limited by such considerations.
	A few respondents say that the study area should be as small as possible, or that Leixlip, Celbridge and Dunboyne should be included.

6.7. Suggestions about the project generally

General	
Suggestion	Several respondents offer suggestions about the project generally.
	A few of these comments relate to the construction work for the project, with suggestions for high-quality surfacing on restored roads, and for plenty of notice to be given about local works.
	A few comments relate to the technology to be used, with suggestions for use of superconductors, and tap-off connections to allow for future substations or areas of future demand.
	A few respondents suggest that demand should be reduced rather than plans made for increasing supply, for example through the use of LED lights in every house.
	Other respondents suggest that updates should be given regularly, that tunnelling will be needed where the route crosses the Royal Canal, and that existing lines should be removed if underground cables are put in place. Respondents also say that broadband infrastructure should be delivered as part of the project, that the project should be routed through Maynooth, and that the project should align with proposals for the reunification of Meath and Westmeath.

7. Feedback on proposed community fund

7.1. Overview

As part of the project, EirGrid have proposed a community fund which would help local communities to benefit from the development. This chapter summarises the comments on the proposed community fund.

7.2. Comments expressing support for the proposed community fund without a suggestion

General	
Support	A few respondents indicate general support for the community fund without suggesting any local projects that could benefit from support.

7.3. Comments expressing concern about the proposed community fund

General	
Oppose	A small number of respondents say that they are opposed to a community fund, mostly arguing that they feel that no amount of money could mitigate the perceived impacts of the project, or claiming that the fund represents an attempt by EirGrid to influence local opinion.
	A few respondents say that the community will benefit from the improved grid infrastructure, and that money should go towards this improvement instead of local projects.

Concern	
Cost	A few respondents say that if money is available, then it could be spent on a community fund, but that money should not be spent unnecessarily.
Insufficient	A few respondents argue that the fund is too small relative to the perceived impact of the proposals on the rural character of the area.

7.4. Suggestions about how the proposed community fund could be spent

Suggestion for funding	
Community including sport/culture	Many respondents suggest that the fund could be spent on community projects and amenities, including cultural and sporting initiatives. A small number of these respondents specify that youth initiatives or schools should be given money from the fund, for example Tiermohan NS.
	A few respondents suggest that Tidy Towns initiatives could receive funding, for example at Brannockstown or Robertstown, while others suggest that EirGrid could fund community centres, for example in Kilcloon, Celbridge or Enfield, or mental health services.
	A few respondents say that local GAA clubs or other sport facilities should be funded, although a smaller number argue that the GAA, or sporting organisations generally, already get support. Specific areas where respondents say that there are sports clubs that could be funded include Straffan, Batterstown, Two Mile House, Milltown and Harristown.
	A few respondents specify that outdoor amenities should benefit, including playgrounds, outdoor seating, skateboarding facilities, and walking or cycling routes, for example near Summerhill.
	A few respondents suggest that cultural bodies could benefit, such as art centres or theatres, for example in Celbridge.
Energy/utility infrastructure	A small number of respondents suggest that the fund could be allocated towards energy or broader utility infrastructure, with a focus on sustainability. These suggestions include community wind turbines or solar projects, charging for electric vehicles in convenient places, LED traffic lights and decarbonised community services, for example in Clane.
	A few respondents argue for fibre optic broadband to be provided to the area.

Environment/ landscape	Some respondents argue that the funding could go towards environmental initiatives, including habitat preservation, wildflower and meadow planting, and the restoration and expansion of Dunstown Wood. Respondents also request that EirGrid fund opportunities for people to learn more about biodiversity and experience the environment, including amenities in Clane, improvements along the Liffey Walk, and greenways and blueways.
Project mitigation	A small number of respondents specifically say that the fund should be used to mitigate any impacts on the locality from the project, including protection from electric and magnetic fields. Other suggestions include the provision of funding for environmental mitigation or for local businesses impacted by construction.

7.5.   Other suggestions about the proposed community fund

Suggestion	
Contact stakeholder	A few respondents say that EirGrid should contact the county councils, Clane Community Council and other community groups to learn about appropriate local schemes that could be funded.
Only required for overhead	A few respondents argue that the fund would only be required if EirGrid pursues an option for an overhead line.

8. Feedback on the consultation process

EirGrid also asked for feedback on how well respondents felt they had been consulted about the project. This included three closed questions, the results of which are included below. Other comments offered by respondents on the consultation process itself are also summarised here.

8.1. Closed Questions

The charts shown in this section summarise the information provided by respondents to the online and hardcopy questionnaire.

Project updates

Respondents were asked: If interested, how would you like to receive further updates on this project? Note that respondents could select more than one option.
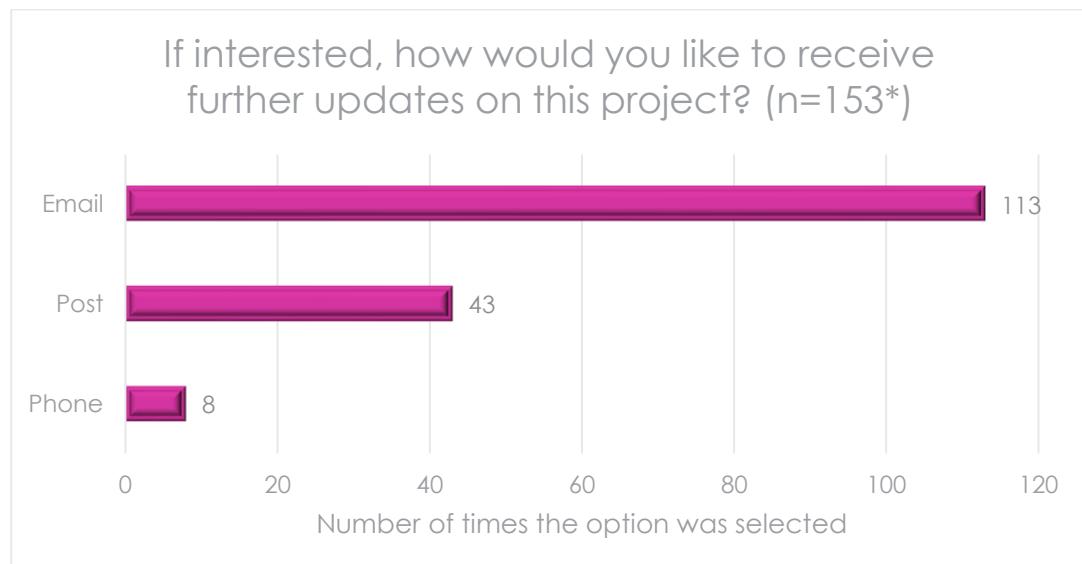
Figure 3: Respondents' preferences for project updates

Consultation

Respondents were also asked: What do you think of the quality of each of the following aspects of the consultation? These aspects were: awareness raising and promotion, publications, project website, and the consultation questionnaire. The charts on the following pages show responses given by respondents to these questions, with many respondents selecting the options 'very good' or 'good' in each case.

Note that for each part of the question, respondents could only select one option.

Awareness raising and promotion (n=160)

Option	Value
Very good	44
Good	54
Average	25
Poor	18
Very Poor	12
No opinion or I don't know	7

Number of times the option was selected
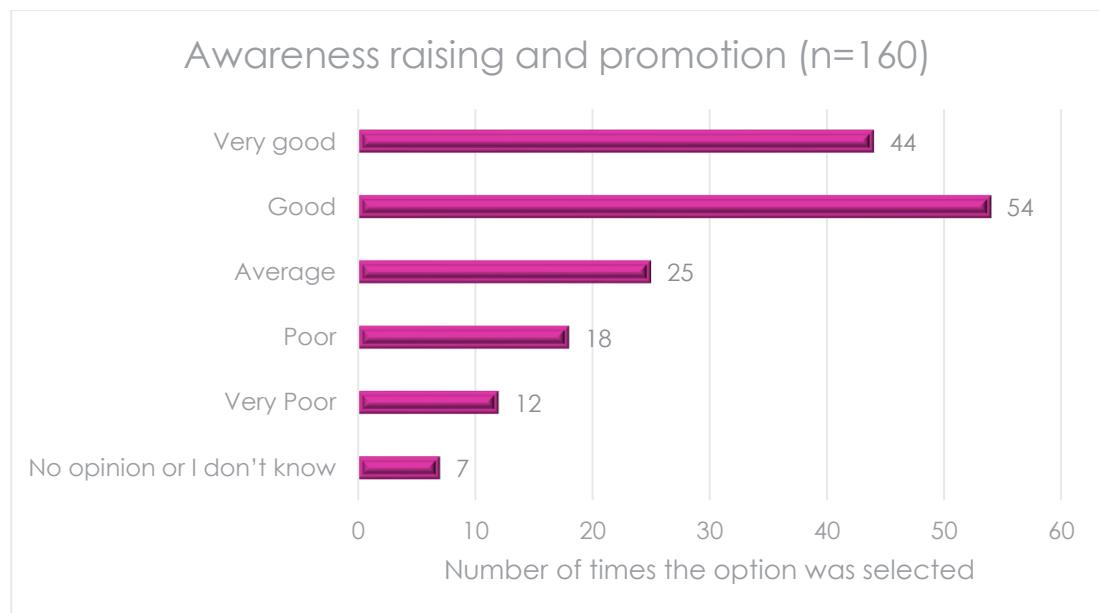
Figure 4: Respondents' opinions on the promotion of the consultation

Publications (n=158)

Option	Value
Very good	31
Good	53
Average	30
Poor	13
Very Poor	10
No opinion or I don't know	21

Number of times the option was selected
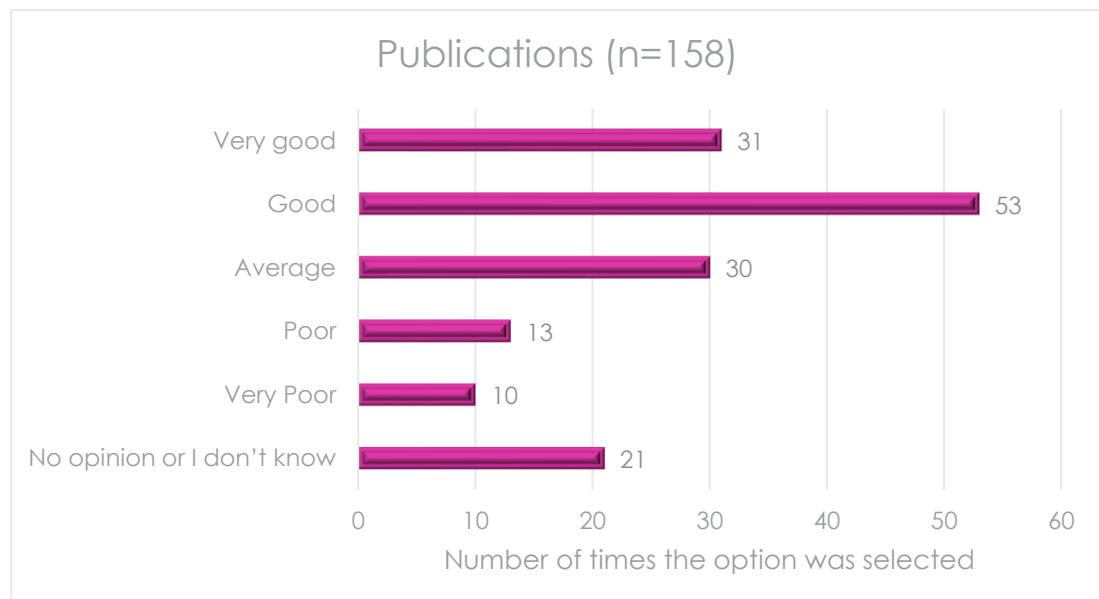
Figure 5: Respondents' opinions on consultation publications

Project Website (n=152)

Option	Number of times the option was selected
Very good	26
Good	38
Average	26
Poor	8
Very Poor	2
No opinion or I don't know	52

Number of times the option was selected
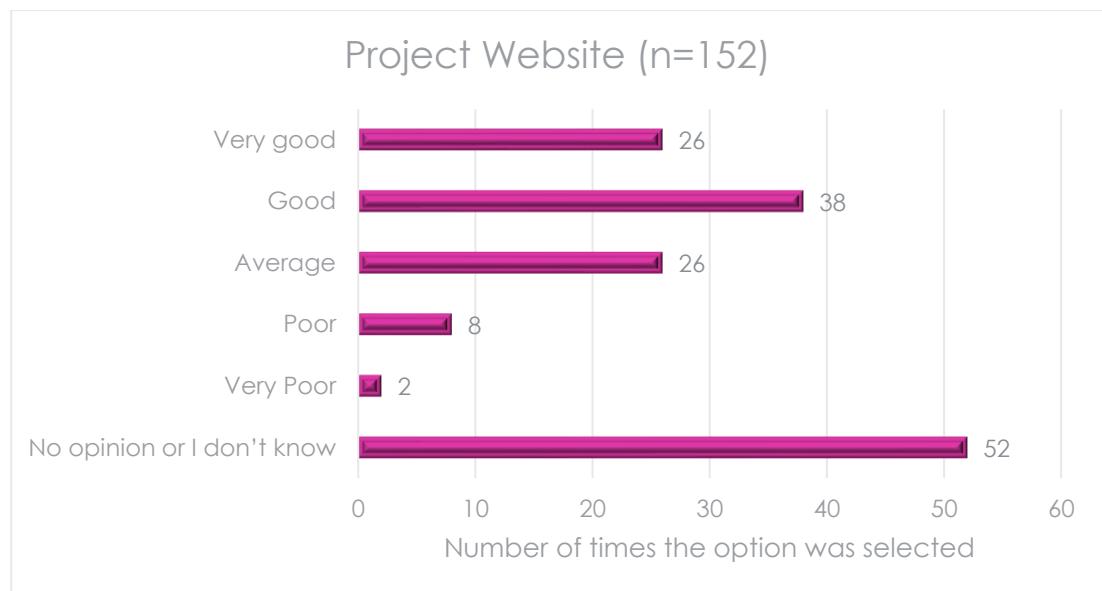
Figure 6: Respondents' opinions on the project website

Questionnaire (n=156)

Option	Number of times the option was selected
Very good	33
Good	79
Average	27
Poor	8
Very Poor	6
No opinion or I don't know	3

Number of times the option was selected
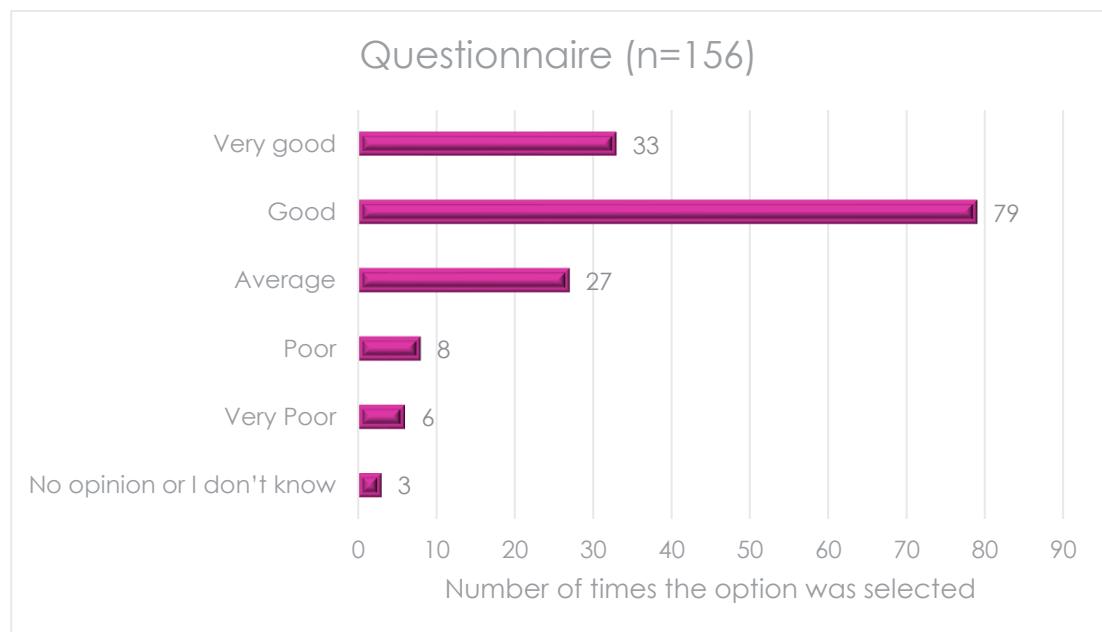
Figure 7: Respondents' opinions on the consultation questionnaire

The chart below shows the responses given when respondents were asked how they first heard about the consultation. Note that respondents could select more than one option.
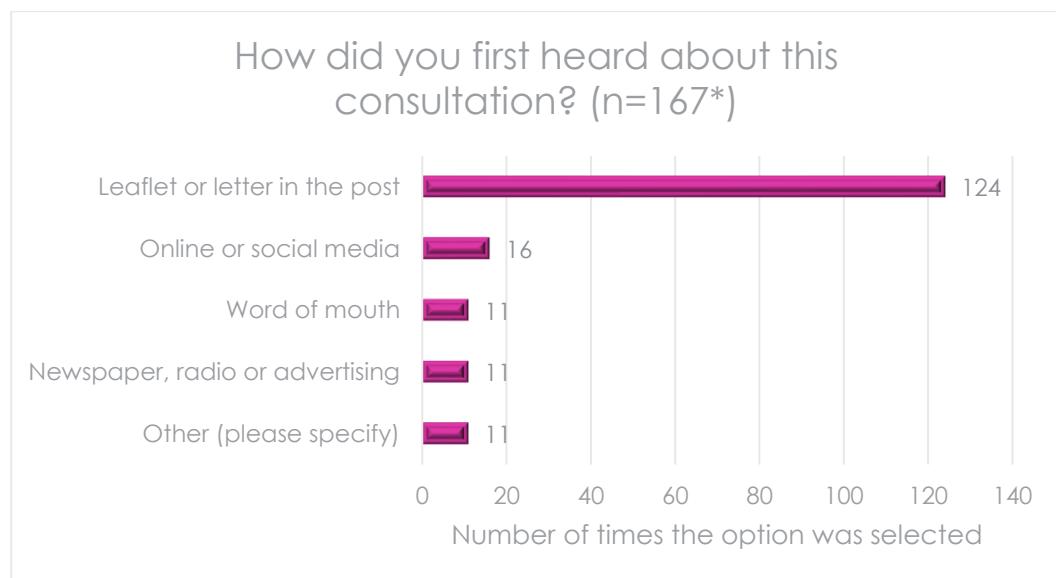

Figure 7: How respondents first heard about the consultation

Respondents who selected the "other" option specify that they first heard about the consultation:

- By receiving the questionnaire;
- Through engagement from EirGrid;
- Through their role as TD.

8.2. Comments expressing support for the consultation process

Support	
General	Some respondents express general support for the consultation process, saying for example that they appreciate the process and are glad to have been able to input into the proposals.
Materials	A few respondents praise the website or say that the information provided is helpful.
Promotion	A few respondents say that the project has been proactively promoted.

8.3. Comments expressing concern about the consultation process

Concern	
Cost	A few respondents argue that sending the consultation material out to households was an unnecessary cost.
Decision already made	A few respondents believe that EirGrid has already made its decision on which option to implement.
Materials	Several respondents express concern about the materials provided for the consultation, often saying that the information is insufficient to make a decision or is overly vague or too complex for a public audience. Some respondents argue that the maps are insufficiently detailed or appear to be out of date or inaccurate, saying for example that houses are missing from the maps. A small number of respondents criticise the lack of clear routes for the options. A few people argue that the potential impacts of the project have not been clear, including traffic or health impacts from the proposals. A few respondents say that the website is hard to use, does not work, or makes information difficult to find.
Promotion	Some respondents express concern about how the consultation has been promoted, sometimes saying that they did not receive information from EirGrid, but often saying that they had not been aware of the project until EirGrid contacted them.
Questionnaire	A few respondents raise separate issues about the structure and online functionality of the consultation questionnaire, saying that it was hard to find, was weighted towards EirGrid's chosen options, was ambiguously structured so that a respondent might think that there was one question on each option, would not accept their response, or did not provide a confirmation that their response had been submitted.

8.4. Suggestions about the consultation process

Suggestion	
General	A few respondents make general suggestions about the consultation, saying that consultation should happen frequently, or arguing that money spent on the consultation should have been spent on engaging with the public on routes and other aspects of delivery.
Materials	A few respondents make suggestions about the materials, saying that the options should be drawn on the map in different colours, or that before and after photographs should be provided for Option 1.
Request for information	Some respondents request further information from EirGrid on the project.
	A few respondents query whether the existing line will be removed if any option other than Option 1 is pursued.
	A few respondents query why particular options, such as Option 1 or 5, cost as much as they do, while others ask why EirGrid would not select the cheapest option.
	Specific questions about Option 1 cover how many more towers will be required, whether certain specified towers will carry a higher voltage, and whether there will be a buzzing sound.
	Specific questions about Option 4 cover whether there are benefits to choosing this option, how easy repairs would be, how often maintenance would be carried out, and why it would pose a greater risk to the environment than Option 1
	Other queries are on topics including potential archaeological finds, possible health and environmental impacts, and details about the delivery of the work, including the contractor to be appointed. Respondents also ask about the visual appearance of the infrastructure, the source of the electricity to be carried in the line, whether the local electricity supply will be more resilient after this project, and whether other upgrades to infrastructure will be necessary to facilitate higher capacity transmission.
Visit	A few respondents ask for notice before any EirGrid representative comes to their house.

Appendix A – Codes applied

The table below shows the codes that were used in the analysis of open responses to identify and group the issues, topics and sentiment of the responses.

The table shows the number of times each code was applied, as well as the number of individual responses to which each code was applied (since a given respondent might raise an issue several times, in which case there would be multiple uses of the code in a single response).

These figures give a broad indication of how frequently any given issue or topic was raised. Please note that the nature of qualitative analysis means that there is always a small margin for variation, and as such these numbers should always be seen as approximate.

It should also be noted that the frequency of an issue being raised does not necessarily correlate with its importance or validity. A frequently raised comment may indicate a commonly held, but incorrect, belief whilst a comment made infrequently may reflect an important issue that may not be widely known.

Code list

Code	No of times the code was applied	No of responses to which code was applied
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Concern | Cost	1	1
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Concern | Insufficient	1	1
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Oppose	7	7
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Suggestion for funding | Community inc sport/culture	41	40
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Suggestion for funding | Energy/utility infrastructure	8	8
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Suggestion for funding | Environment/landscape	15	15
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Suggestion for funding | Project mitigation	7	7
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Suggestion other | Contact stakeholder	4	4
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Suggestion other | Only required for overhead	3	3
Community Fund (FUN) | FUN - Support w/o suggestion	3	3
Consultation (CON) | CON - Concern | Cost	1	1
Consultation (CON) | CON - Concern | Decision already made	2	2
Consultation (CON) | CON - Concern | Materials	40	20
Consultation (CON) | CON - Concern | Promotion	9	9
Consultation (CON) | CON - Concern | Questionnaire	6	6

Consultation (CON) | CON - Suggestion | General	2	2
Consultation (CON) | CON - Suggestion | Materials	2	2
Consultation (CON) | CON - Suggestion | Request for information	52	30
Consultation (CON) | CON - Suggestion | Visit	1	1
Consultation (CON) | CON - Support | General	11	10
Consultation (CON) | CON - Support | Materials	4	4
Consultation (CON) | CON - Support | Promotion	1	1
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Concern | Cost	5	5
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Concern | Current service	5	5
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Concern | Decision-making	8	8
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Concern | Deliverability	4	4
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Concern | Obstruction	2	2
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Prefer undergrounding (general)	49	39
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Suggestion	25	19
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Support	30	24
General comments on proposals (G) | G - Support recommended options (general)	18	18
Option 1 | OPT1 - Concern | Cost	8	8
Option 1 | OPT1 - Concern | Deliverability	5	5
Option 1 | OPT1 - Concern | Environment	8	6
Option 1 | OPT1 - Concern | People & communities	38	28
Option 1 | OPT1 - Concern | Visual & landscape	18	18
Option 1 | OPT1 - Oppose	37	33
Option 1 | OPT1 - Suggestion	6	6
Option 1 | OPT1 - Support	76	64
Option 1 | OPT1 - Support but prefer other	10	10
Option 2 | OPT2 - Concern | Deliverability	4	4
Option 2 | OPT2 - Concern | Environment	1	1
Option 2 | OPT2 - Concern | People & communities	6	5
Option 2 | OPT2 - Concern | Visual & landscape	5	5
Option 2 | OPT2 - Oppose	21	21
Option 2 | OPT2 - Support	9	8
Option 2 | OPT2 - Support but prefer other	4	4
Option 3 | OPT3 - Concern | Cost	6	6
Option 3 | OPT3 - Concern | Deliverability	8	8
Option 3 | OPT3 - Concern | People & communities	2	2
Option 3 | OPT3 - Oppose	13	13
Option 3 | OPT3 - Suggestion	2	2
Option 3 | OPT3 - Support	5	5

Option 4 | OPT4 - Concern | Cost	23	23
Option 4 | OPT4 - Concern | Deliverability	20	20
Option 4 | OPT4 - Concern | Environment	8	7
Option 4 | OPT4 - Concern | People & communities	23	22
Option 4 | OPT4 - Concern | Visual & landscape	1	1
Option 4 | OPT4 - Oppose	11	11
Option 4 | OPT4 - Suggestion	12	10
Option 4 | OPT4 - Support	120	97
Option 4 | OPT4 - Support but prefer other	9	9
Option 5 | OPT5 - Concern | Cost	24	24
Option 5 | OPT5 - Concern | Deliverability	2	2
Option 5 | OPT5 - Concern | Environment	2	2
Option 5 | OPT5 - Concern | People & communities	3	3
Option 5 | OPT5 - Oppose	7	7
Option 5 | OPT5 - Support	7	6
Study Area (STA) | STA - Concern | Environment	27	25
Study Area (STA) | STA - Concern | Existing infrastructure	4	3
Study Area (STA) | STA - Concern | People & communities	35	33
Study Area (STA) | STA - Concern | Visual & landscape	12	12
Study Area (STA) | STA - Suggestion	9	9
Study Area (STA) | STA - Support	10	9

Appendix B – Landowner engagement

The table below summarises the number of landowners engaged by EirGrid.

Identified Registered Landowners	161
Attempted visits	101
Landowners engaged	83

The table below summarises landowners' responses when asked about their preference regarding the project options.

Options	Number of landowners who prefer this option
Option 1	62
Option 2	0
Undergrounding options	16
No opinion given	5

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Appendix C – The project information leaflet

Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

Upgrading lines

Upgrading lives
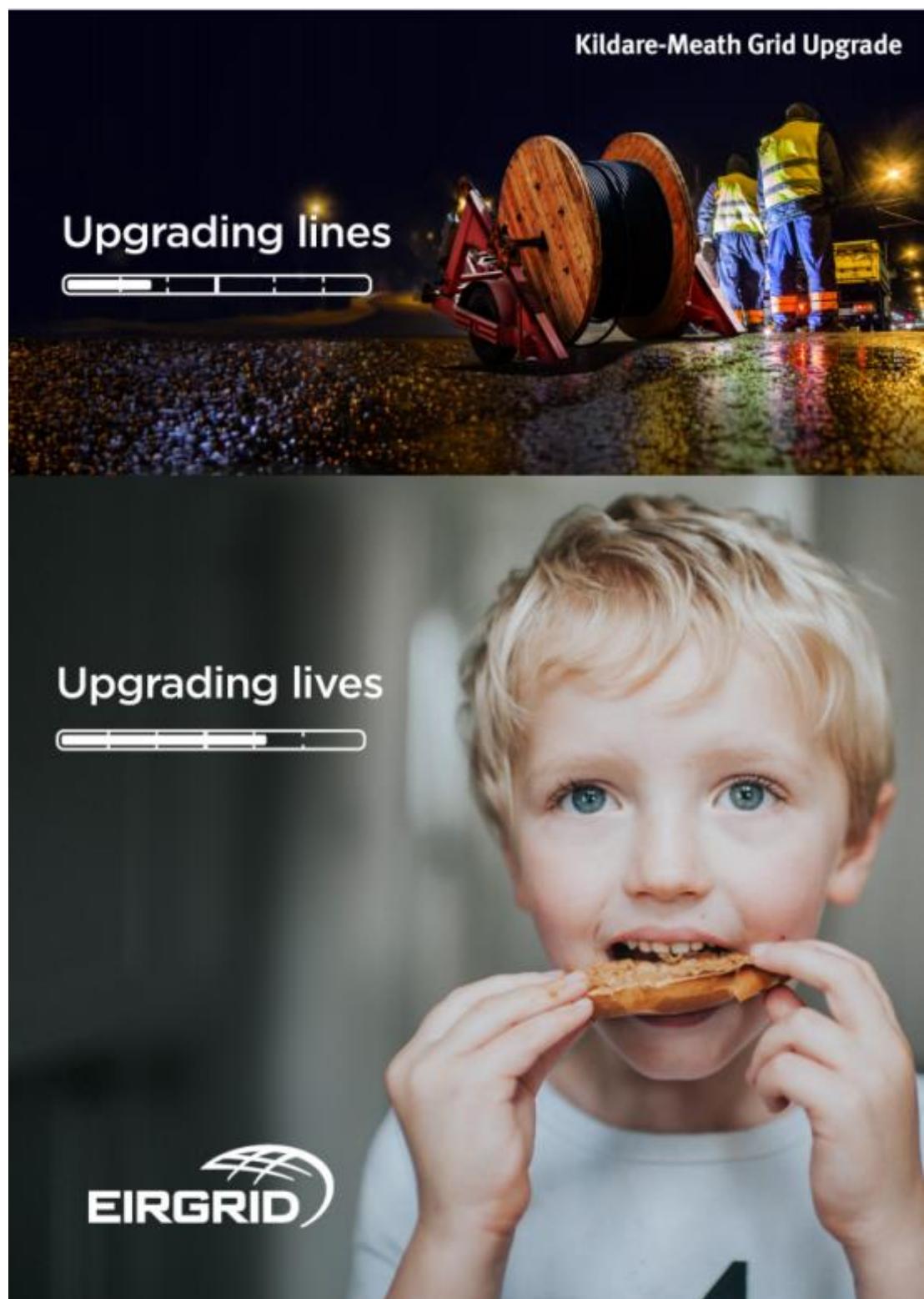
EIRGRID

Your Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade

We all know how much better an upgrade can make things. That's why EirGrid is planning to upgrade the Kildare-Meath Grid. It's vital if we are to have the power we need for our growing population and to ensure you have a safe, secure and sustainable supply of electricity for the future. It also means we can bring more renewable energy onto the grid, helping Ireland to reduce carbon emissions.

We're currently looking at five possible ways of doing this, with overhead or underground options. You can find out more at eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath

Come and meet us

In advance of our public consultation, which will run between September and November, our Mobile Information Unit will be visiting Kildare and Meath in the coming weeks and we'll be happy to answer your questions. Social distancing measures will, of course, be in place and you'll find all the dates, times and locations at eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath You can also call 01 677 1700 or email us at KildareMeath@eirgrid.com to learn more about the project.

EIRGRID

Appendix D – The consultation response form
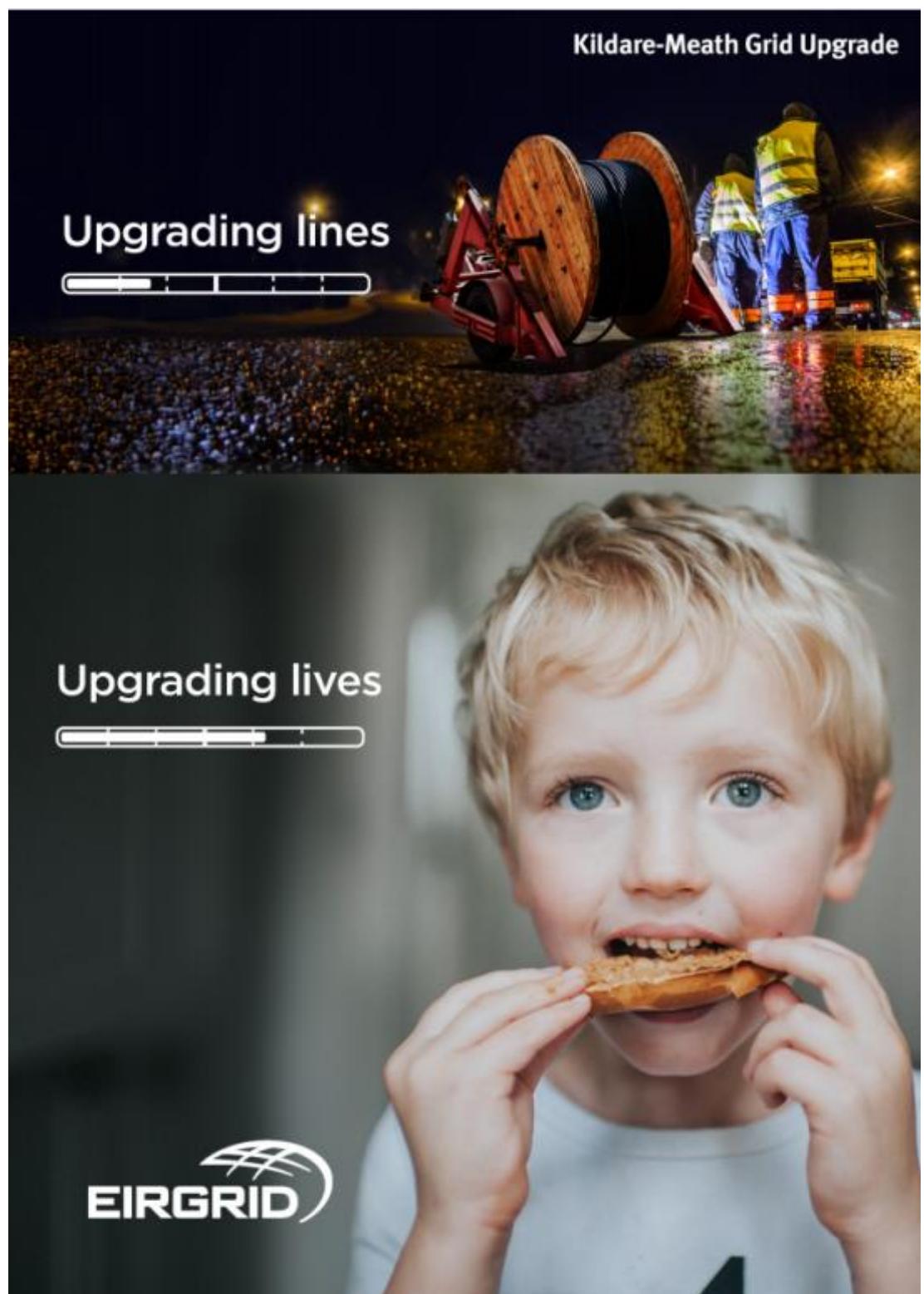
A brief comparison of the 5 options being considered for this project. Find out more at www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath

Consideration	Option 1 Connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV	Option 2 Build a 400 kV overhead line	Option 3 Build a 220 kV underground cable	Option 4 Build a single conductor 400 kV underground cable in one route	Option 5 Build a 400 kV underground cable using two conductors in two separate routes
Outcome of multi-criteria assessments to date	Emerging best performing option	Not emerging as a preferred option	Not emerging as a preferred option	Emerging best performing alternative	Not emerging as a preferred option
Capital cost	€239m	€168m	€372m	€356m	€679m
Environmental impact	Least risk	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Most risk
Potential disruption during construction	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption	Possible road closures, traffic and land access disruption
Visual difference when construction completed	There will be changes to existing overhead infrastructure with minimal new infrastructure on the existing route. New infrastructure into Woodland station	New overhead infrastructure	New underground infrastructure, mainly under existing roads. No new overhead infrastructure	New underground infrastructure, mainly under existing roads. No new overhead infrastructure	New underground infrastructure, mainly under existing roads. No new overhead infrastructure
Meets technical requirements	Yes	Yes	Not to the same level as other options	Yes	Yes
Other notable points	Uses route along existing overhead lines and maximises use of existing infrastructure			Requires a 4 metre wide cable trench and overall work space of up to 12 metres in places	Requires the same as option 4 but along 2 routes

EIRGRID
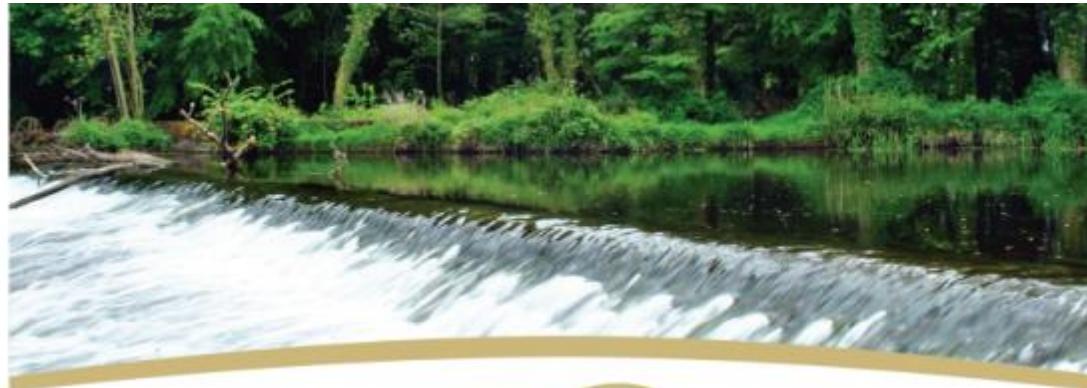
The current. The future.

Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Consultation
6 October to 14 December 2020

Introduction

The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade will add or upgrade a high-capacity electricity connection between Dunstown substation in Kildare and Woodland substation in Meath. The upgrade will help to more effectively transfer and distribute power within the electricity network in Meath, Kildare and surrounding counties.

The project is essential to enable the further integration of renewable energy in line with Government policy ambitions. This includes transporting electricity from offshore renewable sources. It will also help meet the growing demand for electricity in the east. This growth is due to increased economic activity and the planned connection of new large-scale IT industry infrastructure in the region.

We want to hear what you have to say about the options for upgrading the electricity grid between Kildare and Meath.

The options

The five options we are considering are:

1. connect two existing 220 kilovolt (kV) overhead lines and up-voltage to 400 kV;
2. build a 400 kV overhead line;
3. build a 220 kV underground cable;
4. build a single conductor 400 kV underground cable in one route; or
5. build a 400 kV underground cable using two new conductors in two separate routes.

Option 1 has been identified as the emerging best performing option. Based on assessments of the remaining options, we have identified Option 4 as the emerging best performing alternative.

However, please note that we will consider feedback on all five options before making a decision on what the best option is to take into the next step of this project.

About this consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to gather feedback on the options we are considering for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade. The consultation is live from 6 October 2020 to 14 December 2020.

Where can I find out more?

View project information and documents online

View our interactive maps

Take a virtual tour of our Open Day

Sign up for webinar

Arrange to speak to a team member directly

All of this information is available on our website: **www.eirgrid.ie/KildareMeath**. If you need further guidance or copies of any of our documents, please contact your Community Liaison Officer Gráinne Duffy on: **085 887 4798** or **KildareMeath@eirgrid.com**.

How can I give feedback?

Complete this questionnaire and submit it by freepost

Complete the questionnaire online

Write your own submission and freepost it back to us

Email your submission to us at KildareMeath@eirgrid.com

Our freepost address is: **Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade Consultation, EirGrid plc, Freepost FDN 5312, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, D04 FW28.**

How will my feedback be used?

We will use your feedback alongside our technical assessments to determine the best-performing option to take into the next stage of this important project. Please note we are not considering routes at this time.

About this questionnaire

To assist you in responding to this questionnaire, you may wish to refer to the Step 3 Project Update brochure and a report prepared by consultants working on the project. These documents are available on our website: **www.eirgrid.ie/ KildareMeath.**

All information provided to EirGrid will be held by EirGrid personnel and EirGrid's data processors only, for the purpose of engaging with you in the public consultation process. EirGrid's privacy statement is available at: www.eirgrid.ie/privacy

Legend

Purple line: Study area for Option 1.
Purple shade: Zone to connect Option 1 into Woodland Substation.
Blue line: Gorman – Maynooth 220 kV circuit.
Green line: Dunstown – Maynooth (2) 220 kV circuit.
Grey line: Other electricity circuits.
Red line: Study area for options 2 to 5.
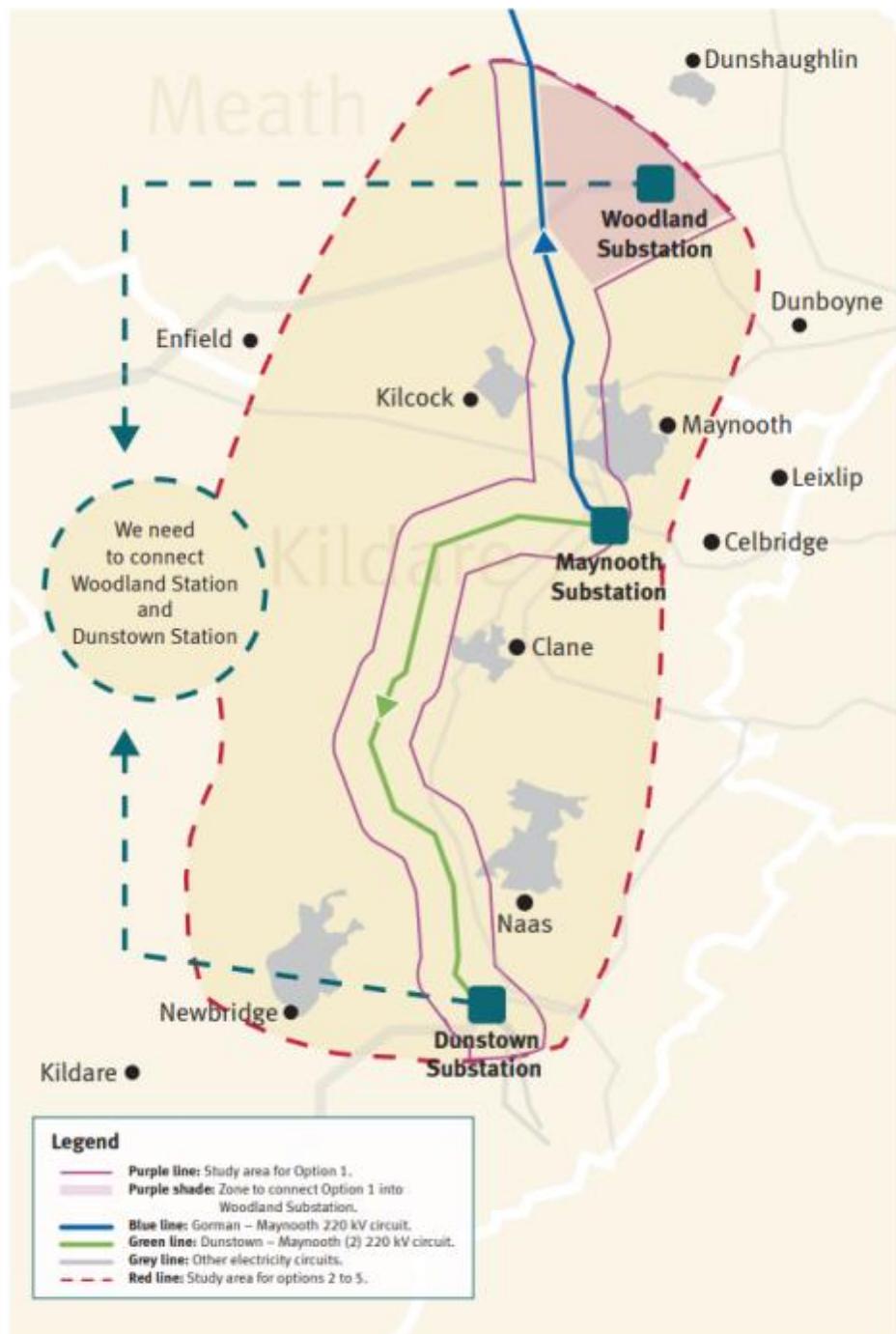
Personal Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

EirCode: _____

Organisation (if any): _____

Contact number: _____

Contact Email: _____

If interested, how would you like to receive further updates on this project?

☐ Phone   ☐ Email   ☐ Post

Option 1 has been identified as the emerging best performing option. Based on assessments of the remaining options, we have identified Option 4 as the emerging best performing alternative.

Question 1: Please provide your comments in relation to Option 1: Connect two existing 220 kV overhead lines and upvoltage to 400 kV.

Question 2: Please provide your comments in relation to Option 4: Build a new 400 kV underground cable.

Question 3: Please provide your comments on the remaining 3 options (please indicate which of the options you are commenting on):

Question 4: The study area is the proposed area within which the electricity infrastructure for the Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade would be built.

Please provide any comments you may have relating to the study area for this project such as environmental and biodiversity constraints, cultural and/or heritage considerations.

[   ]

Question 5: There will be a community fund scheme for communities if the project is granted planning permission. The fund will be made available to community groups in close proximity to the new infrastructure.

Please provide any ideas you have about local projects that this community fund could support or how the community fund could be rolled out.

[   ]

Question 6: What do you think of the quality of each of the following aspects of the consultation?

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	No opinion/I don't know
Awareness raising and promotion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Publications	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Project Website	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Questionnaire	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 7: How did you first hear about this consultation?
(Tick all that apply)

☐ Newspaper, radio or advertising
☐ Leaflet or letter in the post
☐ Online or social media

☐ Word of mouth
☐ Other (please specify)
_____

Question 8: Provide any other comments you may have in relation to this project below:

[   ]

If you would like a large text version of this document, please contact us.

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