

EirGrid Publishes Key New Report on Proposed North South Interconnector

April 16 - EirGrid is seeking feedback on a key new report on the proposed north south interconnector, a cross-border scheme that will improve the all-island electricity system.

The company today publishes a "Final Re-evaluation Report" on the scheme and is holding a series of open days in Meath, Cavan and Monaghan over the coming weeks.

The scheme links Woodland, County Meath with Turleenan in County Tyrone and will provide a second high-capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

EirGrid will in due course apply for planning approval for the North South 400kV Interconnection Development, that part of the scheme located in Ireland.

A previous application was withdrawn in 2010 due to a technical error in a planning notice. Since then EirGrid has undertaken a comprehensive re-evaluation of the project. This involved a thorough re-examination of the previous application, including issues raised during the previous application process.

EirGrid has completed its re-evaluation process and is publishing the "Final Re-evaluation Report". The report finds that there remains an urgent strategic need for the project and recommends that the new interconnector will take the form of a single circuit 400kV alternating current (AC) overhead line.

Fintan Slye, chief executive of EirGrid, said: "The development of a second interconnector between Ireland and Northern Ireland is fundamental to the delivery of a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, businesses and industries across the island. The publication of this report is an important step in the planning and delivery process for the project."

In reaching its conclusions, EirGrid considered feedback from stakeholders at all stages of the project to date, including the consultation period that followed a "Preliminary Re-evaluation Report" in 2011.

The report also takes into account the Government-appointed Meath Tyrone Independent Expert Commission which investigated the case for and cost of undergrounding the interconnector as well as the recent Government energy policy statement.

A period of six weeks is now commencing to allow for feedback on the content and findings of the "Final Re-evaluation Report". EirGrid welcomes any feedback received and will consider this feedback in the preparation of a "Preferred Project Solution Report" which will be published for further consultation in due course.

Ends