

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **NORTH EAST TO BENEFIT FROM MAJOR ELECTRICITY INVESTMENT PLANS**

Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2007: “The overhead power line projects which are currently the subject of a major public consultation process, will bring economic benefits to counties Meath, Monaghan and Cavan”, the independent transmission system operator EirGrid said today. “All route corridor options being consulted on are being actively considered and no decision will be made on the final preferred route until the public consultation process has terminated and a planning application has been made”.

The lines involve an investment of over €200 million and will facilitate more competitive and reliable power, helping keep the north east region on a level playing field in its ability to attract and retain high tech industries, EirGrid pointed out.

#### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

EirGrid has asked people who have comments on the proposals to take part in the four-month consultation process which commenced last month – and which is additional to the statutory planning process which commences in 2008. In excess of 500 people have attended open days in counties Monaghan, Cavan and Meath and many more have contacted Eirgrid on Lo-call: 1890 25 26 90, visited the website [www.EirGrid.com](http://www.EirGrid.com) or emailed Eirgrid at: [MeathCavanPower@eirgrid.com](mailto:MeathCavanPower@eirgrid.com) or [CavanTyronelInterconnector@eirgrid.com](mailto:CavanTyronelInterconnector@eirgrid.com)

A repeat of the Open Days will take place again this month - (27 November, 3–8pm, Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan Town; 28<sup>th</sup> November, 3-8pm, Cabra Castle Hotel, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan; 29 November, 3-8pm, Old Darnley Lodge, Athboy, Co. Meath).

In response to requests from the public, focused discussions will be facilitated at these open days on 27, 28 and 29 November on the issues of EMF and also discussions on factors relating to overhead and underground power transmission during the Open Days. These discussion groups will be held at 4pm, 5.30pm and 7pm. Anyone wishing to participate can register by emailing [MeathCavanPower@eirgrid.com](mailto:MeathCavanPower@eirgrid.com) or [CavanTyronelInterconnector@eirgrid.com](mailto:CavanTyronelInterconnector@eirgrid.com) or lo-call 1890 25 26 90.

Following completion of the consultation process, a planning application will be submitted early in the new year. After the planning application has been lodged, the independent planning process will also present a seven week opportunity for people to make submissions, comments or objections.

#### **‘BROADBAND’ POWER**

The new power lines will bring the equivalent of ‘broadband power’ to the region – that is, the power lines will help ensure the delivery of high quality and highly reliable services. These proposed new lines are vital in order to facilitate competition as part of the All Island Market, and also to ultimately supply the needs of new householders and commercial customers who have connected in recent years. The new lines are needed because transmission lines in the region will reach full capacity in the near future.

The key to the benefits of the new networks is the use of the standard international technology for delivery of high voltage power – overhead lines.

The lines will comply with all international standards and are of the same type as the two lines already in place between Moneypoint in Co Clare and Co Meath and, between Moneypoint and Co Kildare, which total 440km.

### **INVESTMENT WILL HELP ATTRACT AND RETAIN INDUSTRY**

Undergrounding all or part of a Transmission Network presents problems for the secure and reliable operation of that network. The location and repair of faults on underground cables can take a number of weeks, depending on the type of fault and its location. For such an integral part of the transmission system, such a compromise to the security of supply would be unacceptable.

Industries are attracted to a region for many reasons, one of them being a dependable supply of electricity. New industries locating in Ireland discuss with EirGrid the terms, conditions, security of supply and the quality of the power being delivered. A Transmission System depending on circuits of underground cable would not provide the continuity or quality of supply necessary to attract the high quality type of industry being sought by the local development agencies such as the IDA. As an example of this, EirGrid also pointed out that the highly reliable and economic power lines which have helped attract major IT manufacturing to North Dublin and Co Kildare are linked by overhead high voltage lines.

97 per cent of onshore high voltage lines in Europe are overhead lines and this is also true of other developed nations such as the US.

### **INTERNATIONAL BODIES DO NOT FIND ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECT**

EirGrid is satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of international authoritative agencies that the balance of evidence is that electric and magnetic fields do not have any adverse effect on health. (Information available at [www.eirgrid.com](http://www.eirgrid.com))

Following extensive worldwide research, involving expenditure of over €440m, no conclusive evidence has been found that extremely low frequency (ELF) EMF's from power lines are harmful to public health. Research has been reviewed by international bodies including the WHO. It was also reviewed earlier this year by the Department for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

For further information visit [www.eirgrid.com](http://www.eirgrid.com) or [MeathCavanPower@eirgrid.com](mailto:MeathCavanPower@eirgrid.com) or [CavanTyroneInterconnector@eirgrid.com](mailto:CavanTyroneInterconnector@eirgrid.com) or lo-call 1890 25 26 90.

### **Note to Editors:**

The two projects are;

- A new 400kV Interconnector between Cavan and Tyrone that will more than double the current power transfer capacity between the North and the South. The new interconnector will span approximately 45km and 35km in the North in the Republic of Ireland, will cost in the region of €180 million and will be routed from a proposed new substation near Kingscourt in Co Cavan, through Co Monaghan and onwards to Co Tyrone. This project is being undertaken in co-operation with Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE).
- The Woodland (Co Meath) to Kingscourt (Co Cavan) 400kV Power Line. It is approximately 58km long and will cost in the region of €100 million. This power line will reinforce the power system in the North East, facilitating competition and secure supplies of power for all customers.

A number of route corridor options for both projects are currently being investigated and a shortlist of proposed route corridors were presented to the Elected Members of the local authorities in Counties Cavan, Meath and Monaghan in early October and at three public open days. In routing overhead lines EirGrid aim to keep as far away from communities and houses. In any case a minimum clearance of 50 metres is our routing aim.

Public Open Days were held in the Castle Arch Hotel, Trim, the Glencarn Hotel, Castleblaney, and the Cabra Castle Hotel, Kingscourt on the 11<sup>th</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October respectively and over 500 people attended these open days: An enormous amount of feedback was received from these open days and this will feed into the process of selecting the preferred route corridor.

**Further open days** are being planned towards the end of this month. Dates and venues are as follows:

27 November 2007  
3:00 – 8:00 PM  
Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan

28 November 2007  
3:00 – 8:00 PM  
Cabra Castle Hotel, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan

29 November 2007  
3:00 – 8:00 PM  
Old Darnley Lodge, Athboy, Co. Meath

ENDS.

Media queries: Mary Murphy, 087-233 6415 / 01-284 6338