



## **North-South 400kV Interconnection Development**

### **Project Summary Report as at 20 October 2015**

EirGrid provides a non-technical and regularly updated summary of the North-South 400kV Interconnection project in on-line format on the EirGrid project website. The project summary is provided over a number of on-line tabular web pages and is structured as follows:

1. Overview
2. Health & Safety
3. FAQ's
4. Benefits
5. Project Activities

The project activity tab is regularly updated and provides a date stamp of activity on the project on a yearly basis. This report provides an up to date version of this project summary in report format for download purposes and includes project activity for the year to date.



**Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative**

## Section 1 – Overview

### What is it?

EirGrid and SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) are jointly proposing a new high capacity electricity interconnector between the electricity networks of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Currently there is only a single such interconnector between the two networks and a second interconnector is now proposed as shown on the map below.



The planning of that portion of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland was originally undertaken by NIE (Northern Ireland Electricity). However on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 that responsibility was transferred to SONI. For details on the NI portion of the development please see [SONI project website](#).

### Why is it being proposed?

The new interconnector will increase the capacity, and the reliability, of interconnection between the two networks. This will allow the two independent networks to operate together as if they were one system for the mutual benefit of residents and businesses in both jurisdictions.



The increase in interconnection capacity will effectively eliminate current restrictions in cross border support in the event of a shortage of electricity in one jurisdiction, thus enhancing the security of electricity supply throughout the island of Ireland.

Operating the two networks as if they were one system will bring cost savings for all electricity consumers as larger electricity systems can be operated more efficiently than smaller ones.

The increase in interconnection capacity will also facilitate further and greater connection of wind generation in both parts of the island which will help achieve Ireland's renewable energy targets.

### **What is happening now?**

On 19 October 2015 EirGrid submitted a report to An Bord Pleanála detailing its response to the issues raised in submissions and observations made to the planning authority regarding the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development.

### **What has happened recently?**

On 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015 a ten-week period of statutory public consultation commenced in respect of the planning application for the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development. The application documentation, including the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is available for public viewing/downloading on the dedicated planning application website at [www.eirgridnorthsouthinterconnector.ie](http://www.eirgridnorthsouthinterconnector.ie).

The documentation will be on public display during this ten-week period at the offices of –

- An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1
- Meath County Council, County Hall. Navan, County Meath
- Cavan County Council, Cavan Courthouse, Farnham Street, Cavan, County Cavan
- Monaghan County Council, County offices, The Glen, Monaghan, County Monaghan



The documentation is also available for viewing at EirGrid's Project Information Centres, the locations of which can be obtained at the end of this section of the report. All three Information Centres will be open from Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June until Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June (excluding Saturday and Sunday) and again at the end of the consultation period, from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August. During the intervening weeks they will be open during the days and hours stated at the end of this section of the report.

Submissions or observations in respect of the application can **only** be made to An Bord Pleanála and must be received by An Bord Pleanála no later than **5.30 p.m. on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015.**

On 09<sup>th</sup> June 2015 the PCI Unit of An Bord Pleanála accepted for examination the application. Also, on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015 EirGrid submitted a planning application for the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development to the Strategic Infrastructure Division of An Bord Pleanála.

On 02<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 EirGrid placed a public notice in newspapers announcing its intention to seek the approval of An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for this proposed development. A copy of the notice was also published on the project website on the same day.

Also on 02<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 EirGrid published a Community Update Brochure - June 2015. This provides details on the application and where, from Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June, it can be viewed.

For further information on the project, you may contact us in the following ways:

**Write:** c/o EirGrid NS Project Manager, Block 2, Floor, 2, West Pier Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland

**Phone:** Lo-call 1890 25 26 90

**Email:** [northsouth@eirgrid.com](mailto:northsouth@eirgrid.com)



**Website:**

<http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kVinterconnectiondevelopment>

**We are available in our information centres at the following times:**

Navan: 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath. Tuesdays and Fridays 12 noon - 7pm

Carrickmacross: Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. Mondays and Thursdays 12 noon - 7pm

Cootehill: Cootehill Enterprise & Technology Centre, Cootehill, County Cavan. Wednesdays 12 noon – 7pm

\*Offices will be closed on Bank Holidays



## **Section 2 - Health and safety**

EirGrid regards the protection of the health, safety and welfare of its staff and the general public as a core company value.

It is EirGrid's policy to design and operate the transmission network to the highest safety standards and to comply with the most up to date international guidelines and recommendations.

### **Your Health and Electric & Magnetic Fields (EMF)**

A debate about the possible health effects of electric and magnetic fields associated with electric power systems on humans and animals has continued over the last number of decades. Despite extensive worldwide research, international review bodies have found no conclusive evidence that exposure to electric and magnetic fields encountered in normal living and working conditions are harmful to public health.

### **Your concerns**

EirGrid continues to review new developments and research findings and is satisfied from the totality of studies and the views of authoritative bodies that the balance of evidence is that electric and magnetic field emissions from electric power systems do not cause adverse effects on health.

However, EirGrid recognises that some individuals are genuinely concerned about issues regarding electric and magnetic fields and health. The quality of you and your family's living and working environment, along with the welfare of livestock and farm crops is of the utmost importance to us at all times.

We are committed to addressing your concerns in an open manner. To assist in this process we ask that you consult our booklet on electric and magnetic fields.

[For more information on EMF click here](#)

### **Your questions answered**

We are committed to continuously reviewing new research to provide answers to your questions. If you have concerns about this project, we can make an expert available to you. Please feel free to contact us with your questions.



### **Your physical safety**

To make sure you and your family stay safe during this project, we are following strict guidelines for construction and electrical operations.

In addition, before we start any construction task we will carry out an assessment to explore what hazards may be present. If any are found, we will then make sure they are controlled before works begins.

If you have any other concerns about safety on this project, please contact us.

Finally, we acknowledge the obvious health, social and economic benefits that electric power brings to society and reaffirm our commitment to design and operate the electricity transmission system that facilitates these benefits in a safe, reliable and economic manner.



### **Section 3 - Frequently Asked Questions**

The FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) are available under the FAQs tab of the project website





## **Section 4 – Benefits**

EirGrid has identified that an additional high capacity north-south interconnector will provide multiple technical and other benefits. These include:

- Improving competition by reducing the constraints that are currently restricting the efficient performance of the all-island Single Electricity Market;
- Improving security of supply by providing a reliable high capacity link between the two parts of the all-island transmission system; and
- Supporting the development of renewable power generation by enhancing the flexible exchange of power flows over a large area of the island.

These benefits will accrue to all electricity consumers on the island of Ireland.

The proposed interconnector will also provide sufficient additional transmission capacity in the North East area of Ireland to cater for growth in electricity consumption for many years and will also put the area in a good position if an even stronger economic recovery should emerge in the coming years.

### **GRID25**

Regional developments can be seen in the context of EirGrid's Grid Development Strategy, Grid 25. Grid 25 is a long term strategy to put in place a safe, secure, and affordable electricity supply throughout Ireland, supporting economic growth and providing a roadmap to a bright future for renewable and sustainable energy. For an overview of this initiative, please look at the [Grid25 section](#)



## Section 5 - Project Activity

Please note that the project activity timeline provides a date stamped record of project publications since project inception. Please see the date links below for earlier versions of this project update.

If you are looking for the most up-to-date maps, please see the maps link on the website.

If you are unsure about any content, please contact the project team.

The project has been designated as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) by the European Commission and is now subject to EU Regulation No. 347/2013 (the Regulation). An Bord Pleanála (ABP) has been designated as the competent authority for managing the PCI process in Ireland. The PCI Pre-application Process commenced on 02<sup>nd</sup> July 2014.

In accordance with the Regulation EirGrid submitted a CPP to ABP. On 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014 ABP notified EirGrid by [letter](#) that it had modified the concept. The modification requires that EirGrid publish an information leaflet in relation to the project and the PCI process and place an advertisement in national newspapers notifying the public of the publication of the leaflet.

On 07<sup>th</sup> November 2014 EirGrid submitted its draft application file (DAF) to the competent authority (ABP) for review. This is administrative and does not involve ABP making any judgment as to the merits of the application. Instead its purpose is to allow the competent authority to assess the extent of the information provided in the DAF and, as set out in the Regulation, request any “missing information” that it deems necessary.

On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014 ABP informed EirGrid that it has reviewed the DAF and that certain specified missing information is required to be submitted. Further this request for missing information does not preclude ABP from seeking additional or further information should this be deemed necessary during the Strategic Infrastructure Development planning process.

On 06<sup>th</sup> March 2015 EirGrid, with the agreement of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, published the [report](#) that it submitted in June 2014 to the Government appointed Independent Expert Panel.



On 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015, EirGrid submitted information to ABP which included the information that was requested by ABP on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014. ABP will consider the information submitted by EirGrid. In addition ABP will draw up, in close cooperation with EirGrid, the schedule for the permit granting process. EirGrid will then publish the information leaflet and advertisement required as part of the modified CPP and will thereafter finalise the application file and submit it to ABP in accordance with the schedule.

On 16<sup>th</sup> March EirGrid re-published its proposed line route which will form the basis of an application for planning approval to be submitted to ABP in the coming months. This followed a review of the December 2013 line design. The review resulted in some of the proposed tower locations being re-positioned along the alignment. The alignment itself has not been changed. The owners of the landholdings affected by these changes were notified in advance. Maps showing the proposed line route in the [Meath Study Area](#) and the [Cavan Monaghan Study Area](#) were made available for viewing on the website.

On 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015, An Bord Pleanála (ABP) drew up a detailed schedule for the permit granting process. A copy of the schedule was published on the project website on same day.

On 01<sup>st</sup> May 2015 EirGrid published the Project of Common Interest information leaflet, as is required by the CPP. The leaflet provides information on the project, the PCI process and the indicative date for lodgement of the application.

On 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015 ABP advised that it had considered the information provided to it by EirGrid in March 2015 and that it was satisfied that EirGrid has now complied with its request of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014 for the provision of certain specified missing information. On that basis ABP will now accept the application subject to the drawing up by ABP of the detailed schedule for the permit granting process. ABP further advised that EirGrid can now proceed to inform the general public, as required under the modified Concept for Public Participation (CPP), of the indicative date for lodgement of the application.



## ARCHIVE

Previous project activity updates can be accessed at the following links:

- 2014 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2014/>
- 2013 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2013/>
- 2012 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2012/>
- 2011 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2011/>
- 2010 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2010/>
- 2009 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2009/>
- 2008 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2008/>
- 2007 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2007/>
- 2006 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2006/>
- 2005 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2005/>
- 2004 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2004/>
- 2002 <http://www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/northsouth400kvinterconnectiondevelopment/projectactivity/2002/>



## Record of Changes to Project Website

### **20<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

1. A new website [www.erigridgroup.com](http://www.erigridgroup.com) was launched replacing [www.eirgridprojects.com](http://www.eirgridprojects.com). As such, the project information for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development was moved to a newly created webpage within this new website.

### **01<sup>st</sup> July 2015**

1. June 2015 FAQ document was updated and uploaded to the FAQ section of the project website.

### **16<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

1. Published link to [www.eirgridnorthsouthinterconnector.ie](http://www.eirgridnorthsouthinterconnector.ie) website which contains all planning application documentation.
2. Published information on commencement of ten-week period of statutory public consultation in respect of the planning application.
3. Detailed locations at which hard copy planning application documentation will be on display during period of consultation along with amendment of opening hours of EirGrid's project information centres during this period.
4. Published details on how public can make submissions or observations in respect of the application.

### **09<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

1. Announced submission of planning application for the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development to An Bord Pleanála.

### **02<sup>nd</sup> June 2015**

1. Published public notice announcing intention to seek approval of An Bord Pleanála for the proposed development.
2. Announced commencement and closing dates of the ten-week period of statutory consultation.



3. Published Community Update Brochure – June 2015.
4. Included reference to the new public information office in Cootehill, County Cavan which opens on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015.

#### **29<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

1. Published the Schedule for the Permit Granting Process.

#### **01<sup>st</sup> May 2015**

1. Published the Information Leaflet as is required by the modified CPP that provides information on the project, the PCI process and the indicative date for lodgement of the application.
2. Announced that the indicative date for submission of the planning application is during 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June 2015.
3. Removed reference to the project information office in Kingscourt, County Cavan as the venue is no longer available.
4. Inserted a link to the SONI project website.

#### **16<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

1. Announced that on 13<sup>th</sup> March EirGrid submitted information to ABP which included the information that was requested by ABP on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014.
2. Re-published the proposed line route which will now form the basis of the application for planning approval.
3. Announced that the information offices in Counties Monaghan, Cavan and Meath are open to the public.

#### **06<sup>th</sup> March 2015**



1. With the agreement of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural resources EirGrid's report of June 2014 to the Independent Expert Panel was published.

**23<sup>rd</sup> December 2014**

1. Section 1 – Overview: updated to reflect ABP request for “missing information” following meeting which took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2014.



### **13<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

1. Section 1 – Overview: Updated to reflect the current position.
2. Published An Bord Pleanála's letter of 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and EirGrid's associated proposal for the scope of material and level of detail of information to be submitted as part of the application file.
3. Section 5 – Project Activity: Inserted link to the Project Summary Report of 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

### **29<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

1. In the Overview section, under the heading "What is happening now", the words "a minor" have been removed from the sentence "On 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014 the CPP was approved, subject to a minor modification, by ABP."

### **25<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

1. Section 1 – Overview: Updated to reflect the current position.
2. Concept for Public Participation published.
3. Section 5 – Project Activity: Details on 'project activity' for January 2014 and July 2014 that were shown in Section 1 – Overview now transferred to this Section.
4. 2013 Archive of Project Activity: - December 2013 Public Information Leaflet reinstated.