

The Grid Link Project

Consultation Report No. 2 (27th August – 22nd October 2012)

Prepared for EirGrid by RPS Group
SPRING 2013



TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS	IV
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
SECTION 1 – PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	4
1.1.1 The Grid Link Project.....	4
1.1.2 Project Development – Overview.....	4
1.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	8
1.2.1 Constraints Report.....	9
1.3 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY.....	10
1.3.1 Information Centres.....	11
1.3.2 Open Days.....	12
1.3.3 Print Materials.....	15
1.3.4 Online.....	15
1.3.5 Information Service.....	16
1.3.6 Specific Stakeholder Engagement.....	16
1.4 PUBLICISING THE CONSULTATION PROCESS.....	18
1.4.1 Media.....	18
1.4.2 Stakeholders and Community Leaders.....	19
1.4.3 Information Centres.....	20
1.4.4 Website.....	21
1.5 PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSULTATION.....	21
SECTION 2 – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	22
2 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	23
2.1 FEEDBACK ON CONSTRAINTS.....	24
2.1.1 Community.....	24
2.1.2 Communications.....	25
2.1.3 Agricultural.....	26
2.1.4 Bloodstock.....	26
2.1.5 Health.....	27
2.1.6 Water.....	27
2.1.7 Tourism and Leisure.....	28
2.1.8 Ecology.....	28
2.1.9 Existing Infrastructure.....	29
2.1.10 Terrain.....	29
2.1.11 Cultural Heritage.....	30
2.1.12 Operational Issues.....	31
2.1.13 Noise.....	31

2.1.14	Substations	32
2.1.15	Landscape and Visual	32
2.1.16	Renewable Energy	33
2.1.17	Mapping	33
2.2	FEEDBACK ON CORRIDOR IDENTIFICATION	34
2.3	STRATEGIC NEED AND PLANNING	34
3	NEXT STEPS	36

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Road Map	5
------------	----------------	---

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Information Centre locations and opening hours	12
Table 1.2	Public Consultation No. 2: Open day venues, dates and times	14
Table 1.4	Summary of media coverage during the second public consultation period	19

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A Approach to the Development of Electricity Transmission Lines

APPENDIX B Location Map

APPENDIX C Display Material from Open Days

APPENDIX D Feedback Form

APPENDIX E Project Brochures

APPENDIX F Online Information

APPENDIX G Media Coverage 27th August – 22nd October

APPENDIX H Media Releases 27th August – 22nd October

APPENDIX I Local Authorities and Libraries with Reports/Brochures Displayed

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS

Glossary

Description	Glossary
An Bord Pleanála	An Bord Pleanála was established in 1977 under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1976 and is responsible for the determination of appeals and certain other matters under the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2011 and determination of applications for strategic infrastructure development including major road and railway cases. It is also responsible for dealing with proposals for the compulsory acquisition of land by local authorities and others under various enactments. The Board also has functions to determine appeals under Water and Air Pollution Acts and the Building Control Act.
Constraint	Any physical, technical, legal, environmental, topographical or other consideration that may potentially affect, limit, restrict or confine the location or other aspect of the project, within the study area.
Corona	Corona is a luminous discharge due to ionisation of the air surrounding a conductor around which exists a voltage gradient exceeding a certain critical value.
Corridor	A linear corridor within which an alignment could potentially be developed between connection nodes having regard to a high-level assessment of identified constraints and meeting the objectives of the project.
Electric and Magnetic Fields	An electric field is produced within the surrounding area when voltage is applied to a conductor. Magnetic fields are produced where electric current is present.
Non-statutory Consultation	All consultation held outside of statutory consultation. There is no definition for non-statutory consultation in Irish law but it is recognised as a key process in the delivery of projects.
Office of Public Works	The Office of Public Works (previously Board of Works) was established in 1831. Its core services are property maintenance, property management, architectural and engineering services, heritage services, project management and procurement services.
Statutory Consultation	Occurs when a project developer submits a planning application, in this case to An Bord Pleanála.
Study Area	The area under consideration within which project solutions will be sought.

Substation	Substations connect two or more lines in the transmission system or connect lines in the transmission system with the distribution system.
Transformer	An item of equipment connecting electrical equipment at two different nominal voltages.

List of Acronyms

Acronyms	Description
AC	Alternating Current
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Electric and Magnetic Fields
kV	Kilo Volts
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To ensure future electrical power needs are met in the south and east of Ireland, EirGrid is investing an estimated €500 million in a new development called the Grid Link Project. The project consists of a new 400kV overhead power line linking Leinster and Munster. It is a vital development for the region and will deliver a wide range of benefits, including a more secure future electricity supply, empowering growth in the South and East of Ireland, and helping to meet Ireland's 2020 renewable targets.

This report sets out the process for the second round of public consultation for the Grid Link Project.

EirGrid launched the second phase of consultation on the Grid Link Project on the 27th of August 2012. The focus of the second consultation was the project's Constraints Report and the process surrounding the development of corridors. The consultation lasted for an eight week period and concluded on the 22nd of October 2012.

The consultation focused on gathering feedback on the Constraints Report and how EirGrid should develop corridors for the project. The terms of reference for Consultation No. 2 were:

- Comment on the Constraints Report:
 - Are you aware of any constraints – national or regional – that should be taken into account, within the project study area?
 - Has EirGrid identified key features that should be taken into account at this point in the project? These features (constraints) include cultural heritage, infrastructure, ecology, landscape features, etc.
 - Are the key features of your area captured in our Constraints Report?

- Provide feedback on how EirGrid should develop corridors for the project:
 - How should EirGrid consider constraints when determining corridors?
 - Are the categories of constraints appropriate for the development of corridors?
 - What mitigation measures should EirGrid consider when evaluating constraints?
 - What opportunities should be considered when determining corridors?

Section 1 of this report sets out the activities undertaken to ensure widespread awareness of the project and the consultation. This was achieved through a combination of media (press releases, media interviews etc.); advertising (both in print and on radio); direct communication with stakeholders (approximately 5,000 stakeholders/organisations were contacted directly about the project) and online via the EirGrid website (over 2068 unique visitors during the public consultation period).

It also details the consultation activities including the continued operation of four information centres in the project's study area; hosting thirteen public open days; specific stakeholder meetings and briefings; online information and consultation.

Section 2 of the report sets out the feedback raised by stakeholders during the consultation process. The issues are summarised under a series of topics that relate to constraints, developing project corridors, consultation and communications and other issues.

SECTION 1 – PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.1.1 The Grid Link Project

The Grid Link Project represents a significant upgrade of the electricity grid and involves the construction of a new power line linking Dunstown near Kilcullen in County Kildare with Great Island in County Wexford to Knockraha in County Cork. Based on assessments to date, EirGrid has determined that in order to best meet the needs of the South and East, the optimum solution is the construction of a 400kV Alternating Current (AC) overhead line linking Cork and Kildare via Wexford. In developing the Grid Link Project, EirGrid will review its technology assumptions at key stages throughout the project to ensure they remain valid.

The Grid Link Project is a vital development for these regions that will deliver a wide range of benefits, which include:

- Securing future electricity supply for homes, businesses, farms, factories and communities;
- Helping empower growth in the South and East of Ireland;
- Helping Ireland to meet its target of 40% electricity from renewable sources.

EirGrid has established a dedicated project team to develop a route and substation sites for the Grid Link Project. EirGrid does not expect to submit an application to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval before 2015 and public consultation will form an important part of all stages of the project over the coming years.

1.1.2 Project Development – Overview

EirGrid is open to engaging with the public and other interested parties on all aspects of the project at any time. With this in mind EirGrid has developed and published *Approach to the Development of Electricity Transmission Lines*, which can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 1.1 Road Map



Engagement is on-going at all times through the network of four information centres open throughout the study area. However, there are critical points in the development of any project where key decisions are made. In addition to on-going engagement, EirGrid has introduced structured consultation where feedback from the public is gathered and taken into account as part of the project decision-making process. These periods of consultation are described as follows:

Consultation No. 1 - EirGrid Project Development & Consultation Road Map – Stage 1 - Identify Study Area



Consultation No. 1 involved identification of the study area, or the area within which the project will be located. The study area is indicated as the area enclosed by the red line on the map adjacent.

EirGrid asked the public and all interested parties to:

- Comment on the proposed study area map;
- Identify constraints that should be considered for further review;
- Provide feedback on how corridors should be developed.

Feedback gathered during Consultation No. 1 was reviewed and considered by the project team. The findings of this consultation are recorded in Consultation Report No. 1 and were used to develop the Constraints Report. Consultation Report No. 1 can be viewed on the project website or by visiting one of the project information centres.

Consultation No. 2 - EirGrid Project Development & Consultation Road Map - Stage 1 - Identify Environmental & Other Constraints



In Consultation No. 2, the public and all interested parties were asked to:

- Comment on the proposed Constraints Report;
- Provide feedback on how EirGrid should develop corridors for the project.

Feedback from this consultation was reviewed and considered by the project team and the findings are recorded in this document. The findings of Consultation No. 2 will inform the process of identifying corridors.

Consultation No. 3 - EirGrid Project Development & Consultation Road Map – Stage 1 Identify Feasible Options



In Consultation No. 3 EirGrid will outline the corridors for the Grid Link Project.

The public and all interested parties will be asked to:

- Comment on the corridors identified; and
- Provide feedback on the criteria that should be used to determine a least constrained corridor.

The feedback from Consultation No. 3 will be used by the project team to facilitate the evaluation of corridors and identify the least constrained corridor for further consideration.

Consultation No. 4 - EirGrid Project Development & Consultation Road Map - Stage 2 - Identification of Least Constrained Option



Consultation No. 4 will focus on the least constrained corridor and the indicative line route within it. The indicative line route is the proposed route for the project based on the information available at the time.

EirGrid will be asking the public and all interested parties to comment on the least constrained corridor and indicative line route.

Feedback from Consultation No. 4 will be used to finalise the route alignment.

Once the route alignment has been identified, the project team will consult with landowners on the indicative line route and undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will form the basis of a planning application that will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

1.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The second stage of public consultation focused on the Constraints Report and on how EirGrid should identify corridors. It ran for an eight week period, from Monday 27th August to Monday 22nd October, 2012.

Public Consultation No. 2 was a non-statutory¹ public consultation that provided all interested individuals and organisations an opportunity to feed into the early development of the project.

Consultation No. 2: Terms of Reference

- Comment on the Constraints Report:
 - Are you aware of any constraints – national or regional – that should be taken into account, within the project study area?
 - Has EirGrid identified key features that should be taken into account at this point in the project? These features (constraints) include cultural heritage, infrastructure, ecology, landscape features, etc.
 - Are the key features of your area captured in our Constraints Report?
- Provide feedback on how EirGrid should develop corridors for the project:
 - How should EirGrid consider constraints when determining corridors?
 - Are the categories of constraints appropriate for the development of corridors?
 - What mitigation measures should EirGrid consider when evaluating constraints?
 - What opportunities should be considered when determining corridors?

¹ Statutory consultation occurs when a project developer submits a planning application, in this case to An Bord Pleanála. All consultation that occurs outside of this period is non-statutory. There is no definition for non statutory consultation in Irish law but it is recognised as a key process in the delivery of projects.

The closing date for Consultation No. 2 was 5:00 p.m. on Monday, 22nd October 2012. However, submissions from interested parties on any aspect of the project are welcome at any time. All views submitted to the project will be recorded and considered by the project team.

Submissions and feedback, as well as all of the communications activities undertaken as part of the second public consultation have been summarised in this report. The feedback provided to EirGrid during the consultation period is summarised in Section 2. The Grid Link Project team has undertaken a full review of all submissions.

1.2.1 Constraints Report

The following information was presented to the public and other interested parties at the start of the consultation:

The publication of the Constraints Report (27th of August 2012) is a significant milestone in the development of the Grid Link Project.

EirGrid is inviting members of the public and other stakeholders to review the report and provide feedback on its content as part of Consultation No. 2.

What is a constraint?

'Constraints' mean any physical, technical, legal, environmental, topographical or other consideration that may potentially affect, limit, restrict or confine the location or other aspect of the project, within the study area. Simply put, they are features that can influence the location of the project.

Examples of constraints include elevated topography such as mountains; bodies of water such as rivers and lakes; designated or protected areas such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); existing infrastructure such as roads and railways; archaeological and heritage sites such as national monuments and many more.

Why map constraints?

Constraints are identified to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the Grid Link Project study area.

The constraints maps are a spatial representation of the features identified and a vital tool used in the process of identifying corridors. Corridors are geographical areas in which the Grid Link Project could be accommodated.

Where has the constraints information come from?

To identify constraints the project team undertook a desk based study of the regions and acquired data from various relevant authorities. As an example, data was obtained from the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), local authorities within the study area and the National Monuments Service. In addition to this data, consultation feedback from the public and other key stakeholders played a large part in informing the report.

1.3 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

A range of communications tools were used in an attempt to facilitate participation and awareness with as many people as possible. This involved organising public events, a full-time project team presence within the study area, special briefing meetings as well as a phone line and online/traditional postal opportunities.

1.3.1 Information Centres

As part of the public involvement process for the Grid Link Project, a network of four information centres were opened the week following the launch of the project (week beginning the 16th April 2012). These centres have remained open since the launch of the project and were a key part of the consultation methodology for Consultation No. 2. These centres were opened to:

- Enable the provision of information to project stakeholders throughout the project's proposed study area;
- Provide a local facility for meetings with stakeholders within the study area;
- Provide a 'drop-in' service for members of the public.

The locations for the centres were selected based on the need to provide the widest possible geographical spread throughout the proposed study area. Safe, easy access for the public, access to the road network and avoidance of the centre of major urban areas and large towns (owing to traffic congestion) were also considered.

The Grid Link Information Centres were opened in Midleton, Co. Cork, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary, New Ross, Co. Wexford and Carlow Town, Co. Carlow during the first week of Consultation No. 1. The map in Appendix B shows the locations of each information centre. The centres were chosen to provide an evenly distributed geographic spread within the study area, allowing for equal access to stakeholders throughout the area.

The approach taken was to locate each information centre in a reasonably sized population centre, to facilitate access for members of the public and other interested parties. In addition, consideration was given to the quality of the road network and availability of parking at each centre and offices were chosen with this in mind.

In considering the location and facilities of each office, there was a need to ensure that the best balance was chosen across the study area from the options available to the project team.

As the project progresses, the locations of the centres will be reassessed to ensure the network is best serving the needs of the project's stakeholders.

The information centres are staffed by project team members who are available to meet with anyone who wishes to visit the centre during the advertised opening hours. If anyone requests to meet the project team outside of these hours, every effort is made to accommodate that request.

The information centre locations and opening hours are set out in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Information Centre locations and opening hours

Centre	Address	Opening Hours
The EirGrid Midleton Information Centre	Oikoseen House, Castleredmond, Midleton, Co. Cork	Open every Monday from 12 noon to 6pm
The EirGrid Carrick-on-Suir Information Centre	Carrick Community Business Centre at the Nano Nagle Centre, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary	Open every Tuesday from 12 noon to 6pm
The EirGrid New Ross Information Centre	The Coach House, Marsh Lane, New Ross, Co. Wexford	Open every Wednesday from 12 noon to 6pm
The EirGrid Carlow Information Centre	Enterprise House, O'Brien Road, Carlow, Co. Carlow	Open every Thursday from 12 noon to 6pm

* Note: Project Information Centres are closed on bank holidays,

1.3.2 Open Days

In order to provide a focus for engagement, a series of 13 open days was hosted during the consultation period. Expertise from across the Grid Link Project team was available at each open day, including technical and environmental specialists, to engage with members of the public and answer any queries or questions that might arise.

The details of each of the open days held during Consultation No. 2 are outlined below in Table 1.2. Appendix B shows on a map the locations of each open day held as part of the consultation.

A series of tailored information displays was prepared by the project team for the events. The displays focused on explaining:

- The process of identifying constraints;
- Interactive constraints mapping;
- Hard copy mapping;
- The role of EirGrid;
- The Irish national electricity grid;
- Grid Link project background;
- The process associated with route identification;
- The project's consultation process;
- The project time line;
- The project study area.

The open day display materials are included in this report in Appendix C.

The format of the open days encouraged stakeholders to visit the venue at any stage during the event to ensure the greatest degree of flexibility. Members of the project team explained the displays, answering any questions that arose and recording feedback as it was given. Experts in a number of fields including technical design, agronomy and ecology were available at all open days. Appendix D shows the form used by project team members to capture feedback at open days.

Table 1.2 Public Consultation No. 2: Open day venues, dates and times.

County	Venue	Date and Time
Kilkenny	Springhill Court Hotel, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny	Tuesday, 4 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Campile	Campile Parochial Hall, Campile, Co. Wexford	Wednesday, 5 th September 2012, 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Wexford	Ashdown Park Hotel, Gorey, Co. Wexford	Thursday, 6 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Kildare	Killashee House Hotel, Naas, Co. Kildare	Friday, 7 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Dublin	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, County Hall, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin	Monday, 10 th September 2012, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Wicklow	Glenview Hotel, Co. Wicklow	Tuesday, 11 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Cork	Midleton Park Hotel, Midleton, Co. Cork	Wednesday, 12 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Tipperary	Clonmel Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary	Thursday, 13 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Waterford	Dungarvan Park Hotel, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford	Monday, 17 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Knockraha	Knockraha Community Hall, Knockraha, Co. Cork	Tuesday, 18 th September 2012, 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Carlow	Seven Oaks Hotel, Carlow, Co. Carlow	Thursday, 20 th September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Laois	Abbeyleix Manor Hotel, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois	Friday, 21 st September 2012, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Kilcullen ²	Kilcullen Community Theatre & Heritage Centre, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare	Wednesday 3 rd October 2012, 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

² A series of twelve open days was initially envisaged for Consultation No. 2 however, following engagement with members of the community at Kilcullen, Co. Kildare, EirGrid responded to requests to facilitate an information session at Kilcullen Community Theatre & Heritage Centre.

1.3.3 Print Materials

Printed information materials were produced for Consultation No. 2 to ensure stakeholders had adequate access to project information. These materials were produced in addition to the existing body of EirGrid corporate printed materials that include information on what EirGrid is, how the National Grid is operated and developed, the Grid25 programme and other EirGrid materials. A series of printed materials was produced for this stage of the Grid Link project consultation as follows:

- Information Brochure 2;
- Open Day Series 2 Insert & Feedback Form;
- Consultation No. 2 Poster.

Information Brochure 2 contained information about EirGrid, the project background, the constraints identification process, how the project will be developed, the consultation process, contact details and means of communications with the project team and what EirGrid is consulting on during Consultation No. 2.

An insert to the brochure was produced to provide information on the second series of open days to be held throughout the project study area. This contained a full page feedback form to facilitate written submissions to the project team.

The poster produced for Consultation No. 2 included key details of the consultation period including the dates, times and venues of the planned open days to be held, a brief description of the project and contact details of the project team. The focus of the poster was to promote Consultation No. 2.

Appendix E contains samples of all of the above printed materials.

1.3.4 Online

A dedicated page for the Grid Link Project was established on the 'Projects' section of the EirGrid corporate website and extensive information on the project was made live on the website at the project launch in April 2012. All relevant project information, including electronic versions of the project literature is available online. The URL for the project website is www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/gridlink. Appendix F contains screen grabs of the information made available on-line during the consultation.

For Consultation No. 2, the website was updated to allow users to download key reports relevant to the consultation including the Constraints Report, the Constraints Mapping, A User Guide to the Constraints Report and Report on Consultation No. 1.

In addition to the project website, members of the public were invited to submit feedback to the project team via the project email address: gridlink@eirgrid.com

1.3.5 Information Service

The comprehensive project information service was in operation throughout the consultation period to facilitate stakeholders making contact with the project team to ask questions or receive information about any aspect of the project. This service is managed by appropriately qualified personnel who respond in a timely manner to any information request from members of the public.

The information service (which includes the Information Centres for face to face meetings) can be availed of through the project phone line (Lo-call 1890 422 122); online at gridlink@eirgrid.com or via traditional mail at: The Grid Link Project Manager, EirGrid, P.O. Box 12213, Glenageary, County Dublin, Ireland.

1.3.6 Specific Stakeholder Engagement

1.3.6.1 Senators, TDs and MEPs

In recognition of the mandate given to elected representatives and the critical role they play in representing the public and the public interest, Senators, TDs and MEPs were identified as priority stakeholders.

Letters and emails were issued to all Senators, TDs and MEPs in the study area to coincide with the launch of Consultation No. 2. Copies of the consultation information materials were included in these mail outs and all representatives were encouraged to participate in the consultation through attendance at project open days or by making a submission.

A briefing for Senators, TDs and MEPs had previously been held in Buswells Hotel, Dublin 2 on Wednesday 25th of April 2012, during Consultation No. 1. For Consultation No. 2, members of the Oireachtas and European Parliament were asked to get in contact if they required briefings on the project. A small number of representatives availed of this offer.

1.3.6.2 County, City & Town Councils

At the launch of Consultation No. 2, all local elected representatives were issued with a briefing pack about the project by both email and post. This briefing pack contained:

- Information Brochure 2;

- Open Day Series 2 Insert & Feedback Form;
- Consultation No. 2 Poster;
- Letter announcing the second phase of consultation and inviting them to attend the Information Centres and/or the Open Days.

All Councils in the study area have been contacted and a request made that the Grid Link Project team be placed on the agenda to make a presentation to each of the local authorities in the study area. These meetings have been ongoing since May 2012.

Table 1.3 Formal Briefings to Local Elected Representatives

	Local Authority	Date
1	Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly	11/05/12
2	Carlow County Council	14/05/12
3	Kilkenny County Council	21/05/12
4	Cork City Council	28/05/12
5	Waterford County Council	11/06/12
6	Wicklow County Council	11/06/12
7	Cork County Council	15/06/12
8	Kildare County Council	25/06/12
9	South Tipperary County Council	02/07/12
10	Limerick County Council	09/07/12

11	Waterford City Council	10/09/12
12	South East Regional Authority	24/09/12
13	Carlow Town Council	04/10/12
14	Carrick-on-Suir Town Council	08/10/12
15	New Ross Town Council	16/10/12
16	Kilkenny County Council and New Ross Town Council	27/10//12
17	Midleton Town Council	11/12/12
18	Wexford County Council	14/01/13

1.4 PUBLICISING THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Raising awareness of the project and encouraging participation in the public consultation were key aspects of the work undertaken by the Grid Link Project team in this phase. Every effort was made to ensure that as many people as possible were made aware of the project and had an opportunity to participate in the public consultation.

This was achieved through a combination of issuing news releases to national and local print, broadcast and electronic media, placing advertisements in local and national press and local radio stations, directly to stakeholders and online on the EirGrid website.

1.4.1 Media

The media coverage of the public consultation is extensive and is summarised in Table 1.4 below. Advertisements in the media during Consultation No. 2 are summarised in Table 1.5. The media coverage (print, radio and online) and advertisements for the consultation events are listed in Appendix G.

Following on from the launch EirGrid issued a series of news releases to local media promoting the project activity – see Appendix H for list of news releases.

Table 1.4 Summary of media coverage during the second public consultation period

Separate pieces of coverage	Media	Date (2012)
10	Local radio interviews	27 th August – 22 nd October
36	Local print media articles	27 th August – 22 nd October
6	Online news articles	27 th August – 22 nd October

Table 1.5 Summary of advertisements during the second public consultation period

Separate pieces of coverage	Media	Date (2012)
31	Local print media adverts	27 th August – 22 nd October
210	30 second local radio adverts	27 th August – 22 nd October
2	National newspaper adverts	27 th August – 22 nd October

1.4.2 Stakeholders and Community Leaders

Prior to Consultation No. 1 EirGrid undertook a high level audit of individuals and groups that might be interested in making a submission or that might be in a position to share information about the Grid Link Project to their members/community. These stakeholders were contacted again in Consultation No. 2. Stakeholders that had engaged with the project since the launch in April 2012 and those that requested to be added to the Grid Link Project mailing list were also contacted as part of Consultation No. 2.

Stakeholders were issued with project information if they fell into one of the following categories:

- 1) Information about the project would be of interest to them;
- 2) Their participation in the public consultation was important;
- 3) They had the potential to disseminate project information to their own contacts locally.

Stakeholder groups and community leaders from the following sectors were identified:

- Agriculture;

- Environment;
- Elected Representatives;
- Community Organisations;
- Business Organisations;
- Statutory/Strategic Stakeholders.

Contact information for these groups was obtained from publicly available sources including websites and telephone directories. It was recognised that the stakeholder list compiled for the first consultation requires constant updating and records were amended for Consultation No. 2 as appropriate.

At the launch of the consultation period, approximately 5,000 stakeholders and community leaders were issued with a letter, a project brochure, and a project poster. These stakeholders included all elected representatives, schools, third level colleges, NGOs, sports clubs, community groups, County Librarians, EIA guidance consultees, local authorities, local groups, health centres, religious leaders, etc.

As with Consultation No. 1, County Librarians in each local authority within the project study area were contacted and asked to display printed information materials in each public library throughout the study area. Approximately 2,000 brochure sets (Information Brochure 2, Open Day Series 2 Insert and Feedback Form and Consultation No. 2 Poster – see Section 1.3.3) were distributed throughout the public library networks of the 15 local authorities within the project study area in the first two weeks of the public consultation. In addition, the county library in each local authority region was requested to display copies of the Constraints Report and the Report on Consultation No. 1.

For a list of the libraries and local authorities that were sent copies of the project brochures and the Constraints Report and Report on Consultation No. 1 see Appendix I.

1.4.3 Information Centres

Every opportunity to publicise the consultation events was used by the team working in the information centres. Posters were displayed in each town advertising the open days and information centres locally and the project communications team discussed the project with staff in the post offices, newsagents, community centres and public libraries. The communications team also requested that each Local Authority display copies of the Constraints Report and the Report on Consultation No. 1.

1.4.4 Website

The EirGrid website was also used as an information channel and it was updated at the commencement of the consultation period with all of the project information. During the eight week consultation period, 2,068 unique visitors logged onto the project website to access information.

1.5 PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSULTATION

During the second round of consultation, 278³ stakeholders made submissions to the Grid Link Project team. These submissions were made by phone, email, post and at the Grid Link Information Centres, open days and briefings.

³ This figure represents the number of submissions made. It does not reflect the total number of stakeholders who engaged during the process as some stakeholders engaged to gather information without making a submission (and are not counted above) while other stakeholders made more than one submission and are counted individually.

SECTION 2 – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

2 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

EirGrid is very grateful to stakeholders who took the time to make a submission in Consultation No. 2 of the Grid Link Project. The Grid Link Project team has reviewed all feedback from stakeholders and this feedback will be used as part of the process to establish corridors.

The following section sets out a summary of the views, opinions and issues raised by stakeholders who participated in the consultation. **The opinions and views set out in the following sections are those expressed by stakeholders who participated in the consultation and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of EirGrid.**

All submissions made by stakeholders either in writing, online, at the information centres, at the open days or over the phone have been recorded, logged and reviewed by the project team and are summarised in the following sections. This full report, together with the complete submissions, will be further reviewed by the project team.

As this is a non-statutory consultation the personal details of consultees and the submissions that they have made to EirGrid have not been published.

For the purpose of this report the issues have been grouped into feedback on constraints and feedback on corridor identification (having regard to the Terms of Reference for the consultation - see Section 1.2).

2.1 FEEDBACK ON CONSTRAINTS

2.1.1 Community

The feedback received from stakeholders regarding community was varied. This included general issues that affected the community as a whole where stakeholders recommended to avoid communities that are struggling with the closure of local businesses and the possible closure of local schools.

Specific issues that related to individual families were also raised, where stakeholders expressed concern about the project being located in close proximity to their homes.

Many stakeholders raised concerns about the project being located too close to population centres and in particular mentioned the proximity to primary schools and pre-schools. Some stakeholders went on to suggest that schools, nursing homes and sheltered housing should be a primary constraint and therefore be avoided by the project.

The areas on the East-side of Cork Harbour including Saleen, Scartleigh Upper, Bawnward, Rathcoursey, East Ferry and Jamesbrook are areas of considerable and increasing population density.

The issue of community gain was raised many times during the consultation. There was concern expressed that when the existing infrastructure was constructed there was no community gain offered to the areas that are most affected. Community gain, stakeholders concluded, must therefore form an important part of this project. Some suggestions for community gain related to reduced price electricity or investment in local athletics clubs. Some stakeholders were very interested in the processes that would be used to determine and distribute community gain stating that it should be equitable.

Another issue that arose in relation to communities was the potential devaluation of lands and houses. Concern was raised by those stakeholders in the vicinity of existing infrastructure that devaluation has already occurred.

Some individuals noted that their homes are not mapped in the constraints mapping and provided co-ordinates with the expectation that the maps will be up dated prior to the next consultation.

2.1.2 Communications

There was mixed feedback in relation to the advertising for the project with some stakeholders advising that they heard the event on local radio or in the local paper, while others advised that they found out through word of mouth and could have missed the opportunity to participate in the consultation.

One stakeholder felt that there is a high level of concern regarding power lines due to misinformation from third parties. The stakeholder felt that EirGrid should do everything in their power to rectify the situation.

Other stakeholders felt that EirGrid needs to consider how the information for phase three of the project will be presented to communities to ensure everyone potentially affected by the project has an opportunity to participate in the consultation. Community workshops were suggested to achieve this.

It was also suggested that there should be open days in North Tipperary as it is still a separate local authority and part of the study area.

Another suggestion related to the use of parish bulletins to advise of the consultation, referring the team to the diocesan website for all necessary information.

The legitimacy of the consultation process was questioned by some stakeholders. Stakeholders advised that in their view a similar process undertaken for the N8, resulted in the most constrained corridor rather than the least constrained being selected. Stakeholders requested that the information on how corridors are identified and selected needs to be transparent.

While most consultees welcomed the opportunity to be informed and involved in the project at this point, some felt that as there is no line yet on the map the consultation was a waste of time.

Stakeholders recommended that as soon as EirGrid are aware of their findings that they publish them straight away.

Stakeholders were also concerned that going from corridor options to the preferred corridor with a line was too big a step and it was also recommended that EirGrid should talk to local authorities in advance of publishing any corridor options.

2.1.3 Agricultural

There were a range of issues raised in relation to agriculture. It was noted with concern that there was a lack of a reference to agriculture in the constraints report. Stakeholders raised the impact on prime agricultural lands as a key concern to landowners and should be taken into account.

Some stakeholders provided feedback on the positioning of towers. There was a concern that large open fields would be a target for the project. Stakeholders suggested that placing pylons on ditches could minimise the impact on farming practices and felt that new structures should be kept along the field boundary.

Stakeholders also raised concern about whether the use of large agricultural machinery e.g. 24 m sprayers, could be operated in fields where pylons are proposed. Animal welfare under the line was also raised by stakeholders.

Stakeholders advised that some of the information on the constraint mapping was not accurate, in particular the following:

- There are 200 acres of forestry north of Garranurton (Co. Waterford) which is not shown on the map.
- All of the land around Rathmichael (Co. Dublin) is classified as pasture and in reality it is not.
- The constraints map that shows airfields is incomplete.

2.1.4 Bloodstock

There was feedback in relation to the bloodstock industry. It was suggested by some stakeholders that the Grid Link Project has the potential to impact stud farms more than any other land uses in the study area.

There was concern among stakeholders about the impact the corona and other noise and disruption associated with the construction and operation of high voltage power lines could have on thoroughbred horses.

Representatives from individual stud farms made submissions that detailed the nature and extent of their commercial activities and how the Grid Link Project might impact them.

Stakeholders indicated that due to the national and regional significance of the bloodstock industry stakeholders felt that it should be given special consideration. Stakeholders suggested that certain facilities of note should be assigned primary constraint status and therefore avoided. Stakeholders indicated that due to the highly sensitive nature of thoroughbreds and unpredictable nature of corona

noise, stakeholders suggested that a buffer of 10 km be placed around such facilities to ensure there is no impact.

One submission noted that the proposed development is incompatible with the local and national interests of the thoroughbred industry and while the national interest underpinning the development was recognised, stud farms, unlike the project, are not in a position to relocate.

2.1.5 Health

Stakeholders raised concerns about the health impacts due to the presence of overhead powerlines and specifically in relation to Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF), cancer, childhood leukaemia and geo-pathic stress. Stakeholders felt that local health issues should be surveyed as part of the project development.

Concerns were raised by certain members of the public regarding studies which they say show the impact of power lines on the health of communities and it was suggested that EirGrid should avoid particular areas when developing route corridors.

Some stakeholders advised that the research on health in the EirGrid booklet which was available during Consultation No. 2 appeared very dated and it was recommended that it be revised.

It was also suggested that the cumulative effects of EMF in areas should be taken into account.

Some stakeholders in the vicinity of Great Island raised concern about the emissions from the stack for the power station.

One stakeholder queried why a phone would have a warning about proximity to skin if electromagnetic radiation was harmless. Some stakeholders suggested that health impacts in their opinion could be avoided by putting the project underground.

2.1.6 Water

It was suggested that group water schemes should be a constraint and avoided by the project. Reference was made to the Black Stairs Group Water Scheme in this regard.

There are a number of kettle-hole fens and other water features in the region of Skeheenarinky that stakeholders felt should be considered as constraints.

2.1.7 Tourism and Leisure

It was advised that tourist attractions are important for the development of the region and should be preserved. Stakeholders felt that the impact of overhead lines on tourism should be considered and the project should go underground to avoid impact.

It was advised that the following features should be considered as constraints:

- The Atlantic Corridor close to the new Dungarvan bypass in Co. Waterford;
- Planned walkways at Kilcoole Co. Wicklow;
- Planned Bord Fáilte driving routes should be taken into account;
- Golf clubs;
- Mines around Ahenny (Co. Tipperary) are now a tourist destination.

In addition, the possibility that currently inaccessible areas could become accessible to motorised vehicles via pylon construction/access roads was raised as a concern to hill walkers (particularly in Wexford).

2.1.8 Ecology

Stakeholders advised that the following features should be considered as constraints in the identification of corridors:

- Native woodlands;
- Harpers Island (Co. Cork) – there is a proposal to develop a Bird Sanctuary at this location;
- The Freshwater Pearl Mussel in the Funcheon River, which forms the boundary between Skeheenarinky (Co. Tipperary) and County Limerick;

Stakeholders also commented that the conservation of uplands in both Wexford and Carlow are not fully considered in the County Development Plans and need to be taken into account by the project team in mapping constraints.

It was advised that the impact on birds need to be looked at carefully as it will not be possible for the project to avoid birds and their flight path. It was also advised that a total of 74 species of wild birds regularly breed in South Tipperary.

It was recommended that EirGrid also search datasets for rare and protected flora and fauna which may occur outside of the designated sites and sites considered under Article 10 of the Habitats Directive as these may provide extra constraints. It was advised that such datasets can be obtained

from the relevant Local Authorities as well as the websites of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht and of the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Table 8.6a of the Constraints Report should therefore be amended accordingly.

2.1.9 Existing Infrastructure

It was felt that consideration should be given to communities which underwent major disruption during the construction of the N8. Some stakeholders felt that communities that have already been impacted by national infrastructure should be avoided.

The residents of the East-side of Cork Harbour are already impacted by a 110kV power line running close to their homes and through and across the scenic East Ferry Channel.

It was also recommended that consideration be given to the following:

- The Dungarvan bypass (Co. Waterford);
- Gas infrastructure, particularly in Great Island (Co. Wexford);
- Land that is being sterilised for the Clonmel (Co. Tipperary) outer relief road;
- There is a proposal to extract water from the Suir for a reservoir in Charlestown (Co. Tipperary);
- Private airfield at Cashel Road (Co. Tipperary) near Monroe and Ballydoyle;
- Potential to reopen the ferry to Cobh (Co. Cork);
- Kilrush Airfield, south of Kilcullen (County Kildare).

2.1.10 Terrain

Stakeholders provided feedback on the terrain within the study area. The following constraints were provided by stakeholders for consideration:

- Boggy area either side of the N8 in the Skeheenarinky area at Black Road near Sheer Rivers;
- Area between Ballybranagan and Ballycroneen – stakeholders feel this area is susceptible to coastal erosion and would not be suitable for the infrastructure proposed;
- Skeheenarinky and surrounding areas are located at the foothills of the Galtee Mountains. Such high ground (Galtee Mor is the 14th highest mountain in Ireland) should be deemed unsuitable for the construction of pylons;
- During the upgrading of the N8 at Skeheenarinky the road collapsed into a limestone cave structure. Constructing pylons in this area could lead to similar problems which could ultimately interfere with the water supplies in the area;

- It was suggested that high land could be used for the routing of power lines rather than low, agricultural land.

2.1.11 Cultural Heritage

Comments were made regarding the Passage Tomb in Knockroe Co. Kilkenny – A recent OPW plan for the site's conservation states that *'Although the land uses in the immediate vicinity of the monument are unlikely to change radically in the foreseeable future there is a potential for developments remote from the site to affect the preservation of its significance in an adverse manner. Developments that would interfere with the visual connection with Baunfree and Sliabh na mBan fall into this category.'* It was felt that high voltage power lines should also be considered in this context.

It was advised that there are a number of high crosses in the area, with sites in Ahenny (Co. Tipperary), Kilkieran (Co. Kilkenny) and Killamery (Co. Kilkenny) noted. These are managed by the OPW which published a conservation plan for them in August 2012. In the plan it is stated that *'landscape is a vital element in the siting of these monuments and it should receive full protection from insensitively sited farm buildings or from large scale developments such as wind farms and forestry.'* It was felt that high voltage power lines should also be considered in this context.

It was also advised that the village of Tullahought (Co. Kilkenny), with its viewing tower, wildlife reserve and loop walk (which encompasses the Kilmacolier passage tomb situated in the Townsland of Baunfree) provides spectacular views of the unspoilt countryside.

The following were also listed as constraints that stakeholders felt should be considered in the corridor identification process:

- Ashton Grove at Ballingohig (Co. Cork) - 10 acres of gardens and parklands and 40 acres of woodland. House and gardens open to the public for 60 days a year. Pylons within the property would be to its detriment;
- There is a Fulacht Fia, famous locally, South of Knockraha (Co. Cork). It is an old cooling spot on the river near the N78 at Carrigtowhill Road;
- Co-ordinates were supplied for unmapped heritage sites (including architectural heritage areas and 40 warehouses for long term storage of whiskey) a Norman town and standing stone;
- Kilmacurragh House and gardens located east of Rathdrum (Co. Wicklow) does not appear to be listed in the constraints report;
- Kilkea Castle (Co. Kildare) is the oldest continuously inhabited castle in Ireland;
- Kilkea Upper – where the explorer Ernest Shackleton was born at Kilkea House;
- Megalithic Tomb – Kilmacoliver Hill (Co. Kilkenny has not yet been excavated and is not marked on the constraint maps;

- The school located at Skeheenarinky (Co. Tipperary) is one of the oldest functioning schools in Ireland with the building dating back to 1858;
- The Mitchelstown Caves (Co. Tipperary) – one of Europe’s largest show caves with a history dating back to 1601 (where the Earl of Desmond took refuge);
- The location of the Rock of Cashel (Co. Tipperary);
- The JFK arboretum (Co. Wexford);
- Thatched cottages;
- Cleary’s Castle on Great Island;

It was recommended that the team contact the JFK Heritage Committee for more information.

2.1.12 Operational Issues

Stakeholders raised concerns about the operation and construction of the project.

It was advised that the line should be placed underground as it was felt that this was a safer option for animals and humans. Stakeholders noted that overhead lines fail in extreme weather and a safety concern was raised in relation to falling lines.

Stakeholders felt that there should be regular monitoring of EMF and raised concerns about the health effects to those working underneath the line.

A number of stakeholders raised concerns about traffic during construction and operation.

Stakeholders also advised that they had previous dealings with utility companies in the past and were not satisfied with the way works had been carried out.

2.1.13 Noise

The issue of noise was raised by stakeholders. A number of issues (similar to those raised during Consultation No. 1) were raised regarding noise from substations. Some stakeholders believe that the noise barriers at Knockraha have not been completed properly and that has increased the impact of the substation on the local area. Feedback was also provided on the recent noise surveys at Knockraha. It is believed that the survey was undertaken in conditions that favoured the station operators (i.e. the station was not fully operational and the weather was dry). It is felt that this issue is not taken seriously with one family stating that they received advice from one of the noise surveyors to leave ear plugs in or the radio on all night.

In addition, the increase of noise from high voltage during wet weather was raised, with one stakeholder commenting that the people living in the vicinity of existing high voltage infrastructure had advanced warning of a change in the weather as the noise increased with humidity.

Particular concerns about the impact of noise on thoroughbred horses were also raised, please see section 3.1.4.

2.1.14 Substations

Stakeholders also noted that a key issue with the existing station in Knockraha is its incremental growth. It has increased over the years and the impact of what is there is substantial. Stakeholders advised that the infrastructure in Knockraha is already too large in size for a small village and therefore should not be increased. It was advised that any new transformer should be away from the village with Mockbaun being suggested as a potential site for the new substation – it is north of Knockraha in forestry and would have less of an impact on the local community.

The local community at Knockraha felt that many of the issues raised during Consultation No. 1 in relation to noise, traffic, creosote poles stored on the site, etc., had not been dealt with.

At Great Island one stakeholder would like to see the new lines routed into the station from another direction i.e. taking a southerly route to Great Island.

2.1.15 Landscape and Visual

The visual impact of the project was raised by many stakeholders. The quality of the landscape contributes to the economic potential of an area for tourists, the wellbeing of the population and the cultural heritage of an area. Stakeholders felt that the Grid Link Project could impact on all of these features.

It was advised that there is considerable traffic on the M8 every day and the visual impact of 44 m pylons against the backdrop of the Galtee Mountains would seriously hamper this outstanding landscape.

Other scenic areas of note in the study area listed by stakeholders as being sensitive include:

- East Ferry (Co. Cork);
- The area between Ballybranagan and Ballycraheen (Co. Cork);
- Laragh and Glendalough (Co. Wicklow);
- Views of and from the canals;
- Visual amenity of the area around the Blackstairs Mountains (Co. Carlow);

- The area around Skeheenarinky and Kilbehenny (Co. Cork);
- The coastline.

It was advised that existing towers should be used as this would have the least impact and some stakeholders noted that tower design should be selected to reduce visual impacts. In particular, it was noted that towers should be anything other than grey and that alternative tower designs should form part of our considerations, with stakeholders referring to the recent pylon design competition in the UK as an example.

2.1.16 Renewable Energy

Some stakeholders were concerned that the Grid Link Project may bring wind farms into their area, developments which are not welcomed by all local communities. There were a lot of queries raised about potential wind farm developments throughout the study area.

Concerns were raised by stakeholders about the efficiency of wind power in the context of it being one of the key drivers for the Grid Link Project. One stakeholder noted their concern in relation to the need for spinning reserve [generators that can be connected to the system at very short notice] from thermal generation to back up wind generation and that wind is the most expensive form of energy production. One stakeholder suggested the use of nuclear power as an alternative.

There was a concern about the following statement in the project brochure - *The Grid Link Project will facilitate the integration of renewable energy onto the transmission system and reduce our reliance on imported fossil fuels.*

In particular, stakeholders were concerned that in their view the upgrade to the grid was more about exporting electricity rather than importing cheap electricity, which in their view has been advised to date, and that this development would allow many hundreds of windfarms in the future access to the new grid and to the UK and Europe.

It was felt that the local communities will be impacted by windfarms and the associated infrastructure while the main beneficiaries will be the shareholders and people in other countries.

2.1.17 Mapping

It was commented that mapping should be consistent, e.g. Thurles is not shown on map 17.

One stakeholder advised that the land on either side of the local road L6061 is mixed agricultural use (pasture grazing and arable) which may not currently be recorded accurately in the maps.

The co-ordinates of many individual constraints and or private properties were submitted to the project team for inclusion on the next maps issued by the project team.

2.2 FEEDBACK ON CORRIDOR IDENTIFICATION

There was a lot of feedback in relation to the corridor identification process.

Some stakeholders suggested the project should be routed along existing infrastructure corridors, for example motorways or rail infrastructure. While other stakeholders suggested that existing transmission infrastructure should be utilised. This included using the routes of the existing 220kV lines – with EirGrid determining the technical separation distance. It was suggested that these were well planned and offer the optimum solution to avoid constraints.

Other considerations in the identification of corridors suggested by stakeholders are as follows:

- Should avoid areas already overburdened – particularly areas with pylons and motorways already in the area. Many landowners who already had transmission lines on their lands felt they were already impacted on enough with existing lines;
- Based on current mapping, the proposed route would run in a line north east from Knockraha (Co. Cork);
- Should avoid archaeological sites as a key constraint;
- Should avoid areas of visual amenity and scenic beauty as a primary constraint;
- Corridors should steer away from population centres, the coast and tourist sites;
- Straight route corridors are preferable;
- The project cannot go east of Wicklow – too many constraints;
- Corridors should avoid high amenity areas;
- Areas of natural beauty, mountains and coast lines should be avoided;
- The project should be built underground through canals and rivers;
- A straight line from Great Island (Co. Wexford) to Dunstown (Co. Kildare) would give more options for future connections than a line up the coast;
- At Great Island, the power station owns 60 acres of marsh south of the station which should be used for the route;
- Re-route existing lines over the estuary at Great Island or remove them altogether;
- Cumulative impact of existing and new infrastructure should be considered.

2.3 STRATEGIC NEED AND PLANNING

Many stakeholders acknowledged the critical need for the project in the context of:

- The importance of the project and the transmission system to supporting employment in Co. Carlow;
- Essential to the energy supply to Cork;
- Project is needed to support wind development;
- The betterment of the country's electricity system.

The strategic approach to the environmental constraints study for the Grid Link Project was also welcomed.

In relation to the planning application it was recommended that consultation on the scoping of the EIS should be carried out.

Stakeholders were also concerned that Grid25 has not been the subject of an SEA. One stakeholder felt that an SEA should be carried out to form the baseline for all individual grid projects. They also felt the Grid25 strategy should be fully integrated into the National Renewable Plan to ensure a planned approach to renewable energy/grid development as opposed to the current approach. The stakeholder also noted that all EU environmental directives must be fully complied with in the progression of the Grid Link project and in the selection of the preferred route corridor.

3 NEXT STEPS

The Stage One Report will be issued for comment as part of the Grid Link Project's Consultation No. 3. The focus of Consultation No. 3 will be the publication of a series of 1 km wide corridors identified by the project team and feedback will be sought from stakeholders and communities on the information presented.

Through this extensive engagement, it is EirGrid's intention that all interested parties will be aware of the Grid Link Project and that the opportunity to participate in Consultation No. 3 will be made available across the study area.

About EirGrid

EirGrid, a state-owned company, is the national operator of the electricity grid.

The national grid is an interconnected network of high voltage power lines and cables, comparable to the motorways, dual carriage ways and main roads of the national road network. It is operated at three voltage levels, 400kV, 220kV and 110kV, and is approximately 6,400 km in overall length.

The grid is the backbone of Ireland's power system and is vital to ensuring that all customers, including industrial, commercial and residential, from both rural and urban areas, have a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient electricity supply.

Contact Details

EirGrid is committed to ensuring that all members of the public are fully aware of the Grid Link Project and we encourage you to participate in public consultation. If you would like to discuss the project or to meet with a member of the project team, please visit our website for regular updates.

Write: The Grid Link Project Manager, EirGrid, PO Box 12213, Glenageary, Co. Dublin, Ireland

Telephone: Lo-call 1890 422 122

Email: gridlink@eirgrid.com

See: www.eirgridprojects.com/projects/gridlink

Follow: @EirGrid

Visit: The Grid Link Project Information Centres:

Midleton, County Cork	No.5 Market Green Shopping Centre, Midleton, Co. Cork	Every Monday from 12 noon to 6pm
Kilcullen, County Kildare	48 Market Square, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare	Every Monday from 12 noon to 6pm
Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary	Carrick Community Business Centre at the Nano Nagle Centre, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary	Every Tuesday from 12 noon to 6pm
New Ross, County Wexford	The Coach House, Marsh Lane, New Ross, Co. Wexford	Every Wednesday from 12 noon to 6pm
Carlow, County Carlow	Enterprise House, O'Brien Road, Carlow, Co. Carlow	Every Thursday from 12 noon to 6pm

Note: Project Information Centres are closed on Bank Holidays

What is Grid25?

Grid25 is a major initiative to put in place a safe, secure and affordable electricity supply throughout Ireland, supporting economic growth and utilising our renewable energy resource to its maximum potential.

Development of the grid is essential to provide a platform for renewed economic growth and regional development, and is vital if we are to effectively tap into our abundant renewable energy resources.

Grid25 will involve upgrading the high voltage system and an overall investment of approximately €3.2 billion in the period up to 2025. This new infrastructure is every bit as essential to the future growth of the country as any investment in road, rail and broadband.

The Grid Link Project is a major part of the Grid25 initiative.

GRID25
DELIVERING IRELAND'S ELECTRICITY FUTURE

www.eirgridprojects.com

