



North-South 400kV Interconnection Development



Community Update

July 2014



Part Funded by the EU-TEN-E Initiative

GRID25
DELIVERING IRELAND'S ELECTRICITY FUTURE

Update on recent developments and next steps for the project



Overview

EirGrid and System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI) are jointly planning a major cross-border electricity transmission development. EirGrid is preparing a planning application for An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for the portion of the overall development within Ireland, which runs from a substation at Woodland, Meath to the border at Lemgare, Monaghan. The planning of that portion of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland was originally undertaken by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE). The NIE planning function has since been transferred to SONI.

Project Drivers

Improve competition

This project will improve the efficiency of the all-island electricity market.

Ensure a secure supply of electricity

This project will enhance the security of the electricity supply throughout the island of Ireland which is essential for economic growth, the creation of jobs and improving the standard of living and quality of life for all.

Help Ireland meet its 40% renewable electricity target

This project will allow more renewable energy to be connected to the network, reducing our production of greenhouse gasses and our reliance on imported fossil fuels.

Project Update

An Bord Pleanála (ABP)

In August 2013, EirGrid requested ABP to provide a scoping opinion on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the development. ABP consulted with various parties, including the local and prescribed authorities, as well as statutory agencies in Northern Ireland, before providing its scoping opinion to EirGrid on 11th December 2013 - see <http://www.pleanala.ie/casenum/V50002.htm>

Following meetings between EirGrid and ABP to determine whether the project is or is not strategic development, ABP published its decision on the 6th February 2014, finding that:

- the proposed development constitutes strategic infrastructure development,

- an EIS is required to accompany the application, and
- significant effects are likely on the environment in a trans-boundary state (Northern Ireland).

Project of Common Interest

In October 2013, the European Commission designated the overall cross-border development as a Project of Common Interest (PCI). The project is now subject to a new EU regulation that is designed, among other things, to facilitate a faster and more efficient permit granting process. ABP has been designated as the competent authority for managing the PCI process in Ireland and will draw up a schedule for the permit granting process in accordance with the regulation. The pre-application procedure associated with the PCI process commenced on July 2nd 2014 and EirGrid will in due course submit an application for planning approval to ABP.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

EirGrid is now preparing an EIS. This involves a large number of specialists evaluating how the proposed development would interact with the human and natural environment, including any issues of a cross-border nature. As part of this process, potential impacts across a wide range of environmental areas are identified.

The evaluation requires that in the case of each of the identified areas, the baseline conditions be recorded, potential impacts assessed and, where possible, mitigated against using best international practice. For example, the routing of any infrastructure is guided by the principle of mitigation by avoidance. The EIS is being prepared in accordance with the scoping opinion that was provided by ABP. It will also be informed by the feedback received during the public consultation of July to September 2013.

Independent Expert Panel

In January 2014 the Government appointed an Independent Expert Panel to review EirGrid's evaluation of underground routes for the Grid West and Grid Link projects. In addition, the panel was asked to provide an opinion on "the compatibility of the methodologies to be employed on the Grid Link and Grid West projects with what has already been done on the North South Transmission Line project." In July 2014 the panel provided its opinion which is that the work completed to date on the North-South 400kV Interconnection Development is compatible with the methodologies now being employed on the Grid West and Grid Link projects.



EirGrid's Project Development & Consultation Roadmap

The North-South 400kV Interconnection Development is currently in Stage Four: Prepare Planning Application phase of the EirGrid roadmap.

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<p>STAGE 1</p> <p>Information Gathering</p> <p>Identify Project Study Area</p> <p>Identify environmental & other constraints</p> <p>Identify feasible options (corridor/sites)</p> <p>Publication of Stage 1 Report</p> <p>Pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála</p> 	<p>STAGE 2</p> <p>Options</p> <p>Consideration of all feedback from Stage 1</p> <p>Identification of EirGrid's emerging preferred option (route corridor/site)</p> <p>Identification of indicative line within corridor or site boundary</p> <p>Identify and meet landowners of indicative line/site; initial survey</p> <p>Publication of Stage 2 Report</p> <p>Pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála</p> 	<p>STAGE 3</p> <p>Confirm Design</p> <p>Consideration of all feedback from Stage 2</p> <p>Conduct environmental studies and surveys</p> <p>Confirmation of design of line/site proposal including construction methodology</p> <p>Ongoing engagement with landowners on preferred line route or site</p> <p>Pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála</p> 	<p>STAGE 4</p> <p>Prepare Planning Application</p> <p>Complete reports and prepare planning application</p> <p>Preparation of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Report as required</p> <p>Conclusion of Pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála</p> <p>Submit application to An Bord Pleanála</p> 	<p>STAGE 5</p> <p>Wayleaving and Construction</p> <p>Preparation of construction plans</p> <p>Serve wayleave notice to landowners and agree access for construction</p> <p>Commence construction</p> 
<p>Public</p> <p>Public and stakeholder consultation on study area and constraints</p> <p>Public and stakeholder consultation on findings of Stage 1 Report</p>	<p>Public</p> <p>Public and stakeholder consultation on findings of Stage 2 Report</p>	<p>Public</p> <p>Ongoing public information</p>	<p>Public</p> <p>Ongoing public information</p> <p>Once application submitted, public can make submissions to An Bord Pleanála including at an oral hearing, if held</p>	<p>Public</p> <p>Ongoing public information</p> <p>Evaluation of Public Consultation process</p>

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Grid25 – Overview of the National Grid Development Strategy

Grid25 is EirGrid's strategy to develop Ireland's electricity transmission system. The strategy aims to support economic growth and job creation.

It facilitates a reliable supply of electricity for all consumers, providing the infrastructure to enable Ireland to realise its renewable potential and achieve the challenging target of delivering 40% of electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020.

The Government policy statement on the *Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure 2012* specifically endorses and supports the Grid25 development strategy. It reaffirms that Grid25 is Government policy and in the national interest.

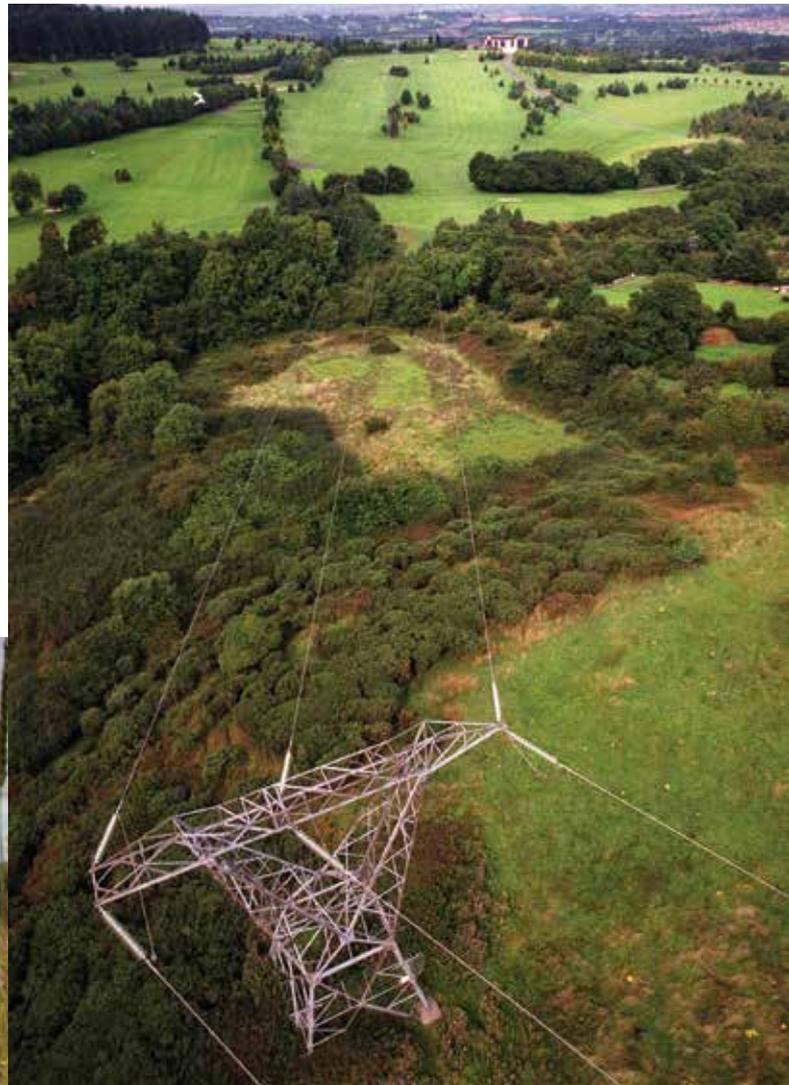
The Development

The proposed interconnector is a 400kV overhead line linking a substation in Woodland, County Meath with a planned substation in Turleenan, County Tyrone. Given its location across two jurisdictions, the proposed interconnector consists of two related and complementary developments:

- 1) The SONI proposal for that portion of the project located in Northern Ireland
- 2) A development being proposed by EirGrid for that portion of the project located in Ireland.

In Ireland the development comprises

- A new single-circuit 400kV overhead transmission line in Monaghan, Cavan and Meath
- A new 400kV circuit along the unused northern side of the existing Oldstreet to Woodland 400kV double circuit line
- Associated works in and adjacent to the Woodland substation in Meath
- An associated temporary construction material storage yard in County Monaghan
- Associated permanent and temporary construction and excavation works



Alternative Routes Considered

In December 2013 EirGrid published its final line route for the project that will form the basis of a planning application that will be submitted to ABP. The final route took account of requests from stakeholders - mostly landowners - for localised changes to the line design. These were evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in the Preferred Project Solution Report, published in July 2013, and many were accommodated.

This was the final instalment in a process dating back to 2007, when EirGrid first published a number of route corridor options. Two years later, in April 2009, following a review of all project documentation, including consultants' studies, reports, and consultation feedback, EirGrid nominated one preferred route corridor for further study.

The preferred route corridor struck the best balance between the competing priorities of community concerns, environmental issues and the technical aspects of the project. The indicative line route in the preferred route corridor was then taken forward to the next phase of project development, involving discussions with landowners, further studies and stakeholder engagement.

Following the withdrawal of an earlier planning application in 2010, EirGrid commenced a comprehensive review of the project. The preliminary findings of the review were published in May 2011 in a Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report. The report included a review of key project documentation, including consultants' studies, reports and feedback from earlier public consultation - including submissions made to ABP. It identified an indicative project solution, which substantially followed the route which formed the basis of the original application.

Underground Options

Since the project commenced numerous studies have been undertaken regarding options for overhead lines and underground cables, including an International Expert Commission, appointed by the Government.

- Ecofys Study (2008)
- TEPCO Technical Study (2009)
- PB Power Report (2009)
- TransGrid Study (2009)
- International Expert Commission Report (2012)
- PB Power Technology and Costs Update Report (2013)

In July 2014, a Government-appointed Independent Expert Panel provided its opinion on whether EirGrid had adequately examined an underground option for the interconnector. The panel compared the work to date on the project with its recently formulated terms of reference for EirGrid's Grid West and Grid Link projects. It found that, in all material respects, the studies and work undertaken on the interconnector project is compatible with the methodologies now being employed on the Grid West and Grid Link projects.



About EirGrid

EirGrid is a state-owned company and 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 carriageways and main roads of the national road network. It is operated at three voltage levels; 400kV, 220kV and 110kV and is approximately 6,400km in overall length. It is the backbone of Ireland's power system and is vital to ensuring that all customers; industrial, commercial and residential from both rural and urban areas have a safe, secure, reliable, affordable and efficient electricity supply. EirGrid and SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) are jointly proposing this 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.

EirGrid also owns SONI Limited (SONI), the System Operator of Northern Ireland. SONI is the applicant for planning approval for that part of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland. The Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) is the market operator of the all-island wholesale electricity trading system. SEMO is a joint venture between EirGrid and SONI. EirGrid operates and develops the national electricity grid power system, providing services to all users of the electricity transmission system. This includes all generators, suppliers, and high voltage customers.

Contact Details

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
(9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)

Email: northsouth@eirgrid.com

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

Make an appointment to visit our information centres:

Navan: 10a Kennedy House, Kennedy Road, Navan, Co. Meath

Carrickmacross: Carrickmacross Workhouse, Shercock Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan

Kingscourt: Dun a Ri House Hotel, Station Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan

Information on the PCI Process

An Bord Pleanála, the competent authority for managing the PCI process in Ireland, has published a Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures which can be viewed at <http://www.pleanala.ie/publications/index.htm>. The EU Commission PCI website can be accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/pci/pci_en.htm.

For information on the Regional Group Meetings please go to <https://circabc.europa.eu>. Then select (in sequence) Browse Categories, Energy, 13 Regional Group Meetings and Library.



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Grid25 is EirGrid's ongoing development strategy to deliver a sustainable, competitive and secure electricity supply to homes, business and industries. Grid25 will also help us meet our target of 40% of our energy supply coming from sustainable Irish sources.