



# Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project

Spring 2022 Update



Delivering a cleaner energy future

# Who are EirGrid – and what do we do?

EirGrid is responsible for a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity – now and in the future.

We develop, manage and operate the electricity transmission grid. This grid brings power from where it is generated to where it is needed throughout Ireland. We use the grid to supply power to industry and businesses that use large amounts of electricity. The grid also powers the distribution network and supplies the electricity you use every day in your homes, businesses, schools, hospitals and farms.

## What is ESB Networks role in this project?

ESB Networks is responsible for the detailed design and construction of the project. They fund and build the infrastructure and maintain it to the specification and standard set out by EirGrid.

## About this update

This update is for you as stakeholders, communities, landowners and members of the public interested in keeping up to date about the Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project construction progress and the Community Benefit Fund.

## What is the Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project?

EirGrid is reinforcing and strengthening the network in the general Laois-Kilkenny region. We are doing this by upgrading the existing electricity transmission network, as well as building new infrastructure.

The reinforcement will consist of the following items:

- A new 400/110 kV substation situated to the south east of Portlaoise, at Coolnabacky.
- Two existing overhead lines will connect to this new substation. These are the 400 kV Moneypoint-Dunstown line and the 110 kV Athy-Portlaoise line. The 400 kV line will require an overhead line connection between the existing line and the new Coolnabacky substation.
- A new 110/38 kV substation. This will be located next to the existing 38 kV electricity substation at Ballyragget, County Kilkenny. (See Picture 1 on page 4)
- A new 110 kV line between these two new stations.
- An upgrade to the existing Ballyragget-Kilkenny overhead line to a 110 kV standard.
- A modification to the existing Athy-Portlaoise 110 kV line and works in the Kilkenny station.



## Why the project is needed

The Laois-Kilkenny Reinforcement Project is required to address quality of supply across Laois, Carlow, Kildare and Wicklow and a security of supply issue that affects County Kilkenny.

## Map of the project area

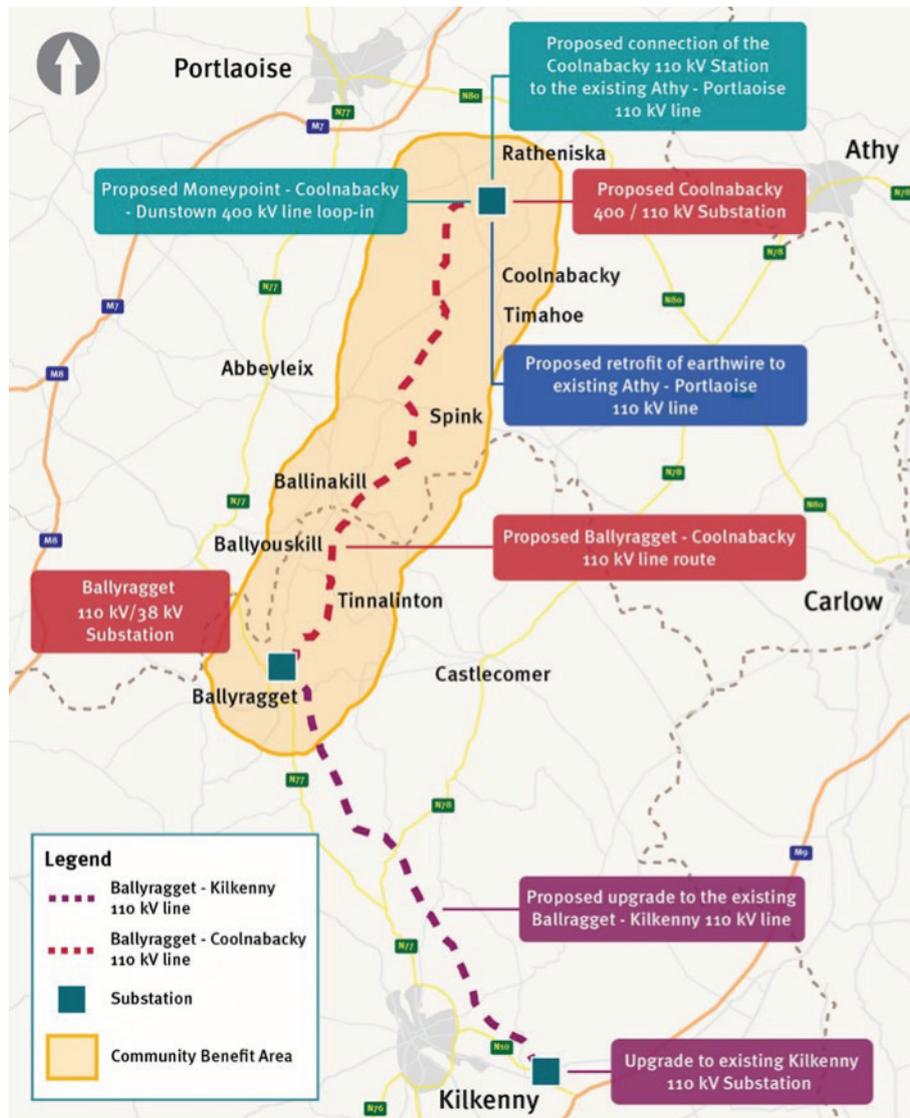


Figure 1: Map of the project area

## What is the current update?

**ESB** are managing the construction stage of the project.

**New Ballyragget Substation:** Construction works are progressing well, the main building has now been constructed and installation of electrical equipment is currently taking place.

**Ballyragget – Kilkenny Line Upgrade:** This is near completion.

**Kilkenny 110kV Substation:** These upgrade works are 50% complete.

**New Coolnaback Substation:** Enabling works are ongoing and will continue over the coming months. The diversion of the Athy-Portlaoise 110kV line is completed. Foundation works associated with the new masts in Coolnaback are underway. Access road construction and substation construction works will commence in the second and third quarter of 2022.

**New Ballyragget-Coolnaback 110 kV Overhead Line:** Landowner engagement will commence on the new Overhead Line (OHL) in the first quarter of 2022.



Picture 1: Ballyragget 110kV Substation



Picture 2: An internal view of the substation

## Update on the Community Forum:

Since 2021 EirGrid has been establishing Community Forums when new infrastructure is being developed in an area. These voluntary Community Forums are comprised of local residents, community representatives and political representatives to consider proposals for the community benefit funding and to develop local area plans.

An information evening about the Laois Kilkenny Community Forum was held on April 28th, 2021 and expressions of interest were sought for membership to the forum. The Community Forum held its first meeting in June 2021 and is chaired by Irish Rural Link.

To date, the Community Forum has received project updates from the project manager and have overseen the development of a community benefit fund scoping study for the project area. The forum has provided advice and guidance on all aspects of the community fund to ensure it aligns with local needs, is open, fair and transparent.

## Update on the Community Benefit Fund:

EirGrid appointed an independent body, M-CO, to administer the fund on its behalf.

EirGrid recognises the importance of the local communities who facilitate the upgrading of the electricity transmission network and the Community Benefit Fund reflects this.

The overall Community Benefit Fund for the Laois-Kilkenny Reinforcement Project is €511,500. This fund will be released in 3 phases, which align with the development of the infrastructure:

Phase	Percentage	Fund amount	Projected timeline
1 – Construction	40%	€204,600	Closed to applications on 1st February 2022.
2 – Ballyragget-Coolnabacky line stringing	30%	€153,450	2023 (To be confirmed)
3 – Energisation	30%	€153,450	2025

These funds will provide support to local community groups, not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises that operate or service communities near the new infrastructure.

Phase 1 of the fund opened for applications on Tuesday, November 30th and closed on Tuesday, February 1st 2022. Applications for phase 1 were made through an online portal, an information evening was held, a grant writing workshop was held, and one-to-one project development support meetings were provided. Nineteen applications were received from community organisations and are currently undergoing an independent evaluation process.

## What are the next steps?

Eirgrid will re-engage with landowners along the Ballyragget – Coolnabacky 110kV line route over the coming months.

The project team will provide regular updates to the Community Forum on the project's progress.

## How can I stay informed?

We will provide detailed project information and updates at: [www.eirgrid.ie/LaoisKilkenny](http://www.eirgrid.ie/LaoisKilkenny) and on our social media pages.

If you would like to find out more information, register to receive update emails or give feedback on this project, you can email project email:

[laoskilkennyreinforcement@eirgrid.com](mailto:laoskilkennyreinforcement@eirgrid.com)

## Who can I contact?

Our Liaison Officers will continue to make themselves available as the project evolves.

You can contact our Liaison Officers:

### **Aidan Naughton**

Agricultural Liaison Officer  
086-172-0156

### **Eoghan O Sullivan**

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087- 247-7732

