

Celtic Interconnector

La liaison électrique entre la France et l'Irlande
Connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France

Community Newsletter - Celtic Interconnector

Welcome to the first issue of EirGrid's Celtic Interconnector newsletter. As works progress on this key development to join the electricity grids of Ireland and France, we want to keep you updated.

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Celtic Interconnector Project team members from EirGrid and RTE at the French converter station site in La Martyre recently

Project Overview

The Celtic Interconnector project will create an electrical interconnection between Ireland and France to allow the exchange of electricity between the two

countries. The connection will link the existing electricity substation located in Knockraha (in east Cork) to the substation in La Martyre (Finistère, France). It will contribute to a more secure and a more sustainable electricity supply by providing Ireland's only direct energy connection to an EU member state.

The project is being developed by EirGrid, the electricity transmission system operator in Ireland, and its French counterpart, RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité). It is expected to be completed in 2026.

RTE Update

Work on the French converter station named 'Ar Merzher' has commenced in La Martyre. The converter station has been named 'Ar Merzher', which is the Breton language name for La Martyre, the town where it is being built. The construction of the converter station is scheduled from July 2023 to December 2026.

The first phase of the converter station works, which will be completed in December 2023, will see the preparatory

work for the installation of the contractors' site facilities and the construction of the site buildings.



3D image of the 'Ar Merzher' converter station.

Community Benefit Fund

EirGrid launched the first phase of the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund, with an initial €960,000 available for eligible community and voluntary groups to apply for, in June 2023. The deadline for applications was the 15th of September.

This €960,000 fund represents 40 percent of the overall €2.4 million fund. There was great interest from communities in this initial phase with applications received for

a vast array of projects under the three different funding streams: community, sustainability and biodiversity.

EirGrid wants to leave a positive legacy through this project and hence, the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund has been set up. The strategy behind the €2.4 million fund was developed in collaboration with local east Cork communities, the Celtic Interconnector Community Forum and SECAD Partnership CLG, which is the grant administrator.

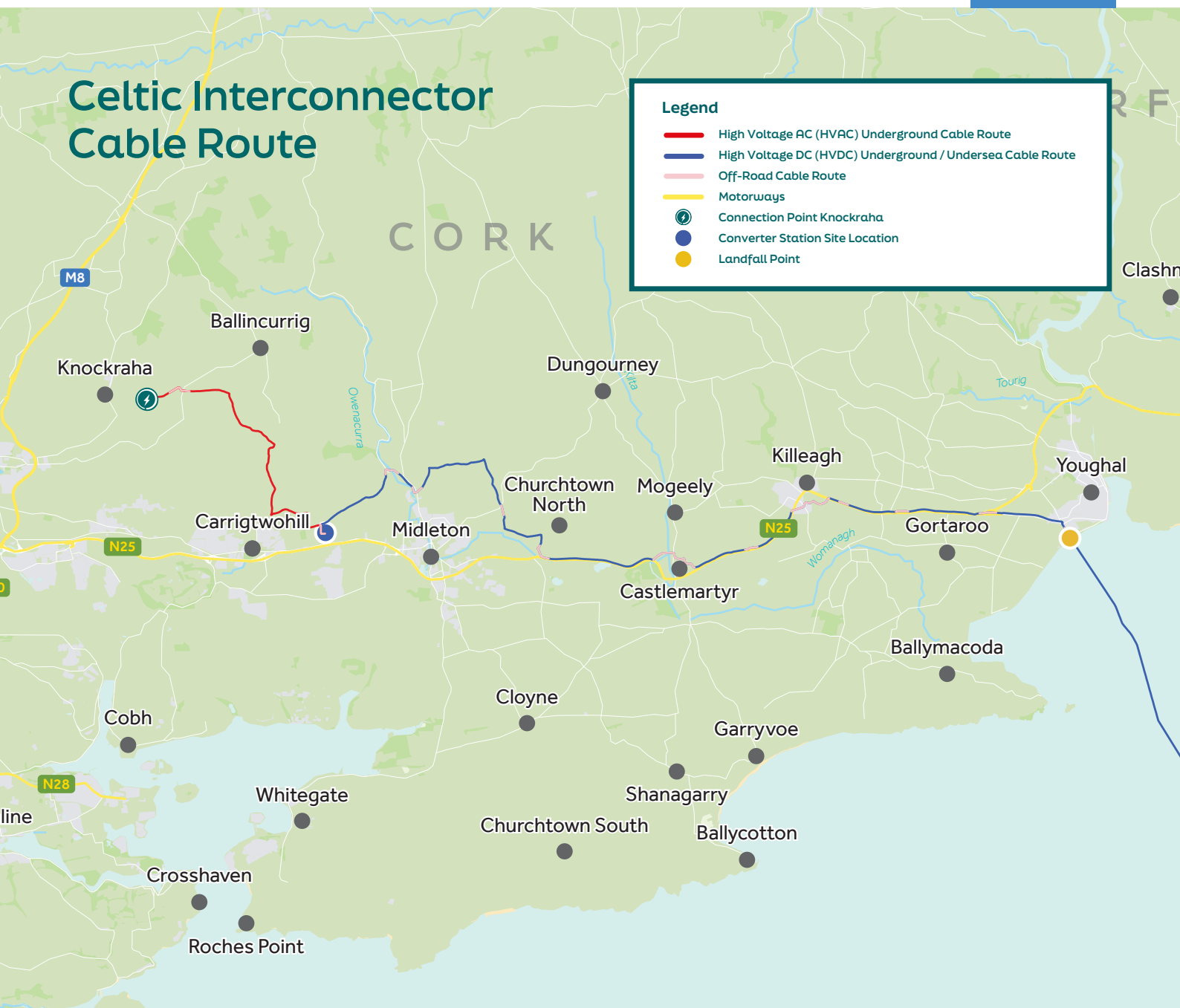
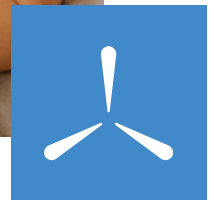


Michelle Walsh, Community Liaison Officer, Celtic Interconnector; Suzanne Kearney, Assistant CEO and Programme Manager, SECAD Partnership CLG and Sinead Dooley, Head of Public Engagement, EirGrid, launching the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund.



The fund in detail:

- On entering construction phase, 40%, or Phase 1 of the fund was released, with €960,000 available. Midway through cabling 30% of funding will be released and following that, the final 30% will be issued after energisation, expected in 2026.
- The community benefit fund is open to community groups, not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises who can demonstrate the benefits to communities from the services, programmes or facilities they provide in the project area.



Benefits



allow 700 MW (megawatts) of electricity to move between the countries



make the supply of electricity more secure, providing Ireland's only direct energy connection to an EU member state;



help us to achieve our climate objectives;



provide the first direct telecommunications fibre optic link between Ireland and France (and continental Europe).



help to reduce the cost of electricity;

Timeline

2023



Design (Cable and Converter Station).

Manufacturing of Irish AC cable.

Preparation works for HVAC and HVDC land cables in Ireland.

Commencement of trenching and ducting works for HVAC and HVDC land cables in Ireland.

Converter station civil works commencement.

2024



Completion of trenching and ducting works for HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Commencement of installation and jointing of HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Converter station installations progress.

2025



Commencement of offshore marine cable installation.

Completion of installation and jointing of HVAC and HVDC land cables.

2026



Completion of offshore marine cable installation.

Submarine cable protection campaigns.

Commissioning tests.

Interconnector system tests.

Trial operation period commences.

Project Update

French cable manufacturer Nexans, which will design and install the 575-kilometre cable between the two countries, is fully established on the project and is progressing with the detailed design process for the cable installation, including procurement and programming the project works. Working with Nexans, Sorensen Civil Engineering Ltd. will deliver the civil works from the landfall site at Claycastle Beach, to the grid connection point at Knockraha Substation.

Siemens Energy will deliver the converter station at both Ballyadam in Ireland and La Martyre in France, as well as other high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission technology required for the project at the network connection point in Knockraha, Ireland.

Converter stations are needed in each country to change the electricity transported over long distances using Direct Current (DC), to the network compatible Alternating Current (AC), which is required for the French and the Irish national networks. In the same way, the converter station will convert from AC to DC when electricity will be exported from either country and sent across the 500 km of undersea cable.

The two engineering, procurement, and construction contractors, Nexans and Siemens, are actively progressing the detailed design and ordering equipment for the Celtic Interconnector since the contracts were signed last November and some manufacturing works have now commenced.

EirGrid and its partner, Réseau de Transport d'Électricité (RTE) are working with both contractors to ensure designs meet project requirements.

What's Happening Now Autumn 2023

The project contractors have established site offices at Ballyadam, the site location for the converter station.

Detailed design and planning works continue, with Nexans' subcontractor, Sorensen Civil Engineering Ltd preparing to commence main construction works in the autumn.


In preparation for these works, a subcontractor liaison officer has been appointed. Elaine Cronin of Sorensen Civil Engineering Ltd will engage with stakeholders ahead of main construction works commencing.


Meanwhile, in the marine, near shore marine surveys have been completed for 2023, with offshore marine surveys continuing.

We look forward to updating you and answering your questions over the coming months as the project progresses.

With works progressing steadily, we look forward to sharing information on what can be expected, including timelines for completion in each area and how to stay up to date with progress as it is confirmed.

Cable works information days are scheduled for:

 **Monday, October 23rd,**
3pm - 8pm at Knockraha
Community Hall, and

 **Wednesday, October 25th,**
1pm - 7pm at Carrigtwohill
Community Centre

At these information events you can meet with EirGrid and our contractor's liaison officer, learn how we will update you throughout the project and be informed about the cable works due to commence shortly.

The Project in Numbers

500 – the total in kilometres of undersea cabling required for the project.

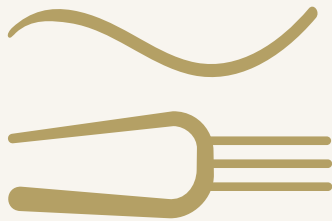
450,000 – the number of homes that could be powered by the Celtic Interconnector.

2,400,000 – the amount in euro available to communities and not for profit organisations through the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund.

700 MW



capacity 450,000 homes



Did You Know?

On completion, the Celtic Interconnector will be one of the world's longest interconnectors to be built using XLPE (cross linked polyethylene) submarine cable technology.

How to Contact Us

At EirGrid, we are committed to engaging with communities during all phases of project development. As we progress construction on the Celtic Interconnector Project, we will continue to provide regular updates on construction, impacts and mitigation efforts.

Our Community Liaison Officer, Michelle Walsh can be contacted on 085 870 4999 or email: celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com or info@eirgrid.com



Michelle Walsh
Community Liaison Officer
085 870 4999



Elaine Cronin
Sorensen Liaison Officer
086 032 6171



Scan here to stay up to date on project progress or visit www.eirgrid.ie/celticinterconnector

Text Update

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