



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Statutory Particulars for Ireland Foreshore Licence Application

June 2021



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Connecting Europe Facility



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



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Report for

EirGrid plc and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité

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**An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht**
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

For Office Use

Ref. No. _____

Application date: _____

Date of receipt. _____

Date Validated: _____

**APPLICATION FOR A LEASE/LICENCE/CONSENT UNDER THE FORESHORE ACT
1933 (AS AMENDED)**

- Applications for Offshore renewable energy (ORE) projects should use an ORE specific form.
- Please complete the form electronically. Type details in the boxes provided, space will expand as you type.
- The enclosures checklist should also be completed
- Tá an leagan Gaeilge den fhoirm seo ar fáil ar iarratas.

**BEFORE FILLING OUT THIS FORM PLEASE READ THE DECLARATION AND
CONSENT ON PAGE 9:**

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A NEW APPLICATION.**

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Applicant Name and Address:

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Company/Organisation: EirGrid plc
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Eircode: D04 Y2Y4

Applicant Contact Details:

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E-mail address: celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com

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Person/Agent acting on behalf of the Applicant:
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Eircode: H91R9YR
Phone No: +353 (0)91 481210
E-mail address: galway@woodplc.com

Applicant's Legal Advisor:

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Eircode: D04 TR29
Phone No: + 353 1 6145000
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Part 1: Proposal Details (Attach additional documents as required)

1.1	<p>Description of proposed works/activity.</p> <p>The proposed Celtic Interconnector, which is the subject of this Foreshore Licence Application, involves the pre-lay installation works, cable installation works, operation, and periodic maintenance of a submarine electricity interconnector between Ireland and France. The interconnector will include a fibre optic link to enable communication and operational control of the interconnector, with the potential for some fibres to also be used for commercial use.</p> <p>The Celtic Interconnector comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two high voltage direct current (HVDC) electricity power cables; • A smaller fibre optic link for control and communication purposes; • All associated works (and work sites) required to construct, install, test, and commission the cables; and • All associated works (and work sites) required to operate, maintain, repair, and decommission the cables, including 2 repair events over the approximately 40-year lifetime of the Project. <p>The Celtic Interconnector Project is approximately 500km long (approximately 35km in Irish Territorial Waters) and generally 500m wide between Claycastle Beach, County Cork and the 12nm limit. A small part of this width will be required for installation (approximately 10-20m) once the detailed design of the cable corridor route is finalised. It is proposed to finalise the precise position of the submarine cables within the 500m wide corridor after permits are granted, but before installation has commenced. This will allow for optimisation of the final laid submarine cables to minimise engineering and environmental challenges.</p>
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	<p>The two HVDC cables and the fibre optic link will be buried within pre-installed carbon steel / HDPE conduits beneath the beach and car park at Claycastle Beach with the HVDC cables entering the two underground concrete transition joint bay chambers, located on the landward side of the 25" Historic Mean High Water Mark. The conduits will be installed at 5m spacing between centres and will extend from the transition joint bay (located shore side of the Claycastle Beach car park) to approximately 150m into the intertidal zone. The conduit cable entry point is located within the intertidal zone, approximately 50m shoreside of Lowest Astronomical Tide.</p> <p>Consideration of the potential need to detonate unexploded ordnance (UXO) target has been included, although it is noted that previous magnetometer surveys have identified a low risk of encountering such targets.</p> <p>An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (which includes a Screening Report) have been prepared in respect of this application and accompany this application. The Celtic Interconnector project is expected to commence on-site construction in 2023 and be fully operational in 2027.</p> <p>Full project details are provided in Volume 3D2 Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall, and Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable of the Ireland Offshore EIAR.</p>
1.2	<p>Describe the nature and scale of any structure to be erected on the foreshore. Is the structure proposed to be temporary or permanent?</p> <p>The Celtic Interconnector comprises the installation of two high voltage direct current power cables and a fibre optic link under the seabed.</p> <p>Two optional construction methods for the landfall are proposed to ensure that the worst case scenario has been assessed from an environmental perspective. Option 1 results in an increased level of construction and environmental impact and Option 2 resulting in reduced environmental impact, but greater potential for disturbance of the beach area.</p> <p>Both options are assessed within the EIAR and the NIS, with Option 1 noted as being generally representative of the worst case scenario. In Option 1 a trench will be excavated across Claycastle Beach using land-based equipment (such as long arm excavators) with the aid of a temporary sheet piled cofferdam and an adjacent temporary causeway for access. The trench will be backfilled, and site reinstated to its original condition following installation. In Option 2, conduits would be installed below the carpark, extending only a short distance below the beach, thus reducing the construction effort, with no requirement for a causeway. However, it would result in a short duration exclusion zone and detours on the beach during cable installation.</p> <p>The temporary cofferdam will be required to achieve the required depth of lowering and prevent the ingress of seawater and sediments. The steel sheet-piles will be installed using a pilling rig comprising of hydraulic vibratory hammers. The piling rig will typically work from the beach outward, using the temporary causeway as an access route. The cofferdam will be approximately 130m long and formed from two lines of sheet piles installed parallel to the centreline of the conduits. With the conduits installed at 5m spacing between centres, a 14m wide cofferdam is conservatively assumed to be sufficient. (Note, for Option 2, the</p>

	<p>cofferdam is unlikely to be required, but if necessary for installation, could be up to 5m in length).</p> <p>The cofferdam will be installed from a temporary causeway constructed adjacent to the cofferdam. It is assumed that the causeway will also be enclosed by sheet piles on all shore facing sides to prevent the ingress of seawater and sediments, particularly at high tides. The causeway will be of sufficient width to allow heavy land-based equipment to manoeuvre during trench excavation and conduit installation. An 8.0m wide causeway (6,000m³) is assumed to be sufficient. The temporary causeway shall be constructed from aggregate material to provide sufficient strength to support excavating equipment.</p> <p>Land take of approximately 3,360m² is required along the beach, the car park, and the section of grass which separates the car park from the year-round holiday park. Land take of approximately 2,860m² is also required into the intertidal zone for installation of the sheet pile cofferdam and temporary causeway.</p> <p>Temporary presence of vessels, including jack-up barge, associated with preparation of the seabed, cable installation, repair, and maintenance and eventual decommissioning.</p> <p>Rock placement as a means of primary cable protection is not envisaged along the cable route in Irish Territorial Waters. However, some contingency is made for secondary rock protection that may be required where the target depth of lay is not fully achieved. The level of secondary rock protection shall be minimised as much as possible through the best endeavours of the installation contractor to achieve the required level of protection through burial. Should external cable protection be required in Irish Territorial Waters, then an allowance has been made for between 0km and 3km in the worst case scenario (or 0t to 10t). The allowance for rock protection in the Irish EEZ is between 0km and 30km in the worst case, or 0t to 80t.</p> <p>Contingency for permanent deposits associated with 2 discrete cable repair works over the lifetime of the Proposed Development, should they be required.</p> <p>A detailed project description of the Proposed Development is provided in Volume 3D2 Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall, and Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable of the appended Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).</p>
1.3	<p>Indicative timing of the works/activity: (i) Start date (ii) Duration (iii) Any other information relevant to timing.</p> <p>Surveying and testing within the foreshore area are expected to begin during 2023, as part of development of detailed design works.</p> <p>The installation sequence would be completed in the winter months, i.e. October 2024 to April 2025, to avoid the bathing season at Claycastle Beach and involves the installation of pre-installed conduits within a trench excavated across the beach. The estimated duration for these works is anticipated to be approximately 10 weeks and is detailed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilisation / Site Preparation – 1 week. • Landfall Civil Works – 4 weeks. • Conduit stringing and Installation – 3 weeks. • Backfilling and Site Reinstatement – 2 weeks.

	<p>This activity is expected to coincide with the installation of the Transition Joint Bay, which is further detailed in Volume 3C Chapter 2: Description of Onshore Development and Chapter 3: Onshore Construction Phase Activates</p> <p>The durations of the works provided above are indicative only and based on a work week Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm and Saturday from 7am to 2pm, however, this will more than likely have to co-exist with conditions of planning associated with the SID consent application. Safety requirements for the installation operations / procedures and weather condition may ultimately also dictate the final programme.</p> <p>The second phase of the installation sequence would take place in the summer months, subject to approval from the relevant authorities, i.e. April 2025 to September 2025, to coincide with favourable weather windows for offshore cable installation. The cable may be laid away from or towards the Irish shore. Schedule certainty shall be subject to progress rates from offshore cable installation if the cable is laid towards shore. There would be greater certainty should the offshore cable installation commence in Ireland and be away from shore. The estimated overall duration for phase two is anticipated to take approximately 4 weeks, detailed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilisation / Site Preparation / Winch Setup – 1 week. • Cable Pull (total) – 1 week (note that this may be undertaken in three separate work periods, totalling 1 week). • Cable Jointing Activities / Site Reinstatement – 2 weeks. <p>The durations of the works provided above are indicative only and based on a work week Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm and Saturday from 7am to 2pm. The duration of certain works could be shortened by shift-work seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Safety requirements for the installation operations / procedures and weather condition may ultimately dictate the final programme.</p> <p>The anticipated lifespan of the Celtic Interconnector is approximately 40 years.</p> <p>Full details of the project programme are provided in Volume 3D2 Chapter 1: Description of the Landfall, and Chapter 2: Description of the Offshore Cable of the appended Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).</p> <p>Timings described here are indicative, and will be confirmed post-consent by the contractor as part of the detailed design phase.</p>																
<p>1.4</p>	<p>Primary usage for proposed development (please tick)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Use</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Industrial</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Commercial</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Within Fishery Harbour Centre</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sea Fisheries</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local Authority</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community/Co Op scheme</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (specify) – Electricity interconnector</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </table>	Use		Industrial		Commercial		Within Fishery Harbour Centre		Sea Fisheries		Local Authority		Community/Co Op scheme		Other (specify) – Electricity interconnector	✓
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Local Authority																	
Community/Co Op scheme																	
Other (specify) – Electricity interconnector	✓																
<p>1.5</p>	<p>Do the proposed works provide for public use, commercial use, restricted use or strictly private use? Provide Details</p>																

	<p>The Celtic Interconnector will have key strategic importance providing significant additional interconnection between County Cork on the south coast of Ireland and the coast of Brittany in North West France (Nord-Finistère), and onwards into mainland Europe. It will provide additional transmission network capacities, reinforcing the existing electricity grids in southern Ireland and North West France and contributing to each country's strategic interconnection objectives. The development and construction of Celtic Interconnector will deliver increased security of supply, fuel diversity, greater competition, and ultimately provide significant benefits to consumers in Ireland, France, and mainland Europe. Celtic Interconnector is designated as a European Union Project of Common Interest (PCI project number PCI0003) under the provisions of European Union Regulation No. 347/2013 on guidelines for Trans-European Network for Energy (TEN-E Regulations), and a designated e-Highway 2050 project.</p>
1.6	<p>Might the proposed works restrict public use/enjoyment of the foreshore? Provide details.</p> <p>Yes. There will be restricted access to Claycastle Beach and the foreshore during the construction of the three cable conduits within the cofferdam prior to backfilling and reinstatement. Land take is required for this stage of the works, along the beach, the car park, and the section of grass which separates the car park from the year-round holiday park. The programme of works across the beach is expected to take approximately 10 weeks of activity conducted between October 2024 and April 2025.</p> <p>Full details of the project are provided in Volume 3D2, Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall, and Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable of the appended Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), with a detailed assessment of potential effects from a population, human health, and socioeconomics perspective provided in Volume 3D2, Chapter 8: Population and Human Health of the EIAR.</p> <p>In summary, it was concluded that the only potential impact of significance was disturbance to beach users during the construction phase; all other potential impacts identified were considered to be negligible and therefore not significant.</p>
1.7	<p>Has the applicant held or does the applicant hold any previous Foreshore Licences, Leases or applications over the area sought or over any other area including pending applications? (Give details including Department's file reference number(s)).</p> <p>Yes. Celtic Interconnector has the following licences for marine survey activities associated with the project: Ref: FS 006243 Foreshore Licence for Geophysical Marine Survey Works Ref: FS 006446 Foreshore Licence for Geotechnical and Environmental Marine Survey Works Ref: FS 006722 Foreshore Licence for Geophysical Marine Survey Works Ref: FS 006811 Foreshore Licence for Geotechnical and Environmental Marine Survey Works</p>
1.8	<p>Status of planning permission application: Pending/granted/not required.</p> <p>Consent type: - Planning Consent – Strategic Infrastructure Development for Proposed Development in Ireland above the High Water Mark. Consent Authority: An Bord Pleanála.</p>

	<p>Reference Number: PL04.302725</p> <p>Status of application: Application being submitted to the SID division of An Bord Pleanála concurrently.</p> <p>(Please provide copies of consents granted) No consents have been granted to date.</p>
1.9	<p>Are any other consents required for this proposal? Please detail.</p> <p><u>REPUBLIC OF IRELAND</u></p> <p>Consent type: – Authorisation to Construct an Interconnector Consent Authority: Commission for the Regulation of Utilities (CRU) Reference Number: TBC Status of application: Not yet formally submitted (however, part of PCI Draft Application File)</p> <p>Consent type: – Section 48 Consent to Lay Electricity Cables. Consent Authority: CRU Reference Number: TBC Status of application: Not yet formally submitted (however, part of PCI Draft Application File)</p> <p>Consent type: – Section 49 Consent to Lay Electricity Cables Consent Authority: CRU Reference Number: TBC Status of application: Not yet formally submitted (however, part of PCI Draft Application File)</p> <p>Consent type: – Interconnector Operator Licence Consent Authority: CRU Reference Number: TBC Status of application: Not yet submitted.</p> <p>As a PCI Project, An Bord Pleanála will issue a Comprehensive Decision for the overall Proposed Development in Ireland.</p> <p>(Please provide copies of consents granted) No consents have been granted to date.</p>
1.10	<p>Employment Implications (if any)</p> <p>Celtic Interconnector will be engaging contractors to construct the Proposed Development. It is estimated that the contractor will employ persons during construction in a range of activities, both onshore and offshore. No permanent jobs during operation are anticipated as a result of the subsea cable.</p>
1.11	<p>Capital cost of proposed works (€ - Euro) The current anticipated cost for works in Irish Territorial Waters is approximately €40M. The total project cost is expected to be approximately €1Bn + / - 10%.</p>
1.12	<p>Do the proposed works involve the draw-down of European Union or State funding?</p>

	<p>If “Yes” give details, including any time restrictions, etc. applying</p> <p>Yes, the Celtic Interconnector Project has received a c. €530.7M Grant from the Connecting Europe Facility. The eligibility period for the drawdown of this fund depends on consents including the Foreshore Licence being received within certain timeframes (preferably by early 2022). The eligibility for the grant expires in its entirety on 31 December 2025.</p>
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Part 2: Proposed Site. (Attach additional documents as required)

2.1	County: Cork
2.2	Location name and nearest townland name: Summerfield
2.3	<p>Geographic co-ordinates of the area under application in degrees minutes and seconds WGS84 for offshore developments and where the area can also be identified on the Ordnance Survey map and/or is connected to the seashore/mainland, specify Ordnance Survey map no and Irish Transverse Mercator coordinates</p> <p>Geographic co-ordinates: Please see Appendix A for table of geographic co-ordinates. Coordinates provided are in WGS 1984 Decimal Degrees (EPSG 42347) and in IRENET95 (Irish Transverse Mercator EPSG 2157).</p> <p>Admiralty chart number: 2071 Youghal (1:12,500).</p> <p>Ordnance survey map: Youghal Beach - Discovery Series Sheet No. 81 covers part of County Cork and Waterford. 4th Edition. SKU 054 081.</p>
2.4	<p>Please indicate the size of the Foreshore area (Ha²) or (M2) or (KM2)</p> <p>Please see Appendix A for table identifying length of route and size of foreshore area in m², km², and hectares.</p>
2.5	<p>If offshore please indicate distance from shore (Km):</p> <p>N/A – Celtic Interconnector marine component application area extends from 25” Historic Mean High Water Mark to 12nm limit.</p>
2.6	<p>Is any of the foreshore in the proposed site in private ownership? If yes please provide documentary evidence of same (e.g. folio)</p> <p>No, the Foreshore below 25” Historic Mean High Water Mark is deemed to be in State Ownership.</p>
2.7	Any other site details considered relevant: N/A

Part 3. Maps and Drawings, Please refer to Guidance on map and drawing requirements.

3.1	<p>Site location map attached? Please include reference no(s).</p> <p>See the following attached maps: 400584-PL-DWG-001 400584-PL-DWG-002 400584-PL-DWG-007 400584-PL-DWG-008</p>
3.2	<p>Foreshore Lease/Licence map attached? Please include reference no(s).</p> <p>Yes, please see the following attached maps: 400584-PL-DWG-009-01 400584-PL-DWG-009-02</p>
3.3	<p>Drawings of structures to be used and or layout (if required) attached? Please detail and include reference no(s).</p> <p>Yes, please see the following attached maps: 400584-SK-DWG-005 400584-PL-DWG-001 400584-PL-DWG-002 400584-PL-DWG-007 400584-PL-DWG-008</p>
3.4	<p>Admiralty Chart attached?</p> <p>Yes, please see the following attached map: 400584-PL-DWG-009-02</p>
3.5	<p>Other maps/drawings attached ?– please detail and include reference numbers</p> <p>N/A</p>

Part 4: Pre- application consultations

4.1	<p>Describe briefly any consultations undertaken with the following bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) • National Monuments Service (NMS) • Inland Fisheries Ireland • Sea Fisheries Protection Authority • Marine Institute • Marine Survey Office <p>Please also provide copies of correspondence.</p>
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Volume 8A: Planning and Consultation Report includes an account of engagement undertaken with the Foreshore Unit and other statutory and non-statutory consultees as part of the Foreshore Licence application process.

A summary of the form of engagement and the responses received from the above-named bodies is presented in **Table 3-4** of the **Planning and Consultation Report**, and outlined below:

- **National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS)** - EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. A response was received on 8 January 2021 (see **Planning and Consultation Report Volume 8A**). The issues raised within this consultation response have been incorporated as appropriate into the appended EIAR.
- **National Monuments Service (NMS)** - EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. A response was received on 8 January 2021 (see **Planning and Consultation Report Volume 8A**). The issues raised within this consultation response have been incorporated as appropriate into the appended EIAR.
- **Inland Fisheries Ireland** - EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. IFI confirmed that they would assess the details of the project at the application stage (see **Planning and Consultation Report Volume 8A**).
- **Sea Fisheries Protection Authority** - EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response has been received to date.
- **Marine Institute** - EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. A response was received on 3 February 2021 (see **Planning and Consultation Report Volume 8A**). The issues raised within this consultation response have been incorporated as appropriate into the appended EIAR.
- **Marine Survey Office** - EIAR Scoping Report email response circulated by Foreshore Unit on 22 December 2020 (see **Planning and Consultation Report Volume 8A**).

The Report sets out how EirGrid has had regard to the comments received in the development of the application, and copies of correspondence are included in the supporting appendices.

Additionally, EirGrid has carried out an extensive programme of public and landowner consultation for the onshore elements of the Celtic Interconnector project. EirGrid has prepared **Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report** (a copy of which is provided as **Appendix C** to this application) to accompany an application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála. The Report has been prepared to support the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) planning application and the Project of Common Interest (PCI) file. Both the SID planning application and the PCI file are available to all members of the public from the time that these consenting files are submitted to the relevant authorities to the time that a final decision is made in relation to the proposed development.

The **Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report** documents the extent and nature of public and landowner consultation and participation that has taken place in Ireland over the course of the project's development. The report shows that EirGrid has endeavoured to ensure the widest possible access by the public and landowners to information about the project at all stages of its pre-planning development. In this regard, it is considered that the consultation

	<p>undertaken in respect of the Celtic Interconnector fully meets the requirements of the Aarhus Convention, Codified EIA Directive, and Irish national legislation. The Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report is included as part of the Foreshore Licence application.</p>
4.2	<p>Describe briefly any consultations undertaken with other relevant authorities (e.g. Local Authority, Port/Harbour authority etc) or State Agencies.</p> <p>Wood Plc has prepared a Planning and Consultation Report for the Ireland offshore section of the Celtic Interconnector project, which is provided in Volume 8A of the appended EIAR. The Report provides a summary of the engagement and consultation carried out to support the development of the Foreshore Licence Application. This includes EirGrid's engagement with statutory and non-statutory consultees as part of the Foreshore Licence application process.</p> <p>A summary of the form of engagement and the responses received from other relevant authorities is presented in Table 3.4 of the Planning and Consultation Report. The most recent direct interaction with stakeholders included the issuing of project consultation letters in November 2020, and following-up on responses as received.</p> <p>Responses to the project consultation letters, and subsequent additional consultation, were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Taisce (National Trust for Ireland); • Commission for Regulation of Utilities; • Cork County Council (a series of meetings has also been held with Cork County Council representatives); • Department of Defence; • Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE); • Department of the Environment, Energy and Communications (DECC); • DP Energy; • Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); • Health Service Executive; • Heritage Council; • Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI); • Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG); • Marine Safety Policy Division; • Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine; • Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG); • National Monuments Service; • National Parks and Wildlife Service; and • Nature Conservation Unit, DHLGH. <p>Additionally, EirGrid has carried out an extensive programme of public and landowner consultation for the onshore elements of the Celtic Interconnector project. EirGrid has therefore prepared Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report (a copy of which is provided with this application) to accompany an application for planning approval to An Bord Pleanála.</p>
4.3	<p>Describe any consultations undertaken to date with other foreshore users.</p>

	<p>As a proponent of a European PCI project, EirGrid is required to conduct public and stakeholder consultation meetings through a variety of means set out in Annex IV(5) of the PCI Regulation. Public consultation was achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates to the Project website (www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/whats-happening-now/). • Public consultation meetings. • Newspaper notices published in both local and national newspapers. • Provision of public information brochure (Celtic Interconnector Connecting the Grids of Ireland and France) – published before the start of formal public consultation and updated throughout the development process. <p>EirGrid has held a number of Public engagement and consultation exercises during Step 1 to 4 of EirGrid’s six step grid development process. Step 4 (Where exactly should we build) commenced in November 2019 and continued to Spring. This included the publication of information on the project pages of EirGrid’s website, and the holding of seven Open Evenings for communities in the East Cork project area. A record of the comments received during this consultation was published in a Step 4 Consultation Report in May 2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, no further events/stakeholder meetings were held in person, but EirGrid maintained contact with stakeholders through publication of newspaper adverts and social media. Online meetings were held with community organisations and councils on request, and online information webinars were held. Full details can be found in the Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report.</p> <p>Volume 8A Planning and Consultation Report also provides a record of engagement with bodies representing foreshore users (see Table 3.4 in Volume 8A).</p>
4.4	<p>Describe any likely interactions with activities of the public or other foreshore users during the construction and operational phases of the works/activities (e.g. fishing, aquaculture, sailing, and surfing swimming, walking). Describe any measures proposed to minimise inconvenience to other users.</p> <p>There is the potential that beach works, and nearshore works will affect recreational users of the Claycastle Beach through the presence of cable installation works and from a visual disturbance perspective. Access to the Claycastle Beach car park and sections of the beach will be restricted during the installation works which may affect beach users and those participating in water sports.</p> <p>Fishing activity and recreational boating will be affected by temporary exclusion zones around the cable installation vessels. Effects are assessed in full in Volume 3D2 of the appended EIAR, Chapter 8: Population and Human Health, Chapter 18: Shipping and Navigation, and Chapter 19: Commercial Fisheries.</p> <p>All the project specific mitigation to be implemented by the Celtic Interconnector project is outlined in a Summary of Monitoring and Mitigation Measures provided in Volume 3D2 of the appended EIAR, Chapter 21. This includes the continued use of a Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) (appointed during the cable route surveys).</p>
4.5	

	<p>Have adjacent landowners, whose properties may be affected by these works been consulted? Please provide details/permissions as appropriate.</p> <p>Adjacent landowners have been consulted directly and through the consultation and engagement process detailed in Sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 above.</p>
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Part 5: Environmental Considerations
(Your consultations with National Parks and Wildlife Service and National Monuments Service may inform your answers. Attach additional reports as required and mark under the R column)

EPA AA GeoTool (Appropriate Assessment Data):

<http://www.epa.ie/terminalfour/PropAssess/index.jsp>

NPWS Appropriate Assessment Guidance:

<https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/guidance-appropriate-assessment-planning-authorities>

NPWS Protected Sites Map Viewer:

<http://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8f7060450de3485fa1c1085536d477ba>

	Environmental legislative requirements	Yes	No	R
5.1	<p>Is an Environmental Impact Statement required for this proposal?</p> <p>While an EIAR is not required on a mandatory basis, it has been prepared following advice received during the pre-application consultation phase with the Foreshore Unit and An Bord Pleanála. Full details of the environmental impacts for the offshore jurisdiction are provided in Volume 3D1 and Volume 3D2 of the EIAR.</p>		✓	✓
5.2	<p>Is a Natura Impact Statement required for this proposal?</p> <p>Yes – Information to inform an Appropriate Assessment, as required by European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) is provided in Volume 6B Natura Impact Statement including Screening Report.</p>	✓		✓
5.3	<p>Is the area within or adjacent to a NHA, pNHA, SAC, SPA, or National Park? Specify site names and code(s).</p> <p>The application area is not located within any of the above-named designations.</p>		✓	✓

<p>The proposed cable route, landfall and associated infrastructure do not interact directly with any designated sites. Having regard for the potential value of national sites to European site integrity, the table below identifies all designated sites within 10km of the proposed cable route and working areas, including European sites, statutory designated national sites (Nature Reserves), and non-statutory designated national sites (proposed Natural Heritage Areas). A full screening for European Sites is provided in Section 2.7 in Volume 6B and Natura Impact Statement including Screening Report.</p>				
Site Name / Code	Distance from Celtic Interconnector (km)	Summary of designated features		
Ballyvergan Marsh pNHA - 000078	<1	Wetland habitats, breeding and non-breeding birds, otter		
Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC - 000077	1	Coastal habitats		
Ballymacoda Bay SPA - 004023	1	Wintering waterbird assemblage		
Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) pNHA - 000077	1	Coastal habitats – overlaps with Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore SAC)		
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC - 002170	1.4	Coastal and riparian habitats, migratory fish, freshwater invertebrates and plants, otter		
Blackwater River and Estuary pNHA - 000072	1.4	Coastal and riparian habitats – overlaps with Blackwater River SAC		
Capel Island and Knockadoon Head Nature Reserve and pNHA- 000083	2	Coastal headland and island		
Blackwater Estuary SPA - 004028	2.6	Wintering waterbird assemblage		
River Barrow and River Nore SAC - 002162	6.5	Coastal and riparian habitats, migratory fish, freshwater invertebrates and plants, otter		

	Ardmore Head SAC - 002123	8.3	Sea cliffs and heaths			
5.4	<p>Describe any other projects or plans for the area, anticipated or developed, that in combination with this proposal, may have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site: Please list with planning reference numbers (where available).</p> <p>The NIS has identified that there are no other projects or plans for the area, anticipated, or developed, that in combination with the Proposed Development, may have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. This has included consideration of potential in combination effects with the wider Celtic Interconnector Project in Ireland (i.e. the onshore elements). The justification for this conclusion is provided below.</p> <p>The Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPP) published in 2019 (OREDPP 2019) has identified the need for sustainable development of offshore wind and tidal energy and examines three different scenarios for delivery of increasing amounts of offshore energy. Whilst this plan does not provide locations of potential sites it does consider the potential capacity of regional marine and coastal areas and further considers potential cumulative impacts with other existing projects in Irish Waters. Through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and associated screening for impacts on environmental receptors (including fish, shellfish, marine mammals, seabirds and marine reptiles) and European Sites an assessment has been made by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications with regard to the potential impacts of a significant increase in offshore development in Irish waters.</p> <p>Results of the SEA conclude that whilst there is potential to achieve the "higher level scenario" presented in the OREDPP without significant adverse effects on the environment, this is only achieved with the inclusion of mitigation measures embedded into the planning and design phases to ensure sustainable development. As highlighted in the NIS that accompanies the OREDPP, a number of European sites and species could be impacted by the levels of offshore development proposed by the plan. However, the assessment highlights the need for further investigative work at an individual project level to adequately assess these impacts and highlights the need for developers to "comprehensively demonstrate at the project level that there would be no LSE on the integrity and conservation of objectives of a Natura Site". It further states that where developers are "unable to demonstrate that there would be no LSE developments would not be permitted unless IROPI was demonstrated". These requirements would therefore be built into any developments brought forward ensuring that where possible offshore developments minimise or avoid impacts on European sites and the species they support.</p>				✓	✓

	<p>However, given the time that would be needed to develop the hypothetical capacity proposed in OREDP there would be no temporal overlap with the Celtic Interconnector Project and therefore no in combination effects on European Sites.</p> <p>Furthermore, given the temporary nature of the construction effects associated with the Celtic Interconnector; it is considered that effects would not occur in combination with other, already operational offshore developments.</p> <p>Full details are provided in the appended Volume 6B Natura Impact Statement including Screening Report.</p>			
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	Environmental Considerations	Yes	No	R
5.5	<p>Will the proposal have any potential environmental impacts? If yes, please describe</p> <p>The Celtic Interconnector EIAR is provided on a voluntary basis. An assessment has been carried out to identify the likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Development. Full details of the environmental effects are provided in Volume 3D1 and Volume 3D2 of the EIAR.</p>	✓		✓
5.6	<p>Are you proposing any measures to mitigate the potential environmental impacts? If yes, please describe</p> <p>All the project specific mitigation to be implemented by the Celtic Interconnector project is outlined in a Summary of Monitoring and Mitigation Measures provided in Volume 3D2 of the EIAR, Chapter 21.</p>	✓		✓
5.7	<p>Are there public health/safety implications arising from the proposed works? (e.g. effluent disposal, removal of derelict or dangerous structures etc.) If yes, please describe</p>		✓	
5.8	<p>Will the works involve the storage and/or disposal of waste? If "Yes" please give details of the type of waste and the proposed method of storage and/or disposal (including location)</p>		✓	

5.9	Any other Environmental Considerations? If yes, please specify.		✓	
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	Built Heritage Considerations	Yes	No	R
5.10	<p>Does the area contain an archaeological site or feature? If yes, please specify.</p> <p>Within the Proposed Development there are no designated prehistoric archaeological sites and no known prehistoric sites. There are no wrecks within the cable study corridor and wider study area. Analysis of the marine geophysical data identified 13 anomalies; although none were identified as having high archaeological potential.</p> <p>For information on marine archaeology please see Volume 3D2 of the EIAR, Chapter 16 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and accompanying Appendices.</p>	✓		✓
5.11	Does the area contain or adjoin a listed archaeological site or monument? If yes, please specify.		✓	
5.12	<p>Will the proposal have any potential impacts on the archaeological integrity of the site? If yes please describe</p> <p>It is anticipated that there would be no disturbance of known remains, either during cabling or installation of cable protection. There is however a limited potential for inadvertent disturbance of remains that have not yet been identified during installation of cabling and installation of cable protection.</p> <p>Therefore, it is anticipated that the Celtic interconnector Project will not have a significant effect on the archaeology and cultural heritage within the area following the application of the proposed mitigation measures. Please see Volume 3D2 of the EIAR, Chapter 15 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and accompanying Appendices.</p>		✓	✓
5.13	<p>Are you proposing any measures to mitigate potential archaeological impacts? If yes, please describe?</p> <p>Mitigation of the disturbance of offshore deposits of geoarchaeological interest would be achieved by an agreed programme of further archaeological investigation and recordings, combined with analysis of archaeological material already recovered and appropriate publication / dissemination of the results.</p>	✓		✓

	<p>Archaeological exclusion zones will be established around the sites of known and potential wrecks. These exclusion zones would be 100m from the recorded location or location of any high potential sites, and 50m from the location of any medium potential sites and would be used to minimise the potential for disturbance of wreck sites.</p> <p>Please see Volume 3D2 of the appended EIAR, Chapter 15 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.</p>			
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Part 6: Navigational Safety Considerations. (Your consultations with relevant stakeholders may inform your answers. Attach additional documents as required and mark under the R column)

	Navigational Safety Considerations.	Yes	No	R
6.1	Are there public navigational safety implications arising from the proposed works?		✓	
6.2	<p>What marine activity is there in the area?</p> <p>There are a number of navigation features near the Proposed Development associated with harbour, anchoring areas, disposal grounds, existing subsea cables, navigation lines and traffic separation zones, all of which are charted to aid navigation.</p> <p>For further details please see Volume 3D2 of the EIAR, Chapter 18 Shipping and Navigation.</p>			✓
6.3	<p>How will the marine activity be affected by the proposed works?</p> <p>The potential effects considered by the EIAR included displacement of shipping from area surrounding Project vessels; change in water depth (associated with external cable protection, if required); and presence of cables within anchor burial depth of the seabed, imposing restrictions on where vessels may anchor.</p> <p>Please see Volume 3D2 of the EIAR, Chapter 18 Shipping and Navigation.</p>			✓
6.4	<p>What mitigating measures will be put in place?</p> <p>During the construction phase, the key to vessel safety is compliance by both work and passing vessels with the COLREGS. This will be encouraged and facilitated by keeping all sea users fully informed of plans and progress regarding the cable installation and procedures in place to</p>			✓

	<p>ensure their safety when navigating in the vicinity. This will be achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue of Marine Notices; • radio navigational warnings by local ports and coastguard; • radio communication between work vessels and passing vessels; • direct contact with local commercial fishing organisations; • direct contact with clubs representing local recreational boat users; and • notices on the beach regarding landfall works and launching of personal watercraft or kite surf boards. <p>The cable contractor will monitor and maintain records of radio communications with passing craft and review these at intervals to ascertain whether any changes or improvements to information dissemination would be appropriate.</p> <p>The principal measure to minimise risks of adverse interaction between vessels and the cable during operation, is to ensure that information is supplied to appropriate authorities to enable marine charts and sailing directions to be updated to show the cable route.</p> <p>For a full list of mitigation please see Volume 3D2 of the appended EIAR, Chapter 18 Shipping and Navigation.</p>			
6.5	<p>How will the proposed works affect Marine Navigation in the future?</p> <p>Please see Section 6.3 above.</p>			✓

Part 7: Fishing/Aquaculture considerations

(Your consultations with IFI, SFPA, DAFM may inform your answers.

Attach additional documents as required and mark under the R column)

	Fishing/Aquaculture considerations	Yes	No	R
7.1	<p>Is the proposal located in proximity to any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aquaculture operation • designated Shellfish Growing Waters • fish spawning ground • other sensitive fisheries location <p>Please Illustrate on appropriate chart including distance in Km.</p> <p>An assessment of the effects on fishing considerations is presented in Volume 3D2 of the appended EIAR, Chapter 19 Commercial Fisheries.</p> <p>The Celtic Interconnector project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not cross through any known spawning or nursery habitat. 	✓		✓

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crosses areas used for potting, scallop dredging, and midwater trawling. • The Claycastle Beach landfall site lies within Youghal Bay Classified Bivalve Mollusc Production Area where both the Pacific oyster and the surf clam, also referred to as the thick trough shell may be commercially harvested. 			
7.2	<p>Are there other potential impacts of the proposal on fishing/aquaculture in the area? If yes, please describe.</p> <p>The Celtic Interconnector EIAR provides an assessment of potential effects on fishing in the area in Chapter 15 Commercial Fisheries. It considers temporary displacement of fishing activity, indirect effects on commercial fish stocks, and snagging resulting from obstructions on the seabed. For the majority of effects assessed is concluded effects will be negligible or minor. No significant effects are predicted to occur.</p> <p>An assessment of the effects on fishing considerations is presented in Volume 3D2 of the EIAR, Chapter 19 Commercial Fisheries.</p>	✓		✓
7.3	<p>Are there any measures proposed to mitigate potential impacts on fisheries or aquaculture? If yes, please describe.</p> <p>Project specific mitigation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment a Fisheries Liaison Officer during the project who will maintain communication with fisheries representatives and organisations throughout construction and installation in accordance with good practice. • Advanced warning and accurate location details of construction operation and associated mobile safety zones. Safety zones to be brought to the attention of mariners with as much advance warning as possible via frequent notice to Mariners and other means e.g. the Kingfisher Bulletin, VHF radio broadcasts etc. and through direct communications via the Fisheries Liaison Officer. • Review of operational phase asset management surveys will be undertaken and any areas of exposure/reduced depth of burial communicated to the fishing industry via Notice to Mariners. • Approval of decommissioning plan which will manage risks. If risks cannot be managed appropriately the cable, or sections of would need to be removed. <p>Further mitigation details are presented in Volume 3D2 of the appended EIAR, Chapter 19 Commercial Fisheries.</p>	✓		✓

Part 8 – Additional information

8.1	Please detail any additional relevant information.
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Declaration and Consent:

The details provided here are correct to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that no works will be commenced, by me or my agents on the proposed site, without the prior written consent of the Minister.

By submitting this application form, I agree that the details provided (with personal contact details redacted) are to be published on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage website and also that the full information provided including contact details are to be processed and retained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and shared with all appropriate Prescribed Bodies (as part of the Prescribed Bodies Consultation process) in furtherance of consideration for a foreshore Consent under the Foreshore Act 1933 (and Foreshore Amendment Act 2011).

I give consent to the Minister and his servants to copy this application and to make (a redacted) copy available for inspection and copying by the public. This consent relates to this application, to any further information, or submission provided by me or on my behalf and to the publication of the licence document.

Signature of Applicant (or his or her Agent):**Name of above Signatory (block letters):**

DES COX

Position Held:

Consents + Planning lead, Celtic Interconnecta.

Date: 8th July 2022

Return completed applications to:

Foreshore Section
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90

Enquiries to: Foreshore@housing.gov.ie

Email a copy of application documents: Foreshore@housing.gov.ie

Enclosures Checklist

One hard copy of every document is required unless otherwise stated. Electronic versions of documentation must also be provided in searchable PDF format (no single file to be greater than 30mb) so that the Department can make them available on its website.

Item No.	Description	No. of copies Required	
1	Application Form. With original signature	4	
2	Mapping (see guidelines document) (i) Site Location map (ii) Foreshore Lease/licence map	4 4	
3	British Admiralty Chart (largest available scale)	1	
4	Drawings of the structures to be used and/or layout	4	
5	Pre-application correspondence with stakeholders.	1	
6	Other statutory permissions: (i) Planning permission (ii) Effluent Discharge Licence (iii) Other consent (Please specify)	1 1 1	
7	Company documentation (1): Certified copy of the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association	1	
8	Company documentation (2) Certificate of Incorporation of a Limited Liability, or Company/Rule Book/Constitution for a Club or Co-Operative Society as appropriate	1	
9	Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). (i) Hard copy (ii) CDs	5 25	
10	Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (i) Hard copy (ii) CDs	5 4	
11	Property-related owner permissions/wayleaves (i) Folio – (or other evidence of private ownership) (ii) Wayleave/consent from other property owners (iii) Other (Please specify)	2 1 1	
12	Other – Please specify	1	



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Appendix A: Geographic co-ordinates

June 2021



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Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28
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Appendix A - Geographic co-ordinates

Route Branch	AC	Longitude DMS (WGS84)	Latitude DMS (WGS84)	Easting in m (Irish National Grid)	Northing in m (Irish National Grid)
Claycastle Beach	0	7° 51' 36.39" W	51° 56' 03.31" N	209671.4	75741.6
Claycastle Beach	1	7° 49' 24.58" W	51° 54' 18.38" N	212198.5	72503.7
Claycastle Beach	2	7° 47' 35.35" W	51° 51' 13.38" N	214303.1	66791.2
Claycastle Beach	3	7° 47' 15.86" W	51° 50' 44.01" N	214678.8	65884.7
Claycastle Beach	4	7° 45' 19.96" W	51° 48' 19.05" N	216912.4	61411.0
Claycastle Beach	5	7° 44' 59.99" W	51° 47' 34.78" N	217299.9	60044.1
Claycastle Beach	6	7° 45' 28.99" W	51° 46' 38.41" N	216749.7	58299.8
Claycastle Beach	7	7° 47' .77" W	51° 44' 38.59" N	215001.1	54591.1
Claycastle Beach	8	7° 50' 16.80" W	51° 39' 21.59" N	211261.8	44783.8
Claycastle Beach	9	7° 49' 55.76" W	51° 38' 40.30" N	211668.2	43508.7



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Appendix B: Size of Area

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Appendix B – Size of area

Route	Route Length (m)	Area (m ²)	Area (km ²)	Area in Hectares	Comment
Claycastle Beach	35,360.0	17571400	17.6	1757.14	Full route - top of beach to 12nm



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Appendix C: Public and Landowner Consultation Report. Prepared in accordance with Article 9(4) of the TEN-E Regulation (No. 347/2013)

June 2021



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2040



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1 Introduction and Overview

1.1 Purpose of Report

This Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report has been prepared to accompany a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) planning application, and a Project of Common Interest (PCI) Application file, made by EirGrid plc (EirGrid) to An Bord Pleanála (the Board) in respect of that portion of the overall proposed Celtic Interconnector project located in Ireland.

This report also fulfills the requirements of Article 9(4) of the TEN-E Regulation (No. 347/2013) which states that:

“The project promoter shall prepare a report summarising the results of activities related to the participation of the public prior to the submission of the application file, including those activities that took place before the start of the permit granting process. The project promoter shall submit that report together with the application file to the competent authority. Due account shall be taken of these results in a comprehensive decision”.

The purpose of this report is to document the extent and nature of public, stakeholder and landowner consultation and participation that has taken place in Ireland over the course of the project’s development. This report demonstrates that EirGrid has endeavoured to ensure the widest possible access by the public, stakeholder and landowners to information about the project at all stages of its pre-planning development.

In this regard, it is considered that the consultation undertaken in respect of the Celtic Interconnector fully meets the requirements of the Aarhus Convention, Codified EIA Directive and Irish national legislation.

1.2 Introduction to EirGrid

EirGrid is the Irish electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO), responsible for ensuring a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity, now and in the future.

EirGrid develops, manages and operates the electricity transmission grid. This brings power from where it is generated to where it is needed throughout Ireland. The grid supplies power to industry and businesses that use large amounts of electricity. The grid also powers the distribution network. This supplies the electricity used every day in homes, businesses, schools, hospitals and farms.

EirGrid is also mandated to explore and develop opportunities to interconnect the transmission grid with the transmission grids in other countries. In 2011 EirGrid completed the East West Interconnector, a 500 MW high-voltage connection between Ireland and mainland Great Britain. The North South Interconnector between Northern Ireland and Ireland is currently under development.

In addition, Ireland has an existing privately-owned and operated 500 MW interconnector linking Co. Antrim in Northern Ireland to Scotland. Furthermore, a proposed privately-owned interconnector is planned to link the South East of the country to Wales.

1.3 The Celtic Interconnector

The Celtic Interconnector is a proposed link between the Irish and the French electricity grids. It is being jointly developed by EirGrid and the French TSO, Réseau de Transport d'Électricité (RTE). When completed it will enable the movement of electricity between Ireland and France, and vice versa, and will be Ireland's sole interconnection with the European Union, following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

The Celtic Interconnector consists of a proposed High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) 700 megawatt (MW) connection between the 400 kV substation at La Martyre (Finistère, France) and the existing 220 kV substation at Knockraha (Co. Cork, Ireland). The total cable length is approximately 575km, of which approximately 500km is subsea.

This project has been subject to collaboration and cooperation between the two project partners for many years, with a commitment from the outset to develop the project in close consultation and engagement with the many stakeholders involved.

As outlined in more detail in Volume 2A (Planning Report) of the application particulars, the Celtic Interconnector was designated in 2013 as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) for the North Seas Countries Offshore Grid Initiative ('NSCOGI') priority corridor under the TEN-E Regulation¹. The TEN-E Regulation seeks to modernise and expand Europe's energy infrastructure and to interconnect networks across borders to meet the European Union's core energy policy objectives of competitiveness, sustainability and security of supply. The project has retained its PCI designation during subsequent reviews on a bi-annual basis since 2013 and most recently in 2019.

The European Commission sees increased interconnection as a key step towards achieving a more integrated electricity system and, as a designated PCI, considers the Celtic Interconnector to be an important contributor to achieving such integration.

As also outlined in more detail in Volume 2A of the application particulars, the Irish Programme for Government states the Government's support for the Celtic Interconnector, which in addition to connecting Ireland to Europe's energy grid will also facilitate increased competition in the electricity market, enhance security of supply and help Ireland to reach its goal of sourcing at least 70% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030. This is a cornerstone of the Government's plans to meet Ireland's future climate commitments and the key driver behind EirGrid's corporate strategy.

¹ Regulation (EU) No. 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No. 1364/2006/EC and amending Regulations (EC) No 713/2009, (EC) No 714/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009. The TEN-E Regulation can be accessed at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32013R0347>

2 Context for Public, Stakeholder and Landowner Engagement

2.1 Public and Landowner Engagement in Context

EirGrid is committed to public and landowner engagement as an integral part of its project development process. This approach is informed by national and European requirements and enhanced by EirGrid's organisational commitment to best practice in this area.

Throughout the project development process for the Celtic Interconnector, EirGrid has consulted with National, regional and local stakeholders, communities, landowners, and members of the public concerned, all in accordance with legislative and formal guideline requirements for best practice, including:

- The Aarhus Convention;
- The Project of Common Interest Process;
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive; and,
- Irish legislation.

2.2 The Aarhus Convention²

The Aarhus Convention is an international treaty which both the EU and Ireland signed up to in 1998. More specifically, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was adopted on 25th June 1998 at the Fourth Ministerial Conference as part of the "Environment for Europe" process.

The EU ratified the Aarhus Convention in February 2005. Ireland ratified the Convention in June 2012. Prior to ratification, Ireland had fully implemented the provisions of the Aarhus Convention and the related EU Directives, Directive 2003/4/EC on Public Access to Environmental Information and Directive 2003/35/EC on Public Participation.

The Aarhus Convention lays down a set of basic rules to promote citizens' involvement in environmental matters and improve enforcement of environmental law. The Aarhus Convention comprises three pillars:

- Access to environmental information,
- Participation in the environmental decision-making process, and
- Access to justice in environmental matters.

² The Aarhus Convention was adopted in Aarhus, Denmark on 25 June 1998. It entered into force on 30 October 2001. The European Union became a signatory and a Party to the Convention in 1998 and since 2005 it has applied to all EU Institutions. By April 2013 there were 45 countries Parties to the Convention, plus the European Union.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) document, *The Aarhus Convention: An Implementation Guide* (Second Edition, 2014) represents best practice in respect of how to consult with members of the public on major projects. This document was central to the consultation process developed by EirGrid in 2017 and applied by the Celtic Interconnector project (please refer to EirGrid's Six-Step Grid Development Process in Section 2.7 below).

2.3 Projects of Common Interest (PCIs)

Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) are key cross-border infrastructure projects that link the energy systems of EU countries. They are intended to help the EU achieve its energy policy and climate objectives: affordable, secure and sustainable energy for all citizens, and the long-term decarbonisation of the economy in accordance with the Paris Agreement³.

The regulations regarding designation of PCIs were adopted on 21st March 2013 and entered into force on 1st June 2013. Under Article 3(4) of the Regulation, the European Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts to establish the union list of PCIs. This list forms an Annex to the Regulation.

The Commission Delegated Regulation 1391/2013, issued on the 14th October 2013, identified the projects forming part of the first union list of PCIs⁴ which included the Celtic Interconnector in the Annex to the Delegated Regulation under the heading “1. *Priority electricity corridor Northern Seas offshore grid ('NSOG')*”⁵.

As a PCI, and without prejudice to any requirements under the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions and relevant Union law, all parties involved in the permit granting process for a PCI project are obliged to follow the principles for public participation set out in the Guidelines in Article 9 of the TEN-E Regulation, and specifically Annex VI(3) thereof. EirGrid's activities to fulfil these needs are detailed in a Concept for Public Participation document shared with and accepted by the PCI Competent Authority in Ireland in July 2020 – see Section 2.4 below.

2.4 Concept for Public Participation (CPP)

The Concept for Public Participation (CPP) document sets out the public participation measures for the Celtic Interconnector project's permit granting and public participation phase in Ireland in reference to, and in accordance with, the PCI requirements. It should be noted that this CPP applied to the PCI project in Ireland - the public participation

³ The Paris Agreement is a **legally binding international treaty on climate change**. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. It can be accessed at: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international/negotiations/paris_en

⁴ TEN-E Regulation

⁵ “1.6 PCI France – Ireland interconnection between La Martyre (FR) and Great Island or Knockraha (IE)”

measures relating to the overall Celtic Interconnector project in the UK and France are detailed by way of separate CPPs for those jurisdictions.

In fulfilment of the requirements of Article 9(3) and Annex VI of the TEN-E Regulation, the CPP sets out the necessary information and measures that EirGrid has undertaken prior to the submission of the CPP, and further planned public consultation on the project in Ireland in order to ensure a high level of public participation in the project.

Under the TEN-E Regulation, EirGrid was required to submit a CPP to An Bord Pleanála (as competent authority for PCI in Ireland), and this was done on 24th April 2020. An Bord Pleanála approved the CPP on 6th July 2020. A copy of the CPP is available on the EirGrid's project specific website and is also contained in Appendix A of this report⁶.

A copy of the information leaflet that was produced in accordance with Annex VI (5) of the TEN-E Regulation is contained in Appendix B of this report.

2.5 The EIA Directive

As a member of the EU, Ireland has been obliged to comply with the EIA Directive since 2005. Under the EIA Directive 2011/98/EU, it is necessary to carry out an assessment of the likely impacts of a project on human beings.

The EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amended the provisions of the EIA Directive 2011/98/EU. The amendments that were introduced to the text of the EIA Directive reflect the Aarhus Convention public participation requirements. For example, the definitions of *'the public'* and *'the public concerned'*⁷ as set out in Articles 2(4) and 2(5) of the Aarhus Convention are incorporated into the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU by Articles 1(2)(d) and (e), respectively. In addition, amendments made to Article 6 of the EIA Directive set out the minimum requirements for effective public participation.

The aim of Articles 6(2) and 6(3) of the Directive is to ensure that the public will be informed of matters early in the environmental decision-making procedure, and that the relevant information and documents are made available to the public concerned. This includes making information available electronically as well as by public notices or by other appropriate means.

The substantive provisions ensure that the public concerned will be given *"early and effective opportunities to participate"* in environmental decision-making procedures for consent to projects and, for that purpose, the public concerned is entitled to express comments and opinions when all options are open to the competent authority, before the decision on the request for development consent is taken.

⁶ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Concept-for-Public-Participation-EirGrid-2020.pdf>

⁷ The 'public concerned' means the public affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the environmental decision-making; for the purposes of this definition non-governmental organisations promoting environmental protection and meeting any requirements under national law shall be deemed to have an interest.

2.6 National Law and Best Practice

As a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID), prospective applicants must enter the pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála in relation to a proposed development, as stipulated under Section 182E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). In this process, the Board can advise the prospective applicants, and gather information and clarifications as the development matures.

EirGrid attended a number of such pre-application consultation meetings with the Strategic Infrastructure division of the Board.

The requirements of the Public Participation Directive (2003/35/EC) in relation to applications for development consent for proposed electricity transmission projects are reflected in Irish law by, *inter alia*, section 182A(4) of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as inserted, and Article 212 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. These provisions require a notice of the nature and location of the proposed development to be published and prescribe the contents of such notice, which include an invitation for submissions and observations to be made to the Board relating to:

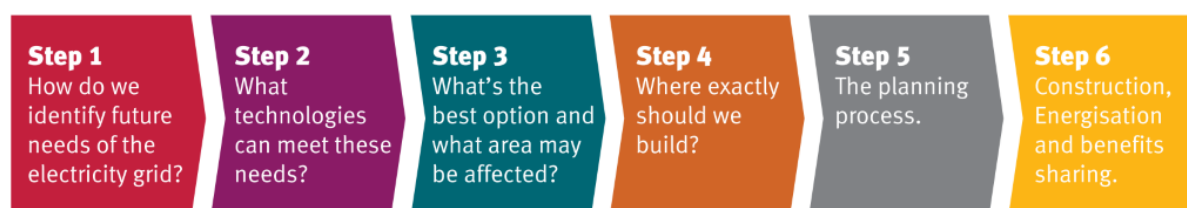
- The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the area or areas concerned; and,
- The likely effects on the environment or adverse effects on the integrity of a European site, as the case may be, of the proposed development.

This is provided for in the application particulars and the SID application process.

2.7 EirGrid's Six-Step Grid Development Process

In reference to the provisions of the TEN-E Regulation and the Aarhus Convention, and in compliance with industry best practice, EirGrid has developed a six-step approach to public participation and stakeholder engagement in the development of its projects.

Figure 2.1: EirGrid's Six-Step Grid Development Process



Source: EirGrid

This approach is based upon values of honesty, social responsibility and integrity. EirGrid undertakes to ensure that our consulting process:

- Communicates proposals clearly in an understandable way, both online and on paper (using Plain English);
- Allows sufficient time for respondents to consider information and provide comment,

- Ensures that anyone who wishes to comment is able to do so;
- Provides clear opportunities to engage with EirGrid;
- Provides an explanation of the decisions that are made;
- Communicates with everyone who has engaged with EirGrid and provides feedback on how their feedback was considered, as well as the outcome of our decision;
- And that EirGrid staff treat everyone on every project with honesty and respect; and,
- This approach is intended to deliver open and transparent engagement and consultation with EirGrid's stakeholders and communities.

2.7.1 EirGrid's approach to engagement

EirGrid's approach to engagement is tailored to suit a particular project or initiative. A bespoke engagement plan is used for each key project or initiative, identifying the channels to be used to provide information and notification to the stakeholders and facilitating the evolution of these methods as the project develops. These methods can include email contact, project brochures and updates, targeted social media content, advertising in local and national press, letters to landowners and statutory bodies, providing spokespeople for discussions on public radio, providing phone lines and conducting webinars.

The process also typically includes promotion in public locations and open days in the local area where members of the public can meet the experts and have their queries addressed. Stakeholders are invited to provide feedback in multiple formats including feedback forms online and at open days, through fora and webinars and by email or letter. Stakeholders can also engage directly with Community Liaison and Agricultural Liaison Officers.

As illustrated by Figure 2.1 above, Step 1 to Step 4 of a project's development is the period when EirGrid proactively engages and consults with all stakeholders to develop informed decisions. Step 5 aligns with the planning process for an SID application to An Bord Pleanála. As per the requirements of Section 182A(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, EirGrid is required to inform the public of the intention to lodge the application and detail how submissions can be raised on the application.

All of the public engagement documentation published to date is available on EirGrid's project specific website for the Celtic Interconnector project⁸ – please refer to Appendix E which sets out the contents of this website. Table 2.1 summarises the number of views on this website over the project development steps 3 – 5 which demonstrates its effectiveness as a consultation tool. EirGrid continues to engage and inform the public and stakeholders during Step 5 through their project specific website.

⁸ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/related-documents/>

Table 2.1 Summary of No. of Views on EirGrid's Dedicated Celtic Interconnector Website

https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/the-project/	
1st Jan 2018 to 31st Dec 2018	
-	Total page-views: 7,826
-	Spike in May 2018: 1,720
1st Jan 2019 to 31st Dec 2019	
-	Total page-views: 12,260
-	Spike in May 2019: 1,541
-	Spike in Oct 2019: 1,890
-	Spike in Nov 2019: 1,656
1st Jan 2020 to 31st Dec 2020	
-	Total page-views: 9,047
-	Spike in Nov 2020: 1,162
https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/whats-happening-now/	
1st Jan 2018 to 31st Dec 2018	
-	Total page-views: 2,525
-	Spike in May 2018: 309
1st Jan 2019 to 31st Dec 2019	
-	Total page-views: 6,933
-	Spike in Nov 2019: 1,497
1st Jan 2020 to 31st Dec 2020	
-	Total page-views: 4,452
-	Spike in May 2020: 538
-	Spike in Nov 2020: 709

The “.eu Website” for the project (<https://www.celticinterconnector.eu/>) (see Section 8.2.1) also facilitates the provision of international communications regarding the project. In addition, a dedicated SID project website has been created for the SID planning application (<https://eirgridcelticinterconnector.ie>). EirGrid will continue to consult and engage with project stakeholders throughout the planning application process, and subsequently throughout the construction phase (Step 6), to ensure that any impacts to local communities during construction are minimised as far as possible.

2.7.2 Receipt of Irish Planning Institute Award 2018 for the Six-Step Process

In February 2018, EirGrid received an Award from the IPI in the 'Participation and Engagement' category for the Six-Step Process. While winning this award demonstrates that the process is highly regarded by industry, it was developed in order to set out EirGrid's desire to develop the national grid in a transparent and inclusive manner with communities and stakeholders.

2.7.3 The Impact of COVID-19⁹

In 2020, the required public response to COVID-19 saw limitations placed on EirGrid's teams in their ability to engage face to face with stakeholders. In response, supplementary engagement activities took place including print advertisements, additional online project information material and increased use of contact via letter together with the addition of new online methods to the toolkit for engagement. These included the use of online meetings and public webinars in order to continue stakeholder engagement. Printed media advertisements were taken out in local and national press in May 2020 and again in November 2020, and replicated on social media platforms in order to maintain public awareness of the project and invite direct contact from stakeholders¹⁰.

2.8 Project's Receipt of the '2020 Renewables Grid Initiative Good Practice of the Year Award' for Communication and Engagement

In October 2020, the Celtic Interconnector project received the Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) Good Practice Award in the Communication and Engagement category. Figure 2.2 was taken the day that the CEO of EirGrid accepted this award.

The Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) is a unique collaboration of NGOs and TSOs from across Europe united to promote fair, transparent, sustainable grid development to enable the growth of renewables and to achieve full decarbonisation in line with the Paris Agreement.

The award recognised how EirGrid applied its bespoke Six-Step Grid Development Process to the project, which allowed the approach to stakeholder consultation for the Celtic Interconnector project to be continuously evaluated and improved upon in line with stakeholder needs. Of particular note by the jury panel was the commencement of engagement and consultation with stakeholders at an early stage of project development.

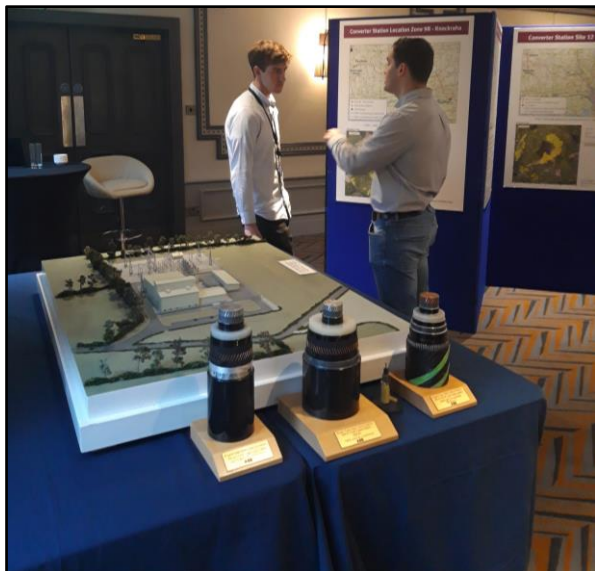
This early commencement allowed for good levels of feedback which was responded to by the development of a holistic communication and engagement approach. This

⁹ i.e. Coronavirus is an infectious disease that emerged in December 2019 and became a global pandemic.

¹⁰ See Appendix C Advertisements

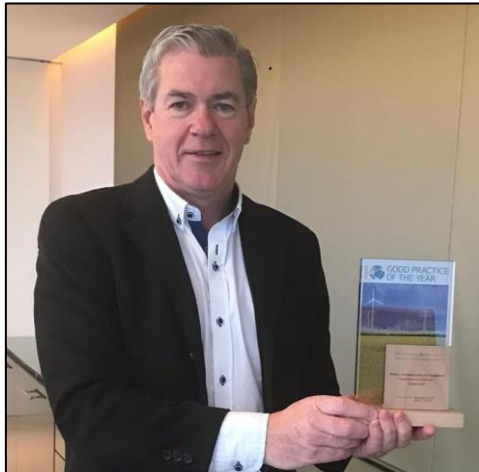
approach evolved to include a diverse set of high-quality measures such as 3D visualisation technology and architectural models.

Figure 2.2: Cable Samples and Architectural model of EWIC Converter station and 3D visualisation technology sample area



These were used to show the project's visual impact in the community. Other methods used to enhance consultation included the appointment of a dedicated Community Liaison Officer and demonstration of Electro Magnetic Frequencies (EMF) as experienced in traditional household settings, with a view to addressing people's concerns, and providing information in the context of the project at public open events.

Figure 2.3: Mark Foley, CEO EirGrid Group accepting the 2020 Renewables Grid Initiative Good Practice of the Year Award' for Communication and Engagement for the Celtic Interconnector project



2.9 Project Communications Team

In recognition of the strategic importance of the project and the importance of local communication and engagement, EirGrid appointed a dedicated Community Liaison Officer (CLO) to the project in 2018. This helped establish good communication channels between communities and other stakeholders and the project team. In addition, the project continues to be supported by the internal communications and public engagement team at EirGrid.

In addition to the CLO, the project also benefits from the focus of EirGrid's experienced Agricultural Liaison Officers (ALOs). ALOs have the expert knowledge to facilitate them in liaising with landowners, in particular those engaged in farming, as well as any landowner whose property is directly impacted by the project development. ALOs have been engaging with stakeholders throughout the project development, but in particular since 2018 within Step 3 and 4 of the Six-Step process.

To ensure best-in-class consultation and engagement analysis and methodologies, EirGrid appointed Traverse in 2019, an independent consultancy specialising in consultation analysis, to assist with the consultation process, analyse responses to the consultation and report on their findings.

Other agencies and internal personnel are used on an ad hoc basis in response to project requirements.

3 Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Approach to consultation and public participation

Our approach to consultation and public participation is driven by EirGrid's commitment to the Six-Step grid development process, as outlined in Section 2.7 above.

At each step, a series of activities are carried out in order to inform, engage and consult with stakeholders and facilitate their participation in the project development process.

3.2 Step 1

The objective in Step 1 is for the project need to be confirmed and explained to representatives and interest groups.

3.2.1 Project Actions

In November 2009, EirGrid published the '*Interconnector Economic Feasibility Report*'¹¹. This report identified an interconnector with France as a viable opportunity to connect to Europe and initiated the project concept that was to evolve into the Celtic Interconnector.

In 2011, the PCI status of the Celtic Interconnector under Delegated Regulation (EU) 1391/2013 was granted by the EU. Over the next five years feasibility studies were completed and supported financially by the EU Commission.

The first PCI list was published in October 2013, and the Celtic Interconnector was included. This inclusion would mean that the project would benefit from:

- Defined planning and permit granting procedures (capped at 3.5 years),
- A single national competent authority that would act as a one-stop-shop for permit granting procedures,
- Fewer administrative costs for the project promoters and authorities due to a more streamlined environmental assessment procedure, whilst respecting the requirements of EU law,
- Increased transparency and improved public participation,
- Increased visibility and attractiveness for investors thanks to an enhanced regulatory framework where costs are allocated to the countries that benefit most from a completed project, and
- The possibility to receive financial support under the €5.85 billion Connecting Europe Facility.

¹¹ www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Interconnection_Economic_Feasibility_Report.pdf

A marine route investigation was conducted in 2014 / 2015 with further feasibility studies completed in 2016. These studies were published on the EirGrid website and reported on in the media¹². The initial studies considered the viability of linking the two previously unconnected markets through a long-distance subsea cable that would link La Martyre in Brittany with either the Great Island 220 kV substation in Co Wexford or the 220 kV substation at Knockraha, Co Cork.

The studies were awarded almost €4 million in funding by the European Commission. Following their successful completion, in July 2016, a Memorandum of Understanding between RTE and EirGrid was signed to develop further the cooperation between France and Ireland on this project¹³. It was signed by President Francois Hollande and An Taoiseach Enda Kenny and reported on in the Irish and European media.

Figure 3.1: 21st July 2016 François Hollande and An Taoiseach Enda Kenny signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



3.2.2 Stakeholder and Landowner Participation

The period from project conception to 2016 was prior to the launch of EirGrid's Six-Step process for grid development projects, which was launched in 2016. Notwithstanding this, high level liaison and cooperation at government levels continued in order to build a solid platform for subsequent project cooperation and development. Once launched the Celtic Interconnector was aligned to Step 2 of the process.

Media exposure derived from the strategic importance of the project was useful in raising the public profile of the project in the early stages of development¹⁴.

¹² <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/energy-and-resources/4m-given-to-investigate-french-irish-electricity-link-1.2284878>

¹³ IRISH TIMES 03.06.2012 EirGrid considers Ireland-France electricity interconnector

¹⁴ <https://www.siliconrepublic.com/comms/celtic-interconnector-ireland-france-electricity-cable>

Interest in the project was accentuated by its inclusion on the PCI list with reports made available to the public on the company website.

3.3 Step 2

The objective in Step 2 is for a number of technical solutions to be considered with the objective of shortlisting feasible options.

3.3.1 Project Actions

In July 2016, the Initial Design and Pre-Consultation phase of the Celtic Interconnector was launched. As part of this phase EirGrid in partnership with Réseau de Transport d'Electricité (RTE), the French transmission system operator and project partner, undertook to complete:

- Additional marine surveys in order to provide a clearer picture of routing options for the project;
- Consultation activities in order to get feedback on plans to date, and in preparation for the statutory consultation and consenting processes;
- Further cost benefit analysis to ensure the benefits for France and Ireland are clear and robust; and,
- Initial preparation for the procurement process.

A joint assessment of the feasibility of the Celtic Interconnector project had already been completed. This included a detailed suite of marine surveys, marine engineering studies, and a technical assessment. These assessments concluded that there were feasible options for the various onshore elements of the project and a feasible marine route between Ireland and France was identified.

At this point the studies also revealed the best option for the Celtic Interconnector was to connect to the existing Irish transmission system at East Cork.

It was communicated via the project pages on the company website that the Initial Design and Pre-Consultation phase did not represent a commitment to construct the interconnector and that initial design work as well as further studies of the marine environment close to the shore, landing points for a subsea cable and connection points to the electricity transmission grid, amongst other studies would be required.

To inform and engage stakeholders a project update brochure was developed and made available in digital and printed format containing a summary of the assessments to date and instructions regarding how to provide feedback. The summary confirmed that:

- The project was feasible;
- The best performing option was to connect to France from East Cork;

- That a shortlist of options for landfall locations had been identified; and,
- That the best performing connection point was the 220 kV substation at Knockraha.

In January 2018, it was established that additional studies would be needed along the coast of East Cork. An application for a Foreshore License was submitted to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in order to carry out these surveys.

A copy of the application, the relevant maps, plans, reports and drawings, were made available in Garda stations in Youghal, Ballycotton and Midleton, Co Cork.

Advertisements were also placed in the Evening Echo and Irish Examiner on 18th January 2018 announcing the public consultation phase of the Foreshore Licence application.

The application was made available on the Department's website. It opened on 18th January 2018 and closed on 16th February 2018. Subsequently additional geotechnical and environmental marine surveys were carried out in May 2018.

On 5th February 2018, EirGrid announced East Cork as being the most suitable location for the Celtic Interconnector. The announcement was made at a meeting hosted by the Cork Chamber of Commerce and attended by local and national elected representatives and other stakeholders.

3.3.2 Stakeholder and Landowner Participation

In addition to ongoing liaison with government departments and other such stakeholders including Cork County Council, specific engagements were held with local community and fishery groups during Step 2 including meetings with:

- The Knockraha Community Association on 15th May 2017
- The Ballycotton Fisherman's Association on 17th July 2017

Members of the EirGrid team presented the project to the Southern Regional Assembly in Waterford in October 2017 and the East Cork Municipal District Meeting in Midleton in November 2017. These meetings placed additional information on the project in the public arena; ensuring elected representatives were kept informed of progress on the project and were able to communicate directly with the project team.

Industry and state bodies were also engaged with including:

- Engineers Ireland;
- the Industrial Development Agency (IDA); and,
- Energy Cork.

This served to continue to raise the project profile amongst a diverse audience.

Participation in Step 2 therefore extended to engagement with statutory bodies and professional organisations.

Public engagement was addressed via direct contact with community organisations and elected representatives and added promotion and visibility amongst the general public was achieved via media coverage.

3.4 Step 3

In Step 3, technology options were considered in more detail. Broad study areas were identified, within which options for routes and the locations for infrastructure would be considered. Information was provided to stakeholders including on the methods used to analyse the technology options and study areas.

3.4.1 Project Activities

Step 3 was launched on 5th February 2018 at a meeting hosted by the Cork Chamber of Commerce. The meeting was attended by elected representatives and project stakeholders.

At the meeting, East Cork was confirmed as the best performing connection point for the project.

Following this decision, an information and engagement campaign to raise the project's profile in the identified project area commenced.

3.4.2 Mobile Information Unit

On 9th and 10th May 2018, EirGrid held drop-in sessions in its Mobile Information Unit (MIU) in Midleton and Youghal in Co. Cork. These sessions were advertised in local print media and online.¹⁵ The MIU was located at busy commuter locations on the Main Street in both Midleton and Youghal and were accessible to the public.

Over the course of two days, members of the project team met with stakeholders to discuss the project and respond to people's issues and questions. The mobile information unit was staffed by:

- Public engagement team members; and,
- Members of the Celtic Interconnector project team including onshore and offshore project managers.

¹⁵ See Appendix C for sample advertisements

Figure 3.2: Members of the Project Team at Main Street Midleton, May 2018



The MIU presence was advertised via radio interview on Community Radio Youghal (CRY104FM) in the days before the event.

Emails were sent alerting Community groups in East Cork to the event via the Public Participation Networks (PPN) email outreach.

Stakeholders met included members of the public and representatives of local community organisations.

3.4.3 Open Evenings

Subsequent to the Mobile Information Unit community events, a programme of information evenings was held in communities within the project study area. In 2018 public meetings to discuss the Celtic Interconnector project were held at:

- Glounthaune Church Centre Wednesday 26th September 2018
- Knockraha Community Centre Wednesday 26th September 2018
- Carrigtwohill Community Hall Thursday 4th October 2018
- Lisgoold Community Hall Thursday 4th October 2018
- Youghal, Cumann na Daoine Hall Monday 3rd December 2018
- Cloyne Community Hall Friday 7th December 2018

The meetings were advertised in local media and promoted widely on social media sites including:

- EirGrid project pages;
- EirGrid social media platforms;
- Local community organisations' Facebook pages; and
- Facebook pages of local elected representatives.

The events were also promoted by email to all elected representatives and the local Public Participation Network (PPN) of community organisations.

The purpose of these events was to inform the general public and project stakeholders on the project. The options presented were in respect of:

- The converter station, the key over ground construction element of the project; and,
- The landfall locations.

14 feasible converter station location zones were presented to stakeholders for comment, each zone denoting an area of approximately 2km radius, as well as 5 landfall options.

Feedback forms were made available at the open evenings to gather commentary.

On 3rd September 2018, EirGrid gave an update to local elected representatives at the meetings of the East Cork and the Cobh-Glanmire Municipal Districts.

Meetings were also held with representatives of the Ballycotton Fisherman's Association (4th October 2018) and Youghal Fisherman's Association (13th November 2018).

An update was given to the Cork Regional Division of Engineers Ireland in the Rochestown Park Hotel on 13th November 2018.

3.4.4 Additional Activities

Additional activities and events where the general public interacted with EirGrid staff and could learn more about the Celtic Interconnector project included:

- Door to Door visits from EirGrid personnel to project area stakeholders.
- June 15th - 16th 2019 Cork Summer Show, with EirGrid staff available in the Mobile Information Unit for the duration of the event. The event was promoted nationally.
- July 12th – 14th 2019 Sponsorship of the Youghal Queen of the Sea Festival, with EirGrid staff available in the Mobile Information Unit for the duration of the event. The event was promoted locally in the East Cork area.
- Sep 17th- 19th 2019 National Ploughing Festival, with EirGrid available at a dedicated stand. The event was promoted nationally.

3.4.5 Step 3 Consultation

A formal Step 3 consultation was launched on the 11th April for eight weeks, closing on the 10th June 2019. This consultation considered a shortlist of three landfall locations

- Ballinwilling Strand, East Cork
- Claycastle Beach, Youghal
- Redbarn Beach Youghal

And six converter station location zones in East Cork, including:

- Ballyadam
- Leamlara
- Knockraha
- Pigeon Hill
- Kilquane
- Balyvatta

Landowners in the Converter Station location Zones (c. 300) and in proximity to the shortlisted landfall locations (c. 270) were advised by letter that these areas were being considered zones as suitable for key infrastructural elements of the project and informed of the consultation dates. Letters were also sent to existing stakeholders whose details were registered on the project's database, statutory bodies and elected representatives (local councillors, TDs, MEPs).

Advertisements were placed in local and national newspapers and on social media including social media pages of community organisations and elected representatives and notifications sent via email to the PPN network in East Cork.

EirGrid published its assessments and supporting information on the proposed shortlist of converter station location zones and landfall location options for consultation on 11th April 2019 via the following documents:

- Offshore Constraints Report
- Onshore Constraints Report and Mapping
- Strategic Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report
- Step 3 - Performance Matrix Assessments
- Project Update Brochure - Step 3 Consultation (Spring 2019)

Feedback was invited via an online feedback form, in person at the advertised public meetings, by phone, email or in writing.

3.4.6 Stakeholder and Landowner Participation

The objectives of the initial engagement activities embarked on in 2018 included:

- Raising the project profile;
- Informing stakeholders;
- Gathering feedback and additional local information; and,
- Promoting access to further project information and documentation.

During this period, the EirGrid team engaged with the public through phone, feedback forms, emails, open days, public events and meetings. Media coverage also contributed

to raising the level of public awareness. Feedback was gathered by means of a physical feedback form completed at the information evenings, verbally by phone and in conversation with stakeholders and by email. Attendance at these information events was satisfactory with some venues getting higher attendance than others. Feedback received was informative for the project team and their ongoing assessments.

The Step 3 consultation followed the information and engagement campaign and was widely advertised and promoted.

Step 3 consultation participation was facilitated through:

- Phone
- Face to face meetings
- Open evenings

And online, through:

- Email
- Online consultation forms

On the forms used to capture feedback, respondents were asked how important it was to consider 13 distinct aspects of the proposals, including air quality, the local economy and the historic environment, when choosing a landfall location. They were also invited to comment on three shortlisted locations for landfall:

- Claycastle Beach;
- Ballinwilling Strand; and
- Redbarn Beach.

Respondents were asked to give their views on twelve aspects of the proposals that could influence the site selection for a converter station location zone and were invited to comment on six shortlisted zones:

- Zone 1 – Ballyadam;
- Zone 6 – Leamlara;
- Zone 9 – Knockraha;
- Zone 10 – Pigeon Hill;
- Zone 12 - Kilquane; and
- Zone 14 – Ballyvatta.

Respondents were able to respond by completing an online response form, submitting a letter, sending an email, or holding conversations with EirGrid representatives at consultation events¹⁶.

¹⁶ Please see Appendix D for a copy of the Online Consultation Form

In total 1,037 responses were received as a result of the consultation process. These included 113 records of engagement with the EirGrid team at consultation events and 770 campaign responses that contained pre-written identical text, with some respondents adding their own comments to the campaign template. Five different campaigns were identified, focusing on concerns relating to three of the proposed converter station location zones: Zone 6 – Leamlara, Zone 10 – Pigeon Hill and Zone 14 – Ballyvatta.

Respondents offered various views on the project: Whereas some respondents expressed support for the project, saying that it is a necessary measure to secure Ireland's energy supply, other respondents discussed the potential negative impact the project could have on specific landfall locations and converter station location zones.

All views were captured and reported on in the 'Celtic Interconnector Project Step 3 Consultation Report'¹⁷ published in August 2019.

In addition to the consultations, detailed meetings were also held with numerous statutory bodies including:

- PCI Unit of An Bord Pleanála;
- SID Unit of An Bord Pleanála;
- Cork County Council (numerous Departments);
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Foreshore Unit);
- Department of Environment, Climate and Communications;
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Development Application Unit;
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- The Commission for the Regulation of Utilities (CRU);
- Irish Rail;
- Irish Water;
- IDA; and,
- Inland Fisheries Ireland.

Following the close of the consultation, a Consultation Report and Consultation Response Document was published online. The Consultation report summarised respondents' views on the overall project, the proposed shortlist of Landfall Locations and Converter Station Location Zones, other proposed infrastructure (for example cables) and the consultation process itself. These responses were separated into benefits, concerns and suggestions and organised by theme.

¹⁷ https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector_Step-3_Consultation-Report_030919-FINAL-FINAL.pdf

A number of common themes were raised in the majority of submissions. These were:

- Noise;
- Health;
- Visual impact;
- Farming and land use; and,
- Traffic and road network.

The Consultation Response Document commented on these themes providing additional information to address stakeholder concerns as identified during the consultation. Questions answered in the response document¹⁸ included:

- How will the project be funded?
- How will this impact on the local economy?
- Will the fibre optic cable be of local benefit?
- Will there be more energy infrastructure developed close to the interconnector in the years to come?
- How will the interconnector connect to the Knockraha substation?
- How many cables are there?
- Why was the Knockraha substation chosen as the most suitable connection point?
- Will the local electricity system be affected?
- Will the outcomes of the studies which have been carried out to date be published?
- Will it bring in nuclear energy from France?
- Will this project impact on planning applications in the area in the future?
- Are the forestry sites being considered suitable for a project of this nature?
- Will there be any impacts on local ecology?
- Will the cable be buried or laid on the seabed?
- How many other cables will have to be crossed over in the sea?
- Will the project impact on surrounding marine life?
- Will the project affect the potential for archaeological work at Claycastle Beach?
- Will the project interfere with local radio signals?

Further information was also made available to address concerns specific to:

- Electro Magnetic Fields (EMFs);

¹⁸ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-3-Consultation-Response-Document.pdf>

- Water Quality; and,
- Air Quality.

At the close of the consultation, EirGrid published a '*Step 3 Preferred Options Report*' dated August 2019 on the EirGrid website¹⁹ along with a separate '*Project Update Brochure - Step 3 Consultation (Spring 2019)*'²⁰ that summarised the Preferred Options Report and confirmed the shortlisted locations which concerned 6 converter station zones and 3 landfall locations (please see Volume 3C Part 2 Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) Appendices for Chapter 1 regarding Alternatives Considered that are included as part of the application).

3.5 Step 4

In Step 4, detailed routes and sites are developed that specify the exact position of any new equipment and infrastructure. Information is provided to stakeholders on how the sites were chosen and on what assessments have been carried out.

3.5.1 Project Activities

In November 2019, EirGrid communicated an Emerging Best Performing Option (EBPO) for the landfall option, three options for the converter station location with one emerging best performing option, and proposed underground cable routes. This information was made public on the project pages of the EirGrid website. The information published included:

- Step 4A Consultant's Development Options Report²¹;
- Claycastle - Landfall location and cable route map;
- Kilquane - Converter station option and cable route map;
- Knockraha - Converter station option and cable route map;
- Ballyadam - Converter station option and cable route map; and,
- Project Update Brochure - Step 4 Consultation (Winter 2019 - 2020)²².

3.5.2 Open Evenings

Seven Open Evenings were scheduled to facilitate stakeholders throughout the East Cork project area including:

¹⁹ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Step-3-Preferred-Options-Report.pdf>

²⁰ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/EirGrid-Celtic-Interconnector-Update-Spring-2019.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-4A-Consultants-Development-Options-Report.pdf>

²² <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/EirGrid-Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Update-4-Proof-07-DOWNLOAD.pdf>

- Landfall communities;
- Communities on the DC and AC cable routes including agricultural areas, commuter towns and stakeholders using arterial route in the South East (N25); and,
- Mixed rural / commuter localities near the Study Area of the proposed converter station sites and system connection location.

The event locations were:

- Knockraha Community Centre: Monday 18th November 2019
- Carrigtwohill Community Hall: Tuesday 19th November 2019
- Middleton Park Hotel: Friday 22nd November 2019
- Middleton Park Hotel: Saturday 23rd November 2019
- Walter Raleigh Hotel, Youghal: Wednesday 27th November 2019
- Castlemartyr Resort Hotel: Thursday 28th November 2019
- Killeagh Community Centre: Friday 29th November 2019

The events were planned to inform and consult with the general public, stakeholders and landowners as to the project options. They were advertised in print media and online, with strong attendance at all locations.

In addition to the Open Evenings, meetings took place in Middleton and Cobh on 7th October 2019 with local elected representatives in the East Cork and the Cobh-Glanmire Municipal Districts, in order to present how the various assessments were being finalised.

Notification of the event locations and dates was sent by letter to registered landowners within the shortlisted converter station sites and in proximity to the shortlisted landfall location along with stakeholders who had registered to receive project updates. In addition, letters advising of the consultation were sent to statutory bodies and elected representatives (local councillors, TDs, MEPs).

Advertisements were placed in local and national newspapers and across social media. Email notification was issued to all email addressees registered with EirGid for updates and the PPN network.

At these Open Evenings, adapted and improved methods of communication and engagement were put into practice in response to learnings taken from the Step 3 Consultation. These included the use of visual communication methodologies.

3.5.3 Visual Communication

Previously in Step 3, an architectural model of the converter station as built for the East West Interconnector project had been displayed. This was a representative model, but it illustrated clearly what a converter station could look like. However, it was not intended to confirm what visual impact the Celtic Interconnector converter station would have on its receiving environment.

Rather, a virtual 3D model was built and used at the open evenings to show the view towards the converter station from any local point. This allowed a stakeholder to view the project from his / her own residence or place of business. This system allowed such views to be seen with and without tree cover and from various heights. It gave a more accurate representation, and addressed the visual concern from the perspective of any individual stakeholder. The technology required the use of 2 high speed computers which were set up for viewing at the open evenings. Stills could also be printed off for individual stakeholders. The landfall location was also represented.

3.5.4 Health Information

Health concerns in regard to electrical infrastructure are concerns for stakeholders. While material had been produced to educate stakeholders as to EMF in regard to electrical infrastructure including overhead line and substations, material relating specifically to underground cabling had not previously been available.

In response to concerns, a dedicated brochure was produced which clearly illustrated and treated EMF concerns in regard to underground cabling. It answered questions including:

- How do underground or undersea cables work?
- What magnetic field levels do alternating current underground power cables produce?
- What magnetic field levels do direct current underground power cables produce?

At the Step 4 consultation open evenings, a display dedicated to addressing EMF was manned by a specialist company²³. The display was a physical demonstration of how EMF works and illustrated the issue using, for example, household appliances and measuring the resulting EMF.

The objective was that the demonstration, alongside the improved written information, would help to address stakeholder concerns.

²³ <https://cei.ie/about-cei/company/>

3.5.5 Cable Samples

A sample of an Underground 400 kV HVAC, an underground 200 kV HVDC and a 200 kV HVDC subsea cable and a fibre optic cable were also available for inspection by stakeholders at the Step 3 and Step 4 open evenings.

3.5.6 Stakeholder and Landowner Participation

Over the course of the consultation, respondents were asked to give their views on the three emerging best performing options for a converter station site, namely:

- Site 1 – Ballyadam;
- Site 9b – Knockraha; and
- Site 12 – Kilquane.

Respondents were also asked to give their views on the emerging best performing option for a landfall location at Claycastle Beach, and the required underground cable routes. Respondents could also offer their views on any of the previously discussed options if they felt there was any new information to be considered, offer suggestions for groups to participate in any local advisory group convened to assist with engagement, comment on how a proposed community fund could be used, and provide feedback about the consultation process itself.

Events were well attended at all locations. Locations had been selected to optimise people's ability to attend one or more East Cork location at a convenient time.

3.5.7 Capturing Feedback

With regard to capturing feedback, respondents were able to complete an online response form, submit a letter, send an email, or hand in a hardcopy response form to an EirGrid representative at consultation events. Feedback was also taken by phone.

In total, 1,047 responses to the consultation were received, including 928 campaign responses that contained pre-written identical text, with some respondents adding their own comments to the campaign template.

Respondents offered various views on the overall project, with some supporting the ambition for greater interconnection with Europe. Others felt that the project was unnecessary and expressed concern about some European countries' use of nuclear power, as well as the perceived environmental impact of the project.

Respondents commented on the perceived environmental impact of the landfall location at Claycastle Beach, saying that the beach is currently undeveloped land, and that it should not be disturbed. They also commented on the proposed cable route and the distance of Claycastle Beach from the potential converter station sites and expressed concern that the need to lay underground cables to connect the converter station site could damage utilities and social amenities in the area surrounding the cable route.

Of the three converter station sites, Site 1 at Ballyadam was noted to be a site that was already zoned for industry and therefore not likely to disturb the surrounding communities; however, there was some concern that a large amount of AC cabling would be required to connect the site with the existing Knockraha substation, as this site is the furthest from the substation.

Converter station Site 9b at Knockraha was noted to be the closest to the existing substation and would therefore require the least amount of AC cabling. Respondents suggested that the surrounding landscape could be adjusted to help mitigate the potential noise impact once the converter station was operational. Conversely other respondents said that the site was elevated and exposed, and that development at this site would have a significant visual impact and potentially lead to further industrialisation of a rural area. Respondents also commented on other possible negative environmental impacts as well as potential damage to sites of historic interest.

Converter station Site 12 at Kilquane was noted to have a suitable landscape to provide visual screening of the converter station and to support noise mitigation measures. However there were concerns that using this site could lead to further industrialisation of a rural area, and that there could be negative environmental impacts and potential damage to sites of historic interest.

A common theme across all comments about potential converter station sites was that there would be very little benefit to the communities surrounding whichever site was chosen. Respondents who commented on the community fund generally supported the idea of investing in local community facilities to support a positive legacy from the project.

A summary of the responses to the Consultation was published in the Step 4 Celtic Interconnector Consultation Report²⁴.

3.5.8 Response to Step 4 Consultation

The consultation provided a lot of information which required to be taken into account as part of the ongoing project assessment process in 2020. Particular focus emerged from the consultation on the assessment process for the converter station site.

A number of respondents supported Site 1, the IDA site at Ballyadam near Carrigtwohill, as the most appropriate location for the new converter station, given the existing industrial and commercial activity in the area. Feedback was also received from both local and national elected representatives recommending that full consideration should be given to Ballyadam.

It was agreed that work to determine a suitable location within Site 1 would need to continue prior to a final decision.

²⁴ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-4-Consultation-Report.pdf>

With additional work required, and due to challenges to ways of working due to COVID-19 restrictions it was decided to publish the 'Step 4 Consultation Report'²⁵ in May 2020 and respond to as many of the issues raised as we were able to at that time. Further updates, along with additional findings made during the ongoing assessment would be communicated once a final decision would be made on the best performing option for the project later that year.

A *Step 4 Consultation Report* was published alongside a '*Step 4 Project Update Document (Spring 2020)*'²⁶ communicating what stage the project assessment was at.

In addition, a preliminary Acoustic Study Report was published in response to stakeholder concerns with particular reference to the Converter Station²⁷.

Common themes to emerge from the Step 4 consultation included:

- Noise;
- Health and Safety;
- Visual Impact and Light Pollution;
- Impact on the Community and the Community Fund;
- Impacts on Local Water Quality;
- Recreational Land use, Ecology and Wildlife;
- Local Ecology and Wildlife;
- History and Heritage; and,
- Traffic and Road Network Concerns.

3.5.9 Consultation and Engagement 2020 – COVID-19 Mitigation measures

The publication of the Step 4 Consultation Report in May 2020 was an important step in responding to stakeholder concerns raised in the preceding consultation.

Subsequently it became increasingly challenging to meet with stakeholders face to face, due to Government restrictions in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this, the team remained available to all stakeholders via direct contact numbers and email addresses.

In May 2020, adverts such as that advertised in Figure 3.3, were published in broadsheets and on EirGrid social media to advise the public that work was progressing despite COVID-19 restrictions and provide project team contact details.

²⁵ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-4-Consultation-Report.pdf>

²⁶ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-4-Project-Update-Document-Spring-2020.pdf>

²⁷ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Preliminary-Acoustic-Study-Report.pdf>

Figure 3.3 Copy of Public Awareness Advert during COVID-19 Restrictions

In addition:

- Online meetings were held with community organisations and councils on request to answer queries and concerns and continue to engage and take feedback.
- The Step 4 Project Update Document (Spring 2020) was published online and issued to registered stakeholders by email.
- The European Movement, Ireland together with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland hosted an online webinar on the Celtic Interconnector Project in June 2020.
- To support ongoing communication and engagement, the project team hosted two online information webinars on the 5th and 6th of August 2020, engaging with members of community councils, business groups and interested stakeholders in the community. The project team took attendees through a short presentation where they gave an overview of the project and an update as to its current status before taking

questions from attendees. Following the meetings, the presentation was published on EirGrid's project specific website²⁸.

- An Underground Cable Brochure was published online in October 2020 to assist stakeholders understanding of the underground cabling process.

3.5.10 Closure of Step 4

In November 2020 EirGrid closed Step 4 with publication of the Best Performing project Option (BPO). Due to COVID-19 related delays in landowner engagement and cable route studies however, the identified BPO cable route remained subject to change as studies and assessments on the cable route were ongoing, specifically in the area of Castlemartyr and Killeagh on the N25.

The assessments, studies and considerations which resulted in the BPO selection for the proposed onshore development in Ireland were outlined in the Consultant's Development Options Report November 2020 and confirmed that :

- The landfall location would be at Claycastle Beach, Youghal;
- The converter station would be located at the IDA Ballyadam Site, Carrigtwohill; and
- The main underground cable corridor between Claycastle and Ballyadam would run along the N25 and local road network, with the routes to be confirmed in relation to Killeagh and Castlemartyr. The underground cable corridor between Ballyadam and Knockraha substation would also largely run along the local road network.
- It was also confirmed that an enhanced community benefit scheme would be established for the Celtic Interconnector project.

The BPO was communicated via two webinars, press advertising²⁹, a press release, an email to registered email addresses (c. 600), a letter to registered stakeholders (c. 1,500), social media, and direct contact to elected representatives as well as to community organisations who had engaged on the project. The announcement was also reported by local and national print and radio media.

Online accessibility to information was enhanced with the publication of an 'easy to access' project overview presentation, a project introduction video and an online booking form where stakeholders were invited to book a call back from a member of the project team at a time to suit them.

With the closure of Step 4 the project entered into Step 5, the Planning Process.

²⁸ <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-4-Overview.pdf>

²⁹ See Appendix C Advertisements

3.5.11 Step 5 Engagement

The project entered Step 5 with a requirement for the cable routes to be confirmed in relation to Killeagh and Castlemartyr. As per the Celtic Interconnector Project Step 4b Report, in November 2020, it remained that a number of considerations particular to the cable route in this area required further assessment. In February 2021, it was confirmed that due to challenges to routing the cable circuit through Killeagh and Castlemartyr villages, which had been raised in the assessment process, both villages would be bypassed and the cable laid in agricultural land north of Castlemartyr and south-east of Killeagh.

3.5.12 Communication of Project Update

This update was communicated to stakeholders on 8th February 2021 with the publication of a complete proposed project cable route option which included by-passing Killeagh and Castlemartyr.

This project update was communicated via press release; email blast to registered emails (c. 600); social media; direct contact with community organisations who had engaged on this issue, Councillors and TDs. The update was also reported by local and national print and radio media.

Limited in external engagement activities (e.g. door to door calls) due to ongoing COVID-19 measures, and to ensure the message had been received by cable route communities, EirGrid elected to issue a letter to the landowners on the cable route advising the complete proposed project cable route and providing direct contact details.

This was issued to the Property Registration Authority Ireland (PRAI) sourced database of landowners on the overall route (c. 650).

3.5.13 Churchtown Route Review

Following the project update in February 2021 a number of stakeholders in the Churchtown/Roxborough area of East Cork, on the HVDC cable route raised concerns with the project team.

The project team engaged meaningfully with the group via:

- Email
- Letter
- Telephone
- Dedicated online meetings

In response to the engagement additional information was issued to stakeholders on the cable route including:

- Celtic Interconnector – Key Facts information piece

- **The Electricity Grid and Your Health – Answering your questions**

An agreed outcome of the engagement was the preparation of a comprehensive route review for the HVDC cable route in the project area west of Castlemartyr to Roxborough. This review considered alternative routes and was informed by the latest information available (March 2021) regarding the development of the Midleton-Youghal Greenway and the proposed upgrade of the N25 from Midleton to Carrigtwohill.

The review determined that the best performing option was the proposed route coming off the N25 at Churchtown and using local roads to Ballyadam.

Subsequent to the publication of the Route Review two public webinars were held to update stakeholders. The outcome of the review was also shared with local, national and European elected representatives and was broadcast by local media.

3.5.14 The Community Forum

A call for expressions of interest from interested parties to participate in the Celtic Interconnector Community Forum was opened in May 2021. The forum brings together people and organisations from across the project area so that stakeholder and community views can be discussed, understood and properly considered prior to and during project delivery. Irish Rural Link has been appointed as the community forum's independent facilitator.

Irish Rural Link (IRL), formed in 1991, is a national network of organisations and individuals campaigning for sustainable rural development in Ireland and Europe. IRL, a non-profit organisation, now directly represents over 600 community groups with a combined membership of 25,000. The organisation has a long, successful track record in designing and implementing community relations plans for development companies, community organisations, semi-state agencies and Government.

In addition to providing a forum for dialogue between stakeholders with interests in the project and the project team the Community Forum will also be invited to input on the design and implementation of the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund.

3.5.15 Ongoing Engagement

In addition to the Community Forum Community Liaison Officers remain available for ongoing stakeholder engagement with additional communication activities to be activated over the coming weeks and months.

4 Landowner Consultation and Engagement

4.1 Approach to landowner Consultation and Engagement

Consultation and engagement with landowners who may be directly impacted by the Celtic Interconnector project has been a critical aspect to the project development process. At EirGrid, this role is carried out by Agricultural Liaison Officers (ALOs).

ALOs are responsible for:

- Providing landowners with a comprehensive knowledge of a project in a timely manner;
- Giving landowners an opportunity to influence decisions being made by EirGrid in regard to the project development; and,
- Discussing the siting of new lines and cables, land access, and also providing information on community funds and proximity payments.

At the Step 3 Consultation stage, letters were issued to landowners in the project study area as per information available through the Property Registration Authority of Ireland (PRAI). These letters were intended to inform landowners about the project plans, raise the project profile and provide contact details for the project team to the landowners.

ALO's were available to engage with stakeholders and landowners at information evenings in the communities where cable routes, methods of work and specific concerns could be addressed.

4.2 Engagement process

In late July / early August 2020 as part of the engagement and consultation required for Step 4, direct landowner engagement on the cable route linking Claycastle to Ballyadam and onto Knockraha began.

Phase 1 of landowner engagement involved engaging with landowners for off-road routes at Castlemartyr and Killeagh along with all of the locations where initial engineering surveys identified a potential off-road requirement for reason of river / stream crossings, culvert crossings, major utility crossings, livestock underpasses and for locations where for various reasons an on-road route was undesirable such as tight corners, extensive mature tree lines, etc.

The Phase 1 engagement which ran from late July 2020 to early October 2020 (including surveys of all lands) occurred during a period of limited Government COVID-19 restrictions (Level 2 restrictions as per the *Living with COVID-19 Plan* were introduced on 15th September 2020).

This Phase 1 engagement involved direct interactions with impacted landowners and was essential in involving landowners in the assessment processes required to subsequently confirm cable routes.

Phase 2 of the landowner engagement involved meeting all the landowners whose lands had been identified as suitable for a passing bay and identifying suitable sites for construction laydown compounds. A further 35 landowners were identified for phase 2 engagement all of whom were contacted directly by the ALO team.

It is the experience of the ALO team at EirGrid that direct and personal contact with landowners implicated on projects is essential to identifying and addressing concerns. It is EirGrid's experience that this establishes good communication and ongoing engagement.

The identification of landowners implicated in the studied cable route options for the Celtic Interconnector project coincided with repeated Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions in 2020.

In accordance with best practice health and safety protocols, face to face meetings were prohibited for the duration of Government COVID-19 Level 5 restrictions. This impacted on the ability of the team to engage with landowners. This restriction lasted for 6 weeks.

Alternatives to face to face meetings were considered but deemed unsatisfactory. In addition the data from the PRAI does not contain any telephone contact information making contact challenging.

Landowner engagement recommenced in early December 2020, when Government COVID-19 restrictions were eased to Level 3. Landowner engagement continued up to Christmas 2020 and recommenced in so far as was possible in January 2021, prior to further Level 5 restrictions imposed by the Government in response to increasing COVID-19 case levels.

4.3 Participation

The face to face engagement between the experienced ALOs and landowners ensured a general understanding by landowners of the project, the infrastructure to be developed, and potential or likely impact on landholdings and agricultural activities. This included both direct impact on landholdings and also in terms of moving livestock, etc.

This engagement facilitated general access to lands as required for environmental and technical survey, although some landowners exercised their right to refuse access for survey. In addition, specific engagement occurred where temporary and permanent infrastructure was planned on landholdings, such as off-road cable laying, and the provision of temporary passing bays.

5 Public Participation Methods and Activities

5.1 Public Participation Methods and Outcomes

The EirGrid Public Engagement team employ a wide array of methods and activities as required by their different audiences and project stages. As the project progresses activity is scaled up accordingly and, particularly due to the high level of engagement with Celtic, methods are developed in line with stakeholder feedback and evolving information needs. Methods used for the Celtic Interconnector Project are listed in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Public Participation Methods and Cumulative Outcomes

Steps	Development of Method and Activity	Cumulative Outcomes
Step 1	High level stakeholders awareness activities	Increased stakeholder awareness
Step 2	Dedicated project website pages Dedicated project email address Project Brochure Publication of technical project reports Stakeholder meetings Social media promotion	Establishment of community relationships Increase in publicly available information. Submission of stakeholder feedback forms detailing concerns Concerns addressed by EirGrid
Step 3	Use of visual aids to explain proposals (posters; architectural models) Online consultation questionnaires Focused stakeholder meetings Site walkovers with community groups. Consultation report	Focused community consultations addressing specific concerns. 1,000+ responses to formal consultation
Step 4	Use of visual aids to explain proposals (posters; architectural models) 3D visualisation software to demonstrate visual impact of project Consultation questionnaire online and hardcopy iPad availability at events to facilitate online access to questionnaires and project information Focused stakeholder meetings (virtual) Consultation report Responses to consultation report Webinars	Additional 1,000+ responses to formal consultation

6 Nature of Feedback Received and Impact of Public Participation on Project Development

6.1 Nature of Feedback Received and Impact on Project Development

Table 6.1 sets out the nature of the feedback received according to various categories. It also sets out impact that the public participation process had on project development in terms of setting out how EirGrid responded to this feedback.

Table 6.1 Nature of Feedback Received and Impact on Project Development

Feedback Category	Description of Feedback	Responses to Feedback
Cultural Heritage	During Step 3, the cultural heritage value of the identified converter station location zones (CSLZ 12) at Kilquane was raised by a number of respondents.	A cultural heritage constraints study by Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd of the shortlisted CSLZ was commissioned and a copy of the report is provided in Appendix D Cultural Heritage Report in the Step 3 Consultation Report. Subsequently the siting of the proposed Converter Station site was selected having regard to numerous factors that occurred during the Step 4 process including the findings of the above report.
Visual impact	The nature of circuit construction overhead vs underground was expressed as a concern.	EirGrid confirmed its intention to install both the AC and DC land circuit by way of underground cable in the early stages of project development.
	Concern was expressed over the visual impact of the converter station.	At Step 3, an architectural model was commissioned and used at information evenings to demonstrate the visual impact of the converter station. At Step 4, a 3D visualisation model was commissioned and made available at open evenings to help address stakeholder concerns demonstrating visual impact at varied locations and seasons. Stakeholder visits to the converter station at Portan, Co. Meath (East West Interconnector converter station) were facilitated for stakeholders on request. A video was made available online showing the EWIC converter station.
Health	Feedback was received outlining local concern about the potential negative health impacts of electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) as produced by electricity	A dedicated brochure 'The Electricity Grid & your Health' which details EMFs in regard to underground cables was produced and made available to stakeholders in hard copy and online.. A demonstration of EMFs in everyday life was made by a specialist contractor at the open evenings held

Feedback Category	Description of Feedback	Responses to Feedback
	infrastructure.	during Step 4.
Noise	Operational noise of the converter station was raised as a concern.	A Preliminary Acoustic Report was produced in May 2020 to help address concerns. Noise impact assessments will be carried out as part of ongoing studies and the final design will be within set acoustic guidelines.
Farming and Land Use	Impact on farming and land use was raised as a concern.	Committed to ongoing engagements with landowners to establish how to mitigate impacts with lessons learned from previous underground cable projects being applied.
Traffic and Road network	Impact on traffic and road use was raised as a concern.	The proposed project route has been established in cooperation with landowners with measures, such as passing bays, anticipated in order to ease traffic disruption.

7 The Impact of Feedback received

7.1 The impact of Consultation

Consultation on the Celtic Interconnector project was structured, methodical, consistent, resourced and improved and developed in line with the project and stakeholder requirements as outlined in Section 3 of this report.

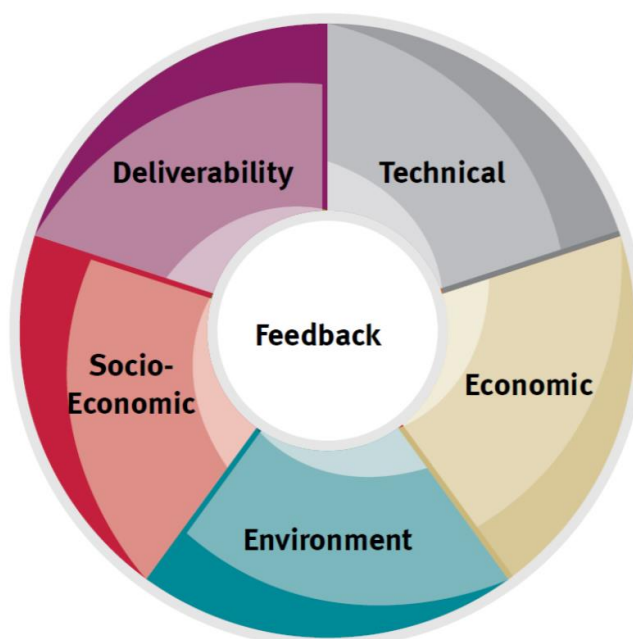
7.2 Outcome of Approach to Consultation

The purpose and aim of consulting, including on an Emerging Best Performing Option was to ensure a robust project development process which could be influenced by stakeholder feedback. In EirGrid's experience, many people do not take an active interest in a project until a precise route or project is defined. However, it is important that EirGrid gathers views before this point and that these views help to shape the emerging project.

An iterative approach to consultation allowed EirGrid to explore options and make well informed decisions. This feedback was considered as part of the EirGrid assessment criteria which includes deliverability; technical; economic; environment and socioeconomic performance. The approach taken to consultation and engagement allowed for:

- Early inclusion of stakeholders in the project development process;
- Early identification of additional information for inclusion in the project development process; and,
- Incremental development of the project in line with the assessment process.

Figure 7.1 Multi-Criteria decision making in EirGrid's Six-Step Process source: EirGrid



7.3 Identification of Best Performing Option

The identification of the Best Performing Option followed a bespoke process defined by the complexities of the project and the high number of considerations required. The sequence of public engagement events, consultations and outcomes is illustrated in Figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2 Sequence of Public Engagement Events, Consultations and Outcomes

8 Additional Activities

8.1 Joint activities with project Partners

As part of the PCI process, the project partners were obliged to work together to inform European citizens, and by default citizens of both France and Ireland, as to the project and its development. This was achieved through the means outlined below.

8.2 Project of Common Interest activities

8.2.1 .eu Website³⁰

This website was established in cooperation with RTE, EirGrid's project partner. This website fulfils the requirements of Article 9(7) of the TEN-E Regulation as it includes a link to the Commission website. It is designed to inform European citizens as to the project context, status and stage of development. It also links back to each of the project partner's websites facilitating additional information to be procured by stakeholders. The website is available in both the English and French language. Key updates and news are posted on the site.

8.2.2 Brochure

A project brochure introducing the project details, its anticipated benefits, current status, and timeline for consultation, is available on the website in both French and English.

8.2.3 Video

An informative video created by both partners illustrating the project details, the anticipated benefits and key milestones, is available on the website in both French and English.

8.2.4 PCI status

Further to the prescribed activities required as a PCI the project has also raised its public profile through consistent political support. This included activities around the securing of a Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) grant for €530 million in December 2019. Activities leading to this milestone event included:

- May 2019: An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar and President of France Emmanuel Macron submitted a joint request to the European Commission seeking financial support for the Celtic Interconnector electricity link. The Taoiseach and Mr Macron co-signed the

³⁰ <https://www.celticinterconnector.eu/>

letter requesting Jean-Claude Juncker's support for the grant application before a European Council meeting in Brussels.

- October 2019: EirGrid, in cooperation with Réseau de Transport d'Electricité (RTE), held an event in October 2019 in Midleton, East Cork on the occasion of the signing of an application request for European Commission funding for the Celtic Interconnector under the Commission's 2019 Connecting Europe Facility Energy Programme. The event brought together a wide range of stakeholders including senior members of both project partner organisations, senior national elected representatives in both Ireland and France, local elected representatives and stakeholders.
- December 2019: A signature ceremony in Brussels occurred on 3 and 4 December 2019 in Brussels, in the presence of Kadri Simson, Commissioner for Energy and Phil Hogan, Commissioner for Trade for the European Commission. It was chaired by the Director-General for Energy, Ditte Juul Jørgensen. Sean Canney, Minister of State for Natural Resources, Community Affairs and Digital Development of Ireland and Fabrice Dubreuil, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the European Union represented France and Ireland.

9 Conclusions

9.1 Compliance with best practice and regulations as per PCI requirements

The approach to public and landowner consultation adopted for the Celtic Interconnector benefitted from the dual requirement to meet the standards demanded for PCI projects as set out in the Concept for Public Participation, those required by both national and European laws, as well as those embodied in the EirGrid Six-Step grid development process. The early focus on consultation and engagement and the additional engagement activity due to the project need to explore a wide variety of options enhanced the process, creating a better outcome for the project.

9.2 Effective Dissemination of Information to the Public and Landowners

Public and landowner consultation and engagement has been central to the project development process for the Celtic Interconnector from the project's inception. EirGrid's six step process has created a distinct opportunity as part of the project development process to inform, engage and consult with a diverse range of stakeholders from an early stage of project development.

Since 2016, EirGrid has employed direct and indirect communication methods ranging from traditional approaches such as face to face meetings, letters and open evenings to using online webinars and meetings in order to reach communities and stakeholders across East Cork who may be impacted or affected by the Celtic Interconnector. In total, over 2,000 responses were received to consultation processes and this feedback was considered carefully alongside the other assessment criteria to assist in identifying the best performing project option.

9.3 Nature of Participation

Participation occurred by a wide range of stakeholders. This included guidance and input from specialised consultants, statutory bodies, business organisations, community organisations, community councils, local government and the general public and landowners.

9.4 Impact of Public Consultation on the Final Proposal

The final proposal has benefitted from robust public consultation and comment. The Best Performing Option has been identified following careful assessment of concerns raised through consultation, and a comprehensive consideration of alternatives, presented for feedback to the public and other stakeholders. These concerns have been responded to both individually and collectively through the development of information material and activities carried out throughout the process, and are reflected in the final project proposal.

9.5 Ongoing Engagement

Engagement is ongoing with stakeholders and landowners. Team members dedicated to public outreach continue to communicate updates and developments.

A Community Forum to ensure that stakeholder and community views are understood and properly considered prior to and during project delivery is in place and will play an important role in maintaining engagement and consultation around the project.

Appendix A: Concept of Public Participation prepared in accordance with Article 9(3) of the TEN-E Regulation

Celtic Interconnector



Connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France

TEN-E Regulation **Concept for Public Participation** Ireland

April 2020



Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility

Executive Summary

The Ireland-France electricity interconnector project, called the Celtic Interconnector, consists of a proposed High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) 700 megawatt (MW) connection, between the 400kV substation in La Martyre (Finistère, France) and the 220kV substation in Knockraha (Co. Cork, Ireland). The interconnector would pass through the territorial waters of Ireland and France along with the Exclusive Economic Zones of Ireland, the United Kingdom and France.

With a total length of approximately 575km this project is being jointly developed by EirGrid and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité (RTÉ), the respective electricity transmission system operators (TSOs) in Ireland and France, who are the “project promoters” within the meaning of Regulation for the trans-European energy infrastructure (347/2013 EU), hereafter referred to as ‘the TEN-E Regulation’.

The European Commission sees increased interconnection as a key step towards achieving a more integrated electricity system and considers the Celtic Interconnector to be an important move towards achieving such integration.

The Celtic Interconnector was designated in 2013 as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) number 1.6 for the North Seas Countries Offshore Grid Initiative (‘NSCOGI’) priority corridor under the TEN-E Regulation. The TEN-E Regulation seeks to modernise and expand Europe’s energy infrastructure and to interconnect networks across borders to meet the European Union’s core energy policy objectives of competitiveness, sustainability and security of supply. The project has retained its PCI designation during subsequent reviews in 2015, 2017 and 2019.

The purpose of this document is to propose a concept for public participation relating to the Celtic Interconnector project, in fulfilment of the requirements of the TEN-E Regulation (Article 9(3) and Annex VI). It sets out the necessary information and measures that EirGrid has undertaken thus far and intends to further undertake in Ireland regarding the public consultation on the project, and the ongoing measures in the United Kingdom and France in order to ensure a high level of public participation in the project.

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1. Introduction

The Celtic Interconnector is a proposed electrical link which will enable the import and export of electricity between Ireland and France and will be the first direct energy link between the two countries, running from the south coast of Ireland to the north-west coast of France. The project promoters are EirGrid plc and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité (RTÉ), the respective Transmission System Operators (TSOs) in Ireland and France.

EirGrid has an obligation under its TSO licence to explore and develop opportunities for interconnection of the Irish power system with other systems and has previously fulfilled this obligation by developing the East West Interconnector between Ireland and Wales which was delivered in 2012.

The European Commission sees increased interconnection as a key step towards achieving a more integrated electricity system and considers the Celtic Interconnector to be an important move towards achieving such integration.

Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) are essential infrastructure projects aimed at helping to physically integrate energy markets and enable Member States to diversify their energy sources and contribute to ending energy isolation. The Celtic Interconnector was designated in 2013 as PCI number 1.6 for the North Seas Countries Offshore Grid Initiative ('NSCOG') priority corridor under the Regulation for the trans-European energy infrastructure (EU 347/2013)¹ (hereafter referred to as the 'TEN-E Regulation'). The project has retained its PCI designation during reviews in 2015 and 2017. This status has been confirmed in the fourth list of PCI projects published by the European Commission on 31st October 2019. The Regulation seeks to modernise and expand Europe's energy infrastructure and to interconnect networks across borders to meet the Union's core energy policy objectives of competitiveness, sustainability and security of supply.

PCI projects can also benefit from accelerated planning and permit granting and also have access to financial support from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). The Celtic Interconnector has already been supported with over €3.5m provided for the Feasibility Phase of the project and a further €4m allocated for the Initial Design & Pre-Consultation Phase of the project. EirGrid and RTÉ made a further grant application in June 2019 for financial support under the CEF to cover the Detailed Design & Consents and Construction Phases of the Celtic Interconnector project (refer to Figure 13) and the European Commission announced in October 2019 that it was awarding a further €530.7m in grant funding to the project.

EirGrid and RTÉ have provided formal notification under Article 10(1)(a) of the TEN-E Regulation to commence the permit granting process for PCI 1.6, the Celtic Interconnector project, to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) in its role as the Competent Authority (CA) in Ireland and to the Ministère de la Transition Écologique et Solidaire in its role as the CA in France. Formal notification has also been provided to the Marine Management

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R0347&from=en>

Organisation (MMO) in its role as the CA in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK).

Where two or more Member States are concerned, the date of the acceptance of the last notification by the CA concerned serves as the date of the start of the permit granting process. In this case the MMO was the last CA to give its acceptance and therefore 31st January 2020 is the start date of the permit granting process for the purposes of PCI.

This Concept for Public Participation (CPP) document sets out the envisaged public participation measures for the Celtic Interconnector project's permit granting and public participation phase in Ireland. The envisaged public participation measures relating to the project in the UK and France are detailed by way of separate CPPs for each jurisdiction.

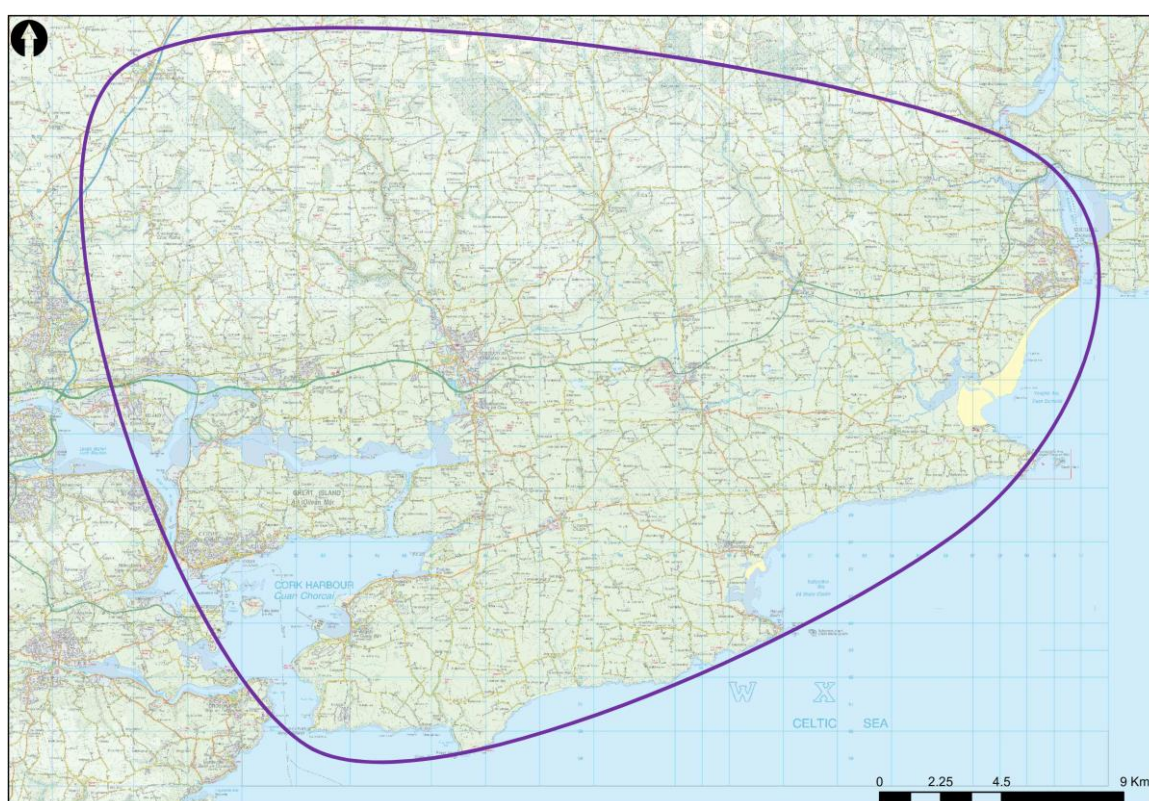


Figure 1 - Celtic Interconnector Project Study Area – East Cork

The onshore project study area in East Cork can be seen in Figure 1 above. Further information about the project can be found on the project websites at:

<http://www.celticinterconnector.eu/>

<http://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/the-project/>

<http://www.rte-france.com/en/project/celtic-interconnector-interconnection-project-between-france-and-ireland/>

2. Project Overview

2.1 Project Benefits

The proposed Celtic Interconnector, which will enable the import and export of electricity between France and Ireland, will support Europe's transition to the Energy Union by applying downward pressure on the cost of electricity to consumers in Ireland and France, by strengthening energy security between the two countries and by facilitating the growth of renewables and the transition to a low carbon energy future.

The Celtic Interconnector is well aligned to support the achievement of Europe's energy ambitions:

- It will enable the movement of electricity across Ireland, France and continental Europe, increasing competition in the electricity market and applying downward pressure on cost to the benefit of consumers;
- It will enhance the security of supply for both Irish and French electricity consumers;
- It will support Europe's transition to a low carbon energy future by increasing the market available for renewable electricity and supporting the development of the renewable energy sector;
- It will provide Ireland's only energy connection to a European Union (EU) Member State following the UK's departure from the EU; and
- It will help to improve telecommunications between Ireland and continental Europe by providing a direct fibre optic link between both countries.



Figure 2 - Celtic Interconnector - proposed electricity interconnector between Ireland and France

2.2 Project Elements

The Celtic Interconnector project involves the construction of an electrical circuit between Ireland and France using High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) technology, the global standard for the transfer of electricity over long distances using underground technology. The interconnector would have a capacity of 700MW (equivalent to the power used by 450,000 homes) and measure approximately 575km in length. The longest spatial element of the Celtic Interconnector would be the submarine circuit which would measure approximately 500km out of the total 575km. The interconnector would form a link between the south coast of Ireland and the coast of Brittany in North West France (Nord-Finistère).



Figure 3 - Celtic Interconnector Project Elements

The main elements of the interconnector are illustrated in Figure 3 above and consist of:

- A submarine circuit, approximately 500km in length placed on or beneath the seabed between France and Ireland. The submarine circuit will pass through the territorial waters of Ireland and France and through the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of Ireland, the UK and France, as shown in Figure 4. The cable route within the UK EEZ passes approximately 30km to the west of the Isles of Scilly and approximately 75km to the west of Land's End on the UK mainland.

In addition to the submarine circuit the infrastructure in both Ireland and France will include:

- A landfall point where the submarine circuit comes onshore;
- A HVDC land circuit between the landfall point and a converter station. This circuit is proposed using underground technology and consists of a pair of cables. There are currently two types of HVDC cable available, either Cross Linked Poly-Ethylene insulation (XLPE) or Mass Impregnated Non-Draining (MIND) insulation technology. Typically these cables are between 100mm and 200mm in diameter and will operate at an expected voltage of 320kV;
- A converter station, to convert the electricity from HVDC to High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC), which is used on the respective transmission grids in each country. The converter stations will use Voltage Source Conversion (VSC) technology and will operate at an expected voltage of 320kV and typically include a range of technical equipment some of which must be located indoors in a series of buildings, potentially up to 25m in height. A typical converter station also includes:

- Control Room;
- Converter Power Electronics and associated DC equipment;
- Alternating Switchgear;
- Transformers and other associated AC equipment;
- Ancillary equipment and spares building.
- A relatively short HVAC land circuit between the converter station and the connection point to the grid. This circuit is proposed using underground technology; and
- A connection point to an existing substation on the transmission grid.

A fibre optic cable would also be laid along the entire route for operational control, communication and telemetry purposes. There would be additional capacity available on the fibre optic cable which could be made available to the market. This model was previously established with the East West Interconnector.

At present there is no direct telecommunications connectivity between Ireland and France, all existing traffic between Ireland, France and the rest of mainland Europe must first pass through the UK land bridge.

A direct telecommunications connection between Ireland and France would provide improved latency performance between the island of Ireland and continental Europe. As well as improved latency, a direct fibre connection between Ireland and France would yield additional strategic benefits for Ireland, including:

- Increased resilience and security of supply;
- Single point of failure reduction;
- Increased competitiveness of the region;
- Providing a marketing tool;
- Potential to attract new businesses.

The overall marine route map is presented in Figure 4 overleaf. The breakdown of the marine cable route by zone is shown in Table 1 below:

Zone	Approximate Cable Route Length
Irish Territorial Waters	35km
Irish Exclusive Economic Zone	115km
UK Exclusive Economic Zone	211km
French Exclusive Economic Zone	88km
French Territorial Waters	48km

Table 1 – Breakdown of marine cable route

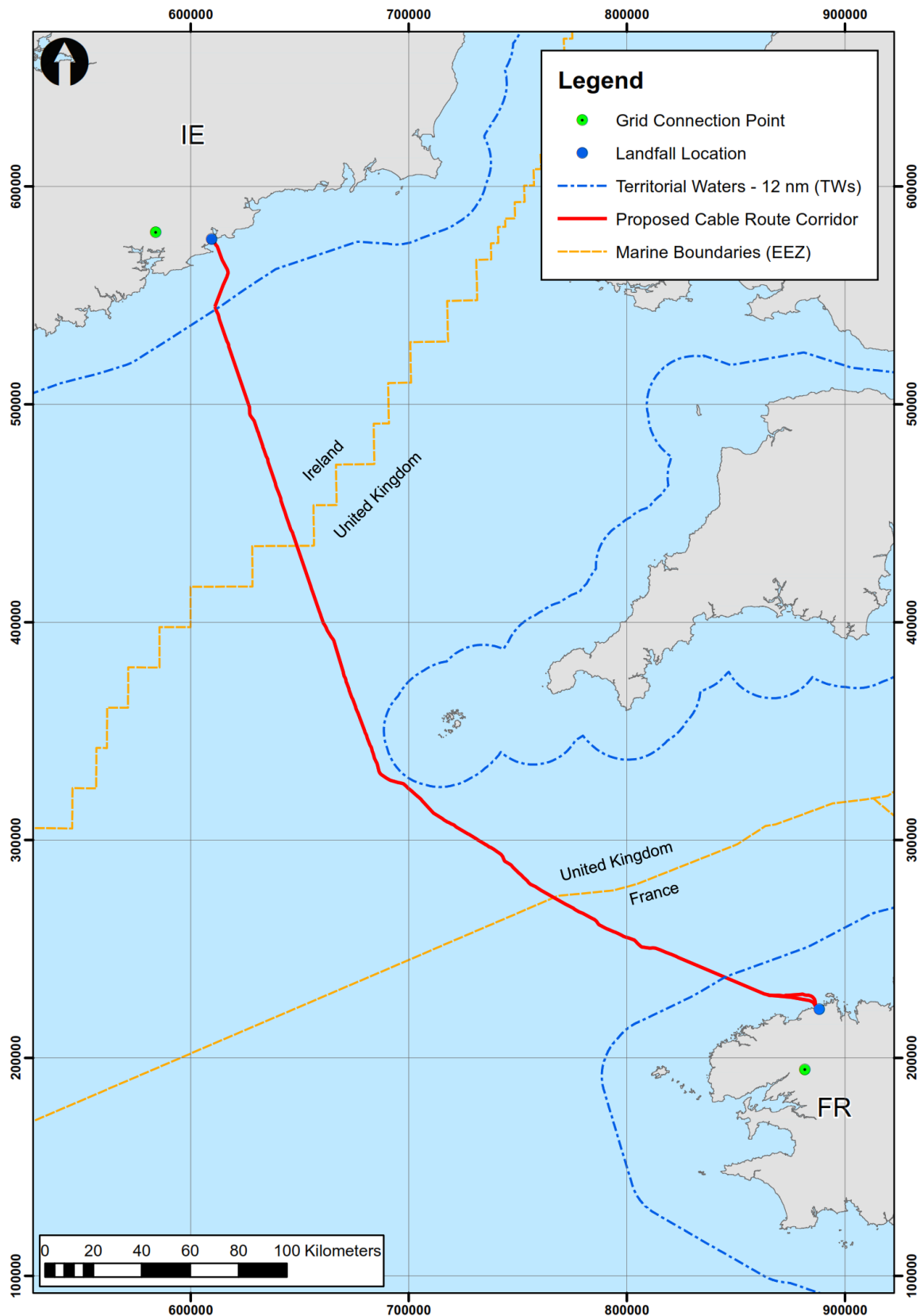
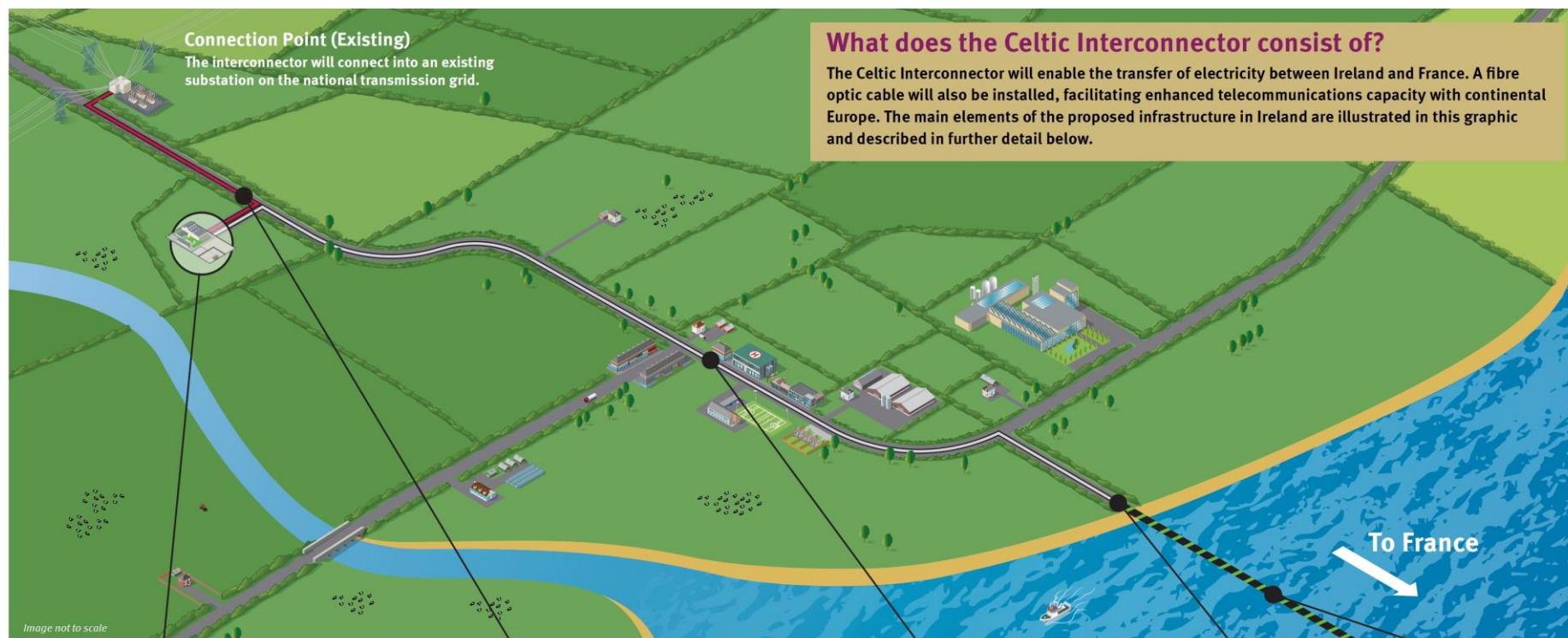


Figure 4 - Celtic Interconnector marine cable route map

EirGrid has also produced a detailed infographic, as shown in Figure 5 overleaf to illustrate in further detail the various elements of the interconnector in Ireland and how they would be installed.





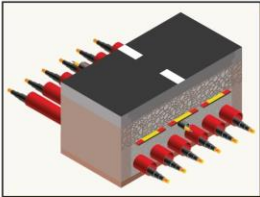

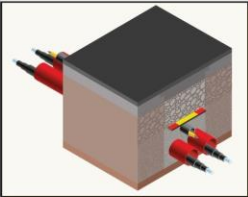
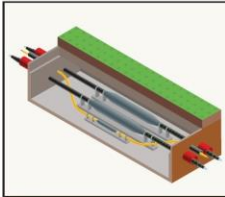
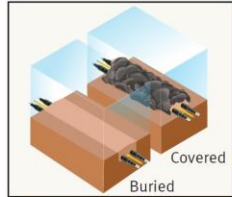
Converter Station	AC Land Circuit	DC Land Circuit	Landfall Point	Submarine Circuit
 <p>The interconnector will use High Voltage Direct Current (DC) technology, the global standard for the transfer of electricity over long distances using subsea cables. The electricity systems in Ireland and France both use Alternating Current (AC) technology, so converter stations are required at either end. The converter station is an industrial type building and outdoor compound with typical dimensions of 300 m x 150 m and a height of up to 25 m.</p>	  <p>The circuit between the connection point and the converter station is intended to be installed as an underground cable. This appears to be feasible based on assessments to date, however it has been determined that a single cable per phase would not meet the power transfer capacity required. Therefore two cables per AC phase would be required totalling 6 power cables. The cables would be installed in ducts under the road network where possible, which would be fully re-instated. Additional equipment would also be required at both the connection point and the converter station once the cable route goes beyond approximately 4.5km in distance.</p>	  <p>The circuit between the converter station and the landfall point will be by underground cable installed in ducts under the road network, which will be fully re-instated. The total length of this circuit is expected to be between 30 – 40 km.</p>	 <p>This is where the land circuit will connect to the submarine circuit by way of an underground transition joint. This will be installed behind the beach where the submarine circuit comes ashore. The landfall point will be fully re-instated following completion of the works.</p>	 <p>The submarine circuit between Ireland and France will be approximately 500 km. It will be either buried beneath the seabed or laid on the seabed and covered for protection.</p>

Figure 5 - What does the Celtic Interconnector consist of?

3. Background to the CPP

3.1 Regulation 347/2013 EU

The Project of Common Interest (PCI) permit granting process established by the TEN-E Regulation establishes the role of a Competent Authority (CA) for PCIs in each Member State to coordinate and schedule the permit granting process and put in place a 'one-stop-shop' to streamline the permit granting process. An Bord Pleanála is the designated CA in Ireland and is responsible for facilitating and co-ordinating the permit granting process for PCIs acting in a collaborative role with the various permitting authorities to ensure a high degree of comprehensiveness in the manner in which the necessary permissions and consents are granted. An Bord Pleanála is also responsible for monitoring the individual time limits within which the various permit granting processes must be concluded.

The PCI permit granting process must take place within a period of three and a half years and is broken down into two separate phases. The first phase is the Pre-Application Phase where the project is refined and any potential impacts associated with the proposed development are assessed in order to help to identify the most suitable location for each element of the project. The preparation of environmental reports and public participation and consultation at an early stage in the decision making process are key components of the Pre-Application Phase, which must take place within an indicative period of up to two years.

The second phase of the process is that of the Statutory Permit Granting Phase, which must take place within an indicative period of up to one and a half years. This phase commences once the Pre-Application Phase has been completed, with the submission of formal consent applications for each of the relevant permits in Ireland, France and the UK. It is currently anticipated that the project will be ready to enter this phase in early 2021 and that the PCI Comprehensive Decision would be issued in early 2022.

In December 2018, EirGrid commenced the PCI permit granting process in Ireland by submitting a PCI Notification to An Bord Pleanála, in its role as the Irish CA. Once the PCI Notification was received by An Bord Pleanála, it contacted all relevant permit granting authorities for their assessment on whether or not the project was sufficiently mature to enter the Pre-Application Phase (first phase of the PCI permit granting process) and in a position to complete it within an indicative period of up to two years. An Bord Pleanála acknowledged the PCI Notification on 21st March 2019.

When submitting the respective notifications to the CAs in both Ireland and France, EirGrid and RTÉ had proceeded on the understanding that no relevant consents were required in the UK on the basis that the marine cable route ran outside of UK territorial waters and that there is no requirement in UK law for any permit or licence for the laying of submarine cables in the EEZ of the UK.

Further detailed technical analysis of the chosen route for the laying of the cable on the seabed of the UK EEZ has indicated geological and sedimentary issues which will likely require the placement of rock at certain locations in order to protect the submarine cable from hazards. Under the UK's Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, the placement of

any object (other than the submarine cable itself) on the seabed of the UK EEZ requires a Marine Licence to be obtained from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), in its role as the relevant permit granting authority for such licences in the UK.

Consequently, EirGrid and RTÉ commenced engagement with the MMO in 2019 and subsequently submitted a PCI Notification to the MMO which was accepted on 31st January 2020, which serves as the start date for the project's PCI permit granting process.

The PCI permit granting process is following the timeline as outlined in Figure 6 below.

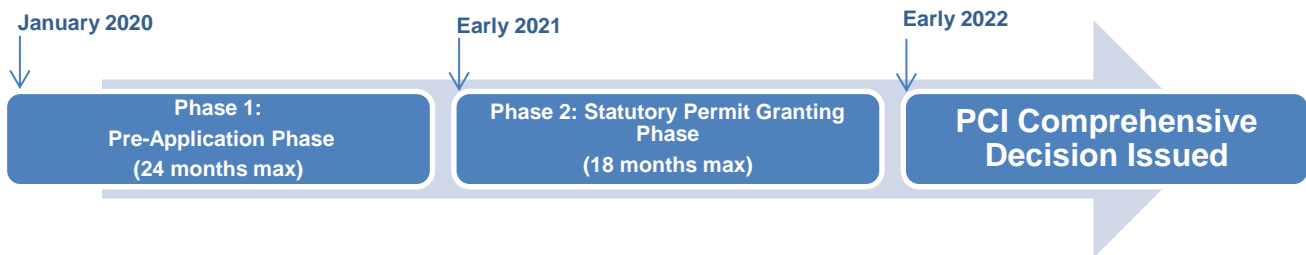


Figure 6 - PCI Permit Granting Process Timeline

Article 1(2)(b) of the TEN-E Regulation relates to the enhancement of public participation facilitated by the introduction of the TEN-E Regulation while Article 9 of the TEN-E Regulation specifically deals with transparency and public participation in Projects of Common Interest cases. Annex VI of the TEN-E Regulation sets out the principles for public participation which the permit granting process established under the TEN-E Regulation must follow. Annex VI of the TEN-E Regulation is appended to this document in Appendix A1.

Article 9(3) of the TEN-E Regulation states the following with reference to the Concept for Public Participation (CPP):

“The project promoter shall, within an indicative period of three months of the start of the permit granting process pursuant to Article 10(1)(a), draw up and submit a concept for public participation to the competent authority, following the process outlined in the manual referred to in paragraph 1 and in line with the guidelines set out in Annex VI.”

Annex VI of the TEN-E Regulation in relation to the CPP specifies the following requirements as a minimum for transparency and public participation:

- The identification of the relevant stakeholders;
- Measures proposed for dedicated project meetings including specified locations;
- The timeline for public participation;
- The human resources allocated to engagement with the public;
- The publication of an information leaflet of no more than 15 pages;
- The establishment of a website to inform the public (to include a non-technical summary of the project, public consultation schedule and contact details regarding submissions); and,
- Written invitations to relevant affected stakeholders to dedicated meetings.

Article 9(3) of the TEN-E Regulation also details the CA's process of review following receipt of the CPP and that they may consider any form of public participation and consultation that took place prior to the submission of the CPP:

“The competent authority shall request modifications or approve the concept for public participation within three months; in so doing, the competent authority shall take into consideration any form of public participation and consultation that took place before the start of the permit granting process, to the extent that such public participation and consultation has fulfilled the requirements of this Article.”

This present document has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála as CA for PCI projects in Ireland in fulfilment of the requirements of the TEN-E Regulation and those outlined in Section 3 of An Bord Pleanála's Project of Common Interest Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures (July 2019)².

3.2 PCI Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures

An Bord Pleanála, as PCI CA pursuant to Article 9(1) of the TEN-E Regulation, has published a Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures (revised 15/07/2019) to assist project promoters, the public and relevant authorities and to provide transparency and assist with public participation in the PCI process.

In Section 3.1 of the Manual, the need for project promoters to interact with the public at the earliest possible opportunity is emphasised. This engagement process is underlined by the Aarhus Convention whose principles are embedded in the TEN-E Regulation. The Manual reiterates the requirements of Annex VI of the TEN-E Regulation with respect to the requirement for and the content of the CPP. The project promoter has an indicative period of three months from the start of the permit granting process (acceptance of PCI Notification) to submit a Concept for Public Participation to the CA which must thereafter either modify or approve the concept within three months of receipt. The CA may seek the opinion of other relevant permitting authorities concerned on the Concept for Public Participation before responding to the project promoter.

² <http://www.pleanala.ie/PCI/PCIManual.pdf>

4. Public Participation

4.1 Introduction

The public participation details described hereinafter comprise several parts:

- A summary of the company's approach to public participation;
- A summary of the project's overall public participation process;
- Public participation in the network development plans or outlines of the network integrating the electricity interconnection project between France and Ireland already conducted; and,
- The principal statutory consents required under the national consenting process in Ireland and the public participation processes therein.

4.2 EirGrid and Public Participation

We are committed to stakeholder engagement and consultation and operate a six step approach to public participation and stakeholder engagement on all grid development projects. This approach is detailed in *'Have your Say; How we develop the electricity grid, and how you can influence our plans'*³. A high level overview of these steps is laid out in Figure 7 overleaf.

Our commitments as part of this approach are:

- We will offer clear opportunities to engage with us;
- We will explain the decisions we need to make – and when. We will explain the factors that influence these decisions, and how you can contribute to the decision-making process;
- We will communicate with everyone who has taken the time to engage with us;
- We will explain how we considered their feedback and the outcome of EirGrid's decisions; and,
- EirGrid's staff will treat everyone, on every project, with honesty and respect.

This approach facilitates open and transparent engagement and consultation with EirGrid's stakeholders and communities. Feedback received through consultation helps us to explore options fully and make more informed decisions.

EirGrid is committed to publishing accessible information, in Plain English, and is keen to meet interested stakeholders on all projects. This commitment to the use of Plain English by EirGrid, specifically on the Celtic Interconnector project, has previously been recognised by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)⁴.

³ http://www.eirgridgroup.com/_uuid/7d658280-91a2-4dbb-b438-ef005a857761/EirGrid-Have-Your-Say_May-2017.pdf

⁴ https://www.nala.ie/sites/default/files/publications/plain_english_awards_winners_and_highlycommended.pdf



Figure 7 - EirGrid six step approach to grid development projects

4.3 Celtic Interconnector and Public Participation

As the Celtic Interconnector project is being jointly developed by EirGrid and RTÉ, the elements of the project in Ireland are being developed in accordance with EirGrid's six step approach above.

In addition, the project has achieved Project of Common Interest (PCI) status. Projects with this status are recognised as developing key cross border infrastructure that links the energy systems of EU countries. PCI projects are intended to help the EU achieve its energy policy and climate objectives. The status places significant emphasis and obligation on the part of the developer to deliver meaningful opportunities for the public, and stakeholders to engage with and understand the project.

A significant level of stakeholder engagement and consultation has already been delivered on the Celtic Interconnector Project, and is outlined below. EirGrid is committed to meeting all interested parties on the project and will endeavour to facilitate all opportunities for persons and organisations to engage with the project.

In 2018 a dedicated, locally based, Community Liaison Officer was appointed to the Celtic Interconnector project. Based in Cork, the officer is responsible for direct communication and consultation with project stakeholders and with ensuring the highest levels of community engagement are met in line with EirGrid and PCI requirements.

Step 1

Step 1 of the process was completed as part of the initial feasibility studies carried out which resulted in establishing the benefits of the project and promoting further studies and included consultation and engagement with strategic stakeholders at a national level. EirGrid's six step approach for grid development projects was launched in 2016 and at that stage the Celtic Interconnector was aligned to Step 2 of the approach.

Step 2

In this step two general areas with feasible connection points were identified for the project. These were East Cork and West Wexford with connection points at Knockraha and Great Island respectively, as shown in Figure 8 below. Five feasible landfall locations were also identified for each area. The objective of Step 2 was to confirm the general area for the project including the connection point and a shortlist of landfall locations.



Figure 8 - Connection points identified in Ireland

Consultation and engagement was completed in 2017 and included:

- Publication of a Project Information page on the EirGrid website;
- Publication of a detailed Project Update Brochure for Step 2⁵ (2017) which summarised the following assessments that had been carried out for both project areas in Co. Cork and Co. Wexford (published on website):
 - Feasibility Study – Converter Station Site & Route Identification in Ireland⁶;
 - Land Report⁷ (identification & analysis of landfall locations);
 - Route Investigation Report⁸ (identification & analysis of marine route options);
 - Feasibility Study – Network Analysis⁹; and
 - Social Impact Assessment Baseline Report¹⁰.
- The Project Update Brochure outlined that the assessments had concluded that the project was feasible and that the best performing option was to connect to France via East Cork;
- Engagement in stakeholder outreach through meetings with:
 - Local community and fisheries groups e.g. meeting with the Knockraha Community Association on 15th May 2017 and meeting with the Ballycotton Fisherman's Association on 17th July 2017;
 - Elected representatives e.g. presentations to the Southern Regional Assembly meeting in Waterford on 6th October 2017 and the East Cork Municipal District Meeting in Midleton on 6th November 2017; and
 - Industry bodies including Engineers Ireland, IDA, Energy Cork, etc.;

⁵ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Update-Brochure.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/PE424-F0000-R000-038-001.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Land-Study-Report-2.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Marine-Route-Investigation.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Feasibility-Phase-Network-Analysis.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-IC-S2-Social-Impact-Baseline-Report-Apr2017.pdf>

- Public consultation from 13th June 2017 to 11th July 2017 specific to the foreshore licence application process for marine survey investigations.

Step 3

Step 3 was launched on 5th February 2018 at a meeting held in the Cork Chamber of Commerce office with both local and national elected representatives and business leaders. During this meeting, EirGrid confirmed that the best performing connection point for the project was in East Cork and also outlined the objectives of Step 3 which focussed on identifying a shortlist of options for the converter station and landfall location in East Cork.



Figure 9 – Initial list of project options identified at the outset of Step 3

EirGrid published a detailed Project Update Brochure for Step 3¹¹ (2018) which outlined the initial list of project options identified, as shown in Figure 9 above, and the onshore and offshore assessments to be carried out as part of Step 3.

On 9th and 10th May 2018, EirGrid held drop in sessions in its mobile information unit in Midleton and Youghal in Co. Cork. On 3rd September 2018, EirGrid gave an update as to the ongoing project assessments to local elected representatives at the meetings of the East Cork and Cobh-Glanmire Municipal Districts. EirGrid then held a number of public information and consultation meetings with project stakeholders in East Cork, which were advertised in local media and through local elected representatives, to inform them about the shortlisting process that was underway and to seek their input as follows:

¹¹ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Update-Brochure-2018.pdf>

- 26th September 2018 in Glounthaune,
- 26th September 2018 in Knockraha,
- 4th October 2018 in Carrigtwohill,
- 4th October 2018 in Lisgoold,
- 3rd December 2018 in Youghal, and
- 7th December 2018 in Cloyne.

Meetings were also held with representatives of the Ballycotton Fisherman's Association on 4th October 2018 and Youghal Fisherman's Association on 13th November 2018. An update presentation on the project's development was also given to the Cork Regional Division of Engineers Ireland in the Rochestown Park Hotel on 13th November 2018.

EirGrid published its assessments and supporting information on the proposed shortlists of converter station location zones and landfall location options on 11th April 2019 via the following documents:

- Offshore Constraints Report¹²;
- Onshore Constraints Report and Mapping¹³;
- Strategic Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report¹⁴;
- Step 3 - Performance Matrix Assessments¹⁵;
- Project Update Brochure - Step 3 Consultation (Spring 2019)¹⁶.

EirGrid held a round of consultation on Step 3 from 11th April to 10th June 2019 where six separate public information and consultation meetings were held in East Cork as follows:

- 23rd April 2019 in Lisgoold,
- 24th April 2019 in Knockraha,
- 30th April 2019 in Carrigtwohill,
- 1st May 2019 in Midleton,
- 2nd May 2019 in Cloyne, and
- 3rd May 2019 in Youghal.

Prior to the launch of the consultation, EirGrid wrote to registered landowners within the shortlisted converter station location zones and in proximity to the shortlisted landfall locations along with existing stakeholders on the project's database, statutory bodies and elected representatives (local councillors, TDs, MEPs), to advise them that EirGrid had published its assessments and supporting information on the proposed shortlists. EirGrid also advertised the consultation through social media and through local and national newspapers. In these communications stakeholders were advised of the dates of the public information meetings along with the various means in which feedback on the project could be submitted:

¹² <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Step-3-Offshore-Constraints-Report.pdf>

¹³ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Step-3-Onshore-Constraints-Report.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Step-3-SIA-Scoping-Report.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Step-3-Performance-Matrix-Assessments.pdf>

¹⁶ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/EirGrid-Celtic-Interconnector-Update-Spring-2019.pdf>

- Completing an online feedback form on the EirGrid project website;
- Attending the public information meetings and giving feedback in person; and
- Contacting the project team by email, phone or in writing to the contact details provided.

The public information meetings were supplemented by meetings in Midleton and Cobh on 7th May 2019 with local elected representatives in the East Cork and Cobh-Glanmire Municipal Districts, in order to explain how the various assessments were carried out and to seek stakeholder feedback on the proposed shortlist of options, as shown in Figure 10 below.

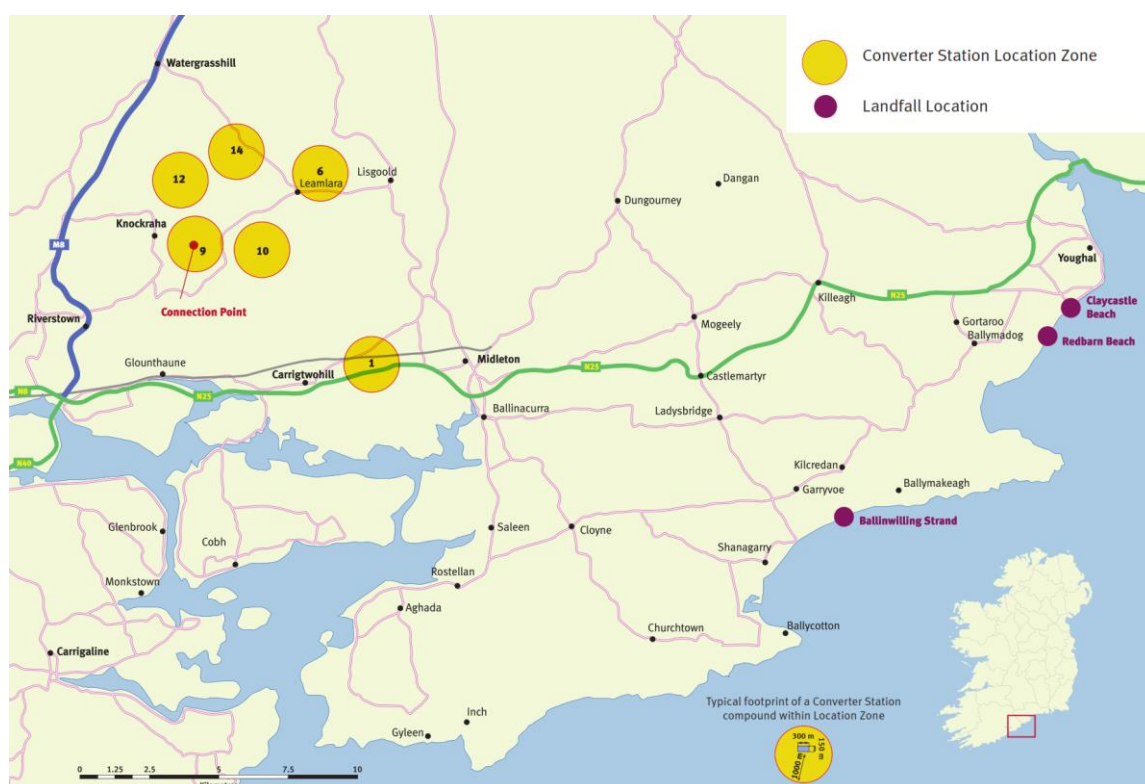


Figure 10 - Refined shortlist of project options identified during Step 3

Stakeholder feedback gathered at Step 3 was analysed before confirming the shortlist of options. EirGrid wrote to all stakeholders concerned in September 2019 to advise them of the outcome of Step 3.

Step 4

Further assessments were carried out in Step 4 in order to refine the shortlisted options which also took account of landowner and community engagements and feedback received during the Step 3 consultations. In November 2019, EirGrid announced that it had identified an Emerging Best Performing Option (EBPO) for the location of the landfall and underground cable routes in Ireland along with three options for the converter station location for consultation with stakeholders.

EirGrid published its assessments and supporting information on the proposed shortlist on 11th November 2019 via the following documents:

- Step 4A Consultant's Development Options Report¹⁷;
- Claycastle - Landfall location and cable route map¹⁸;
- Kilquane - Converter station option and cable route map¹⁹;
- Knockraha - Converter station option and cable route map²⁰;
- Ballyadam - Converter station option and cable route map²¹;
- Project Update Brochure - Step 4 Consultation (Winter 2019-20)²².

EirGrid held a round of consultation on Step 4 from 11th November 2019 to 2nd February 2020 where seven separate public information and consultation meetings were held in East Cork as follows:

- 18th November 2019 in Knockraha,
- 19th November 2019 in Carrigtwohill,
- 22nd November 2019 in Midleton,
- 23rd November 2019 in Midleton,
- 27th November 2019 in Youghal,
- 28th November 2019 in Castlemartyr, and
- 29th November 2019 in Killeagh.

Prior to the launch of the consultation, EirGrid wrote to registered landowners within the shortlisted converter station sites and in proximity to the shortlisted landfall location along with existing stakeholders on the project's database, statutory bodies and elected representatives (local councillors, TDs, MEPs), to advise them that EirGrid had published its assessments and supporting information on the proposed shortlists. EirGrid also advertised the consultation through social media and through local and national newspapers. In these communications stakeholders were advised of the dates of the public information meetings along with the various means in which feedback on the project could be submitted:

- Completing an online feedback form on the EirGrid project website;
- Attending the public information meetings and giving feedback in person; and
- Contacting the project team by email, phone or in writing to the contact details provided.

The public information meetings were preceded by meetings in Midleton and Cobh on 7th October 2019 with local elected representatives in the East Cork and Cobh-Glanmire Municipal Districts, in order to explain how the various assessments were being finalised.

¹⁷ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Step-4A-Consultants-Development-Options-Report.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-CLAYCASTLE-Discovery.jpg>

¹⁹ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-KILQUANE-Discovery.jpg>

²⁰ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-KNOCKRAHA-Discovery.jpg>

²¹ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-BALLYADAM-Discovery.jpg>

²² <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/EirGrid-Celtic-Interconnector-Project-Update-4-Proof-07-DOWNLOAD.pdf>

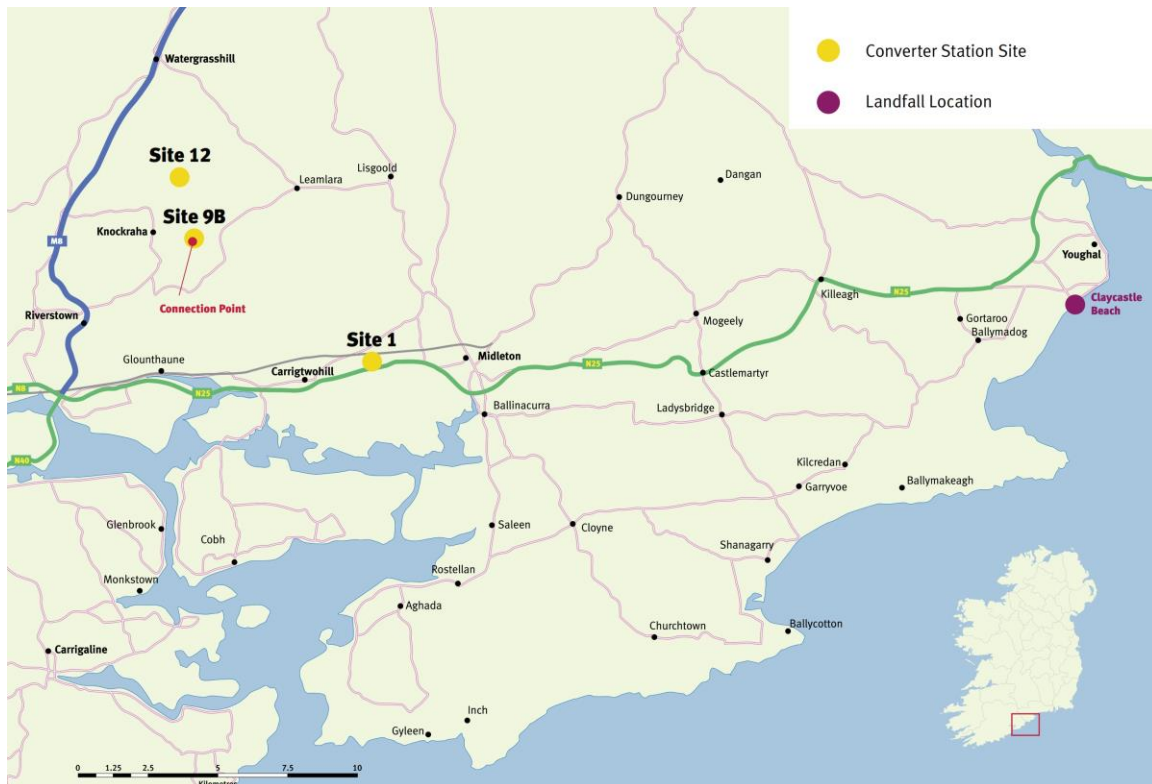


Figure 11 - Refined shortlist of project options identified during Step 4

EirGrid is currently considering and analysing all consultation feedback received as part of the ongoing Step 4 assessments. On completion of this step EirGrid will confirm the Best Performing Option (BPO) for the project, which will form the project proposal within Step 5. Consultation and engagement with relevant affected stakeholders will continue throughout this process. Given the current public health guidelines in place with regard to COVID-19 (as of April 2020) there may be an impact on the ways in which EirGrid engages with stakeholders, however EirGrid will seek to minimise any impact where possible.

Step 5

Step 5 is planned to commence in 2020 with environmental assessment of the confirmed BPO being undertaken and the preparation of the consents application file for submission to the consenting authorities in early 2021. The completion of the statutory permit granting phase and receipt of the PCI Comprehensive Decision is therefore anticipated in early 2022. EirGrid will continue to consult and engage with project stakeholders and keep the public informed throughout the development of Step 5.

Step 6

Step 6 will commence in 2022 with the commencement of the manufacturing process and subsequent construction of the project, which is likely to take place from 2023-2026. EirGrid will continue to consult and engage with relevant affected stakeholders throughout this step to ensure that any impacts to local communities during construction are minimised as far as possible and that they are carried out in accordance with all relevant planning consent conditions.



Figure 12 - Timeline of EirGrid's six step approach for the Celtic Interconnector Project

Community Gain

In response to the 2012 Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and other Energy Infrastructure, which states that '*delivering long lasting benefits to communities is an important way of achieving public acceptability for infrastructure*' and EirGrid's internal Community Gain policy, EirGrid intends to establish a Community Fund for the Celtic Interconnector.

In order for EirGrid to facilitate the development of this Community Fund, specific research will be undertaken into the needs of the local communities that may potentially be impacted by the Celtic Interconnector Project. This will result in the development of a project specific, needs based Community Fund. The Community Fund is scheduled to be released in Step 6 to coincide with the commencement of construction, as per the timelines outlined in Figure 12 above.

Social Impact Assessment

The social impact of grid development projects is a key consideration for EirGrid in project decision making in EirGrid's six step approach to grid development. EirGrid has therefore developed a methodology for Social Impact Assessment (SIA) to provide a consistent format in assessing the potential social impacts of grid developments, irrespective of the scale and complexity of a project. The methodology has been developed in reference to international guidance for social impact assessment published by the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), which has been tailored to the specific context of grid development, and the various steps of EirGrid's six-step approach. It also provides for a proportionate assessment, dependent upon the anticipated significance of social impact.

PCI Process

Further to EirGrid's commitment to stakeholder consultation and engagement, the PCI designation under the TEN-E Regulation brings a number of distinct requirements which are also being met. These include:

- Production of a PCI brochure informing citizens of both partner countries as to the project specifics and benefits; and,
- Publication and curation of a joint project website at www.celticinterconnector.eu.

PCI Information Brochure

EirGrid, in co-ordination with RTE, have produced a 6-page information brochure, available in French and English, informing citizens of both partner countries as to the project specifics and benefits which clearly and concisely presents:

- The purpose of the project;
- The schedule of studies, procedures and works;

The brochure also states, in the form of reference to the appropriate websites:

- The development plan of each national network;
- The environmental assessment process;
- The measures making it possible to avoid, reduce and offset environmental impacts;
- The list of web addresses of the European Commission's transparency platform; and
- The public consultation arrangements.

The PCI information brochure is available on the EirGrid website²³. A bespoke UK version of the brochure will also be made available to ensure that relevant information is provided for UK based stakeholders, including those in the Isles of Scilly. Consultation in the UK is focussing on marine stakeholders given that the entirety of the route is in the UK's EEZ and does not directly interact with the UK's territory.

PCI Website

During the information and public participation phase in accordance with the TEN-E Regulation, EirGrid and RTE have made available common information in English and French relating to the Celtic Interconnector project on-line via a website www.celticinterconnector.eu.

The following information and features are available:

- The presentation of the project, its objectives, its schedule, its status as a Project of Common Interest within the meaning of European Union law;
- A link to the Ten-Year Network Development Plans (EirGrid and RTE);
- A link to the European Commission's transparency platform;
- A link to the list of Projects of Common Interest;
- A link to TYNDP 2018 European network ten-year development plan (ENTSO-E);
- A link to the EirGrid website concerning the consultation in Ireland;
- A link to the RTE website concerning the consultation in France;
- Dedicated e-mail addresses to contact the project managers: celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com and rte-celtic-interconnector@rte-france.com;
- The PCI information brochure on the project previously referred to;
- The timeline of the project and updates on the public consultations;

²³ <http://www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Celtic-Interconnector-Project-PCI-Information-Brochure.pdf>

- The contact details for obtaining all of the documents relating to the application; and
- The contact details to be used to send observations and objections during the public consultations.

Ongoing close cooperation with EirGrid's project partners is a critical part of the project development process, thereby ensuring that clear and correct information on the project is available to all European citizens and that all obligations with regard to public consultation and engagement are being met.

4.4 Network Development Plans

At a European level, the Celtic Interconnector has appeared in the Ten Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) produced by ENTSO-E (European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity), without interruption since 2012.

The TYNDP is the reference tool enabling the European electricity transport system operators to assess, in a consistent and coherent manner, the interest of strengthening the European grid. In terms of public participation, the TYNDP 2018 was the subject of a public consultation from 3rd August to 21st September 2018.

The project also appears in the EirGrid Transmission Development Plan (TDP), the plan for the development of the Irish transmission network and interconnection over ten years, most recently from 2017 to 2027. A public consultation on the most recent TDP was held by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU). Following feedback received from the public consultation EirGrid incorporated feedback where possible, and updated the TDP. A final report was provided to the CRU on feedback received. A final version of the TDP was then prepared and submitted to the CRU for approval.

In France, the Celtic Interconnector project is also included in the Schéma Décennal de Développement du Réseau (SDDR), the Ten-Year Electricity Grid Development Plan drawn up on a regular basis by RTE since 2013. The most recent SDDR is mainly based on the up-to-date information from the multi-annual energy planning or Programmation Pluriannuelle de l'Énergie (PPE) which constitutes the basis of the energy future of France for the coming years and which was the subject of a public presentation on 25th January 2019.

The SDDR was the subject of a consultation within the Commission of Users of the Public Electricity Grid (CURTE) prior to publication in Spring 2019. Interconnection was also presented as part of the consultation with the Celtic Interconnector project being clearly identified.

4.5 National Consenting Process

There are various consents required in order to realise the Celtic Interconnector project and a summary of the public participation processes under the two principal statutory consents has been provided.

Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID)

The Statutory permitting authority for the onshore element of the Celtic Interconnector is An Bord Pleanála (ABP or “The Board”) through the SID consenting process. The SID process has its own public participation requirements as set down in the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). In particular, there is a Statutory requirement for a “prospective applicant” to enter into pre-application discussions with the Board in order to determine whether or not the proposed project constitutes an SID project; the Board also provides other advice to the prospective applicant. There is no provision for public participation in the formal pre-application stage of an SID project (this is separate to the public participation activities that have been and will be undertaken by EirGrid in the project development process as described above) but the pre-application file is available for public inspection once the pre-application stage is complete. In addition, the Board advises that public participation on the project should be undertaken in parallel with the formal pre-application consultation process.

Before applying to the Board, the prospective applicant must publish notice of the proposed application in at least one newspaper circulating in the area, and generally also in a National newspaper. In addition, site notices will also be required in most cases. These notices will indicate the nature and location of the proposed development, that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and / or Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared (where required), the times and places where the application (and EIAR / NIS) can be inspected, that an application is to be made to the Board for planning permission / approval, the types of decisions which the Board may make and that submissions may be made to the Board by the public and others, e.g. prescribed bodies. The Board will also include notice of receipt of the application in its weekly list of new cases and post it on its website.

The applicant must make the full application (including the EIAR / NIS (if required)) available for inspection and for purchase (for the reasonable cost of making the copy) for a period of at least six weeks within which time members of the public, the relevant local authorities, and other prescribed bodies may make submissions to the Board. The documentation will also be available for viewing and downloading on the internet on a dedicated SID project website provided by the applicant. The documents will also be available at the Board's offices and those of the planning authority in whose jurisdiction the proposed development would be located.

The Board has an absolute discretion whether to hold an oral hearing of any strategic infrastructure development case. The Board may not direct the holding of an oral hearing in all cases, particularly where the Board considers that the nature of the issues arising can be adequately and appropriately assessed by way of written submissions.

Foreshore Licence

The relevant permitting authority for that portion of the development within the foreshore is the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) through the consenting process under the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended). DHPLG places a high priority on public participation during the assessment of foreshore applications. At pre-application stage, when the developer initially discusses the project with DHPLG (Marine Planning and Foreshore Section), the developer is encouraged to engage in pre-application consultations with stakeholders.

In accordance with the Aarhus Convention Implementation Guide, Irish legislation pertaining to Environmental Impact Assessment, Access to Information on the Environment and public participation procedures requires notices of applications to be published in a newspaper that is circulated in the relevant area and / or published on-line. The Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended) provides that an applicant, who has submitted an EIAR, must publish a notice in a newspaper circulating in the district in which is situated the foreshore to which the application relates stating:

- That the person has made an application and indicating the location and nature of the proposal to which the application relates;
- Stating that an EIAR has been prepared in respect of the proposal;
- Stating whether Section 19(c) of the Foreshore Act, which concerns applications that may have transboundary effects, applies to the proposal;
- Stating that the Minister is responsible for making a decision on the application and that the Minister may either grant, approve or consent to the application with or without covenants, conditions or agreements, where applicable, or refuse the application;
- Stating that submission, comments or questions in relation to the effects on the environment of the proposal may be made in writing to the appropriate Minister within 8 weeks from the publication of the notice;
- Specifying the times at which and the place where, within 8 weeks from the publication of the notice, a copy of the application, the EIAR and any other relevant report or information (including copies of any submissions, comments or questions received by the appropriate Minister may be inspected free of charge or purchased at a price to be determined by that Minister (which shall not be more than the reasonable cost of the making the copy or copies concerned).
- Where further information is subsequently received by DHPLG following a request by DHPLG, submissions or observations in relation to the further information may be made in writing within a specified period. A second newspaper notice may be required.
- Following the receipt of a foreshore licence application, DHPLG makes the following information available on its website free of charge:
 - Name of applicant
 - Date of application
 - Nature of development
 - All application documents including application form, EIARs (if any), Appropriate Assessment Screening, maps, drawings, reports etc.

5. Consultation Timeline

The Celtic Interconnector project has been in development between EirGrid and RTE since 2011, as shown in the project roadmap in Figure 13 below.

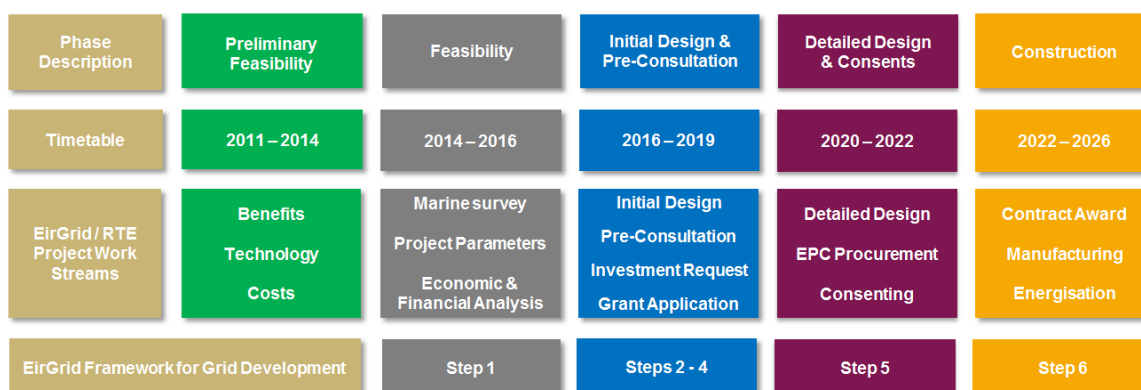


Figure 13 - Celtic Interconnector Project Roadmap

EirGrid has been carrying out high level consultation and engagement with strategic stakeholders at a national level since inception and consultation and engagement with project stakeholders (including members of the public) from Step 2 since 2017, as per the timeline shown in Figure 14 below. Consultation and engagement will continue throughout Steps 4 and 5 at locations in East Cork relevant to the options identified for the project.

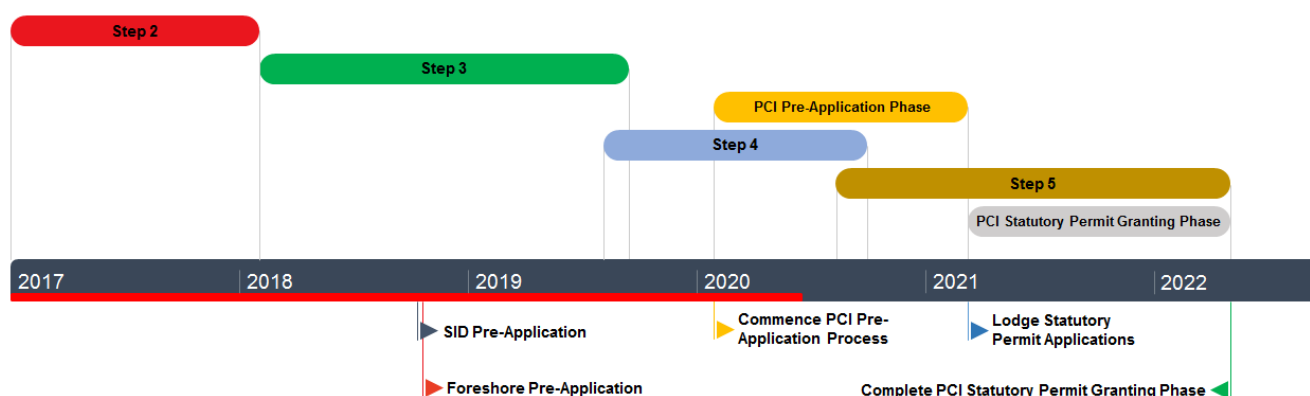


Figure 14 - Celtic Interconnector Project Consultation Timeline

6. Project Stakeholders

6.1 Stakeholder Identification

Engagement with stakeholders concerned by the project is a key part of each step of the EirGrid approach to grid development. Since the project's inception EirGrid has been continually identifying additional stakeholders who have an interest in the project. EirGrid maintains a stakeholder management database specific to the project which is updated on a regular basis.

The process of identifying stakeholders has been both:

- Proactive; and
- Passive.

Examples of proactive forms of stakeholder identification include:

- Stakeholder mapping workshops;
- Early stage communication and consultation activity;
- Advertised engagement events e.g. project meetings, conferences etc.;
- Community Liaison Officer activity in local areas;
- Review of desktop information e.g. data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Property Registration Authority of Ireland (PRAI); and
- Engagement with statutory bodies.

Examples of passive forms of stakeholder identification include previously unidentified stakeholders interacting with the project in response to:

- Project website;
- Social media;
- Media reporting; and
- Word of mouth.

EirGrid is open and accessible to project stakeholders through dedicated phone, email and postal contact details which are available on all project material and on the project website.

6.2 Stakeholders Concerned

A non-exhaustive list of project stakeholders in Ireland is detailed in Table 2 below.

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name
Community Organisations within Project Study Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Taisce Green Coast • Irish Farmers' Association • Clean Coasts Ballynamona • Youghal Residents Network, Cumann na Daoine • The Irish Environmental Network • Enterprise Youghal • South Coast Charter Angling • Youghal For All • Ironman • Ballycotton Development Company • Cork Tourist Information Centre • National Inshore Fisheries Forum • Inch Hideaway Eco-Sustainable Camp • Carrigtohill Community Council • Rocklands Residents Association • Cul Ard Residents Association • Carrigtohill United FC • Midleton MY PLACE Limited • Midleton GAA Club • Midleton Football Club • Midleton Rugby Club • Midleton Post Office • Midleton Pitch and Putt Club • Midleton Farmers Market • Midleton Country Market • Ballyspillane West & Surrounding Area Action Group • Knockraha Area Community Association • Lisgoold GAA Club • Lisgoold Community Childcare Centre • Brookfield Care Centre • Lisgoold / Leamlara Community Council • Leamlara Montessori School • Dungourney Church • Dungourney GAA Club • Dungourney Camogie Club • Midleton & Area Chamber of Commerce • SECAD Partnership • Youghal RNLI lifeboat station • Ballycotton Medical Centre • Ballycotton RNLI lifeboat station • Ballycotton Fisherman's Association • Youghal Fisherman's Association

Local Enterprise within Project Study Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perks Entertainment Centre • Claycastle Pitch & Putt Club • Summerfield Holiday Park • Seafield Caravan Park • Youghal Dive Charters / Deep Sea Angling • Ballymaloe House Restaurant • Inn by the Harbour • Garryvoe Hotel • Ballycotton Pitch and Putt Club • Stephen Pearce Pottery • Swell Surf School • East Cork Tourism Ltd. • Irish Distillers • Dairygold Co-Operative Society Ltd • Jasmine Villa Caravan and Camping Park • Barryscourt Castle • Nordic Enterprise Park Management Company • Europa Enterprise Park Management Company • Water Rock Golf Club • East Cork Golf Club • The Paddocks Holiday Village • The Thatched Inn • Castlemartyr Resort and Castlemartyr Golf Resort • Trabolgan Holiday Village
Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission for Regulation of Utilities • Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Political – Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission • European Parliament • French Government • MEPs
Political – National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of An Taoiseach • Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment • Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation • Oireachtas committees • TD's representing the constituencies of Cork
Political – Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Regional Assembly • County Councillors representing East Cork and Cobh-Glanmire Municipal Districts
Policy – Europe, National, Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E) • Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) • European Investment Bank (EIB)

Statutory Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Bord Pleanála • Cork County Council • Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine • Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht • Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government • Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment • Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport • Transport Infrastructure Ireland • Eirvia (Irish Water and Gas Networks Ireland) • Electricity Supply Board • An Chomhairle Ealaíon (Arts Council) • Fáilte Ireland • An Taisce (the National Trust for Ireland) • The Heritage Council • Regional Fisheries Board • Sea Fisheries Protection Agency • Bord Iascaigh Mhara • Irish Aviation Authority • Córas Iompair Éireann • Health Service Executive • Environmental Protection Agency • Railway Safety Commission • Health and Safety Authority • The Defence Forces • Inland Fisheries Ireland • The Marine Institute
Industry Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDA • IBEC • Chambers Ireland • French Irish Chamber of Commerce • Cork Chamber of Commerce
Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public and private landowners with a land holding of interest within project study area
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast • Press • Online media outlets at a local, national and European level

Table 2 – Project Stakeholders

6.3 Methods of Addressing Stakeholders

For each specific consultation held, project materials are prepared in order to enhance and support the consultation process with a view to securing effective engagement and enabling it to influence the location and form of the development. Engagement is carried out through various project specific means including public advertisements, written correspondence to project stakeholders and registered landowners, project information brochures, project specific web-site, consultation events and community outreach meetings.

Examples of engagement methods employed include (but are not limited to):

- Project Information Brochures (see examples in Figure 15 below);
- Correspondence via email and in writing;
- High level stakeholder events;
- Face to face meetings;
- Public Information Meetings;
- Presentation of cable samples and typical converter station model (see examples in Figure 24);
- Community Liaison Officer engaging at a local level on a regular basis with mobile phone / email contact details available in brochures and on website;
- Project team attendance at local events e.g. Energy Cork Annual Conference, INFOMAR Annual Conference, the Cork Summer Show etc.;
- Press releases;
- Advertising;
- Social media activity, e.g. proactive via posts on EirGrid and local community Facebook / Twitter accounts to advertise project and engagement events;
- Development of engaging collateral, e.g.: brochures, web pages, videos, etc.;
- Online feedback forms; and,
- Mobile Information Unit visits to locations within the study area.



Figure 15 - Celtic Interconnector Project Information Brochures

Photographs giving examples of some of the public consultations that have been carried out to date have been included in Appendix A2.

7. Human Resources

The Celtic Interconnector is being jointly developed between EirGrid and RTÉ. EirGrid is responsible for the development of the project in Ireland and is resourcing the project with internal staff and with the support of external consultants.

Some of the key resources in Ireland are listed in Table 3 and Table 4 below.

Role	Resource Name
Project Manager	Gary Nolan
Onshore Project Manager (Consultation / Consenting Process)	Eoghan Tuite
Offshore Lead / Fisheries Liaison Officer	Erlend Christiansen
Project Communications Specialist	Jamie Moore
Community Liaison Officer (Cork Based)	Michelle Walsh
Community Liaison Officer (Southern Region)	Eoghan O'Sullivan
Agricultural Liaison Officer	Seán Kenny

Table 3 - EirGrid Resources

Role	Resource Name
Lead Consenting Consultant	Mott MacDonald Ireland Limited

Table 4 - External Resources

Appendix A1 – TEN-E Annex VI

25.4.2013

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Official Journal of the European Union

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ANNEX VI

GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- (1) The manual of procedures referred to in Article 9(1) shall at least specify:
 - (a) the relevant law upon which decisions and opinions are based for the different types of relevant projects of common interest, including environmental law;
 - (b) the relevant decisions and opinions to be obtained;
 - (c) the names and contact details of the Competent Authority, other authorities and major stakeholders concerned;
 - (d) the work flow, outlining each stage in the process, including an indicative time frame and a concise overview of the decision-making process;
 - (e) information about the scope, structure and level of detail of documents to be submitted with the application for decisions, including a checklist;
 - (f) the stages and means for the general public to participate in the process.
- (2) The detailed schedule referred to in Article 10(4)(b) shall specify as a minimum the following:
 - (a) the decisions and opinions to be obtained;
 - (b) the authorities, stakeholders, and the public likely to be concerned;
 - (c) the individual stages of the procedure and their duration;
 - (d) major milestones to be accomplished and their deadlines in view of the comprehensive decision to be taken;
 - (e) the resources planned by the authorities and possible additional resource needs.
- (3) To increase public participation in the permit granting process and ensure in advance information and dialogue with the public, the following principles shall be applied:
 - (a) The stakeholders affected by a project of common interest, including relevant national, regional and local authorities, landowners and citizens living in the vicinity of the project, the general public and their associations, organisations or groups, shall be extensively informed and consulted at an early stage, when potential concerns by the public can still be taken into account and in an open and transparent manner. Where relevant, the competent authority shall actively support the activities undertaken by the project promoter.
 - (b) Competent authorities shall ensure that public consultation procedures for projects of common interest are grouped together where possible. Each public consultation shall cover all subject matters relevant to the particular stage of the procedure, and one subject matter relevant to the particular stage of the procedure shall not be addressed in more than one public consultation; however, one public consultation may take place in more than one geographical location. The subject matters addressed by a public consultation shall be clearly indicated in the notification of the public consultation.
 - (c) Comments and objections shall be admissible from the beginning of the public consultation until the expiry of the deadline only.
- (4) The concept for public participation shall at least include information about:
 - (a) the stakeholders concerned and addressed;
 - (b) the measures envisaged, including proposed general locations and dates of dedicated meetings;
 - (c) the timeline;
 - (d) the human resources allocated to the respective tasks.

- (5) In the context of the public consultation to be carried out before submission of the application file, the relevant parties shall at least:
- (a) publish an information leaflet of no more than 15 pages, giving, in a clear and concise manner, an overview of the purpose and preliminary timetable of the project, the national grid development plan, alternative routes considered, expected impacts, including of cross-border nature, and possible mitigation measures, which shall be published prior to the start of the consultation; The information leaflet shall furthermore list the web addresses of the transparency platform referred to in Article 18 and of the manual of procedures referred to in point (1);
 - (b) inform all stakeholders affected about the project through the website referred to in Article 9(7) and other appropriate information means;
 - (c) invite in written form relevant affected stakeholders to dedicated meetings, during which concerns shall be discussed.
- (6) The project website shall make available as a minimum the following:
- (a) the information leaflet referred to in point (5);
 - (b) a non-technical and regularly updated summary of no more than 50 pages reflecting the current status of the project and clearly indicating, in case of updates, changes to previous versions;
 - (c) the project and public consultation planning, clearly indicating dates and locations for public consultations and hearings and the envisaged subject matters relevant for those hearings;
 - (d) contact details in view of obtaining the full set of application documents;
 - (e) contact details in view of conveying comments and objections during public consultations.
-

Appendix A2 – Examples of consultation to date



Figure 16 - Project information session held in Knockraha in May 2017

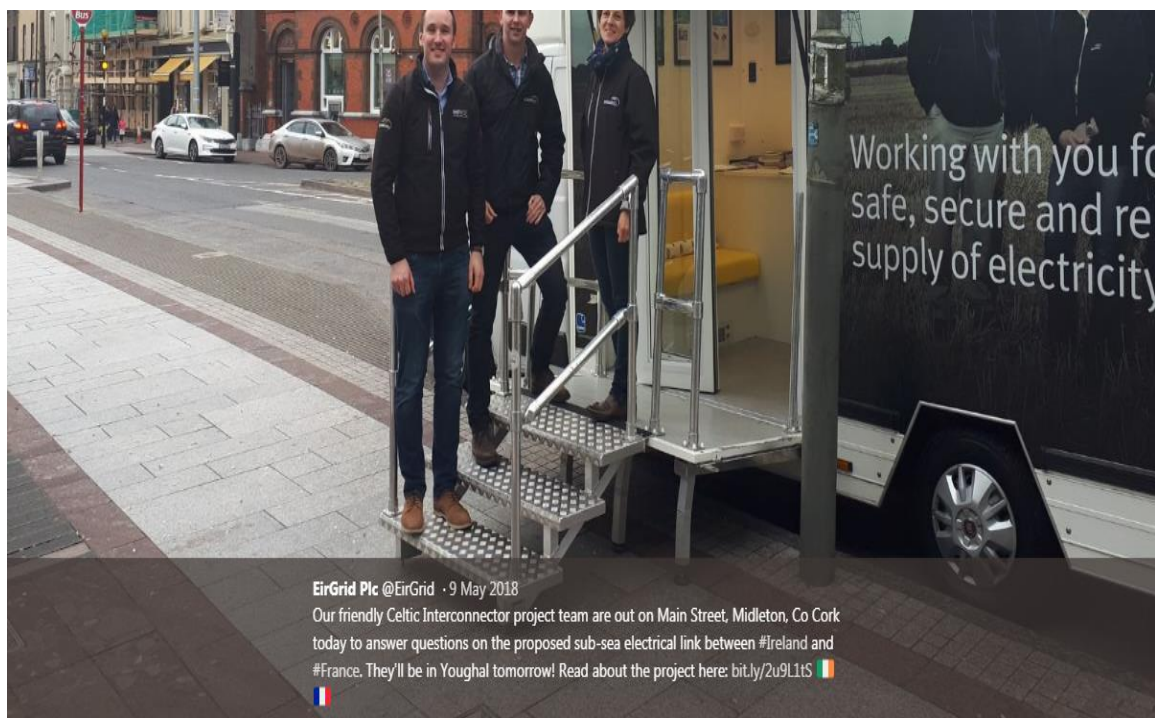


Figure 17 - Project information session held in Midleton in May 2018



Figure 18 - Project information session held in Youghal in May 2018



Figure 19 - Project information session held in Lisgoold in October 2018



Figure 20 - Project information session held in Cloyne in December 2018

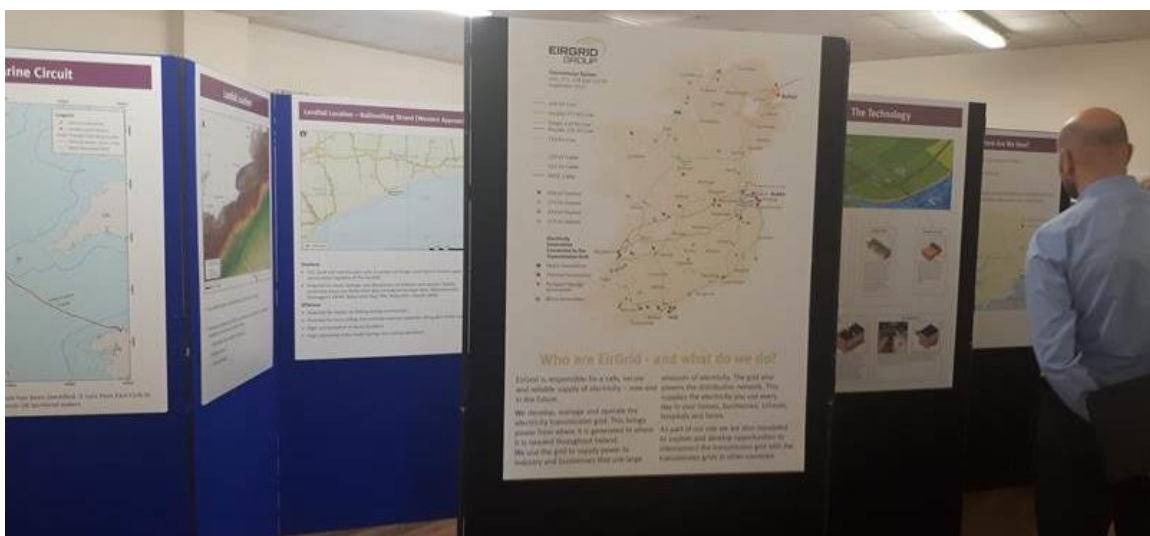


Figure 21 - Project information session held in Carrigtwohill in April 2019



Figure 22 - Project information session held in Midleton in May 2019



Figure 23 – Step 3 project information session held in Cloyne in May 2019



Figure 24 – Step 3 project information session held in Youghal in May 2019

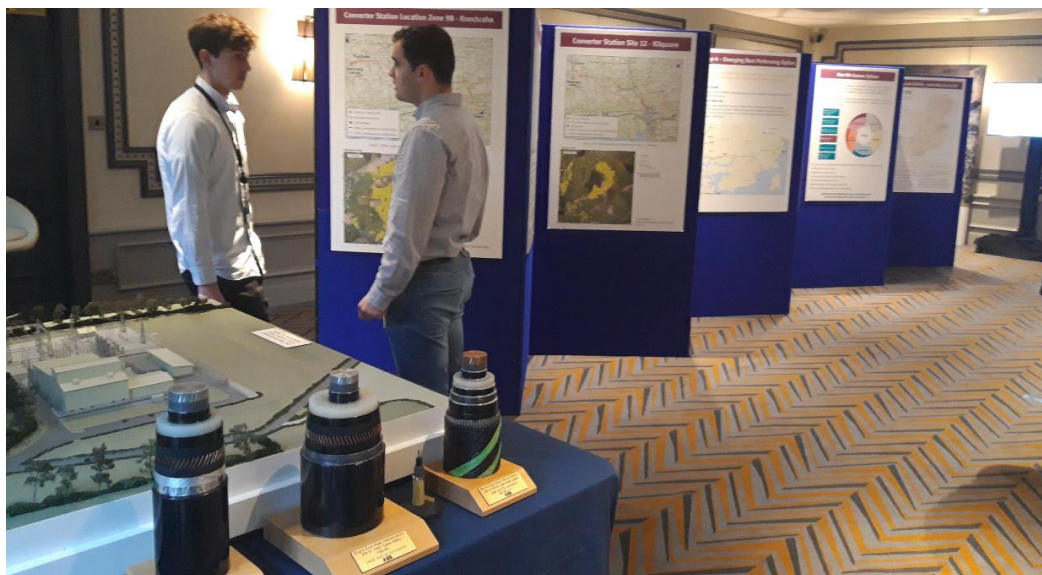


Figure 25 – Step 4 project information session held in Midleton in November 2019



Celtic Interconnector

We're here to talk.

EirGrid operates and develops the electricity grid in Ireland. We are responsible for a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity now and into the future.

Projects like the Celtic Interconnector are part of that future.

This project will carry electricity between France and Ireland, connecting Ireland to the European energy network.

We will be holding public meetings to discuss the Celtic Interconnector project at:

- Glounthaune Church Centre, 26th September, 7.00 pm**
- Knockraha Community Centre, 26th September, 9.00 pm**
- Carrigtwohill Community Hall, 4th October, 7.15 pm**
- Lisgoold Community Hall, 4th October, 9.00 pm**

Members of the project team will be available to provide an update on the project's development and answer your questions. We also want to hear your views on how we can best deliver this project. We look forward to meeting you there.



EIRGRID

The current. The future.

www.eirgridgroup.com

Contact Michelle Walsh on **085 870 4999** or Eoghan O'Sullivan on **087 247 7732**
or email **celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com**

Figure 26 - Step 3 Public Meeting Advertisement 2018 (placed in local / national newspapers)



Celtic Interconnector

We're here to talk.

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Projects like the Celtic Interconnector are part of that future.

This project will carry electricity between France and Ireland, connecting Ireland to the European energy network.

We will be holding public meetings to discuss the Celtic Interconnector project at:

Youghal on Monday 3rd December at the Cumann na Daoine Hall from 5pm – 8pm
Cloyne on Friday 7th December at the Cloyne Parochial Hall from 5pm – 8pm

Members of the project team will be available to provide an update on the project's development and answer your questions. We also want to hear your views on how we can best deliver this project. We look forward to meeting you there.



The current. The future.

www.eirgridgroup.com

Contact Michelle Walsh on **085 870 4999** or Eoghan O'Sullivan on **087 247 7732**
or email **celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com**

Figure 27 - Step 3 Public Meeting Advertisement 2018 (placed in local / national newspapers)



Celtic Interconnector

We're here to listen.

EirGrid operates and develops the electricity grid in Ireland. We are responsible for a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity now and into the future.

Projects like the Celtic Interconnector are part of that future.

This project will carry electricity between Ireland and France, directly connecting Ireland to the European energy network.

We are now consulting on this project, and invite you to attend one of our public information meetings in:

Lisgoold Community Centre	Tuesday 23 April	2pm – 8pm
Knockraha Community Centre	Wednesday 24 April	2pm – 8pm
Carrigtwohill Community Centre	Tuesday 30 April	6pm – 9pm
Midleton Park Hotel	Wednesday 1 May	2pm – 8pm
Cloyne Parochial Hall	Thursday 2 May	6pm – 9pm
Walter Raleigh Hotel, Youghal	Friday 3 May	2pm – 8pm

We want to hear your views and answer your questions on how we can best deliver this project. We look forward to meeting you there.



The current. The future.

www.eirgridgroup.com

Contact Michelle Walsh on **085 870 4999** or Eoghan O'Sullivan on **087 247 7732**
or email **celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com**

Figure 28 – Step 3 Public Consultation Advertisement 2019 (placed in local / national newspapers)



Celtic Interconnector

We're here to listen.

EirGrid operates and develops the electricity grid in Ireland. We are responsible for providing a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity now and into the future. Projects like the Celtic Interconnector are part of that future.

The Celtic Interconnector will carry electricity between Ireland and France, directly linking Ireland to the European energy network.

Between 11th November 2019 and 2nd February 2020, we are holding a public consultation on the project.

If you have questions about the proposals or would like to share your views, please come along to one of our public information evenings in:

Knockraha Community Centre	Monday 18 November	4 pm – 9 pm
Carrigtwohill Community Hall	Tuesday 19 November	4pm – 8 pm
Midleton Park Hotel	Friday 22 November	4 pm – 8 pm
Midleton Park Hotel	Saturday 23 November	12 pm – 5 pm
Walter Raleigh Hotel, Youghal	Wednesday 27 November	12 pm – 8 pm
Castlemartyr Resort Hotel	Thursday 28 November	4 pm – 8 pm
Killeagh Community Centre	Friday 29 November	4 pm - 8 pm

There will also be a feedback form on our website where you can give us your thoughts.

If you want to find out more, see www.eirgridgroup.com

We look forward to hearing your views.



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

The current. The future.

www.eirgridgroup.com

Contact Michelle Walsh on **085 870 4999** or Eoghan O'Sullivan on **087 247 7732**
or email celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com

Figure 29 – Step 4 Public Consultation Advertisement 2019 (placed in local / national newspapers)

Appendix B: Information Leaflet prepared in accordance with Annex VI (5) of the TEN-E Regulation



Le réseau
de transport
d'électricité



The current. The future.

Celtic Interconnector

Connecting the electricity
grids of Ireland and France



Co-financed by the Connecting Europe
Facility of the European Union

Celtic Interconnector

Connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France

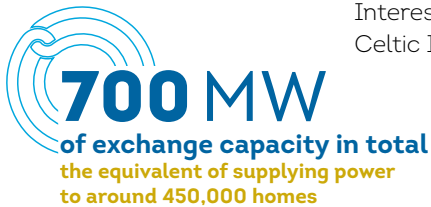


The Celtic Interconnector project aims to create an electrical interconnection between Ireland and France to allow the exchange of electricity between the two countries. It is being developed by EirGrid, the electricity transmission system operator in Ireland and its French counterpart, Réseau de Transport d'Électricité.



The connection will link the existing electricity substation located in Knockraha (in East Cork, Ireland) to the substation in La Martyre (Finistère). Recognised as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) by the European Union, the Celtic Interconnector project responds

to European challenges regarding energy transition and addresses climate change by facilitating progress towards a low-carbon electricity mix. It will contribute to a more secure and a more sustainable electricity supply and will place downward pressure on electricity prices.



The benefits of the project



To facilitate the movement of electricity flows on a European scale

By facilitating electricity flows throughout Ireland, France and continental Europe, the Celtic Interconnector will enable European consumers to benefit from a more open electricity market.



To strengthen the security of supply between countries

The Celtic Interconnector will strengthen the security of electricity supply between the two countries enabling them to rely on one another in the case of unexpected events and interruptions to supply (technical incidents, spikes in consumption...).



To support the development of a more sustainable electricity mix in Ireland and France

The Celtic Interconnector will contribute to the European objectives of a low-carbon energy future, facilitating increased levels of renewables being integrated into the European electricity system. On a wider level, the project is part of plans for a European wide electricity network and will enable Ireland to benefit directly from the integrated European electricity market.

A subsea electricity link across the Celtic Sea

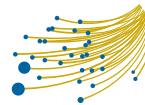
The Celtic Interconnector consists of a proposed 575 km long high voltage direct current (HVDC) connection between the electrical networks of Ireland (East Cork) and France (Brittany).



1 Connection to the Irish electricity network

The interconnector will be connected to the 220kV electrical substation in Knockraha, located in East Cork, Ireland. Onshore infrastructure associated with the interconnector will include a 220kV alternating current (AC) underground connection between the existing Knockraha substation and a new converter station and an underground direct current (DC) connection between the converter station and a landfall point on the Irish coast, where it will meet the subsea connection. The 30 to 40 km long underground connections would be primarily installed beneath the existing road network.

Did you know?

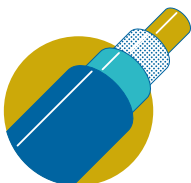


An additional benefit of the Celtic Interconnector will be the provision of a direct telecommunications link between Ireland and France (and continental Europe).

2 The subsea connection

Approximately 500 km long, the subsea connection will link the coast of Cork and the Ceinture Dorée (Gold Belt) coast in Brittany, passing to the west of the Isles of Scilly. Preliminary studies and detailed physical marine surveys have enabled the identification of a preferred route for the cable which avoids the most challenging areas and consequently minimises the environmental impact and any disruption to maritime users. The electrical cable will be either buried beneath the seabed or laid on the seabed and covered for protection.

Did you know?



The subsea cable will not be visible at the landfall point. The underground cable will connect to the subsea cable by way of an underground transition joint and the landfall point will be fully re-instated following the completion of the works.

3 Connection to the French electricity network

The subsea cable from Ireland and the underground cable in France will meet on the east Ceinture Dorée coast. Onshore infrastructure associated with the interconnector will include an underground direct current connection between the French coast and the converter station and a 400kV alternating current underground connection to the La Martyre substation. The length of the underground connections will be approximately 40 km.

Environmental considerations

EirGrid and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité are committed to protecting and respecting communities and the environment affected by the interconnector in each country. They are also committed to preserving the natural environment and have appointed specialist firms to carry out specific environmental analyses, including ecological assessments, for the future connection and the converter stations. EirGrid and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité are working with local stakeholders and associations to carry out these environmental studies which will provide clarification on the project and assist with the development of a specific route while protecting the flora and fauna and any areas of environmental concern. The environmental studies carried out will inform an Environmental Impact Assessment of the project. Measures will be taken to avoid, prevent, reduce, and if possible offset significant adverse effects on the environment. Potential impacts in both terrestrial and marine environments include habitat loss and/or deterioration, water pollution, instream works, and disturbance or displacement of protected species. Mitigation options potentially include timing of works (e.g. to avoid sensitive seasons) sequencing of works (e.g. to implement mitigation first), and use of sensitive construction practices. In both terrestrial and marine environments, monitoring of construction will inform adaptive management of mitigation (e.g. to resolve mitigation conflicts, or to avail of new technologies).

2

3

MORLAIX

4

La Martyre

4 The converter stations

To enable the routing of electricity to consumers, the connection to the AC electricity transmission system in Ireland and in France requires the construction of a converter station in each country. Each converter station requires a surface area of approximately 4 hectares, including a building which will measure up to 20-25 metres in height extending over approximately 0.5 ha. Public consultation and environmental studies will be an important consideration in the identification of a best performing option for the converter station and the AC connection, while taking account of environmental concerns.



Example of a converter station

Celtic Interconnector

A European Project of Common Interest

Project Timeline

2014/ 2016	Feasibility Phase
2017/ 2018	Initial Design & Pre-Consultation Phase
2019/ 2021	Detailed Design and Consents Phase
2022/ 2026	Construction Phase

National Grid Development Plans

At a European level, the Celtic Interconnector features in the Ten Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) produced by ENTSO-E (European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity) since 2012. In Ireland, the project is a part of the EirGrid Transmission Development Plan (TDP), the plan for the development of the Irish transmission network and interconnection over ten years, most recently from 2018 to 2027. In France, the project is also included in the Schéma Décennal de Développement du Réseau (SDDR), the Ten-Year Electricity Grid Development Plan drawn up on a regular basis by Réseau de Transport d'Électricité since 2013.

To learn more

EirGrid Transmission Development Plan:

www.eirgridgroup.com/site-files/library/EirGrid/Transmission-Development-Plan-2018-2027.pdf

Ten Year Network Development Plan (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité):

www.rte-france.com/en/article/ten-year-network-development-plan

Public Information (European Commission):

ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission/service-standards-and-principles/transparency_en

PCI Manual of Permit Granting Process Procedures (An Bord Pleanála):

www.pleanala.ie/PCI/PCIManual.htm

TYNDP 2018 - European Ten Year Network Development Plan (ENTSO-E):

tyndp.entsoe.eu

Alternatives Considered

A range of assessments have been carried out to date on the project. In Ireland two separate connection points were considered for the project, at Knockraha in East Cork and at Great Island in West Wexford. Six separate marine route corridors were also considered during the feasibility phase of the project. EirGrid confirmed in 2018 that the best performing location for the project to connect in Ireland was in East Cork and that the best performing marine route ran from Cork to Brittany and avoids UK territorial waters.

Working towards a carbon-free Europe (by 2030)

- Each country must have an **electrical interconnection capacity of at least 15 %** of its installed generation capacity
- **40 % reduction in greenhouse gas emissions** compared to 1990 levels
- A **renewable energy target of at least 27 %** of final energy consumption by 2030
- Achieve targets for an **improvement in energy efficiency** at EU level of at least **27%** (rising to **30%**)

A Project of Common Interest

The European Union recognised the Celtic Interconnector as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) for the Northern Seas Offshore Grid (NSCOG) priority corridor in October 2013. This was reconfirmed in November 2017. The Celtic Interconnector project is seen as a key contributor to the European Energy Transition for Ireland, France and Europe.

Working together to build the network of tomorrow

Let us hear your views

EirGrid and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité are both examining the project in accordance with their national procedures. Moreover, as the Celtic Interconnector has been identified as a Project of Common Interest (PCI), both promoters will ensure provision of information to and participation of the public, in accordance with European requirements.

EirGrid's Six Step Process for developing projects in Ireland

Many people might not take an active interest in a project at the start of the development process. However, it is important that we gather stakeholder views before this point.

We want stakeholders to know how and why we plan our projects, so we can receive feedback as early as possible.

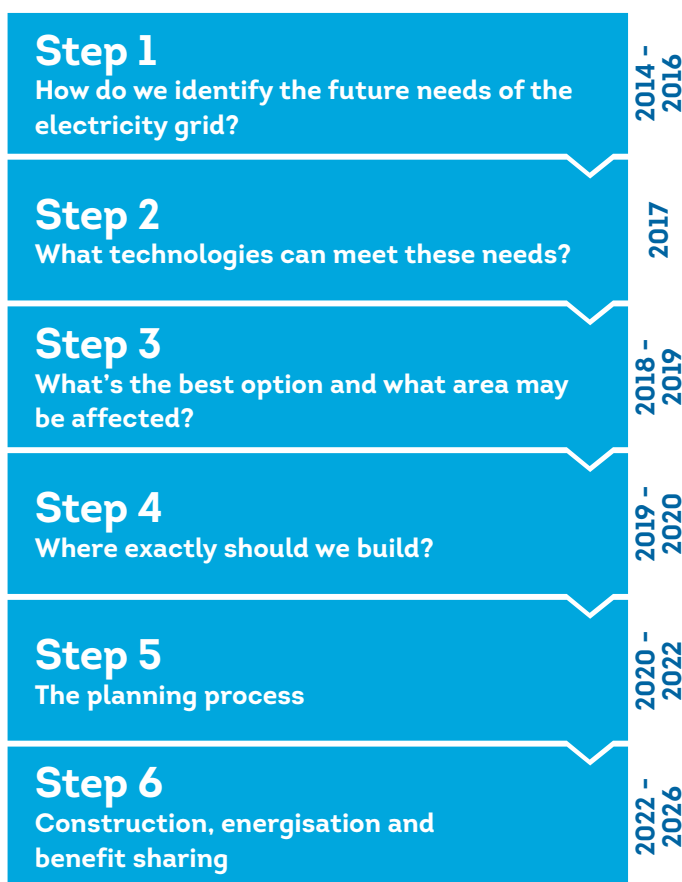
Designing an electricity transmission project can be a complex and lengthy process.

Because of this, we use a consistent project planning process to explore options and make decisions. This means we follow the same steps for every project.

The decision-making tools we use, and the amount of engagement we carry out at each step, depends on the scale and complexity of each project.

What is happening now in Ireland?

At EirGrid we follow a step by step approach to planning the grid. This approach facilitates engagement and consultation with our stakeholders and the public which helps us to explore options fully and make more informed decisions.



For further information

On the project and its development:
www.celticinterconnector.eu

EirGrid project website:
www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector

Réseau de Transport d'Électricité project website:
www.rte-france.com/celtic-interconnector

PCI Procedures Manual (French):
www.ecologique-solidaire.gouv.fr/interconnexions-electriques-manuel-des-procedures

PCI Procedures Manual (English):
www.pleanala.ie/PCI/PCIManual.htm

The project teams

EirGrid

Gary Nolan, Project Manager Ireland
Eoghan Tuite, Consultation Process Manager Ireland
celticinterconnector@EirGrid.com

Réseau de Transport d'Électricité

Eric Thébault, Project Manager France
Gaëlle Chevreau, Consultation Process Manager France
rte-celtic-interconnector@rte-france.com

Appendix C: Advertisements - Selection of Advertisements Used



Celtic Interconnector

We're here to talk.
Main Street, Midleton, 9th May.
Youghal, Market Square, 10th May.

EirGrid operates and develops the electricity grid in Ireland. We are responsible for a safe, secure and reliable source of electricity now and in the future.

Projects like the Celtic Interconnector are part of that future. This project will improve the security of Ireland's electricity supply for decades to come.

Members of our team will be available to answer your questions on **Wednesday 9th May** at **Main Street, Midleton, Co Cork** or **Thursday 10th May** at **Youghal, Market Square** from **10am – 4pm**.

EIRGRID
The current. The future.

www.eirgrid.com

Contact Eoghan O'Sullivan on 087 247 7732 or email Eoghan.O'Sullivan@Eirgrid.com

www.eirgrid.ie/celticinterconnector
THE ORIGINAL MIDLETON AND DISTRICT NEWS
 Wednesday, September 19th, 2012



Celtic Interconnector

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- Knockraha Community Centre, 26th September, 9.00 pm
- Carrigtwohill Community Hall, 4th October, 7.15 pm
- Lisgoold Community Hall, 4th October, 9.00 pm

Members of the project team will be available to provide an update on the project's development and answer your questions. We also want to hear your views on how we can best deliver this project. We look forward to meeting you there.




EIRGRID

The current. The future.

www.eirgridgroup.com

Contact Michelle Walsh on 085 870 4999 or Eoghan O'Sullivan on 087 247 7732
or email celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com




**Keeping our electricity,
and our conversations, flowing.**

EirGrid operates and develops the national grid, making sure we all have electricity when and where we need it.

In these difficult times we continue to plan for a brighter future, carrying out critical development work on the Celtic Interconnector – a planned subsea cable linking Ireland's and France's electricity grids. You can find the latest project update and consultation report online at http://bit.ly/Celtic_Interconnector_Update.

While we can't meet you face to face right now, we want to keep you informed about what's happening. If you have questions or any views to share, please contact us via email at celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com. You can also speak directly to our Community Liaison Officers, Michelle Walsh on 085 870 4999 or Eoghan O'Sullivan on 087 247 7732. We're still here to answer your questions.


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The Celtic Interconnector
Thank you for having your say

EirGrid runs the electricity grid in Ireland, and connects with neighbouring grids. We've been asked by the government to make the grid more resilient, so that 70% of Ireland's electricity can come from renewable sources by 2030. The Celtic Interconnector project is key to this goal. It will connect national grids in France and Ireland, allowing us to export and import power when needed.

For several years we've been listening to the views of people in Cork about how this project will be delivered and can now confirm our proposal.

The Celtic Interconnector will reach Ireland at Claycastle Beach, near Youghal. An underground cable will run inland on the national road passing the villages of Killeagh and Castlemartyr - where we are still deciding the best route. The cable will continue north of Middleton on local roads to the converter station at Ballyadam with the final connection by underground cable from Ballyadam to a substation on the national grid at Knockraha.

We are grateful to you for contributing to our decisions and will continue to engage with you. We will now prepare to apply for planning permission. To learn more about this project please visit eirgrid.ie/CelticInterconnector.



EIRGRID
Delivering a cleaner energy future

 Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility

The European Commission has designated the Celtic Interconnector as a Project of Common Interest.

169760 EirGrid TIMES 25x4.indd 1 23/11/2020 15:09

Appendix D: Copy of the Online Step 3 and Step 4 Consultation Form

Step 3 Online Consultation Form



Registration questions

First name

Last name

Email address

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Name of organisation (if applicable)

House number or name

Address line 1

Address line 2

Town

County

Phone number

Eircode

Your personal data will be securely stored by EirGrid Group as the data controller, and by Traverse (a UK-based consultation company) as the data processor authorised by EirGrid Group, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018), to assist in the work related to the subject of this consultation. This consultation questionnaire is being hosted on Snap Surveys: please see their [GDPR statement](#).

Responses to this consultation will be analysed and may be included in a publicly available summary report. For quotes made by individuals the quote will be displayed but the respondent's name will not. For responses made on behalf of an organisation, the organisation name will be displayed together with the quote, but not the name of the individual who made the response.

Please indicate if you would prefer your response to remain confidential, and not used for reporting purposes.

- ☐ I would not like my response to be quoted in a report summarising feedback.

Please read the statements below, and tick to agree to both, before clicking "Next" and taking part in this consultation

- ☐ I have read the above information and understand the purpose of the consultation, and how my responses will be used.

- ☐ I consent to providing data, which will be stored and processed in line with the information given above, and via [EirGrid's Privacy Statement](#)

If you wish to withdraw your consent at any time, please contact dpo@eirgrid.com

Please indicate whether you would like EirGrid to maintain contact with you about the Celtic Interconnector project:

- ☐ I give EirGrid permission to contact me during the design, application and development of the Celtic Interconnector project.

This questionnaire contains questions on both the proposed shortlists of landfall locations and converter station location zones. You are welcome to complete only one or both of these sets of questions. At the end of the survey there are also some general questions on the project as a whole and on the consultation process.



Converter station location zone

Q1. In your view, how important is it for us to consider each of the following aspects when choosing the converter station location zone? Please choose from the options below.

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
Agriculture and land quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health and security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landscape and visual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local economy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sound, noise and vibration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic and transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste and material resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wildlife, ecology and biodiversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below at Q2b)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2a. Do you agree with the shortlist of converter station location zones identified?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Neutral
☐ Not sure

Q2b. Please provide reasons for your answer.



Landfall location

Q1. In your view, how important is it for us to consider each of the following aspects when choosing the landfall location? Please choose from the options below.

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
Agriculture and land quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health and security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landscape and visual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local economy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sea, freshwater and flood risk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sound, noise and vibration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic and transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste and material resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wildlife, ecology and biodiversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below at Q2b)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2a. Do you agree with the shortlist of landfall locations identified?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Neutral
☐ Not sure

Q2b. Please provide reasons for your answer.



General comments

Q1. What is your view on the Celtic Interconnector Project? Please select one option from below.

- ☐ A very positive step for Ireland
- ☐ A positive step for Ireland
- ☐ Neither a positive nor a negative step for Ireland
- ☐ A negative step for Ireland
- ☐ A very negative step for Ireland

Q2. Finally, here is an opportunity for you to comment generally. You may have something else to say about the landfall locations or converter station location zones overall, or the decision-making process which led to these shortlists. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Consultation process

Q3. Have you attended any of the public information events? If so, please select which event(s) you attended below.

- ☐ Carrigtwohill
- ☐ Cloyne
- ☐ Knockraha
- ☐ Lisgould
- ☐ Middleton
- ☐ Youghal

Q4. How did you first hear about this consultation? Please select one option from below.

- ☐ Correspondence from EirGrid
- ☐ Online/social media
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Poster
- ☐ TV/radio
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Please specify:

Q5. Please rate the following areas of the consultation:

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	Don't know
Q5a. Consultation events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q5b. Consultation materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q5c. Promotion of the consultation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the consultation process.

Q7. Would you like to receive more information about the project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q8. If so, how would you like to receive this information?

☐ Email

☐ Project website

☐ Public events

☐ Other

Please specify:

Q9. As the project progresses, what aspects would you like to find out more about?


☐ Construction timelines

☐ Cable routing options

☐ Visual impact of the development


☐ Other

Please specify:




Step 4 Online Consultation Form


Celtic Interconnector
Step 4 Consultation questionnaire




Responding to the consultation

Submit your response by midnight 02 February 2020 (you only need to submit once, using one of the channels below).

 **Post this form (free):** EirGrid, The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Freepost FDN5312, Dublin 4, D04 FW28

 **Online:** You can fill in the consultation questionnaire at bit.ly/celticconsultation

 **Email:** If you want to submit your response by email, send it to celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com

What we are consulting on

We are seeking feedback on three converter station sites (12, 9B and 1), the emerging best performing landfill location, underground cable route options, and community gain. Before responding, please familiarise yourself with updated project information, available here www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector. Please contact us if you would like to receive a hard copy of any reports.

Personal details

All information provided to EirGrid will be held by EirGrid personnel and EirGrid's data processors only, for the purpose of engaging with you in the public consultation process.

First name

Surname

Email

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of organisation (if applicable)

Role in organisation (if applicable)

House number / name

Eircode

Address line 1

Address line 2

County

Phone Number

I have been informed of the GDPR Privacy Statement and received a copy of the Privacy Notice

☐

I would like to be contacted about the Celtic Interconnector Project

☐

Section 1 – Converter station site

Please refer to the Celtic Interconnector Project Update brochure for the Step 4 Consultation and the Step 4A Consultant's Development Options Report for further information on the converter station sites.

1. We identified converter station sites in each zone by considering a number of factors including visual impact, distance from potentially sensitive receptors, including homes and businesses, feedback from the Step 3 consultation, and the number of landholdings that the site covers. These converter station sites were then assessed under EirGrid's five criteria (deliverability, environment, socio-economic, technical, and economic).

Please provide your comments on the assessment process and studies undertaken.

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

2. EirGrid is moving forward, focussing on three converter station sites (12, 9B and 1) for further review before confirming the best performing option at the end of Step 4. Please provide your comments and any new information about these sites that we should consider.

a. Site 12

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

b. Site 9B

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

c. Site 1

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

3. Four sites (Site 6, Site 9A, Site 10 and Site 14) did not perform as well in our assessments. Please provide any new information about these sites that we should consider.

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

Section 2 – Landfall location and underground cable route options

Please refer to the Celtic Interconnector Project Update brochure for the Step 4 Consultation and the Step 4A Consultant's Development Options Report for further information on the landfall locations and underground cable route options.

4. We have identified the landfall location at Claycastle Beach as the emerging best performing option. Please provide your comments on the assessment process and studies undertaken.

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

5. We have identified underground cable routes from the landfall location at Claycastle Beach to Churchtown (east of Midleton) and from Churchtown (east of Midleton) to the converter station sites 12, 9B and 1 and onwards to the connection point (refer to maps available in the brochure). Please provide any comments you may have relating to any of the routes mentioned (if your comments are about a specific section of the route, highlight it clearly).

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

Section 3 – Working with the community

6. Please provide any ideas you have for how a community fund could best be applied in the affected East Cork communities, where and how the area could benefit, and what support we could give to ensure it is a success.

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

7. We are considering setting up a local advisory group after Step 4, to represent communities in the area of the best performing option. What organisations and/or groups do you feel should be involved?

If you need additional space, continue on separate paper with the question number and include it when you post this form

Section 4 – General

8. What is your view of the effect of the Celtic Interconnector Project on Ireland? (tick only one)

- ☐ Very positive
☐ Positive
☐ Neither positive nor negative
☐ Negative
☐ Very negative
☐ No opinion/don't know

9. What do you think of the quality of each of the following aspects of this consultation?

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No opinion/ don't know
Promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. How did you first hear about this consultation? (tick only one)

- ☐ Correspondence from EirGrid
☐ Newspaper
☐ Online / social media
☐ Word of mouth
☐ Other (please specify)

11. Provide any comments on these or any other aspects of the consultation below:

Next steps

Your feedback on our proposals, alongside results from further studies, will help us decide which converter station site option, landfall location and underground cable route to take forward for further development at the end of step 4. Please note, we will be unable to respond to individual feedback. We will collate all responses to the consultation and publish a report in response.

Contact details for Celtic Interconnector Project

Michelle Walsh, Celtic Interconnector Community Liaison Officer: +353 85 870 4999

Eoghan O'Sullivan, Community Liaison Officer: +353 87 247 7732

EirGrid Customer Relations: +353 1 237 0472

Email: celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com - info@eirgrid.com

Websites: www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector - www.celticinterconnector.eu

The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28 - Telephone: 01 677 1700 - www.eirgrid.com

Appendix E: List of Relevant Publicly Available Documentation

The following documentation is available on EirGrid's project specific website for the Celtic Interconnector Project at <https://www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/related-documents/>. Many of the documents referred to in this Volume 2B Public and Landowner Consultation Report can be accessed via this website.

Step 5 Documents

- Cable Route Options Review Report
- Webinar Slide Deck Presentation - April 2021
- Community Forum Information Evening - 21 April 2021
- Celtic Interconnector Webinar - Wednesday 7 April 2021
- Celtic Interconnector Webinar - Thursday 8 April 2021

Step 4 Documents:

- Step 4B Consultant's Development Options Report
- Step 4B Brochure (Winter 2020)
- Step 4B - Press release
- Step 4 Overview Presentation
- Cable Route Map
- Video: What does a converter station look like?
- Celtic Interconnector Underground Cable Brochure
- Celtic Interconnector Webinar (August 2020)
- Step 4 Project Update Document (Spring 2020)
- Step 4 Consultation Report
- Preliminary Acoustic Study Report
- Step 4 Brochure (Winter 2019 - 2020)
- Step 4A Consultant's Development Options Report

Step 4 Maps:

- Claycastle - Landfall location and cable route
- Kilquane - Converter station option and cable route
- Knockraha - Converter station option and cable route
- Ballyadam - Converter station option and cable route

Step 3 Documents:

- Preferred Options Report
- Consultation Response Document
- Consultation Report
- Project Update Brochure - Step 3 Consultation (Spring 2019)
- Offshore Constraints Report
- Onshore Constraints Report and Mapping
- Strategic Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report
- Performance Matrix Assessments
- Project Update Brochure (2018)

Step 2 Documents:

- Project Update Brochure (2017)
- Marine Route Investigations Report
- Social Impact Assessment - Social Baseline Report
- Feasibility Phase - Network Analysis

Step 2 Land Reports:

- Land Report 1 - Feasibility Study - Converter Station Site and Route Identification in Ireland and Associated Mapping (All maps associated with this study are available for download via hyperlinks throughout the report)
- Land Report 2

Health:

- The Electrical Grid and Your Health

Project of Common Interest Process:

- Project of Common Interest Information Brochure
- Letter from Competent Authority to EirGrid Approving Concept for Public Participation (2020)
- EirGrid Concept for Public Participation (2020)
- Letter from Competent Authority to EirGrid Acknowledge Project of Common Interest Notification (2019)
- Pre-Application Notification from EirGrid to Competent Authority (2018)



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Appendix D: Constitution of EirGrid

June 2021



Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility



Tionscatal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28
Telephone: 01 677 1700 • www.eirgrid.ie

COMPANIES ACT 2014
PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED BY SHARES



A

CONSTITUTION
OF
EIRGRID
(As amended by Special Resolution from time to time)

APPROVED BY EIRGRID BOARD 15th JUNE 2016
APPROVED BY SHAREHOLDER AUGUST 2016

COMPANIES ACT 2014

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

OF

EIRGRID

1. The name of the Company is: “EIRGRID.
2. The Company is a public limited company, registered under part 17 of the Companies Act 2014.
3. All of the clauses of this Constitution are subject to and should be read in conjunction with the provisions of the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations 2000, the Electricity Regulation Act 1999, the 2008 EirGrid Act and the 2005 Internal Market Regulations, and any reference in this Constitution to any of those provisions shall not prejudice the generality of this clause. A reference to any statute or statutory provision shall be construed as a reference to same as it may have been, or may from time to time be amended, modified or re-enacted.
4. The objects for which the Company is established are, based on and subject to any functions (within the meaning assigned by Regulation 2(1) of the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000) conferred by statute or statutory instrument:
 - (a) to operate and ensure the maintenance of and, if necessary, develop a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient electricity transmission system, and to explore and develop opportunities for interconnection of its system with other systems, in all cases with a view to ensuring that all reasonable demands for electricity are met and having due regard for the environment;
 - (aa) to establish, operate and ensure the maintenance and development of the Single Electricity Wholesale Market in the Island of Ireland in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements, licence conditions, SEM Trading and Settlement Code and the Commission for Energy Regulation requirements (as applicable) from time to time and to do all things necessary in its role of Single Market Operator;
 - (b) to ensure the availability of all ancillary services which are necessary for the transmission system operator to carry out its duty outlined in paragraph (a);
 - (c) to take into account the need to operate a co-ordinated distribution system and transmission system;
 - (d) to operate a system of dispatch and use of interconnectors on objective, non-discriminatory, economical and technical criteria, without prejudice to the supply of electricity on the basis of existing contractual obligations, and in accordance with the conditions in the licence granted under section 14(1)(e) of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999, the Grid Code prepared under section 33 of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999, and any Regulations made by the Commission for Energy Regulation (including any requirements which the Commission for Energy Regulation may impose on the transmission system operator in relation to the role of System

Settlement Administrator) under section 9(1)(d) of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999;

- (e) to develop, adhere to, maintain and review, modify and publish procedures for the use of interconnectors with other systems;
- (f) to provide to the operator of any other system with which its system is interconnected sufficient information to ensure the secure and efficient operation, co-ordinated development and inter-operability of the interconnected system;
- (g) otherwise to comply with any other regulation or directions applicable to it made by the Commission for Energy Regulation under the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000 or under the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999;
- (h) to charge for the connection to and use of the transmission system in accordance with Section 35 of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999 and the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000;
- (i) to offer terms and enter into agreements, where appropriate, for connection to and use of the transmission system with all those using and seeking to use the transmission system;
- (j) in discharging its functions under the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations 2000, the transmission system operator shall take into account the objective of minimising the overall costs of the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity to all final customers and at all times protect the interests of consumers of electricity in Northern Ireland and Ireland;
- (k) to own and operate SONI Limited the Northern Ireland transmission system operator and market operator and to do all acts and things as the Board of Directors may from time to time determine to be necessary or desirable;
- (l) to provide in a manner conducive to the other objects of this clause consultancy services and to act as consultants for any company, corporation, undertaking or person and to provide any such company, corporation, undertaking or person with consultancy, advisory, sales, purchasing, managerial, secretarial, technical, representative and other services in connection with the operation or maintenance and, as necessary, the development of, a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system outside of Ireland and to enter into such arrangements or agreements as may be deemed necessary or advisable in connection with the foregoing;
- (m) to construct, own, maintain and transport electricity across an interconnector and to carry on any activity which appears to the Company to be requisite, advantageous or incidental to or which appears to the Company to facilitate the performance by the Company of such functions.

5. The Company shall, for the purpose of Clause 4, have the following powers:

- (a) To invest any monies of the Company in such investments and in such manner as may from time to time be determined, and to hold, sell or deal with such investments and generally to purchase, take on lease or in exchange or otherwise acquire any real and personal property and rights or privileges.

- (b) To develop and turn to account any land acquired by the Company or in which it is interested and in particular by laying out and preparing the same for building purposes, constructing, altering, pulling down, decorating, maintaining, fitting up and improving buildings and conveniences, and by planting, paving, draining, cultivating, letting on building lease or building agreement and by advancing money to and entering into contracts and arrangements of all kinds with builders, tenants and others.
- (c) To acquire and hold shares and stocks of any class or description, debentures, debenture stock, bonds, bills, mortgages, obligations, investments and securities of all descriptions and of any kind issued or guaranteed by any company, corporation or undertaking of whatever nature and wheresoever constituted or carrying on business or issued or guaranteed by any government, state, dominion, colony, sovereign ruler, commissioners, trust, public, municipal, local or other authority or body of whatsoever nature and wheresoever situated and investments, securities and property of all descriptions and of any kind, including real and chattel real estates, mortgages, reversions, assurance policies, contingencies and choses in action.
- (d) To acquire by purchase, exchange, lease, fee farm grant or otherwise, either for an estate in fee simple or for any less estate or other estate or interest, whether immediate or reversionary and whether vested or contingent, any lands, tenements or hereditaments of any tenure, whether subject or not to any charges or encumbrances, and to hold, work and manage and to let or sublet land and buildings of any kind, reversions, interests, and any other property real or personal, movable or immovable, either absolutely or conditionally, and either subject or not to any mortgage, charge, ground rent or other rents or encumbrances.
- (e) To erect or secure the erection of buildings of any kind with a view of occupying them and to enter into any contracts or leases and to grant any licences necessary to effect the same.
- (f) To maintain and improve any lands, tenements or hereditaments acquired by the Company or in which the Company is interested, in particular by decorating, maintaining, furnishing, fitting up and improving such lands, tenements or hereditaments and other buildings and to enter into contracts and arrangements of all kinds with tenants and others.
- (g) To sell, exchange, mortgage (with or without power of sale), assign, turn to account or otherwise dispose of and generally deal with the whole or any part of the property, estates, rights or undertakings of the Company, real, chattel real or personal, movable or immovable, either in whole or in part, upon whatever terms and whatever consideration the Company shall think fit, provided that any transaction aforesaid in excess of €1,270,000 must first be approved by the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, given with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
- (h) To take part in the management, supervision, or control of the business or operations of any company or undertaking, and for that purpose to appoint and remunerate any directors, accountants, or other experts or agents to act as consultants, supervisors and agents of other companies or undertakings and to provide managerial, advisory, technical, design, purchasing and selling services.
- (i) To make, draw, accept, endorse, negotiate, issue, execute, discount and otherwise deal with bills of exchange, promissory notes, letters of credit, circular notes, and other negotiable or transferable instruments.

- (j) To guarantee, support or secure whether by personal covenant or by mortgaging or charging all or any part of the undertaking, property and assets (present and future), the performance of the obligations of, and the repayment or payment of the principal amounts of and the premiums, interest and dividends on any security of any company which is for the time being a subsidiary as defined by Section 7 of the Companies Act 2014 or otherwise associated with the Company in business notwithstanding the fact that the Company may not receive any consideration, advantage or benefit, direct or indirect from entering into such guarantee or other arrangement or transaction contemplated herein, provided that any transaction aforesaid must first be approved by the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, given with the consent of the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
- (k) To lend the funds of the Company with or without security and at interest or free of interest and on such terms and conditions as the directors shall from time to time determine, subject always to the proviso that any loan made by the Company shall firstly be approved by the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment with the consent of the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
- (l) To raise or borrow or secure the payment of money in such manner and on such terms as the directors may deem expedient whether or not by the issue of bonds, debentures or debenture stock, perpetual or redeemable, or by mortgage, charge, lien or pledge upon the whole or any part of the undertaking, property, assets and rights of the Company, present or future, and generally in any other manner as the directors shall from time to time determine and to enter into or issue interest and currency hedging and swap agreements, forward rate agreements, interest and currency futures or options and other forms of financial instruments, and to purchase, redeem or pay off any of the foregoing and to guarantee the liabilities of the Company or any other person, not being a company which is for the time being a subsidiary as defined by Section 7 of the Companies Act 2014 or otherwise associated with the Company in business, and any debentures, debenture stock or other securities may be issued at a discount, premium or otherwise, and with any special privileges as to redemption, surrender, transfer, drawings, appointment of directors and otherwise, provided that any guarantee of liabilities of the company or any other person, not being a company which is for the time being a subsidiary as defined by Section 7 of the Companies Act 2014 or otherwise associated with the Company in business, and any other transaction aforesaid in excess of €1,270,000 must first be approved by the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, given with the consent of the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
- (m) To accumulate capital for any of the purposes of the Company, and to appropriate any of the Company's assets to specific purposes, either conditionally or unconditionally pursuant to the objects aforesaid.
- (n) To issue shares in the Company in accordance with Regulations 40 and 41 of the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000.
- (o) The Company may in accordance with Regulation 17 of the S.I. No. 445/2000 - European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000 prepare and submit for approval superannuation schemes and may carry out any such scheme which has been approved under that Regulation and may perform the other functions conferred by that Regulation.

- (p) To employ experts to investigate and examine into the conditions, prospects, value, character and circumstances of any business concerns, undertakings, assets, property or rights.
- (q) To insure the life of any person who may, in the opinion of the Company, be of value to the Company, as having or holding for the Company interests, goodwill, or influence or otherwise and to pay the premiums on such insurance.
- (r) To apply for, purchase or otherwise acquire any patents, brevets d'invention, licences, trade marks, industrial designs, know-how, concessions and other forms of intellectual property rights and the like conferring any exclusive or non-exclusive or limited or contingent rights to use, or any secret or other information as to any invention or process of the Company, or the acquisition of which may seem calculated directly or indirectly to benefit the Company, and to use, exercise, develop, or grant licences in respect of, or otherwise turn to account the property, rights or information so acquired.
- (s) Subject to the approval of the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment given with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, to enter into partnership or into any arrangement for sharing profits, union of interests, co-operation, joint venture, reciprocal concession or otherwise with any person or company carrying on or engaged in or about to carry on or engage in any business or transaction which the Company is authorised to carry on or engage in or any business or transaction capable of being conducted so as directly or indirectly to benefit the Company.
- (t) Subject to the approval of the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment given with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, to acquire and undertake the whole or any part of the undertaking, business, property and liabilities of any person or company carrying on any business which the Company is authorised to carry on or which is capable of being conducted so as to benefit the Company directly or indirectly or which is possessed of assets suitable for the purposes of the Company.
- (u) To adopt such means of making known the Company and its products and services as may seem expedient.
- (v) Subject to the provisions of Section 5(1) of the Electricity Regulation (Amendment) (EirGrid) Act 2008 acquire, establish or dispose of subsidiaries or invest in any other undertaking. Further a subsidiary of Company may exercise such and so many of EirGrid's functions as are provided for in the Constitution of the subsidiary.
- (w) To do and carry out all such other things which are necessary in pursuance of the objects in Clause 4 by the Company.
- (x) Save however that none of the foregoing shall permit the allotment, issue, transfer, mortgage, charge, lien or pledge of equity securities (as defined in section 1023 of the Companies Act 2014) or shares in the capital of the Company, including its uncalled capital, except in the case of an issue or transfer of shares in accordance with the Electricity (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000.
- (y) Subject to the consent of the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment given with the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, to lease, sell or otherwise dispose of, in whole or in part, an interconnector it has an interest in, including a proposed interconnector, to another person.

And it is hereby declared that the word "company" in this clause, except where used in reference to this Company, shall be deemed to include any person, partnership or other body of persons whether incorporated or not incorporated and whether domiciled in the State or elsewhere.

6. The liability of the members is limited.
7. The authorised share capital of the Company is EUR 37,500 divided into 30,000 Ordinary Shares of EUR 1.25 each. If on the winding up or dissolution of the company there remains after the satisfaction of all of its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed amongst members of the company but shall be paid into or disposed of for the benefit of the Exchequer in such manner as the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform may direct.
8. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Companies Act 2014 and the provisions of the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations 2000, no alteration to this Constitution shall be valid or effectual unless made with the prior approval of the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, given with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

OF

EIRGRID

PART I - PRELIMINARY

The provisions of the Companies Act 2014 are adopted.

Interpretation

In addition to the provisions of the Companies Act 2014, the following regulations shall apply to the Company:

1. (a) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Companies Act 2014 including any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof for the time being in force, no alteration to these Articles of Association of the Company for the time being in force shall be valid or effectual unless made with prior approval of the Minister given with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
- (b) These Articles of Association are subject to and should be read in conjunction with the provisions of the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations 2000, the 2008 Eirgrid Act, the Electricity Regulation Act 1999 and the Internal Market Regulations 2005 and any reference in these Articles to any of those provisions shall not prejudice the generality of this provision.
- (c) In the event of any inconsistency or conflict between the terms of the statutory instrument and these articles of association, the provisions of the statutory instrument shall prevail and all reasonable steps to procure such amendment or alteration of these articles of association as may be necessary to carry out the intentions and terms of the statutory instrument shall be made.
- (d) In these Articles the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

"the Act"	the Companies Act 2014 including any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof for the time being in force;
"these Articles"	these Articles of Association;

"the Auditors"	the auditors for the time being of the Company;
"the Board"	the Board of Directors for the time being of the Company;
"the Chairperson"	the Chairperson for the time being of the Board, and as the context so admits or requires, the Chairperson of any meeting of the Board of Directors;
"the Chief Executive"	the Chief Executive for the time being of the Company;
"clear days"	in relation to the period of a notice, that period excluding the day when the notice is given or deemed to be given and the day for which it is given or on which it is to take effect;
"Commission"	the Commission for Energy Regulation established by the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999;
"the Directors"	the Directors for the time being of the Company or any of them acting as the Board of Directors of the Company;
"the holder"	in relation to any share, the member whose name is entered in the Register as the holder of the share;
"Member of the Company"	a registered holder of a Share or Shares in the Company;
"The Minister"	the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment;
"Month"	calendar month;
"Registered office"	the registered office for the time being of the Company;
"the Register"	the register of members to be kept as required by the Act;
"the Statutory Instrument"	the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations 2000, S.I. No. 445 of 2000 (as amended);
"the Seal"	the common seal of the Company pursuant to the Act;
"Secretary"	any person appointed to perform the duties of the Secretary of the Company.

- (e) Expressions referring to writing shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be construed as including references to printing, lithography, photography, and any other modes of representing or reproducing words in a visible form. The expression "executed" shall include any mode of execution whether under seal or under hand.
- (f) Unless specifically defined herein or the context otherwise requires, words or expressions contained in these Articles shall bear the same meaning as in the Act but excluding any statutory modification thereof not in force when these Articles come into operation.
- (g) References to Articles are to Articles of these Articles. The headings and captions included in these Articles are inserted for convenience of reference only and shall not be considered a part of or affect the construction or interpretation of these Articles.

PART II - SHARE CAPITAL AND VARIATION OF RIGHTS

2. **Authorised Share Capital:** Subject to Regulation 35(3) of the Statutory Instrument the authorised share capital of the Company is EUR 37,500 divided into 30,000 Ordinary shares of EUR 1.25 each. Subject to the prior approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, after consultation with the Minister, the Company may by ordinary resolution increase the share capital by such sum as the resolution shall prescribe, in any manner permitted by law.
3. **Registered Holders:** Save as provided hereinafter or in the Statutory Instrument, the Company shall be entitled to treat the registered holder of any share as the absolute owner thereof, and accordingly, shall not, except as ordered by a Court of competent jurisdiction or required by statute be bound to recognise any equitable, contingent, future, partial or other claim to or interest in such share on the part of any other person notwithstanding any notice thereof, so, however, that this shall not preclude the Company from requiring the members or any transferee of shares to furnish the Company with information as to the beneficial ownership of any share when such information is reasonably required by the Company.
4. **Power to Issue Shares:** For the purposes of Regulations 40, 41 and 42 of the Statutory Instrument, the Company shall have power to issue Shares.

PART III - CERTIFICATES

5. **Share Certificates:** The certificates of title to shares shall be issued under the Seal and signed by two Directors, or by one Director (not being the Secretary) and the Secretary, or by one Director and some other person appointed by the Directors or a committee of the Directors.
6. **Entitlement:** Every person whose name is entered as a member in the Register shall be entitled without payment to receive within two months after allotment or lodgement of a transfer (or within such other period as the conditions of issue shall provide) one certificate for all his or her shares or several certificates each for one or more of his or her shares upon payment of one pound for every certificate after the first or such less sum as the Directors shall from time to time determine.
7. **Replacement:** If any certificate be worn out or defaced, then, upon production thereof to the Directors, they may order the same to be cancelled and may issue a new certificate in lieu thereof, and, if any certificate be lost or destroyed, then, upon proof thereof to the satisfaction of the Directors, and upon giving of such indemnity with or without security as the Directors may deem adequate, a new certificate in lieu thereof shall be given to the party entitled to such lost or destroyed certificate. A sum of €1.27 together with the amount of any costs and expenses which the Company has incurred shall be paid to the Company for every certificate issued under this Article.

PART IV - TRANSFER OF SHARES

8. **Transfer:** The Directors shall register any transfer of shares made under Regulation 44(1) or Regulation 45(1) of the Statutory Instrument and shall not register any other transfer of shares in the Company.
9. **Instrument of Transfer:** Shares in the Company shall be transferable by a written instrument in any common form signed by both transferor and transferee, or in the case of a share transfer form under the Stock Transfer Act, 1963, the transferor only, and the transferor shall be deemed to remain the holder of the share until the name of the transferee is entered in the Register in respect thereof.

PART V - GENERAL MEETINGS

10. **Annual General Meetings:** Subject to Section 175 and 1089 of the Companies Act 2014 the Company shall in each year hold a general meeting as its annual general meeting in addition to any other meeting in that year, and shall specify the meeting as such in the notice calling it, and not more than 15 months shall elapse between the date of one annual general meeting of the Company and that of the next.
11. **Extraordinary General Meetings:** All general meetings other than annual general meetings shall be called extraordinary general meetings.
12. **Convening General Meetings:** The Directors may convene general meetings and shall when requested to do so by the Minister following consultation with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform convene an extraordinary general meeting.

Extraordinary general meetings may also be convened on such requisition, or in default, may be convened by such requisition and in such manner as may be provided by the Act. If at any time there are not within the State sufficient Directors capable of acting to form a quorum, any Director or any two members of the Company may convene an extraordinary general meeting in the same manner as nearly as possible as that in which general meetings may be convened by the Directors.

13. **Notice of General Meeting**

- (a) Subject to the provisions of the Act allowing a general meeting to be called by shorter notice, an annual general meeting and an extraordinary general meeting called for the passing of a special resolution shall be called by at least twenty-one clear days notice and all other extraordinary general meetings shall be called by at least fourteen clear days notice.
- (b) Any notice convening a general meeting shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the general nature of the business to be transacted. Subject to any restrictions imposed on any shares, the notice shall be given to all the members and to the Directors and the Auditors.
- (c) The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of notice of a meeting by, any person entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate the proceedings at the meeting.

14. **General Meetings:** All general meetings of the Company shall be held in the State unless all the members entitled to attend and vote at such meeting consent in writing to its being held elsewhere or a resolution providing that it be held elsewhere has been passed at the preceding general meeting.

PART VI - PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS

15. **Quorum for General Meetings:**

- (a) No business other than the appointment of a chairperson shall be transacted at any general meeting unless a quorum of members is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business. Three persons entitled to vote upon the business to be transacted, each being a member or a proxy for a member shall be a quorum.
- (b) If such a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, or if during a meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting shall be dissolved.

16. **Chairperson of General Meetings:**

- (a) The Chairperson of the Board of Directors or, in his absence, the deputy chairperson (if any) or, in his absence, some other Director nominated by the

Directors shall preside as chairperson at every general meeting of the Company. If at any general meeting none of such persons shall be present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for the holding of the meeting and willing to act, the Directors present shall elect one of their number to be chairperson of the meeting and, if there is only one Director present and willing to act, he shall be chairperson.

- (b) If at any meeting no Director is willing to act as chairperson or if no Director is present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for holding the meeting, the members present and entitled to vote shall choose one of their number to be chairperson of the meeting.

17. **Director's and Auditors' Right to Attend General Meetings:** A Director shall, notwithstanding that he is not a member, be entitled to attend and speak at any general meeting. The Auditors shall be entitled to attend any general meeting and to be heard on any part of the business of the meeting which concerns them as the Auditors.

18. **Adjournment of General Meetings:** The Chairperson may, with the consent of a meeting at which a quorum is present (and shall if so directed by the meeting) adjourn the meeting from time to time (or sine die) and from place to place, but no business shall be transacted at any adjourned meeting other than business which might properly have been transacted at the meeting had the adjournment not taken place. Where a meeting has been adjourned sine die, the time and place for the adjourned meeting to recommence shall be subsequently fixed by the Directors. When a meeting is adjourned for fourteen days or more or sine die, at least seven clear days notice shall be given specifying the time and place of the adjourned meeting and the general nature of the business to be transacted. Save as aforesaid it shall not be necessary to give any notice of an adjournment.

19. **Determination of Resolutions:** At any general meeting a resolution put to the vote of the meeting shall be decided on a show of hands unless before, or on the declaration of the result of, the show of hands a poll is duly demanded. Unless a poll is so demanded a declaration by the Chairperson that a resolution has been carried or carried unanimously, or by a particular majority, or lost, or not carried by a particular majority and an entry to that effect in the minutes of the meeting shall be conclusive evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of or against the resolution. The demand for a poll may, before the poll is taken, be withdrawn but only with the consent of the Chairperson and a demand so withdrawn shall not be taken to have invalidated the result of a show of hands declared before the demand was made.

20. **Entitlement to Demand Poll:** Subject to the provisions of the Act, a poll may be demanded:-

- (a) by the chairperson of the meeting;
- (b) by any one member.

21. **Taking of a Poll:**

- (a) Save as provided in paragraph (b) of this Article, a poll shall be taken in such manner as the Chairperson directs and he may appoint scrutineers (who need not be members) and fix a time and place for declaring the result of the poll. The result of the poll shall be deemed to be the resolution of the meeting at which the poll was demanded.
- (b) A poll demanded on the election of a Chairperson or on a question of adjournment shall be taken forthwith. A poll demanded on any other question shall be taken either forthwith or at such time (not being more than thirty days after the poll is demanded) and place as the chairperson of the meeting may direct. The demand for a poll shall not prevent the continuance of a meeting for the transaction of any business other than the question on which the poll was demanded. If a poll is demanded before the declaration of the result of a show of hands and the demand is duly withdrawn, the meeting shall continue as if the demand had not been made.
- (c) No notice need be given of a poll not taken forthwith if the time and place at which it is to be taken are announced at the meeting in respect of which it is demanded. In any other case at least seven clear days notice shall be given specifying the time and place at which the poll is to be taken.

22. **Votes of Members:** Votes may be given either personally or by proxy. On a show of hands every member present in person and every proxy shall have one vote, so, however, that no individual shall have more than one vote, and on a poll every member shall have one vote for every share of which he is the holder.

23. **Chairperson's Casting Vote:** Where there is an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a poll, the chairperson of the meeting at which the show of hands takes place or at which the poll is demanded, shall be entitled to a casting vote in addition to any other vote he may have.

24. **Voting by Incapacitated Holders:** A member of unsound mind, or in respect of whom an order has been made by any court having jurisdiction (whether in the State or elsewhere) in matters concerning mental disorder may vote, whether on a show of hands or on a poll, by his committee, receiver, guardian or other person appointed by that court, and any such committee, receiver, guardian or other person may vote by proxy on a show of hands or on a poll. Evidence to the satisfaction of the Directors of the authority of the person claiming to exercise the right to vote shall be deposited at the Office or at such other place as is specified in accordance with these Articles for the deposit of instruments of proxy, not less than forty-eight hours before the time appointed for holding the meeting or adjourned meeting at which the right to vote is to be exercised and in default the right to vote shall not be exercisable.

25. **Default in Payment of Calls:** Unless the Directors otherwise determine, no member shall be entitled to vote at any general meeting either in person or by proxy, in respect of any share held by him unless all moneys presently payable by him in respect of that share have been paid.

26. **Time for Objection to Voting:** No objection shall be raised to the qualification of any voter except at the meeting or adjourned meeting at which the vote objected to is tendered, and every vote not disallowed at such meeting shall be valid. Any such objection made in due time shall be referred to the chairperson of the meeting whose decision shall be final and conclusive.
27. **Proxy Voting:** The instrument appointing a proxy shall be in writing in any usual form or in any other form which the Directors may approve and shall be executed by or on behalf of the appointor. The signature on such instrument need not be witnessed. A body corporate may execute a form of proxy under its common seal or under the hand of a duly authorised officer thereof. A proxy need not be a member of the Company. A member may appoint more than one proxy to attend on the same occasion.
28. **Deposit of Proxy Instruments:** The instrument appointing a proxy and any authority under which it is executed or a copy, certified notarially or in some other way approved by the Directors, shall be deposited, at the Office or (at the option of the member) at such other place or places (if any) as may be specified for that purpose in or by way of note to the notice convening the meeting, not less than forty-eight hours before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting or adjourned meeting or (in the case of a poll taken otherwise than at or on the same day as the meeting or adjourned meeting) for the taking of the poll at which it is to be used, and in default shall not be treated as valid. Provided that:-
- (a) in the case of a meeting which is adjourned to, or a poll which is to be taken on a date which is less than seven days after the date of the meeting which was adjourned or at which the poll was demanded, it shall be sufficient if the instrument of proxy and any such authority and certification thereof as aforesaid, is lodged with the Secretary at the commencement of the adjourned meeting or the taking of the poll; and
 - (b) an instrument of proxy relating to more than one meeting (including any adjournment thereof) having once been so delivered for the purposes of any meeting shall not require again to be delivered for the purposes of any subsequent meeting to which it relates.
29. **Effect of Proxy Instruments:** Deposit of an instrument of proxy in respect of a meeting shall not preclude a member from attending and voting at the meeting or at any adjournment thereof. The instrument appointing a proxy shall, unless the contrary is stated therein, be valid as well for any adjournment of the meeting as for the meeting to which it relates.
30. **Effect of Revocation of Proxy:** A vote given or poll demanded by proxy shall be valid notwithstanding the previous determination of the authority of the person voting or demanding a poll unless notice of the determination was received by the Company at the Office, or at such other place at which the instrument of proxy was duly deposited, before the commencement of the meeting or adjourned meeting at which the vote is given or the poll demanded or (in the case of a poll taken otherwise than on the same day as the meeting or adjourned meeting) the time appointed for taking the poll.

31. **Written Resolutions:** Subject to the provisions of the Act, a resolution in writing, executed by and on behalf of each member who would have been entitled to vote upon it if it had been proposed at a General Meeting at which he was present, shall be as effectual as if it had been passed in a general meeting duly convened and held and if described as a special resolution within the meaning of the Act shall be a special resolution. Any such resolution may consist of several instruments in like form each executed by or on behalf of one or more members.

PART VII - CHIEF EXECUTIVE

32. **The Chief Executive:**
- (1) There shall be a chief executive of EirGrid who shall be known as and is referred to in these Articles as the "Chief Executive".
 - (2) The Chief Executive shall, as such, be a Director of EirGrid.
33. **Appointment and Dismissal of the Chief Executive:** Each Chief Executive shall be appointed by the Directors and may not serve in that position for a total of more than 7 years, unless the Directors of EirGrid and the Minister consider that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant a limited extension of that period and furthermore each Chief Executive may be removed from office by the Directors of EirGrid.
34. **Functions:** the functions of the Chief Executive shall be to:-
- (i) carry on, manage and control generally the administration of EirGrid,
 - (ii) advise the Directors on any matter relating to or affecting the technical or safety standards specified under the Statutory Instrument or the safety of the electricity transmission system, and
 - (iii) advise the Directors in relation to the performance of the other functions of the Company as specified in the Statutory Instrument and, in particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, in relation to the making of orders and Regulations and the giving of directions by the Company, subject to lawful directions of the Directors of EirGrid.
35. **Terms and Conditions of Appointment:** Subject to Article 32, the Chief Executive shall hold office upon and subject to such terms and conditions (including terms and conditions relating to remuneration and allowances) as may be determined by the Directors with the consent of the Minister and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

PART VIII - CHAIRPERSON

36. **Chairperson:** Subject to Article 42, the chairperson of the Company shall be appointed from among the Directors by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and may be removed from office by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and shall hold office as chairperson for such period not exceeding 5 years as may be determined by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform at the time of his or her appointment.
37. **Re-Appointment:** A person who holds or has held the office of Chairperson of the Company shall subject to Article 42 and 47 be eligible for re-appointment to that office.
38. **Ceases to Hold Office:** A person who ceases to hold the office of chairperson of the Company may, subject to Article 42 and 47, if the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, so determines, continue to hold the office of Director and he or she shall be eligible for re-appointment as a Director.

PART IX - CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

39. **Chairperson's Report:** The Chairperson of the Company shall, immediately after an audit referred to in Article 85, make a report in writing to the Minister of the Company's activities during that year, separate from the report required under Article 86.
40. **Report:** A report under Article 39 shall include:-
- (i) a statement of all significant developments involving the Company which occurred in that year (including the acquisition of shares or establishment of subsidiaries by the Company),
 - (ii) a description of the matters the chairperson anticipates will arise in the accounting year next following the said year (or, where the chairperson considers it appropriate in any particular case, any subsequent accounting year) which may affect the Company to any significant extent,
 - (iii) a statement, to the best of the chairperson's knowledge or belief, as to whether each of the following, as respects the Company, has been complied with or adhered to, that is to say:-
 - (a) the requirements of the Statutory Instrument or any other enactment in relation to the accounts of the Company and statements as to the financial affairs of the Company,
 - (b) guidelines issued by the Government, the Minister or the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to the accounts of State

enterprises or statements in respect of the financial affairs of the Company,

- (c) any requirements under Regulation 55 of the Statutory Instrument,
 - (d) any requirements under or by virtue of an act of the European Communities,
 - (e) any code of conduct for the Directors or members of staff of State enterprises issued by the Government, the Minister, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform or EirGrid,
 - (f) any guidelines issued by the Government, the Minister or the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, in relation to the entering by a public authority into a contract with any person for the provision of goods or services by that person to such authority.
 - (g) any guidelines issued by the government, the Minister or the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to the remuneration to be paid by State enterprises to their chief executives,
- (iv) where anything referred to in paragraph (iii) hereof is stated not to have been complied with, an explanation (in so far as the chairperson is in a position to give one) as to why there was a failure to comply with it and, where he or she is not in a position to give an explanation, a statement to that effect.

In this Article-

"public authority" means—

- (a) a Minister of the Government,
- (b) the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland,
- (c) a board or other body established (but not including a company) by or under statute,
- (d) a company in which all the shares are held by, or on behalf of, or by directors appointed by, a Minister of the Government, or
- (e) a company in which all the shares are held by a board, other body or company referred to in paragraph (c) or (d);

In this Article "State enterprise" means a company (within the meaning of the Companies Act) one or more shares in the shareholding of which is held by a Minister of the Government and the principal objects of which (as stated in its Constitution) are prescribed in whole or in part by statute.

PART X DIRECTORS

41. **Number of Directors:** The number of Directors (including the Chairperson) shall not exceed ten.
42. **Appointments:**
- (i) The Chairperson and other Directors (except the Chief Executive) shall be appointed and may be removed from office by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform as provided for in Regulation 53 of the Statutory Instrument, and all such appointments and removals shall be effected by letter or other instrument in writing signed by the Minister.
 - (ii) A person who holds the office of Director shall be eligible for re-appointment to that office.
43. **Period of Appointment:** Subject to Articles 44 & 46 each of the Directors (excluding the Chief Executive) shall hold office for such period not exceeding 5 years as may be determined by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform at the time of their appointment. The Directors shall not retire by rotation and shall continue to hold office subject to the provisions of these Articles.
44. **First Directors:** Of the first Directors, other than the Chairperson and Chief Executive, the following shall apply: two, who shall be selected by lot at the first meeting of the Directors, shall hold office for a period of 3 years; two, who shall be selected as aforesaid, shall hold office for a period of 4 years and two, who shall be selected as aforesaid, shall hold office for a period of 5 years.
45. **Resignation:** A Director may at any time resign his or her office as a Director by letter addressed and given or sent to the Minister and the resignation shall take effect on and from the date (which shall be the date of, or a date later than the date of, the letter) specified in the letter for that purpose.
46. **Removal:** If at any time it appears to the Minister that the removal from office of all or any of the Directors (other than the Chief Executive) is necessary in the interests of the effective and economical performance of the functions of EirGrid as set out in the Statutory Instrument, the Minister may remove from office all or so many of the Directors of the Company as the Minister considers necessary in the interest aforesaid.
47. **Removal through ill Health or Absence:** The Minister may at any time remove from office any Director (other than the Chief Executive) who has become incapable through ill-health of performing efficiently his duties as such Director or who has (otherwise than for a reason considered by the Minister to be sufficient) been absent from all meetings of the Company during a period of six months.
48. **Skills and Knowledge:** In making the appointments under Article 42 the Minister shall have regard to the need for appointees to have particular skills and knowledge which are deemed of benefit to the commercial well being of the Company.

49. **Commission for Electricity Regulation:** No person who is a member or has ceased to be a member of the Commission for Energy Regulation or the UK equivalent body within the previous year can be appointed as a Director of the Company.
50. **Casual Vacancy:** Any casual vacancy may be filled by the Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, and the filling of such a vacancy shall be effected by letter or other instrument in writing signed by the Minister.
51. **Share Qualification:** A Director shall not require a share qualification but nevertheless shall be entitled to attend and speak at any meeting of the Company.
52. **Remuneration:** The remuneration and allowances for expenses of the Chairperson and other Directors (other than the Chief Executive) shall be determined by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
53. **Extra Remuneration:** If any Director, being willing, shall be called upon to perform extra services, or to make any special exertions for any of the purposes of the Company, the Company, with the approval of the Minister given with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, may remunerate such Director for such services or exertions and such remuneration may be either in addition to or in substitution of any remuneration payable pursuant to these Articles.
54. **Other Appointments:** A Director or officer of the Company may be or become a Director or other officer of, or otherwise interested in, any company in which the Company may be interested as shareholder or otherwise, and any remuneration or other profits received by him as a Director or officer of or from his or her interest in such other company shall, if directed by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, be remitted to the Company.
55. **Interests:** On appointment, each Director shall furnish to the Secretary details relating to his or her employment and all other business interests. Any interests of any person connected with him, which could involve a conflict of interest with any of the Company's operations, should also be disclosed. Any changes in these particulars should be notified to the Secretary as soon as possible. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing an interest in any electricity undertaking (as defined in the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999) shall be notified to the Secretary. For the purposes of this article a connected person shall have the same meaning as a 'connected person' does in section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995.
56. **Register of Interests:** Details of such interests shall be kept by the Secretary in a confidential register to which only the Chairperson, the Secretary and the Chief Executive shall have access. The register shall be updated on a yearly basis or as events are notified to the Secretary.
57. **Documents:** Documents which relate to dealings by the Company with any body in which a Director has an interest shall not be made available to that Director, and if a Director should receive such documents, he or she shall return them to the Secretary.
58. **Restriction on Director's Voting:** Where at a meeting of the Directors any of the following matters arises, namely

- (a) an arrangement to which the Company is a party or a proposed such arrangement, or
- (b) a contract or other agreement with the Company or a proposed such contract or other agreement,
- (c) the giving, grant or renewal by EirGrid of any instrument of approval, or
- (d) the revocation, cancellation, withdrawal, suspension or endorsement by EirGrid of any instrument of approval, given or granted—
 - (i) by EirGrid, or
 - (ii) by the Minister under a provision of, or made under, any enactment,

then any Director of the Company present at the meeting who, otherwise than in his or her capacity as a Director, is in any way, whether directly or indirectly, interested in the matter:

- (a) shall at the meeting disclose to the Company the fact of such interest and the nature thereof,
- (b) shall absent himself or herself from the meeting or that part of the meeting during which the matter is discussed,
- (c) shall take no part in the deliberations of the Board relating to the matter, and
- (d) shall not vote on a decision relating to the matter.

59. **Disclosure of Interest:** Where an interest is disclosed pursuant to Article 58, the disclosure shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting concerned and, for so long as the matter to which the disclosure relates is being dealt with by the meeting, the Director by whom the disclosure is made shall not be counted in the quorum for the meeting.
60. **Compliance:** Where at a meeting of the Directors a question arises as to whether or not a course of conduct, if pursued by a Director, would be a failure by him or her to comply with the requirements of Article 58, the question may be determined by the Chairperson of the meeting whose decision shall be final and where such a question is so determined particulars of the determination shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
61. **Contravention:** Where the Minister is satisfied that a Director has contravened Article 58, he or she may, if he or she thinks fit, and with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, remove that Director from office and, in case a person is removed from office pursuant to this subsection, he or she shall henceforth be disqualified from being a Director of the Company.
62. **Office:** Subject to prior notification and approval of the Minister and to these Articles a Director may hold any other office or place of profit in the Company (other than the office of auditor) in conjunction with his or her office of Director for such period and

on such conditions and, at such remuneration as the Directors may determine and no Director shall be disqualified by his or her office from contracting with the Company with regard to his or her tenure of any such other office.

63. **Minutes:** The Directors shall cause minutes to be made in books provided for the purpose:
- (a) of all appointments of officers made by the Directors;
 - (b) of the names of the Directors present at each meeting of the Directors and of any committee of the Directors; and
 - (c) of all resolutions and proceedings at all meetings of the Company and of the Directors.

PART XI - POWERS OF DIRECTORS

64. **Directors' Powers:** Subject to the provisions of the Act, the Constitution of the Company, the Statutory Instrument and these Articles and to any directions given by ordinary resolution, the business of the Company shall be managed by the Directors who may exercise all the powers of the Company. No alteration of the Constitution of the Company or of these Articles and no such direction shall invalidate any prior act of the Directors which would have been valid if that alteration had not been made or that direction had not been given. The powers given by this Article shall not be limited by any special power given to the Directors by these Articles and a meeting of Directors at which a quorum is present may exercise all powers exercisable by the Directors.
65. **Power to Delegate:** The Directors may delegate any of their powers to any Chief Executive or any Director holding any other executive office and to any committee consisting of one or more Directors together with such other persons (if any) as may be appointed to such committee by the Directors provided that a majority of the members of each committee (established pursuant to this Article) appointed by the Directors shall at all times consist of Directors and that no resolution of any such committee shall be effective unless a majority of the members of the committee present at the meeting at which it was passed are Directors. Any such delegation may be made subject to any conditions the Directors may impose, and either collaterally with or to the exclusion of their own powers and may be revoked. Subject to any such conditions, the proceedings of a committee with two or more members shall be governed by the provisions of these Articles regulating the proceedings of Directors so far as they are capable of applying.
66. **Appointment of Attorneys:** Subject to power of attorney being approved by the Board and copies being kept by the Secretary for inspection by the Board, the Directors may from time to time and at any time by power of attorney appoint any company, firm or person or body of persons to be the attorney or attorneys of the Company for such purposes and with such powers, authorities and discretions (not exceeding those vested in or exercisable by the Directors under these Articles) and for such period and subject to such conditions as they may think fit, and any such power

of attorney may contain such provisions for the protection of persons dealing with any such attorney as the Directors may think fit.

67. **Entitlement to Grant Pensions:** The directors may in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Statutory Instrument prepare and submit for approval superannuation schemes and may carry out any such scheme which has been approved under that Regulation and may perform the other functions conferred by that Regulation.
68. **Cheques:** All cheques, promissory notes, drafts, bills of exchange and other negotiable instruments and all receipts for moneys paid to the Company shall be signed, drawn, accepted, endorsed or otherwise executed, as the case may be, by such person or persons and in such manner as the Directors shall from time to time by resolution determine.

PART XII - DISQUALIFICATION AND REMOVAL OF DIRECTORS

69. **Disqualification:** The office of the Director shall be vacated if:
- (a) the Director is adjudged bankrupt in the State or elsewhere or makes any arrangement or composition with his or her creditors generally;
 - (b) the Directors becomes restricted from being a Director by reason of any declaration within the meaning of Chapter 3 of Part 14 of the Companies Act 2014;
 - (c) the Director becomes prohibited from being a Director by reason of any order within the meaning of Chapter 4 of Part 14 of the Companies Act 2014;
 - (d) the health of the director is such that he or she can no longer be reasonably regarded as possessing an adequate decision making capacity;
 - (e) the Director resigns his office by notice in writing to EirGrid and to the Minister;
 - (f) the term of office of the Director expires;
 - (g) the Director is convicted of an indictable offence (other than an offence under the Road Traffic Act, 1961, or any Act amending it) or any offence under the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999 or the Statutory Instrument;
 - (h) the Director is for more than 6 months absent without permission of the Directors from meetings of the Directors held during that period;
 - (i) the Director is removed from office by the Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under Article 46 hereof;
 - (i) The Director is removed from office by the Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, under Article 61 hereof;

- (j) the Director is
 - (a) nominated as a member of Seanad Eireann, or
 - (b) elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or to the European Parliament, or
 - (c) regarded pursuant to section 19 of the European Parliament Election Act, 1997, as having been elected to such Parliament to fill a vacancy;
 - (k) after appointment to that office, he or she is elected, re-elected or otherwise becomes a Director, employee or consultant of another electricity undertaking without the prior consent of the Commission;
 - (l) on or prior to appointment to that office, he or she fails to notify and seek the consent of the Commission to continue in any position held as a Director, employee or consultant of another electricity undertaking.
70. **Further Disqualification:** A person who is for the time being entitled under the Standing Orders of either House of the Oireachtas to sit therein or who is a member of the Assembly of the European Communities shall, while he or she is so entitled or is such a member, be disqualified from becoming a Director of the Company.

PART XIII - PROCEEDINGS OF DIRECTORS

71. **Regulation and Convening of Directors' Meetings.** Subject to the provisions of these Articles, the Directors may regulate their proceedings as they think fit. A Director may, and the Secretary at the request of a Director shall call a meeting of the Directors. Any Director may waive notice of any meeting and any such waiver may be retrospective, if the Directors so resolve. It shall not be necessary to give notice of a meeting of Directors to any Director who, being a resident of the State, is for the time being absent from the State.
72. **Voting at Directors' Meetings:** Questions arising at any meeting of Directors shall be decided by a majority of votes. Where there is an equality of votes, the chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
73. **Quorum for Directors' Meetings:** The quorum for Directors' meetings shall be a majority of the Board (with a ten member board at least six members should be present at the meeting to constitute a quorum).
74. **Telecommunications Meetings:** Any Director or any member of a committee of Directors may participate in a meeting of the Directors or a committee of Directors of which he is a member by means of a conference telephone or similar communicating equipment whereby all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other, and participation in a meeting in this manner will be deemed to constitute presence in person at such meeting. For the avoidance of doubt, for the purposes of determining whether the quorum for the transaction of business exists, any Director or committee

member in telephonic communication with a meeting of Directors or of a committee as the case may be will be counted in the quorum.

75. **Chairperson of Board of Directors:** If at any meeting the Chairperson is unwilling to act or is not present within five minutes after the time appointed for holding the same, the Directors present may choose one of their number to be chairperson of the meeting.
76. **Validity of Acts of Directors:** All acts done by any meeting of the Directors or of a committee of Directors or by any person acting as a Director shall, notwithstanding that it be afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment of any such Director or person acting as aforesaid, or that they or any of them were disqualified from holding office or had vacated office, be as valid as if every such person had been duly appointed and was qualified and had continued to be a Director and had been entitled to vote.
77. **Directors' Resolutions in Writing:** A resolution in writing signed by all the Directors entitled to receive notice of a meeting of Directors or of a committee of Directors shall be as valid as if it had been passed at a meeting of Directors or (as the case may be) a committee of Directors duly convened and held and may consist of several documents in the like form each signed by one or more Directors.

PART XIV - BORROWING POWERS

78. **Borrowing Powers:** The Directors may exercise all the powers of the Company to borrow and raise money (including money in a currency other than the currency of the State) as they may think fit and to mortgage or charge its undertaking and property, or any part thereof, and to issue debentures or debenture stock as security for any debt, liability or obligations of the Company or of any third party.
79. **Debentures, Bonds:** Any debentures or debenture stock created or to be created by the Company shall be under the control of the Directors who may issue them upon such terms and conditions and in such manner and for such consideration as they shall consider to be for the benefit of the Company.
80. **Register:** A register of the holders of the shares, debentures and debenture stock of the Company shall be kept at the office, and shall be open to the inspection of the registered holders of such shares, debentures, and debenture stock and of any members of the Company, subject to such restrictions as the Company in general meeting from time to time impose. The Directors may close such register for such period or periods as they may think fit, not exceeding in the aggregate thirty days in any year.

PART XV - SECRETARY

81. **Appointment:** The Secretary shall be appointed by the Directors for such term and on such conditions and at such remuneration (as determined to be in accordance with and subject to Article 109 hereof) as they think fit and he or she may be removed by them.

82. **Authority:** A provision of the Companies Act or these Articles requiring or authorising anything to be done by or to a Director and the Secretary shall not be satisfied by its being done by or to the same person acting both as Director and as, or in the place of, the Secretary.

PART XVI - AUDIT

83. **Auditors:** A person shall be appointed by EirGrid to be its auditor on the basis of a competitive tender. The appointment shall be subject to the prior written approval of the Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.
84. **Accounts:** Without prejudice to the requirements of the Companies Act 2014, in relation to balance sheets and accounts and without prejudice to Regulation 27 of the Statutory Instrument the Company shall keep, in such form as may be approved of by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of all money received by or expended by it, including a profit and loss account, an account showing the derivation of the funds of EirGrid and the purposes to which they are applied (referred to in Article 85 as “the cash flow statement”) and a balance sheet, and shall also keep in such form as aforesaid all such special accounts as the Minister may from time to time direct.
85. **Audited Accounts:** Accounts kept in pursuance of these Articles and Regulation 47 of the Statutory Instrument shall be submitted annually by the Company to an auditor for audit and, as soon as may be after the audit, a copy of the profit and loss account, the cash flow statement, the balance sheet and such other (if any) of the accounts kept by the Company as the Minister may direct and a copy of the auditor’s report on the accounts shall be presented to the Minister who shall cause copies thereof to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas.

PART XVII - ANNUAL REPORT AND FURNISHING OF INFORMATION TO MINISTER

86. **Submission of Annual Report:** Not later than 6 months after the end of each accounting year, the Company shall submit a report in writing to the Minister of its activities and those of its subsidiaries during that year and, not later than 3 months after such submission, the Minister shall cause copies of the report to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas.
87. **Information:** A report of the Company under Article 86 shall include the financial statements as set out in Article 85 and information, in such form as the Minister may direct after consultation with the Company and with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, regarding the operations, cost-effectiveness and financial targets of the Company.
88. **Further Information:** The Company shall, if so required by the Minister, furnish to him or her such information as he or she may require in respect of any balance sheet or other account or any report of the Company or any subsidiaries or in relation to the policy and operations (other than day to day operations) of the Company.

PART XVIII - THE SEAL

89. **Use of Seal:** The Directors shall ensure that the Seal (including any official securities seal kept pursuant to the Act) shall only be used by the authority of the Directors or of a committee authorised by the Directors.
90. **Signature of Sealed Instruments:** Every instrument to which the Seal shall be affixed shall be signed by a Director and shall also be signed by the Secretary or by a second Director or by some other person appointed by the Directors for the purpose save that as regards any certificates for shares or debentures or other securities of the Company the Directors may by resolution determine that such signatures of either of them shall be dispensed with, printed thereon or affixed thereto by some method or system of mechanical signature.
91. **Seal for Use Abroad:** The Company may exercise the powers conferred by the Act with regard to having an official seal for use abroad, and such powers shall be vested in the Directors.

PART XIX - DIVIDENDS AND RESERVES

92. **Declaration of Dividends:**
- (i) Subject to the provisions of the Act, the Company may by ordinary resolution declare dividends in accordance with the respective rights of the members, but no dividend shall exceed the amount recommended by the Directors.
 - (ii) The Directors may from time to time pay into the Exchequer, pursuant to Regulation 46 of the Statutory Instrument, such interim dividends as appear to the Directors to be justified by the profits of the Company.
93. **Interim and Fixed Dividends:** Subject to the provisions of the Act, the Directors may pay interim dividends if it appears to them that they are justified by the profits of the Company available for distribution. The Directors may also pay at intervals settled by them any dividend payable at a fixed rate if it appears to them that the profits available for distribution justify the payment.
94. **Payment of Dividends:** Except as otherwise provided by the rights attached to shares, all dividends shall be declared and paid according to the amounts paid up on the shares on which the dividend is paid. Subject as aforesaid, all dividends shall be apportioned and paid proportionately to the amounts paid or credited as paid on the shares during any portion or portions of the period in respect of which the dividend is paid; but, if any share is issued on terms providing that it shall rank for dividend as from a particular date, such share shall rank for dividend accordingly. For the purposes of this Article, no amount paid on a share in advance of calls shall be treated as paid on a share.
95. **Payment of Dividends by Post:** Any dividend or other moneys payable in respect of any share may be paid by cheque or warrant sent by post to the registered address of the holder or, to the registered address of that one of the joint holders who is first

named on the Register or to such person and to such address as the holder or joint holders may in writing direct. Every such cheque or warrant shall be made payable to the order of the person to whom it is sent and payment of the cheque or warrant shall be a good discharge to the Company.

96. **Dividends Not to Bear Interest:** No dividend or other moneys payable in respect of a share shall bear interest against the Company unless otherwise provided by the rights attached to the share.
97. **Payment to Holders on a Particular Date:** Any resolution declaring a dividend on shares of any class, whether a resolution of the Company in general meeting or a resolution of the Directors, may specify that the same may be payable to the persons registered as the holders of such shares at the close of business on a particular date, notwithstanding that it may be a date prior to that on which the resolution is passed, and thereupon the dividend shall be payable to them in accordance with their respective holdings so registered, but without prejudice to the rights inter se in respect of such dividend of transferors and transferees of any such shares. The provisions of this Article shall, mutatis mutandis, apply to capitalisations to be effected in pursuance of these Articles.
98. **Unclaimed Dividends:** Any dividend which has remained unclaimed for twelve years from the date of its declaration shall, if the Directors so resolve, be forfeited and cease to remain owing by the Company. The payment by the Directors of any unclaimed dividend or other moneys payable in respect of a share into a separate account shall not constitute the Company a trustee in respect thereof.

PART XX - NOTICES

99. **Notices in Writing:** Any notice to be given, served or delivered pursuant to these Articles shall be in writing.
100. **Service of Notices:**
- (a) A notice or document (including a share certificate) to be given, served or delivered in pursuance of these Articles may be given to, served on or delivered to any member by the Company:
 - (i) by handing same to him or his authorised agent;
 - (ii) by leaving the same at his registered address; or
 - (iii) by sending the same by the post in a pre-paid cover addressed to him at his registered address; or
 - (iv) Sending it electronically to the agreed electronic service addresses in accordance with Section 218(4) of the Act.
 - (b) Where a notice or document is given, served or delivered pursuant to subparagraph (a) (i) or (ii) of this Article, the giving, service or delivery thereof shall be deemed to have been effected at the time the same was handed to the

member or his authorised agent, or left at his registered address (as the case may be).

- (c) Where a notice or document is given, served or delivered pursuant to sub-paragraph (a) (iii) of this Article, the giving, service or delivery thereof shall be deemed to have been effected at the expiration of twenty-four hours after the cover containing it was posted. In proving such service or delivery it shall be sufficient to prove that such cover was properly addressed, stamped and posted.
 - (d) Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-paragraphs (a) (i) and (ii) of this Article, if at any time by reason of the suspension or curtailment of postal services within the State, the Company is unable effectively to convene a general meeting by notices sent through the post, a general meeting may be convened by a notice advertised on the same date in at least two leading national daily newspapers in the State and such notice shall be deemed to have been duly served on all members entitled thereto at noon on the day on which the said advertisements shall appear. In any such case the Company shall send confirmatory copies of the notice through the post to those members whose registered addresses are outside the State (if or to the extent that in the opinion of the Directors it is practical so to do) or are in areas of the State unaffected by such suspension or curtailment of postal services and if at least ninety-six hours prior to the time appointed for the holding of the meeting the posting of notices to members in the State, or any part thereof which was previously affected, has again in the opinion of the Directors become practical the Directors shall forthwith send confirmatory copies of the notice by post to such members. The accidental omission to give any such confirmatory copy of a notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of any such confirmatory copy by, any person entitled to receive the same shall not invalidate the proceedings at the meeting.
 - (e) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Article the Company shall not be obliged to take account of or make any investigations as to the existence of any suspension or curtailment of postal services within or in relation to all or any part of any jurisdiction or area other than the State.
101. **Signature to Notices.** The signature to any notice to be given by the Company may be written or printed.
102. **Deemed Receipt of Notices.** A member present, either in person or by proxy, at any meeting of the Company or the holders of any class of shares in the Company shall be deemed to have received notice of the meeting and, where requisite, of the purposes for which it was called.

PART XXI - WINDING UP

103. **Distribution on Winding Up:** If on the winding up or dissolution of the company there remains after the satisfaction of all of its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed amongst members of the

company but shall be paid into or disposed of for the benefit of the Exchequer in such manner as the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform may direct.

PART XXII - INDEMNITY

104. **Indemnity:** Every Director, Chairperson, Chief Executive, agent, auditor, Secretary or other officer for the time being of the Company or Trustee appointed by the Company shall be indemnified out of the assets of the Company against all losses or liabilities which he or she may sustain or incur in or about the execution of the duties of his or her office or otherwise in relation thereto, including any liability incurred by him or her in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgement is given in his or her favour, or in which he is or she is acquitted or in connection with any application under section 233 or 234 of the Companies Act 2014 in which relief is granted to him or her by the court. No Director or other officer shall be liable for any loss, damage or misfortune which may happen to be incurred by the Company in the execution of the duties of his or her office or in relation thereto, but this Article shall only have effect insofar as its provisions are not avoided by section 235 of the Companies Act 2014.

PART XXIII - PROHIBITION ON UNAUTHORISED DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

105. **Prohibition:** Every Director, Chairperson, Managing Director, Auditor, trustee, member of a committee, officer, servant, agent, accountant or other person engaged in the business of the Company, shall keep strictly secret and confidential, and shall not disclose to any person save as may be authorised by the Board, or by some person duly authorised by the Board, or use otherwise than solely for the benefit of the Company in the course of his or her duties, or as may be required by law, any confidential information or any books, documents or records relating to the business, affairs and accounts of the Company and its dealings with customers, suppliers and others; and shall if required by either the Minister or the Board execute an undertaking, in such form as the Board may determine, to perform all of the obligations contained herein, and to indemnify the Company against any loss occasioned as a result of his or her failure to do so. For the purpose of this Article "Company" shall include all subsidiary and associated companies of the Company and "confidential information" shall mean that which is expressed to be confidential either as regards particular information or as regards information of a particular class or description.

PART XXIV - STAFF OF THE COMPANY

106. **Employ:** The Company shall employ such staff as it considers necessary and appropriate for the proper and efficient carrying out of its functions and the conduct of its business.
107. **First Staff:** The first staff of the Company shall be every person who, on the day immediately before the effective date provided for in the Statutory Instrument, was a designated member of the staff of the Electricity Supply Board (as set out in Regulation 14 of the Statutory Instrument), and the Company shall accept all such

persons as staff of the Company as and from the effective date, and in accordance with the provisions in the Statutory Instrument.

108. **Performance of Function:** The Company may perform any of its functions through or by any member of its staff duly authorised to do so by the Company.
109. **Remuneration of Staff:** In determining the remuneration or allowances for expenses to be paid to members of its staff, or the other terms or conditions subject to which such members hold or are to hold their employment, the shall have regard to Government or nationally agreed guidelines which are for the time being extant or to Government policy concerning remuneration and conditions of employment which is so extant, and in addition to the foregoing, the Company shall comply with any Directives with regard to such remuneration, allowances, terms or conditions which the Minister gives to the Company with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

PART XXV- MISCELLANEOUS

110. **Inspection of Books etc. by Members** The books of account shall be kept at the Office or, subject to section 283 of the Companies Act 2014, at such other place as the Directors think fit, and shall at all reasonable times be open to the inspection of the Directors and of the Minister, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, or the duly appointed representative of either Minister.

No member (not being a Director, the Minister, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, or the duly appointed representative of either Minister) shall have any right of inspecting any account or book or document of the Company except as conferred by statute or authorised by the Directors or by the Company in general meeting.

We, the several persons whose names, addresses and descriptions are subscribed, wish to be formed into a Company in pursuance of this Constitution and we agree to take the number of shares in the capital of the Company set opposite our respective names.

NAMES, ADDRESSES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF SUBSCRIBERS

John McQuillan
3 Rectory Way, Herbert Road, Bray, Co Wicklow
Company Secretary Designate

Kieran O'Brien
20 Burnaby Park, Greystones, Co Wicklow
Company Chief Executive Designate

Martin J Brennan
30 Beachdale, Kilcoole, Co Wicklow
Civil Servant

Michael E J O'Kelly
32 Maunsells Road, Galway
Chairman Designate of Company

Fintan A O'Brien
11 St Andrews Park, Swords, Co Dublin
Civil Servant

Paul Byrne
22 Callary Road
Mount Merrion
Co Dublin
Civil Servant

James O'Brien
30 Cypress Park, Templeogue, Dublin 6W
Civil Servant

Minister for Public Enterprise
44 Kildare Street, Dublin 2
Martin J Brennan

Minister for Finance
Government Buildings
Merrion Street, Dublin 2
James O'Brien

Witness: Salvador Nash
1 Stokes Place
St Stephens Green
Dublin 2

Dated this 29 day of January 2001



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Appendix E: Certificate of Incorporation of EirGrid PLC

June 2021



Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28
Telephone: 01 677 1700 • www.eirgrid.ie

Number 338522

DUPLICATE FOR THE FILE

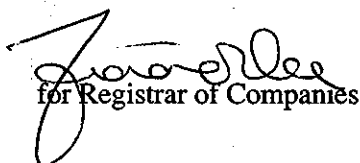
Certificate of Incorporation

I hereby certify that

EIRGRID PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY

is this day incorporated under
the Companies Acts 1963 to 1999
and that the company is limited.

Given under my hand at Dublin, this
Wednesday, the 7th day of February, 2001


for Registrar of Companies

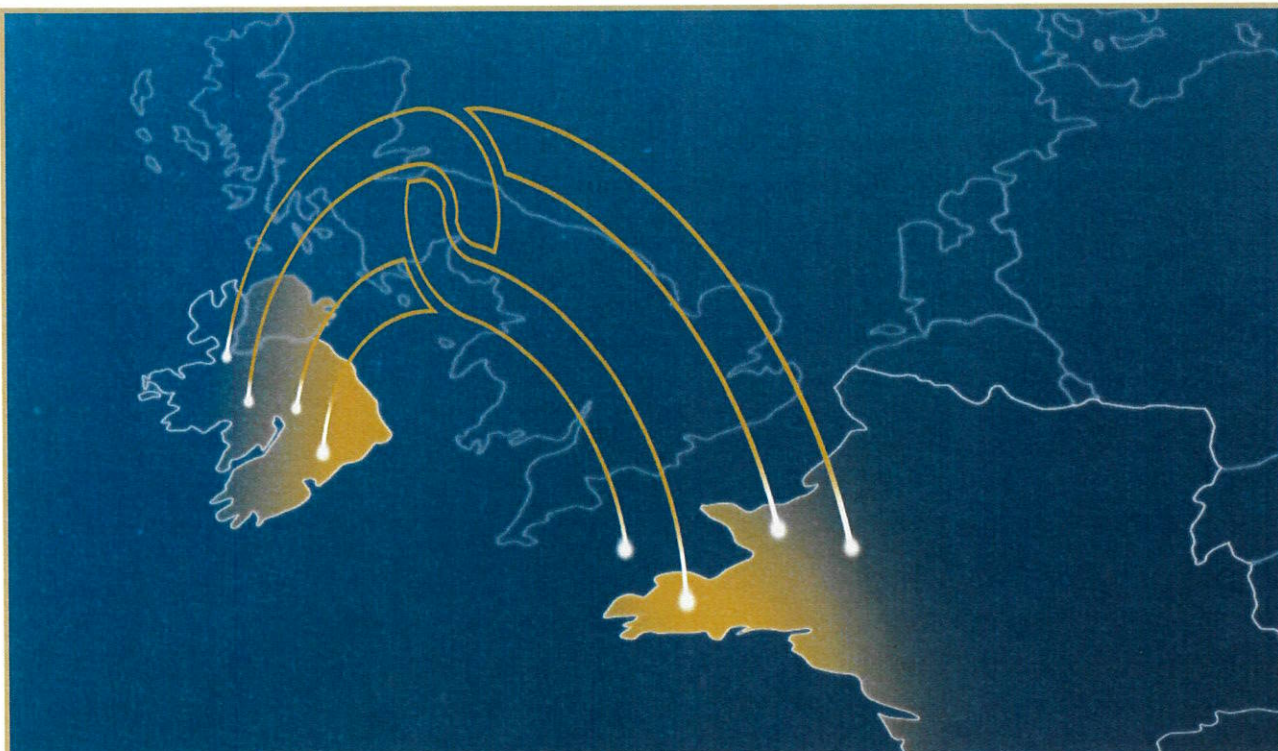
Certificate handed to/posted to*:

Salvador Nash.
Kpmg Services
1, Stokes Place,
St. Stephens Green,
Dublin 2.

Signed: Estelle Duggin

Date: 08-02-01

*Delete as appropriate



Celtic Interconnector

Volume 7A

Appendix F: EIA Portal Confirmation

June 2021



Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility



Tionscadal Eireann
Project Ireland
2040



The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28
Telephone: 01 677 1700 • www.eirgrid.ie

From: [Housing Eiaportal](#)
To: [Billington, Alistair](#)
Subject: EIA Portal Confirmation Notice Portal ID 2021131
Date: 05 July 2021 11:54:32

CAUTION: External email. Please do not click on links/attachments unless you know the content is genuine and safe.

An EIA Portal notification was received on 01/07/2021 in respect of this proposed application. The information provided has been uploaded to the EIA Portal on 05/07/2021 under EIA Portal ID number **2021131** and is available to view at

<http://housinggovie.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d7d5a3d48f104ecbb206e7e5f84b71f1>.

Portal ID: 2021131

Competent Authority: Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government

Applicant Name: EirGrid plc

Location: Between the Mean High Water Mark at Claycastle Beach in Youghal in the townland of Summerfield in County Cork, and the Ireland offshore 12nm limit.

Description: That portion of the Celtic Interconnector project to be constructed below the Mean High Water Mark to approximately 35km offshore in Irish Territorial Waters.

Linear Development: No

Date Uploaded to Portal: 05/07/2021

Regards
Tatiane Arantes
EIA Portal team

An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Teach an Chustaim, Baile Átha Cliath 1. D01 W6X0
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