

4 HUMAN BEINGS – TOURISM AND AMENITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1 This chapter presents an evaluation of the proposed development as described in Chapter 6, **Volume 3B** of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in relation to tourism and amenity considerations. The information contained within this chapter is concerned with tourism and amenity in the Meath Study Area (MSA) as defined in Chapter 5, **Volume 3B** of the EIS. It should be read in conjunction with other chapters of this volume of the EIS, particularly Chapter 2, for a full understanding of the potential for socio-economic impacts associated with the proposed development.
- 2 Chapter 6, **Volume 3B** of the EIS describes the full nature and extent of the proposed development, including elements of the overhead line (OHL) design and the towers. It provides a factual description, on a section by section basis, of the entire line route. The proposed line route is described in that chapter, using townlands and tower numbers as a reference. The principal construction works proposed as part of the proposed development are set out in Chapter 7, **Volume 3B** of this EIS.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

4.2.1 Scope of the Evaluation

- 3 This chapter of the EIS has been prepared in accordance with relevant EU and Irish legislation and guidance, including the requirements of Annex IV of the EIA Directive and in accordance with Schedule 6 of the *Planning and Development Regulations, 2001* (as amended) and conforms to the relevant requirements as specified therein. The scope of the evaluation is based on a review of legislation, guidance documents, other EISs, feedback from public consultation, consultation with prescribed authorities, consultation with An Bord Pleanála (the Board) and on a consideration of the likelihood for significant impacts arising, having regard to the nature of the receiving environment and the nature and extent of the proposed development.
- 4 The scoping opinion received from the Board (refer to Appendix 1.3, **Volume 3B Appendices** of the EIS) identified the following tourism and amenity related considerations as being relevant to this chapter of the EIS:
 - Fáilte Ireland as a Prescribed Body have stated that, from a preliminary analysis of the *Preferred Project Solution Report (PPSR)*, July 2013 (Appendix 1.2, **Volume 3B Appendices**), it considers that the main tourism assets in the vicinity of the proposed development within the MSA are the Hill of Tara, Bective Abbey and the Boyne Valley

Drive with its surrounding attractions. It is further submitted that additional tourism amenities and assets in the area which may be potentially impacted upon should also be identified and this identification can be undertaken in consultation with Fáilte Ireland by reviewing data from their Tourism Content System (TCS).

- Meath County Council has made no specific comments in relation to tourism and amenity. It is considered that the issues raised in the submission from Fáilte Ireland broadly reflect the tourism related issues raised previously by Meath County Council during pre-planning consultations.

5 This chapter concentrates on the tourism and amenity aspects of the existing environment and the potential for impacts on the tourism and amenity value of the area as a result of the proposed development in County Meath.

6 In reaching conclusions in this evaluation, consideration has been given to those locations and activities that are identified in publications and which have been identified during the public consultation process as well as through site visits to the MSA. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify those impacts that are likely to be significant and to propose mitigation measures where feasible and necessary.

7 An evaluation of other economic activities and employment in the MSA is described in **Chapter 2** of this volume of the EIS.

8 Indirect temporary impacts to tourism locations may occur during the construction phase arising mainly from visibility of construction activities and temporary traffic disruptions. These potential impacts have been evaluated and mitigation measures, where required, are outlined in **Chapters 11** and **13** of this volume of the EIS. Impacts from maintenance traffic during operation will be negligible and further consideration of these impacts with regard to tourism locations has therefore been scoped out of this evaluation.

9 The evaluation primarily concentrates on the preferred corridor as identified in the *Final Re-evaluation Report (FRR)* (April 2013) (Appendix 1.1, **Volume 3B Appendices** of the EIS) within which the proposed OHL is situated but it does take account of the wider environment outside of this corridor in an area within at least 5km from the outer edge of the corridor.

4.2.2 Information Sources

10 The information sources used to prepare this chapter include the following:

- Tourism information published by Fáilte Ireland;
- *Guidelines on the treatment of tourism in an EIS*, provided by Fáilte Ireland as part of their submission to the Board referred to in **Section 4.2.1**;

- Local tourism information publications and websites including Meath Tourism www.meath.ie/tourism;
- Other websites related to specific tourist attractions or facilities (e.g. Office for Public Works (OPW) website for attractions managed by them, Údarás na Gaeltachta website for information about the Gaeltacht, local accommodation and attraction websites);
- National and Regional Development Plans;
- *Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019* (the Meath CDP);
- Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) mapping and aerial photography;
- Information provided as a result of project consultation and scoping; and
- Site visits to the MSA.

4.2.3 Fáilte Ireland Guidelines on Treatment of Tourism in an EIS

- 11 Fáilte Ireland has developed these guidelines to facilitate its evaluation of projects on the potential for impacts on tourism and amenities and it is considered that these guidelines are the most appropriate evaluation methodology to use for this EIS. The guidelines differentiate between tourism projects and impacts of other projects affecting tourism (e.g. the quality of a destination or a tourism activity).
- 12 The guidelines suggest that in the area likely to be affected by the proposed development, the attributes of tourism, or the resources that sustain tourism, should be described under the headings of context, character, significance and sensitivity. They further note that the detailed description and analysis will usually be covered in the section dealing with the relevant environmental topic – such as ‘*Landscape*’. Only the relevant findings as to the likely significance to, or effect on, tourism needs to be summarised in the tourism section.
- 13 In interpreting the guidelines, the following approach has been used:
- **Characteristics of the Proposed Development:** The nature and extent of the proposed development in terms of being a linear development;
 - **Existing Environment:** This addresses the context, character, significance and sensitivity of the tourism assets of the area by providing a profile of the tourism base of the area;
 - **Potential Impacts:** Consideration of the likely impacts to the tourism and amenity assets of the area as a result of the proposed development;

- Mitigation Measures: Description of mitigation measures; and
- Residual Impacts: Potential impacts following mitigation measures.

4.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 14 The proposed development primarily involves the erection of an overhead electricity line on lattice steel support structures. The types of issues which OHL developments of this nature typically raise in relation to this topic include; the potential for impacts on the attractiveness and amenity value of an area and the associated impact on tourist numbers and revenue to the area. In that regard, the evaluation considers the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the proposed development.

4.4 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

4.4.1 Description of Key Tourism Attractions and Amenities in the Area

- 15 Meath is a large county and has many tourist attractions throughout the county. It is an important tourist destination, with the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, incorporating the passage tombs at Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth which are a particular focus of tourist activity. The importance of the county as a tourist destination arises as a result of the archaeological and architectural heritage, the rural landscape, the towns and villages and the coastline. As well as the UNESCO sites, Trim Castle and the Hill of Tara also have a high profile in both the domestic and overseas tourist markets. Loughcrew, Tailteann, the Hill of Ward, Christian sites at Kells, Slane, Donaghmore, Killeen, Dunsany and Duleek, monastic ruins at Bective and Trim and country houses from the 18th Century onwards all contribute to the tourism assets in County Meath.
- 16 Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS provides a detailed map of accommodation, attractions and activities focusing on those within 5km of the OHL. The material is sourced from information provided in October 2014 by Fáilte Ireland. Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS is representative of what Fáilte Ireland has in its Tourism Content System database at a point in time and should not be construed as representing all tourism businesses in any particular area. It does not include, for example, tourism accommodation providers that are not registered with Fáilte Ireland. Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS is also representative of tourist attractions and activities in counties Cavan, Monaghan and Meath, as identified in publications compiled by the local tourist organisation, Meath Tourism. The relevant tourist attractions and activities which are described in this EIS are confined to those main tourism assets that are proximate and relevant to the project MSA section of the proposed development.

17 From the information provided, the most significant visitor attractions identified by Fáilte Ireland in County Meath, some of which lie outside the MSA project area and are therefore not shown on Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS are as follows:

- Battle of the Boyne site – Oldbridge Estate (located approximately 22km east of the OHL);
- Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre (located approximately 20km east of the OHL);
- Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth (located approximately 18km east of the OHL);
- Trim Castle (located approximately 6km west of the OHL);
- Hill of Tara (located approximately 6km east of the OHL);
- Bective Abbey (located approximately 800m north-east of the OHL); and
- Boyne Valley Drive and surrounding attractions (traversed by the OHL).

18 It is important to note that with the exception of Trim Castle, Hill of Tara, Bective Abbey and Boyne Valley Drive, the other attractions lie a significant distance from the proposed alignment of the OHL and have not been identified by Fáilte Ireland as tourism assets within the MSA related to the OHL. Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre, Newgrange, Knowth, Dowth, the Battle of the Boyne site – Oldbridge Estate and Trim Castle have been considered during the route selection stage and avoidance of these has been the objective during route selection (in particular refer to **Chapters 5 and 6, Volume 3B of this EIS**). The most relevant tourism assets proximate to the OHL from the list above are described in the following sections.

4.4.1.1 Trim Castle (approximately 6km west of the OHL)

19 Trim Castle and Visitor Centre (see **Figure 4.2**) is located in the Heritage Town of Trim and is managed by the Office for Public Works (OPW). The visitor centre exhibition portrays Trims past, which coincided with the early period of Norman power in Ireland. The castle is open to the public and guided tours are available year round. The latest available statistics from the OPW show that almost 50,000 people visited Trim Castle in 2013. It features as a stop on many tourist coach itineraries.



Figure 4.2: Image of Trim Castle

4.4.1.2 Hill of Tara (approximately 6km east of the OHL)

20 The Hill of Tara is an area of raised upland to the south of Navan (see **Figure 4.3**), with extensive views over the surrounding countryside. It is immediately proximate to the M3 national primary route, which links Navan to Dunshaughlin to the east of the Hill of Tara. Though best known as the seat of the High Kings of Ireland, the Hill of Tara has been an important site since the late Stone Age when a passage tomb was constructed there. The site is managed by the OPW. It is open to the public from May to September and guided tours and an audio-visual show are available along with restaurant facilities. The latest available statistics from the OPW show that almost 10,000 people visited the Hill of Tara in 2013. It features as a stop on many tourist coach itineraries.



Figure 4.3: Views from Hill of Tara

4.4.1.3 Bective Abbey (approximately 800m north-east of the OHL)

- 21 Bective Abbey (see **Figure 4.4**) which lies between Trim and Navan is a National Monument in County Meath and is managed by the OPW. Bective Abbey is the oldest Cistercian foundation in County Meath and the second oldest Cistercian foundation in Ireland. The abbey at Bective was dissolved in 1536 and the stones from the abbey were used in the repair of Trim Castle. It is open to the public year round and was used as a film set in 1995. No visitor statistics are collected as entry is free. Visitor facilities are limited to a car park.



Figure 4.4: Views of Bective Abbey

4.4.1.4 Towns and Villages

- 22 The many smaller towns and villages around County Meath have a number of local attractions and amenities for tourists and the surrounding population. The following villages are those which are located in the MSA in surrounding areas where the proposed development is located; Nobber, Kilmainhamwood, Gibstown, Robinstown, Dunderry, Bohermeen, Oristown, Wilkinstown, Castletown, Drumree, Dunsany, Cortown, Teevurcher and Batterstown.

4.4.2 Description of Visitor and Recreational Activities and Events

- 23 There are a number of visitor activities available in County Meath as indicated in Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS and in local tourist publications. While many indoor activities are located in towns and villages, there are a variety of outdoor activities available at different

locations throughout the county. This section focuses on those outdoor activities which are proximate to the proposed line route.

4.4.2.1 Angling, Shooting and Hunting

24 County Meath is known as an angling destination, particularly along the Rivers Boyne, Blackwater and their tributaries for salmon and trout fishing. The main rivers that the line route crosses are the River Boyne and the River Blackwater; sections of both rivers are within the candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). Other rivers that the line route crosses are the River Dee, Kilmainham River, Clady River, Derrypatrick River and the Boycetown River.

25 Shooting clubs and hunting is a popular activity in County Meath and while there are no specific designated areas within the MSA for such activities, the area along the line route is the type of lands where such activities can take place.

4.4.2.2 Equestrian

26 There are a number of equestrian centres and stables throughout County Meath. Bachelors Lodge Equestrian Centre is approximately 1km east of the OHL. Equestrian activities and horse riding take place in many rural areas throughout the county and are likely to occur in other areas in the general vicinity of the proposed development.

4.4.2.3 Walking, Cycling and Other Recreational Activities

27 There are no waymarked walking trails listed on www.irishtrails.ie located in close proximity to the proposed development, the nearest being in the south of the county along the Royal Canal approximately 13km to the south of the proposed development. While there are no waymarked routes walking, cycling, local gatherings and other recreational activities take place along quieter country roads and in settlements throughout the area.

28 A feasibility study has recently been completed (July 2013) by the Navan to Kingscourt Railway Committee to examine the feasibility of the development of the disused Navan to Kingscourt railway line as a Greenway for both walkers and cyclists. The route which mainly follows the now disused Navan – Kingscourt Railway line would be approximately 30km in length would extend from the major tourist and amenity area of the Boyne Valley to Kingscourt, in County Cavan. Should this Greenway proceed it is likely to attract additional cycling tourism to the area.

4.4.2.4 Driving Routes

- 29 Fáilte Ireland has recently completed the Boyne Valley Driving Route project. Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS shows the driving route relative to the proposed OHL. Fáilte Ireland has identified this as a tourism asset within the MSA where the proposed development is located. The route is 225km long and takes in 22 historic sites including two world heritage sites along the way. Included in the route are Brú Na Bóinne (the UNESCO World Heritage sites at Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth), Trim Castle, Monasterboice, Slane Castle and Mellifont Abbey. Phase one of the Boyne Valley Driving Route project, which included signage along the route is complete and plans are underway for the next phase regarding the layout and design of the sites to ensure a cohesive look to the drive. Funded by Fáilte Ireland, the route was created in collaboration with local authorities in Meath and Louth in a bid to revitalise the region and promote the Boyne Valley as a must-visit destination for overseas visitors.
- 30 As illustrated in Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS the proposed OHL route crosses the driving route at two locations, close to Bective Abbey and close to Baile Ghib. There are various scenic views along the route; these are described in **Chapter 11** of this volume of the EIS.

4.4.2.5 Activities Related to Trim Airfield

- 31 Trim Airfield is located approximately 4km north-west of Trim and has one grass runway that is 560m long. It is used for a range of aviation activities including hot air ballooning, microlight flying and helicopter use. The airfield is located approximately 1.2km from the OHL. The airfield and its uses and the potential for impacts on airfield activities are described in **Chapter 12** of this volume of the EIS.

4.4.2.6 Gaeltacht Area

- 32 The Meath Gaeltacht is the smallest Gaeltacht area in Ireland and consists of two adjacent villages of Ráth Chairn and Baile Ghib. It encompasses a geographical area of 44km², which represents 1% of total Gaeltacht land area (www.udaras.ie). An evaluation of the proposed development in relation to the Gaeltacht is discussed in **Chapter 2** of this volume of the EIS.

4.4.2.7 Dunderry Fair and Festival

- 33 Dunderry Fair has been held in recent times on an annual basis since 2004 in the month of May in the field to the west of Dunderry House, which is the field adjacent to Dunderry graveyard. In 2013 it was reported that 16,000 people attended this Fair compared to 6,000 people in 2004. To date, it is reported that the Fair has donated over €200,000 to local and national charities. The Fair, although conceived by locals in 2004, has deep historical roots. Previous to 2004, the

last Dunderry Fair was held over 150 years ago. Activities include vintage motor parade, ICA workshops, live music, farm animals and 'half an acre' of amusements. For more information refer to www.dunderryfair.ie.

- 34 Dunderry Park Festival also known as 'Spirit of Folk Festival' is held in September in Dunderry Park. This event celebrates the Autumn Equinox through ritual ceremony and includes Shamanic drumming, druidic rites as well as dance, yoga, voice and many other workshops. For more information refer to www.spiritoffolk.com. In addition to this Festival, workshops are held in Dunderry House including 'The Shaman's Journey' in August and November, 'The Shaman's Breath' in February, April, July and November, in addition to this there are ongoing courses in Shamanic Healing and Shaman Counselling Training throughout the year. From the above, it is apparent that the Dunderry area is a high amenity area with both Dunderry Fair and the Dunderry Park festival taking place once a year.

4.4.2.8 The Gathering 2013 and Other Events

- 35 Throughout 2013 Fáilte Ireland promoted a national tourism initiative referred to as the 'The Gathering'. Recently published figures by Fáilte Ireland for this initiative indicate that it has resulted in additional overseas visitors to the country and may provide a basis for future tourism growth.
- 36 There are a number of other local festivals and events which take place in the area, including the Drive In Bingo held in a field outside Baile Ghib, the location of this activity is located immediately adjacent to the proposed OHL.

4.4.3 Description of Accommodation Providers

- 37 There are a wide variety of accommodation types throughout County Meath, with the majority of them located in or on the outskirts of the main towns. Fáilte Ireland has provided details of all registered accommodation, which has been mapped, see Figure 4.1, **Volume 3D Figures** of the EIS.
- 38 The nearest registered accommodation provider to the proposed development is Kiltale Holiday Homes and Farm which is approximately 950m east of Tower 376. This consists of seven self-catering units located on a farm with various on site activities available.

4.4.4 Value of Tourism to the Area

- 39 The value of overseas tourism for each county in Ireland is available from statistics published by Fáilte Ireland for the period 2012. The latest available figures for 2012 for Meath are presented

in the context of highest and lowest in **Table 4.1** in order to give an indication of the value of tourism to the area within a wider context.

Table 4.1: Overseas Visitor Number and Value 2012

County	Overseas Visitors ('000)	Associated Revenue (€m)
Meath	122	44
Dublin (Highest)	3,641	1,267
Longford (Lowest)	20	6

Source: www.failteireland.ie.

- 40 Figures for domestic tourism for each county are not available as statistics are only collected in relation to overseas visitors. However, the importance of domestic tourism is highlighted by the fact that Fáilte Ireland estimated that domestic visitors took almost nine million trips and generated expenditure of €1.7 billion in 2013.
- 41 Tourism is important to County Meath, particularly as it is located adjacent to Dublin, which receives the highest number of overseas tourists and revenue. Fáilte Ireland statistics record that the World Heritage Sites of Brú na Bóinne attracted in excess of 130,000 visitors in 2013.
- 42 Recognising the importance of tourism to economic growth and the opportunities available by being located adjacent to Dublin, the Meath Tourism - *Tourism Strategic Plan 2011-2013* recommends that Meath Tourism channels its focus of activity into two main areas to make a national and international impact:
- Heritage and Culture Tourism as Ireland's Heritage Capital; and
 - Business Tourism.
- 43 The strategic plan recommends that all promotional activities should fall under these two main headings to ensure Meath achieves greater penetration in the heritage and culture arena and the concentive (conference and incentive) market, Ireland's two most lucrative visitor areas.
- 44 Development of rural tourism and leisure is identified as an important area of diversification for agricultural enterprises in the county development plan. There are a number of existing rural tourism enterprises in the county in the vicinity of the proposed development including the Crystal Maze and Royal Breffni Tours. The alignment passes through an area with potential to be developed as a tourist attraction at Teltown.

- 45 Notwithstanding the statistics published by Fáilte Ireland in terms of visitor numbers and revenue, tourism revenue is an important source of income to local areas where it is earned and is likely to become more important as tourism products develop in the future.

4.5 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

4.5.1 Do Nothing

- 46 Tourism and amenity development is likely to evolve and develop in line with national trends, the location of visitor attractions and amenities and with local strategies. Doing nothing will have no effect on tourism and recreation in County Meath.

4.5.2 Construction Phase

- 47 Construction of the proposed development, including modifications to the existing 110 kV transmission OHL, will be visible to tourists for the duration of the construction period, although as noted in Chapter 7, **Volume 3B** of the EIS, the linear nature of the proposed development will mean that the construction of the proposed development will be of short duration in any one locality. An outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is included in this EIS as part of Appendix 7.1, **Volume 3B Appendices** of the EIS. The visual impact of the proposed development during construction is addressed in **Chapter 11** of this volume of the EIS. This will be a temporary slight impact and will not have any significant long term impacts on tourism and amenity. There may be some periodic disruption along local roads in the area during construction but this will be managed as detailed in **Chapter 13**, of this volume of the EIS.

4.5.3 Operational Phase

- 48 The Fáilte Ireland guidelines advise that the predicted impacts section should describe the location, type, significance, magnitude / extent of the tourism activities or assets that are likely to be affected.
- 49 The tourism profile of the area shows that the many of the key tourism assets identified by Fáilte Ireland, which attract very significant numbers of visitors, lie in the region of 20km from the proposed development, including Battle of the Boyne site – Oldbridge Estate, Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre and Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth. Others tourism assets (e.g. Trim Castle and the Hill of Tara) lie approximately 6km from the proposed development, while two tourism assets (e.g. Bective Abbey and Boyne Valley Drive) lie within 1km of the proposed development. Avoidance of the significant tourism assets has been the objective during route selection stage (refer to **Chapters 5 and 6, Volume 3B of this EIS**).

- 50 The context, character, significance and sensitivity of the tourism and amenity resource of the existing area have been described previously. The description concluded that the main tourism assets in close proximity of the proposed development are Bective Abbey and the Boyne Valley Driving Route. At a local level, there are other attractions and activities which take place within the vicinity of the proposed development including aviation related activities at Trim Airfield, fair / festivals and other activities in Dunderry Park and House and the Gibstown Drive In Bingo. Activities which take place throughout the area include walking, cycling, equestrian, angling, sports activities and other forms of passive and active recreation. These activities have the potential to be impacted by the proposed development.
- 51 While there are other tourist attractions and local amenities outside the key tourism assets, these are less sensitive to change when compared to the key assets. While tourism is important to particular areas of County Meath, overall visitor numbers to the county are high by comparison with other counties in Ireland. This arises particularly as a result of the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Brú na Bóinne. Outside of significant tourist attractions tourism revenue can be an important source of income to local areas where it is earned, particularly in rural areas.
- 52 While there is future potential for development of tourism in rural areas where the proposed development is located, this potential is generally based on further development of existing activities and products, such as angling, water based activities, driving, walking and cycling. The landscape and land use of an area is an important factor in the development of tourism as it provides a setting for the activities which take place in the area.
- 53 The proposed development will not directly inhibit any tourist and amenity activities along its route, however, the reduction in the visual amenity of a local area may be perceived as reducing the attractiveness of an area used for tourist and amenity related activities. There will be a direct though localised visual impact on a short section of the Boyne Valley Driving Route, as the line crosses this route at two locations close to Bective Abbey and Gibstown. There will be direct but limited visibility when viewed from specific locations within Bective Abbey. The potential visual impacts are detailed in **Chapter 11** of this volume of the EIS.
- 54 Other outdoor amenity areas and activities, including the location of Gibstown Drive In Bingo, are in close proximity to the proposed development. While the OHL will be visible from these areas and there may be a reduction in the visual amenity of these areas it is unlikely to prohibit recreational activities continuing at these locations.
- 55 As the proposed line route will pass through some areas of localised landscape sensitivity and, in particular, short sections of the Boyne Valley Driving Route and close to the location of Bective Abbey, it may have slight indirect impacts on the attractiveness and associated tourism

and amenity value of these and other areas. The degree to which the line route could potentially affect the visual amenities of these areas is evaluated in **Chapter 11** of this volume of the EIS.

56 As the most significant tourist accommodations, attractions and activities, as identified by Fáilte Ireland and local tourism agencies, are being avoided, with the exception of the Boyne Valley Driving Route and existing activities can continue in the vicinity of the proposed development, it is reasonable to conclude that overall there may be slight localised impacts on tourism and recreational amenities and associated economic activity arising directly as a result of the proposed development.

4.5.4 Decommissioning

57 The proposed development will become a permanent part of the transmission infrastructure. The expected lifespan of the development is in the region of 50 to 80 years. This will be achieved by routine maintenance and replacement of hardware as required. There are no plans for the decommissioning of the OHL. In the event that part of, or the entire proposed infrastructure is to be decommissioned, all towers, equipment and material to be decommissioned will be removed off site and the land reinstated. Impacts would be expected to be less than during the construction phase and would be of short term duration.

4.6 MITIGATION MEASURES

58 Route selection has been the main mitigation measure used to reduce the potential for adverse impacts on tourism and amenity as a result of the operation of the proposed development and the potential for adverse impacts is classified as localised slight. Other than locating the line route to a different area, which may create more significant impacts in that area, no further mitigation measures can be employed. The route alternatives are considered in **Chapter 5 and 6, Volume 3B** of the EIS.

4.7 RESIDUAL IMPACTS

59 Once the proposed development is operational, slight localised residual impacts on tourism and amenity may arise.

4.8 INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

60 This chapter should be read in conjunction with other chapters of this volume of the EIS including; **Chapter 2** Human Beings – Population and Economic, **Chapter 3** Human Beings – Land Use, **Chapter 6** Flora and Fauna, **Chapter 11** Landscape and **Chapter 14** Cultural Heritage for a full understanding of the main interactions between these environmental topics.

61 The main potential interactions arise from the following interrelationships:

- **Chapter 2** - Human Beings – Population and Economic – There may be a slight reduction in tourism spend and associated economic activity in the immediate areas where the proposed development will be located.
- **Chapter 11** - Landscape – The OHL will be visible from some short sections of the Boyne Valley Driving Route. This may be perceived as reducing the attractiveness of the attractions at these locations for tourism and amenity purposes.
- **Chapter 14** - Cultural Heritage – The OHL will be visible from some areas within Bective Abbey. This may be perceived as reducing the attractiveness of this area for tourism and amenity purposes.

4.9 CONCLUSIONS

62 Impacts to tourism and amenity will not be direct impacts, as no tourist sites will be physically impacted by the proposed development. Potential negative impacts on tourism and amenity are anticipated to be limited to indirect localised visual impacts on the landscape in close proximity to the OHL. The Boyne Valley Driving Route and Bective Abbey are the tourism assets which have the potential to experience such visual impacts.