1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1 This volume (**Volume 3C**) of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides an evaluation of the potential for environmental impacts arising from the proposed North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development for the section of the proposed development which is located in the Cavan Monaghan Study Area (CMSA) as defined in Chapter 5, **Volume 3B** of the EIS. The contents of this volume are supported by two separate volumes: **Volume 3C Appendices** and **Volume 3C Figures** of the EIS.

2 The proposed development in the CMSA comprises a new single circuit 400 kV overhead transmission circuit supported by 134 towers (Tower 103 to Tower 236) extending generally southwards from the jurisdictional border with Northern Ireland (between the townland of Doohat or Crossreagh, County Armagh, and the townland of Lemgare, County Monaghan) to the townland of Clonturkan, County Cavan for a distance of approximately 46km. It includes lands traversed by the conductor from the jurisdictional border to Tower 103 and from Tower 103 to Tower 236 inclusive and lands traversed by the conductor strung from Tower 236 to Tower 237 (the first tower on the MSA section of the proposed development). It also includes modifications to existing 110 kV transmission overhead lines, and all associated and ancillary development works including permanent and temporary construction and excavation works. The proposed development also includes an associated temporary construction materials storage yard to be located on a site of approximately 1.4ha in the townlands of Monaltyduff and Monaltybane, Carrickmacross, County Monaghan.

3 The portion of the overall proposed interconnector occurring within Ireland runs a linear distance of approximately 103.35 kilometres (km) between Lemgare in County Monaghan and Woodland in County Meath. However, for the purposes of presenting the information in this EIS, it has been subdivided into the CMSA (**Volume 3C**) and the Meath Study Area (MSA) (**Volume 3D**).

4 Chapter 1, **Volume 3B** of the EIS provides a comprehensive introduction to the proposed development which considers the following:

- Context of the proposed development;
- Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);
- Preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);
- Structure and content of the EIS; and

- Technical difficulties encountered during preparation of the EIS.

5 The CMSA section of the transmission circuit is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**.

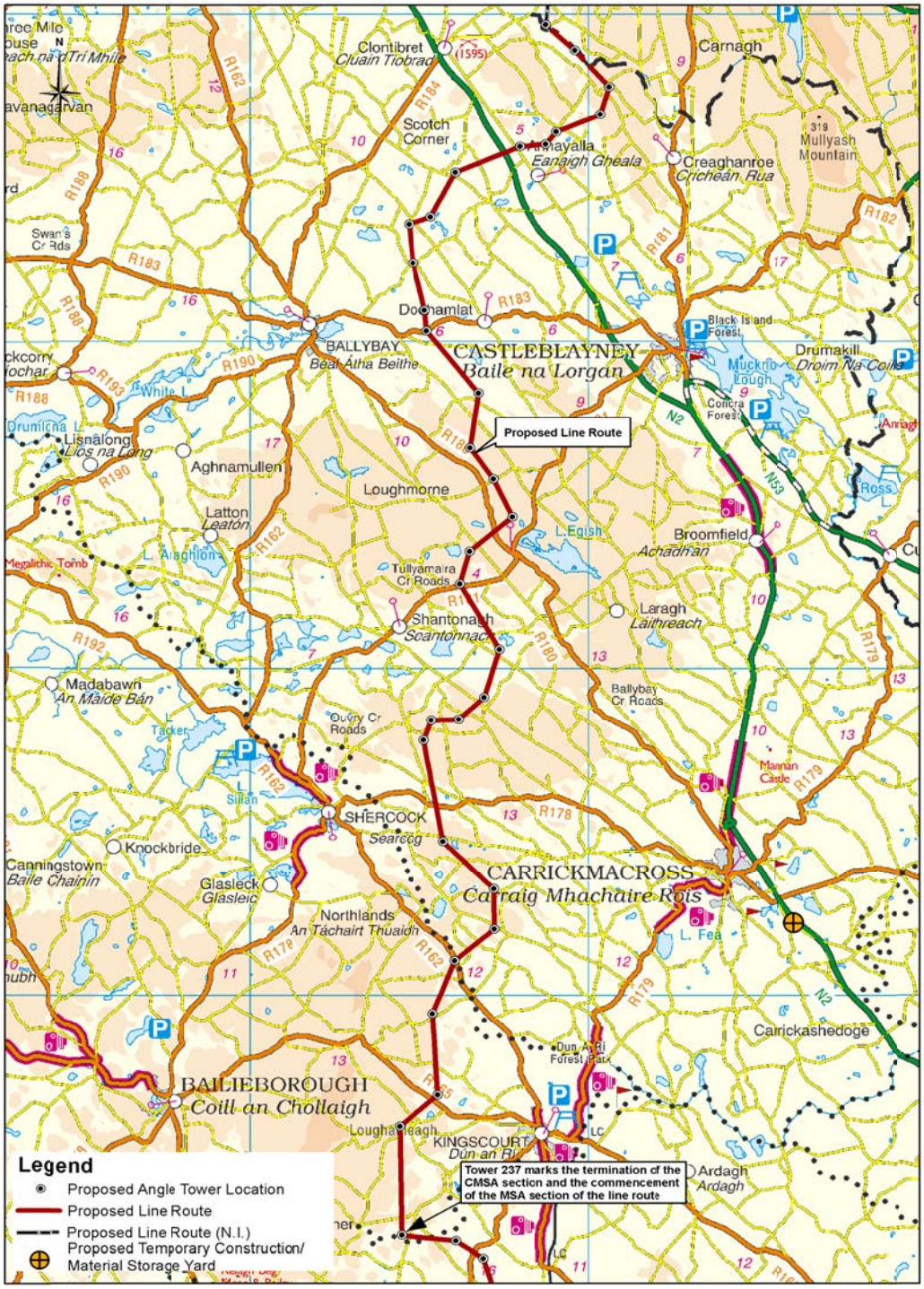

Figure 1.1: CMSA Section of Transmission Circuit

6 This volume of the EIS provides the following:

- A description of the potential effects of the proposed development on the environment in relation to specific environmental headings;
- A description of the data required to identify and the forecasting methods used to evaluate the potential effects in relation to the environmental headings;
- A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, reduce and, where possible, remedy significant adverse effects on the environment;
- A description of the residual impacts, if any; and
- A description of the interrelationships between environmental factors.

7 **Volume 3B** of the EIS provides an evaluation of the potential for transboundary impacts. It also provides an evaluation of the potential for cumulative impacts as well as an evaluation of the interrelationships between the environmental topics in **Volumes 3C** and **3D** of the EIS.

8 A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the EIS is provided in **Volume 3A** of the EIS.

9 In addition to the consideration of transboundary effects in **Volume 3B** of the EIS, **Volume 4** of the application documentation comprises a *Joint Environmental Report.* This report has been prepared by EirGrid and System Operator Northern Ireland Ltd (SONI) (the respective applicants)[1] to provide an overview of the impacts as presented in the separate EIS / Environmental Statement (ES) documents. The report also provides an overview of transboundary impacts in a manner consistent with a suggested approach of recent European Commission guidance, *Guidance on the Application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure for Large-scale Transboundary Projects* (May 2013).

1.2 EIS FORMAT

10 This volume of the EIS follows a grouped format structure. Using this structure, this volume of the EIS is prepared in a framework which examines each environmental topic (as prescribed by

[1] The planning of that portion of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland was originally undertaken by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE). However, NIE was obligated by the European Commission to transfer its investment planning function (the "Planning Function") to SONI. The SONI transmission system operator licence (the "Licence") was amended on 28th March 2014 to take account of the transfer of the Planning Function following a consultation process by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR). The Licence amendments took effect on 30th April 2014. Accordingly, responsibility for the pursuance of the planning application in respect of the proposed interconnector within Northern Ireland has been transferred from NIE to SONI.

the EIA Directive and Irish national regulations) in a separate section. These sections include reference to:

- The characteristics of the proposed development;
- The existing (receiving) environment;
- Potential impacts;
- Mitigation measures;
- Residual impacts (where applicable);
- Interrelationships between environmental factors; and
- Conclusions.