
MEMO

Case ref.: PCI 0001 / 02.VC0054

Project promoter: EirGrid PLC

Issue: Project of Common Interest / Strategic Infrastructure application – Draft application file lodged in connection with potential S.I. application under s. 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) for that section of the North South 400kV Interconnector project falling within the Irish State

Nature of Development: Proposed 400kV North South electricity interconnector from Woodlands substation Co Meath to State border.

Introduction:

This memo follows from a previous scoping report prepared in respect of file ref. PL02.VS.0002. The purpose of the memo is to identify whether the draft EIS accompanying the Draft PCI application, addresses the matters identified in the scoping opinion supplied by the Board to the applicants. This is not an assessment of the merits of the prospective application or of the quality of the information supplied in the EIS.

General:

The comments contained below relate primarily to Volumes 3B, C & D of the EIS and associated appendices. Where revisions or additions to the EIS are identified, appropriate revisions or additions to the non-technical summary, contained in Volume 3A should follow.

While it is considered that the EIS and its associated appendices and drawings, generally address the matters raised in the scoping opinion supplied by the Board, the following matters require further detail or examination by the prospective applicants. Where appropriate, the numbering used in the Scoping Opinion is used below. In some cases, matters identified at scoping stage are addressed under different headings in the draft EIS, however, this is not considered to be a significant issue.

2.1 Introduction

- The authors of, and contributors to, relevant sections of the EIS should be identified.

2.2 Description of Development

- Notwithstanding comments in the EIS, further detail should be provided with regard to the nature of works and likely impacts arising from any future decommissioning of the proposed development.

2.5 Subject Areas

2.5.1 Humans:

- Documentation should confirm whether there are any relevant extant planning permissions, or current planning applications as appropriate, along the route of the proposed development.

2.5.2 Flora and Fauna:

- Notwithstanding the current stage in the process, a draft Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) should be prepared based on the information available at this time. The CEMP should have regard to mitigation measures identified in Natura Impact Statement, as well as the Environmental Impact Statement.
- On Page 6.5 of Volume 3D, clarification is required with regard to the last bullet point in section 6.1.2.

2.5.6 Landscape:

- Where significant impacts on landscapes / demesne landscapes are identified, the EIS should address the potential for partial undergrounding of the line to mitigate those impacts.

2.5.7 Material Assets:

- The indicative route of the proposed Leinster Orbital Route and relationship with the proposed development should be identified, based on best available information.
- Confirm where, if any, re-routing of existing overhead lines will be required.
- As advised in previous discussions with Board representatives, a preliminary construction traffic management plan should be submitted outlining how these matters will be addressed.¹

2.5.8 Cultural Heritage:

¹ Phil Green ADP to advise on previous comments by the Board to the applicants in this regard.

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- The EIS should confirm that consideration was given to potential impacts on the relationship between sites of archaeological and architectural interest as well as to impacts on individual site and features.

Other Matters Arising:

- Clarify reference under Item 4.30 on Page 11-14 of Volume 3B, to “See 4.34 below.” under monitoring.
 - Correct reference to “*Error! Reference Source not found.*” in paragraph 1 of Page 14-21 of Vol. 3C
 - The EIS should ensure that all figures and illustrations contained in Volumes 3A – 3D are fully legible. This relates in particular to the following
 - Figure 2.1 on Page 2-4 of Volume 3B.
 - Figure 6.1 Page 6-3 of Volume 3B.
 - Figure 7.10 on page 7-22.
 - Figure 4.1 on Page 4-19 of Volume 3B.
 - Ensure that each volume of the EIS and Appendices is provided with a Table of Contents.
 - Copies of all background reports and studies referenced in the EIS should be submitted with the application. These include in particular, the following documents:
 - Meath-Tyrone Report Review by the International Expert Commission August, November 2011 - January 2012;
 - Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure, July 2012;
 - Grid25 Implementation Programme (IP) 2011-2016 and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) both May 2012;
 - EirGrid’s Project Development and Consultation Roadmap, 2012.
 - The PB Power Preliminary Briefing Note (Parsons Brinckerhoff, Power Division [PB Power], 2008) and subsequent PB Power Study (2009).
 - The TEPCO Study (TEPCO, 2009).
 - The TransGrid Study (TransGrid, 2009).
 - The Ecofys Study (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) 2008). A Study on the Comparative Merits of Overhead Electricity Transmission Lines Versus Underground Cables.
 - The PB Power Technology and Costs Update (PB Power, April 2013 and Supplementary Note July 2013).
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- Europacable and ENTSO-E (Feasibility and Technical Aspects of Partial Undergrounding of Extra High Voltage Power Transmission Lines submitted to the European Commission (December 2010)).

Conor McGrath SPI
