

Celtic Interconnector



Connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France

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

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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.

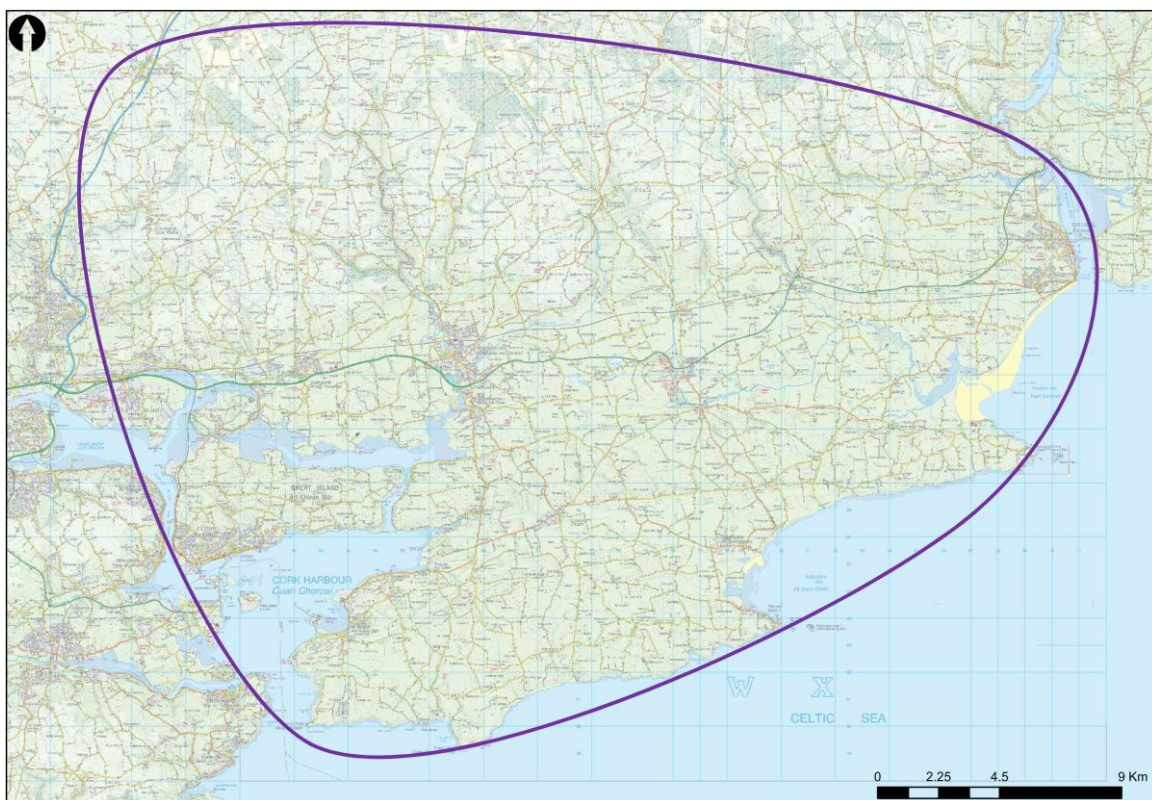


Figure 1 - Celtic Interconnector Project Study Area – East Cork

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.

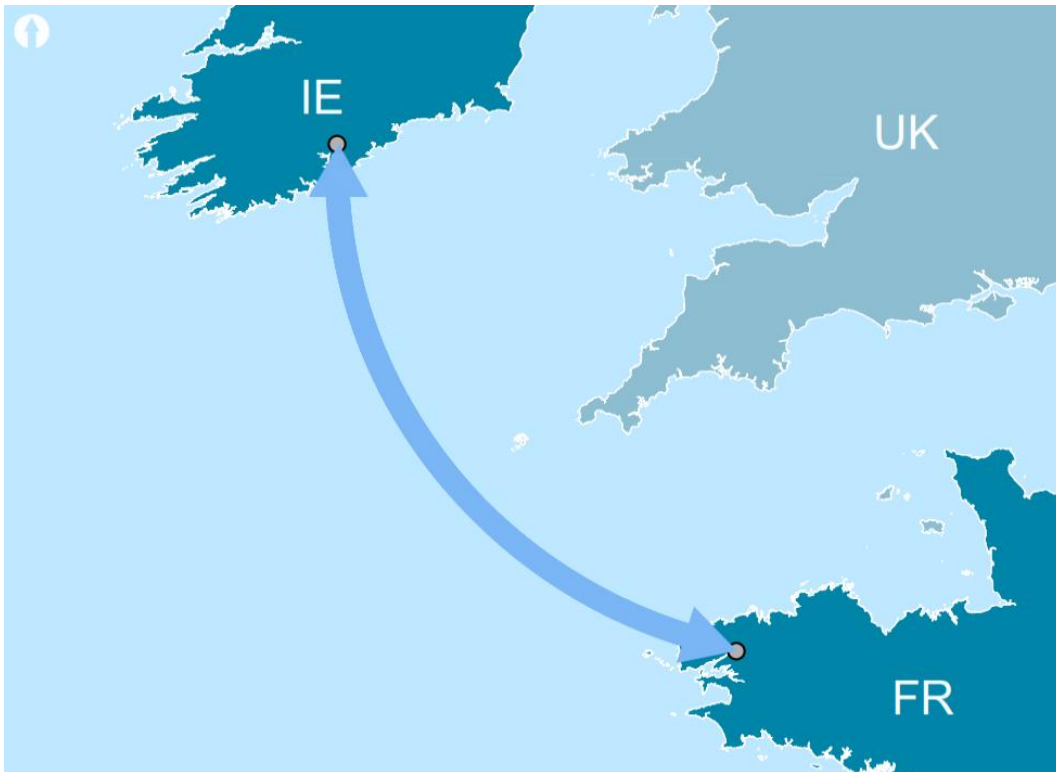


Figure 2 - Celtic Interconnector - proposed electricity interconnector between Ireland and France

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

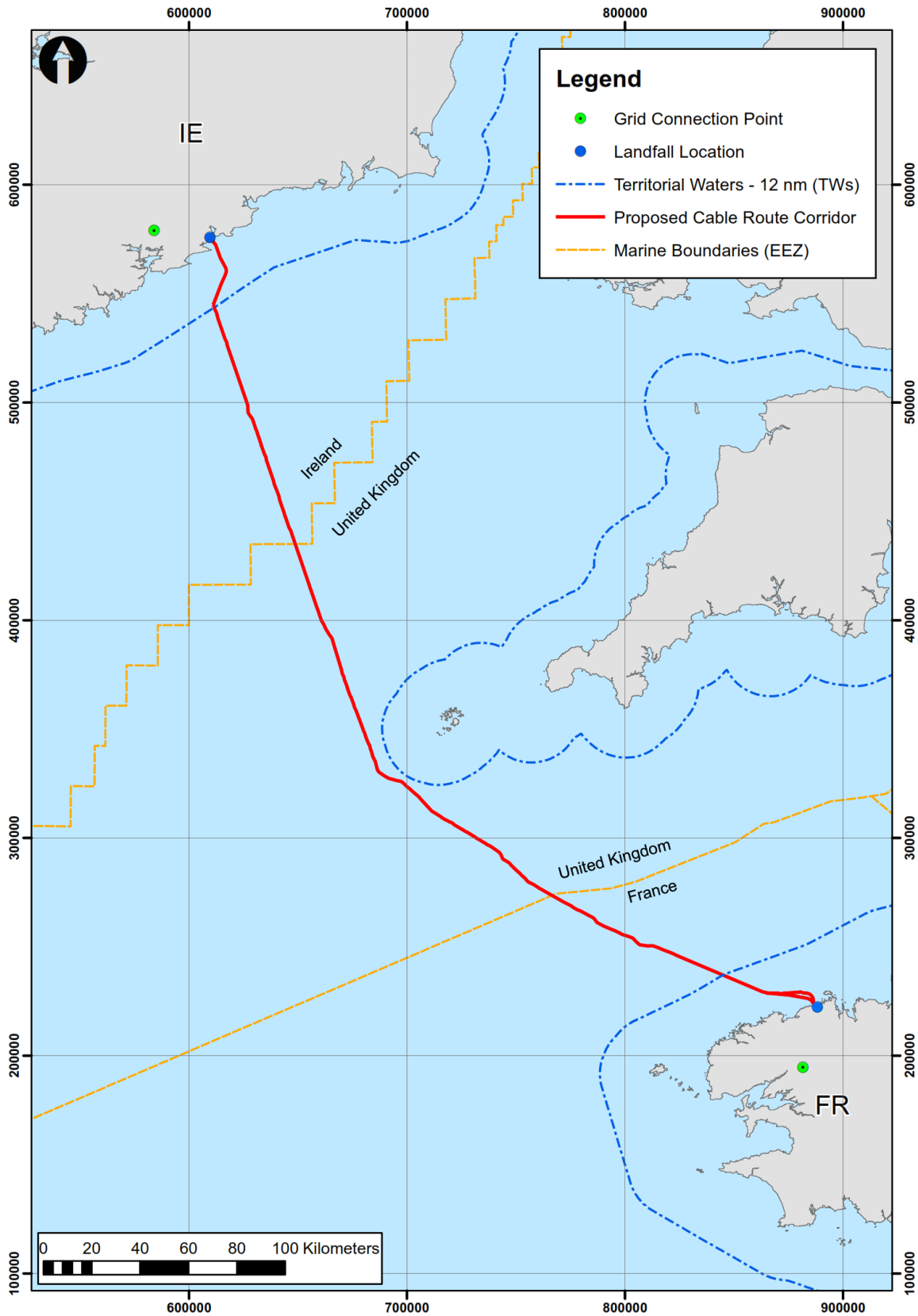
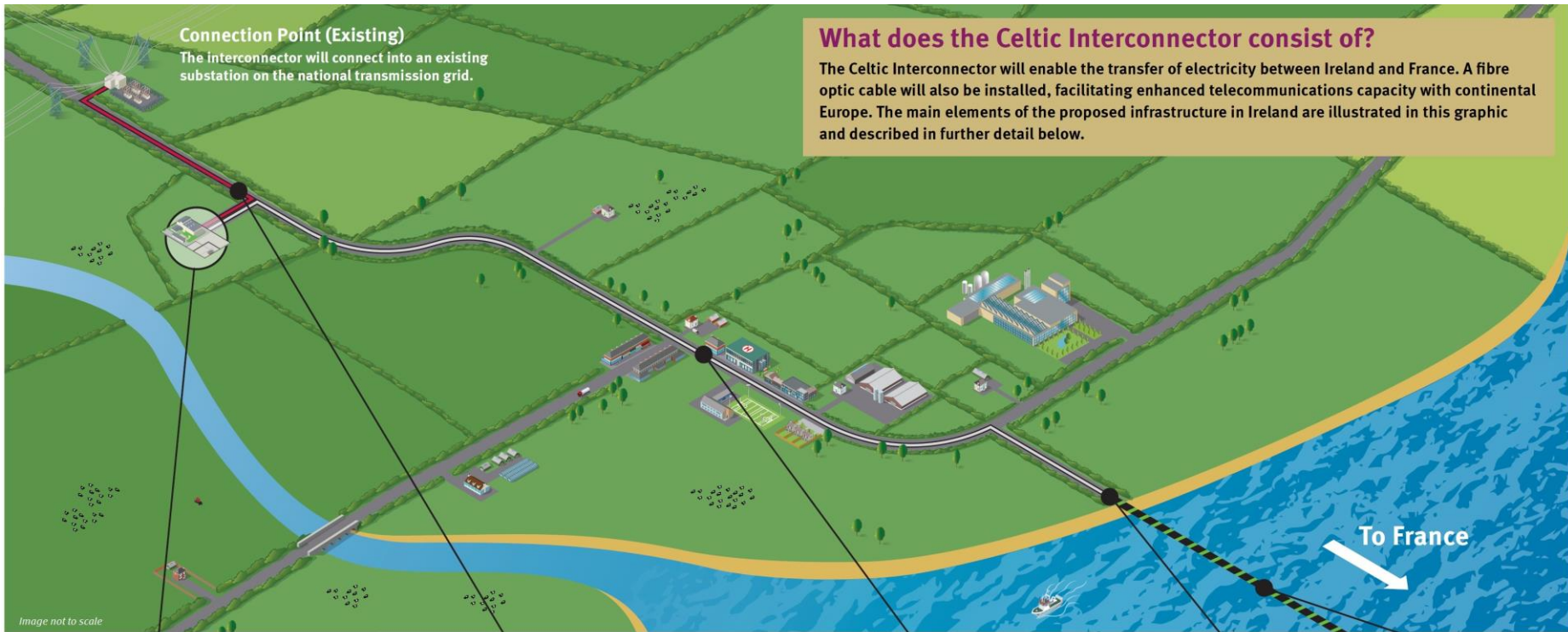


Figure 4 - Celtic Interconnector marine cable route map

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.




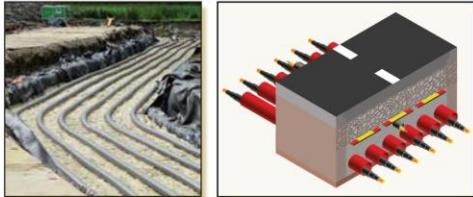


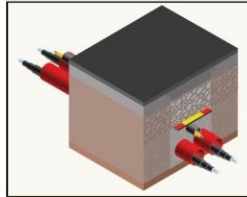
Converter Station	AC Land Circuit	DC Land Circuit	Landfall Point	Submarine Circuit
 <p>The interconnector will use High Voltage Direct Current (DC) technology, the global standard for the transfer of electricity over long distances using subsea cables. The electricity systems in Ireland and France both 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.

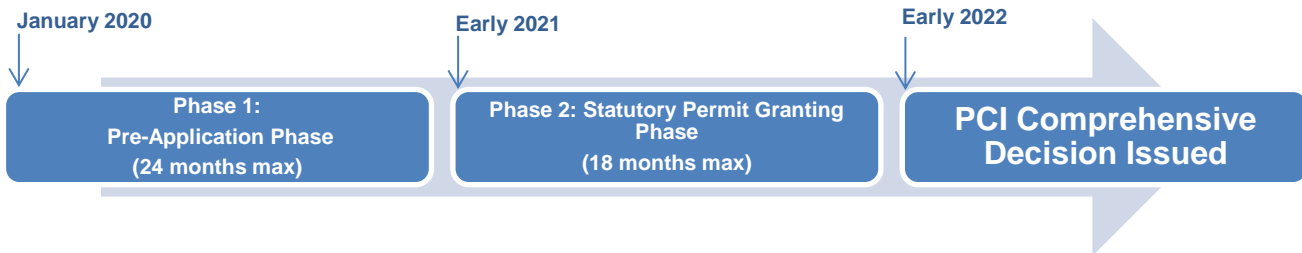


Figure 6 - PCI Permit Granting Process Timeline

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.

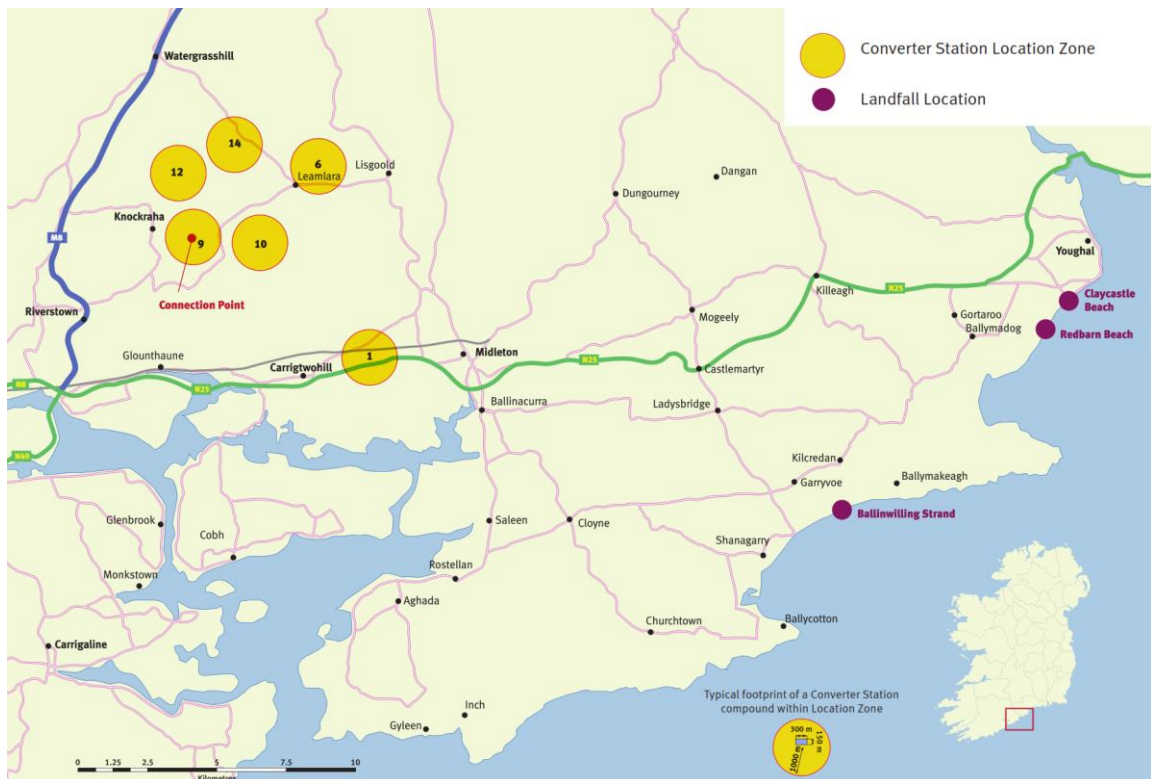


Figure 10 - Refined shortlist of project options identified during Step 3

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>

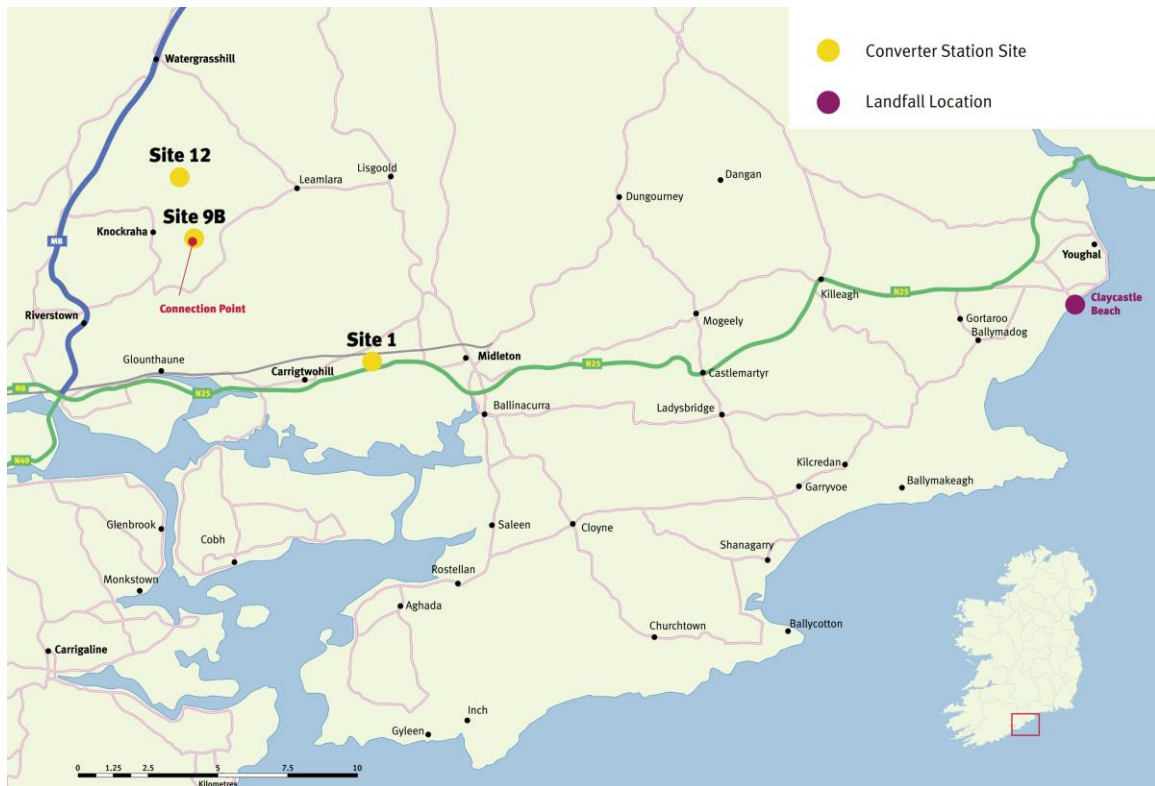


Figure 11 - Refined shortlist of project options identified during Step 4

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 RTÉ since 2011, as shown in the project roadmap in Figure 13 below.

Phase Description	Preliminary Feasibility	Feasibility	Initial Design & Pre-Consultation	Detailed Design & Consents	Construction
Timetable	2011 – 2014	2014 – 2016	2016 – 2019	2020 – 2022	2022 – 2026
EirGrid / RTE Project Work Streams	Benefits Technology Costs	Marine survey Project Parameters Economic & Financial Analysis	Initial Design Pre-Consultation Investment Request Grant Application	Detailed Design EPC Procurement Consenting	Contract Award Manufacturing Energisation
EirGrid Framework for Grid Development		Step 1	Steps 2 - 4	Step 5	Step 6

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.

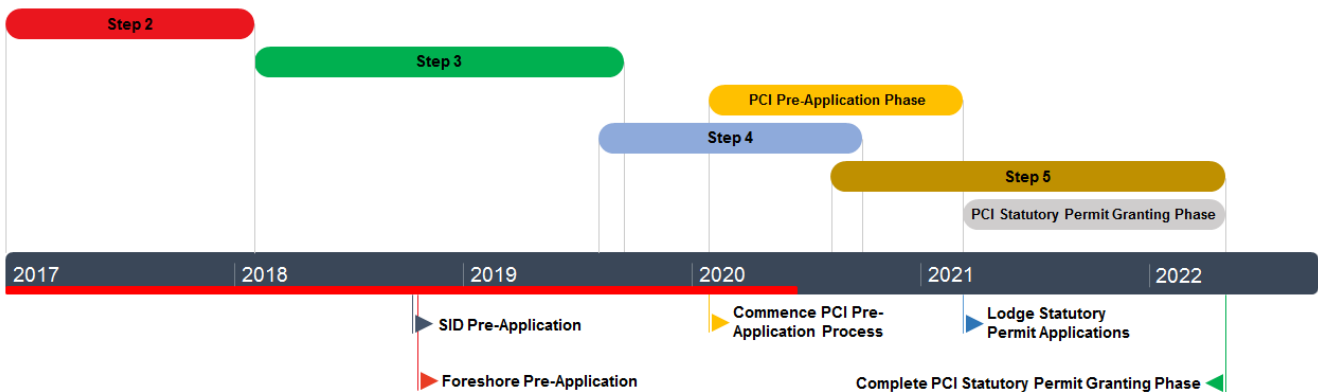


Figure 14 - Celtic Interconnector Project Consultation Timeline

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 • Ervia (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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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

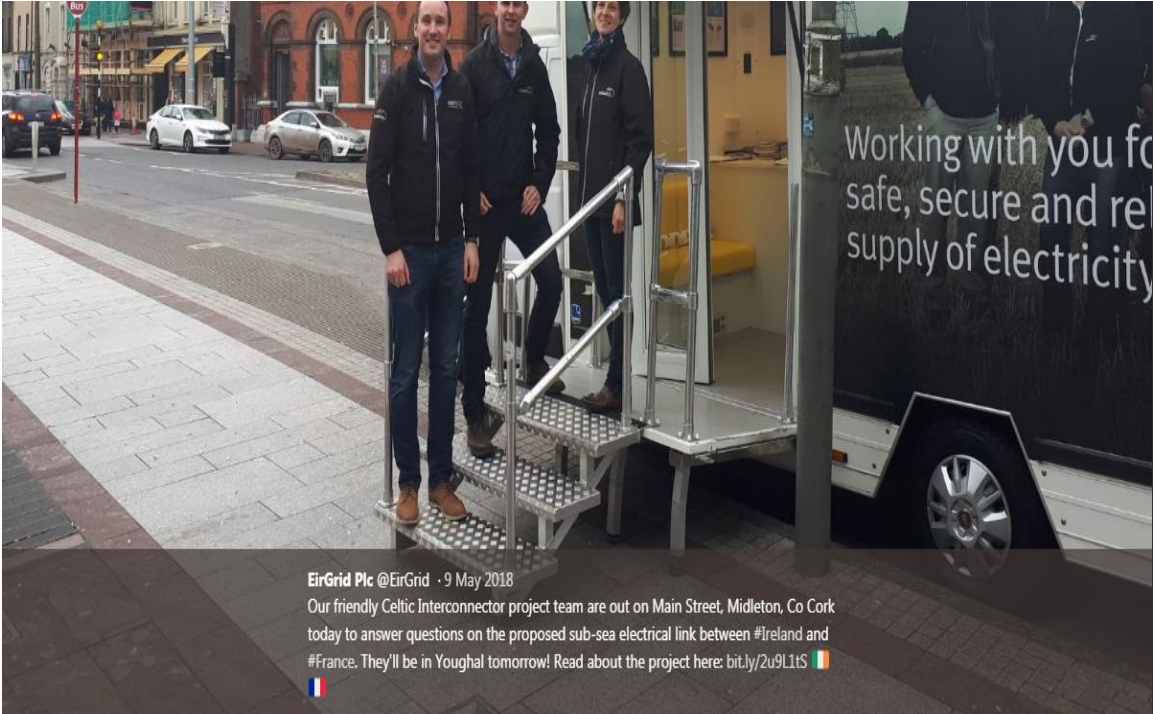


Figure 17 - Project information session held in Midleton in May 2018



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

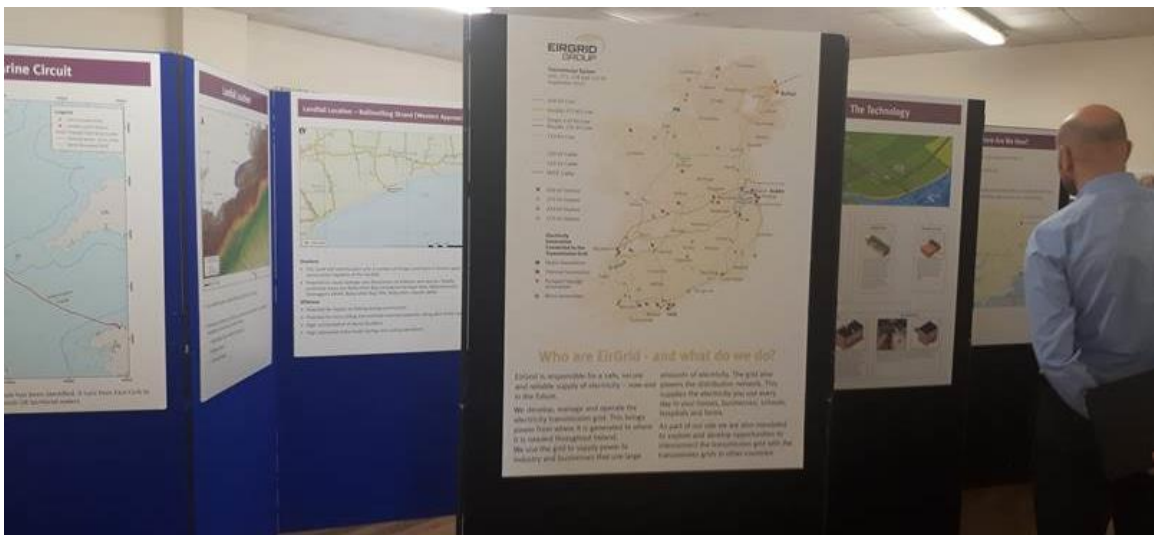


Figure 21 - Project information session held in Carrigtwohill in April 2019



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

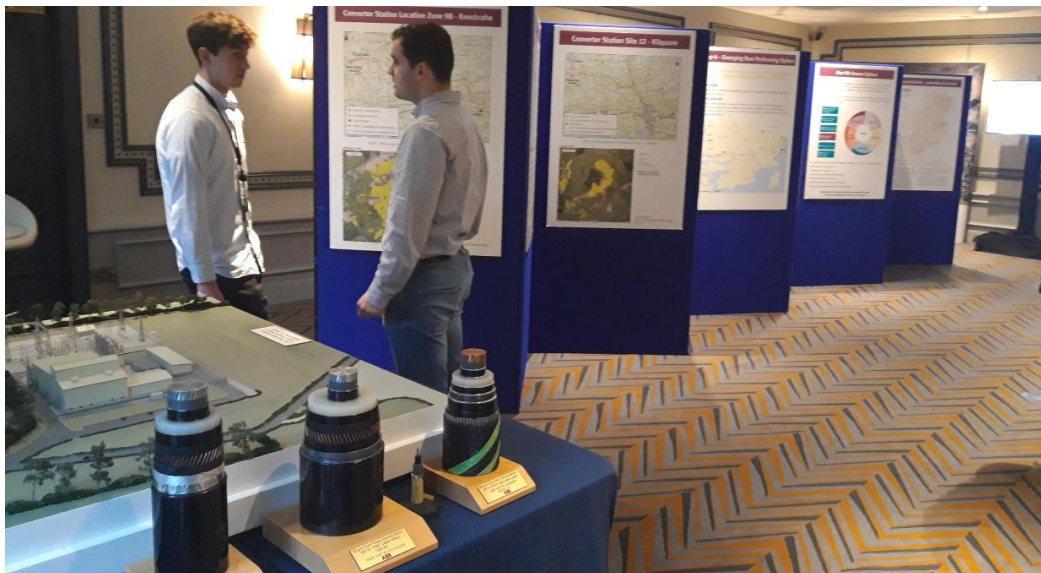


Figure 25 – Step 4 project information session held in Midleton in November 2019



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.



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

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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.

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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
Middleton 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

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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.



The current. The future.



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Project Ireland
2040

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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)