



Celtic Interconnector

La liaison électrique entre la France et l'Irlande
Connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France

Project Overview

The Celtic Interconnector project will create an electrical interconnection between Ireland and France to allow the exchange of electricity between the two countries. The connection will link the existing electricity substation located in Knockraha (in east Cork) to the substation in La Martyre (Finistère, France). It will contribute to a more secure and a more sustainable electricity supply by providing Ireland's only direct energy connection to an EU member state.

The project is being developed by EirGrid, the electricity transmission system operator in Ireland, and its French counterpart, RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité). It is expected to be completed in 2026.

Project Update

On-land cable works (trenching and ducting) for the Celtic Interconnector project are nearing completion along the High Voltage Alternating Current cable (HVAC) route, with trenching and ducting works along the High Voltage Direct Current cable (HVDC) route having commenced. This is the first stage of roadworks and requires temporary road closures on local roads. The second stage involves cable pulling and finally cable jointing, before all works on the road come to a complete finish.

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The first installation of the bespoke 400KV HVAC cable also commenced in April. This was the first of 91 power cable installation operations that are required to complete the 43km long land-based cable route on the Irish side of the project.

Cabling crews began working west to east on local roads, from the network connection side of the project, towards the submarine cable interface at Claycastle Beach, Youghal.





The archaeological investigation on Claycastle Beach took place in March 2024.

Archaeological survey

In March, an archaeological investigation was carried out to explore the extent of peat deposits and establish whether any buried archaeological or paleo-environmental remains were present under Claycastle Beach in Youghal.

The minor investigation was overseen by archaeologists from the Underwater Archaeology Unit and the National Monuments Service.

Samples were taken from two trenches on the line of the cable and numerous wood samples were taken which are now with specialists for further examination. These works were carried out to inform a potential further archaeological excavation that would take place in autumn 2024.

What's Happening Now

The second phase of cable laying has commenced in sections of the route where the ducting is already installed in the trench. This requires the cable to be pulled through the lengths of ducting and into the jointing bay where one length of cable will be jointed or connected onto the next. This operation is repeated to form a continuous cable length. This is a specialised and highly skilled job that is critical to the integrity of the entire project.

Due to production and transport limitations for the bespoke cable, cable lengths of only approximately one kilometre are produced, meaning that a cable joint operation needs to be carried out at approximately every 1,000 metres.

A project of this size causes an impact on traffic. We continue to work very closely with the authorities and our partners to implement the approved traffic management plans and to minimise disruption. We remain grateful to the local community and landowners for their ongoing cooperation.



Cable installation works began in April 2024, and are progressing at pace.

Marine Surveys

Marine Surveys are currently taking place on the project between the south-east coast of Ireland and the French coast. These are being undertaken by the main cable contractor Nexans, supported by international marine science and offshore construction support service Next Geosolutions.

The Survey operations are being conducted within the cable corridor extending around 50 metres each side of the centreline of the proposed cables.

The survey vessel 'NG Worker' has commenced its marine surveys as of the 8th of May in the Irish nearshore. The marine survey activities include

pUXO (potential unexploded ordnance), geophysical surveys within Youghal Bay before heading offshore for a geotechnical survey. Our OoS (out of service) cable cutting vessel the 'Detector' is performing well and making good headway in French waters before making its way through UK waters and into the Irish offshore. The vessel is approximately 50% through the entire cable route for the OoS operations.

We'll see some other vessels joining the fleet for the upcoming pre-trenching and boulder clearance works anticipated to begin in Irish waters mid-summer for favourable weather conditions.



'NG Worker' Marine Survey Vessel, May 2024.

Converter station site

Construction works continue at the converter station site at Ballyadam, outside Carrigtwohill. The commencement of main civil works officially began with the excavation of the converter station control building.

Siemens Energy has appointed civil engineering contractor, Wills Bros, as its sub-contractor to construct the converter station. To date, the build-up of the converter station platform has been completed using stone, with drainage installed and materials excavated.

To date, the build-up of the converter station site to platform level has been completed with underground services installed in preparation for commencement of pouring of concrete foundation slabs.



Road Closure Updates

Trenching and Ducting Completed

- ✓ **Section A:** Knockraha Substation Road L-6989
- ✓ **Section B:** New Line L-2966 and Ballinakilla L-7631
- ✓ **Section D:** Upper Garranes L-7634
- ✓ **Section E:** Woodstock Hill (L-3606)
- ✓ **Section J:** Gortacruce Road Number L-3610, from R626 to junction L-3613

Ongoing

- **Section C*:** Road Number L-7634 to Hagerty's Cross/ Upper Garranes. Period of licence: Friday 1 March to Friday 31 May.
- **Section F:** L-7639 – Woodstock Road to the junction at L7640/ Ballyadam Road. Period of licence: Tuesday 19 March to Friday 31 May.
- **Section G:** L-7640 -Ballyadam Road to the junction at L3617 – Carrigane Road Period of licence Tuesday the 6 May to Friday the 7 June.
- **Section K:** L3613 from Broomfield Ridge (East Cork Golf Club) to Ballyspillane West Period of licence Monday the 13 May to Friday the 12 July.

For more information on road closures please see www.eirgrid.ie/celticinterconnector

All dates may be subject to change.

RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité) Update

In France, works at the converter station are progressing and include an eco design approach with more than 50% low carbon concrete and more than 60% recycled steel being used.

Works along the cable route commenced in early April, with the selected method of installation also reducing the amount of concrete required, in keeping with the eco-design approach.

Preparatory works for the marine cable are ongoing and the ducts to protect marine cables are assembled and will be transferred to the landfall point in Cleder, Brittany, later this month.



Works progressing at the converter station site near La Martyre substation (Finistère).

Celtic Interconnector in focus

- A workshop, facilitated by MaREI researchers at University College Cork and supported by Science Foundation Ireland took place in Paris last month, exploring and identifying priorities around sustainability, socio-economic opportunities, and leveraging the potential of the Celtic Interconnector for cultural exchange between communities in Brittany and Cork.

Hosted by the Embassy of Ireland, Paris, the workshop explored interconnectors, bringing into focus the Celtic Interconnector project.
- At the 'Celtic Interconnections: Generating and Consolidating Energies' seminar at [Technological University Dublin](#) earlier this month, a range of industry and academic experts came together to discuss the powerful links between Ireland and France.

Primarily focused on matters related to energy, the National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies at TU Dublin hosted the event. Topics ranged from the practicalities of electricity interconnection to the importance of ensuring EU energy independence.
- Also last month, the Representation of the European Commission in Ireland held an event, 'EU for Cork: Unlocking Opportunities for Cork'. The event discussed the importance of EU funding for projects in Cork, including the Celtic Interconnector which was awarded €530.7 million in CEF (Connecting Europe Facility) funding in 2019.

Community Benefit Fund

Following the announcement of successful Phase 1 applicants of the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund in December 2023, the 29 groups and not-for-profit organisations were issued with a letter of offer and contract.

Applicants who were not successful in their application to Phase 1 of the fund are encouraged to contact SECAD and will be supported in applying for funding to Phase 2, with recommendations given to help to achieve a successful application.

Several projects have now commenced and successful applicants are being supported by SECAD Partnership throughout their project implementation journey.



Celtic Interconnector Community Liaison Officer Michelle Walsh (centre) with Grace O'Sullivan MEP candidate Ireland South (right) and Noelle O'Connell, CEO European Movement Ireland, at the 'EU for Cork: Unlocking Opportunities for Cork' event last month.

Images from projects supported through the Clashavoon Dunmanway electricity line Community Benefit Fund including Dunmanway Family Resource Centre, Community Garden & Men's Shed project, and Dunmanway Chamber of Commerce Riverside Walkway project.

Successful Projects

Community Benefit Fund Phase 1



Lead Community Group/ Organisation	Project Title	Awarded amount
Lisgoold Leamlara Community Council	Community amenity walkway in Leamlara Woods.	€37,000.00
East Cork Abilities Special Olympics Sports Club	Purchase of a floorball arena and goals for the club.	€5,300.00
Killeagh Community Centre	Upgrade to interior and exterior lights, plus the manual heating system in the community centre.	€4,428.00
Carrigtwohill Flower and Garden Club	Running costs including Insurance, cost of venue and speakers.	€1,800.00
Claycastle Pitch and Putt Club	Development of facilities at Claycastle Pitch and Putt Club.	€10,000.00
Youghal Lawn Tennis Club	Youghal Lawn Tennis Club Floodlighting LED Retrofit Project.	€10,000.00
Castlemartyr Parents Association	Development of Castlemartyr National School's Playground.	€12,000.00
Mogeely FC Soccer Club	Pitch perimeter gravel walkway and solar powered lighting.	€4,347.00
Barnardo's Youghal Family Resource Initiative	PEEPS Parent and child learning together programme facilitator training and programme costs.	€1,184.00
Clonpriest National School	Development of a school sensory garden.	€5,000.00
Imogeela Community Sports Hall CLG	All weather surface sports facility.	€30,000.00
Knockraha Area Community Association CLG	Knockraha Community Amenity Park.	€125,000.00
Castlemartyr Community Council	An Umbrella Application for local community groups.	€15,000.00
Carrigtwohill Community Council CLG	Interior development, expanding existing activity room floorspace and creating two new upstairs meeting/activity rooms.	€125,000.00
Killeagh GAA	Upgrading existing sports facilities.	€30,000.00

Carrigtwohill United	Carrigtwohill United All Weather Playing Surface and Community Walkway.	€30,000.00
Carrigtwohill guides district	Carrigtwohill girl guides camping equipment.	€4,600.00
Midleton G.A.A. Club (One Club)	Walking Trail at Midleton G.A.A. new grounds at Park South, Midleton.	€40,000.00
Ballintotis community council	PV Solar and battery system, new storage shed including civil works and lawnmower.	€23,200.00
Carrigtwohill & District Historical Society	Cultural & Heritage Project on behalf of our Local Community & International Diaspora.	€5,205.00
The Midleton Hub CLG	Interior fitout project to double the usable floor space.	€30,000.00
Youghal Community Bus /The Youghal Community Transport Group	Purchase of wheelchair accessible adapted EV 6-seater with wheelchair space.	€70,000.00
Craobh Eochaille CCE	Project to create of an east Cork Youth Folk Orchestra.	€27,000.00
Youghal GAA One Club	Youghal GAA Facilities Development 2023 Phase 1: Sustainable LED Floodlights.	€30,000.00
Youghal Blue and Green Community Network Cumann Na Daoine	Biodiversity, community and sustainability projects including restoration of Keane Park Pond project.	€33,819.00
Carrigtwohill GAA Club	Carrigtwohill GAA Walkway Project.	€40,000.00
Youghal Rugby Football Club	Floodlight upgrade to LED.	€30,000.00
Greywood Arts CLG	Growing Creativity: Building Youth Arts Education Initiatives and Creative Digital Resources in East Cork.	€54,104.00
Castlemartyr GAA	Phase 1 of a sports facility development project.	€5,000.00
Phase 1 Total Monies Awarded		€838,987.00

Cable information event

A cable information event will take place on

May 22nd
at Killeagh Community Centre, from 5pm - 8pm.

This event will provide an opportunity for members of the public to be updated on cable installation progress and meet the EirGrid and subcontractor teams.



Did You Know?

Nature has been given equal weight in the planning of the Celtic Interconnector at EirGrid, with protective measures already being put into action.

Work being carried out at the converter station site is ensuring that grasslands and woodlands there will continue to function for biodiversity, as well as being visually pleasing.

The team is actively advancing a 'green hay' approach, in consultation with biodiversity specialists to ensure the vegetation is restored by species local to the area. A progressive approach to grassland restoration, 'green hay' is when species rich hay from the local area is spread on the area to be restored, maintaining the seeds, wildflowers and grasses from the locality.

The Project in Numbers

48 – the number of high voltage alternating current cable drums delivered by sea to Cork harbour last January. This bespoke cable is to be installed in the road east to west from Knockraha substation.

23 – the number of plant and machinery being managed by Siemens Energy at the converter station site in Ballyadam, with the project recently winning a global Siemens Energy safety award for Plant and Vehicle Safety.

Did You Know?

 The submarine cable for the Celtic Interconnector project will be manufactured by main contractor Nexans, in a tower which is 152.89 meters tall. The tower is Norway's tallest building and first skyscraper.

Celtic Interconnector Cable Route



Nexans and EirGrid representatives atop the XLPE insulation tower at the Nexans subsea cable manufacturing facility in Halden, Norway.

Project Timeline

2024



Marine surveys.

Continuation of trenching and ducting works for HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Commencement of installation and jointing of HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Converter station installations progress.

2025



Commencement of offshore marine cable installation.

Completion of installation and jointing of HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Converter station buildings complete.

2026



Completion of offshore marine cable installation.

Submarine cable protection campaigns.

Commissioning tests.

Interconnector system tests.

Trial operation period commences.

How to Contact Us

At EirGrid, we are committed to engaging with communities during all phases of project development. As we progress construction on the Celtic Interconnector Project, we will continue to provide regular updates on construction, impacts and mitigation efforts.

Welcome to Jean O'Donovan, who has joined Sorensen as the Liaison Officer on the Celtic Interconnector project supporting main contractor Nexans.



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Liaison Officer
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Jean O'Donovan
Sorensen Liaison Officer
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