
Connect West

Part 1 stakeholder engagement summary

September 2025



Version history

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1 Introduction

SONI External Communications have carried out the required stakeholder engagement during Part 1 of the Grid Development Process for the Connect West Project. This document is intended to provide a summary of the feedback received from key stakeholders in the study area.

In Spring 2023, SONI completed a round of engagement on initial proposals for this project (previously known as the Mid Tyrone Project). A summary of initial Part 1 engagement is appended to this document. SONI have amended their plans for this project to upgrade the transmission system to future-proof this part of the network for years to come.

The updated preliminary preferred option for the Connect West Project proposes a new 275 kV circuit between Dromore and the new substation at Turleenan. This new circuit will support the delivery of climate change targets and will remove costly constraints in the west of Northern Ireland as well as future proofing this part of the network, helping to unlock the full potential of wind, solar and other green technologies.

New constituency boundaries for Westminster have come into effect since the initial round of engagement on the 'Mid Tyrone Project'. With the new boundaries, the study area for the proposed new circuit now traverses three parliamentary constituencies, from Dromore Substation in the West Tyrone Constituency through Fermanagh & South Tyrone Constituency and into Turleenan Substation on the boundary of the Mid Ulster Constituency.

While the constituency boundaries for Westminster (MPs) have changed following the election, the boundaries for the Assembly (MLAs) remain as they were during the initial round of engagement. This will change after the next election for the Northern Ireland Assembly (currently planned for 2027), when the Assembly constituencies will follow the same boundaries as have been introduced for Westminster. At Assembly level, the constituencies remain as they were, with the relevant constituencies being West Tyrone and Fermanagh & South Tyrone.

While the final route is yet to be determined, the new circuit is expected to run through the West Tyrone and Mid Tyrone DEAs in Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and through the Clogher Valley and Dungannon DEAs in Mid Ulster District Council.

Due to the scale of the proposals, which includes a new 275 kV circuit, the project is expected to be classed as 'regionally significant' and will be determined by the Department for Infrastructure according to the 'Hierarchy of Developments' contained in the relevant planning legislation.

This phase of engagement was focused on elected representatives in the relevant constituencies as well as DfI Planning Officials. While only a small amount of the study area crosses into the Mid Ulster Constituency and there is considered to be limited impact on this area, it was decided not to engage with Mid Ulster representatives at this stage. Should it become apparent that infrastructure will be located in the Mid Ulster constituency then elected representatives for this constituency will be engaged in the next phase of consultation.

As the majority of elected representatives affected by the project had previously been engaged with on the earlier proposals, letters were issued to representatives with an offer to meet. If meetings were sought, stakeholders were encouraged to invite other party colleagues to the meetings, as appropriate. The meeting with DfI Planning Officials took place in person and all other meetings took place virtually via Microsoft Teams / Zoom. Initial engagement requests were issued via email to key representatives on 21st October 2024. These representatives included Pat Cullen (Sinn Féin MP), Colm Gildernew (Sinn Féin MLA), Diana Armstrong (UUP MLA), Deborah Erskine (DUP MLA), Órfhlaith Begley (Sinn Féin MLA), Daniel McCrossan (SDLP MLA), Tom Buchanan (DUP MLA), Declan McAleer (Sinn Féin MLA) and Alistair Beggs (DfI Planning).

Diana Armstrong was engaged with by SONI representatives as part of more general engagements, during which she was provided with an update on the Connect West Project. Due to availability, SONI were unable to meet with Daniel McCrossan during Part 1 engagement and issued a project briefing note in August 2025 to update on the proposals (appended to this document).

To support our engagement a slide deck was shared during each meeting, which is appended to this report

This report outlines a summary of the meetings held during Part 1 and the feedback that was received from each of the key stakeholders

2 Summary of engagement

Table 2.1 details the engagement undertaken during Part 1 of the Connect West Project.

Table 2.1: Part 1 engagement on Connect West Project

Representative/ Council official	Organisation/ Role	Type of engagement	Date of engagement
Alistair Beggs, Kathryn McFerran, Nicole Thompson	DfI Planning Officials	In-person briefing	20.11.24
Deborah Erskine MLA	Fermanagh & South Tyrone DUP	Online briefing	28.11.24
Pat Cullen MP	Fermanagh & South Tyrone Sinn Féin	In-person briefing	04.12.24
Tom Buchanan MLA	West Tyrone DUP	Online briefing	12.02.25
Órfhlaith Begley MP, Declan McAleer MLA, Cllr Paul Boggs	West Tyrone Sinn Féin	Online briefing	22.08.25

A summary of the feedback from each of the meetings is included in the subsections below.

2.1 Summary of engagement with DfI

Attending: Alistair Beggs, Director of regional planning policy and casework
Kathryn McFerran, Senior planning officer
Nicole Thompson, Planning officer

Location: James House, Cromac Avenue, Belfast

Date: 20 November 2024

A summary of the feedback and discussions held around the Connect West Project is outlined below.

- Asked for clarification on whether this project would help with connecting renewable generation onto the grid.
- Discussion around the thresholds for regionally significant projects and agreement that this project would exceed that threshold and will therefore be dealt with by the Department. SONI will require a Section 26 Determination and will need to write to the Department in the first instance, when appropriate, for a formal determination.
- Query on how long construction would take on this project.
- Query on the route of the circuit and whether this would go through the Sperrins Area of Natural Beauty (AONB). DfI welcomed that the project doesn't go through the AONB as this would have been a challenge.
- This project is likely to attract a lot of interest and it is likely that there will be calls for the project to be undergrounded.
- Officials highlighted the option of a PAD and noted SONI should avail of this opportunity as it will help make the application run smoother. The Planning team in the Department would be happy to talk to SONI about this.
- SONI should look at the lessons learned from the North South Interconnector Project.

2.2 Summary of engagement with Fermanagh and South Tyrone DUP

Attending: Deborah Erskine MLA
Location: Online via Microsoft Teams
Date: 28 November 2024

A meeting was held with Deborah Erskine on the Connect West Project where she raised the following queries and made the follow comments. Deborah was also briefed on the initial 'Mid Tyrone Project' in April 2023.

- Understanding of the issues around traffic disruption caused by construction.
Support for the project and the more future-proofed solution.
- Query on how this project will link into the North South Interconnector.
- Discussion around the timescales for the project and engagement with landowners and if there have been any issues at this stage with landowners.
- Stressed the importance of communicating the benefits so that they are understood.
This has been an issue with the A5 Project.
- Has there been any discussion between SONI and DfI around the public impact as parts of the project will cross into the A5?
- Would SONI seek to complete preparatory works while construction of the A5 is underway?
- Local farmers have been in contact regarding issues with connecting to the grid.
- Recognises the benefit for economic development in the area.

2.3 Summary of engagement with Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein

Attending: Pat Cullen MP
Location: Castlereagh House
Date: 04 December 2024

As a newly elected MP, Pat Cullen received a tour of the SONI Control Room ahead of her meeting on the Connect West Project, where she was provided with an overview of the Northern Ireland Transmission Grid and SONI's role in operating and managing the system.

A summary of the feedback and discussions held around the Connect West Project is outlined below.

- Query on the timescales for the project.
- Impressed with the project and discussion around what is required from elected representatives on this project.
- What do SONI do if community buy-in is not achieved?
- Health concerns with people living in close proximity to these projects that need to be addressed.
- Discussion around the North South Interconnector Project and timescales.

2.4 Summary of engagement with West Tyrone DUP

Attending: Tom Buchanan MLA
Location: Online via Microsoft Teams
Date: 12 February 2025

Tom Buchanan was originally briefed on the 'Mid Tyrone Project' in April 2023. During this meeting on the Connect West Project, Mr Buchanan provided the following feedback and comments:

- Discussion around the timescales for the project and when it will be built.
- Has any engagement been carried out with those constructing the A5?
- Underground cabling would be best during storms, however, there would be issues with farmers and obtaining buy-in to dig up land.
- Query on the length of the new circuit.
- Discussion around battery storage projects and whether SONI have any involvement in these projects.
- Planning highlighted as an issue to overcome.
- Discussion on the make-up of the system in taking energy into the west, is there adequate infrastructure in place to do this?
- Discussion of how successful delivery of the A5 would increase economic development and therefore would increase demand in this area.
- Engagement with farmers and landowners will be tricky in this area who are likely to raise concerns with the project.

2.5 Summary of engagement with West Tyrone Sinn Fein

Attending: Órfhlaith Begley MP
Declan McAleer MLA
Councillor Paul Boggs (Sperrin DEA)

Location: Online via Microsoft Teams

Date: 22 August 2025

Órfhlaith Begley MP and Declan McAleer MLA were originally briefed on the 'Mid Tyrone Project' during May 2023. During this meeting on the Connect West Project, the Sinn Fein representatives provided the following feedback and comments:

- Query on the planning process and when a planning application is expected to be submitted.
- Has the preferred route for the project been determined or will there be an opportunity to provide feedback and 'shape' the preferred route?
- Órfhlaith Begley asked for an update on the NSI Project, noting Sinn Féin's Party position that the NSI should be undergrounded, and asked how this impacts the Connect West Project.
- Declan McAleer highlighted the importance of consulting with local communities, ensuring the least disruptive route is proposed and considering compensation for impacted landowners.
- Discussion around undergrounding and the various issues around choosing this option. Mr McAleer queried the difference between direct current and alternating current and how this performs when undergrounded.

3 Summary of key feedback

Feedback collated from the stakeholder engagement meetings was analysed and key themes have emerged. These themes, including extracts from the meetings with the stakeholders, are outlined below.

3.1 Key theme 1: general support

- *“I am supportive of this project and glad to hear it is a more future-proofed solution”*
- *“I would like this project to happen as it would be huge for economic development in the area.”*
- *“I am impressed by the project and would offer any support, if required.”*

3.2 Key theme 2: engagement

- *“Has there been any issues at this stage with landowners?”*
- *“Part of the difficulty will be getting people to understand the benefits of the project and why it is needed – I have noticed the same issue with the A5 Project.”*
- *“Will there be any discussion between SONI and DfI regarding the public impact as parts of this project will cross into the A5. Would SONI seek to complete any prep works while the construction of the A5 is underway?”*
- *“What will SONI do if community buy-in is not achieved?”*
- *“Has any discussions taken place with those constructing the A5?”*
- *“Engagement with farmers and landowners on this project will be tricky and there will be issues with these individuals.”*
- *“It is important to consult with local communities and consider compensation for impacted landowners.”*

3.3 Key theme 3: planning process

- *“This project will exceed the threshold for regionally significant and therefore the application will be dealt with by the Department. SONI will require a Section 26 determination and will have to write to the Department, when appropriate, for a formal determination.”*
- *“There is an option of undertaking a PAD process. SONI should avail of this opportunity as the sooner this happens, the better, and it will help the application run smoother.”*
- *“Planning will be one of the biggest hindrances with this project.”*
- *“What is the timeframe for an application to be submitted for this project?”*

3.4 Key theme 4: timescales

- *“What will the build time be for this project?”*
- *“What are the timescales for the project and when will landowner engagement take place?”*
- *“When will the project be built?”*
- *“What is the timeframe for an application to be submitted for this project?”*

3.5 Key theme 5: grid capacity / connections

- *“If new wind and solar generation becomes available, will this project help with connecting these renewables onto the grid?”*
- *“Local farmers are regularly in touch who want a connection to the grid.”*
- *“What is the system like in taking energy out of the west, is there adequate infrastructure in place for this? If the A5 was built, this would encourage more large-scale businesses into the west which would increase demand in this area.”*

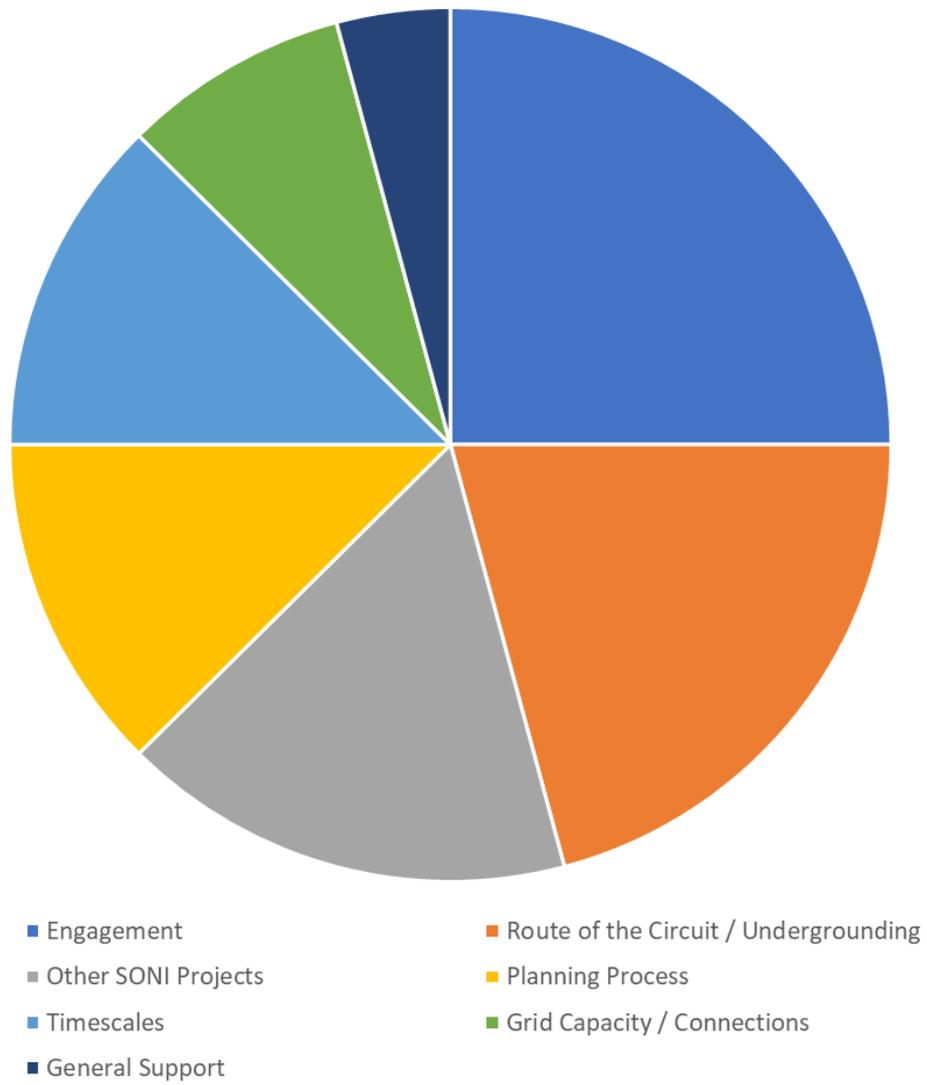
3.6 Key theme 6: route of the circuit / undergrounding

- *“It is positive that the new circuit does not go through the Sperrins Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) as this would have been a challenge.”*
- *“There is likely to be calls for the project to be undergrounded.”*
- *“Underground cabling would be best during storms, however, there would be issues with farmers to obtain buy-in to dig up land.”*
- *“What length will the new circuit be?”*
- *“Has the route for the project been determined or will there be an opportunity to provide feedback and shape the route?”*
- *“It is important to ensure the least disruptive route is proposed.”*
- *“Can alternating current be undergrounded or can both alternating and direct current be undergrounded?”*

3.7 Key theme 7: other SONI projects / North South Interconnector

- *“SONI should look at the lessons learned from the North South Interconnector (NSI) Project.”*
- *“How will this project link into the NSI Project?”*
- *“Why has the NSI faced such a delay?”*
- *“There are a number of local battery storage projects, are SONI involved with these?”*
- *“What is the update with the NSI project and how does the NSI impact this project?”*

Appendix A: Frequency of feedback following Part 1 engagement



Appendix B: Part 1 Stakeholder Engagement meeting slides



Agenda

- Our Purpose
- Managing a Power System in Transition
- SONI's 3-Part Process for Developing the Grid
- Project Need
- Existing Omagh - Tamnamore Circuit Arrangement
- Preliminary Preferred Option
- Project Benefits

2 | Connect West Project Briefing

Our Purpose:

Meeting Northern Ireland's energy needs, today and in the future

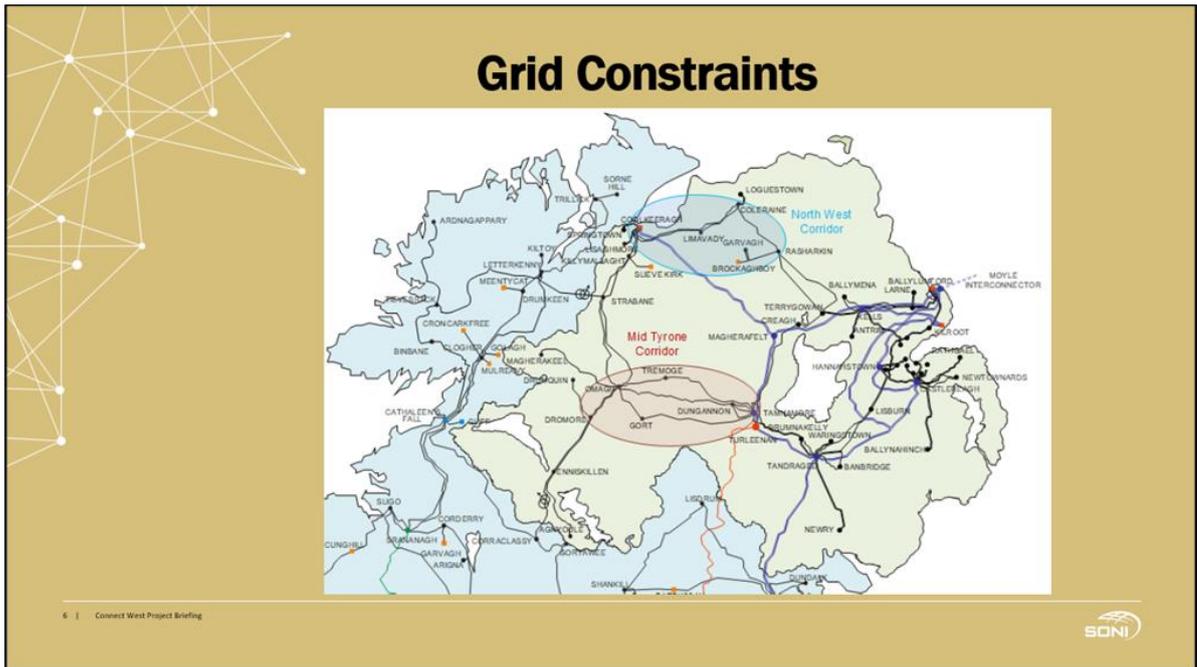
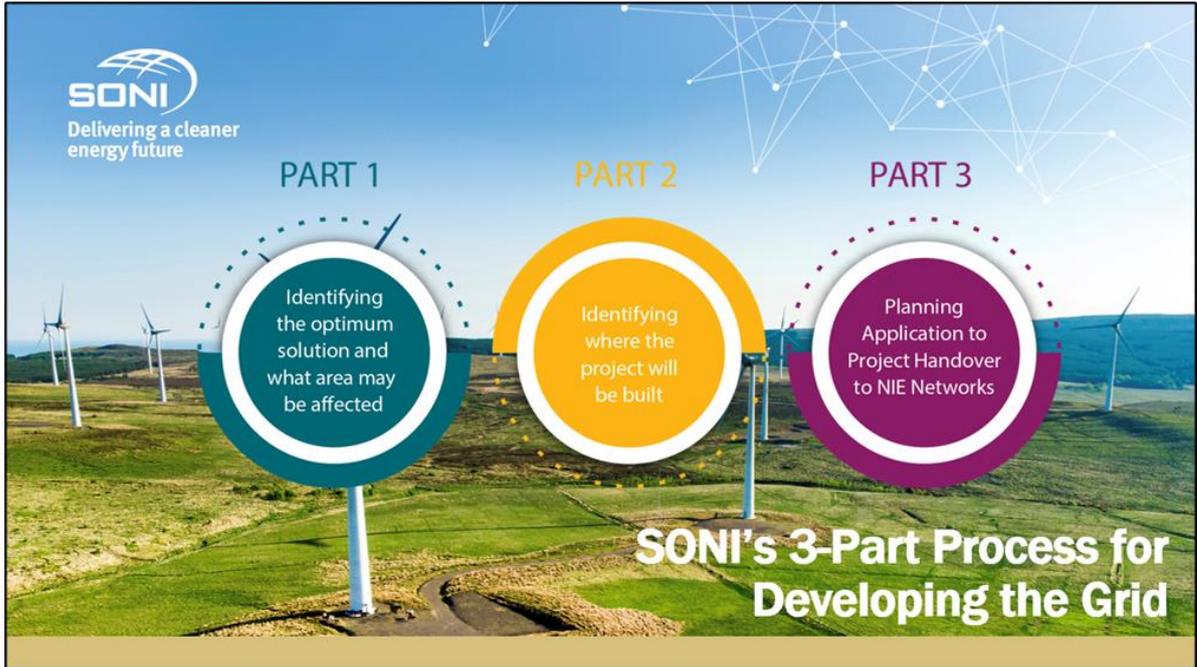


Managing a power system in transition

The process to reach NI's Energy Strategy targets is both complex and ambitious.

- Significant upgrades to the current system
- Extensive programme of new development to meet our changing energy needs
- Ensuring secure flow of electricity for consumers 24/7/365
- Broader challenges (local acceptance, landowner agreement).



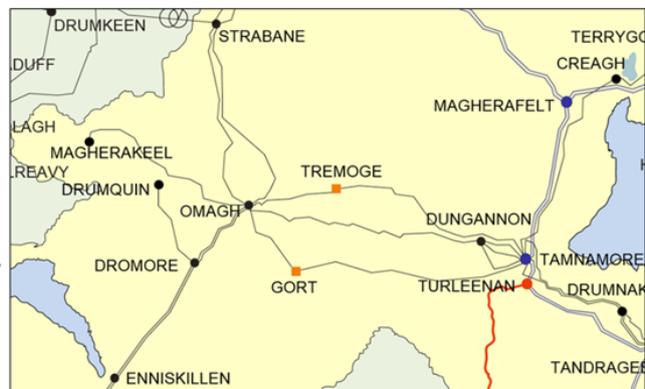


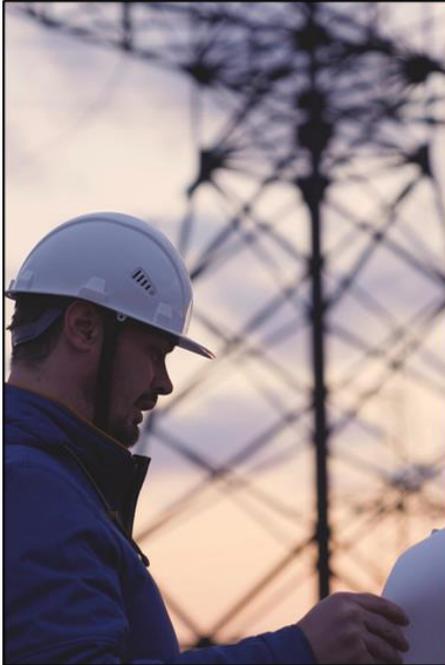
Project Need

- The existing three main circuits between Omagh and Tamnamore are heavily congested
- Currently renewable generation must be constrained
- Need for grid to be strengthened to facilitate additional renewable generation required to meet climate targets

Existing Omagh - Tamnamore Circuit Arrangement

- There are three main transmission circuits on the Omagh – Tamnamore corridor
- Omagh – Dungannon was updated to 200 MVA in 2011
- The northern circuit was updated, connected to a new cluster substation at Tremoge and diverted to a new 275/110 kV substation at Tamnamore
- A third circuit was constructed between Omagh and Tamnamore in 2018, connecting the new Gort cluster





Preliminary Preferred Option

A new 275 kV circuit between Dromore and the new substation at Turleenan



Project Benefits

- Supports the delivery of our climate change target of Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050
- Removes costly constraints on the grid in the west of Northern Ireland
- Enhances security of supply
- Future proofs this part of the network, helping to unlock the full potential of wind, solar and other green technologies
- Supports economic development in the west of the province







Connect West Project Briefing Note

About SONI

SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) is Northern Ireland's Transmission System Operator (TSO). We manage the electricity grid to ensure that power can flow safely, securely and reliably from where it is generated to where it is needed. We are also transforming the electricity system to deliver a cleaner, cheaper, more secure energy future for homes, farms and businesses across Northern Ireland.

Previous Engagement

In Spring 2023, SONI completed a round of engagement on initial proposals for this project (previously known as the Mid Tyrone Project) and met with Simon Ashley and Bernard McGrath on the 28th April 2023. SONI have amended their plans for this project to upgrade the transmission system to future-proof this part of the network for years to come.

Need for the Project

Many of the existing main circuits in the Tyrone area are heavily congested. With further increases in renewable energy by 2030, existing circuits in the west of Northern Ireland are at significant risk of overloading unless we reduce the output of the generators, meaning available renewable generation is being constrained. To ensure that we can facilitate the additional renewable generation required to meet climate targets, we have to strengthen the grid in this area.

Connect West Project

There are three main transmission circuits on the Omagh – Tamnamore corridor, which all have limited capacity. The Connect West Project proposes to construct a new 275 kV circuit between Dromore and the new substation at Turleenan, near Moy. This would enable the grid to carry the level of renewable generation predicted in the time ahead.

Project Benefits

- Supports the delivery of our climate change target of Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050
- Removes costly constraints on the grid in the west of Northern Ireland
- Enhances security of supply for Tyrone and Fermanagh
- Future proofs this part of the network for years to come, helping to unlock the full potential of wind, solar and other green technologies
- Supports economic development in the west of the province



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

Introduction

SONI External Communications carried out the required stakeholder engagement during Part 1 of the Grid Development Process for the Mid Tyrone Project. This document is intended to provide a summary of the feedback received from key stakeholders in the study area.

The preliminary preferred option proposes a new 110 kV circuit from Dromore to Tamnamore. This new circuit will address constraints in the area and will reduce loading on the existing three circuits connecting Omagh and Tamnamore. The proposed study area runs through two Parliamentary / Assembly Constituencies, from Dromore Substation in West Tyrone Constituency through to the Tamnamore Substation in the Fermanagh & South Tyrone Constituency. While a route has not yet been finalised, the new circuit is expected to run through the West Tyrone and Mid Tyrone DEAs in Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and through the Clogher Valley and Dungannon DEAs in Mid Ulster District Council.

Based on this, Part 1 engagement was focused on elected representatives in both constituencies as well as the Director of Planning in Mid Ulster District Council and the Director of Regeneration and Planning at Fermanagh & Omagh District Council. Given the large number of elected representatives in the project area, we focused on direct meetings with representatives from parties which have Assembly or Westminster representation in West Tyrone and Fermanagh & South Tyrone Constituencies. Prioritised stakeholders were encouraged to invite other party colleagues to the meetings, as appropriate. The meetings took place virtually via Microsoft Teams.

This report outlines a summary of the meetings held during Part 1 and the feedback received from each of the key stakeholders.

Meeting with Dr Chris Boomer – Mid Ulster District Council Director of Planning

8th March 2023, via Microsoft Teams

Dr Chris Boomer was briefed on the Mid Tyrone Project along with the Tamnamore – Drumnakelly Project. During this meeting Dr Boomer made the following comments and asked the following questions regarding the Mid Tyrone Project.

- Chris Boomer discussed the topography of the landscape in the project study area and stated it may be tricky to develop a route due to this and the number of wind farms in this area. Chris understood the benefits of not having all energy flowing through Omagh and confirmed he would assign a planning officer to have a look at the study area with members of the SONI team.
- Dr Boomer noted the Battery Storage issue at Tamnamore Substation. Chris stated SONI need to have separate discussions regarding this issue to secure the land around Tamnamore Substation in order to achieve the proposals.



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

- Chris also discussed the switching stations and asked if there were any issues with these. Dr Boomer offered to support SONI in their engagements with landowners to achieve the area needed complete these projects.
- Dr Boomer concluded the meeting by thanking SONI for the presentation and asked for an additional meeting to discuss issues SONI are experiencing around Battery Storage.

As this meeting also briefed Dr Boomer on the Tamnamore – Drumnakelly Project, the following points relating to SONI projects are important to note.

- Chris noted the steel towers affect him more than the wooden poles and that the increased capacity is a huge benefit to the local area.
- Chris discussed the main issue in the Mid Ulster area is regarding the ability to use the power generated in the area given the significant amount of industry in the Mid Ulster area. With the probable increase in demand for electricity over the next number of years, Dr Boomer questioned to what extent are SONI's projects future-proofed to deal with these increases.

Meeting with Kim McLaughlin – Fermanagh & Omagh Director of Regeneration & Planning

12th April 2023, via Microsoft Teams

Paul McDermott (Lead Planner in Fermanagh & Omagh District Council) was also in attendance for this briefing. During the meeting, Kim and Paul made the following comments and asked the following questions.

- Kim McLaughlin welcomed the early engagement on this project.
- Kim highlighted problems in the area with a large number of turbine applications and issues with individuals connecting these to the grid. Ms McLaughlin stated this may be raised during meetings with elected representatives.
- Paul McDermott noted that the project crosses two council areas and asked if the application could be deemed regionally significant and whether this would be an application DfI would consider.
- Mr McDermott highlighted the Council's new Local Development Plan (LDP) with updated policies and details around new overhead lines that SONI should be aware of.
- Paul also asked if this would be a new line or whether there would be any changes to the current infrastructure.

Meeting with Tom Buchanan – West Tyrone MLA (DUP)

14th April 2023, via Microsoft Teams



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

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- Kim highlighted problems in the area with a large number of turbine applications and issues with individuals connecting these to the grid. Ms McLaughlin stated this may be raised during meetings with elected representatives.
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Meeting with Tom Buchanan – West Tyrone MLA (DUP)

14th April 2023, via Microsoft Teams



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

During this meeting, Mr Buchanan made the following comments and asked the following questions.

- Tom Buchanan appreciated the engagement on this project and agreed that renewables are the way forward, however there is always going to be objection to these kinds of projects.
- Mr Buchanan asked when SONI plan to determine their preferred route for the project and highlighted potential issues they may experience when engaging with landowners on this. Tom outlined on previous projects there have been issues with farmers and landowners regarding damage to land etc. where neither SONI nor NIE were prepared to take responsibility to get the issues sorted. Tom asked that SONI work with landowners to sort these issues if they arise during this project.
- Tom highlighted an issue on a previous project where a landowner had concerns regarding the location of the new line and how close this came to their dwelling and there didn't seem to be any flexibility in changing the route. Based on this, Tom asked that the project team provide more assurance to local farmers.
- Tom enquired about the cost of the project and whether this would be passed to the consumer to pay for.
- Mr Buchanan also discussed battery storage.
- Tom looks forward to further engagement on this project and offered support to SONI when engaging with landowners etc.

Meeting with Daniel McCrossan – West Tyrone MLA (SDLP)

27th April 2023, via Microsoft Teams

Daniel McCrossan could not attend due to an urgent constituency issue, however his Office Manager Simon Ashley represented him in his absence. Also present at the meeting was local representative, Bernard McGrath, where they raised the following queries and asked the following questions.

- Mr Ashley asked that a copy of the presentation be sent through to Councillors in the study area following the election in May 2023.
- Simon questioned the timescales for the project.
- Mr Ashley discussed the submission of the application to the Utility Regulator and asked what the protocol is around this.
- Simon also asked when will public consultation be carried out regarding this project.
- Mr McGrath stated he lives on a poultry farm around Omagh/Killyclogher and currently produces 40kW of solar energy. Bernard has applied for an extra 20kW but was refused due to the grid not being able to handle this.
- Mr Ashley confirmed Daniel McCrossan is generally in favour of infrastructure improvements and thanked SONI for the presentation.



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

Meeting with Deborah Erskine – Fermanagh & South Tyrone MLA (DUP)

28th April 2023, via Microsoft Teams

During this meeting, Deborah made the following comments and asked the following questions.

- Deborah thanked the team for the presentation. Deborah sought clarification on the timeframes of the project and the plans to have this in place by 2030. Ms Erskine asked if the project team envisaged any delay in receiving planning permission as this can take some time especially with the project being over two council areas.
- Deborah discussed the issue of grid capacity and the details around getting renewables connected to the grid.
- Ms Erskine looks forward to further engagement throughout the duration of this project.

Meeting with Tom Elliott – Fermanagh & South Tyrone MLA (UUP)

28th April 2023, via Microsoft Teams

During this meeting Tom raised the following points and asked the following questions.

- Tom discussed the energy generation process and how the distribution of energy is controlled and managed. Tom asked when energy is generated from wind turbines, where does it go and also questioned whether fossil fuel generation is switched off if there is a surplus.
- Mr Elliott questioned the circuits in the area and asked does this project mean there are going to be two systems into Dromore – when the line gets to Dromore does it go into the existing network and can Fermanagh handle this?
- Tom asked SONI how they would deal with individuals who want the circuit to go underground through their land when it could go overground, and the process regarding deciding what is underground and what isn't.
- Tom also asked for an explanation of what the circuit would look like, especially the towers.
- Mr Elliott asked to what extent is this project future-proofed.
- Tom stated he has a keen interest in the energy sector and appreciates there is a clear need for the project.

Meeting with Sinn Féin Representatives – Órfhlaith Begley (West Tyrone MP) & Colm Gildernew (Fermanagh & South Tyrone MLA)

26th May 2023, via Microsoft Teams

Declan McAleer (West Tyrone MLA) and Cllr Dominic Molloy (Dungannon DEA) were additional attendees at the meeting. The representatives raised the following points and questions.



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

- Colm Gildernew discussed the layout of the new circuit and asked if there would be steel towers or wooden poles. The new circuit will be similar to the existing circuits in the area – mostly twin wood poles with the occasional steel tower.
- Mr Gildernew stated he appreciates the security of supply issues in the west and asked is the purpose to move energy from where it is generated in the west to where it is needed in the east and noted that there should be a strategic focus on economic development in the west.
- Colm discussed the potential of developing this project alongside the new A5 at the time of construction.
- Mr Gildernew also highlighted Sinn Féin's preference for underground circuits instead of overhead lines and stated he doesn't understand why cabling would be harder to maintain. Colm suggested SONI only underground when it suits.
- Colm asked where the funding comes from for these projects.
- Cllr Molloy noted the impact these large projects have on the local community – when you look at the overall project alongside others such as the NSI, they all feed into the same area which is tough on local residents.
- Órfhlaith Begley discussed the engagement process and asked what form this engagement takes and how will SONI engage with the local communities.
- Mr Gildernew noted that security of supply has improved significantly in the past year but added there is not much supply and asked is there a way to increase the supply for local companies.
- Declan McAleer stated he could see the benefits of the project and asked would this trigger more applications for turbines in the area. Declan also asked when the preferred route of the line would be decided and noted local people are experiencing issues with getting connected to the grid.
- Mr McAleer asked a further question on engagement throughout this project and asked if SONI have spoken to council officials in Mid Ulster and Fermanagh & Omagh Councils.
- Colm asked if this project would have any impact of the North South Interconnector.
- Colm discussed the future proofing of the project and asked if there was merit in looking at a higher voltage for a more long-term solution.
- Mr Gildernew asked could EV charging points be incorporated as part of this project.



Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary

Slide Deck Shared During Stakeholder Engagement Meetings



Project Need

- The existing three main circuits between Omagh and Tamnamore are heavily congested
- With further increases in renewable energy by 2030 all circuits on the Omagh to Tamnamore corridor are at significant risk of overloading
- The current capacity of the circuits are insufficient
- Renewable energy currently has to be constrained

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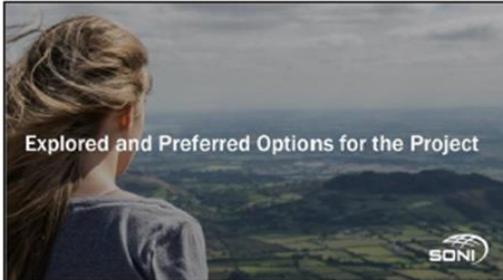
Benefits of the project

- Removes constraints on the grid in the west of Northern Ireland
- Addresses future security of supply
- Improves capacity and efficiency of the grid
- Vital to deliver our climate target of 80% renewable generation by 2030

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Mid Tyrone Project Part 1 Engagement Summary



Explored and Preferred Options for the Project

Existing Omagh – Tamnamore Circuit Arrangement

- There are three main circuits on the Omagh – Tamnamore corridor
- One of the circuits was upgraded to 200 MVA in 2014
- The circuit was upgraded, connected to a new cluster substation at Trengale and diverted to a new 275/110 kV substation at Tamnamore
- A third circuit was constructed between Omagh and Tamnamore in 2018, connecting the new Gort cluster

Mid Tyrone Project Outline of Shortlisted Options

Option 1: Do nothing

Option 1a

- A new 110 kV substation established at Omagh
- A new very high capacity underground circuit built between Omagh and Tamnamore

Option 2

- A new 275 kV circuit constructed part of the way from Tamnamore to Omagh, partially replacing Omagh-Dungannon 110 kV circuit
- New 110 kV circuits built to connect Gort and Trengale to Mid Tyrone substation



Mid Tyrone Project Outline of Shortlisted Options continued

Option 3

- A new 275/110 kV substation established at Omagh
- A 275 kV circuit built between Omagh and Tamnamore, replacing the existing Dungannon – Omagh 110 kV circuit

Option 4

- A new 110 kV circuit established between Droineac and Tamnamore

Option 5

- Upgrades all the existing 110 kV circuits between Omagh and Tamnamore to approx 250 MVA



Part 1 Preliminary Preferred Option

Option 4 – New 110 kV circuit from Droineac – Tamnamore

- Reduces loading on the existing three circuits connecting Omagh and Tamnamore
- Increases security of supply in Fermanagh
- Addresses constraints in the area
- Best performing option across multiple criteria
- Estimated Cost of €32.2 million



Next Steps

Publicise latest reports on SONI website, including:

- Nucleus Case Report
- Options Report
- Project approval submission to the Utility Regulator
- Progress to Part 2 of the Grid Development Process

Public consultation process planned as the project progresses

