
For Written Answer on : 30/05/2018
Question Number(s): 196 Question Reference(s): 23944/18
Department: Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Asked by: Brendan Smith T.D.

QUESTION

[Ref No.: 23944/18]

* To ask the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment when he plans to publish the independent review of the proposed North-South interconnector; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Brendan Smith.

* For WRITTEN answer on Wednesday, 30th May, 2018.

(617 Received on 23rd May, 2018.)

REPLY

The North South Interconnector, as proposed as an overhead line, now has full planning permission in both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I have listened carefully to the issues raised in relation to this project, particularly those living in close proximity to the proposed project. In February and March 2017, two motions calling for an updated independent study into the north-south interconnector were passed by Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. I met with the Monaghan Anti-Pylon Committee and North East Pylon Pressure Campaign, together with Oireachtas members from Cavan, Monaghan and Meath in February 2017.

I subsequently met with Oireachtas members in May 2017 and most recently again in January of this year. In addition, my officials have held separate meetings with the Monaghan Anti-Pylon Committee and North East Pylon Pressure Campaign in March and April last year.

All of these engagements – together with the motions - were important in my decision to commission two independent studies into the project. The studies were designed to address the main points of the motions as well as key concerns expressed by those parties opposed to the development of an overhead line.

I have indicated previously that the Consultants undertaking the two studies have finalised their reports, that once considered in my department and submitted to me it is my intention that these will be brought to Government and made publicly available, and that this process would take some time to complete.

For Oral Answer on : 31/05/2018
Question Number(s): 16,22,47 Question Reference(s): 23918/18, 23923/18, 23924/18
Department: Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Asked by: Thomas Byrne T.D., Brendan Smith T.D.

QUESTION

[Ref No.: 23923/18]

To ask the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment if all procurement related activities will be halted pending the determination of the judicial review in view of the recent decision regarding an incinerator development in Northern Ireland and the impending judicial review of the proposed North-South Interconnector; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Brendan Smith.

For ORAL answer on Thursday, 31st May, 2018.

(24 Received on 23rd May, 2018.)

To ask the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment if the procurement process that he approved some time ago will be halted in view of a judicial review in Northern Ireland in relation to the proposed North-South Interconnector; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Brendan Smith.

For ORAL answer on Thursday, 31st May, 2018.

Ref No: 23924/18 **Lottery:** 20

To ask the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment the status of the North-South Interconnector project; and if the transmission lines will be undergrounded..

- Thomas Byrne.

For ORAL answer on Thursday, 31st May, 2018.

Ref No: 23918/18 **Lottery:** 46

REPLY

I propose to take Questions Nos 16, 22 and 47 together.

The North South Interconnector, as proposed as an overhead line, has full planning permission in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. On 21 December 2016 An Bord Pleanála granted planning permission for the North-South Interconnector in Ireland. The decision concluded a lengthy planning process which included an Oral Hearing completed over eleven weeks from March to May of 2016. On 23 January 2018, full planning permission was also granted for the section of the line that lies in Northern Ireland.

The approval process for that part of the North South Interconnector in Northern Ireland is a matter for the authorities there. The Judgement referred to in the question relates to a different project although it has been acknowledged that it could have wider implications for decision making in Northern Ireland. I understand that the decision is being appealed by the Department for Infrastructure in Belfast.

Following the planning consents, and the conclusion of a number of judicial review proceedings relating to the planning decision in Ireland, the construction of the project and any procurement processes that arise from that construction are operational matters for EirGrid and ESB Networks, and one in which I have no function.