



Northern & Western Regional Assembly,  
The Square,  
Ballaghaderreen,  
Co. Roscommon  
F45 W674

rses@nwra.ie

[www.eirgrid.com](http://www.eirgrid.com)  
The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road  
Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28, Ireland  
**Telephone** +353 1 677 1700  
**Email** info@eirgrid.com

7<sup>th</sup> February 2019  
[By Email]

**Re: Submission to the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

EirGrid Group welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the *Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)* and requests that this submission is taken into consideration in the finalisation of the RSES. EirGrid made a submission to the Issues Paper Consultation on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in which the strategic issue of the future development of Ireland's electricity transmission grid was highlighted.

EirGrid is responsible for the safe, secure and reliable transmission of electricity – now and in the future. EirGrid develops, manages and operates the electricity transmission grid. This brings power from where it is generated to where it is needed throughout Ireland. The grid also supplies power to industry and businesses that use large amounts of electricity and powers the distribution network. The distribution network in turn supplies electricity to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals, and farms.

In this context, EirGrid notes and welcomes several key policies and objectives in the draft, in particular Section 8.3 Electrical Grid Network which highlight the electricity transmission grid's importance in supporting our society and economy. EirGrid considers that policies and objectives which support a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity need to be explicit in the RSES in order to assist EirGrid in the successful implementation of its Grid Development Strategy - Your Grid, Your Tomorrow (2017b). This is imperative to meeting national targets for electricity generation, climate change targets, and security of energy supplies. The policies and objectives are critical for regional economic and spatial development and should be maintained in the finalisation the strategy.

EirGrid would raise Section 6.0. Growth Ambition 3: Connectivity – Connected Region and specially the infographic (pg.223) *Our Connect Places* which states '*the region is poorly provided for in terms of Electrical Grid Infrastructure with Counties Mayo, Leitrim and Donegal containing only 110kv lines*'. The nominal voltage value of the electrical network in the region, or lack of higher voltages, should not be considered an indicator of a poor network particularly where the network is safe, secure and reliable. The network is successfully serving both the demand and generation in the region and can continue to do so.

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**EirGrid Plc**  
**The Oval**  
**160 Shelbourne Road**  
**Ballsbridge**  
**Dublin D04 FW28**  
**Ireland**  
**Company Registration**  
**No. 338522**

A key tenant of EirGrid's strategy is to maximise the use of the existing transmission network. Where we can increase the capacity of existing infrastructure, or use new technologies, this may remove the need to construct new lines and introduce lines with higher voltages. This strategy lowers costs and ensures that there will be potentially less impact on the environment and on local communities. EirGrid is constantly assessing the needs of the future electricity system and will only develop infrastructure where it is necessary to do so.

EirGrid is available to collaborate with the Assembly and to provide expert and focused input into the preparation of the RSES, particularly from a strategic energy policy perspective. Should you have any comments in regard of this submission please contact the undersigned. EirGrid once more welcomes the opportunity to participate in the making of the RSES and looks forward to further engagement.

Yours sincerely,

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**Tomás Bradley,**  
**Senior Planner**  
**tomas.bradley@eirgrid.com**

## References

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