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Project Manager
North Connacht 110kV Project
EirGrid
The Oval
160 Shelbourne Road
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D04 FW28
(Issued via email to: northconnachtproject@eirgrid.com)

11 December 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: North Connacht 110kV Project Consultation

Firstly, on behalf of Mercury Renewables Ltd (“**Mercury**”), I wish to thank EirGrid for facilitating the public consultation for the North Connacht 110kV Project (the “**Project**”). Secondly, Mercury fully supports EirGrid in the planning and development of the Project and can make ourselves available to EirGrid to provide any assistance required for this very important project.

Mercury is currently developing the Firlough Wind Farm, which will benefit from the development of the North Connacht 110kV Project. Together with other wind farm developers listed below (hereafter referred to as the “Subgroup”), we have been engaging with EirGrid on the development of new transmission network capacity in the North Connacht region.

Subgroup:

- ABO Wind Ireland Ltd
- Bord na Mona
- ESB Wind Development
- Mercury Renewables Ltd

Mercury strongly recommends that EirGrid proceed with the North Connacht 110kV Project in the form of an underground cable. This recommendation is based on past experience of significant delays in the consenting and delivery of transmission overhead lines generally in Ireland and specifically regarding recent public opposition to EirGrid pylons expressed by communities in Co. Mayo. There has already been significant delays in the delivery of new transmission infrastructure into the North

Mayo area which means existing and new wind farms are not able to provide their full benefit to Ireland's RES-E targets. It is Mercury's view that a 110kV underground cable could be consented and delivered within a significantly shorter timeframe than a 110kV overhead line due to public opposition regarding overhead lines in the region. As a result and given the already significant delays experienced to date it is Mercury's view that EirGrid's main priority now should be to expedite the delivery of this project and believe this can be best achieved if the North Connacht 110kV Project is delivered in the form of an underground cable.

While the Subgroup would benefit from the North Connacht 110kV Project, it is important to note that existing wind farms in North Connacht region would also benefit from the Project in the form of reduced constraints, and therefore is further justification to expedite the delivery of the Project.

The renewable electricity from these wind farm projects will provide critical capacity to help Ireland meet its interim and 2030 RES-E targets. These additional wind farms should also increase competition in the RESS auctions, reducing the cost of electricity for consumers. It is noted that EirGrid have proposed three indicative underground cable route options in this consultation. As stated above, Mercury strongly supports an underground cable configuration but we have no particular preference on the route, and instead believe that the views of local communities should be prioritised and taken into consideration when selecting the optimal underground cable route.

To conclude, Mercury fully support EirGrid in the planning and development of the North Connacht 110kV Project. However, we believe that EirGrid's main priority should be to expedite the consenting and delivery of the Project in the form of an underground cable. Furthermore, Mercury would like to explore with Eirgrid the possibility of becoming directly involved in the delivery of an underground solution for the North Connacht 110kV Project .

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P.P. [unintelligible]', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JOHN DUFFY
DIRECTOR,
MERCURY RENEWABLES LIMITED