Wirral cable laying on target for year end completion

National Grid engineers have laid more than eighty percent of the onshore cable which is part of the £1bn Western Link project to bring renewable energy from Scotland to homes and businesses in England and Wales.

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- **More than eighty per cent of the underground cable is laid**
- **Work on the A540 is expected to finish shortly**
- **Work is starting to commission the Flintshire Bridge converter station**

More than eighty per cent of the Western Link project's underground cable has been laid from Leasowe, at the northern tip of the Wirral peninsula, down to National Grid's substation in Connah's Quay.

This includes the two-kilometre stretch along the A540, the longest section being laid in a main road, and it is expected that work will be completed here shortly.

Peter Roper, Senior Project Manager said: "We appreciate that our work is affecting local residents and commuters, and we'd like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone for their patience so far.

"The good news is that by the end of the year we expect to have laid all the cable and joined the sections together, and completed most of the reinstatement of the land where we've laid the cables. We may need a handful of road closures to complete the work and if we do, we'll post these on our website www.westernhvdclink.co.uk."

Most of the cable is laid in trenches. The cable is brought to the site on a special transporter around 26 metres long, and a powerful winch pulls the cable into the trench. The trench is then backfilled and the land reinstated according to the requirements of the landowners and to its previous condition, as a minimum.

Joining the cables together – known as 'jointing' – is highly specialised work and needs to be carried out in a controlled environment. Specialist teams work inside containers, where they create two joints, one for each cable, with each joint taking between seven to ten days. Once the work is complete the containers are removed and the land reinstated.

On Deeside Industrial Park, work has progressed well with construction of the Flintshire Bridge converter station. All the buildings are complete, and all the electrical equipment needed to connect the Western Link cables to the existing national grid has been installed. Work is starting shortly on the complex, lengthy task of commissioning.

The alternating current cables needed to connect the converter station to National Grid's substation in Connah's Quay have been pulled through pipes installed under the River Dee, and laid underground along the banks of the river up to the substation.

"We expect to complete all the work on the alternating current cables, including reinstatement of the land, over the next few months," said Peter Roper.

Out at sea, work is continuing to lay the subsea cable to connect to North Ayrshire, where work is continuing to construct a second converter station and install approximately four kilometres of underground cable.

If people have any queries on the project they can contact the Community Relations Team by emailing westernlink@communityrelations.co.uk or calling 0800 021 7878. They can also find more information on the website www.westernhvdclink.co.uk.

The £1 billion Western Link project is a joint venture between National Grid and ScottishPower Transmission. When complete, it will bring renewable energy from Scotland to homes and businesses in England and Wales and help the UK meet its carbon reduction targets.

Contact for media information only

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Notes for editors

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.

- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news

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