

Session : 2 Supporting Local Authorities in Accelerating Infrastructure

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Supporting Local Authorities in Accelerating Infrastructure



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Department of Transport



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Session : 2

Supporting Local Authorities in Accelerating Infrastructure

This Presentation is about

- **Context for Acceleration of Infrastructure Delivery**
- **Actions by Government**
 - **JUTCH & JET**
- **Roles**
 - **Local Authority / Promoter / TII / Site Teams**
 - **Role of the Local Authority Central Support Unit**
- **Next Steps**



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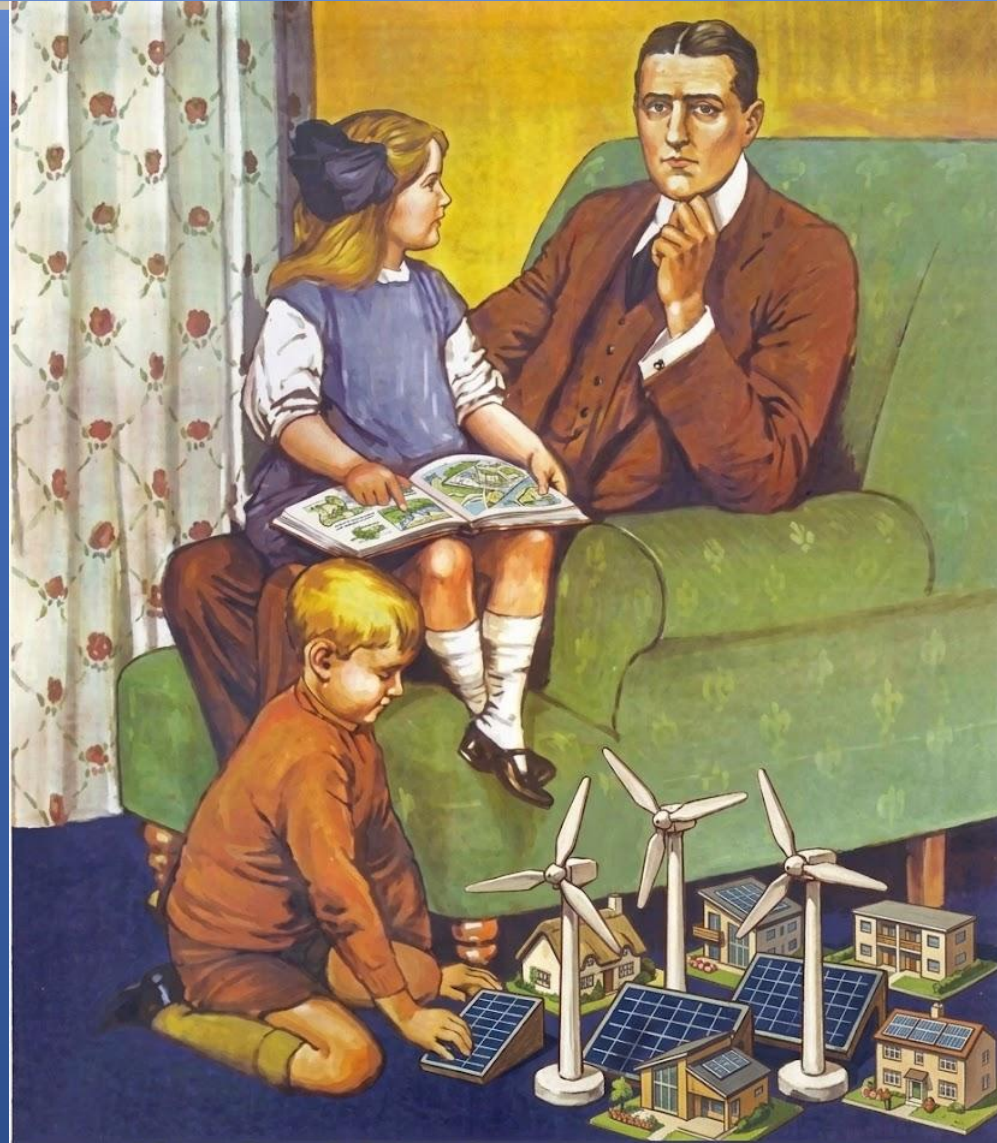


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CONTEXT



Daddy, what did you do to mitigate climate change and improve housing delivery?



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Infrastructure Spending to Meet Urgent National Challenges

Record Infrastructure Investment: The State plans €19 billion in infrastructure spending in 2026, nearly triple the €7.1 billion spent in 2019.

Investment Reflects Urgent National Needs: Funding aligns with pressing societal challenges, emphasising resilience, wellbeing, and economic stability.

Key Priority Areas: Focus on housing, climate action, fuel security, and economic security as interconnected challenges.



Housing

- Population 5.1M.
 - By 2037 5.7 - 6.1M
 - By 2047 5.8 - 6.6M <CSO>
- Housing demand 44,000 per annum (p.a.) to 2030,
- 39,000 p.a. over the 2030–2040 period.



Energy & Climate

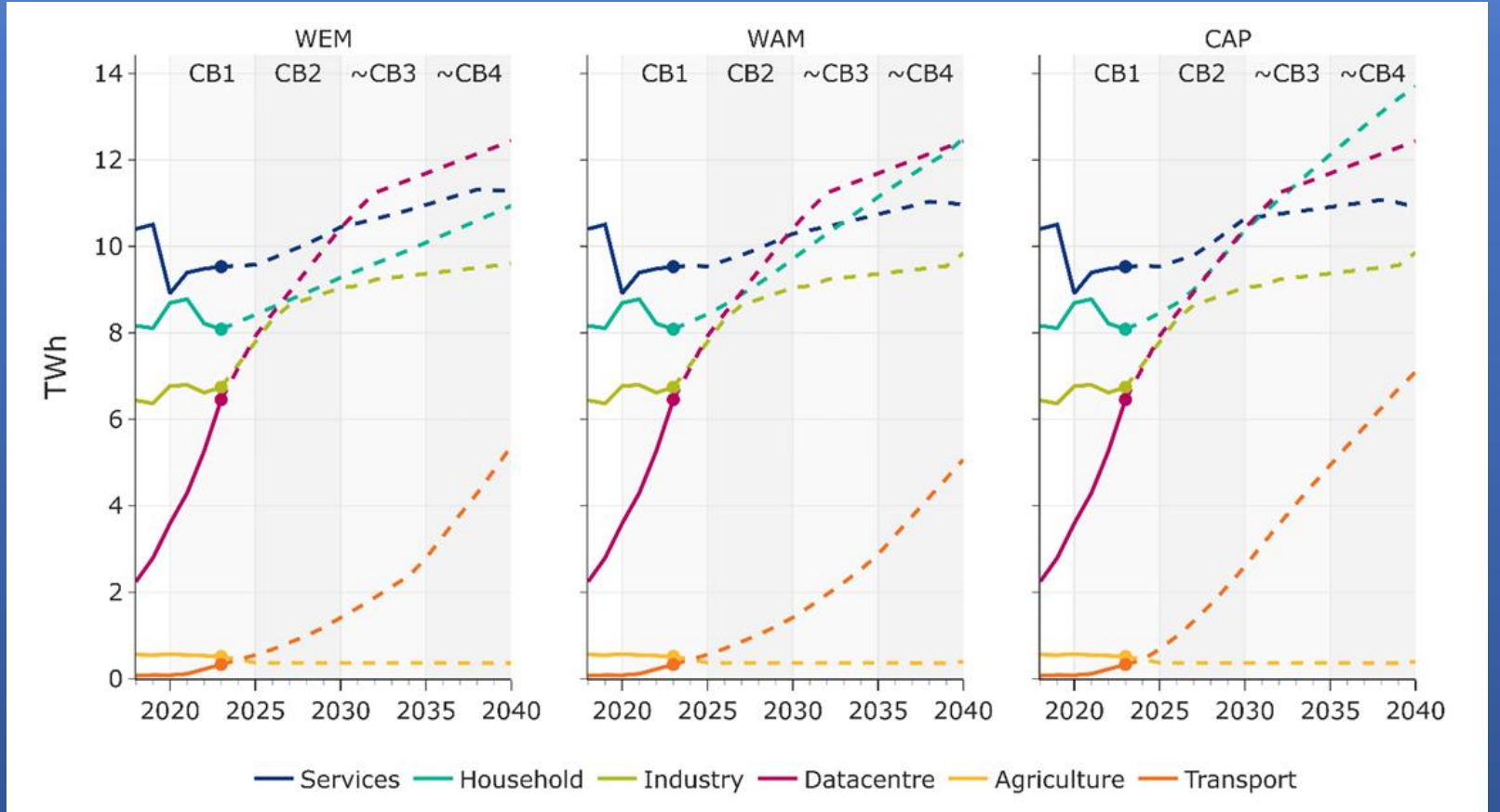
- Decarbonisation of electricity generation is crucial to achieve climate obligations.
- Electricity consumption
 - 41 TWh in 2030, (increase of 30% from 2023).
 - 56% of consumption growth is from large energy users.
 - remainder mostly transport and heat electrification.

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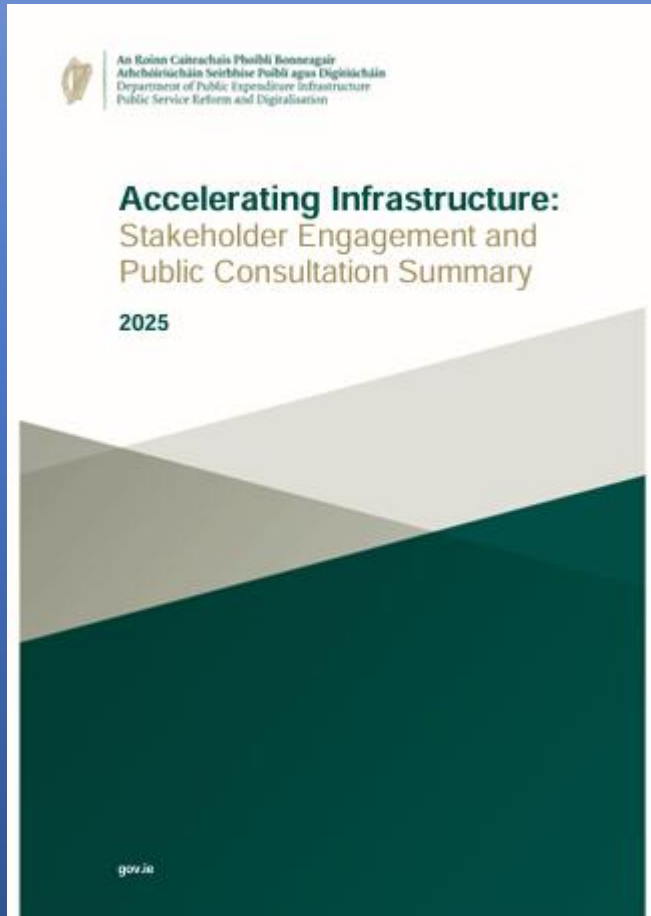
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seai SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

National Energy Projections 2025

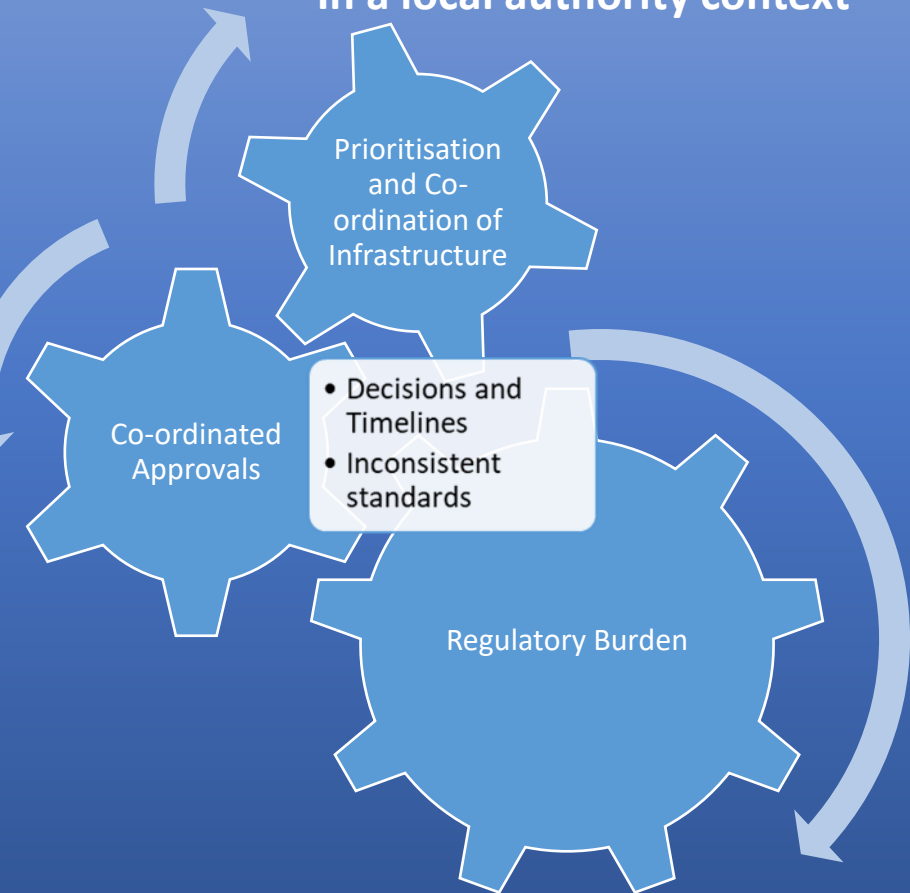


Barriers to Infrastructure Development



1.	Public Acceptance Insufficient public awareness of the consequences of poor infrastructure tends to magnify opposition
2.	Increased Regulatory Burden Multiple, distinct and often overlapping regulatory processes increase complexity without necessarily improving outcomes
3.	Risk Aversion Threat of judicial review on procedural matters drives a culture of caution, limiting the scope for coordination and engagement that could lead to improved outcomes
4.	Increasing Judicial Reviews The increasing number of judicial reviews is contributing to uncertainty, longer timelines and higher cost, driving risk aversion at all other steps
5.	Consequences of Judicial Reviews Lack of fast track for priority projects; procedural flaws can often significantly delay infrastructure without means for consideration of wider consequences
6.	Insufficiently Co-ordinated Approvals Limited coordination on licences, consents and permissions leads to duplication of effort and sequential processes that could be conducted in parallel, saving time/money
7.	Slow Processes Unclear that current procedures on project assessment add value that is commensurate with the time burden imposed
8.	Inconsistent Planning Decisions and Timelines The extent of competing issues can lead to inconsistency and hence drive uncertainty
9.	Prioritisation and Co-ordination of Infrastructure Semi-state companies and regulatory agencies are often limited in their ability to prioritise and to consider wider societal aims in decision making
10.	Procurement Challenges Current processes are leading to falling competition in public tenders, impacting value for money and incentives for investment in skills/capability
11.	Uncertainty of Funding and Project Pipeline Uncertainty around the timing and feasibility of Govt investment plans is limiting interest in the Irish infrastructure market among potential developers
12.	Construction Sector Capacity and Productivity Construction Sector capacity and productivity is a constraint

In a local authority context



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ACTIONS



This is what was done.



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Actions




 Action 1: Reform Judicial Review	 Action 2: Enact Legislation to Accelerate Critical Infrastructure and Provide for Emergency Powers
 Action 3: Implement Other Targeted Legislative Reforms	 Action 4: Progress Domestic Reforms to Environmental Assessment in Parallel with EU Simplification Agenda
 Action 5: Increase Exemption Thresholds for Critical Infrastructure	 Action 6: Respond Rapidly to Precedent
 Action 7: Enact Civil Reform Bill to Legislate for Judicial Reviews	 Action 8: Develop and Publish National Planning Statements for Critical Infrastructure
 Action 9: Establish a Regulatory Simplification Unit	 Action 10: Rationalise Legislation Underpinning Regulatory Processes
 Action 11: Reform Processes Applied to Critical Infrastructure within Agencies/Regulators	 Action 12: Implement Early Warning System re EU Legislative Change on Critical Infrastructure
 Action 13: Advocate for new approach to legislation at EU level on critical infrastructure	 Action 14: Advise on Alternative Methods of Transposing EU Legislation
 Action 15: Enable Developer-led Infrastructure	 Action 16: Review the Role and Functions of the Office of the Planning Regulator and drive performance in the planning system, including consistency in decision making

 Action 17: Target Investment at Priority Sectors through NDP Review	 Action 18: Publish Sectoral Investment Plans to Promote Project Pipelines
 Action 19: Enhance Infrastructure Coordination Function in DPER	 Action 20: Introduce Risk Appetite Statements
 Action 21: Improve Utility Coordination at National and Local Level	 Action 22: Increase Construction Sector Capacity and Productivity
 Action 23: Accelerate Projects through Consenting Processes	 Action 24: Provide expert assistance for key Infrastructure projects
 Action 25: Reform Procurement Processes	 Action 26: Apply AI and Digital Tools to Support Infrastructure Rollout
 Action 27: Create a Duty for State Bodies to Cooperate in Making Land Available and Accessible for Critical Infrastructure	 Action 28: Build Leadership Support for Critical Infrastructure Projects at National and Local Levels
 Action 29: Enhance Government Communication to Promote the Importance of Infrastructure Delivery	 Action 30: Establish a Benefits Realisation Framework for Infrastructure Projects


Actions - DPER

Joint “Clearing House” chaired by DPER

- Facilitate early and ongoing engagement on major electricity, water, and transport projects
- Coordinate linear infrastructure works to reduce duplication, disruption, and cost
- Update codes of practice and technical standards (e.g. road openings, abnormal loads, no-dig technologies, emergency access)
- Act as an escalation point to resolve conflicts and remove barriers promptly providing practical support to local authorities.


Action 11: Reform Processes Applied to Critical Infrastructure Within Agencies/Regulators

Mandate the introduction of a series of reforms to the processes of all bodies involved in the licensing and operation of critical infrastructure. These reforms will improve coordination between bodies, ensure consistency, and improve the efficiency of the processes.


Action 21: Improve Utility Coordination at National and Local Level

Establish a new Joint Utilities and Transport Clearing House (JUTCH) to enhance collaboration between utilities. Supplement this with formal engagement structures at local level to promote more effective engagement between utilities and Local Government in the delivery of critical infrastructure.

Sub action	Timeline	Responsible Body
i. Establish a Joint Utilities and Transport Clearing House with representatives from DCEE, D/Transport, DHLGH, DPER, utilities, transport authorities, and Local Authorities, and agree terms of reference	Q4 2025	DPER
ii. Establish sub-group of JUTCH between national utilities and Local Authorities to enhance coordination and accelerate infrastructure delivery	Q1 2026	DHLGH
iii. Mandate formal engagement structures, with regular coordination, at local and regional levels between nominated points of contact from each utility and local authority	Q1 2026	DPER
iv. Ensure regular consultation and engagement with local councillors on strategic plans of utilities delivering infrastructure services.	Q2 2026	DHLGH
v. Develop work programme for JUTCH including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Facilitate early and ongoing engagement on major electricity, water, and transport projects → Update codes of practice and technical standards (e.g. road openings, abnormal loads, no-dig technologies, emergency access) → Coordinate linear infrastructure works to reduce duplication, disruption, and cost → Act as an escalation point to resolve conflicts and remove barriers promptly 	Q1 2026	JUTCH

Expected Outcome

- Reduced duplication and disruption in road openings and utility diversions
- Accelerated delivery of critical electricity, water, and transport infrastructure
- Improved coordination and predictability in project planning and execution
- More effective and proportionate licensing processes
- Timely resolution of issues as they arise

KPI

- Number of utility projects accelerated through coordinated road access
- Reduction in average time for road opening approvals
- Reduction in time for agreeing diversions of utilities needed for transport projects
- Decrease in repeated road openings for separate utility works

Supporting Stakeholders

DCEE, D/Transport, DHLGH, DPER, County and City Management Association (CCMA), CRU, ESB Networks, EirGrid, Uisce Éireann (UÉ), Transport Infrastructure Ireland

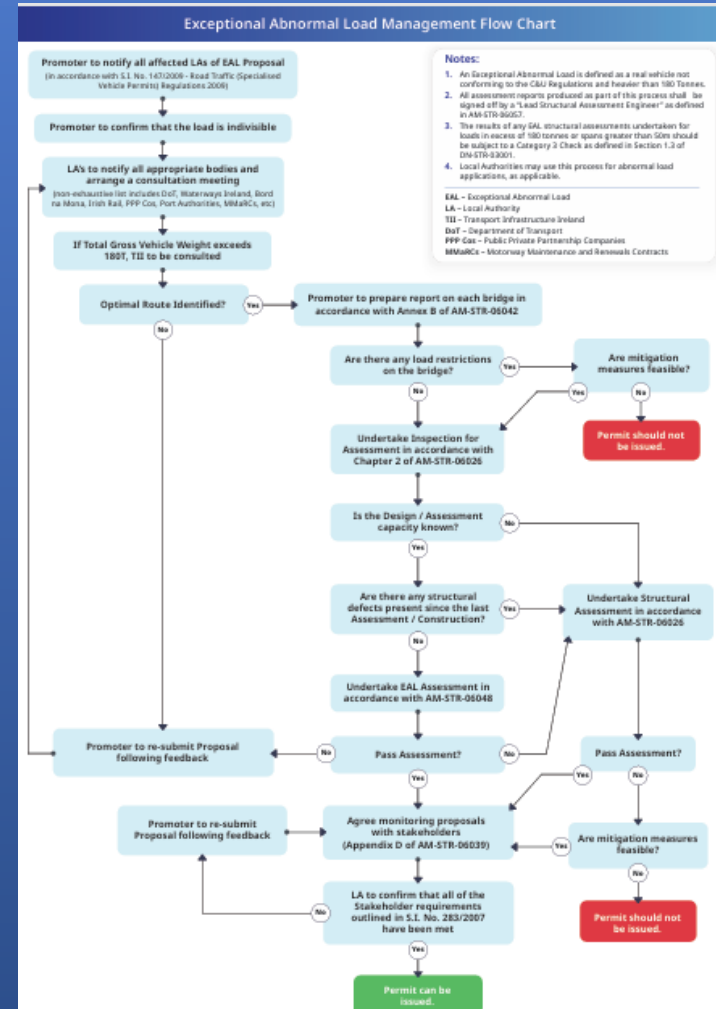
Actions – CCMA – DOT – DCEE – TII – EirGrid - ESBN

Creation of a **Joint Electricity Transport Working Group JET**

- **Coordination body to align electricity infrastructure deployment with Ireland's road network, supporting the 2030 renewable electricity target of 80%.**
- **Framework Implementation: Overseeing the 'Roads Sector Engagement Framework' implementation to ensure consistent application across all MV/HV infrastructure projects.**
- **Overseeing the development of agreed new standards for placement of energy assets in public road spaces.**
- **Oversight of the operation of the shared service unit that provides supports to LAs & others**

Standards & Processes

Exceptional Abnormal Loads including RW 18 introduced in 2024 and associated standards

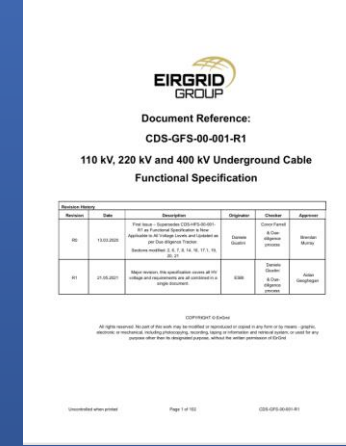
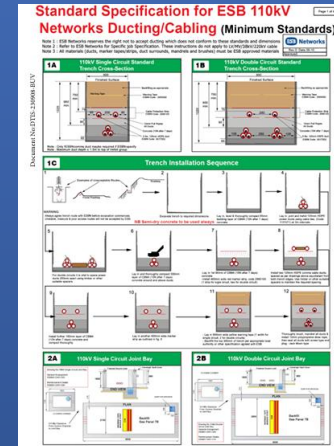
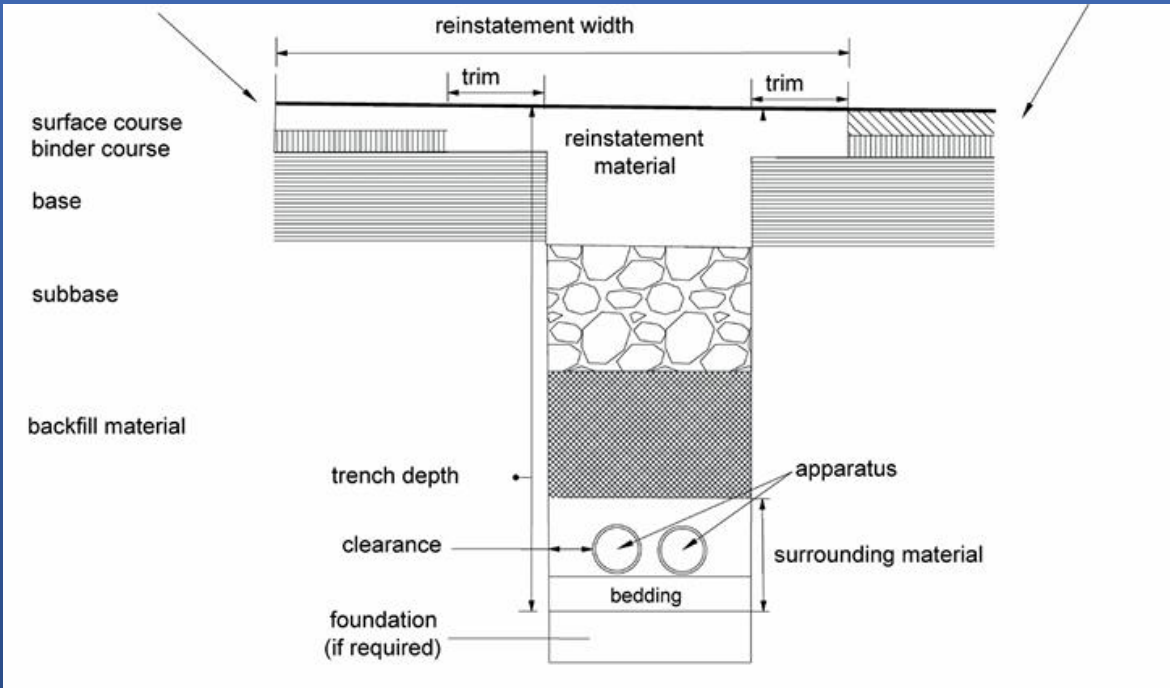
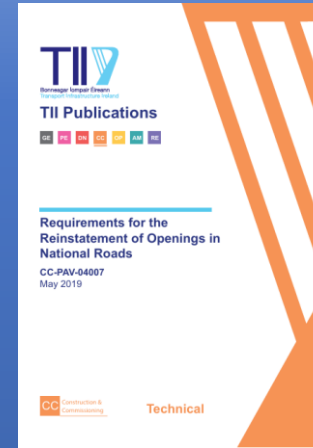


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Standards & Processes

For trenches.



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Actions – CCMA – DOT – DCEE – TII – EirGrid - ESBN

Creation of a Support Unit in RMO

- **Helping authorities apply Department of Transport and TII guidance, including Electricity Transmission Infrastructure Development – Roads Sector Engagement Framework**
- **Acting as a single point of contact for technical and standards-related queries between road authorities, system operators and other stakeholders.**

Actions – CCMA – DOT – DCEE – TII – EirGrid - ESBN

Creation of a **Support Unit in RMO**

- Promoting consistency nationwide by:
 - Standardising how applications are submitted
 - Supporting consistent decision-making by authorities
 - Coordinating responses across local authorities where projects cross county or city boundaries.
 - Supporting individual authorities on:
 - Route selection / Conditions for road opening licences and/or planning submissions
 - Appropriate centralised security for project completion
 - Providing or arranging technical and IT support, where needed.

R = Responsible (does the work)

A = Accountable (owns outcome)

C = Consulted (provides input)

I = Informed (kept aware)



Joint Electricity - Transport Committee

Sets cross sector strategic direction and alignment

Monitors progress at strategic level

no delivery role

Promoter

Identify needs and strategic intent

Accountable for engagement and option development (routes, and assessments)

Prepares applications & seeks consent

Delivers project and complies with requirements

Handover of as-built records Asset acceptance Data transfer to road asset owners

Road Authority

Highlights road protection priorities

Development options, routes and assessments
Input to option viability and constructability

Confirm road issues, standards and set conditions

Issues consents for ROL
Planning decisions made by the competent statutory authority

Monitors progress and compliance through Project teams

Project Coordination / Oversight Teams (LA(s))

no delivery role
coordination technical support

storage licences e
Oversees road-related construction consents
Monitors compliance and supports delivery coordination
stakeholders

TII (National Roads)

Highlights road protection priorities

Identify constraints, standards, and local issues

Confirm road issues addressed and determines conditions

Monitors progress and compliance through Project teams

"This RACI diagram illustrates accountability and engagement across the lifecycle of electricity projects interacting with the road network."



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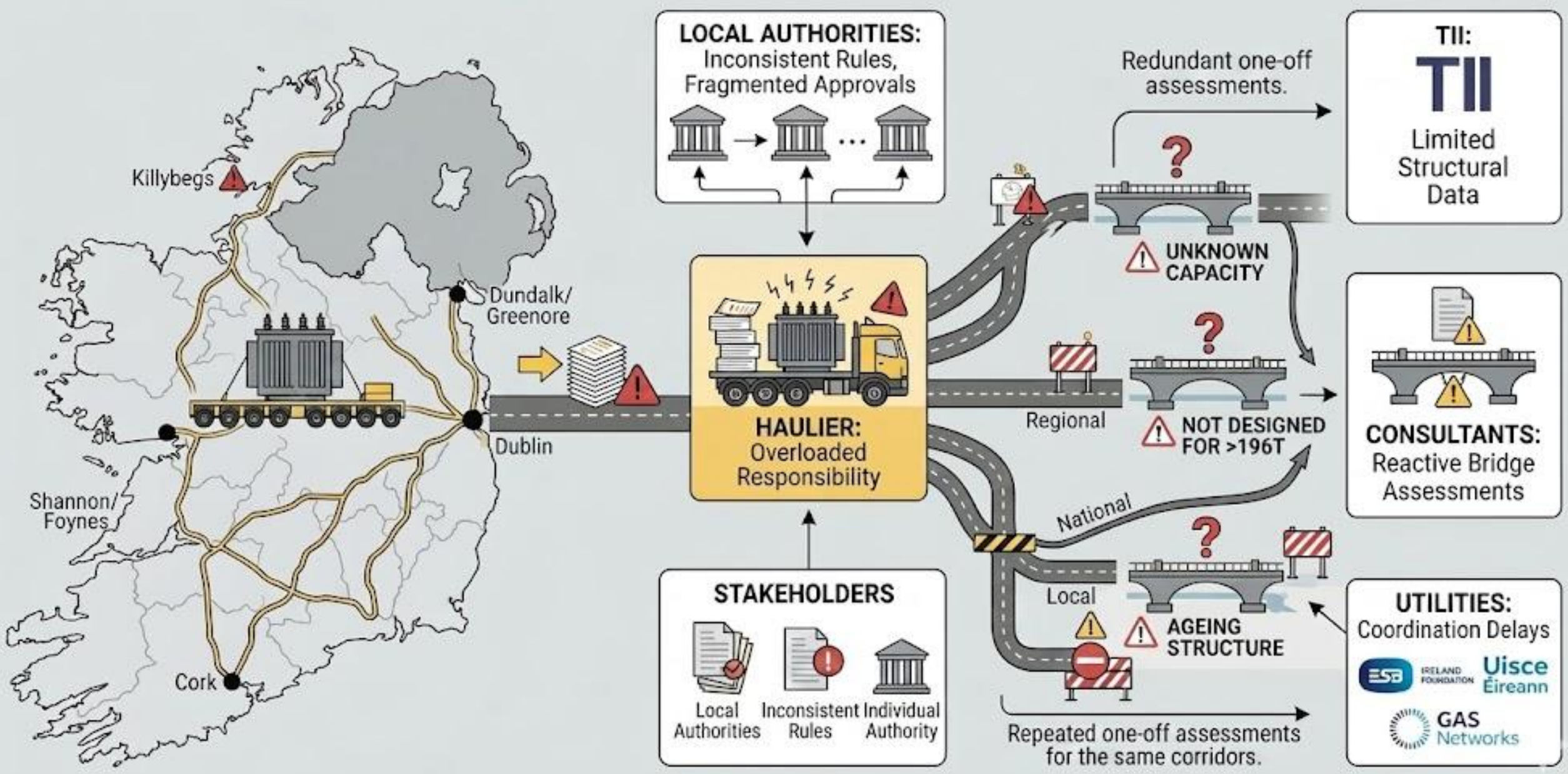
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Actions – CCMA – DOT – DCEE – TII – EirGrid - ESBN

Creation of a Support Unit in RMO

Exceptional Abnormal Load (EAL) Support

- **Coordinating EAL permitting with relevant stakeholders.**
- **Developing and managing a national database to record: Structural assessments, load ratings across the road network for EAL routes , Preferred routes**
- **Recommending remedial or upgrade works to reduce impacts on bridges and roads.**
- **Coordinating assessments and information with local authorities and stakeholders, with systems that can be accessed by hauliers where appropriate.**
- **Developing standard national procedures**



LOCAL AUTHORITIES:
Inconsistent Rules,
Fragmented Approvals



HAULIER:
Overloaded
Responsibility



STAKEHOLDERS

Local Authorities Inconsistent Rules Individual Authority



Redundant one-off assessments.

TII:
TII
Limited
Structural
Data



UNKNOWN CAPACITY

CONSULTANTS:
Reactive Bridge
Assessments



NOT DESIGNED FOR >196T

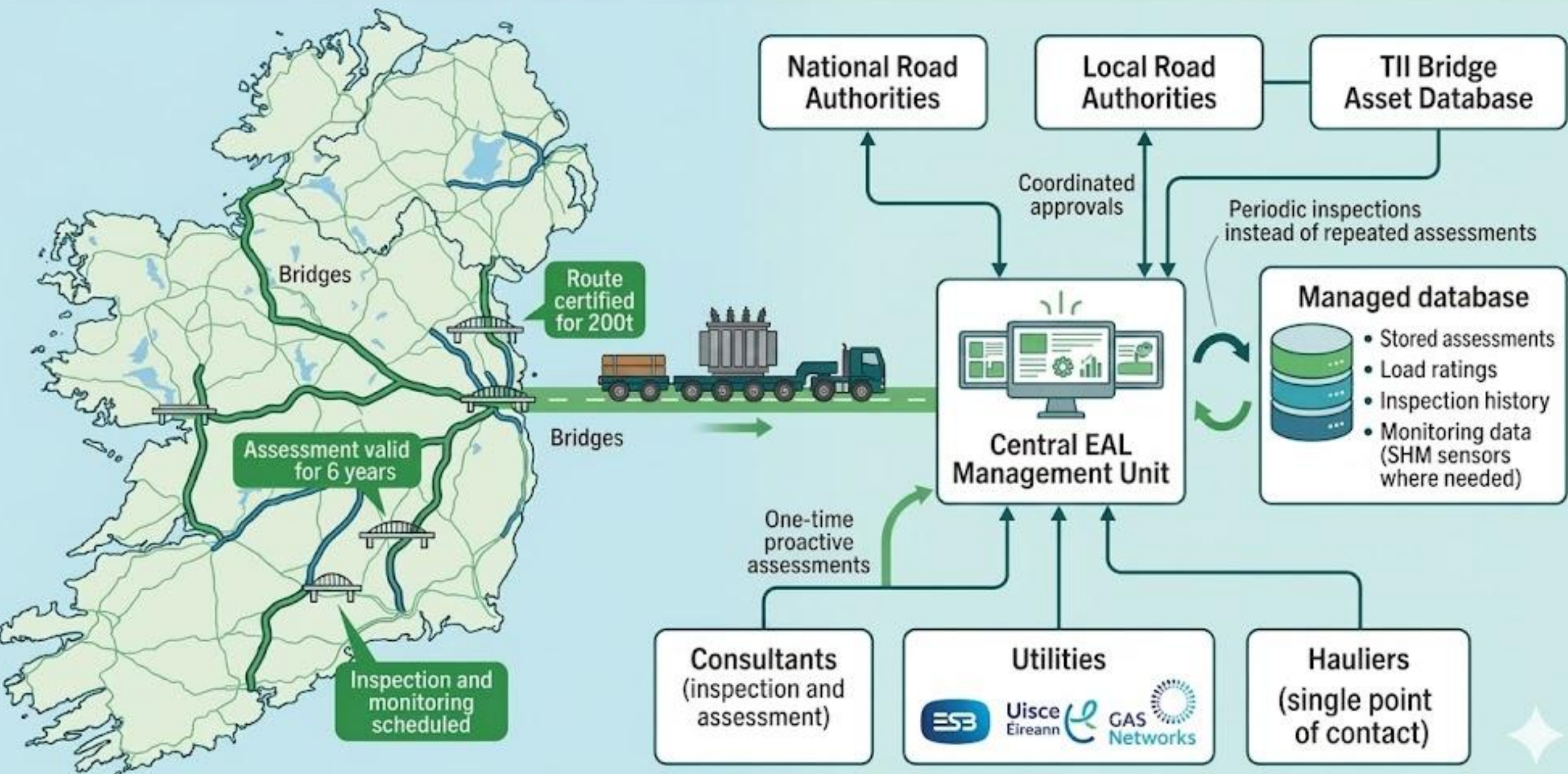


AGEING STRUCTURE

UTILITIES:
Coordination Delays

ESB IRELAND FOUNDATION Uisce Éireann
GAS Networks

Repeated one-off assessments for the same corridors.



Next Steps and Rollout of Support Unit

Underground Electricity Infrastructure

- Support implementation of DoT 'Interim Guidance' for ongoing projects from Q2 '26
- Establish electricity sector project pipelines through JET from Q2 '26
- Agree process for implementation of 'Electricity Transmission Infrastructure Development - Roads Sector Engagement Framework' and communicate to stakeholders, from Q3 2026
- Support local authorities in applying the Engagement Framework , from Q3 2026
- Promote the expansion of the framework beyond Transmission Infrastructure.
- Support adoption of any amended or new guidelines or standards issued.



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Next Steps and Rollout of Support Unit

Exceptional Abnormal Loads

- Consultation with Stakeholders including TII, local authorities, IPB and Haulage Industry from Q2, '26
- Establish electricity sector deliveries schedule through JET from Q2 '26
- Agreement of CCMA on the proposed approach in Q2, '26.
- Procurement of Assessment Framework for EALs, Q3 to Q4, '26
- Procurement of Assessment for specific routes commencing 2027.

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John Mc Nulty, Operations Manager, Road Management Office

THANK YOU



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Join the Q&A session at **Slido.com**
and enter 2063208 or via the **QR**
Code.

**Questions must include name
and associated Local Authority
to be considered by the panel.**

