

JUNE 2007

# Corrib Onshore Gas Pipeline Community Update

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## **What you said at Public Consultation**

RPS has received a lot of feedback from the public following the Open Day on 27th February, the Consultation Workshop on 31st March and the Open Week in May to hear your views about route selection criteria for the Corrib onshore gas pipeline. All of these public consultation events were attended by members of the community, following extensive advertising in local media and sending leaflets to homes.

Feedback has also been received through phonecalls, emails and meetings at the RPS project office, in Seafield House, Belmullet.

The main issues highlighted by the community over the last few months of public consultation are the importance of listening to the concerns of the community, health and safety and the environment. See inside for a detailed report on what stage RPS is at in the route selection process and what you told us.



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## The Route Selection Process

The Corrib Gas Partners have committed to re-route the onshore section of the Corrib gas pipeline. RPS was appointed to assist in the selection of an alternative route.

### Advantica's Independent Safety Review

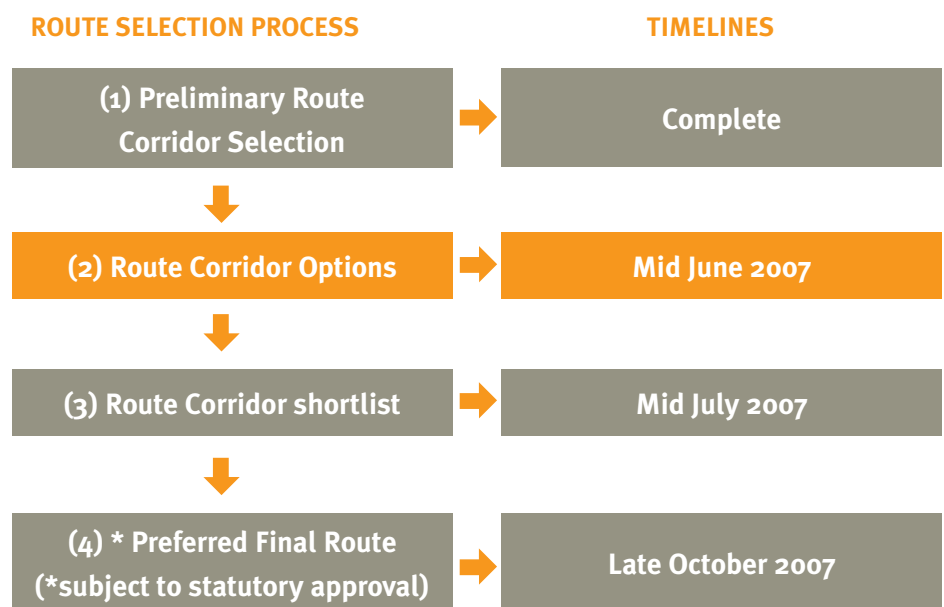
An independent safety review into the onshore section of the pipeline was commissioned by the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and was carried out by pipeline safety experts Advantica. The main recommendation in the January 2006 Report was that the pressure in the onshore pipeline be limited to 144 bar.

### Peter Cassells' Mediation Report

Following a seven month mediation process Mr. Cassells recommended that the company **“modify the route of the pipeline in the vicinity of Rossport to address community concerns regarding proximity to housing.”**

**The Corrib Gas Partners have fully accepted these recommendations.**

The Route Selection Process is outlined below and timelines are given for each of the phases.



## What are the Route Selection Criteria?

The following selection criteria were established based on a combination of community input as well as the relevant statutory, technical, environmental and project requirements. Safety is always the first priority and informs decisions at every level. It was highlighted by the community during consultation and is the most important project requirement.

These selection criteria will be used to shortlist the corridors and to determine the final route.

The selection criteria and examples of each are outlined below:

### Community Criteria

- Maximise safety
- Minimise impacts on people
- Proximity to dwellings/public centres – (e.g. how close will the pipeline be to houses/schools)
- Planning/land use – (e.g. will there be planning restrictions for houses close to a pipeline)

### Environmental Criteria

- Minimise impacts on wildlife and habitats – (e.g. impacts to sensitive ecosystems and environmentally designated area such as:
  - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
  - Special Protection Areas (SPA)
  - National Heritage Areas (NHA)

(e.g.) Glenamoy Bog Complex, Sruwaddacon Bay, Carrowmore Lake

- Avoid impacts on archaeology and cultural heritage
- Minimise visual impact – (e.g. impacts to scenic views)

### Technical Criteria and Project Requirements

- Pipeline construction and operation (e.g. access, complexity and hazards associated with both onshore and offshore construction of the pipeline)
- Minimise environmental disturbance
- Optimise pipeline design and operation
- Minimise pipeline length and distance to the field
- Location of, and access to landfall valve

## Community input into Selection Criteria - What you told us



RPS has hosted a number of consultation events over the last five months which have included:

- Open Day 1 on the 27th February, 2007
- RPS Workshop on the 31st March, 2007
- Open House Week on the 30th April – May 4th, 2007

During consultation the community has raised a number of issues and concerns which they feel should be reflected in the route selection criteria for the rerouting of the pipeline.

RPS has summarised these concerns under the categories below, although many issues also fit into all or a number of the categories.

### Community

The community has described the serious impact on people in the community of the events that have led up to this point.

The community have expressed their concern about the potential impact of a pipeline on certain sectors critical to the success of the local economy, such as agriculture, tourism and fishing.

Community members are concerned about the possibility of not being able to build or obtain planning permission on their land due to the presence of a pipeline. *“Will it be difficult to get planning permission for a dwelling, which would be in close proximity to the pipeline? Will there be a wayleave exclusion zone?”*

Some people in the community also think that it would be better to place the pipeline in an area with the least amount of houses, e.g. in Sruwaddacon Bay.

Reference was also made to the potential for traffic issues arising during construction of the onshore pipeline. A suitable traffic management plan will be required during construction. *“Traffic management planning during construction will be very important - roads are very narrow and this can cause problems for local road users”.*



## Health & Safety

The community is concerned for the health and safety of those living in the area. This has come across to the RPS team as a priority concern. Some people indicated that there would be a *“huge difference”* if the pipeline could be routed away from settlements and human activities – schools, school bus routes etc.

*“The community needs to be satisfied that the pipeline will be safe and stable”.*

Some concerns were raised in relation to the landfall valve. There is concern about the location, the effectiveness of the valve and whether it would be ‘fit for purpose’ i.e. to make sure that the pressure in the onshore pipeline could not rise above 144 bar.

Other concerns related to the potential for landslides damaging any pipeline that goes through an area that could potentially be susceptible to landslides. *“A new landslide could affect the existing landfall site”.*

People are concerned about what kind of methodology could be used to construct a pipeline through a bog. *“The stability of peat needs to be assessed”.*

There are concerns also that Sruwaddacon Bay has a strong current in part of the Bay. *“Older people and fishermen in the area need to be contacted as they have knowledge of these currents.”*



## Environment

A lot of the people in the community have raised concerns about the potential impact a pipeline could have on their *“unspoilt and pristine”* environment. There are a number of designated environmental areas e.g. Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within the study area which need to be protected.

*“Don’t go through Machair”. “No damage to SACs, NHAs, SPAs”.*

Concerns were raised about the long-term impact of disturbing the bog *“it took so long to establish in the first place”.*

Some people in the community are concerned about the potential impacts to angling in the area. Concerns were also expressed about the need to protect the growing area for mussels in Sruwaddacon Bay.

Concerns were raised about the potential impact of pipeline construction on salmon and trout in lakes and rivers in the area. It was suggested that consultation should take place with local Angling Clubs.

*“The Carrowmore Lake is one of the best lakes in Europe for salmon fishing in terms of both quantity and quality. Numbers of salmon in the Carrowmore Lake have been increasing over the last few years and it needs to be protected from pollution”.*

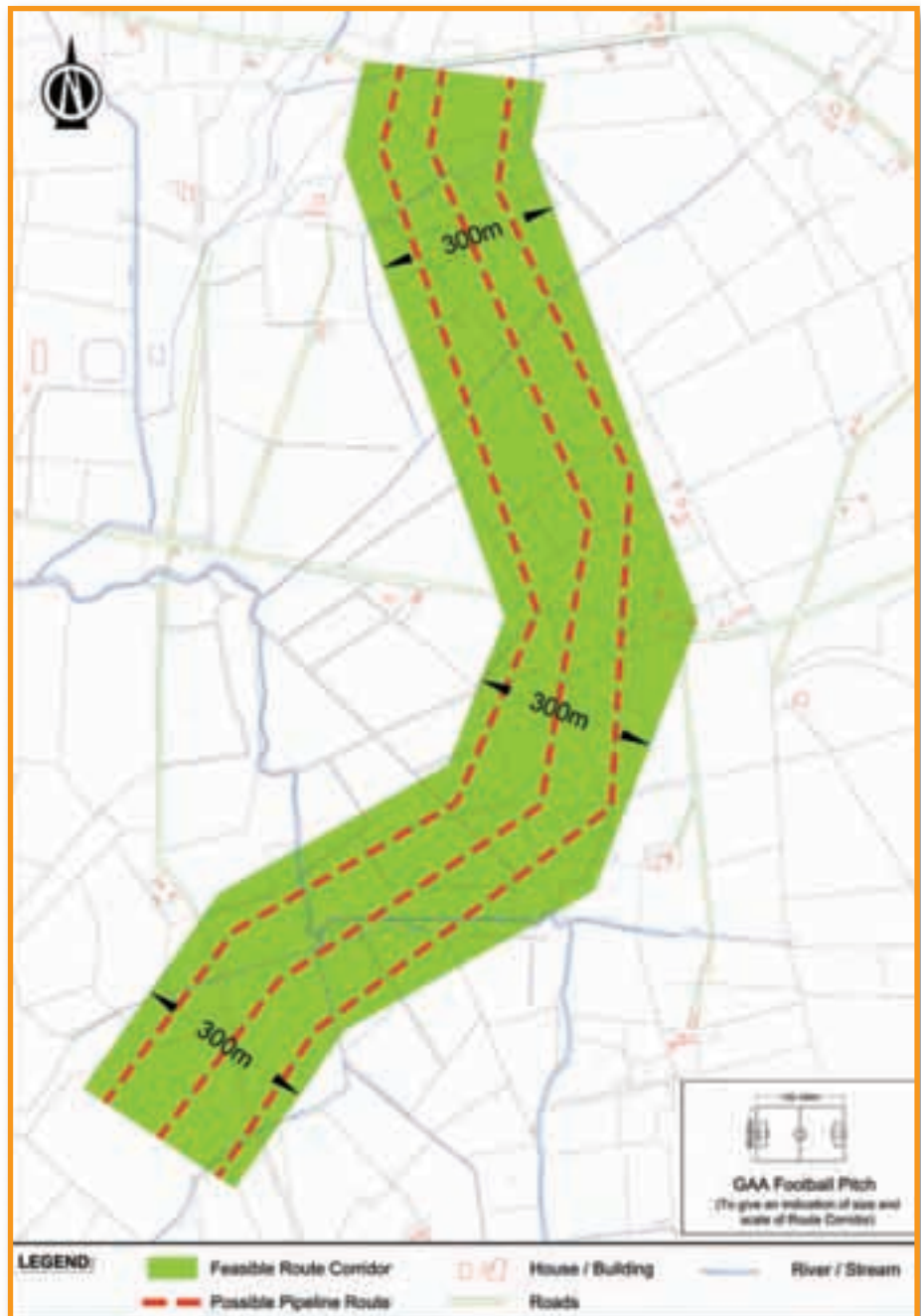
## What stage is RPS at in the Route Selection Process?

RPS has now identified eight alternative route corridor options within the study area.

### Corridor Definition

These corridors, within which a pipeline could possibly be routed, are approximately 300 metres wide. The dashed lines on the corridor illustrate three typical pipeline route options along a particular corridor.

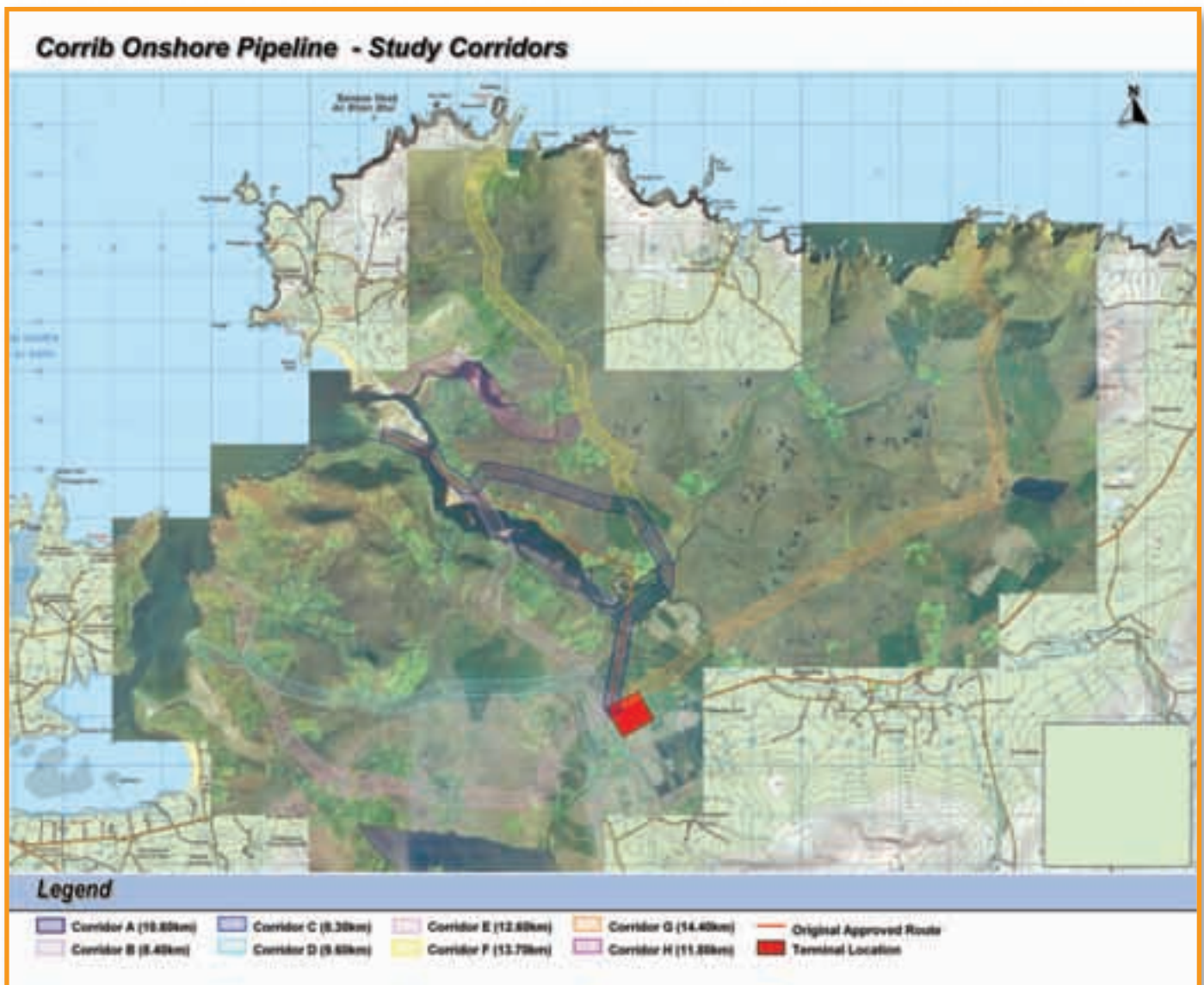
### Explanation of 300m Route Corridor



## Where are the Corridors?

The eight corridors within the study area are outlined below and were chosen based on the following:

- Consultation with the Community
- Visual Surveys of the Area
- Desk Studies (e.g)
  - Ecology (natural habitat, wildlife)
  - Archaeology & Heritage
- Visual assessment



The above eight corridor options are shown for public consultation and engagement purposes. In technical and environmental terms, it should be noted that all route corridors are not equal. This consultation process will provide input into the shortlisting of corridors short listed corridors in July 2007, together with community, environmental, technical and project requirements.

# Summary of Preliminary Community, Environmental and Technical Issues



The following provides a brief description of the eight corridors in relation to some of the important issues (grouped under the headings Community, Environment and Technical) that need to be taken into consideration during more detailed studies of the corridor areas. Other issues may also arise as more detailed studies are undertaken.

## Corridor A

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 10
- Traverses farmland and commonage

### Environment

- Offshore approach and landfall construction has minimum impact (Broadhaven Bay Special Area of Conservation)
- Protected views and protected scenic route
- Short crossing of Sruwaddacon Bay and two river crossings (Glenamoy and Muingnabo) all within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Traverses intact blanket bog and approximately 2 km of Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 11 km
- Retains original landfall at Glengad
- Construct through extensive section of peat
- Construct estuary crossing and two river crossings

## Corridor B

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 10
- Traverses farmland and commonage

### Environment

- Offshore approach and landfall construction has minimum impact (Broadhaven Bay Special Area of Conservation)
- Protected views and protected scenic route
- Two crossings of Sruwaddacon Bay within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 8 km
- Retains original landfall at Glengad
- Construct through peat
- Construct two estuary crossings





## Corridor C

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 10
- Traverses farmland

### Environment

- Offshore approach and landfall construction has minimum impact (Broadhaven Bay Special Area of Conservation)
- Protected views and protected scenic route
- Traverses long stretch of Sruwaddacon Bay Special Area of Conservation
- Important salmonid habitat and feeding habitat for birds
- Habitat has high capacity for self repair

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 8 km
- Retains original landfall at Glengad
- Construction in sensitive bay habitat: 3 - 5 km, possibly subject to seasonal constraints
- Construction in estuarine conditions with limited access opportunities



## Corridor D

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 10
- Relative proximity to village at Inver
- Local beach amenity
- Traverses farmland and commonage

### Environment

- Landfall and offshore approach through Broadhaven Bay Special Area of Conservation – may require rock breaking/blasting
- Protected views and protected scenic route
- Traverses Pollatomish Bog Natural Heritage Area in two sections
- Significant archaeological features in the area
- River crossing (Aghoos)

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 10 km
- Construction up-slope from Carrowmore Lake (adequate mitigation measures required)
- Landfall and approaches through inner Broadhaven Bay
- Limited access for lay barge
- Anchorages across from Ballyglass Pier
- Construct through large section of peat (5.5 km)
- Construct river crossing



## Corridor E

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 20
- Relative proximity to village at Inver
- Local beach amenity

### Environment

- Landfall and offshore approach through Broadhaven Bay Special Area of Conservation – may require rock breaking/blasting
- Crosses intact bog (non-designated)
- Significant archaeological features in the area
- Two river crossings (Owenduff and Aghoos)

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 13 km
- Construction up-slope from Carrowmore Lake (adequate mitigation measures required)
- Landfall and approaches through inner Broadhaven Bay
- Construct through large section of peat (approx 6 km)
- Construct two river crossings



## Corridor F

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 10
- Traverses farmland and commonage
- Local beach amenity

### Environment

- Landfall within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Traverses section of intact blanket bog (Priority Habitat) within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Two river crossings (Muingnabo and Glenamoy) with Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 14 km
- Additional length to offshore pipeline: 14 km
- Exposed and potentially rocky offshore approach
- Limited access for landfall works
- Limited options for landfall valve location
- Construct through extensive section of peat
- Construct two river crossings



## Corridor G

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### Community

- No dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor
- Traverses commonage and forestry

### Environment

- Landfall within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Traverses large section of intact blanket bog (Priority Habitat) within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Two river crossings (Muingnabo and Glenamoy) with Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Traverses EU Life Programme, bog restoration site (Coillte)

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 14 km
- Additional length to offshore pipeline: 20 km
- Limited options for constructing offshore approach and landfall including pull-in
- Limitations with regard to access to landfall and sections of route corridor.
- Exposed landfall with steep cliffs greater than 50 m
- Construction through extended section of intact bog

## Corridor H

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### Community

- Approximate number of dwellings within or touching the edge of the corridor less than 10
- Traverses farmland and commonage

### Environment

- Landfall within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Traverses part of Garter Hill to Rinroe Point sand dune and machair systems (Priority Habitat)
- Protected views and protected scenic route
- Offshore approach through Brent Geese feeding area
- Traverses bay in Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation.
- Bay habitat has high capacity for self repair
- Traverses section of blanket bog in Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation
- Three river crossings (Gweedaney, Muingnabo and Glenamoy Rivers) all within Glenamoy Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation

### Technical

- Approximate length of onshore pipeline: 12 km
- Addition to length of offshore pipeline 1.5 km
- Shore approach through sand bar
- Limited access for landfall construction
- Construction in sensitive bay habitat: 3.4 km, possibly subject to seasonal constraints. Construct through large section of peat
- Construct three river crossings



## What Next?

The next stage in the route selection process involves contacting landowners in order to seek permission to carry out examinations of the preliminary route corridors. A number of specialists (pipeline route engineers, ecologists, archaeologists etc.) will conduct “walk over” surveys of the corridors to gather more information. Each of the corridors will then be appraised against the list of route selection criteria to give a short list of emerging preferred corridors in July 2007. Further investigation will then be required to shortlist one preferred final route option, again using all gathered technical information and the route selection criteria.

As walkover surveys commence and as the route selection process moves toward the selection of a final route, the RPS consultation team will be in regular contact with landowners and residents along these routes.

Lorraine Herity, Consultation Team Manager, who is based in the RPS project office in Belmullet will be available to answer any queries that the community may have. Furthermore, each month RPS will host a ‘Focus Week’, where members of the community can speak directly to the members of the technical and environmental team.

Once a final route has been identified, the community will be informed and their views sought. Details on further consultation will be advertised through local media and parish newsletters.

Applications for statutory approval will then be sent to An Bord Pleanála and the Minister of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

## RPS Consultation Team Manager *Introduction*

Lorraine Herity, RPS Consultation Team Manager has now moved to the RPS Project Office in Belmullet and will be available to discuss any issues or concerns that individuals and interest groups within the local community may have in regard to the re-routing of the onshore pipeline. Feel free to drop into the office to speak to Lorraine, or call her to make an appointment.

Contact details are as follows:



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