

NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS • OCTOBER 2019

Quevaucamps-Harchies overhead line



Christian Kerremans
Community Relations Officer

0800 18 002

riverains@elia.be

Dear Resident,

On 19 March, Elia, the high-voltage transmission system operator, held an advance public information meeting at which it presented its preliminary plans to rebuild the section of high-voltage line connecting the Quevaucamps substation to Harchies.

Following this meeting, you had 15 days in which to send your comments, suggestions and observations.

As required by law, these were passed on to CSD Engineers, the independent and accredited consultants carrying out the Environmental Impact Study (EIS). Based on this information, CSD Engineers analysed Elia's preliminary plans and made recommendations on how to improve them while limiting the impact on the environment. As well as assessing the environmental impact of the project, the study also addresses the questions and comments raised at the public information meeting and in correspondence.

In this newsletter, we update you on the latest information about the project, with a particular focus on the EIS and its results.

Elia will soon submit its planning permit application, including the EIS conducted by CSD Engineers. You will then be able to view the EIS and permit application in full during the public consultation organised by your municipality.

Should you have any questions or comments, you can contact the Elia team by phone on 0800 18 002 or by email at riverains@elia.be. To find out the latest project news, visit www.elia.be or check out our Facebook page [@Elia projects](https://www.facebook.com/Elia.projects).

We hope you enjoy the newsletter!



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Guaranteeing grid reliability

The Quevaucamps-Harchies project is an investment for the future, both guaranteeing grid reliability in the region and enabling the integration of renewable energy. The energy transition is under way, so our grid must be able to accommodate peaks in renewable energy generation and offer sufficient capacity all along the Quevaucamps-Elouges-Pâturages-Baudour line.

Given that the conductors on the section of overhead line between the Quevaucamps substation and Harchies have reached the end of their life, Elia plans to rebuild this section and, at a later stage, dismantle the existing connection.

As a responsible company anxious to improve local residents' living environment, Elia has decided to propose a new, improved route that takes the line away from homes and closer to existing infrastructure (motorway and railway line).

As you may recall, Elia's preliminary plans involved a 14-pylon section running for 5.4 km through the municipalities of Bernissart and Beloeil.

Environmental Impact Study

Under Walloon environmental legislation, the Quevaucamps-Harchies project must undergo an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) before the planing application is submitted.

The aim of the EIS is to analyse all the potential impacts of the project in a number of areas: soil, air, water, climate, landscape, heritage, waste, health, noise and socio-economic aspects.



What is included in an EIS?

- Detailed description of the project
- Environmental assessment
- Review of alternatives that may reasonably be considered
- Study of the impacts on the municipalities concerned and neighbouring municipalities
- Summary of responses to the comments submitted by the public
- File setting out the conclusions and recommendations



Who are CSD Engineers?

CSD Engineers are independent European consultants active in the fields of environment and construction:

- 700 employees, including 60 in Belgium
- 25 years of experience in Belgium and 45 years in Europe
- 300 environmental assessments
- Local bases in Namur, Liège and Brussels
- Team experienced with impact studies and notices
- Accredited by the Walloon government



Main conclusions and recommendations of the study

The experts' conclusions and recommendations include the following¹:

Landscape, heritage and planning

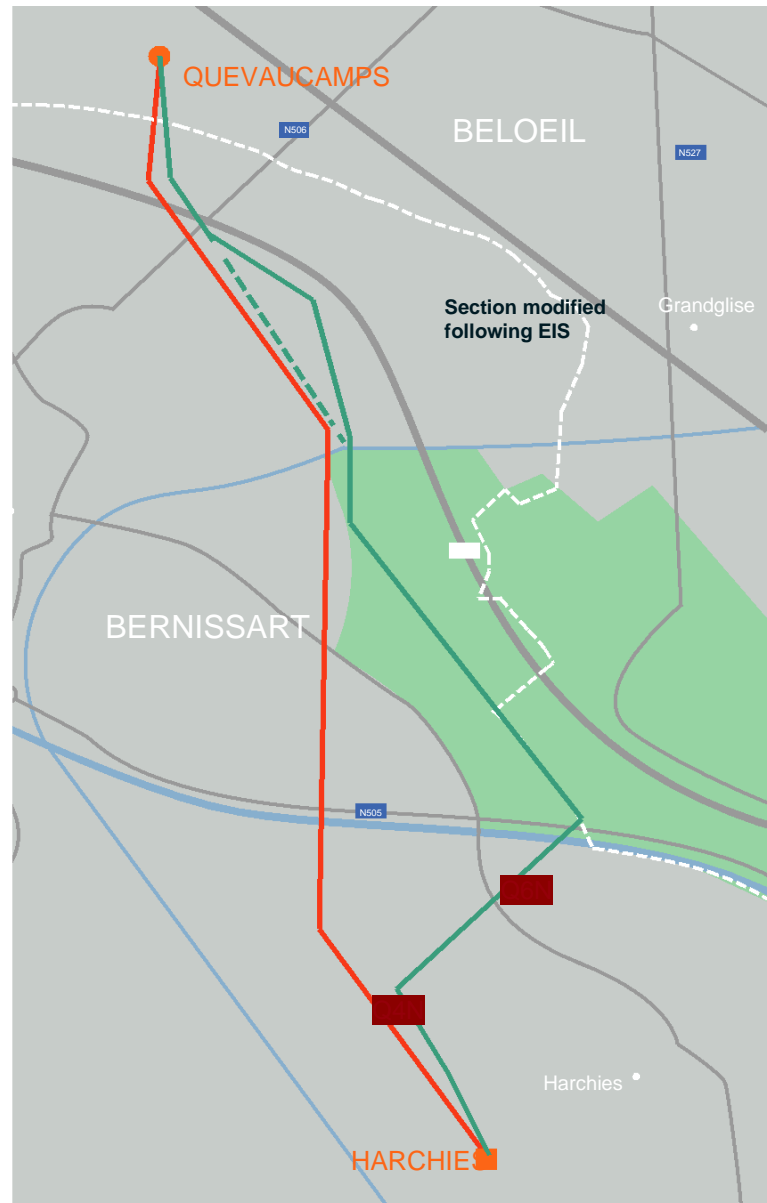
- The pylons along the new route will be less visible overall in the landscape.
- The proposed new route crosses six times fewer residential developments than the current line section.
- Moving pylon Q13N, located close to Sentier de Quevaucamps and Chemin du Pire, 120 metres nearer to the motorway would make it less visible without requiring it to be painted in a prominent colour (which is mandatory within 130 metres of a motorway).
- Creating a plant screen along Rue des Préaux would help blend Q4N into its surroundings.
- Moving pylon Q6N 40 metres to the east would better integrate it into the wooded areas, provided that the adjacent pylons did not need to be raised by more than 3 metres.

Health and safety

- Homes located more than 75 metres from the line section will not be exposed to any magnetic or electric fields generated by the line.
- For homes less than 75 metres away, the models show that the magnetic fields are still well within international and European standards, for both 70-kV and 150-kV operation.
- The electric fields will be very weak and below the lowest limits specified in the General Regulations for Electrical Installations for homes located within 75 metres of a line.

Alternatives

- Three alternative overhead designs were examined. On the consultants' advice, the northern part of the route will be improved by moving pylon Q13N 120 metres to the north-east.
- A comparative analysis of the environmental impacts suggests that burying the line is not justified, given that the overhead design will not have a significant impact.



- Current 70-kV line (total voltage: 150 kV)
- Future 70-kV line (total voltage: 150 kV)
- Substation
- Branch point

The study also makes a number of other recommendations on the environment, mobility and noise/disturbance.

Revised and improved route

In light of the EIS, Elia's improved final route sees pylon Q13N, in the northern part of the route, moved 120 metres nearer to the motorway. Elia has therefore shifted the route away from residential areas while keeping the number of pylons the same. Nevertheless, the line is still far enough away from the motorway to meet safety standards without having to paint the pylons red for enhanced visibility.

¹CSD Engineers' conclusions and recommendations can be found on page 251 of the report. You can view the report during the public consultation organised by your municipality.



Provisional timetable

Permit application

To enable the implementation of the Quevaucamps-Harchies project, various authorisations are required, tied to different specific procedures.



The study by the independent consultancy will be included with the planning permit application that Elia intends to submit by November 2019.

Once the file has been declared admissible, the planning officer will have 130 days to assess the application. A decision on the project is therefore expected some time in March or April 2020.

As part of the legal procedure, your municipal council will organise a public consultation. This will give you a final opportunity to examine the plans. Your municipal council will then submit its opinion to the Walloon Planning Officer, who is the competent authority in this area.



Elia is Belgium's high-voltage transmission system operator, employing 1,350 professionals and currently in charge of more than 8,495 km of underground cables and overhead lines. Its grid is considered one of the most reliable in Europe. It transmits electricity from generators to distribution system operators and major industrial consumers, while also importing and exporting electricity from and to neighbouring countries.

 www.elia.be
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 @Elia projects
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