

Rabosée-Battice project: planning permission granted and work begun at Herve

On 20 October 2017, Elia was granted planning permission to build a new underground electricity connection linking the substations at Rabosée and Battice. Teams are now on the ground making this project a reality, after construction work began at Herve in early January. Elia is investing €10 million in this new infrastructure, which is essential to supply electricity to the east of the Province of Liège.

The project involves creating a new underground electricity connection between the Battice substation and the future transition substation at Rabosée. The 150-kV, 12-km line will span the municipalities of Liège, Blegny, Soumagne and Herve. It will ensure electricity supply in the eastern part of the Province of Liège and aims to support growth and meet the changing needs of the residential consumers, businesses and electricity generators.

Public feedback on the planning application

As required by the planning application procedure, an advance public information meeting was held in Soumagne in December 2016. The meeting was an opportunity for residents to learn about the preliminary plans and share their observations and suggestions. These were then analysed by an independent consulting firm as part of its environmental impact study (EIS).

After studying the recommendations made in the EIS, Elia submitted a planning application to Public Service Wallonia (SPW) in late May 2017. The full application was then presented to the public during the summer of 2017 as part of the public consultation.

After analysing the application in detail, SPW granted planning permission for Elia's Rabosée-Battice project on 20 October last year.

Work begins at Herve

Elia put the first shovel in the ground at Herve at the start of this year. Construction work began on the section along the RAVeL walking and cycle path (Line 38 of the RAVeL network). Elia is coordinating this part of the work with SPW, which plans to tarmac the path at the same time. The work is scheduled to last 12 months. Trenches will be dug and cables laid in sections of 800-1,000 m. Each section will take four to six weeks to construct, from opening the trench to restoring the infrastructure.

Respect for local residents and the environment is a priority for Elia. It is therefore working closely with local councils, highway authorities and the local police. Among other things, solutions will be deployed to minimise the mobility impact for local residents.

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Project Manager Peter Nys:

"With some roads, for example, we have opted to use the directional drilling technique, which will have a very limited impact on traffic. This technique allows us to lay cables without opening a trench, passing beneath any obstacles such as roads, buildings or waterways.

We will also ensure that local residents retain access to their homes at all times."

Bressoux-Battice section to be demolished

Construction of the new Rabosée-Battice link will enable Elia to dismantle part of the 70-kV line between Bressoux and Battice, which dates from 1923 and is nearing the end of its life. The 84 pylons earmarked for demolition are located between the Bellaire and Battice substations, in the municipalities of Liège, Beyne-Heusay, Fléron, Soumagne and Herve.

The dismantling work will take place in stages between January and September 2018.

Throughout these two projects, Elia will ensure transparent and proactive communication with local authorities, stakeholders and residents. We will give regular updates on the works via a number of channels, including the project's webpage at www.elia.be/en/projects. A freephone number (0800 18 002) and email address (riverains@elia.be) are also available.

About Elia

Elia is Belgium's high-voltage transmission system operator (30 kV to 380 kV), employing 1,200 professionals and operating over 8,000 km of lines and underground cables. Its grid is considered one of the most reliable in Europe and plays a key role in the community: large industrial customers are connected directly to it and it transmits electricity from generators to the distribution networks, which in turn supply electricity to individual consumers. Elia also operates interconnectors to neighbouring countries.