

Wexford County Council
Planning Department
Carricklawn
Wexford
Co. Wexford
Y35 WY93



Date: 28 November 2024

Re: Proposed development of an extension to current port infrastructure at Rosslare Europort to provide assembly support for offshore wind farms.
Rosslare Harbour, Ballygillane Big, County Wexford.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer further to the above-mentioned pre-application consultation. Please be advised that the consultations have concluded.

A copy of the documentation relating to the Board's pre-application file is enclosed for your information including a copy of the written record of the pre-application consultation meetings between An Bord Pleanála and the prospective applicant.

A copy of the pre-application consultation file can be made available for public inspection at this stage and must be associated with any application file documentation when such an application is made. In this regard please note that the Board has directed the prospective applicant to include a statement in the public notices of any planning application indicating that the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the coastal planning authority (as well as the offices of the Board) and on a standalone website. The Board would therefore be obliged if you could make the necessary arrangements in this regard following receipt of the copies of any application documentation from the prospective applicant.

Please note that the public will have the right to make submissions/observations on the application only to An Bord Pleanála and within a time limit which will be specified in the public notices (copies of same will accompany the application documentation) and the public should be alerted to this fact when inspecting the file. It is the Board's intention that all the application documentation will remain available for public inspection during the currency of the application.

The Board will also separately communicate with you when any application is lodged indicating the date by which the planning authority may lodge its report on the application under section 291(4) of the Act.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

The attachment contains information in relation to challenges to the validity of a decision of An Bord Pleanála under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaao Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	Email	bord@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board or email marine@pleanala.ie quoting the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence with the Board.

Yours faithfully,



Ellen Moss
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737285

OC09

Teil
Glao Áitiúil
Facs
Láithreán Gréasáin
Ríomhphost

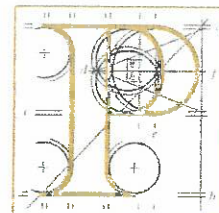
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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
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64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
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Our Case Number: ABP-319811-24

Your Reference: Iarnród Éireann



An
Bord
Pleanála

Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions
Unit A2
Nutgrove Business Park
Rathfarnham
Dublin 14

Date: 28 November 2024

Re: Proposed development of an extension to current port infrastructure at Rosslare Europort to provide assembly support for offshore wind farms.
Rosslare Harbour, Ballygillane Big, County Wexford.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer further to the pre-application consultation request in relation of the above-mentioned proposed development.

Please note the Board now considers it appropriate to conclude the consultation in respect of this matter.

Attached is a list of prescribed bodies to be notified of the application for the proposed development.

In accordance with section 146(5) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, the Board will make available for inspection and purchase at its offices the documents relating to the decision within 3 working days following its decision. This information is normally made available on the list of decided cases on the website on the Wednesday following the week in which the decision is made.

The attachment contains information in relation to challenges to the validity of a decision of An Bord Pleanála under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board or email marine@pleanala.ie quoting the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence with the Board.

Yours faithfully,



Ellen Moss
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737285

OC08A

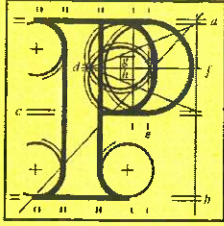
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Attached is a list of prescribed bodies to be notified of the application for the proposed development.

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Minister for Transport
- Minister for Defence
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
- Minister for Rural and Community Development
- Marine Institute
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Health and Safety Authority
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Failte Ireland
- An Taisce
- Southern Regional Assembly
- National Transport Authority
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- Commissioner of Irish Lights
- Irish Coastguard
- Wexford County Council

Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.



**An
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**Board Direction
BD-018311-24
ABP-319811-24**

The submissions on file and the inspector's report were considered at a Board Meeting held on 26/11/2024.

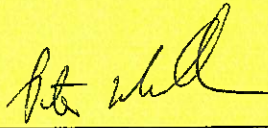
The Board noted that further to Section 287 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the applicant has entered into consultations with the Board prior to submitting an application for a ORE focussed purpose-built quay and berth facility together with quayside storage and pre-construction areas. Following the completion of the pre-application meeting on 24th July 2024, the Board decided that the process should be concluded, and prospective applicant informed that the process is closed and that in accordance with S291(3)(b) and S291(3)(d), the applicant is requested to send copies of the application to:

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Minister for Transport
- Minister for Defence
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
- Minister for Rural and Community Development
- Marine Institute
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Health and Safety Authority
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Failte Ireland

- An Taisce
- Southern Regional Assembly
- National Transport Authority
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- Commissioner of Irish Lights
- Irish Coastguard
- Wexford County Council

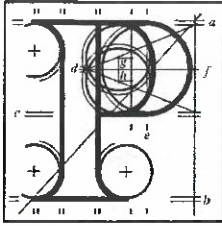
Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.

Board Member



Peter Mullan

Date: 27/11/2024



An
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Inspector's Report ABP-319811-24

Development	ORE port facility development including dredging and land reclamation
Location	Rosslare Harbour, Ballygillane Big, Co. Wexford
Prospective Applicant	Iarnrod Eireann
Planning Authority	Wexford County Council
Type of Application	Pre-Application Consultation under s.287 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for Other Development in the Maritime Area
Date of Site Inspection	19 th July 2024
Inspector	Una O'Neill

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This report relates to pre-application discussions held with Iarnrod Eireann ‘the Prospective Applicant’ in respect of the development of an ORE port facility at Rosslare, Co. Wexford.
- 1.2. The Board received a request on 17th May 2024 from Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions, acting on behalf of Iarnrod Eireann (‘the prospective applicant’), to enter into pre-application consultation under section 287 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in relation to a proposed development consisting of a new ORE focussed purpose-built quay and berth (involving dredging and land reclamation) together with quayside storage and pre-construction areas.
- 1.3. One consultation meeting was subsequently held between An Bord Pleanála and the prospective applicant on 24th July 2024. The presentation provided by the prospective applicant and written record of the meeting are on file. This report should be read in conjunction with the written record on file. It is not proposed to repeat the contents of those records in detail here.
- 1.4. This report provides an overview of the proposed development, a summary of the meeting, the legislative provisions, and recommended list of Prescribed Bodies, that should be forwarded copies of any future application, which is included in Appendix A.

2.0 Site location

- 2.1. The subject site is located to the north and west of Rosslare Europort in Co. Wexford. The site is partly on land and partly in the nearshore area of a coastal planning authority, namely Wexford County Council. The terrestrial component of the site is comprised of brownfield hard standing areas and a small harbour (Ballygeary Harbour), all owned by Rosslare Europort. The site is c. 61 ha in area, comprising 21 hectares of reclaimed land and 40 ha of dredged area within the sea.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1. The proposed development comprises the following:

- ORE purpose-built quay and berth (with berth pockets dredged down to -12 mCD water depth),
- ORE quayside storage and pre-construction areas,
- A navigable channel (dredged down to -10 mCD water depth),
- C. 1,300,000 m³ material is to be dredged; c. 1,500,000 m³ material required for reclamation, which will comprise a combination of dredged material and imported engineered fill,
- A management control centre and management offices and facilities.

3.2. The applicant states that the primary purpose of the proposed development is to provide a main staging, installation and storage facility to support offshore renewable energy projects for the east coast of Ireland and the Celtic Sea, as well as an operations and maintenance facility for the duration of the offshore renewable energy projects.

3.3. The applicant has indicated that a MAC application was submitted in December 2023 and at the time of the pre-application meeting this was not yet approved. I note that under S287(4) (a) of the Act as amended, a prospective applicant for permission to carry out development consisting of port infrastructure to facilitate the deployment, maintenance or operation of offshore renewable energy infrastructure, may consult with the Board in accordance with *subsection (1)* notwithstanding that the prospective applicant is not the holder of a maritime area consent granted for the occupation of a maritime site for the purposes of such proposed development.

4.0 Policy Context

4.1. The following policy documents are of relevance but, it should be noted, do not comprise an exhaustive list:

- EU Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy (2020)
- National Maritime Planning Framework (NMPF) (2021)
- Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan 2014
- Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan 2022

- Marine Planning Policy Statement 2019
- Policy Statement on the Facilitation of Offshore Renewable Energy by Commercial Ports in Ireland (2021)
- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework 2040 & National Development Plan 2018-2027
- Climate Action Plan 2024
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region
- Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028

5.0 Pre-Application Consultation History

- 5.1. One meeting was held with the prospective applicant's representatives on the 24th July 2024. A presentation was provided at the meeting which is included in the file together with other information provided to the Board in respect of same. The record of the meeting is also contained in the file.
- 5.2. Issues raised at the meeting are identified and discussed in Section 8 below.

6.0 Legislative Context

6.1. Planning and Development Act 2000, as Amended

Part XXI Marine Development -Chapter III – Other Development in the Marine Area

6.1.1. Section 285.—(1) Subject to *subsection (2)*, this Chapter applies to—

(a) development situated—

(i) wholly in the outer maritime area,

(ii) partly in the outer maritime area and partly in—

(I) the nearshore area of a coastal planning authority, or

(II) the nearshore areas of more than one coastal planning authority,

(iii) partly in the outer maritime area, partly in—

(I) the nearshore area of a coastal planning authority, or

(II) the nearshore areas of more than one coastal planning authority, and partly on land, or

(iv) partly in the outer maritime area and partly on land,

S285 (c) development of a class specified in the *Eighth Schedule* situated—

(i) wholly in—

(I) the nearshore area of a coastal planning authority, or

(II) the nearshore areas of more than one coastal planning authority,

or

(ii) partly on land and partly in—

(I) the nearshore area of a coastal planning authority, or

(II) the nearshore areas of more than one coastal planning authority.

6.1.2. **S. 287(1)** of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended ('the Act'), states that a person who proposes to make an application for permission under s.291 shall consult with the Board. S.287(2) of the Act states that the Board may provide its opinion regarding the making of the application and in particular, as respects:

(a) the procedures to be followed by the prospective applicant when making the application and by the Board when considering the application,

(b) the documents required to accompany the application,

(c) the need for the prospective applicant to create an internet website for the purpose of publishing the application and all documentation accompanying the application,

(d) the publication of notices in accordance with this Act, the furnishing of documentation to persons referred to in subsection (3) of section 291 and the making of submissions and observations in relation to an application under that section,

(e) such persons as may be prescribed for the purposes of this Chapter,

(f) some or all of the matters that the Board is likely to take into consideration relating to—

- (i) the National Marine Planning Framework,
- (ii) objectives of maritime spatial planning,
- (iii) principles of proper planning and sustainable development, and
- (iv) the environment or any European site,

when making a decision under section 293 in relation to the application,

(g) the fees payable to the Board in relation to the making of the application, and

(h) compliance by the prospective applicant with any direction of the Board under subsection (3) of section 291.

6.1.3. Of note, under S.287(3) the Board may at any time conclude a consultation under this section where it considers it appropriate to do so.

6.1.4. An application for an opinion under S.287A is not being sought for this development.

6.1.5. **S287(4) (a)** states that ‘Subject to *paragraph (b)*, a prospective applicant for permission to carry out development consisting of port infrastructure to facilitate the deployment, maintenance or operation of offshore renewable energy infrastructure may consult with the Board in accordance with *subsection (1)* notwithstanding that the prospective applicant is not the holder of a maritime area consent granted for the occupation of a maritime site for the purposes of such proposed development’.

6.1.6. Eighth Schedule relates to Classes of Development Specified for Purposes of Chapter III of Part XXI, including:

1. Development referred to in the Seventh Schedule.

2. Development consisting of a trading port or pier for loading and unloading goods that—

(a) is connected to land, and

(b) can accommodate vessels of over 1,350 tonnes.

.....

21. A harbour or port installation, including—

- (a) loading or unloading areas,
- (b) vehicle queuing and parking areas,
- (c) ship repair areas,
- (d) areas for berthing or dry docking of ships, and
- (e) areas for the weighing, handling or transport of goods or the movement or transport of passengers (including customs or passport control facilities), and any associated offices or other similar facilities that would—
 - (i) result in the enclosed area of water in the harbour or port installation being not less than 20 hectares,
 - (ii) involve the reclamation of an area of land of not less than 5 hectares,
 - (iii) involve the construction of a quay greater than 100 metres in length, or
 - (iv) be capable of admitting a vessel of more than 1,350 tonnes.

7.0 Relevant Cases

7.1. The following comprise recent marine related pre-application consultations which are considered of note:

- **ABP-315796-23:** Pre-application consultations in respect of a proposed offshore wind farm, comprising either 47 or 52 turbines and associated infrastructure on and around the **Arklow Bank**, approximately 6 – 15 km from the shore at Arklow, Co. Wicklow, lodged December 2022. Design option pre-application consultations were requested under **ABP-316331-23**. Both cases have been determined by the Board, with the consultations under section 287 concluded (ABP-315796) and an opinion issued under section 287A (ABP-316331).
- **ABP-315800-23:** Pre-application consultations in respect of the proposed **Dublin Array** offshore windfarm project, to have between 39 and 50 turbines (depending on type) located c.10km off the coast of Dublin and Wicklow. Design option pre-application consultations were requested under **ABP-318552-23**. Both cases have been determined by the Board, with the consultations under section 287 concluded (ABP-315800) and an opinion issued under section 287A (ABP-318552).

- **ABP-315801-23:** Pre-application consultations in respect of **North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Ltd.**, offshore wind farm off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth with a maximum of 42 turbines, lodged February 2023. Design option pre-application consultations were requested under **ABP-316332-23**. **ABP-310329-23:** S.182 Pre-Application Consultation for proposed onshore electrical and associated infrastructure (NISA). Both cases ABP-315801-23 and ABP-316332-23 have been determined by the Board, with the consultations under section 287 concluded (ABP-315801-23) and an opinion issued under section 287A (ABP-316332-23).
- **ABP-315803-23:** Pre-application consultations in respect of the **Oriel** offshore windfarm project, to have a maximum of 25 turbines located c.5km off the coast of Louth and Meath. Design option pre-application consultations were requested under **ABP-318274-23**. Both cases have been determined by the Board, with the consultations under section 287 concluded (ABP-315803-23) and an opinion issued under section 287A (ABP-318274-23).
- **ABP-315809-23:** Pre-application consultations in respect of the **Codling** offshore windfarm project would have a between 60 and 75 turbines located c.13km to c.22km off the County Wicklow coast. Design option pre-application consultations were requested under **ABP-318588-23**. Both cases have been determined by the Board, with the consultations under section 287 concluded (ABP-315809-23) and an opinion issued under section 287A (ABP-318588-23).

7.2. The following comprise recent marine related applications, which follow on from the above pre-app consultation meetings:

- **ABP-320768-24** – Application submitted for off-shore wind energy development known as **Codling Wind Park**, located in the Irish Sea, off the coast of County Wicklow
- **ABP-319866-24** - Application submitted for off-shore wind energy development known as the **North Irish Sea Array**, located in the Irish Sea, off the coast of counties Dublin, Meath and Louth.
- **ABP-319864-24** - Application submitted for off-shore wind energy development known as **Arklow Bank 2**, located in the Irish Sea, off the coasts of Co. Wicklow and Co. Wexford.

- **ABP-319799-24** - Application submitted for off-shore wind energy development known as **Oriel Wind Farm**, located in the Irish Sea, off the coast of County Louth.

8.0 Matters Arising

8.1. Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

8.1.1. The matters arising include inter alia:

- National Marine Planning Framework, and in particular the need to clearly indicate project compliance with NMPF policies and objectives.
- Policy context surrounding the proposal ranging from strategic to local, including the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region and the Development Plan for the relevant Coastal Planning Authority, namely Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028. Documentation needs to be robust in its assessment against national and local policy and use of best available scientific data.
- Public consultation process, including with prescribed bodies such as the NPWS.
- Potential impact on birds and extent of survey area, using most up to date data, and impact from construction and operation noise.
- Potential impact on migratory and /or mobile species, including marine mammals.
- Potential impacts on hydrodynamics, wave patterns and coastal processes (incl. patterns of erosion & deposition along the coastline).
- Potential impacts on seabed and benthic communities.
- Potential impacts on fisheries, shipping and navigation, cultural heritage, air quality and noise, landscape and visual, and cumulative impacts.
- Potential impacts from construction and operational phases- Construction Impacts, include inter alia: Dredging (increase in suspended sediment); Piling/Drilling/Blasting (increase in underwater noise); Reclamation (change to local hydrological and sediment dynamics); Increase in construction vessel traffic (disruption to shipping traffic). Operational Impacts, include inter alia: Operation of

ORE facility (provision of 21 ha of storage and operational areas and to facilitate construction, operation and maintenance of ORE projects); Operation of New Small Boat Harbour (provision of small boat harbour with enhanced facilities to replace Ballygeary Harbour for current users of Ballygeary Harbour); Increase in ORE vessel traffic (disruption to shipping traffic); Increase in freight vessel traffic from 2040 (disruption to shipping traffic).

- Survey work - methodologies adopted, modelling assumptions and any data gaps to be clearly set out.
- Potential impact on terrestrial habitats and species.
- Potential impacts on traffic and traffic management given other development in the area, specifically the permitted access road.
- Designated sites and habitats – consideration of Zone of Influence, noting extent of zone of influence can be large given mobility of species, and noting proximity to Seas off Wexford cSPA and recent additions to SACs in the area.
- Consideration of carbon sequestration and consideration of destination of any removed material (incl. any EPA Licence requirements).

8.2. Environmental Impact Assessment

8.2.1. It is proposed to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment Report with the proposed application. The following include matters which were outlined during the course of the consultation meeting.

- EIA scoping undertaken.
- Environmental factors include, inter alia:
 - Offshore considerations and associated surveys - including Bird and marine mammal surveys; Noise and Dust monitoring; Deployment of metocean equipment to measure current and wave patterns in the area; Deployment of FPODs and Soundtraps to record marine mammal vocalisations in the area; Geophysical survey campaign; Geotechnical survey campaign; Benthic ecology sampling; Water quality sampling; Terrestrial ecology surveys; Hydrodynamic modelling; Underwater noise modelling.

- Onshore considerations and associated surveys, including terrestrial surveys, bat surveys, visual impact; traffic assessment.
- Consideration of cumulative impacts.
- The importance of robust impact assessments, setting out of methodology, most up to date data, source of survey data, dates of surveys etc, and identify areas of uncertainty.

8.3. Appropriate Assessment

8.3.1. It is proposed to submit a Natura Impact Assessment Report with the proposed application. The following include matters which were discussed during the consultation meeting:

- Location of site partially within Seas off Wexford cSPA.
- Likely Zone of Impact of all elements of the proposal.
- Natura 2000 sites within likely zone of impact and proximity to QI's/SCI's.
- Recent addition of Harbour Porpoise as a QI in a number of nearby SACs.

8.4. Procedures

8.4.1. I recommend that the Board representatives provide the prospective applicant with a document containing all of the procedures required for the making of an application.

8.4.2. The prospective applicant should send a copy of the application, accompanying documents (including EIAR and NIS) and a copy of the public notice to the Prescribed Bodies listed in Appendix A. In forming the list in Appendix A, regard was had to, inter alia, the requirement under Schedule 1 of the Planning and Development (Maritime Development) Regulations 2023. Regard was also had, in drawing up the list, to the provisions of S.291(3)(b) and S.291(3)(d) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The Board may wish to review that list and satisfy itself that it is sufficient. In this regard, I note that the prescribed bodies list (Appendix A) has been compiled on the basis of information that is available from the pre-application consultations and that the applicant who has been carrying out detailed studies and surveys in preparing the EIAR and NIS may consider other

bodies to be relevant. Accordingly, I recommend that any communication with the prospective applicant advise them that it is open to them to send copies of the application and its associated documentation to any other bodies that they consider relevant on the basis of the studies that they have carried out.

8.5. Transboundary Consultation

8.5.1. No transboundary issues arise.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1. Further to Section 287 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the applicant has entered into consultations with the Board prior to submitting an application for a ORE focussed purpose-built quay and berth facility together with quayside storage and pre-construction areas. The Board has given advice regarding the procedures involved and what considerations in relation to the effects of the proposed development on the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development may have on its decision in relation to the application. During the meetings held, advice was provided as noted on the file attached.
- 9.2. Following the completion of the pre-application meeting on 24th July 2024, I am of the opinion that the process should be concluded, and the Board should notify the prospective applicant that the process is closed and include the attached list of bodies that the applicant is requested to send copies of the application to, in accordance with S291(3)(b) and S291(3)(d).

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.



Una O'Neill

Senior Planning Inspector

21st November 2024

Appendix A Prescribed Bodies

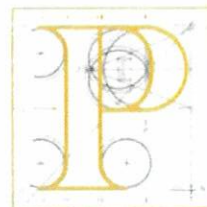
The following is a list of prescribed bodies considered relevant by the Board:

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Minister for Transport
- Minister for Defence
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
- Minister for Rural and Community Development
- Marine Institute
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Health and Safety Authority
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Failte Ireland
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- Southern Regional Assembly
- National Transport Authority
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- Commissioner of Irish Lights
- Irish Coastguard
- Wexford County Council

Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.

Our Case Number: ABP-319811-24

Your Reference: Iamród Éireann



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions
Unit A2
Nutgrove Business Park
Rathfarnham
Dublin 14

Date: 22 August 2024

Re: Proposed development of an extension to current port infrastructure at Rosslare Europort to provide assembly support for offshore wind farms.
Rosslare Harbour, Ballygillane Big, County Wexford.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer further to the above-mentioned pre-application consultation request.

Please find enclosed a copy of the written record of the meeting of the 24th of July, 2024.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board or email marine@pleanala.ie quoting the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

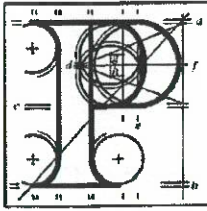


Ellen Moss
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737285

OC07

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An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-319811-24 (OC)

Case Reference / Description	Proposed development of an extension to current port infrastructure at Rosslare Europort to provide assembly support for offshore wind farms. Rosslare Harbour, Ballygillane Big, County Wexford		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	1 st Meeting		
Date	24 July 2024	Start Time	3:40pm
Location	MS Teams	End Time	5:10pm

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Stephen Kay (Assistant Planning Director) Chair
Una O'Neill (Senior Planning Inspector)
Maeve Flynn (Ecologist)
Conor Donnelly (Ecologist)
Ellen Moss (Executive Officer)

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Jeannie Dunne (Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions Limited)
Joey O'Connor (Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions Limited)
Aoife Kelly (Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions Limited)
Diarmuid O'Loan (Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions Limited)
Matthew Greene (Irish Rail)
Billy Hoey (Irish Rail)
Glenn Carr (Irish Rail)
Krista Farrugia (Nolan O'Dwyer)

Introduction

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 17th May 2024, requesting pre-application consultations under section 287 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Board; it also invited the prospective applicant to outline the nature of the proposed development and to highlight any matters that it wished to receive advice on from the Board. The Board's representatives mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Board once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Board.
- The Board may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- In accordance with section 287(3) of the Act, the decision to close a consultation rests with the Board. At the conclusion of the pre-application process the case file including the record of meetings held and the report of the reporting inspector detailing the issues arising in the consultation, will be forwarded to the Board. The Board will issue a Direction/Order clarifying that the consultation has closed and that the prospective applicant may make an application for permission under section 291.

- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in any legal proceedings.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant began their presentation by briefly discussing the meeting agenda.

The prospective applicant provided an introduction and background to the proposed development. The proposed development site is ideally positioned to support offshore developments in the Irish and Celtic seas, including the five 'Phase 1' offshore windfarm projects on the East Coast.

The prospective applicant provided an overview of the proposed development, including information on dredging and land reclamation. The development will comprise a new ORE focussed purpose built quay and berth together with quayside storage and pre construction areas. A navigable channel of –10mCD will be widened from the existing 150m to 300m and this together with berth pockets at the new berths will require 1,300,000 m³ of material to be dredged. The total of 21 hectares of reclamation area proposed will require 1,500,000 m³ of infill material. The reclamation material will be a combination of dredged material and imported engineered fill.

The prospective applicant provided information on the progress of the project. The MAC application was submitted in December 2023. Geotechnical site investigation work was completed in April 2024. Public consultation events were held in December 2023 and June 2024. The prospective applicant advised that all studies and surveys are due to be completed by the end of July 2024 and that the EIAR will be completed in September, 2024. The prospective applicant advised they intend to submit the

application in September / October 2024. If the application is granted, it is intended that construction works would begin in January 2026 with an aim to complete construction works in December 2027, in line with the offshore projects looking likely to commence construction in 2028.

The prospective applicant provided a further summary of the proposed development. Rosslare is Ireland's closest port to mainland Europe. It is the second busiest port for passenger and freight traffic, after Dublin Port. The proposed project development boundary includes the reclamation area and the dredge area and lies largely within the maritime area.

The prospective applicant will apply for planning permission for 50 years, however it is envisaged that the port facilities developed by the project will be required beyond this time period. It is not considered necessary to plan for demolition and reinstatement works or closure of the ORE Hub.

The prospective applicant set out how the project is aligned with requirements set out in the Climate Action Plan 2024, National Development Plan 2021-2030, Department of Transport Policy Statement on the Facilitation of Offshore Renewable Energy by Commercial Ports in Ireland (2021), EU Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy (2020) and the National Marine Planning Framework (2021).

The prospective applicant provided information on stakeholder engagement consultations undertaken to date. This includes Wexford County Council, the Commissioner for Irish Lights (April 2023), Department for Transport (April 2023), NMS (April 2023) and the National Parks and Wildlife Services (informal phone call in September 2023). Engagement with users of the existing small boat harbour is ongoing. Town Hall events for the public were held in Rosslare Europort in December 2023 and May 2024. In person project briefings were held for local stakeholders, including political representatives, in December 2023 and online in

May and June 2024. In February 2024 a workshop was held for the fishing community. A dedicated project website was launched in May 2024. Further engagement with the NPWS was initiated in July 2024.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) will be prepared to consider the impact of the project on the Seas off Wexford candidate Special Protection Area (cSPA) site. The project team consider the need to invoke the IROPI provisions of the directive to be highly unlikely. This is due to the absence of priority habitat, the fact that no Annex I habitats will be impacted, low usage by birds for foraging during the two years of site bird surveys undertaken and low biodiversity value and sufficient mitigation measures proposed in the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment in the NIS.

The proposed development's primary purpose would be to support offshore renewable energy projects for the East Coast of Ireland and the Celtic Sea, as well as the provision of operations and maintenance facilities for the duration of the projects. Given high development cost (currently estimate €220M) and uncertainty over timelines for construction of Phase 1 and South Coast DMAP offshore wind projects, the proposed development may support traditional port operations (e.g. RORO freight operations) in periods where there is no offshore renewable energy project demand in order to generate required revenue streams. Inclusion of the traditional port operations uses in the application is on the basis that the ORE Hub will need to be used from when it is constructed right throughout its lifetime to ensure value for money is achieved.

Discussion:

The Boards representatives began the discussion by mentioning that they noticed that the presentation shown was slightly different from that provided prior to the meeting. The project design life on slide 13 had changed from 30 years to 50 years. The prospective applicant advised that the design life was in relation to the

infrastructure and not necessarily the duration of which the EIA assessment will be undertaken and that 50 years would be the typical operational life of the port before upgrades and repairs would be required. The Boards representatives advised the prospective applicant to submit clear documentation as to the primary purpose of the port, outlining (as discussed) that the intention isn't that the port use would end and that there isn't a ceasing of the validity of the permission at the end of the 50 years.

The prospective applicant advised that the port would require the ability to use the facility for existing operations and that it is essential that the port continue to use the facility for port uses after the construction of the ORE Hub. The Boards representatives reminded the prospective applicant to be clear with their intentions in this regard when preparing the application documents and to tie in the Ports Policy. The Boards representatives noted that the Ports Policy is currently being updated. The prospective applicant advised the revised ports policy will not be ready until next year, but at this stage, it is expected that the regional development of ports is going to be a core part of the policy and the proximity of Rosslare to Dublin Port would reduce the capacity challenges Dublin Port could face in the mid 2030's.

The Boards representatives noted that the prospective applicant had submitted a MAC application in December 2023 and queried if there was any update. The prospective applicant advised that the MAC is currently under assessment by MARA.

The Boards representatives noted that a total of 21 hectares of reclaimed area would be required and queried the area of dredging that would be required. The prospective applicant advised in total 40 hectares would be dredged to facilitate the new berth and widened navigation channel.

The Board representatives advised the prospective applicant that any future application will be assessed against the National Maritime Planning Framework (NMPF) as it is a requirement under the Act to comply with NMPF. Application

documentation should demonstrate compliance with the range of policies within the NMPF, using best available scientific data, including demonstration of application of an ecosystem-based approach to planning.

The Boards representatives queried if any issues other than noise and dust were raised by Wexford County Council. The prospective applicant advised that they had specifically engaged with noise and dust issues highlighted by the local authority and that Wexford County Council had guided them on where they wanted monitoring equipment to be based. The prospective applicant advised Wexford County Council made a submission to them on the 21st June 2024 and they have received good feedback from them. The Boards representative noted that the application documents should address policies and objectives of the Wexford County Development Plan, particularly issues arising in relation to coastal zone management and marine spatial planning.

The Boards representatives queried if there had been engagement with the NPWS. The prospective applicant advised they have engaged with the NPWS in terms of their scoping report and, so far, they have not identified any issues or concerns. Following a digital response, the prospective applicant had a conversation with a representative from the NPWS. They discussed methodology, marine mammal ecology surveys and what was issued in the scoping report.

The Boards representatives discussed the bird surveys undertaken and queried the extent of the survey area and need for operational noise assessment, as well as construction noise impact. The prospective applicant highlighted that the two vantage point areas cover the entire proposed development area. The prospective applicant also highlighted that extensive bird surveys have been undertaken for a period of two years. Sufficient coverage of the area was available for land-based sea bird surveys. The Boards representatives advised that the applicant should ensure that the most up-to-date data is utilised in survey work and that all assessments

must be robust to avoid any time delays in the process. Documentation should be clear in terms of methodologies adopted, modelling assumptions, and if there are gaps, highlight where and why, and how they have been addressed.

The Boards representative queried if the prospective applicant had thought about applying a nature positive or biodiversity type net gain to the proposal. The prospective applicant responded that this is something that would have to be discussed with the application team. The Boards representative stated that it is not a requirement but is something that is beneficial.

The Boards representative advised that clear tables in the NIS, including the attributes and targets of the project can provide a clear overview of any issues and can help with the assessment.

The Boards representatives queried whether the prospective applicant could provide an overview of their findings to date concerning marine mammals. The prospective applicant advised that they are working with the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group and have completed two 24-month vantage point surveys for marine mammals. They have also deployed some F pods in December, so there will be 6 months of F Pod data for porpoise surveys. They have 3 months of noise surveys from which they hope to extract seal vocalisation data as they are close to harbour seals. The NPWS have informally advised the prospective applicant that they are most interested in the seal population. The prospective applicant advised that they don't have information on acoustic surveys as they are still processing the information. They have issued the marine mammal survey to the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG), and they have found that there are a number of harbour porpoises in the general area. The IWDG have records of common dolphins. Regarding the vantage point surveys, some harbour porpoises are a bit further out but not within the proposed site location. Similarly, with harbour seals, there is no record of harbour seals in the proposed site location, but there have been grey seals.

The Boards representatives queried potential erosion, deposition, and pattern changes as a result of dredging and land reclamation works, and potential impacts on seabed habitat loss and disturbance to benthic communities. The prospective applicant advised that settlement modelling surveys are still being conducted and that work has been undertaken by UCC looking at this issue. The wave and currents modelling has been completed; the application team had two buoys deployed until April. The prospective applicant anticipates that the port would experience sediment coming from the southeast instead of erosion, and maintenance dredging would be required every 2 to 3 years. The prospective applicant advised that a licence from MARA will be required for the dredging and accompanying dumping at sea licence from the EPA. There is current maintenance dredging at the port and the prospective applicant's target is not to affect the current regime. The Boards representatives asked if contamination issues arise with the dredged material. The prospective applicant advised that they have surveyed boreholes, and there has been no evidence of contamination above the levels permitted for dumping at sea in any of the samples collected.

The Boards representatives noted the extent of surveys/considerations listed in relation to fisheries, shipping and navigation; cultural heritage; air quality and noise, landscape and visual; cumulative impacts. The Boards representatives reiterated the importance of how survey results are presented, with the methodology used and assumptions clearly set out, and any data gaps identified.

The Boards representatives queried extent of terrestrial surveys and whether bat surveys have been undertaken. The prospective applicant advised that approximately 12 months of surveys have been undertaken, and bats have not been present.

The Boards representatives noted that they were aware of permission granted under section 177AE for the M25 access road (ABP Ref ABP-314015-22) and queried if there would be any overlap between the construction of the road and the proposed development. The prospective applicant advised that the construction of the road is expected to begin next year, and it is unlikely but possible that, if permission is granted for this development, that the construction of the two developments would overlap. The Boards representatives queried if this development's access route depends on the road being constructed. The prospective applicant advised that the access to the development site is not dependent on the new road, however it is the preferred route. The Boards representatives reminded the prospective applicant to highlight these options in the traffic management and other relevant sections of the EIAR.

The Boards representatives queried whether construction noise would be an issue in residential areas. The prospective applicant advised that there would not be an issue due to the separation distance to the nearest residential area. They are currently working at the port and have received positive feedback from the community on how the work is being managed and no complaints received.

The prospective applicant queried the next steps of the pre-application consultation stage and noted that they hope to submit the application in October. The Boards representatives advised the prospective applicant that following this meeting, the Board would prepare and issue the record of the meeting for them to review and issue a response to the Board with any comments that would go on the file. The Boards representatives reminded the prospective applicant that the process differs slightly from sections 37 and 182 in that the Board has the discretion to close the consultation stage. Regarding the timeline, the Boards representative advised that depending on whether further meetings are required and when the valid MAC is received, the timeline for submitting the application in late September/ October may

be feasible and reiterated that if the prospective applicant requires a further meeting, this can be facilitated.

The Boards representatives issued the procedures documentation to the prospective applicant prior to the meeting. The Board's representatives reiterated that the Board's administrative team is available to check dates in site notices and newspaper notices and queried if the prospective applicant had any questions based on the documentation issued. The prospective applicant queried if an updated list of prescribed bodies is available. The Boards representatives advised that the list of prescribed bodies would accompany the Board Direction at the conclusion of the pre application consultation process.

The Boards representatives requested that the updated presentation be issued to the Board for the case file.

Conclusion:

The Board's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will be issued in due course and the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing or alternatively bring any comments for discussion at the time of any further meeting.

The Meeting concluded at 5:10pm.



Stephen Kay

Assistant Director of Planning



Rosslare Europort Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Hub

ABP-319811-24 Pre-application Consultation Meeting

July 24th 2024



Agenda & Topics for Discussion

- Introductions
- Project Description
- Timing of development in relation to Ireland's Offshore Renewable Energy requirements
- Pre-Application Document: Key points
- Seas Off Wexford cSPA
- Planning Strategy
- Discussion
- AOB



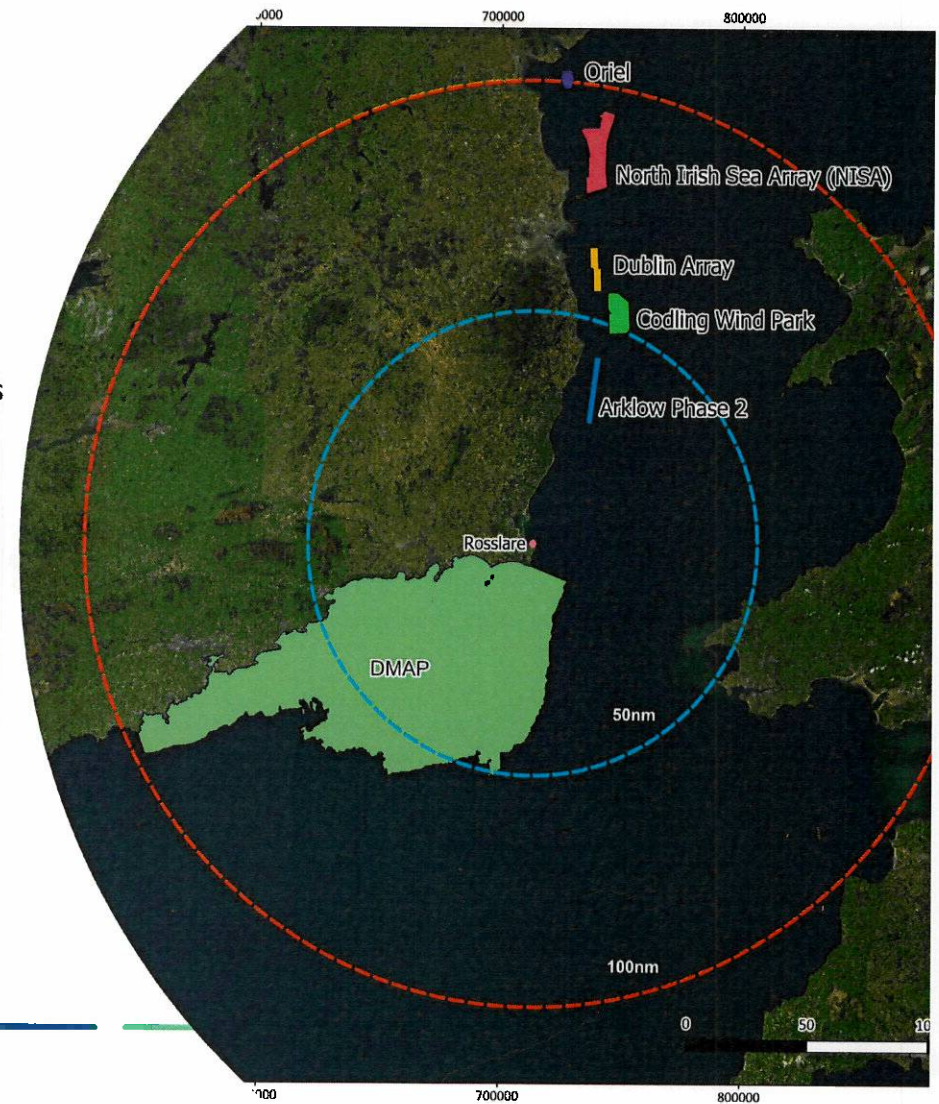
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Introduction & Background to Project

Background to ORE Hub Project

- Ireland to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by 51% (2021 to 2030)
- Key objective of Irish Government's National Planning Framework is the development of Ireland's offshore renewable energy potential
- Climate Action Plan – 7GW offshore wind installed capacity by 2030
- Five 'Phase 1' projects on the East Coast
- South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan ('DMAP')
- Rosslare Europort is ideally positioned to support offshore developments in the Irish and Celtic seas



History at Rosslare

Arklow Bank = 7nr @ 3.6MW
25MW Commissioned June 2004
1st deployment of 3.6MW turbine
Turbine height = 74m
Blades = 50m long
Located 10km offshore

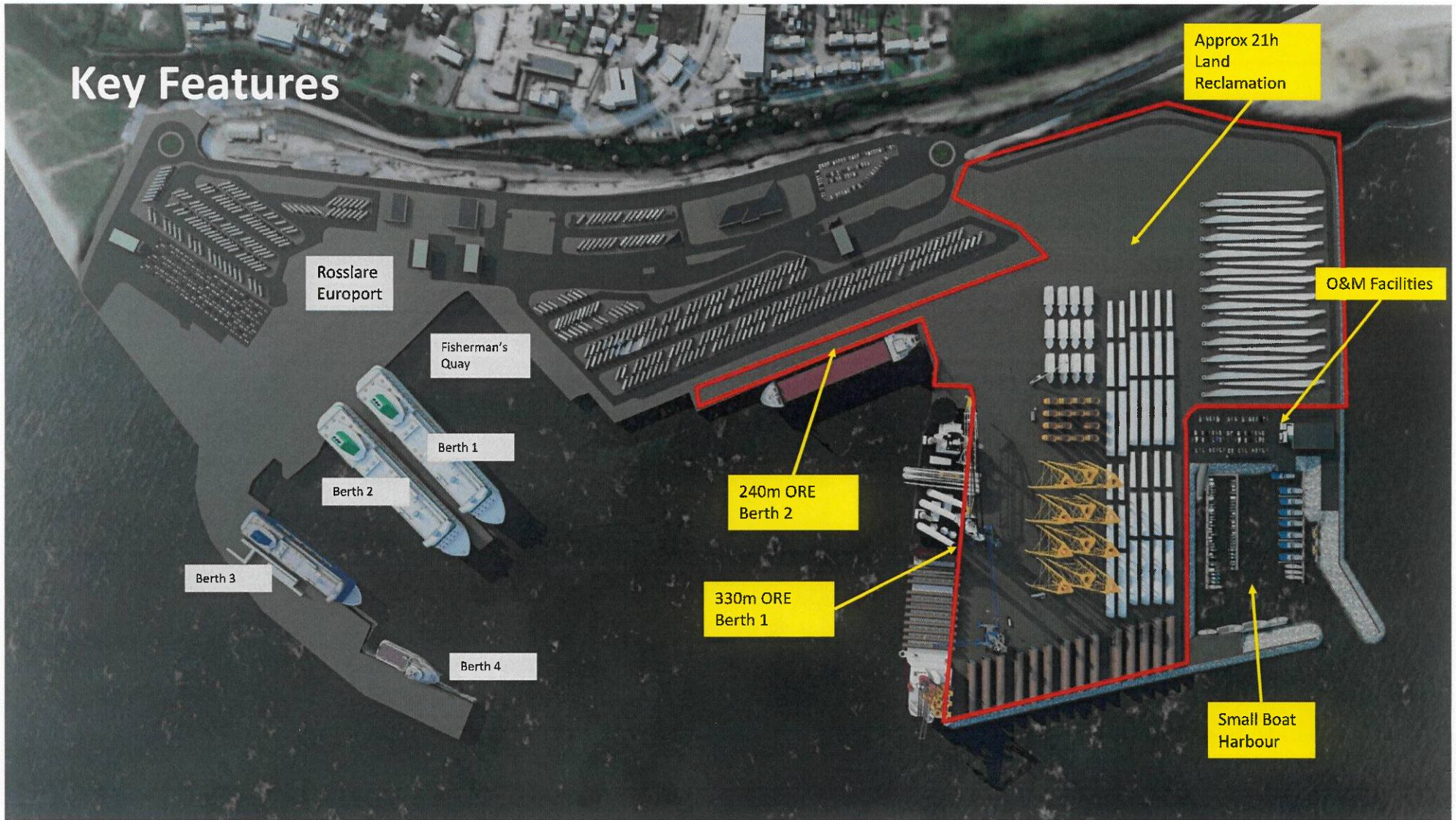




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Project Description

Key Features



Dredging and Reclamation



- Navigable channel widened from 150m to 300m and dredged to a minimum of -10m
- Construct 21 hectares reclamation area
- Berth pockets dredged to -12m
- ~1,300,000 m³ material to be dredged
- ~1,500,000 m³ material for reclamation - combination of dredged material and imported engineered fill

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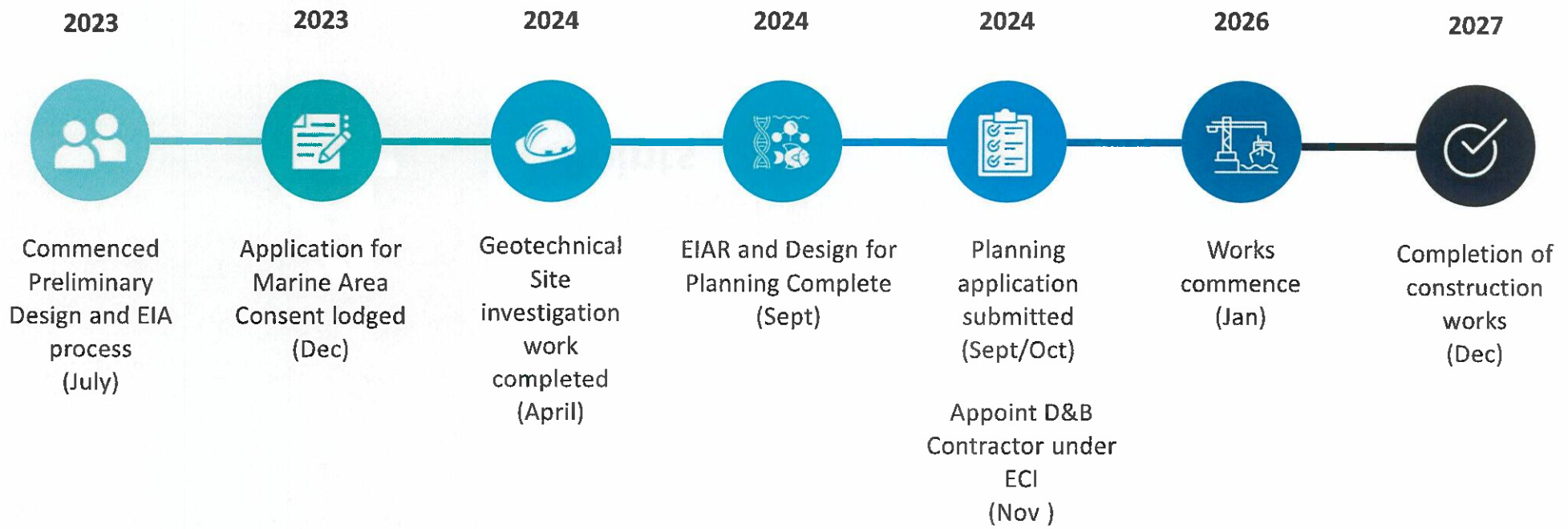
Timing of development in relation to Ireland's Offshore Renewable Energy requirements

Progress Update

- Environmental and Ecological Studies and Surveys underway since 2022
- CEF secured for preliminary studies and investigations
- Statutory approvals in place for site investigation works – Foreshore license for SI, CIL approvals and archaeological licenses
- Geotechnical and ecological site investigations complete
- Design for planning is substantially complete
- EIA well progressed and EIAR chapters are being drafted
- Extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation – Public consultation events held in Dec '23 and June '24
- MAC application submitted
- All studies due to be completed by end July



Timeline – Key Project Milestones





4

Pre-Application Document: Key Points

Project Summary

- Rosslare is Ireland's closest port to mainland Europe and second busiest Roll On Roll Off (RORO)/ Roll On Roll Off Passenger (ROPAX) port for freight traffic, after Dublin.
- The existing port facilities, managed by Iarnród Éireann, provide for passenger and freight ferries to and from the United Kingdom and the European Continent.
- The proposed Project Development Boundary includes the reclamation area and the dredge area, and lies largely within the maritime area
- The primary purpose of the proposed development is to provide a main staging, installation and storage facility for offshore renewable energy projects for the east coast of Ireland and the Celtic Sea, as well as an operations and maintenance facility for the duration of the offshore renewable energy projects.
- The proposed development may support traditional port operations (e.g. RORO freight operations) in periods where there is no offshore renewable energy project demand for the development
- Planning permission will be sought for a project design life of 30 years (i.e. from commencement of construction in 2026 until 2056).
- As it is envisaged that the port facilities developed by the project will be required beyond this time period, it is not considered necessary to plan for demolition and reinstatement works or closure of the ORE Hub once in place.

Project Team

- Project team is led by Iarnród Éireann, supported by Nicholas O'Dwyer and GDG
- Additional Subject Matter Experts include:
 - Cork Ecology (Ornithology)
 - MERC Environmental (Benthic)
 - ADCO (Cultural Heritage)
 - Nash Maritime (Shipping and Navigation)
 - AWN (Climate, Air Quality and Noise)
 - Pinnacle (Traffic and Transportation)
 - Macroworks (Landscape and Visual)

Policy Context

- Project is aligned with requirements set out in:
 - Climate Action Plan (2024)
 - National Development Plan 2021-2030
 - Department of Transport Policy Statement on the Facilitation of Offshore Renewable Energy by Commercial Ports in Ireland (2021)
 - EU Offshore Renewables Energy Strategy (2020)
 - National Marine Planning Framework (2021)

Stakeholder Engagement

- Consultations undertaken to date include:
 - ❑ Direct engagement with Wexford County Council regarding noise and dust monitoring requirements (July 2022)
 - ❑ Direct engagement sessions with Statutory Stakeholders following issue of EIA Scoping Report in February 2023 (note scoping report was re-issued to Statutory Stakeholders in July 2023 to seek any further feedback from this group)
 - Commissioner for Irish Lights (03/04/2023)
 - Department of Transport (19/04/2023)
 - NMS (19/04/2023)
 - NPWS (informal phone call, 04/09/2023)

Stakeholder Engagement

- Ongoing engagement with users of the existing small boat harbour via Harbourmaster and Iarnród Éireann Project Managers
- 'Town hall' events for public in Rosslare Europort (11-12/12/2023 & 30/05/2024)
- In-person (11/12/2023) and online (22/05/2024 & 21/06/2024) project briefings for local stakeholders including political representatives (local and national), Wexford Council, IDA and local business representatives
- Fishing community workshop (01/02/2024)
- Dedicated project website launched in May 2024
- Further engagement initiated with NPWS in July 2024

Key Environmental Considerations

- EIA and AA well progressed
- All evidence gathering completed in line with topic-specific guidelines and best practice
- All studies due to be completed by end July, no environmental 'red flags' identified to date
- Notification of proposed **Seas Off Wexford cSPA** given in January 2024 for protection of foraging grounds for seabirds

Anticipated Key Activities

- Key construction **activities** (and potential associated effects) include:
 - Dredging** (increase in suspended sediment)
 - Piling/Drilling** (increase in underwater noise)
 - Reclamation** (change to local hydrological and sediment dynamics)
 - A phased approach is anticipated to filling as part of the reclamation, with the south-western section of the reclamation area expected be closed in and filled in last to allow small boat harbour operations to continue until the new small boat harbour is completed. Please note the final construction sequence will be determined by the contractor at the construction stage of the project.
 - Increase in construction vessel traffic** (disruption to shipping traffic)
- It is anticipated that the proposed facility will create up to 350 direct Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) jobs during its construction, estimated to span 18-24 months.

Anticipated Key Activities

- Key operational **activities** (and potential associated effects) include:
 - ❑ **Operation of ORE facility** (provision of 21 ha of storage and operational areas and to facilitate construction, operation and maintenance of ORE projects)
 - ❑ **Operation of New Small Boat Harbour** (provision of small boat harbour with enhanced facilities to replace Ballygeary Harbour for current users of Ballygeary Harbour)
 - ❑ **Future increase in RoRo freight vessel traffic** (disruption to shipping traffic)
- The ORE facility is expected to provide up to 100 jobs at the port to support the installation phases of offshore wind developments in both the Irish and Celtic Seas.
- Long-term jobs will be created at the ORE Operations and Maintenance facility, which will be in place for the full operation lifetime of the project.

5

Seas Off Wexford cSPA

Seas Off Wexford cSPA

- Rosslare ORE Hub planning application will consider impact of project on current cSPA boundary through Natura Impact Statement (Note: An Bord Pleanála will undertake Appropriate Assessment as competent authority)
- Finding of Adverse Effects on cSPA at Stage 2 AA (NIS) and the absence of alternative solutions is required to trigger IROPI
- IROPI considered highly unlikely by project team due to:
 - Absence of priority habitat
 - No Annex I habitats will be impacted
 - “*de minimis*” footprint of foraging habitat affected (0.0068% of cSPA)
 - Low usage by birds for foraging during > 2yrs of site bird surveys
 - No birds observed within or adjacent to development area during surveys used by NPWS to support designation
 - Low biodiversity value based on outcome of benthic sampling campaign
 - Sufficient mitigation measures proposed in Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (NIS)



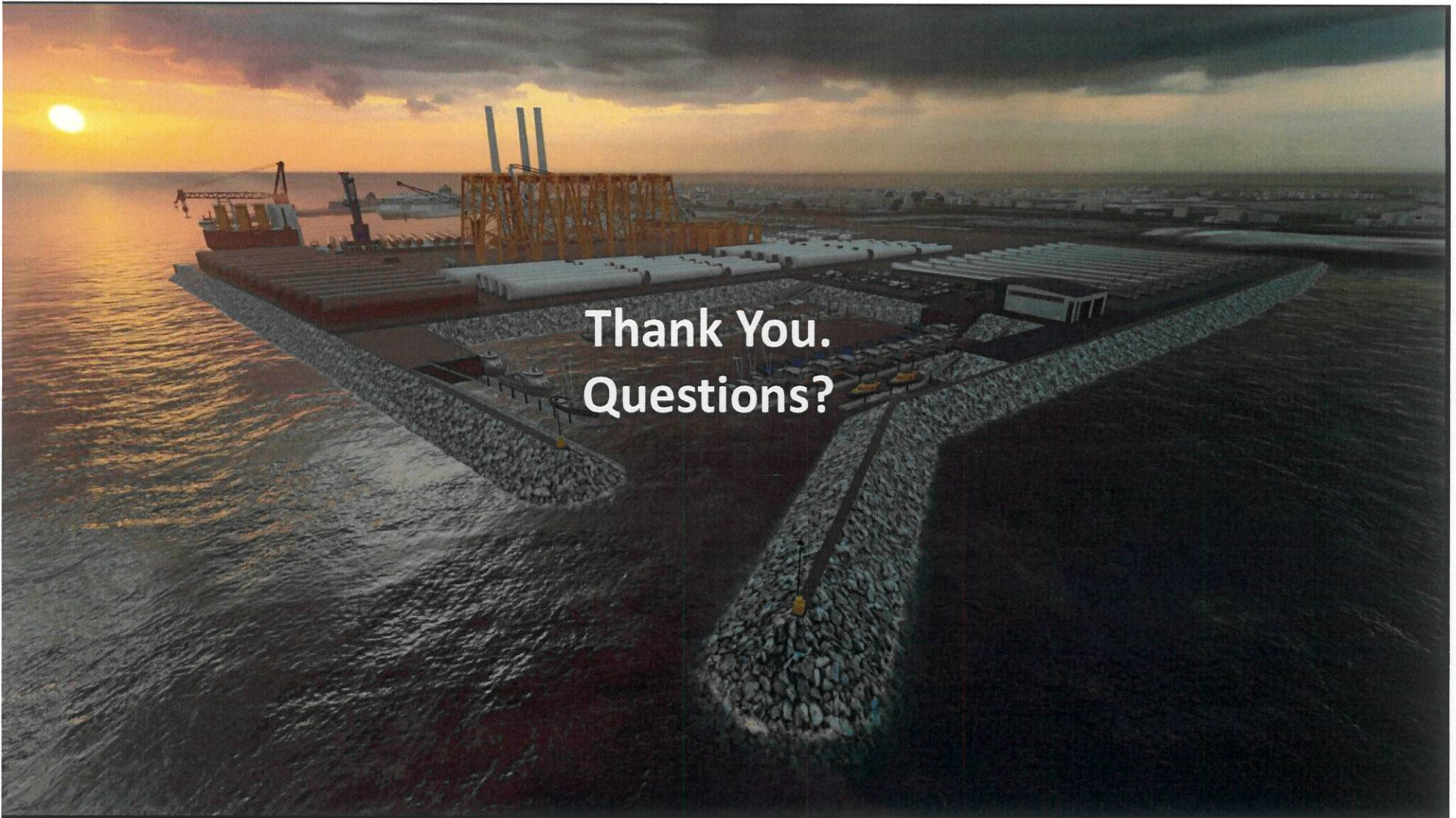


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Planning Strategy

Planning Strategy

- The primary purpose of the proposed development is to support offshore renewable energy projects for the east coast of Ireland and the Celtic Sea, as well as an operations and maintenance facility for the duration of the offshore renewable energy projects.
- Given high development cost (currently estimate €220M) and uncertainty over timelines for construction of Phase 1 and SC-DMAP offshore wind projects, the proposed development may support traditional port operations (e.g. RORO freight operations) in periods where there is no offshore renewable energy project demand in order to generate required revenue streams
- Project team propose considering impacts of these traditional port operations in environmental assessments and including these in development consent application
- Inclusion of the traditional port operations uses in the project development consent application is on the basis that the ORE Hub will need to be used from when it is constructed right throughout its lifetime to ensure value for money is achieved



Thank You.
Questions?