

Volume 8: Appendices (Introductory)

Appendix 1.2

Consultation Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Report and Approach to Stakeholder Consultation

North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Ltd (hereafter referred to as “the Developer” is proposing to develop the North Irish Sea Array (NISA) Offshore Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the proposed development).

The proposed development is an offshore wind farm located off the east coast of Ireland, comprising onshore and offshore infrastructure. The offshore infrastructure of the proposed development is situated off the coast of counties Dublin, Meath, and Louth, with the onshore infrastructure situated within Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council jurisdictions.

This report summarises the approach to consultation in relation to the proposed development from project inception to planning application submission stage. The process and the outcomes of the consultation and engagement are detailed in this report. The submissions received from consultees, and how these submissions have been incorporated into the ongoing design of the proposed development, are also described.

The Developer has committed, throughout the lifecycle of the project, to provide information throughout all design development phases of the proposed development. As such, the Developer established a systematic, documented process to manage the stakeholder consultation from the outset of the development process to bring forward proposals that would be appropriate in the context of the local area. At a very early stage in the design of the proposed development, the Developer initiated a stakeholder engagement campaign with statutory bodies, the public and other relevant organisations. The project team has conducted wide stakeholder consultation throughout the development process to include Fingal, Dublin City, Meath and Louth County Councils, relevant statutory bodies, fisheries organisations and other interested coastal and marine bodies, utility and service providers, and landowners in addition to residents and businesses in proximity to the proposed development. See below for further details.

Where practicable, the information and advice received during the consultation process was incorporated into the design of the proposed development and addressed in the relevant chapters of the EIAR.

2. Public Consultations

Public participation has been an integral part of the iterative design of the proposed development from the outset. Public consultation was carried out to inform the public and stakeholders of the progress of the project from a very early stage and to seek feedback and participation. The project and EIAR team has undertaken a comprehensive consultation and engagement process with stakeholders, landowners, and members of the public throughout the evolution of the proposed development.

The primary objective of the public consultation process has been to provide opportunities for members of the public and interested stakeholders (including fisheries stakeholders) to contribute to the planning and design of the proposed development and to inform the development process. Public participation in the planning and design of the proposed development began in 2019 through on-the-ground engagement and information and media campaigns.

The early involvement of the public and stakeholders ensured the views of various groups, individuals and stakeholders were taken into consideration in the proposed development and in the preparation of this EIAR to ensure that the development is appropriate, in the context of the local area.

This feedback was relayed to the project and EIAR team and has informed the project design as it has developed.

2.1 Engagement with the Fishing Industry

The Developer engaged with the fishing industry at a very early stage in the development process and before any licence application for site investigations/surveys was submitted. This engagement has developed and evolved since 2019 and has been influenced significantly, in terms of approach and outputs by feedback and input from the fishing industry.

Approach

Fisheries were identified as one of the key stakeholders at an early stage of the development process. The approach to engagement with this key stakeholder is fundamentally based on early, genuine, meaningful, and transparent engagement. It was recognised that development of a relationship with the fisheries that would provide a constructive two-way dialogue, would ensure that all considerations could be taken into account, concerns addressed in the best possible way including the early identification of the best mitigation strategies and that any opportunities could be identified.

At the outset in 2019, the developer engaged with at a high level with An Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and the Northeast Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum (NERIFF). Based on feedback from these meetings, a fisheries liaison officer (FLO), with significant experience in the fishing industry, was appointed by the Developer to represent the proposed development. This FLO was appointed before any significant applications were made on behalf of the project.

Initial Steps

As a first step following appointment, the FLO organised meetings with some of the key stakeholders within the fishing industry, including the NERIFF and South East Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum (SERIFF), to provide information on what was being considered and to open up lines of communication with the fishing industry. Importantly, and as a first demonstration of the developer's commitment to engaging openly and proactively with the fishing industry, a commercial fisheries section was drafted and included in the foreshore licence application. This section was aimed at explaining the planned surveys, including outlining the technologies likely to be employed during the surveys, to the fishing industry in a way that was understandable and clear from a fisheries perspective.

The initial engagement focused on understanding how the fisheries wanted to be communicated with and what the most appropriate channels would be to use.

Extent of Fisheries Engagement

The extent of engagement was considered in terms of geography and industry reach. The engagement approach was to have multiple engagements and discussions with fishers interested in the proposed development. This allowed not only the provision of information but also time for consideration of the information provided which in turn allowed for considered feedback to be provided from stakeholders to the project.

Engaging with fishers multiple times, the FLO and fisheries engagement team has had in excess of 1,000 individual engagements with locally interested fishers.

Engagement commenced (and is ongoing) with fisheries organisations covering national fishing industry bodies and key local individuals and groups in the fishing industry. These groups are outlined below.

Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation Limited (ISEFPO)	Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO)
Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation (ISWFPO)	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO)
National Inshore Fishermen's Association & National Inshore Fishermen's Organisation (NIFA/NIFO)	National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF)
North East Inshore Fisheries Forum (NERIFF)	South East Inshore Fisheries Forum (SERIFF)
Clogherhead Fishermen's Co-Op	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM).
Naval Service – Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC)	Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)	Marine Institute (MI)

In addition to this, direct engagement was commenced with local fishers (both supporting organisation affiliated and unaffiliated) including port and pier visits. These visits facilitated open discussion regarding the project being considered and fishers were asked to provide feedback in terms of concerns held (both on planned surveys and the overall project) and also in terms of potential opportunities for collaboration. A key aspect of these visits was to develop an in-depth understanding of the how the fishing community operates in the local area.

Local ports with continuing direct engagement include those listed below.

Clogherhead	Howth
Loughshinny	Balbriggan
Skerries	Rush

In addition to the ports listed in the table above, Kilkeel fishing port in the North of Ireland and Dun Laoghaire ports were also visited.

Understanding Local Fishing Practices

To support meaningful engagement and supplement information gathered from organisation and individual engagement, a comprehensive campaign was carried out to understand how fishing is carried out in the area. This included identification of the relevant fishing vessels via;

- Direct engagement with the local fishing fleet and key stakeholders (as outlined above)
- Afloat fisheries surveys to ID fishing gear and fishing types in the area
- Engagement with the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
- Engagement with the Naval Service
- Engagement with the Marine Institute
- Analysis of redacted Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) information
- Analysis of Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) information.

The above approach has continued over the course of development and is ongoing. Analysis of information available has also allowed the project to develop an understanding of both the current usage and the historical usage patterns of the area going back to as far as 2012. This has allowed for the compilation of a comprehensive understanding of the fishers relevant to the project area. Engagement and initiatives under development are being tailored to support constructive collaboration with all those identified.

The project FLO also attended all Public Consultation Events (as outlined in section 2.5) for the project. Fishers were invited to attend these events and the FLO answered queries from both the fishing community and general public.

The local fisheries are fundamentally made up of both an inshore fisheries and an offshore fisheries. The offshore fisheries are focused mainly on Nephrops along with some fin fish and other species. The inshore fisheries consist of multiple small and medium sized vessels targeting predominantly the export cable corridor extending into the intertidal area. These vessels target shellfish and bi-valve species. Full details on the local fisheries can be found in the Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (Appendix 16.2 of Volume 9).

Feedback and the Design Process

A key objective of the consultation and engagement process was to gather feedback from the fishing community. This feedback was shared with the design team and wider project team, with fisheries being central consideration of the development process.

Initial feedback reflected a number of concerns being expressed including the interaction between the proposed project and the Nephrops fisheries. Exploring the concerns raised highlighted a number of issues including the way that the area is currently fished, exclusion zones, navigability and ultimately impacts on incomes.

A revised layout was brought forward which incorporated the Pod Layout concept which maximised navigability, maximised corridors between turbines for navigation and orientated the turbines in a NNW – SSE direction to facilitate the direction of trawling in this area. This layout was again brought forward to the fisheries for consideration and feedback sought in terms of not only the design but also the engagement process. Fishers expressed a view that demonstrated acknowledgement and appreciation of the endeavour to address their concerns however said that the redesign would not address concerns as it increased the overall footprint of the project. During this process, fisheries stakeholders expressed a preference for an overall reduced project footprint which further design iterations incorporated. Whilst this engagement did not close out concerns from a fisheries perspective, it did provide the foundation upon which to build collaborative and constructive relationship going forward.

Subsequent consultation focused on providing information on the project and the designs which were being considered and gathering feedback.

Throughout these consultations, feedback was gathered on concerns raised from a fisheries perspective.

In addition to the concerns outlined above including turbine orientation of NNW – SSE and trawl corridors, concerns expressed during this process included surveys to be conducted during the development. This feedback continued to be incorporated into the design of the proposed development and has influenced the layout and orientation of the current design. The layout proposal has incorporated the general orientation in line with the fishers preferred direction of trawling and turbine spacing has remained cognisant of navigability within the wind farm.

Follow up engagement was carried out to provide clarification on issues where the required information was available and information on aspects being worked into design. These communications included fisheries specific project booklets circulated in Q2 2021 and another in Q2 2022. In order to address concerns in relation to offshore survey works, an additional and dedicated booklet was circulated in Q3 2022 providing information on the types of surveys that were to be carried out along with contact details for the project FLO team.

A mechanism to deal with concerns around the impact on fishing incomes, was developed to provide a reliable, transparent and fair system of pre-emptive impact mitigation. Engagement is ongoing with the fisheries to develop this mechanism and this is outlined further below.

Engagement During Offshore Surveys

A proactive approach was taken to the planning and coordination of the offshore survey campaigns which included providing early information in advance of the surveys commencing, collaboration in terms of information provided relating to the surveys and ensuring that there was adequate and sufficient points of contact both in terms of numbers and experience. This resulted in the project FLO securing additional resources including an onboard FLO who joined on board the relevant vessels and an additional shore-based FLO to engage with fishers on the piers. This allowed multiple communication avenues for local fishers to the project during survey works.

Prior to the commencement of the surveys in 2022, an information booklet (refer to Appendix B below), outlining the surveys and explain the technology was distributed to the local fishers. Prior to this survey campaign, a marine notice was issued and consultation held with fishing industry reps with feedback advising on the local fisheries perspectives. Following this engagement, the marine notice was amended to take on board that feedback and to better inform the fishing industry in particular in relation to the planned surveys.

The project endeavoured to work around fisheries and minimise disruption. This included not restricting any fishing vessel movement unless entirely necessary. Survey operators were instructed to engage proactively with fishers and standard operating procedures were developed to ensure cooperation, communication, and minimisation of disturbance to the fishing industry. Engagement with the fishing operators was constructive during these surveys and based on mutual respect.

This process has been followed for all surveys carried out to date.

The Sustainable Fisheries Community Initiative

To deal with the impact on fishing incomes, a mechanism was developed to provide a reliable, transparent, and fair system of pre-emptive impact mitigation. This resulted in development of the Sustainable Fisheries Community (SFC) initiative in collaboration with key influencers in the industry. This is in the early stages of development and discussions are ongoing.

Key aims:

The SFC is a mechanism to deliver proactive fisheries impact mitigation delivering mutual, long-term benefit for energy, food and the marine environment through collaboration and mutual cooperation between the local fishing community and NISA.

- Collaboration between NISA and local fishing community
- Provide a definition of what is considered the local fishing community
- Deliver a proactive fisheries impact mitigation process
- Deliver a mechanism to deliver long term benefits to the local fishing ports
- Work collaboratively to deliver enhancements to the local marine environment
- Enhance the sustainability of the local fisheries
- Explore ways of adding value to local seafood produce.

Next steps are to establish the initiative in a way that genuine local fishers (as identified) can support. Further specific information regarding the SFC can be seen in the Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (Appendix 16.2 of Volume 9). This site-specific initiative is compliant with the new Offshore Renewable Energy Seafood Working Group (ORE SFWG) communications protocol which is based on openness and transparency.

2.2 Community Consultation

In 2019, a community liaison officer (CLO) was appointed to begin building awareness of the project among coastal communities from Clogherhead in Co. Louth to Howth in Co. Dublin This was prior to a working design being established. Since then, the CLO has been the main point of contact with the local community. At the same time, the community liaison strategy (CLS) was established and implemented by the CLO. The strategy is based on the ‘Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland Guidelines for Community Engagement’. The code’s core fundamentals are to engage with the local community in an open, honest, and transparent manner with the aim of providing clear information on a project, and for getting feedback from the local community to use this to inform the design and development process. This gives the local community a chance to have input in the project development path and influence the final project design.

The CLS for the proposed development was based on the fundamental principle of active engagement with all communities that may be impacted by the onshore and/or offshore infrastructure of the proposed development. Scoping for the strategy included identifying the footprint for community consultation to ensure as many members as possible of the community were reached with adequate project information and were afforded the opportunity to provide feedback. This engagement sought to open a two-way dialogue with people in this area. Early objectives of the CLS included building awareness and understanding of offshore renewable energy and what this development specifically could bring to these communities. This CLS evolved as the development moved closer to an initial working design.

Introductions and subsequent engagement with the CLO have included meeting with key influencers in the local community to raise awareness of the proposed development, sharing design updates, dealing with queries, and receiving feedback. In April 2023 the team expanded to include a full-time Stakeholder Manager and in April 2024 a further resource was added to the team with a second CLO.

As part of the ongoing design and evolution of the proposed development, the community liaison team has participated in a wide range of engagements with local stakeholders, community groups, elected representatives, and authorities.

To date, the Developer's community liaison team has:

- Has had over 1,500 engagements with local stakeholders
- Hosted 17 public consultation events in seven coastal communities (see Section 2.5 below)
- Developed and promoted three virtual consultation rooms (see Section 2.4 below)
- Established a dedicated project website for the proposed development
- Engaged on a personal basis with people in order to give them the opportunity to consider and discuss the proposal
- Engaged with local community groups
- Contacted and met with local and national elected representatives
- Carried out ongoing engagement with local authorities (see Section 5.1 below) and
- Put up posters in public buildings (detailed in Section 2.5) and placed advertisements in the main local newspapers advising of public consultation (detailed in Section 2.5)

2.2.1 Engagement with Public Representatives

The CLO and the project team's Stakeholder Manger consulted local Teachtaí Dála (TDs), ministers, councillors, and elected representatives in the local electoral areas as well as those in the constituencies of Fingal, Meath (East), Louth and Dublin Bay North. In all, 36 local councillors and 20 TDs were initially contacted regarding the proposed development. Once a working design was established in early 2021, correspondence included sharing high-level information on the proposed development and a link to the newly launched project website. Follow-up meetings were offered to provide information and gather feedback.

Updates on the proposed development were issued to the elected representatives throughout the design development in the form of:

- Email updates announcing the launch of the new website
- Invitations to each round of the public consultation events and
- One-to-one meetings, where requested, to update on the proposed development

2.2.2 Engagement with Local Community Groups

Following commencement of engagement with the public representatives, the CLO began to contact local groups, organisations, businesses and interested individuals to provide information and gather feedback. This engagement was carried out in person, over the phone, and by email as was appropriate. The feedback was again conveyed to the design team for consideration. In all, there has been personal engagement with 350 groups, organisations and interested parties, with the majority of these being engaged with on more than one occasion.

These groups include, but are not limited to:

- Skerries Community Association
- Sustainable Skerries
- Skerries Tidy Towns
- Balbriggan Residents' Association
- Balbriggan Chamber of Commerce

- Our Balbriggan
- Balbriggan Climate Club
- Bettystown Tidy Towns
- Gormanstown Community Association
- Clogherhead Development Group
- Rush Tourism
- Howth Yacht Club
- Malahide Community Forum
- Clogherhead, Howth, Skerries RNLi
- Fingal, Louth, Meath Public Participation Network PPN and
- Sonairte

Should permission be granted, community engagement will continue during the lifetime of the proposed development, continuing throughout development and extending into construction and operations.

2.3 Project Website

In February 2021 a dedicated website for the proposed development was launched. This website, www.northirishsearray.ie, provided information on the proposed development, including:

- High-level information about the Developer and proposed development
- Details of the proposed development – evolution and how the design had evolved to this point. Design and location including maps and photomontages, the further design that was required, and how the proposed development could deliver on sustainability
- The Development Path – EIAR process, foreshore licences, and the route to planning
- Benefits – on a national and local level
- A Contact Us facility

In May 2023 a revised website was launched with further updates on the development and additional detail on all aspects of proposed development design and environmental assessments. The new website added to the first by including detail and information covering:

- The need for the proposed development – this section set out the importance of the impact of climate change and energy security in tandem with the goal of sustainability
- The process of environmental assessment – a diagram of the process was provided
- An updated development timeline
- Survey forms for the community, fisheries and marine users and prospective business partners for the development. All surveys could be completed anonymously or by sharing contact information in accordance with GDPR guidelines and
- A dedicated area for Marine Notices and survey updates

Website traffic statistics from 1st June 2021 to 19th April 2024 include:

Users	30,993
Visits	99,613
Page Views	226,178

Statistics from feedback and survey forms include:

Community Survey	155
Fisheries Survey	100
Marine Users Survey	17
General Enquiry Form	76

This website has been advertised on local media, social media, through our engagement process and on posters and leaflets. The website continues to provide up to date and relevant information on the Developer, the proposed development, the development path, benefits, and contact details for further information.

2.4 Virtual Consultation Rooms

The first virtual consultation room (VCR) was launched on 3 September 2021 and ran until 22 November 2021. This included:

- An introductory video
- Project at a glance
- Overview of project infrastructure
- Photomontages
- Community Benefits.

The VCR was advertised on a number of local papers. A press release was issued to all local media outlets in the area, advising people of the consultation and asking them to engage with the information.

A second VCR was established in July 2023 to share updated information on the proposed development and provide the public the opportunity for continued engagement and feedback on the progress of the proposed development.

The second VCR included added layers of information and opportunities to engage using:

- A two-minute video delivering the high-level proposed development details
- Project information at a glance – setting out in simple terms what the proposed development would entail
- Two indicative WTG layouts
- Photomontages of the proposed WTG array from 12 vantage points
- Distance to shore from 12 coastal locations
- The proposed cable route from landfall to the EirGrid facility at Belcamp and
- Information about the Developer's approach to sustainability and the Community Benefit Fund.

There have been over 1,000 visits to the Virtual Consultation room since it launched in July 2023.

A third VCR was launched on 10 April 2024. This added further information including:

- Details for onshore and offshore infrastructure as well as approach to construction – including high level timelines for these phases
- Updated WTGs layouts in 35 and 49 WTG options
- Updated photomontages to reflect the final design layout options – presented from 12 different vantage points and including distance to shore for each.

These VCRs acted as an interactive platform that provided relevant information on the various stages of the proposed development. The feedback obtained has informed the design development and EIAR preparation.

2.5 Public Consultation Events

Three rounds of Public Consultation Events were undertaken between June 2023 and April 2024. These events are an important step in the community consultation process to ensure transparency for the proposed development's design and to facilitate a dialogue with the community.

In June 2023 the first series of public consultation events were held in six coastal towns in counties Dublin, Meath and Louth.

These events were held in the following venues from 2pm to 8pm:

- Skerries Sailing Club – 27 June 2023
- Bracken Court Hotel, Balbriggan – 28 June 2023
- Clogherhead Community Centre – 29 June 2023
- The Village Hotel, Bettystown – 4 July 2023
- The Grand Hotel, Malahide – 5th July 2023
- The Marine Hotel, Sutton – 6 July 2023

These events displayed all the information that was available on the virtual consultation room with a minimum of six project team members present at any one time to ensure appropriate technical expertise was available to address any concern a guest may have had.

The information on display included multiple QR codes to direct guests to online survey forms to share feedback on the development.

The events were attended by 150 members of the public.

The promotion of these events included advertising in local newspapers, in public buildings and on the proposed development's website. These included printed and electronic advertisements in the newspaper, on their websites and their social media channels:

Table 1 Local and Regional Newspaper Promotions

Publication	Print Circulation
Skerries News	2,500
Dublin People	29,500
Meath Chronicle	10,373
Drogheda Leader	20,000
Drogheda Independent	28,000

In addition, the local poster campaign to promote events in coastal towns from Clogherhead to Howth included posters in:

- Local post offices
- Local garda stations
- Local newsagents
- Libraries
- Local service stations and
- Community halls.

A second round of public consultation was held across five events over two weeks in November 2023. A sixth event took place in January 2024 at the request of a local community group, which the community liaison team was happy to facilitate. These events ran from circa 4pm to 8pm at the locations listed below, with over 250 people attending:

- Skerries Sailing Club – 7 November 2023
- Clogherhead Community Centre – 8 November 2023
- Bettystown Village Hotel – 9 November 2023
- Balbriggan Bracken Court Hotel – 14 November 2023
- Malahide Grand Hotel – 15 November 2023
- Rush Community Centre – 30 January 2024.

A third round of public consultations was held across five events over two weeks which ran from 4pm to 8pm at the locations listed below, with over 100 people attending:

- Malahide Grand Hotel – 9 April 2024
- Balbriggan Bracken Court Hotel – 10 April 2024
- Skerries Sailing Club – 11 April 2024
- Bettystown Village Hotel – 16 April 2024
- Clogherhead Community Centre – 17 April 2024.

The promotion of these events was conducted through local print advertising, a poster and email campaign, and through the project website.

2.6 Tailored Information Clinics

The public consultation events also served as a platform to schedule further tailored information clinics with community groups which felt they would benefit from such a session. These sessions enabled the community liaison team to raise further awareness of the proposed development. These sessions included a presentation from a select group of the project team and facilitated discussion about the development and the various elements that could have the greatest impact on their community. Such topics included:

- Offshore visualisations including photomontages
- Cable route
- Substation facilities at landfall and
- Community Benefit Fund.

The tailored information clinics were with the following groups and occurred between September and February 2024:

- Board of Skerries Mills
- Skerries Community Association
- Fingal Chamber of Commerce
- Rush Community Council and
- Malahide Community Forum.

2.7 Supporting Documentation

Brochure

A 12-page project brochure was created to support the public consultation events in June 2023. This brochure was available to download from the Virtual Consultation Room with an additional 400 copies shared with communities over the course of the events and subsequent meetings by the project team's CLO.

Along with the detail on the proposed development's design, this brochure contained information about climate change and fossil fuel dependency to provide context on why the proposed development was being considered. Furthermore, the booklet outlined how the proposed development could bring benefits to the local area and sought feedback from community members with a QR code directing people back to the website's engagement and survey page.

Information Leaflet One

A four-page full colour information leaflet was produced to coincide with the second round of public consultation events. This took feedback from the local community onboard whereby they requested a summary of the proposed development's details with a link to the website to find out more. The flier included:

- Project at a glance details
- Outline of the project infrastructure
- Details on the site selection and indicative WTG layout
- Project timeline
- Details for the community liaison team
- Links to the website.

Information Leaflet Two

An updated information leaflet was created to coincide with the third round of public consultation events. This included updates on the proposed development's details capturing:

- More about the developers
- Detail and a map for the onshore cable route
- A QR code directing community members to share feedback.

As well as being distributed during the consultation events, this leaflet was delivered to 5,790 homes in the Malahide area. This was to ensure maximum awareness of the onshore infrastructure element of the proposed development.

2.8 Summary of Topics Discussed During Community Consultation

Engagement to date has shown that the need for the development of renewable energy is well-understood. Via the establishment of the project website and hosting in-person and virtual consultations, valuable feedback has been gathered. The project CLO has been working to meet with groups and individuals across the area to ensure that information is provided and concerns are heard. A summary of the key topics discussed during the gathering of feedback through community engagement is presented below.

Construction Phase – Onshore

Feedback was received on the temporary social impacts on communities and public roads in the form of traffic restrictions and disturbance to residents and road users. NISA is keenly aware of and wishes to minimise any impacts on local communities in the development of this critical infrastructure.

Mitigating against impact to communities during the construction phase is a priority for NISA and measures to manage this are detailed in the EIAR. The team continues to engage with local communities to gather feedback to ensure that the project can be delivered in the most appropriate manner.

Distance of WTGs to Shore

Throughout the consultation phase with community, there were questions as to why the WTGs could not be constructed further from the shore. The project team and the community liaison team provided an overview of the licensing process and detailed the survey works that has led to the final proposed development layout. The team also gave an overview of the technology that was available to the proposed development that would facilitate a fixed-bottom foundation suitable for the seabed depth and ground conditions.

Onshore Infrastructure

There were also concerns raised about the grid facility that would be located north of Balbriggan, west of the R132. NISA recognises that this is a new type of infrastructure for the area so measures to screen the infrastructure to minimise any visual impact were displayed as part of the public consultation and on the website.

No Impact or Damage to Beaches or Coastline

Several concerns were raised about the potential impact to the area of coastline in which cables would come onshore. Feedback from the engagement process was that people would rather not see the coastline disturbed. This is reflected by the installation of the cable at landfall being undertaken by Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), directly under the seabed rather than an open cut trench through the seabed. The starting point for the HDD is onshore (above MHW) and the exit point for the HDD is in the subtidal environment. Therefore, the entire intertidal environment will be avoided.

Visuals

The visual aspect of the proposed development has always been a key consideration. As part of the design process, visual impact assessments were completed and photomontages for the proposed development are provided in Volume 5, Chapter 29: Seascape, Landscape and Visual.

Environment

Feedback was received regarding potential impacts the project could have on marine life, sea birds and mammals as well as the local environment. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) considers the potential impacts of the construction, operational and maintenance and decommissioning phases of the proposed development, both onshore and offshore. The NISA project team is committed to minimising negative impacts on the surrounding areas while seeking opportunities to enhance biodiversity and the local environment. The project team is considering the sustainability of this project through the various stages of construction and operation with the view to ensuring that the project is delivered in the most environmentally appropriate manner.

Community Benefit Fund

In the case of the proposed development, a Community Benefit Fund could reach approximately €4million each year or €80 million over the lifetime of the project – giving residents the opportunity to bring about transformative and positive change to their local community. Multiple communities had questions on the administration and distribution of this fund. An independent Fund Administrator will be appointed to facilitate and support the local community to maximise the opportunities of the Community Benefit Fund. Since 2019, the project team has been engaging with local community groups on the process with a view to aggregating information, feedback and submissions which could guide the direction of the Community Benefit Fund.

3. Landowner Consultation

Significant consultation has taken place with the owners of properties and lands within the proposed onshore development boundary. The Developer enlisted third-party land agency services to support on land agreement valuations and provide landowners with an ‘on the ground’ single point of contact.

As outlined in Volume , Chapter 9: Construction Strategy – Onshore, the majority of the onshore cable will be laid within the existing road network in accordance with EirGrid Function Specifications. However, at areas in which staying in the road is not technically feasible (due to watercourse crossings, protected structures, etc.), it is necessary to install the cable on private lands. Hence, significant level of engagement throughout the development phase of the proposed development was required to reach agreement with Landowners to place the onshore cable within their lands if required. The Landowners consist of private, semi-state and state organisations. This engagement was part of informing cable routing within lands identified in the onshore red line boundary.

Land agreements such as wayleaves and leases have been obtained with all affected Landowners. In some cases, lands have been acquired to facilitate the proposed development. These discussions included site visits and one-to-one meetings facilitated by the Land Agent. In addition to the discussions and negotiations surrounding land agreements, the Land Agents also contacted the Landowners to notify them of any upcoming public consultation events, and to request permission to access their lands for survey works.

These agreements involved separate legal representation on behalf of the Landowners and the Developer. Also, in some circumstances, the Landowners engaged their own Land Agents and Valuers to act on their behalf.

4. Informal EIAR Scoping Consultation

An EIAR Scoping Report was prepared in 2021 which described the key elements of the proposed development, the baseline conditions and sensitivities of the receiving environment likely to be affected by the proposed development. The studies and assessments proposed to be undertaken for the preparation of the EIAR were summarised. The report identified potential for likely significant effects and provided an outline of the proposed EIAR. The report also facilitated stakeholder engagement, with feedback sought from consultees to further inform the content and scope of the EIAR.

Upon finalisation of the EIAR Scoping Report, informal scoping consultation was carried out from 20 May 2021 to 30 June 2021 and feedback was sought from the consultees listed in Table 1. The concerns and queries raised during the EIAR scoping stage have been given due consideration by the EIAR and design teams and the results have been incorporated where relevant into this EIAR. See Section 6.5 of this report for relevant feedback received during the informal EIAR scoping consultation.

Table 2 EIAR Scoping Consultees

EIAR Scoping Consultees		
An Chomhairle Ealaíon	An Taisce	Bat Conservation Ireland
Birdwatch Ireland	Coastwatch	Commissioners of Irish Lights
Commission for Regulation of Utilities	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Development Applications Unit: The National Parks and Wildlife Service and The National Monuments Service (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage)

EIAR Scoping Consultees		
Department of Defence (Kildare) / Defence Forces	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Drogheda Port Company	Dublin Airport Authority	Dublin City Council
Dublin Port Company	Eastern Midland and Regional Assembly	Earth Mining Division, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
Eco Advocacy (Meath)	EirGrid	Environmental Protection Agency
Environmental Pillar (Irish Environmental Network - IEN)	Fingal County Council	Fingal Public Participation Network
Health and Safety Authority	Health Services Executive	Geological Society of Ireland
Irish Wildlife Trust	The Irish Coastguard	Inland Fisheries Ireland
Irish Aviation Authority	Irish Cruising Association	Irish Chamber of Shipping
Irish Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC) of the Irish Coast Guard – Marine Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) of the Irish Coast Guard	Irish Sailing Association	Irish Whale and Dolphin Group
Louth County Council	Louth Public Participation Network	Louth Environmental Network (sub-group of En Pillar/IEN)
Marine Institute	Marine Survey Office	Meath County Council
Meath Public Participation Network	National Biodiversity Data Centre	Office of Public Works
Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Warrenpoint Port

5. Pre-Application Consultations with An Bord Pleanála

Pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála is required under section 287 of the Planning Acts before an application for consent for the proposed development can be made under section 291 of the Planning Acts.

On 5 January 2023, North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited (the “Developer”) submitted a request to An Bord Pleanála (the “Board”) to enter pre-application consultation under section 287(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the “Planning Acts”). Reference number ABP-315801-23 was allocated by the Board with respect to the Developer’s intended application under section 291 of the Planning Acts.

The Board, in a letter dated 20 February 2023, required the developer to submit specified information in accordance with section 288(1)(a) of the Planning Acts. Subsequently, on 13 March 2023, the Developer prepared a report responding to the Board’s requirements. A copy of this report is provided in Appendix 2.2 of Volume 8 of this EIAR. There were four meetings held during the Section 287 pre-application process (30 May 2023, 21 September 2023, 2 November 2023, and 14 December 2023). An Bord Pleanála closed the Section 287 pre-application consultations on 2 February 2024.

Section 287A of the Planning Acts provides for a developer to enter pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála in relation to flexibility for certain details of a proposed development. The Developer, in its report dated 13 March 2023 confirmed that it would be requesting an opinion on flexibility under section 287A of the Planning Acts. Reference number ABP-316332-23 was allocated by the Board with respect to the Developer’s intended application under section 287A of the Planning Acts.

Following pre-application consultation meetings with the Board on 30 May 2023 and 21 September 2023, the Developer was invited to submit an application for a design flexibility opinion under section 287B of the Planning Acts. On or about 26 October 2024, the Developer submitted this application to the Board. A copy of the application by the Developer under section 287A is provided in Appendix 2.3 of Volume 8 of this EIAR. On 2 February 2024, An Bord Pleanála issued its opinion on design flexibility, signed 30 January 2024 (the “DF Opinion”). The DF Opinion is provided in Appendix 2.4 of Volume 8 of this EIAR.

6. Other Stakeholders

Extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders throughout the design development and EIAR preparation commenced in 2021 in order to:

- Provide information to the stakeholder on the proposed development
- Ascertain and understand the views of stakeholders and
- Seek and incorporate input from stakeholders on the design, baseline characterisation, and input on the assessment of the construction, operation, and decommissioning aspects of the proposed development.

This section describes the general project consultation that has been undertaken. Where relevant, Table 3 identifies the key issues arising from consultation. Where relevant, these have been addressed in the EIAR.

6.1 Coastal Planning Authorities (Local Authorities)

Several meetings took place between members of the project team and the technical staff of Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council to discuss specific issues during the design development. In particular, the Planning Departments, Roads Department, Area Engineers, and Bridge Engineers of these planning authorities were consulted by the project team to discuss the design development. These meetings informed specific design elements including the proposed watercourse crossings, and the local authorities’ proposed plans and programmes for the area were considered in developing the proposed construction and traffic management strategies.

Meetings and discussions also took place with Meath County Council and Louth County Council. These meetings were undertaken with the Planning Departments, Traffic Departments and Heritage Officers to provide project updates, and to discuss the baseline surveys which were undertaken to inform the EIAR.

6.2 Statutory Bodies/Other Stakeholders

During 2021-2023, consultations have continued with the statutory bodies and other relevant stakeholders as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3 Pre-Application consultation with statutory bodies and other relevant stakeholders

Stakeholder	Consultation Dates
Birdwatch Ireland	- 13th April 2023 - 26th July 2023
Commissioners of Irish Lights	- 08th July 2021 - 27th April 2023 - 13th September 2023 - 13th December 2023
Coras Iompair Eireann (CIE)	- 07th April 2022
Department of Defence	- 05 th November 2021 - 07 th November 2022

Stakeholder	Consultation Dates
	- 10 th January 2023
Drogheda Port Company	- 27th April 2023
Dublin City Council	- 23rd February 2022 - 03rd July 2023
EirGrid	- 10th August 2021 - 08th April 2022 (EWIC)
ESB Networks	- 29th April 2022 - 02nd September 2022
Fáilte Ireland	- 04th September 2023
Fingal County Council	- 09th April 2021 - 02nd June 2021 - 02nd December 2021 - 12th April 2022 - 25th April 2022 - 19th September 2022 - 29th November 2022 - 13th April 2023 - 23rd June 2023 - 18th July 2023 - 27th September 2023 - 09th January 2024
Fingleton White (Aviation Fuel Pipeline)	- 04th October 2022
Greater Dublin Drainage	- 09 December 2022
Iarnród Éireann	- 10th August 2021 - 22nd September 2021 - 09th May 2022 - 31st May 2022 - 17th October 2022 - 24th November 2022 (DART) - 08 th December 2023 (DART) - 18th December 2023
Irish Coast Guard	- 21st April 2023 - 12th December 2023
Irish Fish Producers Organisation	- 15th June 2023
Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation	- 15th June 2023
Irish Whale and Dolphin Group	- 26th July 2023
Louth County Council	- 29 th September 2021 - 4 th August 2023
National Monuments Service (NMS)	- 24th October 2022 - 8th December 2023
National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)	- 23rd February 2023 - 11th August 2023 - 23rd October 2023
Marine Survey Office	- 19 th July 2021 - 19 th April 2023
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority	- 18th October 2023
Meath County Council	- 21st July 2023
Met Éireann	- 06th December 2023

Stakeholder	Consultation Dates
Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	- 06 th December 2019 - 27 th October 2022
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (Metrolink)	- 24 th June 2021 () - 22 nd July 2021 - 25 th February 2022
Uisce Éireann	- 23 September 2021 - 16 th September 2022
Underwater Archaeology Unit (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	- 20 th July 2021 - 15 th February 2022 - 04 th July 2023

6.3 Transboundary Consultees

An Bord Pleanála, upon conclusion of the pre-application consultation stage with North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Ltd (the ‘Developer’), directed that the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and Isle of Man should be notified of the planning application for the proposed development. Formal notification of the Developer’s intent to submit a planning application were issued on 27th February 2024 to the following transboundary consultees:

Transboundary Consultee
Isle of Man – Chief Officer, Department of Infrastructure
Northern Ireland – Department for Infrastructure Planning
Scotland – Head of Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team
United Kingdom – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Environmental Assessment, Planning Reform and Housing Quality
Wales – Energy Division, Welsh Government

Notification of the application will be provided to the above transboundary consultees.

6.4 Phase One Collaboration

During S287 pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála, the Developer stated that developers from other Phase One projects have collaborated to share appropriate levels of information. An Bord Pleanála stated that it is important to have ongoing communication in this regard and that there is a consistency in approach and methodology used.

The developers of the five east coast Phase One projects, (Oriel Wind Park, North Irish Sea Array Wind Farm, Dublin Array Offshore Wind Farm, Codling Wind Park and Arklow Bank Phase 2) collaborated on the following activities:

- An ornithology joint method statement (including the assessment methods to be used in preparing the EIARs) was prepared and submitted to NPWS (refer to Volume 3, Chapter 15 Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology, for further details)
- Impact assessment methodology workshops were held between project technical specialists to discuss the assessment approach and receptor sensitivities, and establish alignment where possible. This included for seascape, landscape and visual impact, offshore bats, ornithology, fish and shellfish, marine mammals, shipping and navigation, and cumulative effects assessment
- Data sharing for the purposes of cumulative effects assessments for:
 - Offshore ornithology
 - Marine mammals and

- SLVIA.
- Collaboration between project teams for the proposed development and Dublin Array Offshore Wind Farm including data sharing, for the purposes of preparing a dynamic energy budget modelling exercise to establish the potential for likely significant effects on the Rockabill to Dalkey Island Special Area of Conservation, and
- Agreement on establishing the East Coast Phase One Monitoring Group' (ECPOMG). The ECPOMG are committed to continued collaboration within the group, and with those relevant statutory and technical stakeholders, in order to agree and implement strategic monitoring initiatives where appropriate and relevant. Monitoring initiatives implemented by the East Coast Phase One projects will be determined by the conclusions of the EIAR process, with a focus on validation and evidence gathering. It is anticipated that the ECPOMG, alongside those relevant statutory and technical stakeholders, would seek to explore and agree monitoring objectives, methodologies and outcomes via ongoing collaborative engagement.

6.5 Summary of Observations Raised During Statutory Stakeholder Consultations

Table 4 Summary of issues raised during EIAR statutory stakeholder consultation

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
Alternatives	Meetings with ESBN MetroLink prompted feasibility studies to determine the potential for co-existence of the onshore cable route of the proposed development and MetroLink. These discussions prompted the addition of an alternative route in the proposed development as demonstrated in Volume 2, Chapter 5: Consideration of Alternatives.	Volume 2, Chapter 5: Alternatives provides detailed justification for the evolution of the onshore cable route optioneering process.
Marine Physical Processes	<p>Geological Survey Ireland</p> <p>A response to the EIAR Scoping Report was provided by the Geological Survey Ireland in 2021. Key issues raised included the recommendation to consult the Aggregate Potential Mapping viewer to identify areas of aggregates; recommendation to consult the marine mapping programme INFOMAR (in particular to locate shipwrecks); recommendation to consult the Coastal Vulnerability Index mapping.</p>	Chapter 10 Marine Geology, Oceanography, and Physical Processes presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area. This has included using data and information from the recommended mapping sources.
Marine Water and Sediment Quality	<p>Meath County Council</p> <p>Key issues that were raised by Meath County Council on the subject of Marine Water and Sediment Quality were provided in response to the proposed development EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of the designated/ non-designated Bathing Waters (Laytown/ Bettystown; Mornington Beach); • Due regard to the 2020 Beach Management Plan for Laytown/ Bettystown; and • Inclusion of the designated Shellfish Water Balbriggan/ Skerries Shellfish Area for which a Pollution Reduction Plan was adopted in 2011. 	Chapter 11 Marine Water and Sediment Quality presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area which consider receptors identified by Meath County Council. Chapter 11 is also supplemented by Appendix 11.1 of Volume 9: Water Framework Directive Assessment.
Benthic and Intertidal Ecology	No key issues on benthic and intertidal ecology receptors were raised during stakeholder consultation.	N/A
Fish and Shellfish	<p>Marine Institute</p> <p>Key issues that were raised by the Marine Institute in response to the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 under the topic of fish and shellfish include the effects of Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) on electro-sensitive species. Their expectation is that the EIAR examines, in depth, the likely effects of the proposed development on a number of possible receptors. These include, shellfish species (crustaceans), elasmobranchs, demersal species and mammals.</p>	Volume 9, Appendix 13.1 provides a comprehensive baseline assessment of the fish and shellfish receptors within the offshore development area and study area. Impacts to these receptors is assessed in Volume 3, Chapter 13 Fish and Shellfish and this includes from EMF.

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
	<p>Irish Fisheries Producer Organisations</p> <p>During consultation with fisheries Producer Organisations in 2023, as part of the consultation undertaken on commercial fisheries, concerns were raised about the proposed development's potential impacts on the habitat and ecology of local fish species. Information on key fish habitats and biotopes was presented in person to the producer organisations in 2023.</p>	
<p>Marine Mammal and Megafauna Ecology</p>	<p>National Parks and Wildlife Service</p> <p>A response to the EIAR Scoping Report was provided by the NPWS in 2021, and a follow up virtual meeting was also held in 2021. The survey and assessment methodologies were presented. The NPWS had a number of queries and key issues on these, including for marine mammals.</p> <p>Marine Institute</p> <p>Key issues that were raised by the Marine Institute in response to the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 under the topic of marine mammals include confirmation that aerial surveys can also be used to survey marine mammals.</p> <p>Irish Whale and Dolphin Group</p> <p>The EIAR Scoping Report was provided to the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) in 2021 and no response was received and no issues were raised. Consultation was undertaken by the Developer and the EIAR team with IWDG in 2023 by virtual meeting. The impact assessment methodology to be used in the EIAR was presented. The importance of mitigation measures for the reduction of impacts to marine mammals was raised as a key issue, in particular in relation to the approach to piling. IWDG commented that stakeholders are moving away from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) approach and that IWDG considers the current NPWS guidelines are insufficient with regards to mitigation. For IWDG there is an expectation that projects will use whatever measures are necessary (maximum mitigation) to reduce impacts. However, if projects are able to demonstrate acceptable impact levels with science, IWDG will be open to reviewing this.</p> <p>IWDG is keen to obtain as much monitoring data as possible to help understand the current status of the marine environment in particular SACs.</p> <p>IWDG was encouraged that Phase One projects were in discussion on approaches for cumulative assessments.</p>	<p>Volume 3; Chapter 14: Marine Mammals presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development and is supported by Appendix 16.1: Marine Mammals Technical Report and Appendix 16.2 Marine Mammals Mitigation Protocol. These documents provide the detail on surveys undertaken; assessment methodologies used; and the mitigation measures relevant to Marine Mammals.</p>
<p>Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology</p>	<p>Marine Institute</p> <p>Key issues that were raised by the Marine Institute in response to the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 under the topic of offshore and intertidal ornithology include the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) screening of species and relevant SPA colonies and concern over ornithology survey methodologies.</p>	<p>Volume 3, Chapter 15: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology presents a summary of the surveys, methodologies and impacts assessed of the offshore development area and is supported by Volume 9, Appendices 15.1 to 15.5 which include baseline data and impact assessment and modelling results.</p>

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
	<p>The Marine Institute confirmed that aerial digital surveys are the method of choice. The Marine Institute also states that there is a need for some low tide intertidal bird surveys to predict any potential disturbance effect.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Marine Institute commented that methodologies proposed to measure and evaluate cumulative effects of offshore renewable developments, in what is becoming a very active area, i.e. western Irish Sea, was not clearly communicated.</p> <p>National Parks and Wildlife Service</p> <p>A response to the EIAR Scoping Report was provided by the NPWS in 2021, and a follow up virtual meeting was also held in 2021. The survey and assessment methodologies were presented and NPWS had a number of queries and key issues on these, including for offshore ornithology such as displacement of fish feeding (prey for birds), bird collision and displacement. NPWS noted in-combination/cumulative effects to be given substantial consideration in the EIAR and NIS.</p> <p>In 2023 a meeting was held between Wind Energy Ireland, the Phase 1 project teams and NPWS to discuss the impacts of the Northwest Irish Sea cSPA on the preparation of the appropriate assessment screening and NISs for Phase One projects. Immediately following this meeting, the EIAR team met the NPWS. At the time of consultation, conservation objectives and qualifying interests had not been established. The project team presented significant survey data to demonstrate the baseline characterisation from an offshore ornithology perspective.</p> <p>Birdwatch Ireland</p> <p>Birdwatch Ireland (BWI) were provided the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 and no response was received.</p> <p>Consultation with BWI was undertaken in 2023 by virtual meetings where the proposed development was presented, assessment approaches discussed, and questions asked around available survey information. BWI raised their concerns regarding bird flu and the potential impact on populations at Rockabill. Tern populations on Rockabill are a concern for BWI. BWI have concerns about cumulative effects, as this has been an issue for onshore wind farm projects. BWI asked about the impact to Malahide Estuary SPA and whether fish species (prey) were being assessed as part of the EIAR. During further discussion queries were asked about barrier effects to those birds commuting to and from local sites such as Lambay Island.</p>	

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
Commercial Fisheries	<p>Marine Institute</p> <p>Key issues that were raised by the Marine Institute in response to the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 under the topic of commercial fisheries included ensuring that key references are consulted including the Shellfish Review 2020 for Razor clams among others and earlier versions for Whelk, also the Marine Atlas for any information on distribution of fisheries by vessels under 12m in length.</p> <p>Irish Fish Producers Organisation, Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation</p> <p>An in-person meeting was held in 2023 for the proposed development to provide a project update and present the baseline data which informed the commercial fisheries impact assessment.</p> <p>Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO) requested an update as soon as the export cable route is finalised. Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation (ISEFPO) provided updates to brown crab fishing grounds and whelk grounds which IFPO confirmed. ISEFPO also confirmed that the areas around the edge of the offshore infrastructure boundary will likely become an area of high fishing pressure. IFPO confirmed that trawling will likely not take place within the array area which could impact historic trawling practices. The EIAR team confirmed displacement of vessels in line with potential Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) will be considered from a cumulative perspective.</p> <p>Additional species for consideration in the baseline assessment were highlighted during consultation as having fishing grounds which extend up to the proposed development boundary which include:</p> <p>Brown crab;</p> <p>Whelk; and</p> <p>Nephrops (Norwegian lobster, prawn and langoustine).</p> <p>Concern was also raised about the displacement effects of the proposed development on the fishing fleet and the corresponding impacts from a safety and navigational viewpoint. Further discussions are being held in relation to Displacement fishing effort as a part of the wider conversation currently underway with fishing industry representative bodies</p> <p>In 2024 based on the request of the IFPO and the ISEFPO the project is now engaging with the IFPO, ISEFPO, KFO, ISWFPO, NIFF, NERIFF and NIFA in relation planning, layout and coexistence.</p>	<p>Volume 3, Chapter 16: Commercial Fisheries presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area and is supported by Appendix 16.1: Commercial Fisheries Technical Report and Appendix 16.2 Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy. Volume 3, Chapter 17: Shipping and Navigation presents a comprehensive assessment of navigational safety risks including fishing vessel movements within the offshore development area.</p>

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
Shipping and Navigation	<p>Meath County Council</p> <p>Key issues that were raised by the Meath County Council (MCC) in response to the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021 under the topic of shipping and navigation include the proposals for Bremore Port (which is recognised under the Draft Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027), and Drogheda Port (identified as a Regional Growth Centre in the National Planning Framework). Drogheda Port is a significant contributor to the local and regional economy. MCC noted that the port is circa 10m west of the site. Vessel movements to and from the port are a project consideration.</p> <p>Commissioners of Irish Lights</p> <p>Following review of the EIAR Scoping Report provided in 2021, the Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL) made specific comments on pod layout and distance to Lambay Island. They agreed on the use of Safety of Navigation: Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response (MGN 654);, marine surveys, and cumulative impacts.</p> <p>A virtual meeting with CIL was held in 2021 to introduce the proposed development and discuss the above feedback on the EIAR Scoping Report. Key issues raised include that the pod layout concept may be challenging for vessel traffic; the proximity to Lambay Island may affect vessel passage; consultation with additional stakeholders will be required; and cumulative effects with other offshore wind farms needs to be considered.</p> <p>In 2023 a virtual meeting was held to present the marine survey results and assessment methodology. From a Search and Rescue (SAR) point of view inclusion of a line of orientation is preferable. From a mariner’s perspective, a single geometrical shape would be beneficial for layout. Overall shape is the biggest priority.</p> <p>Later in 2023 a further meeting was held to provide a project update and confirm the proposed development commitment to not placing infrastructure within 3nm of Rockabill. SAR lanes were also presented. Key issues raised include that that vessels will not transit within the array so may well use the gap between Rockabill and the array area. CIL queried if Standard Positioning Service (SPS) and Indoor Positioning Systems (IPS) requirements had been considered and requested indicative SPS and IPS locations.</p> <p>Dublin Port Company</p> <p>Following issue of the EIAR Scoping Report, a response letter was received, which included key issues such as consideration of Dublin Port’s strategy; liaison with fishery, sailing and leisure clubs; the traffic separation scheme at the port north entrance; cable burial; future shipping vessel numbers; and concluded that the proposed development does not represent a negative outcome for the vast majority of vessels to/from the port but vessels carrying cargoes up and down the east coast to Drogheda and Dundalk will require alternative routing (details are within Appendix 17.1).</p>	<p>Volume 3, Chapter 17: Shipping and Navigation presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area and is supplemented with Appendix 17.1 of Volume 9: the Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA).</p> <p>Within the NRA is a full breakdown of the key points raised during consultation from all the stakeholders, and a response of where the point has been addressed within the NRA.</p>

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
	<p>A follow up meeting was held with Dublin Port Company in 2021. Key issues discussed included the Operation and Maintenance Facility, and there was not sufficient space at Dublin Port. No additional key issues were raised.</p> <p>Marine Survey Office</p> <p>Following receipt of the EIAR Scoping Report provided in 2021, the Marine Survey Office (MSO) agreed to a consultation meeting.</p> <p>In 2021 a virtual meeting was held between the Developer and the MSO. Key issues included that Bremore Port development may present some challenges to the proposed development; navigation channels between the pods will need to be assessed as part of the NRA; Agree that use of MGN 654 guidance is the preferred approach; There is no expectation of any major issues with commercial vessel navigation occurring as a result of the project.</p> <p>In 2023 a virtual meeting was held to present the marine survey results and assessment methodology. MSO raised the need for awareness of the military firing area and liaison with defence infrastructure. Main concern in relation to the layout was obscuring the view of vessels i.e., could non-alignment of turbines obscure vessels from each other. May be an effect on the south-west corner of the array area from vessel traffic i.e., increased vessel numbers. MSO advised consultation with Drogheda Port and vessel operators.</p> <p>Later in 2023 a further meeting was held to provide a project update and confirm the proposed development commitment to not placing infrastructure within 3nm of Rockabill. SAR lanes were also presented. MSO had no concerns over the layout approach</p> <p>Irish Coast Guard (IRCG)</p> <p>In 2023 a virtual meeting was held to present the marine survey results and assessment methodology. Key issues raised included the request to include vessels drifting, colliding and alliding within the NRA. Later in 2023 a further meeting was held to provide a project update and confirm the proposed development commitment to not placing infrastructure within 3nm of Rockabill. IRCG noted that technical equipment such as Very High Frequency Radio should be in place on the offshore substations and that the project would be expected to have adequate self-help capabilities.</p> <p>Drogheda Port Company</p> <p>Following issue of the EIAR Scoping Report, a meeting held with Drogheda Port Company in 2021. Focus was on potential impacts of the project on marine vessels using Drogheda port in addition to possible benefits if Drogheda/Bremore Port was to be considered during O&M. Ship steaming times are critical to their business given the proximity of adjacent ports and cross channel tidal time differences, hence a ship deviation to navigate around an array would be a concern to their business.</p>	

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
	<p>It was highlighted in the meeting that possibly some of the information the Developer are using on/about Drogheda is dated and incorrect and this may disadvantage the Developer’s consideration of Drogheda particularly for the O&M side of the overall development.</p> <p>In 2023 a virtual meeting was held to present the marine survey results and assessment methodology. Preference of 3nm between Rockabill and the array area, to allow a safe passing distance of 1nm between project structures and other hazards.</p> <p>Later in 2023 a further meeting was held to provide a project update and confirm the proposed development commitment to not placing infrastructure within 3nm of Rockabill (referred to as the ‘Structure Exclusion Zone’). Drogheda Port Company were in agreement with of the Structure Exclusion Zone and confirmed that their advice of having a mile either side and a mile in the middle has been taken on by the Developer and noted that smaller vessels within the area can still go closer to land if they wish.</p> <p>Other Stakeholders consulted as part of the Navigational Risk Assessment include the Irish Chamber of Shipping; CLDN, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority</p>	
Offshore Archaeology	<p>National Monument Service - Underwater Archaeology Unit</p> <p>Following receipt of the proposed development EIAR Scoping Report provided in 2021, the Underwater Archaeology Unit (UAU) of the National Monument Service (NMS) agreed to consultation by meeting.</p> <p>Consultation was undertaken by the proposed development with UAU in 2021, 2022 and 2023 by virtual meeting. Project updates were provided with a focus on archaeological surveys undertaken and proposed impact assessment. Key issues and requests raised by the NMS included that baseline archaeological information should be as robust as possible to ensure the UAU can advise An Bord Pleanála in their decision making during the application status.</p> <p>Additionally, the NMS expects to see consideration of submerged landscapes as part of the baseline assessment within the EIAR. The NMS and UAU also confirmed in July 2023 that the locations of geotechnical surveys satisfied the condition of the relevant Foreshore licence (FS007358).</p>	<p>Volume 3, Chapter 18: Offshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area and is supplemented with Appendix 18.1 of Volume 9: Marine Palaeogeographical Assessment which covers the submerged landscapes as part of the baseline.</p> <p>The Developer also committed to undertaking the geotechnical surveys under the Foreshore Licence FS007358 to survey outside the offshore Export Cable Corridor up to the Belle Hill wreck.</p>
Aviation and Radar	<p>Irish Aviation Authority, AirNav Ireland, and Dublin Airport</p> <p>Following receipt of the EIAR Scoping Report provided in 2021, Dublin Airport (part of the dAA Group) confirmed that it had no comment to make in relation to the contents of the EIAR Scoping Report. Further request for consultation with Dublin Airport and AirNav was made in 2023.</p> <p>The Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) provided automatic receipt of the proposed developments EIAR Scoping Report in 2021. Further requests for consultation were made in 2022 and 2023 following recognition that the proposed development was under Dublin Airport controlled airspace.</p>	<p>Volume 3, Chapter 19: Aviation and Radar provides a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area with regards to aviation and radar receptors and is supported by Appendix 19.1: Airspace Analysis and Radar Modelling.</p>

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
	<p>IAA responded in 2023 by letter that the IAA will not be involved within the planning process. The letter noted the requirements for the IAA to be notified at least 30 days prior to construction taking place around IAA infrastructure. Additional information was provided on lighting requirements for the offshore infrastructure during construction and operation.</p> <p>Isle of Man Airport</p> <p>Consultation was undertaken by the proposed development with Isle of Man Airport in 2023 by virtual meeting. An overview of the proposed development was presented and discussion was undertaken on the potential for impacts to airport operations. Isle of Man Airport confirmed that they do not see any impact to operations from the proposed development. No other key issues were raised.</p> <p>Met Éireann</p> <p>Consultation was undertaken by the proposed development with Met Éireann twice in 2023 by virtual meeting. The project was presented and discussion was undertaken on the potential for impacts to the Met Éireann weather radar at Dublin Airport. The proposed development confirmed that the closest turbine is 30.94km from the radar, beyond the 20km World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) guideline. Met Éireann was unable to confirm at this stage the scale of the anticipated impacts to the weather radar at Dublin Airport but did comment that the position of the proposed development (to the north east) is not in the most impactful area due to the prevailing winds.</p> <p>Department of Defence</p> <p>Consultation was sought by the Developer and the EIAR team with the Department of Defence (DoD) in 2022 and 2023 on the aviation operations undertaken in the Gormanston D1 Range Danger Area. Informal discussions and email correspondence with the DoD confirmed the use of the facility for air operations. No key issues were raised by DoD on the proposed development.</p>	
Infrastructure and Other Users	<p>Department of Defence</p> <p>The Department of Defence (DoD) confirmed receipt of the EIAR Scoping Report in 2021, no key issues were raised at that time.</p> <p>A request for consultation with DoD was made in 2022 to discuss the potential interactions associated with subsea cables within the Gormanston D1 Range Danger Area. The DoD confirmed in 2023 that it does not often engage with projects at pre-application stages yet it recognise the importance of the proposed development and was willing to engage.</p> <p>However, the DoD confirmed following receipt of further design information that the DoD safeguards EI-D1 as a live firing range and Gormanston Aerodrome for use as a military airfield. The DoD further confirmed that a Non Direction Beacon and Distance Measure Equipment are both present and operational at the Gormanston Aerodrome.</p>	<p>Volume 3, Chapter 20: Infrastructure and Other Users provides a comprehensive baseline assessment of the offshore development area with regards to infrastructure and other users, including the operations of DoD and any GNI assets.</p> <p>Further information on the proposed development's interaction with third party assets is also presented in Volume 2, Chapter 6: Description of the Proposed Development – Offshore.</p>

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
	<p>The DoD confirmed that any firing exercise in the location of the offshore export cable corridor is subject to public notices advising of times and dates.</p> <p>Gas Networks Ireland</p> <p>In relation to offshore assets, Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) noted that a key concern around the proposed development’s proximity to Interconnector 2 (c. 410m) is in relation to anchor drops. It was noted that offshore cables/infrastructure will not cross with any GNI assets at any point.</p>	
Offshore bats	<p>NPWS</p> <p>NPWS were consulted during 2023 on the survey methodology and impact assessment methodology for offshore bats. NPWS agreed with the survey and assessment approach and recognised the great value in having survey data, as there is very little available on offshore bats in the Irish sea. NPWS recommended a collaborative approach with other Phase One projects (then called Relevant Projects). NPWS recommended a full year of survey data, to obtain a better understanding of bat activity.</p> <p>Bat Conservation Ireland</p> <p>Bat Conservation Ireland (BCI) were provided the proposed development EIAR Scoping Report in 2021. BCI confirmed that they do not have the resources to comment on planning issues, and no key issues on offshore receptors were raised.</p>	<p>Volume 4, Chapter 35: Offshore Bats summarises the surveys undertaken by the proposed development and the results of those efforts.</p> <p>The proposed development did undertake further survey following request from NPWS and the survey data is presented in Appendix 35.1 and 35.2.</p> <p>The Phase One projects have agreed to a collaborative approach to monitoring post consent, that includes offshore bats.</p>
Land and Soils	<p>Geological Survey Ireland</p> <p>A response to the EIAR Scoping Report was provided by the Geological Survey Ireland in 2021. In relation to Land, Soils, the Geological Survey Ireland included several datasets of relevance to the proposed development for consideration in establishing the baseline environment.</p>	<p>The baseline environment from a land and soils perspective (including geology and hydrogeology) is presented using the datasets noted by the Geological Survey Ireland in Volume 4, Chapter 21: Land and Soils.</p>
Water	<p>Fingal County Council (FCC)</p> <p>Consultations with FCC indicated that the surface water management plan of the grid facility does not impact on the management plans of nearby developments.</p> <p>FCC also suggested that the proposed development should consider Section 50 applications to determine the feasibility of watercourse crossings.</p> <p>Office of Public Works and the Environmental Protection Agency</p> <p>The OPW and EPA were consulted regarding their feedback on proposed development particularly on the watercourse and the proposed method of crossing them. A virtual meeting was held with the OPW which confirmed that underground cables will not interfere with conveyance and therefore, Section 50s are not likely to be required. However, the EPA did not attend the meeting, stating that they do not want to comment on individual projects before receiving the project details as a prescribed body.</p>	<p>A Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP), which forms part of the Onshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (refer to Appendix 9.1) has been developed following the consultation with FCC.</p> <p>Information on the watercourse crossings is provided in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Description of the Proposed Development – Onshore, and Volume 2, Chapter 9: Construction Strategy – Onshore. Further assessments on the watercourse crossings are provided within Volume 4, Chapter 21: Land and Soils, Volume 4, Chapter 22: Water, and Volume 4: Chapter 23: Biodiversity.</p>

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
Biodiversity landward of the Highwater Mark (HWM)	<p>National Parks and Wildlife Service</p> <p>A response to the EIAR Scoping Report was provided by the NPWS in 2021, and a follow up virtual meeting was also held in 2021. The survey and assessment methodologies were presented. Additional input was obtained from the NPWS on the various ecological surveys to be carried out on receptors landward of the HWM.</p> <p>Several subsequent consultations with the NPWS were undertaken in conjunction with the development of the Northwest Irish Sea Special Protection Area (SPA). Following these consultations, the NPWS provided the datasets to the project team for use in the assessments which enabled a robust assessment of likely significant effects of the proposed development on relevant qualifying species.</p>	Please see Volume 4, Chapter 23: Biodiversity for a detailed assessment of the likely significant effects arising from the proposed development on biodiversity. Appendices 23.1 to 23.9 present the results of desk studies and ecological surveys which informed the baseline upon which the impact assessment was conducted.
Traffic & Transportation	<p>Fingal County Council</p> <p>At various stages in the EIAR preparation, the Developer and project team engaged with FCC’s traffic and transportation team to present relevant aspects of the proposed development from a traffic perspective. Following the evolution of the design of the proposed development, subsequent consultation was undertaken around the required road closures and proposed diversion routes. Mitigation measures were discussed and agreed to reduce potential impacts by limiting the duration of closures.</p> <p>Dublin City Council</p> <p>The main impact from an EIAR perspective in Dublin City Council jurisdiction will be from construction traffic. Consultation with DCC indicated that there are numerous proposals within the area and additional information has been provided during consultation to be incorporated into the EIAR to reduce the potential for traffic congestion.</p>	See Volume 4, Chapter 24: Traffic and Transportation for a full assessment of likely significant effects from the proposed development on traffic within FCC and DCC jurisdictions. These include the potential road closures, diversions and mitigation measures proposed throughout the construction phase of the proposed development. Further measures to reduce impacts to baseline traffic levels are included in the Construction Traffic Management Plan which is included as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in Appendix 9.1.
Onshore Archaeology	<p>National Monument Service</p> <p>The National Monument Service (NMS) noted that a geophysical survey at the landfall will be beneficial as the landfall site is suitable for bronze age material. The NMS also noted that additional intertidal surveys would be required due to the volume of wrecks around Balbriggan (see Offshore Archaeology above for further information).</p> <p>Prior to obtaining the DF Opinion from An Bord Pleanála, the Developer and EIAR team engaged with NMS to outline the approach taken within the EIAR in relation to the assessment of onshore impacts. NMS confirmed that the approach to impact assessment for effects on archaeology landward of the HWM is sufficient.</p>	The findings from the geophysical survey and subsequent test-trenching surveys undertaken following consultation with NMS are provided in Appendix 25.2 and Appendix 25.3 respectively. The full assessment on onshore archaeology is presented in Volume 4, Chapter 25: Onshore Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage.

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
Material Assets	<p>Irish Rail</p> <p>Multiple consultations have been undertaken between the Developer and Irish Rail to agree an approach to the crossing of the Dublin-Belfast rail line at the landfall site. Engagement was also undertaken with the Dublin Area Rapid Transit (DART) Coastal North + Team over the landfall boundaries and the potential substation site proposed to be located adjacent to the proposed development boundary at the landfall site. Engagement to date has resulted in a letter of consent issued to the Developer by Córas Iompair Éireann for the landfall construction activities.</p> <p>Gas Networks Ireland</p> <p>In relation to onshore GNI assets, the proposed development interacts with Interconnector 1 and Interconnector 2 at three separate locations. GNI noted that at these crossings a trefoil formation is preferred to mitigate electrical interference.</p> <p>EirGrid</p> <p>Consultation with EirGrid has confirmed the crossing methodology for the East West Interconnector, as well as the connection strategy for connecting the proposed development to the existing Belcamp Substation and the proposed Belcamp extension.</p> <p>Uisce Éireann, Greater Dublin Drainage and ESB</p> <p>Interactions with various Uisce Éireann assets, arterial drainage schemes, and electrical infrastructure were raised during consultation with Uisce Éireann, Greater Dublin Drainage Scheme and ESB.</p>	<p>Volume 4, Chapter 26: Material Assets presents the assessment of the proposed development on land use, properties and utilities landward of the HWM. Interactions with Irish Rail, GNI, EirGrid, Uisce Éireann, and ESB assets are fully assessed following the feedback received during consultation.</p> <p>Further information on the interaction with these assets is presented in Volume 2, Chapter 9: Construction Strategy – Onshore.</p>
Air Quality	No key issues on air quality receptors were raised during stakeholder consultation.	N/A
Climate	No key issues on climate were raised during stakeholder consultation.	N/A
Seascape, Landscape and Visual	Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, Meath County Council and Louth County Council queried the location and size of the turbines from a Seascape, Landscape and Visual perspective.	Volume 5, Chapter 29: Seascape, Landscape and Visual presents an assessment of likely significant effects from viewpoints selected across the coastal planning authorities. The assessment was conducted on determining the Project Option which results in the greatest magnitude of impact, thereby resulting in the greatest significance of effect and addresses the concerns raised during consultation with the aforementioned stakeholders.
Noise and Vibration	No key issues on noise and vibration receptors were raised during stakeholder consultation.	N/A
Resource and Waste Management	No key issues on resource and waste management were raised during stakeholder consultation.	N/A

EIAR Topic	Summary of Key Issues from Statutory Stakeholder Consultations	Where addressed in the EIAR
Population and Human Health	No key issues on population and human health receptors were raised during stakeholder consultation.	N/A
Socioeconomic, tourism and recreation	<p>Fáilte Ireland</p> <p>During consultation with Fáilte Ireland, the potential impact on beach access during landfall construction were raised. Fáilte Ireland confirmed that evidence from site visits in the UK to visit Rampion windfarm in Brighton indicates that tourism does not seem to be negatively impacted by offshore wind farms.</p> <p>No key issues on socioeconomic receptors were raised during stakeholder consultation</p>	<p>Volume 5, Chapter 29: Seascape Landscape and Visual presents an assessment of likely significant effects from viewpoints selected across the coastal planning authorities. The assessment was conducted on determining the Project Option which results in the greatest magnitude of impact, thereby resulting in the greatest significance of effect and addresses the concerns raised during consultation with the aforementioned stakeholders.</p> <p>Further information on the visual impact to tourism receptors is presented in Volume 5, Chapter 33: Socioeconomic, Tourism and Recreation.</p>
Cumulative Effects	<p>An Bord Pleanála</p> <p>During S287 pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála, the Developer stated that developers from other Phase One projects have collaborated to share appropriate levels of information. An Bord Pleanála stated that it is important to have ongoing communication in this regard and that there is a consistency in approach and methodology used.</p> <p>Coastal Planning Authorities</p> <p>During consultation with Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, Meath County Council and Louth County Council, the need for a comprehensive cumulative assessment was raised in various meetings with regards to the proposed development. Specific discussions around Fingal County Council focused on the MetroLink and DART Coastal North+ projects for consideration.</p> <p>Consequently, numerous projects including MetroLink (TII and ESB), the Aviation Fuel Pipeline, various active travel plans, DART Coastal North (Irish Rail), and the Greater Dublin Drainage project teams have been consulted from a cumulative perspective and have informed the design and all relevant cumulative assessments.</p>	<p>Volume 6, Chapter 38: Cumulative and Inter-Related Effects presents a detailed assessment on cumulative effects carried out as part of this EIAR for onshore and sitewide chapters. Offshore cumulative assessments are presented in the relevant EIAR Chapters in Volume 3, Chapters 10-20 and Volume 5, Chapter 35: Offshore Bats.</p>

Appendix A

Community Information Booklets

A.1 Community Information Booklets

NISA

North Irish Sea Array
Offshore Wind Farm Project

SECURING OUR ENERGY FUTURE



NISA

North Irish Sea Array

North Irish Sea Array

This offshore wind energy project being proposed off the coast of counties Dublin, Meath and Louth brings with it an opportunity for Ireland to significantly contribute to the development of a clean, sustainable, renewable energy future.

Our Community Liaison team has been engaging with local stakeholders since 2021 sharing information via meetings, public consultation events, virtual consultation rooms, our project website and community poster campaigns. As NISA moves towards a planning submission, providing information on the project's current position and continued engagement remains critical to the development process.



Design layout includes maximum of 49 turbines



Off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth



CO2 displacement – up to half a million tonnes per year



Capacity to power approximately 500,000 Irish homes and businesses.



Community Benefit Fund of approximately €4 million per annum



Potential to create high-quality jobs

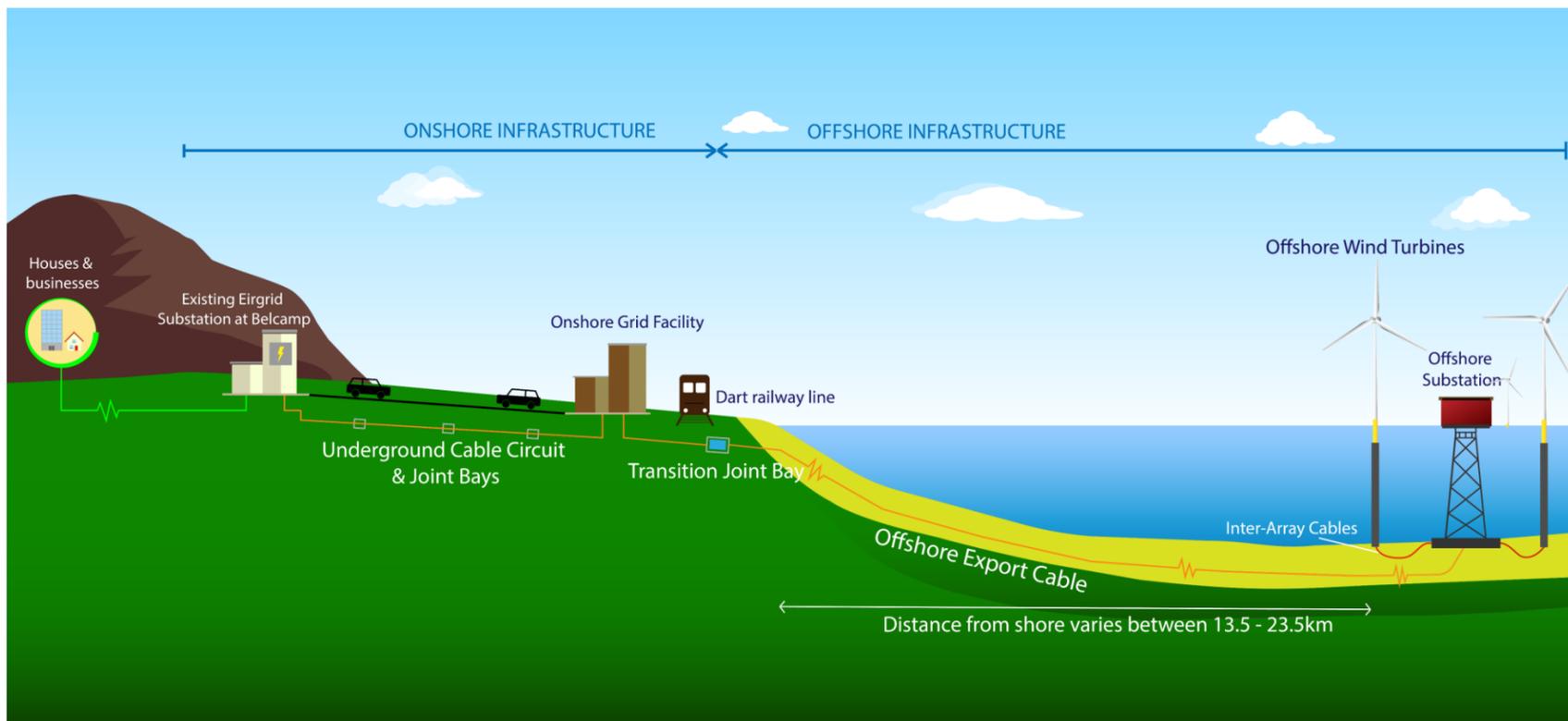
About the Developers

This project is a joint venture between **Statkraft**, Europe's largest producer of renewable energy and **Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners P/S (CIP)**, the world's largest dedicated fund manager within greenfield renewable energy investments, and a global leader in offshore wind.

Full details of the project are available on our website
www.northirishsearray.ie

Project Infrastructure

Offshore and Onshore Infrastructure

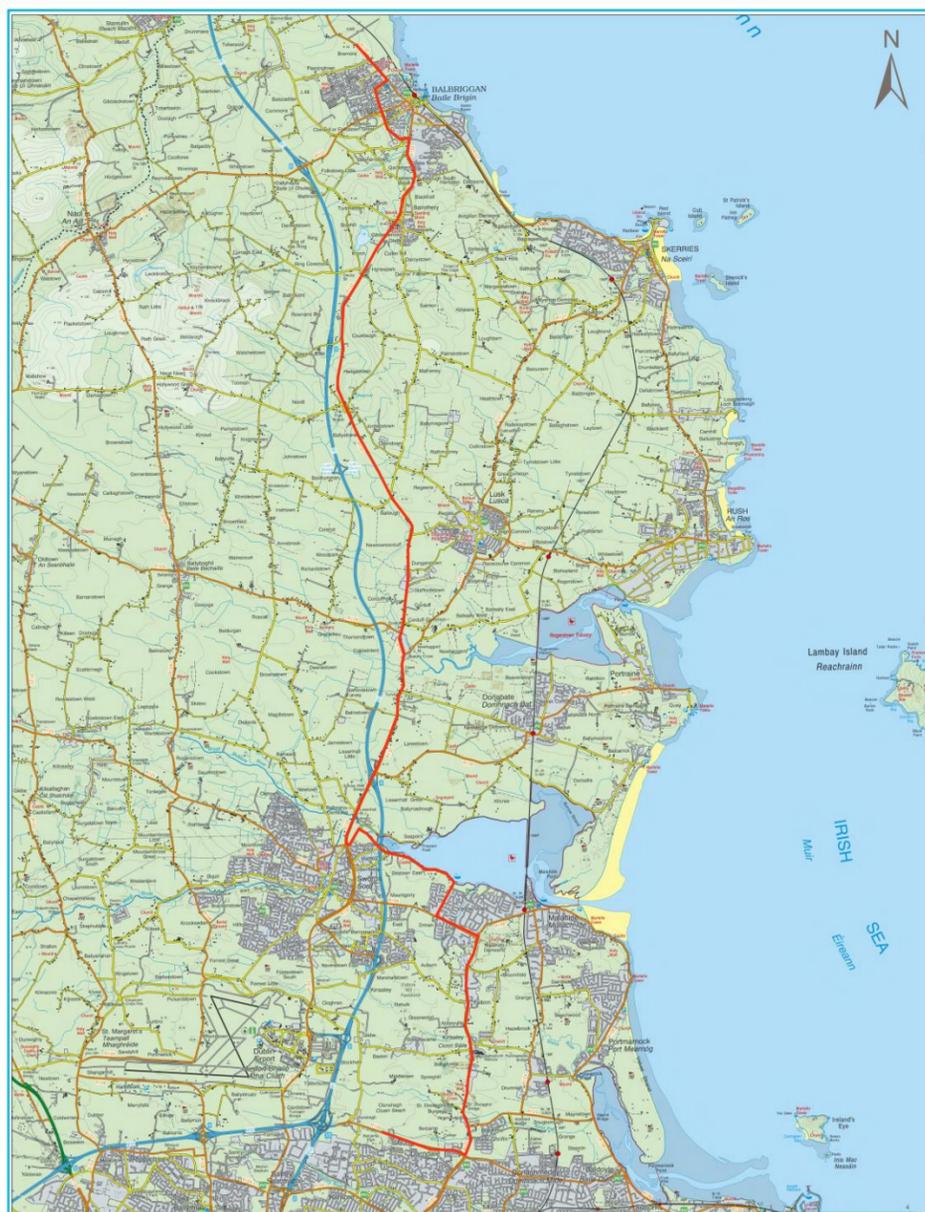


Cable Route

A proposed underground cable route for the project goes from the north of Balbriggan to the grid connection point at Belcamp.

As per EirGrid specifications, the proposed route will follow local roads wide enough to minimise the need for closures, cross under the M1 and arrive at grid connection point at Belcamp.

Belcamp is a facility on the national grid with optimum connectivity and capacity.

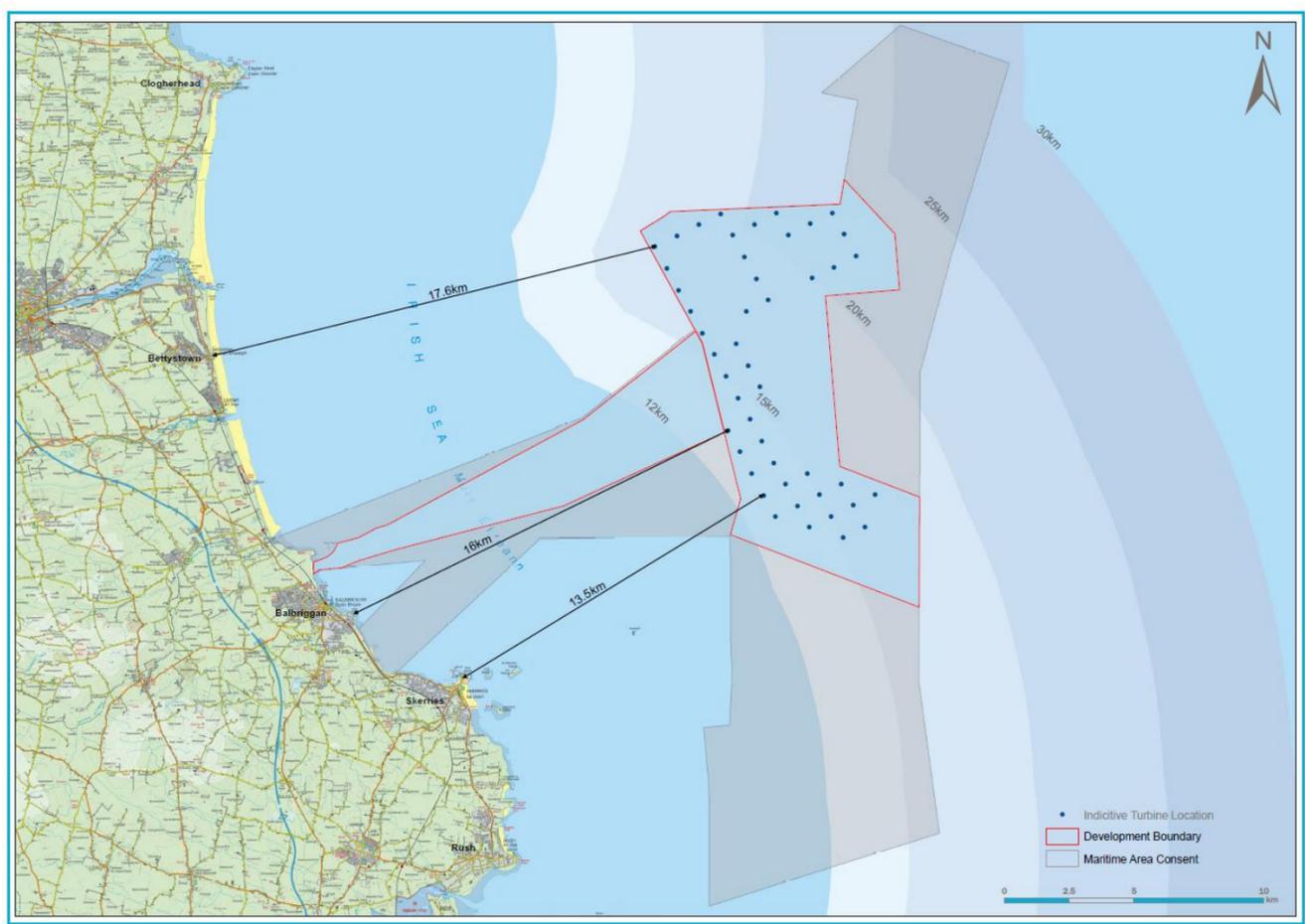


Map not to scale

Site selection

NISA is located off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth, with the closest potential turbine location being approximately 13.5km from shore.

The NISA location couples an area with an excellent wind resource, with an area with a very high electricity demand.



Timeline

The project has a target planning submission date of summer 2024. We encourage you to reach out to our community liaison team with any questions you may have on project design at enquiries@northirishsearray.ie



Share your feedback here



Full details of the project are available on our website
www.northirishsearray.ie

NISA

North Irish Sea Array
Offshore Wind Farm Project

SECURING OUR ENERGY FUTURE

NISA

North Irish Sea Array

The Project at a Glance



Current design layout includes between 35-46 turbines



Off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth



CO2 displacement – half a million tonnes per year



Capacity to power approx. 500,000 homes



Associated works including turbine foundations, subsea electrical and communications cables, temporary site compounds, substation, grid systems services and maintenance facilities.



Potential to create high-quality jobs



Produce renewable energy for Ireland's electricity grid



Community Benefit Fund of approximately €4 million per annum



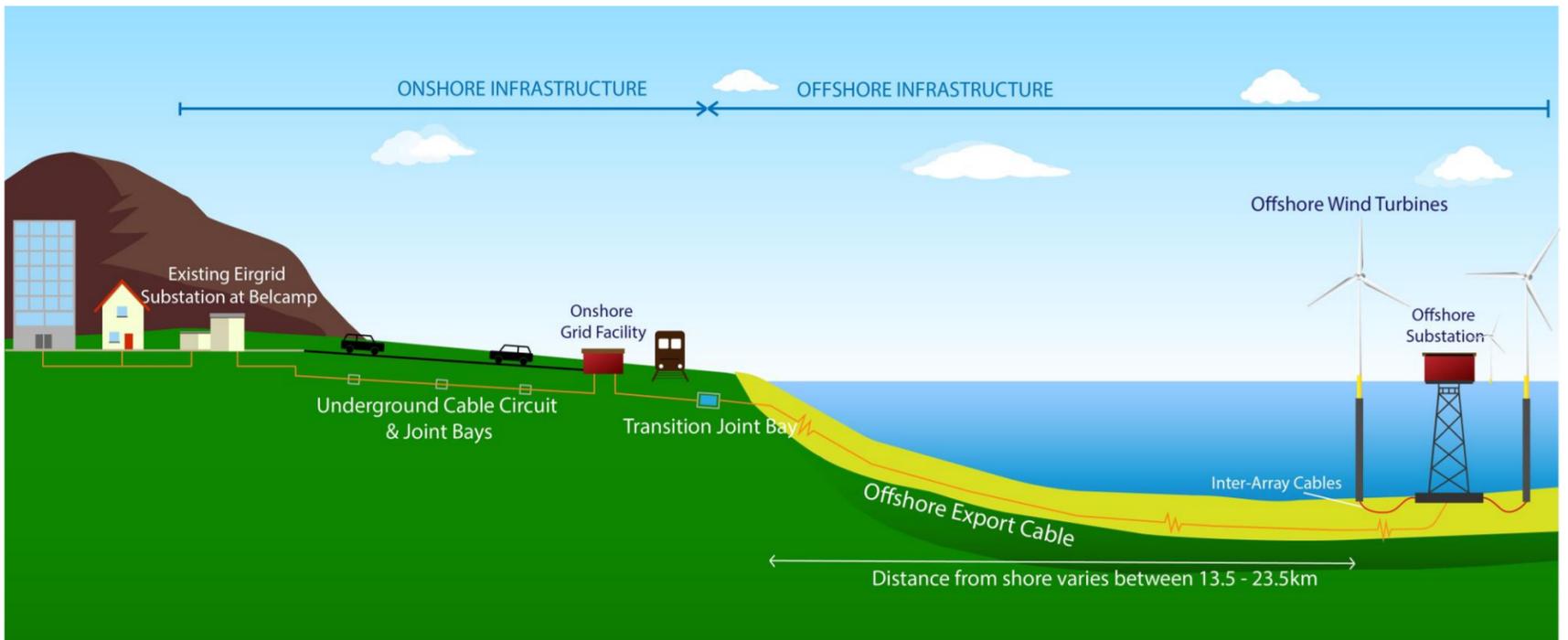
Planned connection point: Belcamp Station



NISA is a Strategic Infrastructure Development which is of strategic or social importance to the local area and as such requires a direct application to An Bord Pleanála

Outline project infrastructure

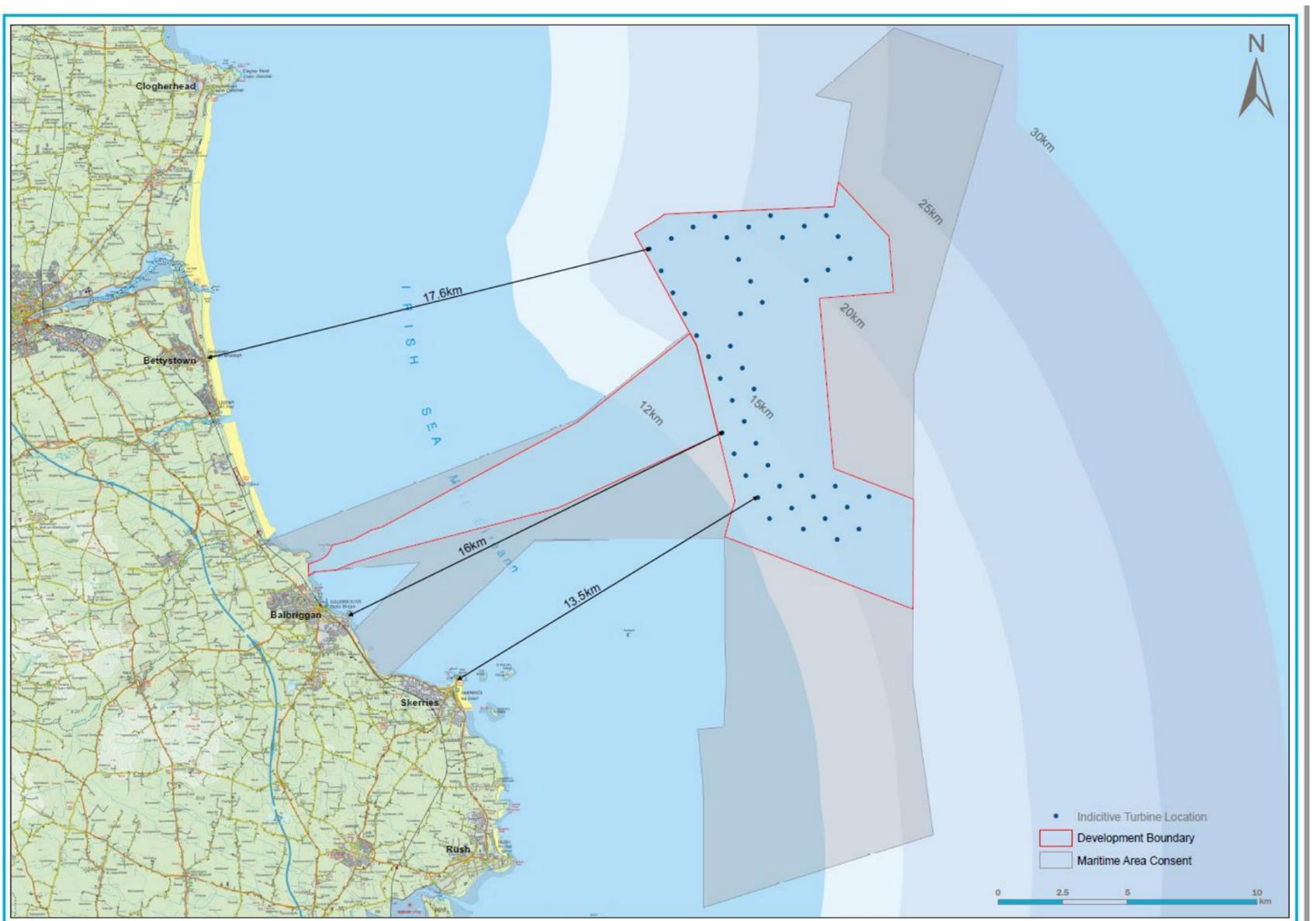
NISA is located off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth, with the closest potential turbine location being approximately 13.5km from shore.



Site selection

The NISA location couples an area with an excellent wind resource, to an area with a very high electricity demand.

While survey and design works are still ongoing, the NISA wind farm has committed to reducing the overall footprint of the project by 64% in comparison to the MAC extent. All infrastructure remaining within the depicted red line offshore development boundary.



Timeline

Our internal processes for approaching any project are incredibly detailed and thorough. Before embarking on any design, we carry out extensive scoping, surveys and community engagement.

Project designs were developed to support a submission to ORESSI in May 2023. These designs were created based on the results of those extensive surveys that began in 2019, including establishing the areas technically feasible to install wind turbines and as such, influence the wind farm layouts being considered.

The next phase will see us refining those designs further ahead of submitting a formal planning application.



Full details of the work conducted to date are available on our website www.northirishseaarray.ie

We would encourage anyone who has an interest in this proposal to get in touch with the Community Liaison Team
enquiries@northirishseaarray.ie

North Irish Sea Array Offshore Wind Farm

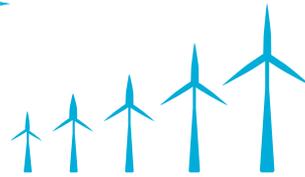
Project Booklet

Q3 2023





NISA Offshore Wind Farm



North Irish Sea Array

North Irish Sea Array Offshore Wind Farm, also known as **NISA**, is an offshore wind energy project being proposed off the coast of counties Dublin, Meath and Louth. **NISA** brings with it an opportunity to significantly contribute to the development of a clean, sustainable, renewable energy future for Ireland. Over the course of our public consultation events, virtual consultation facilities and in person engagement, we would like to share with you what sustainability means to us, and the role this project and offshore renewable energy plays in delivering a more sustainable future for you, your family and for generations to come.

DELIVERING A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FUTURE

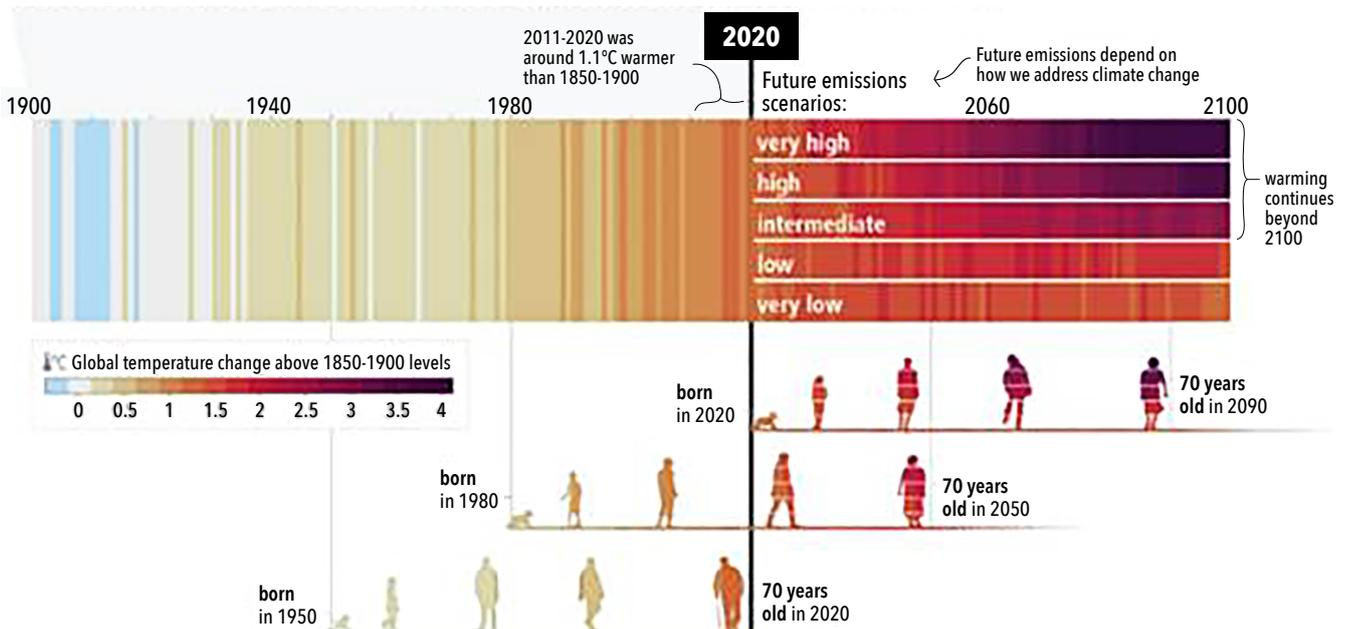
Climate Action

We believe that it is possible to combat the worst impacts of climate change and deliver a better future for us all. We are all being challenged to consider the role we play in climate action and how we can reduce our reliance on costly and polluting imported fossil fuels.

The world is getting warmer, and extreme weather events are a frequent occurrence. Researchers say there's a strong possibility that we will pass the 1.5°C global warming threshold between now and 2027.

This graphic from the IPCC's AR6 Synthesis Report, which was published earlier this year, shows the observed and possible projected global temperature trends and how they would impact different generations.

c) The extent to which current and future generations will experience a hotter and different world depends on choices now and in the near-term



(IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023)



We cannot stop climate change, but we can take action to address it.

Renewable Energy and Energy Security

Renewable energy development is a vital part of that action. Price hikes have put huge pressure on households and businesses and exacerbated the cost-of-living crisis. Our electricity demands are also on the rise and providing sufficient supplies to avoid potential power shortages has become more challenging. Furthermore, energy security in Ireland has recently come into sharp focus. Having our own secure energy supply will shield us from global market energy price increases and continue to help protect families and businesses from the worst effects of a crisis caused by our reliance on fossil fuels. We can tap into our own natural resources and roll out clean, affordable energy that won't break the bank.

The first offshore wind specific auction in Ireland, Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme (ORESS) 1, was a competitive auction process held in May 2023. NISA was one of the successful projects at this auction, confirming a route to market should the project receive planning permission. This competitive ORESS-1 price will see us locked into low-price renewable energy for the next 20 years.

Who We Are

Statkraft is a leading company in hydropower internationally and Europe's largest generator of renewable energy. The Group produces hydropower, wind power, solar power, gas-fired power and supplies district heating. Statkraft is a global company in energy market operations and has 5,300 employees in 21 countries.

Statkraft is committed to delivering affordable renewable energy on to our grid system and working with communities to explore how these projects might work best in their local areas. We are also committed to delivering local funds to assist people and communities in a real and tangible way, making lives easier, better, and more sustainable.

In January 2023, we joined forces with Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), a global leader in offshore wind energy projects, to develop the NISA project. This new partnership with CIP will complement our development experience, enabling us to deliver clean, green energy to Irish homes and businesses.



■ OUR APPROACH TO CONSULTATION

Community Input and Feedback

We are acutely aware of how precious this coastline and marine environment is to you, the vibrant coastal communities.

As part of our engagement approach, our team has been working from an early stage in the development process to share project information. This is to both make you aware but also to provide an opportunity to gather your feedback. It is with this feedback that we are able to bring forward proposals that are suitable and appropriate in the context of the local area.

NISA is an opportunity to deliver a sustainable energy future. We are committed to fostering a positive and constructive two-way dialogue based on openness and transparency which we believe will allow NISA to deliver the maximum benefits locally, in the best possible way.

The Fishing Community and NISA

The NISA team recognises the fishing community as important stakeholders in this project. We believe that NISA can and should work to deliver a more sustainable future for the local fisheries, supporting those earning a living from our shared waters. We have endeavoured over the past number of years to develop an in-depth understanding of the area's local fishing practices. We are working proactively to shape a project that will support the sustainable development of the local fisheries and the communities in which they operate.

We are endeavouring to create a win-win scenario in which the fishing community and the local marine environment can benefit from the delivery of much-needed renewable energy. We are working with representative organisations, including local fisherman, and considering new ideas to establish how this can best be achieved.



Your Fisheries Liaison Officer

Mark O'Reilly

To contact your Fisheries Liaison Officer, please email flo@northirishsearray.ie

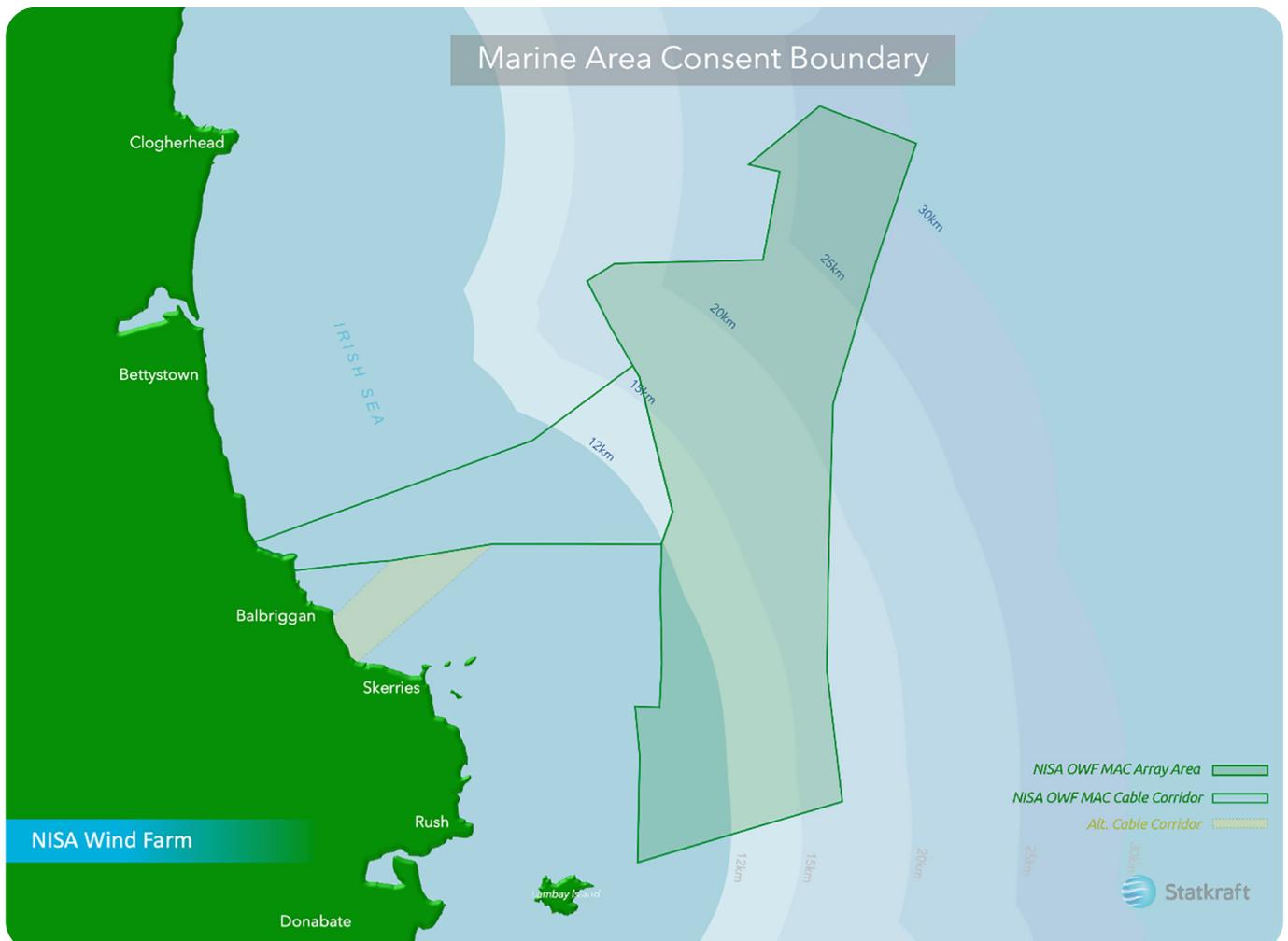
PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Project at a Glance

The NISA Offshore Renewable Energy Project

- Current design layout includes between 35 - 46 turbines
- Off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth
- CO₂ displacement - half a million tonnes per annum
- Capacity to power approx. 500,000 homes
- Associated works will include turbine foundations, subsea electrical and communications cables, temporary site compounds, substations, grid systems services, underground electrical and communications cables, joint bays, grid connection and operation and maintenance facilities.
- Potential to create high-quality jobs
- Produce renewable energy for Ireland's electricity grid
- Community Benefit Fund of approximately €4 million per annum
- Planned connection point: Belcamp Station
- NISA is a Strategic Infrastructure Development which is of strategic or social importance to the local area and as such requires a direct application to An Bord Pleanála

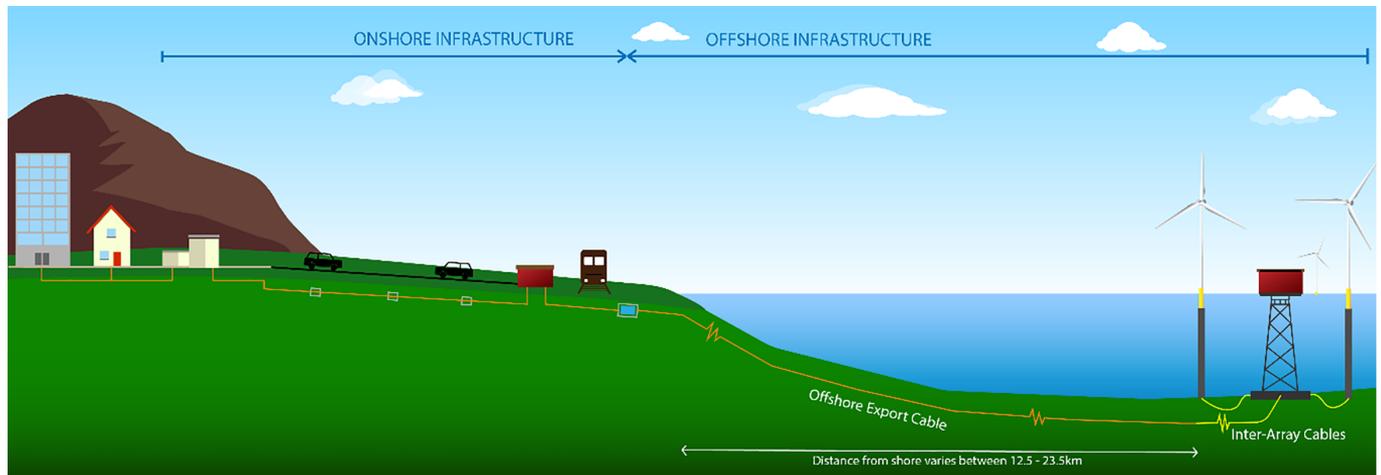
The NISA location couples an area with an excellent wind resource, to an area with a very high electricity demand.





■ PROJECT DETAILS

NISA is located off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth, with the closest potential turbine location being approximately 12.5km from shore. From the coastline, that is approximately the same distance as Skerries to Naul, Bettystown to Donore or Balbriggan to Barons Hall.



Offshore

The offshore elements include between 35 and 46 wind turbines with a maximum tip height of 320m.

The wind farm layout is something we are continuing to develop. The positioning of the turbines, along with the cable route to shore, require thorough examination to ensure minimal impact on the coastal communities and marine environment.

We welcome you to view a selection of photomontages at our Virtual Consultation Room at www.northirishseaarray.ie

Landfall

To consider both offshore and onshore requirements, a detailed review of the coastline was carried out. The objective of the review was to establish the most suitable and appropriate area to bring the cables onshore and to consider that in a local context. An area to the north of Balbriggan has emerged as the preferred landfall location.

The project will employ Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) technology which minimises disturbance along the coastline. HDD is a construction technique whereby a tunnel is drilled under a waterway or other designated area, and a pipeline or other utility is pulled through the drilled underground tunnel.

Onshore

There will be a substation located at landfall. This facility will be located to the west of the road R132. This is required not only to facilitate the transmission of the electricity from the wind farm to the connection point, but it will also strengthen the electricity grid in this area.

We recognise that this is a new type of infrastructure for the area so measures to screen the infrastructure will be taken to minimise any visual impact.

Cable Route

A cable route from the north of Balbriggan to the connection point at Belcamp is now being considered. Our assessments to date have taken account of several different factors including:

- Future road upgrades
- Impacts of traffic management during construction
- Existing services
- Active travel initiatives such as the possibility of creating cycle paths as part of the reinstatement works
- Environmental consideration
- Existing infrastructure

We envisage a route which would go around the north of Balbriggan, follow local roads wide enough to minimise the need for closures, cross under the M1 and arrive at Belcamp. The grid connection point will be at Belcamp - a facility on the national grid with great connectivity and capacity. We are engaging with EirGrid to determine what, if any, further infrastructure will be required here.

A high-level indicative cable route map is available to view at our virtual consultation room





■ BENEFITS

Commitment to the Local Area

Becoming part of a vibrant coastal community is hugely important to everyone on the NISA team. We are proud to have brought the climate-focused, Gaisce-approved Rewrite programme to transition-year students in the area. Rewrite is a blended learning programme that explains why climate change is happening, with an emphasis on the solutions that currently exist, the innovations that are on the horizon and the exciting opportunities for students in this space. We hope to expand our sponsorship of Rewrite with additional schools in 2023.

In addition, the team has worked with other community groups to support local festivals and Christmas activities.

Strengthening our Economy

Developing offshore wind energy also has the potential to support thousands of additional jobs in years to come all around the country through the maturing of supply chain, building out our nation's ports and stimulating foreign investment thanks to a robust energy infrastructure.

Local Employment

Offshore wind creates employment opportunities in areas such as manufacturing, construction, scientific research and electricity generation. Over the duration of this project, it is estimated that over 300 jobs will be created through the construction and management periods.

NISA also encourages local businesses to offer services such as engineering services, hospitality, fuel supply or office space.

We welcome you to register your interest via our project website <https://northirishseaarray.ie>

The Community Benefit Fund

The Community Benefit Fund gives power to the people – because it is the local community that decides where the money is spent. In the case of NISA, the funding would reach approximately €60 million over the lifetime of the project – giving residents the opportunity to bring about transformative and positive change to their local community. Not only would the fund allow communities to develop new and exciting initiatives in their own areas; it would also support existing local amenities and clubs, environmental and energy efficiency schemes, as well as the fishing industry.

In time, an independent Fund Administrator will be appointed to facilitate and support the local community to maximise the opportunities of the Community Benefit Fund.

Since 2019, the project team has been engaging with local community groups on the process with a view to aggregating information, feedback and submissions which could guide the direction of the Community Benefit Fund.

Environment

While we gain invaluable knowledge from consulting with local communities, the NISA project has undertaken extensive site survey efforts, both onshore and offshore, to provide vital information regarding the environmental and technical characterisation of the project area.

The findings from these surveys will inform the development of the proposed project and will be published in our Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) as part of the NISA planning application.

Environmental Surveys & Studies

(ongoing since 2019)

Offshore

Ornithology & Marine Mammal Surveys

Marine Traffic Surveys

Metocean

Oceanographic & meteorological surveys

Marine Archaeology

Location of ship wrecks

Benthic Surveys

Marine Biological Communities

Intertidal Surveys

All marine activities

Geological Investigations

Geotechnical & Geophysical surveys

Onshore

Bird Surveys

Ornithology

Ecological Surveys

Mammals & natural habitats

Site Investigations

Geotechnical & location of existing services

Traffic & Transport

Traffic surveys & studies

Archaeology

Archaeological assessments

Noise & Air Quality

Establishing baselines





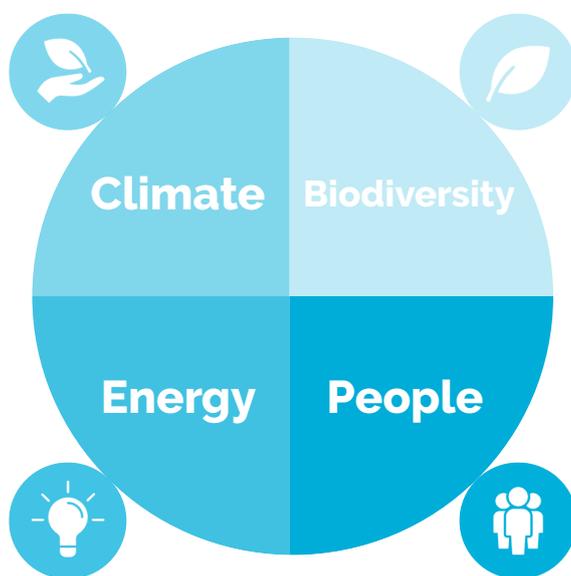
Sustainability at Statkraft

At Statkraft, we are committed to creating a world where renewable energy powers every community, home and business. We believe sustainability is about more than operating responsibly. It's an opportunity to support the communities we're a part of and to make a bigger impact on the world. Statkraft regards climate, energy, biodiversity and human rights as particularly important areas to which the company is well-positioned to contribute.

What does sustainability mean to us? And what does that mean to you?

Replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy is the only way to avoid harmful global warming. Statkraft is involved in the development of onshore wind energy, battery storage and grid services which are aimed at facilitating a grid system that can run entirely on renewable energy. All of these technologies will support Ireland's ambitious decarbonisation plans, eliminating our reliance on polluting fossil fuels. Climate change is a challenge for us all.

A core part of Statkraft's business is the commitment to delivering affordable renewable energy. We see this not only as a way of protecting people against energy price inflation but also as a key element in combatting climate change and supporting households and businesses.



We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis and at Statkraft we are committed to capturing opportunities that will serve our environment well. Examples of these types of initiatives include planting wildflower meadows, providing sections of species-rich grass and improving hedgerows. Protecting and enhancing our biodiversity will make our local environment more resilient.

Sustainability encompasses more than simply protecting the environment or delivering climate action it also includes people, communities and delivering for society as a whole. This includes the communities where we operate and the people who work with us.

Our Obligation to Create a More Sustainable Future

As a developer of renewable energy, we have a responsibility to do not only what is right, but to do it the right way.

Addressing climate change and energy security warrants nothing less.

Should this proposal come to fruition, it goes without saying that there will be an onus on us to operate the wind farm in a responsible way. This is a responsibility that we take very seriously.

We want to become your partner in building a more sustainable community. Together we can identify and execute wider sustainability projects that will make your community an even better place to live, work and raise a family. Whether that project is delivering climate action, nurturing biodiversity and wildlife, focusing on sustainable employment or building more inclusive communities, we want to hear from you on how we can work together.

Our Climate, Our Seas and Our Coastline

These issues are inextricably linked. As an island nation, our seas and our coastline form part of our very identity and are very important to us.

Effectively limiting the negative impacts associated with climate change, which have already been felt in many coastal areas can only be delivered through decarbonising our electricity system. Climate change will cause our coastline to change however, projects such as NISA can help limit this and can also assist local coastal communities in delivering climate mitigation and adaption initiatives to protect our communities into the future.

From a visual perspective, some people will view offshore renewable energy projects as a beacon of hope for a sustainable energy future, others will consider that they are simply a blot on the horizon. Ultimately this is a very personal matter but we would hope that NISA will be seen as a symbol, and physical demonstration of our generations commitment to a green and sustainable future.

The Power of Wind Energy

Wind energy saved 4 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2020, more than every other form of renewable energy in Ireland combined. It also provided 41% of Ireland's electricity in January 2023 – a record high for the month of January.

With greater efficiencies thanks to the higher speed and consistency of wind resource at sea, offshore wind energy is a clean, sustainable source of energy that can push expensive gas generators off the system and ensure we drive the cost of electricity down.

Offshore renewable energy is still in its infancy in Ireland. Therefore, collaboration across communities is critical to ensure that it can deliver the most benefit and in the most appropriate way.

Positive engagement and feedback on this proposal, while design is ongoing, will ensure that all possible opportunities can be captured and ultimately delivered, should the project come to fruition.

We endeavour to develop suitable and appropriate renewable energy projects that will bring long-lasting benefits, not only to our country and future generations, but also to the local communities in which they are located.

What NISA Can Deliver

Specifically, NISA has the potential to:

 <p>POWER APPROXIMATELY 500,000 Homes WITH CLEAN ENERGY</p>	 <p>DISPLACE APPROXIMATELY 1/2 a Million Tonnes OF CO₂</p>	 <p>PROVIDE GREEN ENERGY TO POWER HOMES, BUSINESSES, INDUSTRY, HEATING AND TRANSPORT</p>	 <p>REDUCE OR ELIMINATE OUR NEED TO IMPORT ENERGY AND PROVIDE ENERGY SECURITY FOR YEARS TO COME</p>
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■ Talk to our Community Liaison Team

The Community Liaison Team has years of experience in both wind energy and working with communities. While the team members are very knowledgeable about renewable energy projects, they also appreciate the fact that individuals and communities have different thoughts on what works in their respective areas. The team is available to provide information on this proposal or indeed the wider issues of climate action. We would encourage anyone who has an interest in this proposal to get in touch with us using the contact details below.

Contact Us

Community Liaison Team

enquiries@northirishseaarray.ie



Community Liaison Officer
Jim O'Reilly



Stakeholder Manager
Anne Browning

Dedicated Website

There is a dedicated project website in place where all information and updates relevant to the project will be posted. Please do have a look at the information provided.

<https://northirishseaarray.ie>

Virtual Consultation Room

There is a dedicated project Virtual Consultation Room in place where all information and updates relevant to the NISA Offshore Wind Farm will be posted. We encourage you to visit the consultation room to keep up to date with the latest developments. If you have any further questions, you can contact our dedicated Community Liaison Officer on the contact details provided above.

Privacy Policy

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Submit feedback here



Appendix B

Fisheries Consultation Booklets

B.1 Fisheries Consultation Booklets

NISA Fisheries Engagement Project Update

■ Overview of NISA

The North Irish Sea Array, also known as NISA, is an offshore wind energy project being proposed off the coast of counties Dublin, Meath and Louth. The NISA project is currently in the early stages of development, with surveys, consultations and assessments to be carried out over the next year, to inform the design of the proposed project. We are endeavouring to take a considered approach to harnessing the wind energy in this area, in order to deliver real climate action, in a locally appropriate way.

In 2019, engagement was commenced with the fishing industry and our FLO was appointed. The purpose of this brochure is to provide the fishing community with information on the project, the current position and proposed next steps. As part of our commitment to engaging with the fishing community, we have outlined some of the feedback that we have received and details on how the NISA project design has evolved to incorporate and address issues raised.

■ Our Engagement Objectives

- Establish solid lines of communication
- Provide information on what is being proposed
- Receive feedback from fishers identifying concerns and opportunities
- Develop a design approach that will allow for continued fishing of the waters
- Provide information on planned surveys to avoid or minimise inconvenience
- Develop dialogue to establish best ways and means of:
 - Protecting fishing incomes
 - Working with the fishing industry during the operational lifetime of the windfarm to develop the sustainability of the fishing industry, making lives easier and better

■ Timelines

2019	2020	2021	2022 - 2023	2024 - 2025	2026 - 2028
Initial engagement with fisheries	Engagement and feedback	Preliminary design established	Planning	Construction	Operation
	Design	Surveys commence			

■ Initial Engagement

The NISA project team have been engaging proactively with individuals and representatives of the fishing industry since late 2019, prior to any foreshore application license being submitted for consideration.

During this time, we have initiated contact and engaged with as many fisheries stakeholders as possible. These included:

Organisations	Groups and Individuals in the following areas	
Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)	Howth	Skerries
North East RIFF	Balbriggan	Lough Shinny
South East RIFF	Drogheda	Clogherhead

If we have not previously been in contact with you, we would like to hear your thoughts on our proposal.

■ Feedback and Response

Since our initial engagement, we have collected valuable feedback from both individuals and organisations.

Standing over the commitments that we made to the fishing industry at the outset, we have taken feedback onboard which has fundamentally influenced the current design layout of the NISA proposal. It is our intention to continue to work to design a proposal that will allow for the effective mutual sharing of this marine space.

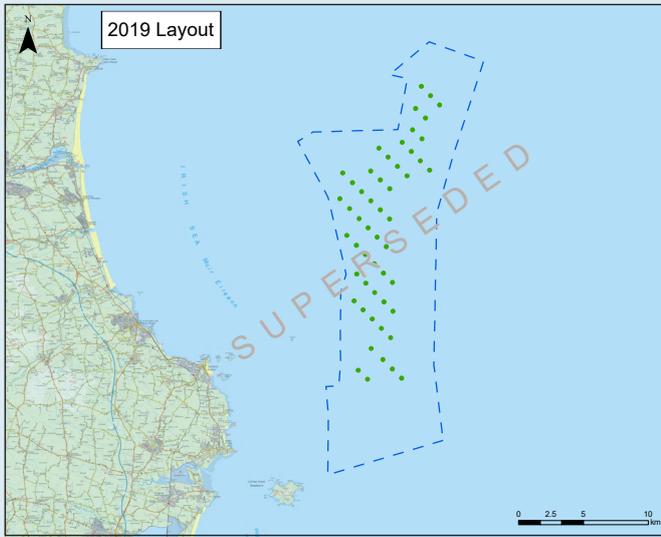
Incorporating fisheries considerations into the wind farm design will add project costs, however, we believe that in the long term, this approach will allow for the best results for both the fishing industry and for NISA through establishing an offshore wind farm that works in its local context.

Our long-term aim is not only to allow the wind farm area to be fishable, but also for NISA to support a sustainable fishing industry in the area.

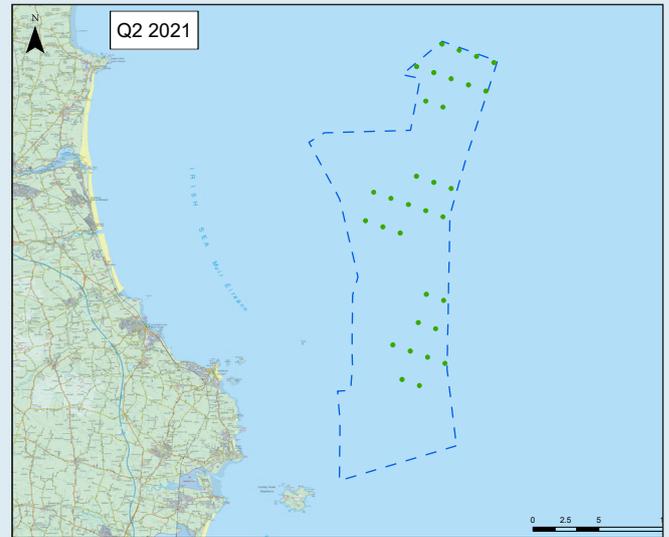
Your Feedback	Our Response
Exclusion Zones	
The possibility of exclusion zones being created within and/or around offshore wind farms was highlighted as a concern. It was stated that it was imperative that fishing grounds are not permanently lost. The demand for space within the Irish Sea has increased and there was a worry that fisheries would be permanently displaced.	In order to address these concerns, NISA is being designed to eliminate any project need for exclusion zones during the operational lifetime of the wind farm. This is largely through adopting the “pod” concept but also by designing the individual pod layouts with the fisheries in mind. Feedback sought from governing bodies and organisations has indicated that it is <u>not</u> envisaged that there will be a regulatory requirement for exclusion zones.
Impacts on Navigability	
It was noted that the proposed turbines may present a hazard for navigation. A fear was expressed that the turbines would present obstacles that would prevent the safe navigation of the area, regardless of any official exclusion zones or lack thereof.	To ensure safe and efficient navigation within and around the NISA wind farm, we have made several changes to the design and layout. We have reduced the number of turbines and increased the separation distances between individual turbines. The current layout provides for 1.1km corridors through the wind farm. This will provide better permeability. Grouping the turbines into “pods” provides open areas between each pod for easier navigation.
Trawling Directions	
Feedback from the fishing community highlighted that the proposed turbines may impact on established trawl directions and if this were to be the case it would likely leave the area unfishable to those involved in the trawling industry.	To ensure that trawling can continue within the proposed wind farm the turbines have been oriented to provide navigable corridors to allow for continued trawling. These corridors have been aligned with the general direction of towing.
Impacts on Incomes	
Feedback was received to say that this proposal could have a fundamentally detrimental effect on certain sectors of the fishing industry.	Not alone is NISA being developed with the fisheries to the forefront of consideration in terms of design, NISA is also seeking to identify areas where there may be impacts on fishing and to take action on these. Following (and potentially during) construction, community benefit funds will become available. The fishing community will be in a position to avail of this funding. Building on established positive relationships, NISA can deliver real and tangible benefits for all of those involved in the local commercial fishing community

NISA Design

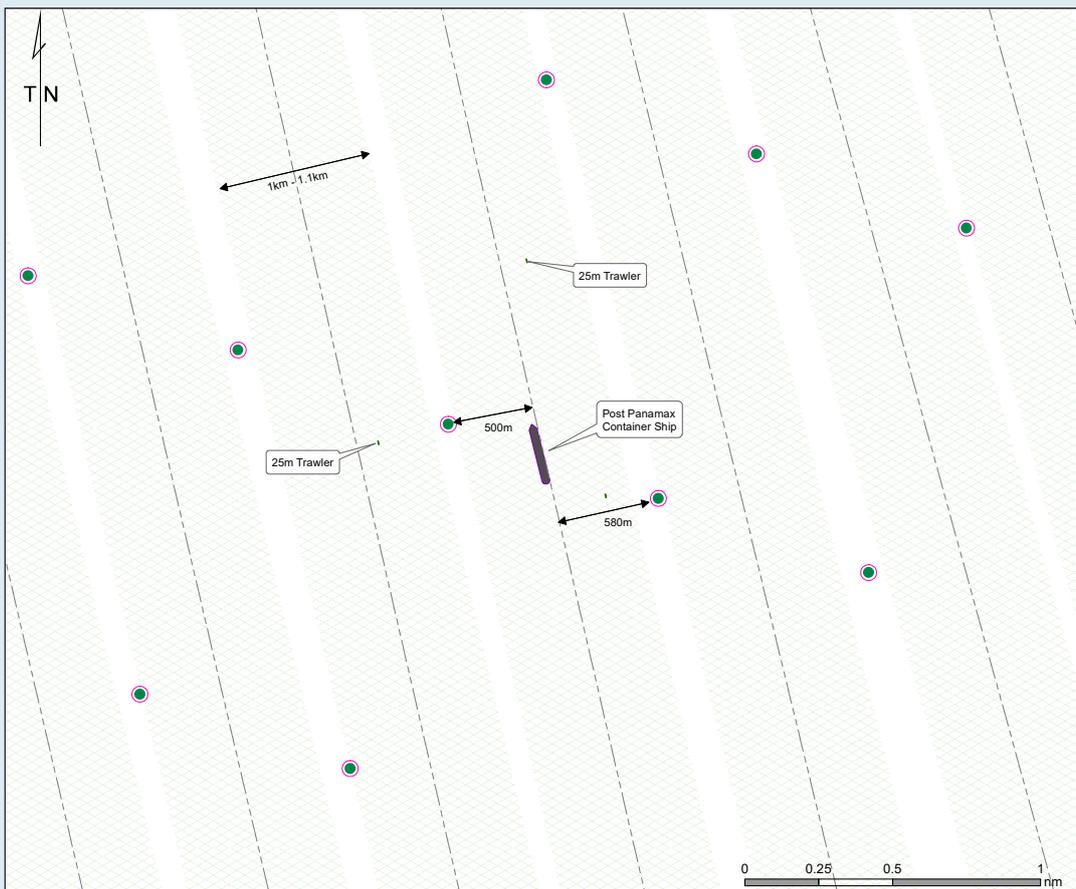
Initial Design



Current Design – Pod Concept



Navigation within the Pods



Benefits to the fishing industry of the Pod approach:

- Navigable corridors to facilitate continued trawling
- Corridors aligned with the general direction of towing
- Fewer turbines
- Ease of navigation through the wind farm
- Ease of navigation around the pods
- Significant turbine spacing

■ Next Steps

We believe that the design features now incorporated into the NISA proposal demonstrate our commitment to working with the fishing industry. Our vision is that NISA will not only allow for the continued existence of the fishing industry in this area, but that it will support the development and evolution of a sustainable fishing industry here.

Next steps include:

2021 – Site Investigation Surveys

2024 – 2025 Construction

2026 – 2028 Operation

■ Proposed Site investigation surveys

Applications have been made to the foreshore unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, for the NISA project. These applications have been sought in order to allow information to be gathered on the sea bed in both the main NISA site investigation area and also in an area closer to shore which is being assessed for its suitability for accommodating the cables coming onshore.

It is our intention to carry out these survey works as soon as all of the necessary consents are in place and suitable vessels secured etc. As with our approach to the design of the wind farm, we will be actively working to minimise any potential disruption from these surveys and we will take onboard any feedback that you might have in this regard. As part of this proactive engagement we will advise as soon as any survey dates are confirmed in order to provide advance notice of vessels being active in the area.

If you have any queries or comments regarding the proposed surveys, please do not hesitate to contact our project FLO for further information and to provide feedback.

Contact Us

For all fishing related inquiries, please contact our FLO at:

Phone: 021 203 1006 **Email:** flo@northirishsearray.ie

Statkraft, Building 4200, Cork Airport Business Park, Cork, T12D23C

www.northirishsearray.ie

■ Construction & Operation–Ensuring coexistence

During the construction of the wind farm, it will be important to provide safeguards for those who traditionally fish these areas.

- Bullet points to be changed to the following:
- Construction will take approximately 2 years to complete. During this period, it is likely that safety zones will need to be in place
- It is foreseen that, during this period, there may be impacts on fishing activities in the area
- Building on our fisheries orientated design proposals, NISA is committed to endeavouring to ensure that fishers traditionally fishing in this area can continue with their businesses
- We will work to ensure that no fisher is at an avoidable loss because of the construction of the wind farm
- Proposals for a mechanism that will allow for the coexistence of the wind farm and fishing industry during the construction period will need to be developed

Following construction, the operational phase of the wind farm will commence. It is expected that the operational life of the wind farm will be in the region of 30 years and may extend longer. It is in this long-term context that we believe the early consultation with the fishing industry can really pay dividends. This is not alone in the design changes that have been made to ensure the fishability of the area but also in the ongoing efforts to establish how NISA can assist in delivering a sustainable fishing future for the local fishing community.

■ Talk to our Fisheries Liaison Officer

From the initial stages, we have recognised that the fishing community as central stakeholders in this process. Mark O'Reilly, who is the fisheries liaison officer (FLO) for NISA, has been in place from the earliest stages of development and more recently, has been joined by Trudy McIntyre. Both Trudy and Mark have extensive experience of the fishing industry and are ideally placed to identify both potential issues and areas of opportunity from both sides as our project develops. We would encourage anyone who has a query, concern or who has feedback in relation to NISA to contact either Trudy or Mark to discuss the project. This engagement is critical to establishing a long-term positive outcome for both the wind farm and the fishing community.



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North Irish Sea Array (NISA) Offshore Wind Farm

Update Booklet #2 for Fisheries
Q2 2022

NISA can deliver for the fishing community - Your input will make a difference!

Working towards achieving successful coexistence with the fishing industry is central to how this project is being developed, constructed, and operated. NISA is endeavouring to ensure that fishing families who depend on an income from the sea, can continue to do.

The challenges that the fishing community face are many, including quotas, Brexit, rising fuel costs and market volatility. NISA has the potential to help overcome some of these pressures and support the fishing community to be more sustainable and resilient into the future. Fishermen tell us two main things - that they just want to fish and that the future is very uncertain for the industry.

The offshore industry can deliver a more sustainable future for the fishing community. We believe that offshore renewable energy can and should support those earning a living from the mutually shared waters. Under the new Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme (ORESS), this project will bring with it a multi-million-euro annual Community Benefit Fund which will last for the lifetime of the scheme. We have lobbied on behalf of the fishing industry to ensure that there is a special interest pot of funding available for the fishing industry within the new ORESS terms and conditions.

Maximising this potential is dependent on your input! To make this work best, you need to tell us where you see opportunities. We want to hear your ideas and aspirations and to work with the fishing community to endeavour to capture all opportunities possible.

What ideas and suggestions have fishers had?

We have been asking fishers what benefits you would like to see delivered in association with offshore renewable energy projects. NISA would like to work with the fishing community to establish what ideas and concepts might be achievable. Outlined below are some of the ideas that you have already shared.

Harbour Improvements

Fishers would like to see:

- NISA working to identify short term achievable improvements
- Support for longer term development plans



Supporting Sustainability & Diversification

Fishers would like to see:

- The monitoring of the fish stocks fished by the local fleet to provide independent scientific data
- A lesson's learning visit, for local fishermen, to a Lobster Hatchery
- A study to establish if this hatchery would be achievable and of benefit
- Research into what fishery diversification opportunities are available

Welfare, Training and Safety

Fishers would like to see initiatives that:

- Support fishing industry safety training initiatives
- Support and assist the transition to STCW-F
- Support other marine training initiatives and the development of crew welfare facilities
- Develop potential opportunities for supplementary employment schemes on the back of STCW-F

The above is based on feedback that we have had from engagement with the fishing community.

We want to hear from you! We would hope to be in a position to progress these suggestions further with the fishing community. If there are other opportunities that you think would be of benefit please call your dedicated FLO, **Trudy McIntyre on 087 122 5636**

Project Timeline

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 - 2025	2026 - 2028
Initial engagement with fisheries.	Initial design concept provided	Preliminary design	Offshore site investigation surveys commence	Planning	Construction	Commence operation
Overview of surveys given	Feedback and engagement	Virtual consultation room	Second virtual consultation room	Feedback and engagement	Feedback and engagement	Feedback and engagement
Feedback and engagement		Fisheries leaflet distributed	Feedback and engagement			



Contact us

For all fishing related inquiries, please contact our dedicated FLO:

Trudy McIntyre

Phone: 021 203 1006 / 087 1225636

Email: flo@northirishseaarray.ie



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www.hacketsprint.ie





■ Background

The North Irish Sea Array, also known as NISA, is an offshore wind energy project proposed off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth. Engagement with the fishing industry commenced in 2019 when a Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) was appointed. This leaflet follows on from a more detailed leaflet distributed in 2021.

Since our engagement process began, Statkraft has developed our understanding of the fishing industry and the positive impact it has had on our economy and our environment. As an island nation, it is an industry that central to our identity. Statkraft recognises that the fishing industry has had a difficult past but also that it has a future with a lot of challenges to face, not just in terms of the current high diesel prices but also in terms of policy changes in Ireland.

■ Engagement

We believe that it is only with transparent and proactive engagement from all sides that the best outcomes can be achieved. At Statkraft, we see fishers as key stakeholders in this project, and it is important that both sides work as close as possible together, to ultimately deliver a project that that will achieve its full potential in terms of delivering for all parties.

We have several aims when it comes to our communication with you. These include:

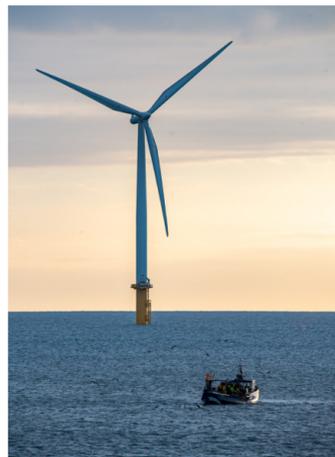
- Understanding what you do and how you make your living
- Providing details so that you will know who to contact if you have any queries
- Providing information on what is being proposed and importantly, getting your feedback
- Establishing the best ways of both industries working in a shared area
- Providing information on planned surveys to avoid or minimise inconvenience
- Developing dialogue to establish best ways of protecting fishing incomes and working with the fishing industry during the operational lifetime of the windfarm to develop the sustainability of the fishing industry

■ Site investigation surveys

NISA is currently at a stage in design where we are gathering relevant information, which will be used to develop our proposals further. Surveys are being carried out – both onshore and offshore – to gain an understanding of what may or may not be considered as design progresses.

NISA was awarded its foreshore licence for the array site area in late December 2021, which allows for offshore surveys to commence. Some survey activities commenced in January 2022 with the deployment of metocean instruments (See Marine Notice 03/2022). It is intended to begin the site investigation work in early May 2022, which will include geo-physical, geo-technical and benthic surveys.

Before a Marine Notice is issued, the project FLO's will ensure the relevant information is communicated to the fishing industry, so that it does not come as a surprise. Marine notices will be issued in advance of works with further details on the activity being carried out at any given time, in any given area.



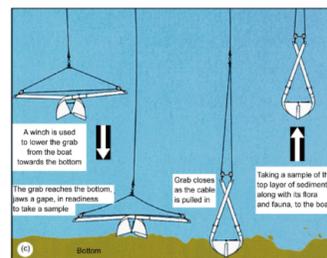
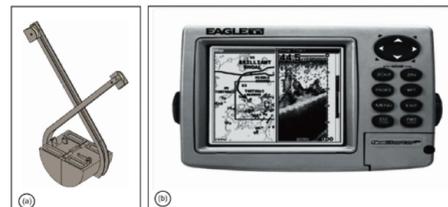
■ Survey overview

Below is an overview of the surveys being carried out within the wind farm site area, as well as the estimated period that they will be taking place.

From our engagement and from fishing surveys we are aware that the SW corner is used for potting. Every effort will be made to avoid this area for the purposes of this particular set of surveys.

Date	Survey	Details	Technology used	Static / Mobile
May 2022	Geophysical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses materials on the seabed • Non-intrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multibeam Echosounder • Side scan sonar • Magnetometer • Sub bottom profiling 	Mobile
July 2022	Geotechnical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects samples from seabed • Intrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grab samplers • Vibrocore • Boreholes • Core penetration testing 	Static
Ongoing	Oceanographic & Hydrographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects wave, tidal and wind data • Non-intrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MetOcean buoy • Wind Lidar buoy • Acoustic doppler current profiler (ADCP) 	Static
May 2022	Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect baseline environmental data for EIAR Report • Intrusive and non-intrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamon grab sample • Drop down video survey equipment 	Static

■ Equipment



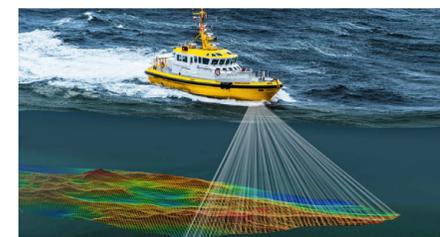
Grab Sampler | Credit: ResearchGate



Lidar Buoy | Credit: Fugro



Magnetometer | Credit: Edgeteck



Multibeam Echosounder | Credit: Verispos

■ Survey work in practice – when, where and how

These surveys allow NISA to gather information about the sea bed and environmental conditions of the windfarm area being considered. One of the main considerations when planning the work is how to limit disruption to those who already work in the area.

This first phase of work will be limited to the wind farm array site and primarily within the trawling grounds. It is our intention to avoid any of the potting grounds during the initial geophysical and geotechnical survey efforts.

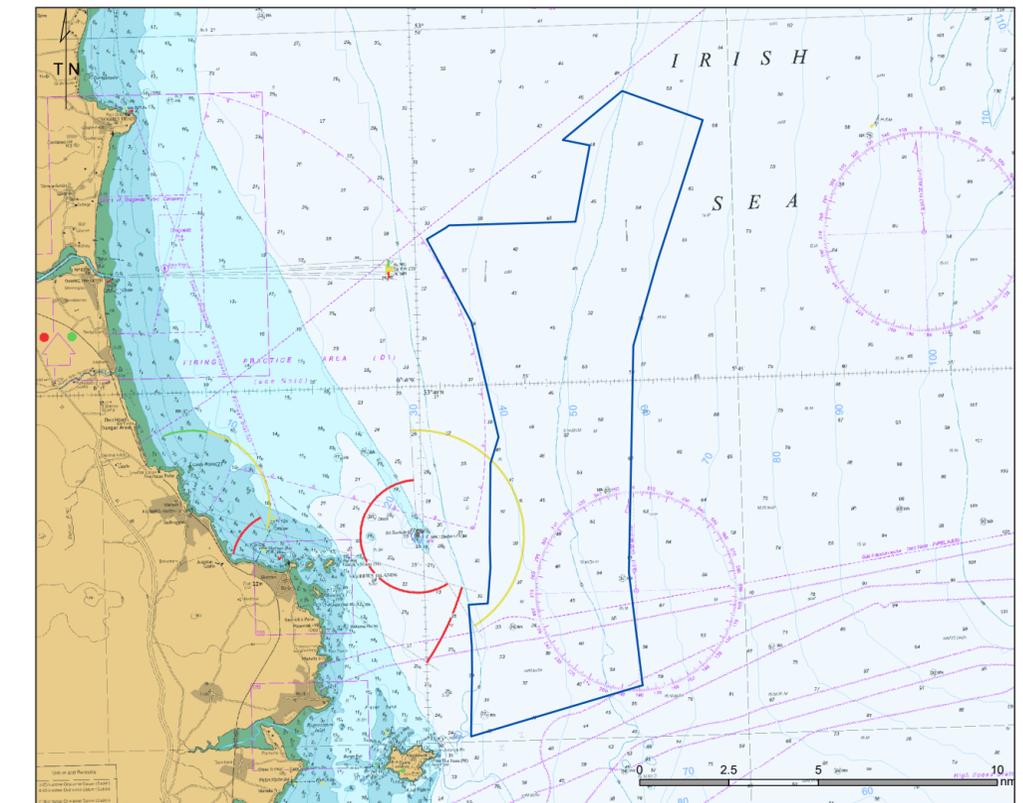
The first of these surveys are due to commence in May 2022. As such, we recognise the importance of engaging with the trawling fleet, amongst others, to provide information and establish clear lines of contact.

We would like to establish how we can best work together to avoid any inconvenience on either side. It is for this reason that we are highlighting our planned works as far in advance as possible.

In addition to providing advance notice, we will:

- Engage a scout vessel which will be used to minimise disruption to both the survey effort and to the fishing activity in the area.
- Propose to carry out a trawl survey both before and after the site investigation works are carried out. This is in the interest of ensuring openness, fairness and transparency in all of our dealings with the fishing industry and **we would welcome your feedback on how such a trawl survey could work best.**

■ Map



This equipment is similar in nature to that regularly used by the Marine Institute and INFOMAR. For more detailed information on the surveys, technologies used and the Marine Notices, please visit the project website on www.northirishsearray.ie



NISA Fisheries Engagement – Offshore surveys update

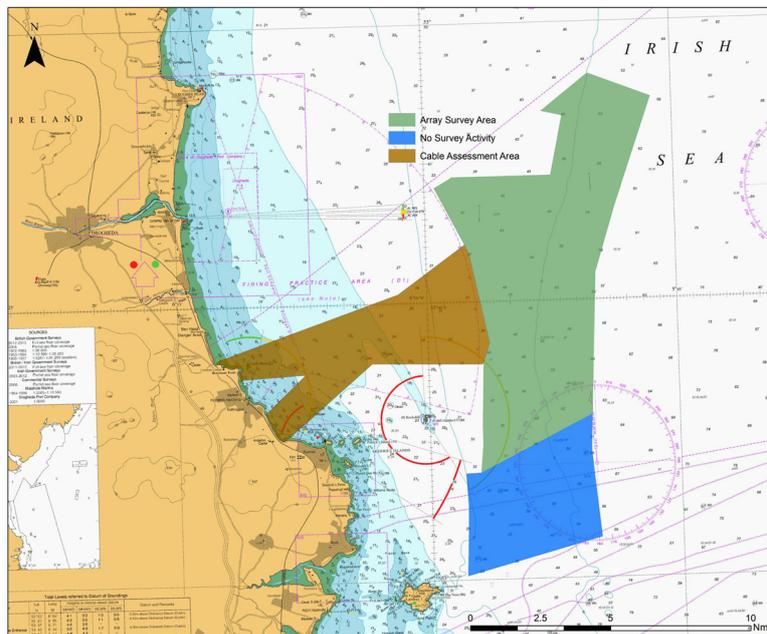
Update #3

■ Introduction

The NISA offshore project is planning to commence the 2nd stage of its offshore site investigations in Q3 of 2022. In planning these works we have endeavoured to take into consideration the fishing activities in these areas. The works are proposed to be carried out between mid-September and before the beginning of December as we are cognisant of the Christmas market period.

This update aims to provide information on the type of surveys that we will be undertaking, the areas that we will be operating in and the types of equipment that we will be using. The surveys will consist of geophysical surveys on the export cable area (area being assess for the cables coming onshore) and geotechnical surveys on the main array site. In addition to this, the metocean surveys at the northern location previously advised will continue with a guard buoy being added here. Benthic and geotechnical surveys on the cable area will follow in due course to complete the initial survey effort.

■ Where will the surveys be carried out?



■ Export Cable Route & Landing Areas

The initial surveys planned in this area are geophysical. NISA is being designed with the intention of ultimately utilising trenchless technology (Horizontal Directional Drilling or HDD) to bring the cables ashore at the shoreline. This method could have benefits for the Razor fishers that operate closest to the shoreline.

■ Main Array Site

Geotechnical information from the area where turbines are being considered will inform the types of foundations that may need to be considered, optimal construction methods and cable protection options etc. The survey area will exclude the southernmost portion of the site as outlined on the map.

■ When are surveys planned?

Area	Survey	Survey Type	Duration
Export Cable Route	Geophysical	Mid Sept – Mid Oct	Approx. 3 – 4 weeks
Main Array Site	Geotechnical	Mid Sept – Nov	Approx. 4 – 6 weeks

■ Export Cable Survey Area

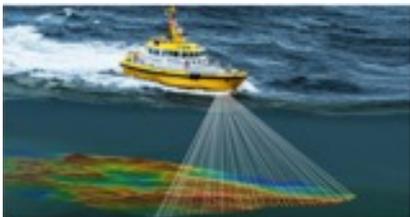
The export cable route (ECR) will be the route that the cables will follow to join the main array site to the mainland. The area being surveyed, and the surveys being planned, will allow the NISA designers to assess the suitability of the ground conditions for an ECR whilst also informing the most suitable means of delivering cable protection etc.

The current design assumptions include 2 cables that will follow a corridor from the wind farm to the mainland. We are aware that Razor fishing and potting take place in this area and we are not only taking this into account in our approach to these surveys, but also ensuring that this information is factored into any designs being considered.

These are the same surveys that have been previously carried out on the main array site.

Date	Survey	Details	Technology used	Static / Mobile
Mid September to October 2022* Approx. 4 weeks *Weather dependant	Export Cable Area Geophys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses materials on the seabed Non-intrusive 	Hull mounted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multibeam Echosounder Sub bottom profiling Towed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Side scan sonar Magnetometer 	Mobile

This equipment is similar in nature to that regularly used by the Marine Institute and INFOMAR. For more detailed information on the surveys, technologies used and the Marine Notices, please visit the project website on www.northirishsearray.ie



Multibeam Echosounder



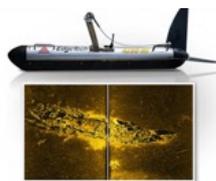
Magnetometer



Fastnet Puffin



Sub bottom profiler



Sidescan Sonar



Geo Focus

[Photo credit – IGP sidescan sonar; Edgetech – Sub Bottom profiler; Maine Traffic – Geo focus; Fastnet Shipping – Fastnet Puffin]

■ Main Array Site - Geotechnical Survey

The main array site is the area that is being considered for the location of turbines. Geophysical surveys have been completed in this area. The planned geotechnical works will gather information under the seabed which will inform the types of foundations that may be required, the optimal construction methodologies, the inter array cable burial/protection methods etc.

Buffer Zone:

As the vessel will be stationary, we would request a 500m clearance area of the vessel to ensure mutual safety while drilling operations are being undertaken.

Key points

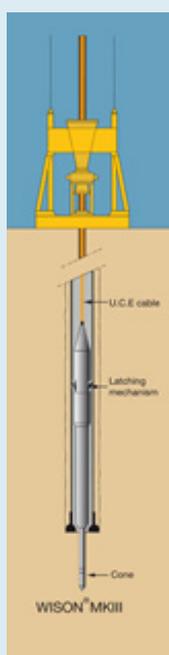
- Vessel – Fugro supplied Geotech Vessel with DP positioning systems
- Approx. 10 no. borehole locations
- Boreholes will be approx. 200mm in diameter
- Core samples will be removed from the seabed and holes will infill naturally.
- No ‘mounds’ or obstructions will be created on the sea bed
- Approx. 15 cone penetration test locations

Date/Status	Survey	Details	Technology	Static / Mobile
November 2022* Approx. 6 weeks on site works *Weather dependant	Main site Geotech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects samples from seabed • Intrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grab samplers • Vibrocore • c. 10 Boreholes • c.15 Core penetration testing 	Static Approx. 3 days per BH location Approx. 1 day per CPT location

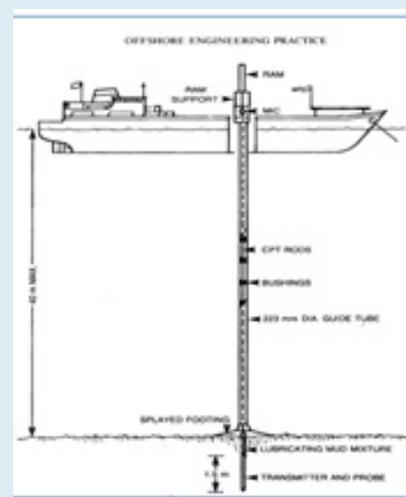
■ Survey Equipment



Geotechnical Drilling Vessel.
Credit Fugro



Seabed Frame and Downhole CPT.
Credit Fugro



Offshore Drilling Overview

■ Engagement during the surveys

One of the main considerations when planning the work is how to limit disruption to those who already work in the area.

We remain committed to establishing how we can best work together to avoid any inconvenience on either side. It is for this reason that we are again highlighting our planned works as far in advance as possible.

In addition to providing advance notice, we will:

- Provide an onboard FLO for the surveys planned to liaise with the fishers in the area.
- Engage a scout vessel which will be used to minimise disruption to both the survey effort and to the fishing activity in the area.

■ Continued Engagement – We want to hear from you

As outlined in our previous updates, in addition to providing information and answering queries, we are endeavouring to establish avenues for offshore renewable energy to deliver benefits to the fishing community. This work is continuing, and we would again like to offer you the opportunity to let us know how you think this might be best achieved. If you have ideas, concepts or initiatives that you would like to see NISA deliver for the local fishing community, please reach out to our FLOs to share these ideas with them!

■ Project Timeline

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 - 2025	2026 - 2028
Initial engagement with fisheries.	Initial design concept provided	Preliminary design	Offshore site investigation surveys commence	Planning	Construction	Commence operation
Overview of surveys given	Feedback and engagement	Virtual consultation room	Second virtual consultation room	Feedback and engagement	Feedback and engagement	Feedback and engagement
Feedback and engagement		Fisheries leaflet distributed	Feedback and engagement			
		Feedback and engagement				

www.hackettdigital.ie

Contact Us

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