



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Record of 2nd Meeting ABP-321635-25

Case Reference / Description	Proposed Decommissioning of Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 1 located on the long narrow Arklow Bank sand bank, within 10 km off the Coast of Arklow, County Wicklow.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	2 nd Meeting		
Date	11/09/2025	Start Time	12:00pm
Location	Virtually	End Time	2:30pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála

Stephen Kay, Assistant Planning Director, Chair

Susan Clarke, Senior Planning Inspector

Conor Donnelly, Ecologist

Eugene Nixon, Marine Consultant to ACP

Shauna Creane, Marine Consultant to ACP

Sinead White, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant

Anne-Marie Coyle, Gevernova

Jerry Barnes, McCabe Durney Barnes

Matthew Royal, Ramboll

Kim Bridge, Ramboll

Sara Mendez Roldan, Ramboll
Chris Delahunt, Gevernova

Introduction

The Commission's representatives referred to its previous meeting with the prospective applicant on 16th June 2025 and the record of that meeting. The Commission's representatives asked if the prospective applicant had any comments it wished to make on the record of this meeting or questions. The prospective applicant advised that they would review the records and confirm at a later date if they had any comments.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

The presentation began by the prospective applicant providing an update of the proposed development including the onshore and offshore elements. In summary, it is proposed to remove all the onshore elements of the project, except the onshore cable. Similarly, at present, it is proposed that all the offshore elements (wind turbines, cables, and scour protection where visible) will also be removed. However, confirmation in relation to the removal of the inter-array cables is pending further investigation.

The prospective applicant stated that there is ongoing work on selecting the best decommissioning methods for the development and noted different proposed approaches are possible. In the case of the removal of the turbine foundations, the selected method will be informed by frictional analysis, which is due to be completed in the coming weeks. It was highlighted that dredging, may be required.

The prospective applicant presented a preliminary identification of potential pathways for the effects on coastal processes.

The prospective applicant ended the presentation by outlining a proposed scope for a future planning application.

Discussion:

- Following a question from the Commission's representatives, the prospective applicant advised that the onshore substation building will be removed. The Commission's representatives advised the prospective applicant to consider whether or not a letter of consent was required for the making of this part of the planning application.
- The Commission's representatives asked for a timeline surrounding the scope of the works in relation to submitting a planning application. In addition, the Commission's representatives queried whether or not the prospective applicant would be seeking an opinion on design flexibility (Section 287(a)) having regard to the uncertainty of the project's scope (primarily whether or not the inter-array cables will be left in situ). The prospective applicant advised that a design flexibility opinion would not be required, as further analysis in advance of making a planning application would resolve any such uncertainties. The prospective applicant advised that the results of the frictional analysis are expected in 2-3 weeks' time.
- Following a question from the Commission's representatives, the prospective applicant stated that all the works will be carried out within the lease area.
- Following a query in relation to survey work from the Commission's representatives, the prospective applicant advised that a series of pre-decommissioning surveys would form part of the planning application. It was stated that these surveys would be required closer to the commencement of the decommissioning works, due to the dynamic nature of the sandbank. In relation

to completed surveys, the prospective applicant outlined that a series of surveys had already been undertaken and that these would be supplemented by survey work undertaken in respect of ABP Ref. 319864-24 (proposed offshore renewable energy project – Arklow Bank Wind Park 2). The Commission's representatives advised the prospective applicant to review the request for Further Information issued in respect of that project, with specific reference to survey/baseline matters. The Commission's representatives highlighted the importance of presenting an accurate baseline environment in the planning application.

- The prospective applicant responded to a question regarding the location of the export cable, stating that, based on previous surveys, an assumption can be made on its location and the works required for its removal. Again, the Commission's representatives highlighted the importance of presenting an accurate baseline environment in the planning application to enable an assessment and decision to be made by the Commission.
- Following a question from the Commission's representatives, the prospective applicant explained that the turbine blades were removed during the summer for maintenance purposes. The Commission's representatives advised the prospective applicant to give due consideration to potential impacts on birds and bats (through the introduction of roosting/resting areas), should the blades not be reinstated for an extended time, prior to the removal of the wind turbine nacelle and tower.
- The Commission's representatives suggested that the prospective applicant include coastal erosion in their assessment of coastal processes. In addition, it was advised to include analysis in relation to potential slope failure and an explanation as to why the entire wind turbine's monopile/foundation are not proposed to be removed. Data in relation to the validity or calibration of any

modelling should be included with the application. Similarly, any assumptions or statements made should be clearly justified/referenced in the planning application documentation to enable a comprehensive assessment.

- Following discussions in relation to the potential for the residual component of the monopiles to protrude the seabed floor post decommissioning (noting the dynamics of the sandbank), the Commission's representatives strongly recommended that the prospective applicant engage in consultation with the Irish Coast Guard, the Commissioners of Irish Lights and MARA.
- Following a question regarding monitoring post decommissioning from the Commission's representatives, the prospective applicant stated that this has not been specified yet but would be outlined in the planning application. It was acknowledged by the prospective applicant that there will be a need for monitoring post-decommissioning.
- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant that the planning application should appropriately assess impacts on biodiversity (marine mammals, birds, bats, fish, etc.) with an accurate baseline environment description and justification(s) for any assumptions made in relation to the significance of impacts. The Commission's representatives queried what noise levels would likely be generated from the decommissioning works, in particular from the cutting of the monopiles. The prospective applicant advised that the noise from vessel activity is anticipated to generate the most noise, but not at significant levels.
- Following queries from the Commission's representatives in relation to benthic impacts, the prospective applicant advised that all biogenic communities are removed from the turbines for maintenance purposes. Representatives of the

Commission noted that there may be benthic communities present on the cables depending on their location.

- The Commission's representatives agreed with the prospective applicant that the proposed development would likely fall within Class 13(c) of Schedule 7 and accordingly the proposed development would be a class of development that could potentially be subject to EIA. Again, the Commission's representatives highlighted the importance of presenting an accurate baseline environment in the planning application.
- The prospective applicant informed the Commission's representatives that they plan on doing a very robust Appropriate Assessment screening, but it is envisaged that full AA will not be required. The Commission's representatives cautioned against the reliance on mitigation measures during the screening process.
- The Commission's representatives advised the prospective applicant that just because the decommissioning works and future ORE projects may not overlap in terms of timing, the cumulative impacts and effects could overlap and recommended that the prospective applicant give due consideration to this in the assessment of cumulative impacts. In addition, the Commission's representatives highlighted that should a Dumping-at-Sea licence be required to carry out the proposed development, this should form part of the cumulative assessment.
- The Commission's representatives highlighted the importance of including a waste management plan with the planning application for both the onshore and offshore elements of the project.

- The Commission's representatives reiterated the importance of the application demonstrating compliance with the NMPF and providing an assessment on ecosystem system services and functions. The need to demonstrate compliance with the Wicklow County Development Plan was also flagged.
- The Commission's representatives questioned what public consultation had been undertaken to-date. The prospective applicant stated that they had undertaken initial discussions with key consultees and planned on having further discussions prior to the submission of an application.
- In relation to a query from the Commission's representatives as to whether or not consultation has been carried out/proposed to be carried out with the general public, the prospective applicant advised that no such consultation was planned at this stage. The Commission's representatives strongly advised that such consultation was undertaken prior to the submission of the planning application.

Conclusion:

The record of the instant meeting will be issued in due course, and the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing or alternatively bring any comments for discussion at the time of any further meeting. The Commission will revert to the prospective applicant in relation to scheduling a further meeting.

The Meeting concluded at 2:30pm.



Stephen Kay

Assistant Director of Planning