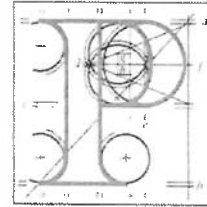


Our Case Number: ABP-319866-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Fingal County Council
County Hall
Main Street
Swords
Co. Dublin
K67 X8Y2

Date: 16 August 2024

Re: Proposed development known as North Irish Sea Array ("NISA") Offshore Wind Farm
Located off the coast of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth (www.northirishsearraysid.ie)

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your submission in relation to the above-mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

The Board will revert to you in due course in respect of this matter. Please be advised that copies of all submissions/observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the coastal planning authority and at the offices of An Bord Pleanála when they have been processed by the Board.

More detailed information in relation to marine infrastructure development can be viewed on the Board's website: www.pleanala.ie.

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

Yours faithfully,

Ellen Moss
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737285

OA15

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

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



The Secretary,
An Bord Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.

Our Ref. SID/04/24

Your Ref. ABP- 319866-24

29th July 2024

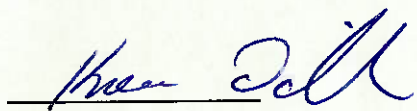
Re: The proposed development is an offshore wind farm comprising of both offshore and onshore infrastructure. The proposed development boundary, within which the proposed development is located, will include offshore infrastructure off the coast of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth and onshore infrastructure within County Dublin (Fingal and Dublin City Council administrative areas) for North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to your correspondence dated 7th June regarding the above application.

The Planning Authority comments are in the attached report.

Yours faithfully


For Senior Executive Officer

Date 29/7/24

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	<u>074056-24</u>
ABP-	_____
29 JUL 2024	
Fee: €	Type: _____
Time: <u>13:32</u>	By: <u>hmd</u>

**EXTRACT FROM ADMINISTRATOR'S MINUTES OF MEETING OF
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 8TH JULY 2024**

Marine Developments - North Irish Sea Array Windfarm

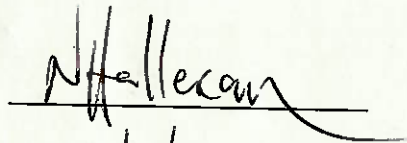
MINUTE NO. F/325/24

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true record of the minute number F/325/24 Administrator's Minutes of Meeting of Fingal County Council held on 8th July 2024.

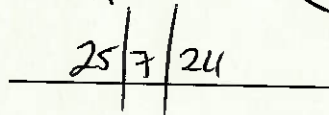
The attached report by the Chief Executive which had been circulated was CONSIDERED. A presentation was provided to the Members by Deirdre Fallon, Senior Planner, Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department.

Following discussion, the report was **NOTED**.

A/Senior Executive Officer:



Date:



Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

**An Roinn um Pleanáil agus
Infrastruchtúr Straitéiseach**
Planning and Strategic
Infrastructure Department

Chief Executive's Report

North Irish Sea Array Windfarm

July 2024

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Section 1 Background

1.1 Introduction

An application has been lodged with An Bord Pleanála for a proposed development known as the North Irish Sea Array.

Fingal County Council hereby sets out the submission of the Planning Authority on the proposed development.

An Bord Pleanála, as the consenting authority, will decide to grant or refuse this application.

1.2 Procedural Background

The application has been lodged with An Bord Pleanála under Section 291 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. It is noted that the applicant has undertaken consultations with the Board in accordance with Section 287(1) of the Act.

North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Ltd was granted a Maritime Area Consent in relation to the windfarm which has a commencement date of 23rd December 2022. The Maritime Area Consent states that an application for permission must be submitted 18 months from the commencement date. The application was lodged with An Bord Pleanála on 7th June 2024.

The correspondence from An Bord Pleanála refers to Section 291(4)(b) of the Act which states that:

A coastal planning authority –

(b) whose nearshore area, or any other part of whose functional area, adjoins that part of the maritime area in which it is proposed that the development concerned would (in whole or in part) be situated, may, not later than 10 weeks (or such longer period as may be specified by the Board) from the making of the application under this section in respect of the proposed development, prepare and submit to the Board a report setting out the views of the coastal planning authority in relation to the proposed development, having regard in particular to the matters to which a coastal planning authority is required to have regard in accordance with subsection (2) of section 34 and subsection (2) of section 282 in relation to an application referred to in subsection (3) of section 281.

Submissions may be made to An Bord Pleanála by no later than 5.30pm on 9th August 2024.

The correspondence from An Bord Pleanála also refers to Section 291(5) of the Act which states as follows:

The Board may, in addition to a report referred to in subsection (4), require a coastal planning authority to which that subsection applies or any planning

authority on whose functional area the proposed development is, in the opinion of the Board, likely to have a significant effect to furnish to the Board such information as the Board may specify in relation to—

- (a) the implications of the proposed development for maritime spatial planning,
- (b) the implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the functional area concerned, and
- (c) the likely effects of the proposed development on the environment or any European site.

Fingal County Council has not received any notification arising from Section 291(5) to date.

Section 291(6) and (7) state as follows:

(6) The chief executive of a coastal planning authority shall, before that coastal planning authority submits a report to the Board under *subsection (4)* in relation to a proposed development, submit the report to the members of the coastal planning authority and request their views on the proposed development.

(7) The members of a coastal planning authority may, by resolution, decide to attach recommendations specified in the resolution to the report of the coastal planning authority under subsection (4) and, where those members so decide—

- (a) those recommendations, and
- (b) a record prepared by the meetings administrator (within the meaning of section 46 of the Local Government Act 2001) of the views expressed by the members on the proposed development,

shall be attached to the report submitted to the Board under that subsection.

The submission was presented to the members of Fingal County Council at the July meeting of the Council. Section 3.3 contains further details in this regard.

1.3 Proposed Development

The proposal consists of an offshore wind farm comprising of both offshore and onshore infrastructure. The proposed development boundary, within which the proposed development is located, will include offshore infrastructure off the coast of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth and onshore infrastructure within County Dublin (Fingal and Dublin City Council administrative areas).

A high-level overview of the proposed development is provided below in accordance with the details submitted with the application.

Offshore Infrastructure (located within and Array area and export cable corridor (ECC)):

- Offshore wind turbine generators (WTGs) and their associated foundations;
- Inter-array cables which will connect the WTGs to the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP);
- An OSP and associated foundations; and

- Offshore export cable(s) which will deliver the generated power from the OSP to the high-water mark (HWM) as defined by Ordnance Survey Ireland mapping (the HWM being the transition point between the offshore and onshore infrastructure).

Onshore Infrastructure:

- Offshore export cable(s) from the HWM to the landfall transition joint bays (TJBs);
- Transition joint bays (TJBs) where the offshore and onshore export cables are joined;
- Onshore export cable(s) from the TJBs to the grid facility;
- A Grid Facility, comprising a compensation substation and Bremore substation, together within ancillary infrastructure;
- Onshore cable(s) from the grid facility to the Belcamp Substation; and
- A connection from the onshore cable(s) to the national electricity transmission network at Belcamp Substation.

The landfall will comprise both offshore and onshore infrastructure, with the HWM being the point of transition between the two. The export cables come ashore and transition to onshore cables at the TJBs close to the shoreline at Bremore Bay beach in Bremore, north of Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

According to the details submitted, the proposed development is considered to be established in the context of its essential contribution to Ireland's committed offshore wind target, wider renewable energy targets, the need for an urgent response to the global climate emergency, whilst also providing an indigenous power source to ensure Ireland's security of energy supply, at an affordable price to the consumer.

1.4 Site Location

The application documentation describes the offshore infrastructure as being located within the proposed development boundary seaward of the high-water mark (HWM) at the shoreline of Bremore Bay beach in Bremore, north of Balbriggan, Co. Dublin, from the landfall to the furthest extent of the array, covering an area of approximately 125km².

The array area covers approximately 89km². At its closest point, the array area is located approximately 11.3km from land in water depths of approximately 30m to 63m below lowest astronomical tide (LAT), with the closest Offshore Wind Turbine Generator (WTG) situated approximately 12.3km from the coastline.

The landfall site is where the two offshore export cables reach the shore and extends landward from the HWM and far as the grid facility. The site identified for landfall will be located immediately south of Bremore Point in the townland of Bremore, north of Balbriggan, Co. Dublin. The landfall site consists of undulating agricultural fields with relatively few dwellings in the immediate vicinity. The Dublin to Belfast railway line passes through the agricultural fields in a north-south direction and the R132 road lies immediately to the west of the landfall site.

A grid facility will be located across two fields currently under agricultural use, in the townland of Bremore. There are a number of houses in the vicinity of the grid facility site, with two residential dwellings immediately east of the grid facility and another residential dwelling located approximately 100m north-east of the grid facility. Residential dwellings are also located along Bremore Cottages and Dun Saithne View roads to the south, with the closest of these being approximately 150m from the grid facility site. Lands in Flemington, identified in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029, are located to the immediate south of the grid facility.

The function of the grid facility will be to receive power delivered from the offshore substation platform via the offshore and onshore export cables and process it so that it is suitable for feeding into the electricity grid.

According to the details submitted, the onshore cable route runs for approximately 33-35km between the proposed grid facility just north of Balbriggan, to the existing electrical substation at Belcamp on the northern outskirts of Dublin. The majority of the route – approximately 29km out of the 33km – is contained within the footprint of existing roads including the R132, the R106 and other local roads.

Towards the southern end of the cable route, two options for the route are included – one along the R107 and one via the R124 – the alternative route providing flexibility to ensure integration with other existing utilities infrastructure including the planned route for power cables associated with the Metrolink project. The route via the R124 would add approximately 2km to the overall cable route (hence the cable route will be approximately 33 – 35km).

1.5 Relevant Planning History

Relevant significant planning history is outlined below, with the focus on the landfall elements, grid facility, Belcamp substation and Blake's Cross.

SID/02/23: Application lodged to An Bord Pleanála for the development of up to approximately 24 kilometres (km) of underground cable (UGC) at various locations in North Dublin between Forrest Little, Belcamp, Clonsaugh and Harristown, County Dublin. The primary purpose of the proposed UGCs is to provide electrical power to the proposed MetroLink project (ABP Case reference: 317831).

F23A/0040: Permission granted for development consisting of the provision of new electricity transmission infrastructure at the existing ESB Belcamp 220 kV substation, comprising:

1. Installation of an additional 220 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) 16 Bay Building north of the existing station compound (approximately 84 m by 25m and 17 m in height), this includes an associated extension to the hardstanding compound (approximately 3.2 hectares) to facilitate the same. This includes: a) Three 220/110 kV transformers located adjacent to the new 220 kV GIS building (approximately 8m high); b) A busduct connection from the new 220 kV GIS building to the existing 220 kV Belcamp substation; c) One +100 MVAR 220 kV STATCOM transformer including

associated auxiliary transformer, series coils, outdoor cooling bank control and valve building;

2. Seven lightning protection masts (ranging in height from approximately 8 m to 20 m);

3. All ancillary site development works including site preparation works, site clearance and levelling; provision of hardstanding, internal access tracks and temporary construction compound; associated underground cabling and earthgrid; associated extended surface water drainage network including attenuation storage; associated reinforced concrete perimeter wall (3 m in height with a 1 m electric fence on top); perimeter palisade fencing (3 m in height), external lighting as required to facilitate the development;

4. Access to the proposed development site will be via the existing internal access road, and existing vehicular entrance onto the R139 regional road.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) accompanied this application.

PARTXI/006/20: Relates to the Bremore Regional Park Development Project, including The Balbriggan Sports and Recreational Hub, central zone open spaces, new coastal park, all ancillary infrastructure and park boundaries.

F20A/0616: Permission granted for demolition of an existing garage and single storey extension, construction of a one and two storey extension to the side and rear of an existing single storey cottage, replace existing septic tank with proprietary waste water treatment system, SuDS drainage and all associated site works at Coneyhill, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

F18A/0133: Permission refused for development consisting of (i) Construction of 74 no. dwellings (ii) creation of new vehicular entrance from Drogheda Road (R132); (iii) landscaped public open space including playground; tree planting, boundary treatments; street lighting; internal roadways, footpaths and shared surfaces (iv) foul and SuDS drainage; and (v) all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development at Drogheda Road, (north of Bremore Cottages), Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

F18A/0389: Permission granted for development consisting of a two-storey clubhouse building (total area 1,724sq.m.) (incl. double height sports-hall), 2no. playing pitches, ancillary fencing, floodlighting, carparking, outbuildings & hurling wall. Development comprises: (A) New Clubhouse/Sportshall building (B) Formation & construction of 2no. natural-surface GAA playing pitches each with associated ball-stop netting (c.15.5m high). (C) 1 detached field maintenance shed (51.8sq.m.) & 1 external equipment building (incl. generator) (70sq.m.). (D) Hurling wall & associated floodlighting & enclosure fencing. (E) New vehicular & pedestrian entrance gates, piers & railings (off R132); new bicycle & carparking (127 cars & 4 mini-buses). (F) All associated drainage (incl. foul pump station & surface-water attenuation tank), site development works, services, perimeter fencing (c32.4m high) & landscape works on a site of c.3.82 Ha located c.40 m North of the existing junction between R132 road and Flemington Lane at Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

VA06F.VA0014: Application approved for a 220kv substation and associated works. LOCATION: Townland of Belcamp & Clonshaugh.

F10A/0231: Permission granted for a new agricultural building (grain store c. 557sq/m) located in southeast corner of existing farmyard at Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

VA17.VA0002: Approval granted by An Bord Pleanála for a high voltage direct current (HVDC) East West Interconnector between Ireland and Great Britain. LOCATION: From Converter Station In Townland Of Woodland West Of Batterstown Co Meath, Underground To Transition Joint, At North Beach Rush.

F04A/1599: Permission refused for the construction of a retirement village comprising of a single storey nursing home, 4 no. single storey terraces each containing 4 no. two bedroom retirement units, new site entrance, proprietary waste water treatment system and associated site works. LOCATION: Corduff, Lusk, Co. Dublin.

F04A/1082: Permission granted for the erection of a two storey clubhouse and double height sports facilities building including: Sports Hall 1833m², squash and handball courts 388m², changing rooms area 828m², first aid room 31m², multi purpose room 231m², meeting rooms totalling 106.5m², clubhouse bar facilities 580m² and ancillary toilets, stores, boiler room: Overall building area is 6725 m². External facilities include: entrance piers and gates, parking for 407 cars and 6 coaches, hurling wall, perimeter fencing 2.4m high; laying out the grounds to provide 3 no. GAA pitches and 1 no. running track and all weather pitch, floodlighting, pump station and associated drainage works, all landscaping and site development works on a site of 10.37 Ha located circa 60 m North-West of the existing junction between N1 road and Flemington Lane. The lands are located bounded by the N1 (east) and the Dublin - Belfast rail line (west) in townland of Bremore.

F02A/1143: Permission granted for erection of a two-storey clubhouse building, including first floor bar and lounge area (700 sq.m approx. in total) and connected double height single storey sports hall (411 sq.m approx.); two no. Playing pitches totalling circa 24,2814sq.m; 89 no. associates car parking spaces; site development and landscape works; vehicular access off the former N1 (Dublin - Belfast Road) to serve development to be located c. 60m north-west of existing junction between N1 (Dublin-Belfast Road) and Flemington Lane, all on lands of approx. 4.5 Ha, located to the east of the former N1 (Dublin-Belfast Road) proximate to the junction of Flemington Lane and west of the Dublin-Belfast railway line. LOCATION: Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

F01B/0479: Permission granted for the demolition of the existing kitchen and bathroom and the construction of a 5 room single storey extension comprising living, dining, bath and utility rooms and kitchen to the rear. LOCATION: Coney Hill, Bremore, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

Section 2.0 Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029

2.1 Introduction

This section outlines the relevant planning policy context for the proposed development as set out in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029.

2.2 Strategic Context

The Development Plan is underpinned by 4 cross cutting themes one of which is climate action. In respect of this, the Plan refers to the greater importance that renewable energy production has assumed over the last decade.

The Strategic Objectives of the Plan include transitioning to an environmentally sustainable carbon neutral economy.

2.3 Renewable Energy

The Development Plan policies encourage the sustainable development of the renewable energy sector in the County (including bioenergy, wind, wave, solar, green hydrogen and biofuels, etc) due to the positive contribution it can make to the economy and to the achievement of renewable energy targets. Ireland's territorial waters present major opportunities in the blue economy and offshore renewable energy sectors, which would support the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

Policy CAP13 – Energy from Renewable Sources

Actively support the production of energy from renewable sources and associated electricity grid infrastructure, such as from solar energy, hydro energy, wave/tidal energy, geothermal, wind energy, combined heat and power (CHP), heat energy distribution such as district heating/cooling systems, and any other renewable energy sources, subject to normal planning and environmental considerations.

Policy CAP16 – Offshore Wind-Energy Production

Support the implementation of the 2014 Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP) and any successor thereof, and to facilitate infrastructure such as grid facilities on the land side of any renewable energy proposals of the offshore wind resource, where appropriate and having regard to the principles set out in the National Marine Planning Framework.

Objective EEO70 – Renewable and Alternative Energy

Facilitate and encourage the development of the alternative energy sector, in line with a Local Renewable Energy Strategy, and work with the relevant agencies to support the development of alternative forms of energy where such developments do not negatively impact upon the environmental quality, and visual, residential or rural amenity of the area.

Policy IUP27 – Energy Networks and ICT Infrastructure

Facilitate and promote the development of energy networks and ICT infrastructure where necessary to facilitate sustainable growth and economic development and

support the provision of critical energy utilities and the transition to alternative, renewable, decarbonised, and decentralised energy sources, technologies, and infrastructure.

Policy IUP29 – Enhancement and Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure and Networks

Work in partnership with existing service providers, businesses and local community groups to facilitate required enhancement and upgrading of existing infrastructure and networks and support the development of new energy systems, local community sustainable energy generation projects and transmission grids, which will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave, and solar energy.

Policy IUP30 – Promote Low Carbon Energy Development

Promote more energy-efficient development through the location of housing and employment along district heating hubs, or potential renewable energy locations, where people can connect buildings to energy efficient, low-carbon alternatives.

Policy IUP31 – Enhancement and Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure and Networks

Support EirGrid's Grid Development Strategy – Your Grid, Your Tomorrow 2017, Implementation Plan 2017–2022, Shaping our Electricity Future-A Roadmap to achieve our Renewable Ambition 2021 and Transmission Development Plan (TDP) 2020-2029, and the Government's Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply November 2021 and any subsequent plans prepared during the lifetime of this Plan, to provide for the safe, secure, and reliable supply of electricity.

Policy IUP33 – Renewable Energy

Continue to develop and implement climate action and energy related initiatives in Fingal and continue to support the recording and monitoring of renewable energy potential in Fingal in partnership with other stakeholders including the East Midlands Regional Assembly EMRA, the Dublin Energy Agency (Codema) and the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO).

Objective IUO44 – Energy Utilities

Support the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated transmission and distribution networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the County, and to facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects and technologies.

Objective IUO45 – Undergrounding of Utility Infrastructure

Require that the location of local utility services such as electricity, telephone and television cables be located underground wherever possible, and to promote the undergrounding of existing overhead cables and associated equipment, where possible, in the interests of visual amenity and improved public realm.

2.4 Surface Water

Chapter 11 states that the management of surface water drainage in Fingal over the lifetime of the Development Plan and beyond will be key to reducing surface water run-off both mitigating and adapting to climate change and flooding.

Policy IUP10 – Water Conservation and SuDS

Promote the inclusion of water conservation and SuDS measures in all developments, to reduce the level of surface water run-off, improve water quality and contribute to adaptation to climate change through natural solutions.

2.5 Existing Trees/Hedgerow

Policy CAP35 – Climate Action and Green Infrastructure

Protect, connect and expand the County's green infrastructure while optimising the climate change adaptation and mitigation services it provides.

Policy GINHP21 – Protection of Trees and Hedgerows

Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/ or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management in line with the adopted Forest of Fingal-A Tree Strategy for Fingal.

Objective GINHO46 – Tree Removal

Ensure adequate justification for tree removal in new developments and open space management and require documentation and recording of the reasons where tree felling is proposed and avoid removal of trees without justification.

2.6 Development Management

Objective DMSO89 – Design and Siting of Business Parks and Industrial Areas.

Ensure that the design and siting of any new Business Parks and Industrial Areas, including office developments, conforms to the principles of Design Guidelines as outlined in Table 14.15.

Objective DMSO228 – Design of New Utility Structures

Require new utility structures such as electricity substations and telecommunication equipment cabinets to be of a high quality design and to be maintained to a high standard by the relevant service provider.

Objective DMSO229 – Impacts on Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

Ensure that proposals for large scale developments and infrastructure projects consider the impacts on the archaeological and architectural heritage and seek to avoid them. The extent, scale, density, route, services and signage for such projects should be sited at a distance from Protected Structures and Recorded Monuments, avoid affecting the special character of Architectural Conservation Areas, remain outside the boundaries of historic designed landscapes, and not interrupt specifically designed vistas. Where this is not possible the visual and physical impact must be minimised through appropriate

mitigation measures such as high-quality design, that goes beyond regulatory and engineering requirements.

Objective DMSO230 – Undergrounding of Cables

Seek the placing underground of all electricity, telephone, utility and TV cables in urban areas. It is the intention of the Council to co-operate with other agencies as appropriate, and to use its Development Management powers in the implementation of this policy.

Objective DMSO126 – Protection of Trees and Hedgerows during Development

Ensure during the course of development, trees and hedgerows that are conditioned for retention are fully protected in accordance with *BS5837 2012 Trees in relation to the Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations* or as may be updated and are monitored by the appointed arboriculture consultant.

Objective DMSO140 – Protection of Existing Landscape

Protect existing landscape features such as scrub, woodland, large trees, hedgerows, meadows, ponds and wetlands which are of biodiversity or amenity value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.

Objective DMSO194 – Provision of Public Art

Require new residential developments in excess of 100 units and large commercial/retail developments in excess of 2000 sqm to provide for a piece of public art to be agreed with the Council.

2.8 Landscape

The Landscape Character Assessment in the Development Plan provides for the classification of Fingal's landscapes into types and values and sensitivities. The coastal and estuary types which run along the eastern edge of Fingal are identified as being of exceptional value and high sensitivity. The high lying landscape type is also of high sensitivity and high value. There are a number of views identified for protection in the Development Plan, a number of which are located along the coastal boundary of Fingal.

Policies/objectives relevant to the current proposal include:

Objective GINHO58 – Sensitive Areas

Resist development such as houses, forestry, masts, extractive operations, landfills, caravan parks, and campsites, and large agricultural/horticulture units which would interfere with the character of highly sensitive areas or with a view or prospect of special amenity value, which it is necessary to preserve.

Objective GINHO59 – Development and Sensitive Areas

Ensure that new development does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of highly sensitive areas and does not detract from the scenic value of the area. New development in highly sensitive areas shall not be permitted if it:

- Causes unacceptable visual harm.
- Introduces incongruous landscape elements.
- Causes the disturbance or loss of (i) landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness, (ii) historic elements that contribute significantly to landscape character and quality such as field or road patterns, (iii) vegetation which is a characteristic of that landscape type and (iv) the visual condition of landscape elements.

Policy GINHP26 – Preservation of Views and Prospects

Preserve views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest including those located within and outside the County.

Objective GINHO60 – Protection of Views and Prospects

Protect views and prospects that contribute to the character of the landscape, particularly those identified in the Development Plan, from inappropriate development.

2.7 Zoning and Designations

The proposed landfall site is primarily zoned 'HA' High Amenity and 'OS' Open Space under the Development Plan. The 'HA' High Amenity objective is to 'Protect and enhance high amenity areas'. The 'OS' Open Space zoning objective is to 'Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities'. Under both of these zonings, utility installations have not been listed as permitted or not permitted. It is noted that no above ground developments are proposed in these areas.

The proposed grid facility is zoned 'RU' Rural in the Fingal Development Plan. The 'RU' zoning objective is to 'Protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture and rural related enterprise, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage'. Utility installations are listed as permitted in principle under the 'RU' zoning. This is defined as "A structure composed of one or more pieces of equipment connected to or part of a structure and/ or a facility designed to provide a public utility service such as the provision of heat, electricity, telecommunications, water or sewage disposal and/or treatment".

The Belcamp substation site is zoned 'HT' High Technology under the Development Plan, where the objective is to 'Provide for office, research and development and high technology/high technology manufacturing type employment in a high quality built and landscaped environment'. Under the 'HT' zoning, utility installations are listed as permitted in principle.

Map Based Policies and Objectives

The proposed landfall site is located in an area of land that is within 100 metres of the coastline and is therefore considered 'Vulnerable to Erosion'.

The proposed landfall site is situated on Highly Sensitive Landscape within the Historic Landscape Character Boundary for Balbriggan.

The landfall site would be in close proximity to the following Protected Structure:

- RPS No. 875 – Newhaven Quay (i.e. Remains of 16th century drystone pier)

The proposed grid facility is located within the Balbriggan Development Boundary and is in the vicinity of the Dart Extension NTA Strategic Transport Route.

Section 3 Planning Issues

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the comments of the Planning Authority in respect of the proposed development. These are provided in terms of the policy context for renewable energy and subsequently in terms of specific issues associated with the proposal.

3.2 Internal Reports

A number of internal departments within Fingal County Council were consulted on this proposal and their comments have informed this report. Comments were received from the following departments:

- Water Services Section: Report received which addresses surface water and flood risk. Recommended conditions are set out in the event that permission is granted.
- Parks and Green Infrastructure: Report received which addresses existing trees and hedgerows, the landfall cable route and the landscape plan for the grid facility. Recommended conditions are set out in the event that permission is granted.
- Transportation Planning Section: Report received which addresses a number of aspects of the proposed development including layout, phasing and interaction with planned and proposed developments, road reinstatement, access and road closures and construction traffic management. Recommended conditions are set out in the event that permission is granted.

The individual reports are included in Appendix 2.

3.3 Report of the Council Meeting

The Report of the Chief Executive was presented to the Elected Members of Fingal Council in accordance with Section 291(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The Report was considered by the Members at the Council meeting held on 8th July.

The issues raised at the meeting are summarised below. No resolution, as referred to in Section 291(7) was proposed at the meeting. The administrator's record of the meeting is also included with this submission.

Cllr. Quinn

Queried rationale for siting of turbines closer to Skerries than Balbriggan.

Cllr Healy

Noted that windfarms are very welcome as an essential element in terms of decarbonisation of the electricity system.

Raised the local impact arising from the proposed development on roads around Malahide (including Swords Road, Malahide Road, Estuary Road) and also further north with long closures proposed to facilitate the proposed development. Queried the level of discussion held regarding this issue.

Raised safety concerns regarding some of the diversion roads in question with diversions proposed onto unsuitable roads in terms of pedestrian access e.g. Yellow Walls Road.

Queried why a direct route along the M1 motorway wasn't used.

Cllr. O'Brien

Raised the issue of the impact that the proposed development would have in terms of road closures and laying of cables in the Malahide area.

Noted that the community forum has engaged with the proponents of the scheme and has contacted landowners with regards to an alternative cable route that would mainly pass through greenfield lands. Considered that this would have merit if it could be done.

Noted the potential conditions suggested in the report with regards to the route and managing cable routes. Requested further detail on this.

Highlighted that a request has been made by the community forum for the planning authority to engage directly with the group prior to the planning authority submitting their report with regards to the alternative route. Queried whether this is possible.

Considered that Cllr Healy's comment regarding an M1 route is valid.

Cllr Ryan

Referred to report of the Chief Executive and comments therein on landscape impact.

Advised that a local group in Skerries has examined the information in terms of visual impact and photomontages. The group is not opposed to wind energy. They believe the scheme should be located further out to sea (35km). They have put together a model of the proposal which illustrates Rockabill in the context of the scheme.

Queried whether the Chief Executive's report refers to the photomontages in the application documentation in terms of assessing visual impact or whether the planning authority has carried out independent work in this respect.

Requested that the planning authority should meet with the community group in Skerries in relation to this issue.

Cllr Tormey

Concurred with the views expressed by Cllrs. O'Brien and Healy.

Expressed concern regarding the laying of underground cables in the Malahide area. Noted that construction of this would need to be carefully managed. However, more consideration needed on the route selection on main roads and if alternatives options could be used. Malahide Community Forum has presented an alternative option.

Noted that a request has been received from the community forum to meet with the planning authority which has been forwarded to staff in Fingal County Council.

Cllr. Maguire

Issue raised by Cllr Ryan in respect of whether the images produced depict the reality of the proposal is valid.

Numerous people in Balbriggan have attended meetings with the Skerries group and raised concern regarding the size of the unit behind the Flemington LAP lands. It had been said at meetings that the building would be camouflaged with trees etc but that would take to develop.

Concerns set out regarding the route through Balbriggan particularly going up through Main Street and closing off this street and given the Harry Reynolds Road project which is ongoing. The proposal would result in opening that road again which would not represent value for money and is not good planning.

The route overland needs to be looked at again and whether they go through greenfield land and then along the M1 which would make sense.

The route through Balbriggan Main Street and Harry Reynolds Road isn't acceptable.

Cllr Hoey

Queried if it is possible for the planning authority to meet with Malahide Community Forum regarding the alternative route proposed which would result in less disruption.

Supportive of renewable energy projects where it can be done without causing such disruption.

3.4 Renewable Energy

The Strategic Objectives of the Fingal Development Plan include transitioning to an environmentally sustainable carbon neutral economy. Associated with this, the Development Plan recognises that Ireland's territorial waters present major opportunities in the offshore renewable energy sector which would support the transition to a zero carbon economy.

This viewpoint is reflected in the specific policies and objectives of the Development Plan including Policy CAP13 and Objective EEO70, which supports energy from renewable sources and the alternative energy sector, and Policy CAP16 which supports the implementation of the 2014 Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (and any successor to this document). The Development Plan would thus be supportive of

proposals such as the proposed development subject to normal planning and environmental considerations.

3.5 Zoning

The majority of the on-shore element of the proposed development is underground.

The proposed grid facility north of Balbriggan is located on lands zoned 'RU – Rural' where utility installations are permitted in principle. The proposal is therefore acceptable in this regard.

According to the details submitted, the cable route from the proposed grid facility development largely passes under public roads. These are not subject to zoning in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. According to Section 7.5.2 of the EIAR in respect of the cable route description, once construction is completed, the only visible above ground structures along the onshore cable route will be small marker posts to indicate the location of the cables and manhole covers associated with joint bays, link boxes and communications chambers. Drawings of the marker posts should be provided for clarity.

Above ground works are proposed at Blake's Cross, the location of which is subject to the 'RU – Rural' zoning. These works are in the form of landscaping and consequently are not considered to have implications for the land use zoning.

3.6 Landscape and Visual Impact

3.6.1 On-Shore

The proposed grid facility to serve the development would be situated north of Balbriggan on the western side of the R132. This site is within the development boundary for Balbriggan town in the Fingal Development Plan and is a prominent site at the edge of the town.

The grid facility has 2 distinct areas to accommodate the compensation substation and the Bremore 220kV Gas Insulated Switchgear substation.

The compensation substation includes two buildings: a gas insulated switchgear building which is approximately 17m in height with lightning protection rods on the building roof extending to 3m and a static VAR compensator building which is 6.85m high. Finishes to the buildings are stated as metal wall cladding (or similar) in a matt dark grey/green.

The Bremore 220kV GIS substation building is approximately 17m in height with lightning protection rods on the building roof extending to 3m. Finishes are stated as metal wall cladding (or similar) in a matt dark grey/green.

Other infrastructure within the grid facility includes an environmental screen around the external area serving the harmonic filters (in the compensation substation area). This is stated on the grid facility layout plan (sheet 1 of 2) as being 8m high. Section

7.4.2.1 of the EIAR states that there are 3m high environmental screens on three sides to screen the components of the harmonic filters. Based on the elevation drawings, it would appear that the screen is 8m in height. It is also stated that lightning arrestor masts, maximum 30m high, are provided in the compensation compound. The location of these is not clear, based on the elevation drawings submitted, as the lightning masts shown do not appear to extend beyond the height of the compensation substation building.

Lighting columns, various equipment including transformers and reactors are also to be provided in the grid facility in addition to an attenuation basin along part of the western boundary.

The landscape plan for the compound provides for native screening/woodland around the western boundary of the site compound, part of the southern and eastern boundaries and within part of the interior of the compound. Further consideration is required on treatment of the south-eastern boundary of the site in terms of the provision of adequate width for additional screen planting as well as allowing for the proposed storm water swale and protection of exiting hedgerow.

A number of photomontages have been submitted of the grid facility. Section 29.15.2 of the EIAR refers to the use of a recessive colour scheme for the grid facility structures which is shown on the montages. However, these finishes are not replicated on the elevational drawings submitted. The montages also include views with the mitigation landscaping established. However, these show planting in full leaf which will only be available for part of the year.

The facility adjoins land zoned for residential development in the Fingal County Development Plan and identified for the preparation of a Local Area Plan (LAP) – the Flemington LAP. Fingal County Council has commenced work on the preparation of the LAP. The GIS substation building is the closest of the largest scale structures to the Flemington lands and is oriented northwest-southeast to the Flemington lands. The photomontage viewpoints closest to the Flemington lands are VP48, VP49 and VP55. The positioning of VP49 and VP55 from the roadside does not give a full understanding of the impact to the Flemington lands. VP50 is also considered a useful reference point in terms of distance and illustrates the scale of the proposal. While cognisant of the functionality of the structures on site, given the prominence of the site, it is considered that a higher standard of architectural merit should be incorporated into the external finishes proposed to the compensation and GIS buildings.

3.6.2 Off-Shore

As set out previously, the coastline along Fingal is identified as a highly sensitive landscape, with the coastal and estuary landscapes being of exceptional quality. The Fingal County Development Plan seeks to protect the quality, character and integrity of these landscapes.

A number of photomontages have been prepared for viewpoints along the Fingal coast illustrating both design options. The proposal is most clearly visible along the northern edge of the Fingal coast, at the viewpoints at Balbriggan, Ardgillan, Skerries and Loughshinny. Based on the details submitted, Fingal County Council considers that the proposal would not impinge in any significant way on the landscape in Fingal county and thus would not be contrary to Objective GINHO59, which is to ensure that "that new development does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of highly sensitive areas and does not detract from the scenic value of the area".

3.7 Impacts on Residential Amenity

During the construction stage, it is noted that the EIAR predicts slight to moderate construction impacts to a number of noise sensitive receptors close to the substation site. During operational stage, no exceedance of limits was identified in the predicted operational hours for normal or emergency operational situations.

The construction period, as set out in the EIAR is lengthy. In order to mitigate impacts on the amenities of property, construction works should be carried out during specified hours unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. In circumstances where work outside specified working hours is approved, measures to communicate this to nearby residents should be followed by the developer.

Lighting is proposed in the grid facility. According to the EIAR (section 7.4.3.3), external lighting would be switched off during hours of darkness under normal operating conditions with the exception to this being for emergency repairs to outdoor equipment where high level illumination would be switched on. It is also stated that the use of motion sensor technology "is likely to be implemented to control lighting at access doors, security gates etc.". Section 29.13.2 of the EIAR states that motion sensor technology "will be implemented". In order to prevent negative impacts on residential amenities and also having regard to potential impacts on biodiversity, it is considered that conditions should be attached to address the hours of operation of the lighting and to require the implementation of motion sensor lighting as appropriate.

3.8 Access

General information in respect of vehicular access directly off the public road to serve the proposed development has been provided. In assessing proposals for development, Fingal County Council generally require a sightline drawing to be provided for any proposed new vehicular entrance onto a public road. Objective DMSO115 of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 seeks to "restrict unnecessary new accesses directly off Regional Roads, and to ensure premature obsolescence of all County/local roads does not occur by avoiding excessive levels of individual entrances, and to ensure that necessary new entrances are designed in accordance with DMRB or DMURS as appropriate, thereby avoiding the creation of traffic hazards".

It appears that specific details to demonstrate that the appropriate minimum sightlines are achieved has not been provided by the applicant, such as a dedicated 'sightline

drawing'. An Bord Pleanála should satisfy themselves that appropriate sightlines are achieved for the posted speed limit at each of the proposed new vehicular entrances, as per the minimum requirements of DN-GEO-03060 as published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and where appropriate, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

It is recommended that the layouts of proposed new vehicular entrances are designed so as to provide sightlines as per the minimum requirements of DN-GEO-03060 as published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and where appropriate, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

3.9 Existing Trees/Hedgerow

The applicant has provided a *Base Line Tree Survey Report* as part of EIAR Vol. 10, Appendix 23.11. The document includes a Tree Constraints Plan but has omitted to provide a Tree Protection Plan. A Tree Protection Plan provides information on what trees and hedgerows are proposed to be removed and retained with details of tree protection measures. Based on this information, the impact of the proposed hedgerow / tree loss can be ascertained and consequently the quantity of replacement planting required to compensate for the tree canopy cover as a result of this development can be calculated. This approach is in line with 'Forest of Fingal A Tree Strategy for Fingal' which is to be implemented as per Objective GINHO23 of the Fingal Development Plan.

Reference is made to hedgerow planting and woodland planting at the grid facility and at Blakes Cross North in EIAR Appendix 23.10 -Habitat and Species Management Plan (HSMP). However it is not clear if there are proposals for any further tree and hedgerow planting works in relation to the development.

According to Section 7.2.3.2 of the EIAR, it is stated that where possible the onshore cable will be laid in the public road, with some off-road sections where it is not technically feasible to maintain the route within the road. It is stated that temporary and permanent access tracks will not be sited within 3m from the hedgerow vegetation and no other construction works or activities will be sited within 5m of the hedgerow vegetation. It is also stated that where the onshore cable route is located within public roads, the removal of any trees or vegetation alongside the road will be avoided as much as practicable.

In this regard, replacement planting of trees and hedgerows within the Fingal area would need to be agreed with Fingal County Council in particular in terms of specification and location of replacement planting. It is noted that in certain cases it may not be feasible to carry out replacement planting at the exact location where trees and / hedgerows must be removed. In these cases, an appropriate nearby location should be agreed with the Council.

The applicant should provide details of proposed tree and hedgerow removal and compensatory planting in order to ensure that there is no net canopy (or biodiversity loss) as a result of the development.

3.10 Water Services

The grid facility at Bremore would be served by a potable water supply. The comments of Uisce Eireann sought be sought in this regard.

According to the details provided, foul wastewater will be collected and disposed of off-site.

As per the EIAR, the Contractor for the development will be required to put in place a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) to protect the water environment during construction. The applicant has listed out a number of mitigation measures which will be implemented to prevent contaminated surface water runoff into any water bodies. These mitigation measures are considered acceptable.

Proposals for surface water drainage have been submitted. Surface water runoff will be collected into the carrier pipe network. It is stated that the majority of the surface water will discharge to an existing ditch at the northwest of the site; a small portion of the site will discharge locally to the existing roadside drainage network and operational surface water runoff will be restricted to match existing greenfield runoff rates. An attenuation basin has been provided to ensure that the instantaneous surface water runoff rate from the site will not exceed the greenfield runoff rate. Filter drains and a hydrocarbon interceptor will be provided upstream of the attenuation basis and fuel tanks will be located in concrete bunds.

Surface water run-off from temporary works area to be collected in silt/gravel traps prior to discharge to the surface water drainage network. A Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) will be implemented to allow controls to be designed for the retention of large volumes of water that may arise from spoil deposition areas.

The surface water drainage strategy is considered acceptable.

3.11 Flood Risk

According to the details submitted, the development contractor will be required to put in place a Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) to ensure staff are not exposed to the risk of flooding, to minimise damage to the construction works in case of flooding and to reduce risk of flooding to nearby properties. It is also stated that:

- The work near watercourses will be planned to be undertaken at appropriate periods when low flow is expected.
- Weather warning notifications will be issued and the weather forecast checked regularly when working near areas at risk of flooding.
- Where offline open cut trench method is proposed, water levels upstream of the watercourse crossings will be monitored.
- A flood warning system and management plan will be implemented.

Further mitigation measures specific to each construction methodology are outlined in

the EIAR. Subject to implementation of the mitigation strategy identified in the application documentation, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of flood risk.

3.12 Onshore Cable Works

It is not clear from the submitted documentation what is proposed at the landfall location in terms of what will be visible above ground once this overall project is complete. It is therefore difficult to assess the impact of this area in terms of visual amenity and on the future development of this land. In addition, it is not clear what is proposed as the defined construction corridor for works in this area (e.g. 30-40 metre working width.) This issue should be considered by An Bord Pleanála in the assessment of the proposal.

The application documentation includes a drawing with the proposed typical cable trench details. In the event that An Bord Pleanála approves the development, the exact detail of the cable trench, including depth and formation cross section arrangement, should be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council and the developer should take cognisance of the latest edition of the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' published by the Department of Transport. Similarly, the exact detail of the longitudinal layout of the cable trench within the road should be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council. In this regard, the preference of the Council is that the cables be installed at a minimum at the regulation depth and generally located in the centre of the carriageway, as the verges and edge of the carriageway are needed for localised utilities and road drainage.

Fingal County Council wishes to highlight that any excavation or opening of a public road or footway would require that a road opening licence be applied for through the MRL system. Should the development be approved, the applicant should apply for a T1 licence at the earliest stage as possible in the project.

Road reinstatement would need to be carried out as per the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' published by the Department of Transport; and to be agreed with the Council under the road opening licence procedure.

In regard to road reinstatement where the roadway has been recently renewed, the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' describes that the protected period for a recently renewed surface will be for 5 years, and a Road Opening Licence Holder would need to carry out full width/lane/bay reinstatement on a renewed surface in the protected period. The developer should have cognisance of this.

The application documentation sets out details of proposed road closures required to facilitate the proposed development. Fingal County Council has concerns regarding the scale of these and the level of disruption that could be caused to local and regional transport, for example:

- Malahide Road (R107) – 11 week closure proposed
- Swords Road (R106) – 7 week closures
- Estuary Road 6 -12 weeks depending on option route taken.

Other alternatives may need to be considered to mitigate impacts such as:

- Lane closures with significant traffic management measures i.e. flagmen and other appropriate measures could be considered.
- Nighttime road closures could also be considered but would need to be justified, and this option does not appear to have been explored.
- Mitigation measures in terms of increased resources are proposed to reduce some of the duration of the road closures, however, given the volumes of traffic on these roads this may have to be reconsidered for partial closures or night-based works to hand back the road to the council each day for example.

Fingal County Council recommend that the phasing and duration of the works on the public road, including proposed lane and road closures is kept to an absolute minimum and is agreed in writing with the Council should permission be granted for the proposed development.

3.13 Interaction with Permitted and Proposed Developments

The proposed onshore cable route would be approximately 33-35km in length and would potentially interact with the construction of the following permitted and proposed transport developments (but not limited to this list):

- MetroLink, including advance works projects.
- The Harry Reynolds Road Pedestrian and Cycle Route, on the Harry Reynolds Road in Balbriggan – which involves the full reconstruction of the road cross section for the entire length of Harry Reynolds Road, to provide improved active travel infrastructure. This project is currently under construction.
- The Council is currently in the process of designing an ‘active travel’ infrastructure project from Bremore North of Balbriggan to the county boundary with Meath. Planning permission is not yet in place for this project.
- The R132 Connectivity Project in Swords, which involves the full reconstruction of the road cross section and junctions on the R132 from Estuary Roundabout to Pinockhill Roundabout. This project has planning permission in place.
- The Council has a design in place for an ‘active travel’ project on the section of road between Seatown Road to Malahide Estuary, to provide Road Safety, Cycling and Walking Improvements.
- Fingal County Council is in the early stages of the process for designing an improved active travel infrastructure along the Swords Road in Malahide.
- The Council has a design in place for an ‘active travel’ project on the section of Balheary Road, north of Swords, in the vicinity of the bridge crossing the Broadmeadow River.
- The Seatown Road in Swords (as it approaches Main Street) is currently closed for the next 2 years as part of the construction of the Swords Cultural Quarter project.
- Solar photovoltaic (‘PV’) energy development on lands at Mainscourt, Ballyboghil, Co. Dublin, reg. ref. F22A/0365. This permitted development involves underground electricity cables in ducts from Mainscourt, Ballyboghil to the ESB Mountgorry 38kV Substation, Swords Business Park.

- Eirgrid Cable Route from Meath.
- Swords Main Street Upgrade works. This project is at the early stages of design development.

There are also reoccurring events that are held in Fingal each year, usually in June and July, which include the Malahide Castle concerts and the Flavors of Fingal. It should be noted that, in general, Fingal County Council does not allow any road works in the area in the lead up to or during these events.

In order to ensure proper coordination between the proposed development and the various planned projects along the proposed cable route, in the event that permission is granted, the phasing of the proposed works on the public road, including the phasing dates and duration of any proposed 'road closures' on the public road, should be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

3.14 Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report has been submitted with the application.

An Bord Pleanála are the competent authority with regard to Environmental Impact Assessment and should therefore satisfy themselves regarding the adequacy of documentation submitted.

3.15 Appropriate Assessment

An Bord Pleanála are the competent authority with regard to Appropriate Assessment and should therefore satisfy themselves regarding the adequacy of documentation submitted in this respect.

3.16 Section 48/49 Development Contribution Schemes

The 'Fingal County Council Development Contribution Scheme 2021-2025' is the applicable contributions scheme. Should permission be granted, the Board is requested to include a condition requiring the payment of a development contribution in accordance with the scheme.

There are no Section 49 supplementary contributions schemes either adopted or proposed that would affect this development.

Section 4 Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The provisions of the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 support in principle the development of renewal energy including off shore windfarms subject to normal planning and environmental considerations. Fingal County Council considers that the offshore elements would not impinge in any significant way on the landscape in Fingal county and would be acceptable in this respect in the context of the objectives for landscape in the Fingal Development Plan. A high specification of materials for the grid facility would be required given the prominent location of this site at the entrance to Balbriggan town and proximity to residential zoned lands. Should permission be granted, the construction of the development requires careful consideration and management in order to minimise impacts on the road network in Fingal and traffic movements. Fingal County Council recommends that these issues are addressed by condition should An Bord Pleanála approve the proposed development.

4.2 Recommended Conditions

The Planning Authority recommends that certain conditions be attached should An Bord Pleanála be minded to grant permission for this development. These conditions are set out below and are not intended as an exhaustive list.

1. The development shall be carried out in its entirety in accordance with the plans, particulars and specifications lodged with the application, save as may be required by the other conditions attached hereto.
REASON: To ensure that the development shall be in accordance with the permission, and that effective control be maintained.
2. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit for the written agreement of Fingal County Council, revised proposals for external finishes to the compensation and GIS substation buildings. The proposals shall be accompanied by trade brochures and photomontages of the structures incorporating the materials. Sample panels shall be erected on the site (if requested by Fingal County Council).
REASON: In the interests of the proper planning and development of the area.
3. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit for the written agreement of Fingal County Council, details of the location and height of all lightning rods.
REASON: In the interest of clarity and development control.
4. CCTV cameras shall not be directed outside of the grid facility site boundaries.
REASON: To protect the amenities of the area.
5. External lighting in the grid facility shall be cowled and shall not be directed outside of the site boundaries. External lighting shall be switched off during hours of darkness, save where required for emergency repairs. A log shall be maintained

by the developer of such instances which shall be made available, if requested, to Fingal County Council. Motion sensor lighting shall be implemented to control lighting at access doors and security gates on the site.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area.

6. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit for the written agreement of Fingal County Council, elevational drawings of the marker posts for the cable route.

REASON: In the interest of clarity and development control.

7. The following shall be complied with in respect of surface water management:
- (a) No surface water/ rainwater shall discharge into the foul water system under any circumstances.
 - (b) The surface water drainage arrangements shall be in compliance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Version 6.0 FCC April 2006.
 - (c) All culverts shall be designed in accordance with "Culvert Design Guide" Report 168 by CIRIA, latest revision or its replacement, and shall also comply with the recommendations of the OPW. Design calculations for these shall be submitted for the written agreement of Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.
 - (d) The developer shall apply to the OPW to obtain permission under Section 50, Arterial Drainage Act 1945, for culverting of any watercourse.

REASON: In the interests of public health.

8. (a) Prior to commencement of development, a Tree Protection Plan, including tree protection measures and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction Recommendations shall be submitted for the written agreement of Fingal County Council. This plan shall clearly indicate the trees and hedgerows proposed for removal and retention. The plan shall clearly indicate the length and area of hedgerows as well as the number of trees proposed for removal.
- (b) Prior to commencement of development, a detailed Landscape Plan, Planting and Works Specification and Management and Maintenance Plan shall be submitted in writing with Fingal County Council in relation to this development. The Landscape Plan shall clearly indicate the length and area of hedgerows as well as the number of trees which are proposed to be planted. This plan shall clearly indicate that there shall be no net tree canopy cover loss as a result of this development. These documents shall be prepared by a suitably qualified landscape professional.
- (c) A consultant qualified arborist suitably qualified landscape professional shall be engaged for the duration of the development to ensure trees and hedgerows are protected in accordance with the agreed Tree Protection Plan.

REASON: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design.

9. Prior to the commencement of works on site, full details of the defined construction corridor and above and ground infrastructure and landscape proposals in relation to the landfall site indicated on Proposed Cable Route Map Sheet 03 and Sheet 04 of 64 shall be submitted for the written agreement of Fingal County Council.

REASON: In the interest of visual amenity and orderly development.

10. (a) Prior to commencement of development, a revised landscape plan for the Grid Facility shall be submitted for the written agreement of Fingal County Council to include additional screen planting (using a mix of standard trees and whips) along the south-eastern boundary.

(b) Prior to commencement of development, a cross section drawing shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority which illustrates clearly the proposed boundary treatment, existing hedgerow, additional screen planting and the proposed swale.

REASON: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design.

11. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit for the written agreement of Fingal County Council a phasing plan for the cabling works proposed in the public road.

REASON: In the interest of orderly development.

12. The developer shall comply with the following requirements:

(a) The layout and depth of the ducting trench cross section shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(b) The exact location/route of the ducting trench within each individual section of road shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(c) The exact details for road reinstatement works for each individual section of road shall be as per the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' (often referred to as 'the purple book'), and the details of which shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(d) The phasing of the proposed works on the public road, including the phasing dates and duration of any proposed 'road closures' on the public road, shall be coordinated so as to avoid the proposed development works conflicting with various planned and permitted developments along the proposed cable route corridor. In this regard, a phasing plan shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(e) The details of the proposed construction traffic management plan, including the details of all proposed road closures and lane closures shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(f) The developer shall agree all proposed public transport diversions due to proposed road closures with all relevant transportation stakeholder's, including the NTA, Dublin Bus, and Bus Eireann, prior to commencement of development. The agreed details shall be submitted for the written agreement of Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(g) All necessary consents from the Council shall be obtained before works commence, including the necessary road opening licences.

(h) All details of temporary construction vehicular access opening onto the public road shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(i) All details of new permanent vehicular access onto the public road shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(j) A photographic pre-condition road survey of the entire proposed route for the ducting trench shall be prepared by the developer submitted for the written agreement of Fingal County Council prior to commencement of development.

(k) Any damage caused to the pavement on the existing road network arising from the construction works (e.g. damage of the surface wearing course, etc.) shall be rectified in accordance with TII Pavement Standards. Details in this regard shall be agreed with the Road Authority in writing prior to the commencement of any development on site.

REASON: In the interests of orderly development, traffic safety and proper planning.

13. Within the grid facility, no additional development shall take place above roof parapet level, including air handling equipment, storage tanks, ducts or other external plant, telecommunication aerials, antennas or equipment, unless authorised by a further grant of planning permission.

REASON: To protect the visual amenities of the area.

14. The following requirements shall be complied with in full:

(a) The hours of operation on all construction sites shall be restricted to between 0800 hours to 1900 hours Monday to Friday, and between 0800 hours to 1400 hours on Saturdays.

(b) No activities shall take place on site on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

(c) Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from Fingal County Council. Such approval may be given subject to conditions pertaining to the particular circumstances being set by Fingal County Council.

(d) Where revisions are approved in accordance with point (c) above, local residents, business in areas which are likely to be affected by noise from the proposed works shall be notified in advance, for example, by letter/leaflet or advertisement stating the following:

- Name, address and telephone number of the company carrying out works.
- Nature of and reason for works.
- Duration and times of work.

REASON: In the interest of public health and in the interest of residential amenity.

15. All service cables associated with the proposed development shall be run underground.

REASON: In the interest of orderly development and the visual amenities of the area.

16. All necessary measures shall be taken by the applicant/developer to prevent the spillage or deposit of any materials including clay rubble or other debris on adjoining roads during the course of development. In the event of any such spillage or deposit, immediate steps shall be taken to remove the material from the road surface at the applicant/developers own expense.

The applicant/developer shall be responsible for the full cost of repair in respect of any damage caused to the adjoining public road arising from the construction work and shall either make good any damage to the satisfaction of Fingal County Council or pay the Council the cost of making good any such damage upon issue of such a requirement by the Council.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area.

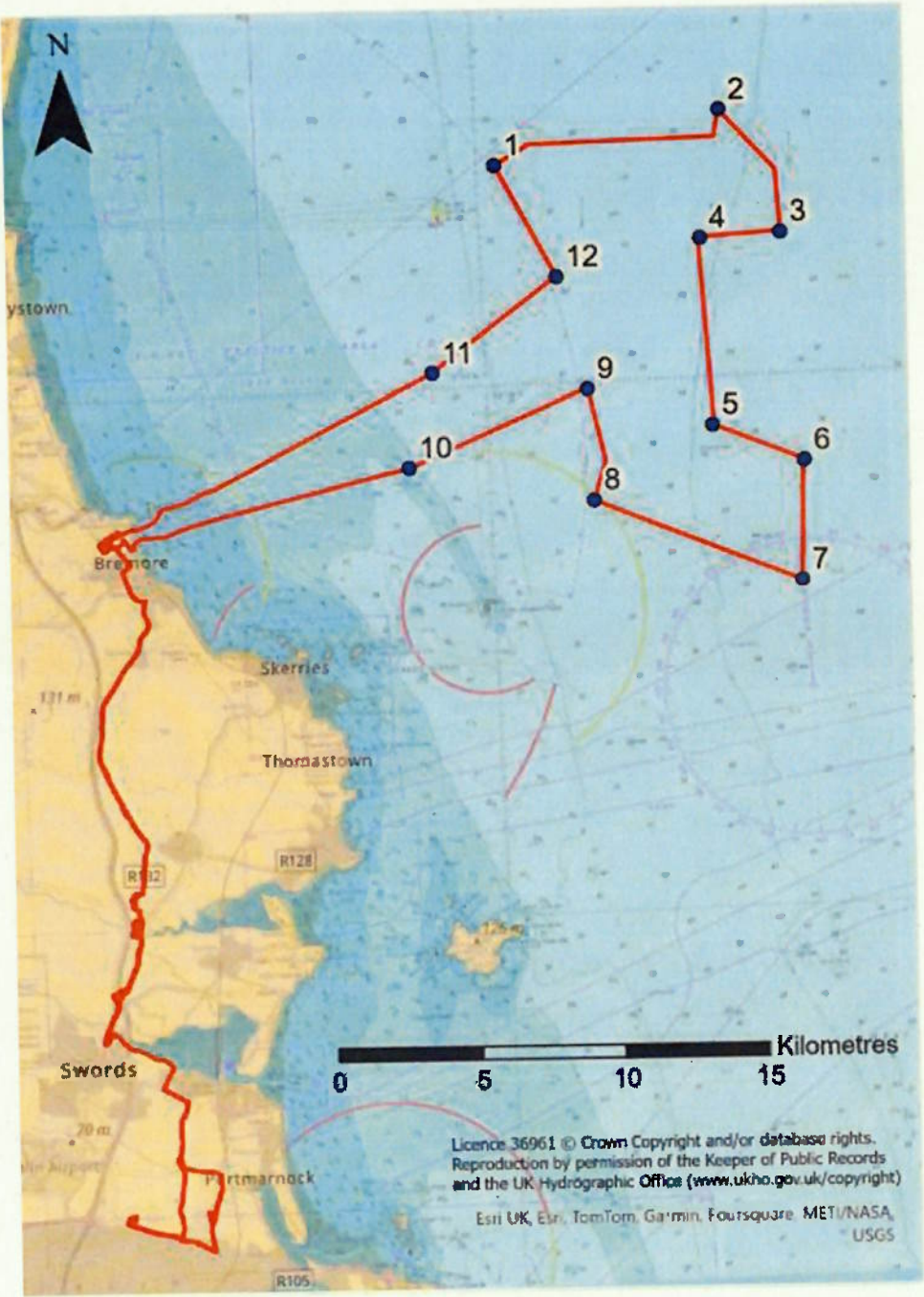
17. The developer shall provide a piece of public art or sculpture or architectural feature, to be designed in consultation with Fingal County Council (Public Art Coordinator, within the Community Culture & Sports Division of Fingal County Council). The piece of art shall have a relationship with the area.

REASON: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

18. Prior to commencement of development the developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution towards expenditure that was and/or that is proposed to be incurred by the planning authority in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the Authority, as provided for in the Contribution Scheme for Fingal County made by the Council. The phasing of payments shall be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development.

REASON: It is considered reasonable that the payment of a contribution be required in respect of the public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the Planning Authority and which is provided, or which is intended to be provided by, or on behalf of the Local Authority.

Appendix 1 Location of Development



Appendix 2 Departmental Reports

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL INTERNAL CONSULTTEE

PLANNING REPORT

Report of the Water Services Department

Register Reference: SID/04/24

Registration Date: 07-Jun-2024

Development: The proposed development is an offshore wind farm comprising of both offshore and onshore infrastructure.

The proposed development boundary, within which the proposed development is located, will include offshore infrastructure off the coast of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth and onshore infrastructure within County Dublin (Fingal and Dublin City Council administrative areas). A high-level overview of the proposed development is provided below.

Offshore Infrastructure (located within and Array area and export cable corridor (ECC)):

- Offshore wind turbine generators (WTGs) and their associated foundations;
- Inter-array cables which will connect the WTGs to the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP);
- An OSP and associated foundations; and
- Offshore export cable(s) which will deliver the generated power from the OSP to the high-water mark (HWM) as defined by Ordnance Survey Ireland mapping (the HWM being the transition point between the offshore and onshore infrastructure).

Onshore Infrastructure:

- Offshore export cable(s) from the HWM to the landfall transition joint bays (TJBs);
- Transition joint bays (TJBs) where the offshore and onshore export cables are joined;
- Onshore export cable(s) from the TJBs to the grid facility;
- A Grid Facility, comprising a compensation substation and Bremore substation, together within ancillary infrastructure;
- Onshore cable(s) from the grid facility to the Belcamp Substation; and
- A connection from the onshore cable(s) to the national electricity transmission network at Belcamp Substation.

The landfall will comprise both offshore and onshore infrastructure, with the HWM being the point of transition between the two. The export cables come ashore and transition to onshore cables at the TJBs close to the shoreline at Bremore Bay beach in Bremore, north of Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

Location: The offshore infrastructure of the proposed development will be located off the coast, of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth., The onshore infrastructure of the proposed development will be located in County Dublin, (Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council)

Applicant: North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited
Application Type: Strategic Infrastructure Development

Report

Foul Sewer: IW

Surface Water: No objection subject to:

1. As per the EIAR submission, The Contractor will be required to put in place a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) to protect the water environment during construction. The applicant has listed out a number of mitigation measures which will be implemented to prevent contaminated surface water runoff into any water bodies (*Page 36.31, 36.14 Water (includes hydrology, surface water quality and flooding) Mitigation and Monitoring Measures*). These mitigation measures are deemed acceptable.
2. The applicant will implement a number of SuDs measures as part of the overall drainage strategy for the proposed development:
 - An attenuation basin will be provided at the grid facility and this will ensure that the instantaneous surface water runoff rate from the site will not exceed the greenfield runoff rate. Water quality will be managed by controlling the volume and treating the discharge in line with SuDS principles.
 - Surface water run-off from temporary works area to be collected in silt/gravel traps prior to discharge to the surface water drainage network.
 - Oil interceptors will be installed on surface water drainage network at the grid facility works areas for the construction phase.
 - A Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) will be implemented to allow controls to be designed for the retention of large volumes of water that may arise from spoil deposition areas.In summary, the surface water strategy is deemed acceptable.
3. All culverts shall be designed in accordance with "Culvert Design Guide" Report 168 by CIRIA, latest revision or its replacement, and shall also comply with the recommendations of the OPW. Design calculations are to be submitted.
4. The Developer shall apply to the OPW to obtain permission under Section 50, Arterial Drainage Act 1945, for culverting of any watercourse.
5. No surface water / rainwater is to discharge into the foul water system under any circumstances.
6. The surface water drainage must be in compliance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works, Version 6.0, FCC, April 2006.

Flooding: No Objection

As per the EIAR submission, the contractor will be required to put in place a Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) to ensure staff are not exposed to the risk of flooding, to minimise damage to the construction works in case of flooding and to reduce risk of flooding to nearby properties.

- The work near watercourses will be planned to be undertaken at appropriate periods when low flow is expected.
- Weather warning notifications will be issued and the weather forecast checked regularly when working near areas at risk of flooding.
- Where offline open cut trench method is proposed, water levels upstream of the watercourse crossings will be monitored.
- A flood warning system and management plan will be implemented.

Further mitigation measures specific to each construction methodology are outlined in the EIAR submission (Page 36.34/36.35).

In summary, the level of flood risk is deemed acceptable subject to the mitigation listed above and as per the EIAR submission (Page 36.34/36.35).

Water Supply: IW

1. IW standard details document IW-CDS-5030-01 and IW Code of Practice IW-CDS-5030-03 apply.
2. Note that the statutory consultee in this regard is Irish Water, accordingly:
 - a. Where the applicant proposes to connect directly or indirectly to a public water/wastewater network operated by Irish Water, the applicant must sign a connection agreement with Irish Water prior to the commencement of the development and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement.
 - b. In the interest of Public Health and Environmental Sustainability, Irish Water Infrastructure capacity requirements and proposed connections to the Water and Waste Water Infrastructure will be subject to the constraints of the Irish Water Capital Investment Programme.

Officer: _____DC_____ Endorsed: _____DD

Date: _____01/07/2024_____ Date: _____01/07/2024

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL INTERNAL CONSULTEE**PLANNING REPORT****Report of Parks and Green Infrastructure Division**

Register Reference: SID/04/24

Registration Date: 07-Jun-2024

Development: The proposed development is an offshore wind farm comprising of both offshore and onshore infrastructure.
The proposed development boundary, within which the proposed development is located, will include offshore infrastructure off the coast of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth and onshore infrastructure within County Dublin (Fingal and Dublin City Council administrative areas).

A high-level overview of the proposed development is provided below.

Offshore Infrastructure (located within and Array area and export cable corridor (ECC)):

- Offshore wind turbine generators (WTGs) and their associated foundations;
- Inter-array cables which will connect the WTGs to the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP);
- An OSP and associated foundations; and
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Onshore Infrastructure:

- Offshore export cable(s) from the HWM to the landfall transition joint bays (TJBs);
- Transition joint bays (TJBs) where the offshore and onshore export cables are joined;
- Onshore export cable(s) from the TJBs to the grid facility;
- A Grid Facility, comprising a compensation substation and Bremore substation, together within ancillary infrastructure;
- Onshore cable(s) from the grid facility to the Belcamp Substation; and
- A connection from the onshore cable(s) to the national electricity transmission network at Belcamp Substation.

The landfall will comprise both offshore and onshore infrastructure, with the HWM being the point of transition between the two. The export cables come ashore and transition to onshore cables at the TJBs close to the shoreline at Bremore Bay beach in Bremore, north of Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

Location: The offshore infrastructure of the proposed development will be located off the coast, of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth., The onshore infrastructure of the proposed development will be located in County Dublin, (Fingal Counry Council and Dubin City Coucil)

Applicant: North irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited

Application Type: Strategic Infrastructure Development

Report

The Parks and Green Infrastructure Division's comments are as follows:

Existing trees and hedgerows:

The applicant has provided a *Base Line Tree Survey Report* as part of EIAR Vol. 10, Appendix 23.11. The document includes a Tree Constraints Plan but has omitted to provide a Tree Protection Plan. A Tree Protection Plan provides information on what trees and hedgerows are proposed to be removed and retained with details of tree protection measures. Based on this information, the impact of the proposed hedgerow / tree loss can be ascertained and consequently the quantity of replacement planting required to compensate for the tree canopy cover as a result of this development can be calculated.

Reference is made to hedgerow planting and woodland planting at the grid facility and at Blakes Cross North in EIAR Appendix 23.10 -Habitat and Species Management Plan (HSMP). However it is not clear if there are proposals for any further tree and hedgerow planting works in relation to this development.

According to Section 7.2.3.2 of the EIAR, it is stated that where possible the onshore cable will be laid in the public road, with some off-road sections where it is not technically feasible to maintain the route within the road. It is stated that temporary and permanent access tracks will not be sited within 3m from the hedgerow vegetation and no other construction works or activities will be sited within 5m of the hedgerow vegetation. It is also stated that where the onshore cable route is located within public roads, the removal of any trees or vegetation alongside the road will be avoided as much as practicable.

In this regard, replacement planting of trees and hedgerows within the Fingal area would need to be agreed with this Planning Authority in particular in terms of specification and location of replacement planting. It is noted that in certain cases it may not be feasible to carry out replacement planting at the exact location where trees and / hedgerows must be removed. In these cases, an appropriate nearby location should be agreed with the Planning Authority.

The applicant should provide details of proposed tree and hedgerow removal and compensatory planting in order to ensure that there is no net canopy (or biodiversity loss as a result of the development.

Recommended Conditions:

A Tree Protection Plan, including tree protection measures and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS5837:2012 *Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction Recommendations* shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority in relation to this development. This plan shall clearly indicate the trees and hedgerows proposed for removal and retention. The plan shall clearly indicate the length and area of hedgerows as well as the number of trees proposed for removal.

A detailed Landscape Plan, Planting and Works Specification and Management and Maintenance Plan shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority in relation to this development. The Landscape Plan shall clearly indicate the length and area of hedgerows as well as the number of trees which are proposed to be planted. This plan shall clearly indicate that there shall be no net tree canopy cover loss as a result of this development. These documents shall be prepared by a suitably qualified landscape professional.

A consultant qualified arborist suitably qualified landscape professional shall be engaged for the duration of the development to ensure trees and hedgerows are protected in accordance with the agreed Tree Protection Plan.

Proposed Cable Route Map Sheet 03 and Sheet 04 of 64 (Landfall)

It is not clear from the submitted documentation what is proposed at the above Landfall location in terms of what will be visible above ground once this overall project is complete. It is therefore difficult to assess the impact of this area in terms of visual amenity and on the future development of this land. In addition, it is not clear what is proposed as the defined construction corridor for works in this area (e.g. 30-40 metre working width.)

Recommended Condition:

Prior to the commencement of works on site, full details of the defined construction corridor and above and ground infrastructure and landscape proposals in relation to the Landfall site indicated on *Proposed Cable Route Map Sheet 03 and Sheet 04 of 64* shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority.

Grid Facility

It is noted that a landscape plan denoted as Grid Facility Landscape Plan (Drawing no. 281240_MCR_ONS_GF_DR_YE_1010) has been provided. Further consideration is required on treatment of the south-eastern boundary of the site in terms of the provision of adequate width for additional screen planting as well as allowing for the proposed storm water swale and protection of exiting hedgerow.

Recommended Condition:

A revised landscape plan for the Grid Facility shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority to include additional screen planting (using a mix of standard trees and whips) along the south-eastern boundary. A cross section shall be provided to clearly show the proposed boundary treatment, existing hedgerow, additional screen planting and proposed swale.

Officer: Gemma Carr Endorsed: _____

Date: 28/06/24 Date: _____

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL INTERNAL CONSULTEE

PLANNING REPORT

Report of the Transportation Planning Section

Register Reference: SID/04/24
Registration Date: 07-Jun-2024
Development: The proposed development is an offshore wind farm comprising of both offshore and onshore infrastructure.

The proposed development boundary, within which the proposed development is located, will include offshore infrastructure off the coast of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth and onshore infrastructure within County Dublin (Fingal and Dublin City Council administrative areas).

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Location: The offshore infrastructure of the proposed development will be located off the coast, of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth., The onshore infrastructure of the proposed development will be located in County Dublin, (Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council

Applicant: North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited

Application Type: Strategic Infrastructure Development

General

The proposed development is a combination of offshore infrastructure and onshore infrastructure. The 'Landfall site', where the offshore export cables come onshore, would be located in Bremore, just north of Balbriggan; and nearby on the opposite side of the R132 would be the 'grid facility', where the onshore export cables terminate at the grid facility, and is comprised of two distinct substations on the same site.

The onshore cable route (220kV HVAC cables in two cable circuits) would be approximately 33-35km in length, and would be laid underground from the grid facility to the grid connection point at the existing substation at Belcamp.

Layout

The applicant describes the following in their submission: *that the onshore cable route would run for approximately 33-35km between the proposed grid facility just north of Balbriggan, to an existing electrical substation at Belcamp on the northern outskirts of Dublin. The majority of the route - approximately 29km out of the 33km - would be contained within the footprint of existing roads including the R132, the R106 and other local roads. Towards the southern end of the cable route, two options for the route are included - one along the R107 and one via the R124 - the alternative route providing flexibility to ensure integration with other existing utilities infrastructure including the planned route for power cables associated with the Metrolink project. The route via the R124 would add approximately 2km to the overall cable route (hence the cable route will be approximately 33 - 35km). The two 220kV HVAC cable circuits would be laid underground in either a single trench arrangement (one trench accommodating all electrical cables, fibre-optic and earthing cables) or in twin-trench arrangement (with each cable circuit contained within its own trench). This variation in trench arrangement would be utilised to ensure the cable route can navigate through areas of high utility congestion and minimise the likelihood of disruption during the construction phase associated with works to existing utilities.*

The applicant has provided a drawing with the proposed typical cable trench details.

The Transportation Planning Section recommends that the exact detail of the cable trench, including depth and formation cross section arrangement, should be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development. The applicant should take cognisance of the latest edition of the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' published by the Department of Transport.

The Transportation Planning Section recommends that the exact detail of the longitudinal layout of the cable trench within the road, should be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development. The applicant should take cognisance that the Council has a preference that the cables be installed at a minimum at the regulation depth and generally located in the centre of the carriageway,

as the verges and edge of the carriageway is needed for localised utilities and road drainage.

Phasing and Interaction with Planned and Proposed Developments

The proposed onshore cable route would be approximately 33-35km in length and would potentially interact with the construction of the following permitted and proposed transport developments (but not limited to this list):

- MetroLink, including advance works projects.
- The Harry Reynolds Road Pedestrian and Cycle Route, on the Harry Reynolds Road in Balbriggan – which involves the full reconstruction of the road cross section for the entire length of Harry Reynolds Road, to provide improved active travel infrastructure. This project is currently under construction.
- The Council is currently in the process of designing an 'active travel' infrastructure project from Bremore North of Balbriggan to the county boundary with Meath. Planning permission is not yet in place for this project.
- The R132 Connectivity Project in Swords, which involves the full reconstruction of the road cross section and junctions on the R132 from Estuary Roundabout to Pinockhill Roundabout. This project has planning permission in place.
- The Council has a design in place for an 'active travel' project on the section of road between Seatown Road to Malahide Estuary, to provide Road Safety, Cycling and Walking Improvements.
- The Council is in the early stages of the process for designing an improved active travel infrastructure along the Swords Road in Malahide.
- The Council has a design in place for an 'active travel' project on the section of Balheary Road, north of Swords, in the vicinity of the bridge crossing the Broadmeadow River.
- The Seatown Road in Swords (as it approaches Main Street) is currently closed for the next 2 years as part of the construction of the Swords Cultural Quarter project.
- Solar photovoltaic ('PV') energy development on lands at Mainscourt, Ballyboghill, Co. Dublin, reg. ref. F22A/0365. This permitted development involves underground electricity cables in ducts from Mainscourt, Ballyboghill to the ESB Mountgorry 38kV Substation, Swords Business Park.
- Eirgrid Cable Route from Meath.
- Swords Main Street Upgrade works. This project is at the early stages of design development.

There are also reoccurring events that are held in Fingal each year, usually in June and July, and include the Malahide Castel Concerts and the Flavors of Fingal. It should be noted that, in general, FCC Operations Department don't allow any road works in the area in the lead up to or during these events.

In order to ensure proper coordination between the proposed development and the various planned projects along the proposed cable route, the Transportation Planning Section recommends that the phasing of the proposed works on the public road,

including the phasing dates and duration of any proposed 'road closures' on the public road, is to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.

Road Reinstatement

Any excavation or opening of a public road or footway would require that a road opening licence be applied for through the MRL system; and for further information in regard to road opening licences the Operations Department of Fingal Co. Co. can be contacted at HowMalOpArea@fingal.ie or BalSwoOpArea@fingal.ie. The applicant should apply for a T1 licence at the earliest stage as possible in the project.

Road reinstatement would need to be carried out as per the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' published by the Department of Transport; and to be agreed with the Council under the road opening licence procedure.

In regard to road reinstatement where the roadway has been recently renewed, the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' describes that the protected period for a recently renewed surface will be for 5 years, and a Road Opening Licence Holder would need to carry out full width/lane/bay reinstatement on a renewed surface in the protected period.

Access

In regard to vehicular access directly off the public road, the applicant describes the following in the submission:

- *The applicant describes that three primary contractor compounds would be established to support the construction works, comprising the grid facility contractor compound which would support the construction of the grid facility, and two cable contractor compounds (the Bremore cable contractor compound and the Blakes Cross cable contractor compound) which would support the construction of the cable routes.*
- *The applicant describes that localised HDD (horizontal directional drilling) contractor compounds would be required for the HDD operations at the HDD locations.*
- *The applicant describes that a number of temporary haul routes are required for the construction phase of the proposed development, to enable access to offline areas of construction. These temporary haul routes would be reinstated following completion of construction. A number of permanent access tracks are also required, which will enable access to joint bays and other areas, during the operational phase. These temporary and permanent access tracks/haul routes are identified on the planning drawings as referenced in Section X above and included in Appendix 7.1. Where possible, existing field entrances and access tracks have been utilised.*
- *The applicant describes in the submission that all access roads to the proposed compounds will be designed to ensure abnormal loads can exit the public road during delivery with minimal disruption to the public road. A designated route and parking area for abnormal loads will be provided within the confines of the*

proposed compound for unloading, which will be detailed in the Contractors CTMP. Additionally, the Contractor CTMP will detail the temporary traffic management to be implemented during abnormal load deliveries, such as temporary stop/go lane or road closures, escort vehicles, banksman, etc., to be agreed by the contactor with the local authority and An Garda Síochána prior to starting construction.

- *4.11.3 of the CEMP (contained in appendix 9.1 of the EIAR) states 'On completion of the construction works and energisation of the project, the permanent wayleave will be 8m wide in third party lands. Future access to the joint bays in third party lands for annual inspection will be maintained via the construction of approximately 5m wide permanent access tracks to each joint bay location.'*

The Transportation Planning Section generally require a sightline drawing to be provided for any proposed new vehicular entrance onto a public road. Objective DMSO115 of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (Restriction of New Access Arrangements), seeks to restrict unnecessary new accesses directly off Regional Roads, and to ensure premature obsolescence of all County/local roads does not occur by avoiding excessive levels of individual entrances, and to ensure that necessary new entrances are designed in accordance with DMRB or DMURS as appropriate, thereby avoiding the creation of traffic hazards.'

It appears that specific details to demonstrate that the appropriate minimum sightlines are achieved has not been provided by the applicant, such as a dedicated 'sightline drawing'; and the Transportation Planning Section recommend that the Planning Authority satisfy themselves that appropriate sightlines are achieved for the posted speed limit at each of the proposed new vehicular entrances, as per the minimum requirements of DN-GEO-03060 as published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and where appropriate, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. This visibility requirement is to the nearside edge of the road both sides of the entrance, viewed at the entrance from a 2.4m setback from the edge of the road, from a driver eyeheight of 1.05m to an object height of 0.6m.

The Transportation Planning Section recommends that the layout of proposed new vehicular entrances are designed so as to provide sightlines as per the minimum requirements of DN-GEO-03060 as published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and where appropriate, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets; the detail of which should be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.

Road Closures

In regard to the traffic management for construction works on the public road, the applicant describes the following, in summary:

- The applicant describes in section 5.1.1.1 of the CEMP (contained in appendix 9.1 of the EIAR) that *The full road closures have been identified along narrower roads where the construction width is limited and where it would not be possible*

to lay the cable while safely maintaining partial traffic flows. In the case of full road closures local property access will still be maintained for car, active travel (pedestrians and cyclists) and service/emergency vehicles throughout, through the contractor's implementation of safe traffic management measures. Local diversion routes have been identified to maintain local community accessibility by car and active modes (See Appendix 24.1 in Volume 11 of the EIAR which provides details on full and partial road closure diversion routes). Strategic diversion routes have also been identified to mitigate the impact on local roads and will be recommended for general 'through' traffic where possible (See Appendix 24.1 in Volume 11). Bus diversion routes and bus stop relocations have been identified to ensure access to bus services is reasonably maintained where possible (See Appendix 24.1 in Volume 11). The strategic diversion routes will limit the volume of diverted general 'through' traffic along the bus diversion routes. There will also be rolling temporary partial (single lane) closures (each approximately 200 - 300m in length) throughout the remaining onshore cable route sections along the public road network. For temporary partial road closures, traffic flow will be maintained with the use of rolling temporary stop/go traffic signals along each section. Local diversion routes have been identified that will alleviate congestion along the corridor (See Appendix 24.1 in Volume 11). Local property access will be maintained for car, active travel and service/emergency vehicles throughout. Buses will be prioritised at stop/go locations where possible. Strategic diversion routes are not proposed for these partial closure locations. Diversion routes will be managed according to the Contractor's Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), refer to further details on the CTMP below. As outlined above, those living along the road closure section will be able to access their properties throughout the road closure.

- *In Section 9.2 of the submitted Chapter 9 Construction Strategy, it states "If public roads: the proposed development boundary for these sections will generally be the width of the public road, and the working corridor width for construction purposes will generally be limited to one side of the carriageway. The proposed development boundary provides flexibility during the construction stage if minor re-routing is required to accommodate local road network conditions. The cable route will be constructed under a rolling lane closure arrangement, with temporary traffic management in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual. At certain narrow sections of road, where there is insufficient space to accommodate the traffic running lane and the excavation, temporary road closures will be required during construction of that specific section. These sections of road closures are outlined in Volume 4, Chapter 24: Traffic and Transportation. There are also seven locations where the onshore cable route deviates off-line from public roads and traverses private lands."*
- *In Section 9.3.3 of the submitted Chapter 9 Construction Strategy, it states that "it is expected that construction works along the onshore cable route will take approximately twenty-four (24) months, with some activities, at different*

locations, taking place in parallel. However, for the majority of the cable route, the duration of works would be much less than 24 months."

- Section 9.3.3 of the submitted Chapter 9 Construction Strategy goes on to describe that *"Due to the narrow widths of certain roads, temporary full road closures with associated traffic diversions are likely to be necessary at some sections of the onshore cable route. These roads are set out in Section 24.4 of Volume 4, Chapter 24: Traffic and Transportation and the expected full road closure durations, taking account of mitigation measures proposed, are set out in section 24.6 of the same chapter. For the remainder of onshore cable route works on public roads, partial road closures (lane closures) will be in place during construction. Installation of the onshore cable will be undertaken on a rolling basis. Where no obstacles or constraints exist within or near the onshore cable route, it is expected that progress rates for the trench excavation and installation of ducts will be up to:*
 - *80m/day in farmland and on road sections with full road closure*
 - *60m/day on roads with single lane closure; and*
 - *30m/day on roads maintaining two-way traffic."*

The Transportation Planning Section has significant concerns with the proposed scale of the proposed potential road closures, and the level of disruption that could be caused to local and regional transport. The Transportation Planning Section recommends that the phasing and duration of the works on the public road, including proposed lane and road closures is kept to an absolute minimum and to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.

The Fingal County Council Operations Department has raised concerns for the duration of some of the proposed road closures, for example:

- Malahide Road (R107) – 11 week closure proposed
- Swords Road (R106) – 7 week closures
- Estuary Road 6 -12 weeks depending on option route taken.

Full road closures for these durations would need to be further considered and agreed with Fingal County Council; and the following alternatives may need to be considered:

- Lane closures with significant traffic management measures i.e. flagmen and other appropriate measures could be considered.
- Nighttime road closures could also be considered but would need to be justified, and this option does not appear to have been explored.
- We note from the report that the mitigation measures in terms of increased resources is proposed to reduce some of the duration of the road closures, however, give the volumes of traffic on these roads this may have to be reconsider for partial closures or night-based works to hand back the road to the council each day for example.

Construction Traffic Management

A detailed construction traffic management plan should be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Conclusion

The Transportation Planning Section recommend that the following conditions be considered for inclusion, should a grant of planning permission be under consideration:

- The layout and depth of the ducting trench cross section is to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- The exact location/route of the ducting trench within each individual section of road is to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- The exact details for road reinstatement works for each individual section of road is to be as per the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads' (often referred to as 'the purple book'), and the details of which are to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- The phasing of the proposed works on the public road, including the phasing dates and duration of any proposed 'road closures' on the public road, is to be coordinated so as to avoid the proposed development works conflicting with various planned and permitted developments along the proposed cable route corridor; and the phasing plan is to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- The details of the proposed traffic management plan, including the details of all proposed road closures and lane closures is to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- The developer shall agree all proposed public transport diversions due to proposed road closures with all relevant transportation stakeholder's, including the NTA, Dublin Bus, and Bus Eireann, prior to commencement of development; and the agreed details shall be submitted for agreement in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- All necessary consents from the Council shall be obtained before works commence, including the necessary road opening licences.
- All details of temporary construction vehicular access opening onto the public road are to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.
- All details of new permanent vehicular access onto the public road are to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to commencement of development.

- A photographic pre-condition road survey of the entire proposed route for the ducting trench shall be prepared by the developer and agreed with the council prior to commencement of development.
- Any damage caused to the pavement on the existing road network arising from the construction works (e.g. damage of the surface wearing course, etc.) shall be rectified in accordance with TII Pavement Standards and details in this regard shall be agreed with the Road Authority in writing prior to the commencement of any development on site.

Signed: Shane Comaskey
Date: 01/07/2024

Endorsed: _____
Date: _____

