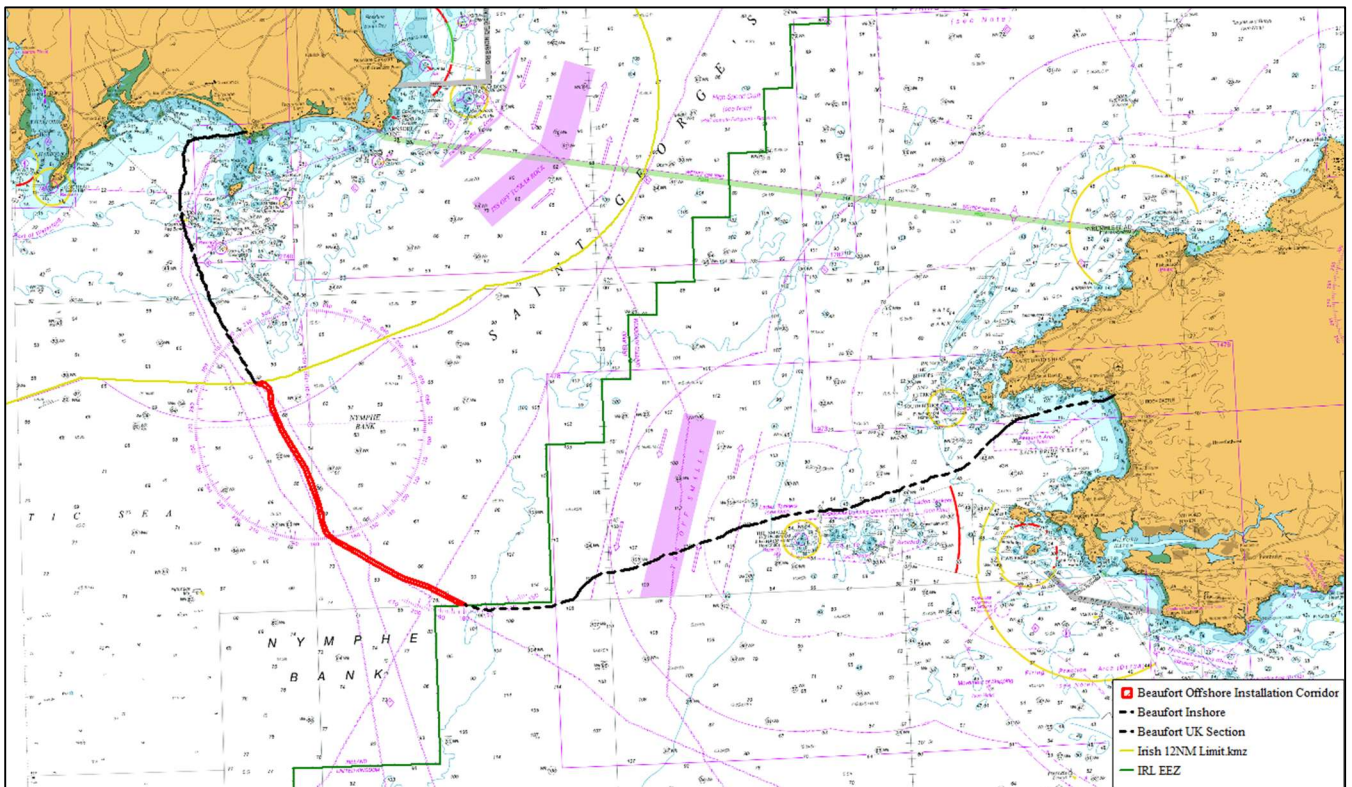


## Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report for the Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable: Cable Installation Works from IRL 12nm Limit to IRL EEZ Boundary



31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

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## 1. Introduction

The following Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment (SISAA) Report has been prepared by **Altamar Ltd.** for the Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable, specifically in relation to cable installation works from IRL 12nm Limit to IRL EEZ Boundary.

An AA is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed project or plan, on its own, or in combination with other plans or projects, on any European sites. European sites are those sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive or Special Protection Areas (SPA) under the Birds Directive.

The AA Screening stage examines the likely significant effects of a plan or project, either on its own, or in combination with other plans and projects, upon a European site and considers whether, on the basis of objective scientific evidence, it can be concluded that there are no likely significant effects on any European site, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites.

### 1.1 Altamar Ltd.

Since its inception in 2001, Altamar has been delivering ecological and environmental services to a broad range of clients. Operational areas include: residential; infrastructural; renewable; oil & gas; private industry; Local Authorities; EC projects; and, State/semi-State Departments. Bryan Deegan, the managing director of Altamar, is an Environmental Scientist and Marine Biologist with over 30 years' experience working in Irish terrestrial and aquatic environments, providing services to the State, Semi-State and industry. He is currently contracted to Inland Fisheries Ireland as the sole "External Expert" to environmentally assess internal and external projects. He is also chair of an internal IFI working group on environmental assessment. Bryan Deegan (MCIEEM) holds a MSc in Environmental Science, BSc (Hons.) in Applied Marine Biology, NCEA National Diploma in Applied Aquatic Science and a NCEA National Certificate in Science (Aquaculture). Bryan Deegan carried out all elements of this SISAA. Bryan has been involved in twelve international sub marine fibre optic cable projects, many of which involved Horizontal Directional Drills within designated sites and all works required ecological supervision.

## 2. Background to the Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (together with the Birds Directive (2009/1477/EC)) forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy. The Directive protects over 1000 animals and plant species and over 200 "habitat types" which are of European importance. In the Habitats Directive, Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of European Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of conservation sites (NATURA, 2000). These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive), Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

*"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [NATURA 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implication for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the component national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public."*

As outlined in "Managing European sites, The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC" (European Commission, 21 November 2018) *"The purpose of the appropriate assessment is to assess the implications of the plan or project in respect of the site's conservation objectives, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. The conclusions should enable the competent authorities to ascertain whether the plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. The focus of the appropriate assessment is therefore specifically on the species and/or the habitats for which the European site is designated."*

As outlined in the EC guidance document on Article 6(4) (January 2007)<sup>1</sup>:

*"Appropriate assessments of the implications of the plan or project for the site concerned must precede its approval and take into account the cumulative effects which result from the combination of that plan or project with other plans or projects in view of the site's conservation objectives. This implies that all aspects of the plan or project which can, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, affect those objectives must be identified in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field."*

*Assessment procedures of plans or projects likely to affect European sites should guarantee full consideration of all elements contributing to the site integrity and to the overall coherence of the network, both in the definition of the baseline conditions and in the stages leading to identification of potential impacts, mitigation measures and residual impacts. These determine what has to be compensated, both in quality and quantity. Regardless of whether the provisions of Article 6(3) are delivered following existing environmental impact assessment procedures or other specific methods, it must be ensured that:*

- *Article 6(3) assessment results allow full traceability of the decisions eventually made, including the selection of alternatives and any imperative reasons of overriding public interest.*
- *The assessment should include all elements contributing to the site's integrity and to the overall coherence of the network as defined in the site's conservation objectives and Standard Data Form, and be based on best available scientific knowledge in the field. The information required should be updated and could include the following issues:*
  - *Structure and function, and the respective role of the site's ecological assets;*
  - *Area, representativity and conservation status of the priority and nonpriority habitats in the site;*
  - *Population size, degree of isolation, ecotype, genetic pool, age class structure, and conservation status of species under Annex II of the Habitats Directive or Annex I of the Birds Directive present in the site;*
  - *Role of the site within the biographical region and in the coherence of the European network; and,*

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<sup>1</sup>European Commission. (2007). Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission;

- *Any other ecological assets and functions identified in the site.*
- *It should include a comprehensive identification of all the potential impacts of the plan or project likely to be significant on the site, taking into account cumulative impacts and other impacts likely to arise as a result of the combined action of the plan or project under assessment and other plans or projects.*
- *The assessment under Article 6(3) applies the best available techniques and methods, to estimate the extent of the effects of the plan or project on the biological integrity of the site(s) likely to be damaged.*
- *The assessment provides for the incorporation of the most effective mitigation measures into the plan or project concerned, in order to avoid, reduce or even cancel the negative impacts on the site.*
- *The characterisation of the biological integrity and the impact assessment should be based on the best possible indicators specific to the European assets which must also be useful to monitor the plan or project implementation."*

### 3. Stages of the Appropriate Assessment

This SISAA was undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001), Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in addition to the December 2009 publication from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities' and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. In order to comply with the above Guidelines and legislation, the Appropriate Assessment process must be structured as follows:

- 1) Screening stage:
  - Description of plan or project, and local site or plan area characteristics;
  - Identification of relevant European sites, and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives
  - Identification and description of individual in combination effects likely to result from the proposed project;
  - Assessment of the likely significance of the effects identified above. Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no likely significant effects; and,
  - Conclusions
- 2) Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement):
  - Description of the European sites that will be considered further;
  - Identification and description of potential adverse impacts on the conservation objectives of these sites likely to occur from the project or plan; and,
  - Mitigation Measures that will be implemented to avoid, reduce or remedy any such potential adverse impacts
  - Assessment as to whether, following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, it can be concluded, beyond all reasonable scientific doubt, that there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of the relevant European Site in light of its conservation objectives"
  - Conclusions.

If it can be demonstrated during the AA screening phase (Stage 1), that the proposed project will not have a significant effect, whether alone or in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, then no further AA (Stage 2) will be required. It is important to note that there is a requirement to apply a precautionary approach to AA screening. Therefore, where effects are possible, certain or unknown at the screening stage, AA will be required.

In addition, it should be noted that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an AA of the implications, for a site concerned, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of the measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site.

## 4. Description of the Proposed Project

### 4.1 Management of the Site

The plan or project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites.

### 4.2 Background

Amazon MCS Ireland Limited is applying to land the new high-capacity Beaufort submarine fibre-optic cable system in Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford; linking Ireland to the UK. The Beaufort system will be jointly developed and operated with Microsoft to provide next generation diverse connectivity between Ireland and the UK with onward connectivity to Continental Europe. When fully operational, the cable will support high quality, robust and resilient access to international telecommunications networks - a key driver in social, economic and industrial growth; supporting the development of the region and of Ireland as a whole as outlined in the National Marine Planning Framework.

The existing subsea cable systems in the Celtic Sea linking Ireland and the UK are approaching end of life as they date from the year 2000 and earlier. More recent cable builds between Ireland and the UK have focused on routing directly into Dublin from the Northeast of England and Wales. The new Beaufort system will help ensure the long-term security of communications and resilient connectivity for Ireland and the UK. The system will make use of existing infrastructure such as ducts and the cable landing compound in Kilmore Quay. The system will land in the UK at a landfall in Newgale, Wales.

The Beaufort subsea cable is approximately 33mm in diameter and will be “un-repeated” (i.e. not powered). It is to be an industry-standard optical fibre cable. The cable will be double armoured in Irish waters.

Beaufort Cable System will re-use the existing ESAT-1 landfall infrastructure at Ballyteige Burrow to the northwest of Kilmore Quay. This includes the duct to sea beneath the dune system, the Beach Manhole, the fronthaul duct from the Beach Manhole to the Cable Landing Station and the Cable Landing Station.

#### **Overall Route**

Amazon MCS Ireland Limited is planning to construct a new subsea fibre optic cable system to replace an out-of-service cable and upgrade connectivity in the southern sea corridor between Ireland and the UK. The planned cable will extend from Kilmore Quay on the southeast coast of Wexford in Ireland to Newgale, Pembrokeshire on the southwest coast of Wales. The overall scheme is referred to as the Beaufort Cable System and the route configuration is shown in Figure 1.

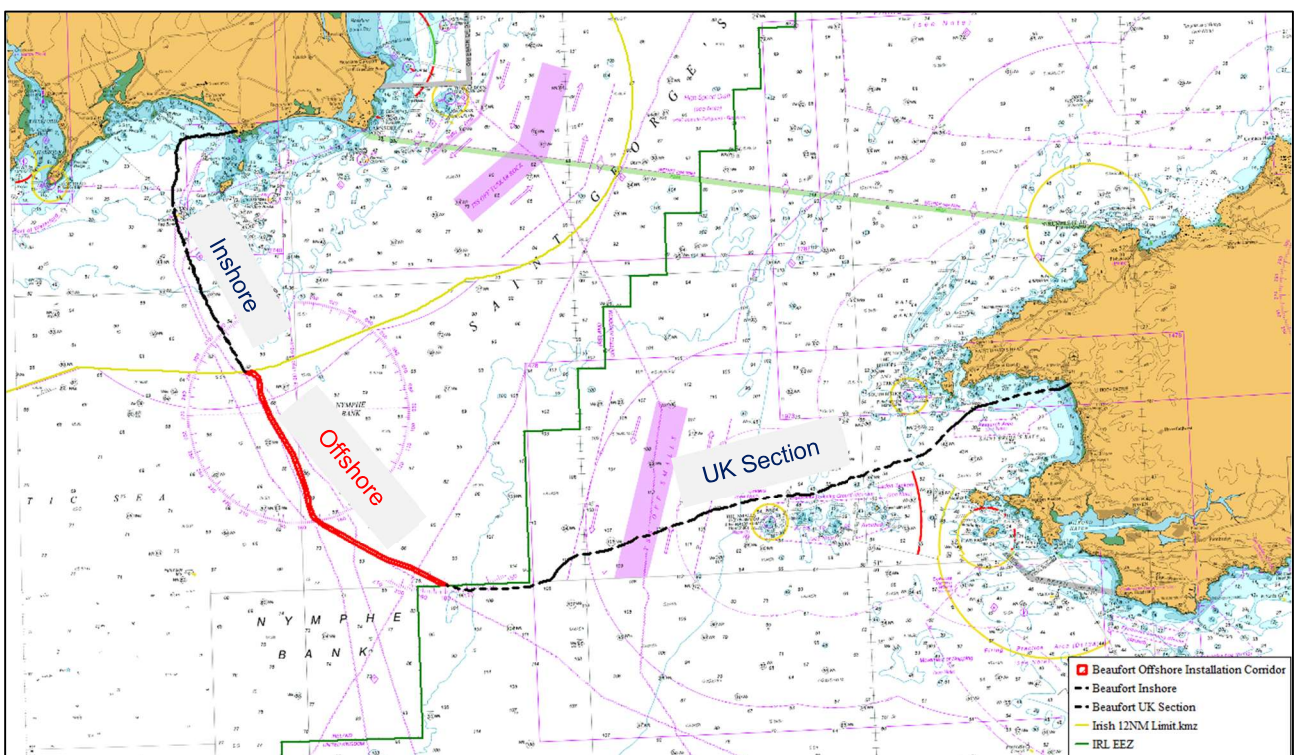


Figure 1. Beaufort Cable System (Source: MDM)

The planned system is comprised of three segments which are defined as follows:

|                    |                                                                                                          |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inshore:</b>    | Kilmore Quay to Irish 12nm Limit - Granted permission under Foreshore License FS007361 on 29/11/2023.    |
| <b>Offshore:</b>   | Irish 12nm Limit to Irish EEZ Boundary – This segment will be the primary focus of this report.          |
| <b>UK Section:</b> | EEZ Boundary to Newgale – This segment is pending decision by UK authorities (application ref. CML2606). |

Several cable systems linking Ireland and the UK have been constructed in the Celtic Sea in the past 25 years and these are shown in Figure 2. These cables include:

- |                       |                             |      |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------|
| • Celtic              | Kilmore Quay to Land's End  | 1994 |
| • ESAT-1              | Kilmore Quay to Land's End  | 1998 |
| • UK - IRL Crossing 1 | Kilmore Quay to Land's End  | 1999 |
| • UK - IRL Crossing 2 | Ballinesker to Bude         | 1999 |
| • Solas               | Kilmore Quay to South Wales | 2000 |

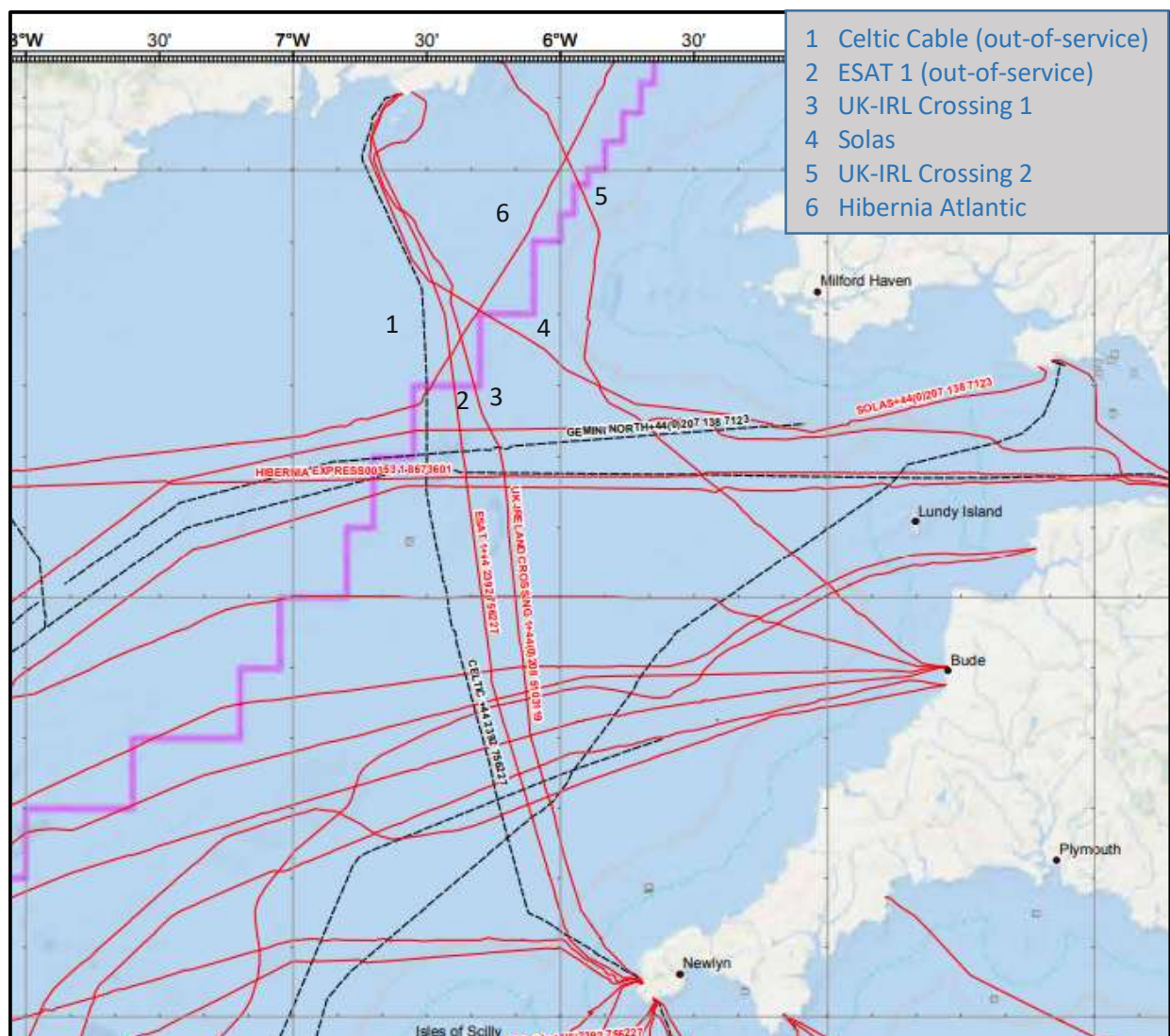


Figure 2. Existing Cable Systems (Source: MDM)

Celtic is an old Telecom Eireann / BT cable and has been taken out of service. ESAT-1 was installed in 1998 and has recently been taken out of service. UK-IRL Crossing 1 and UK-IRL Crossing 2 were both installed in 1999 and are relatively old in cable terms. Solas and Hibernia Atlantic installed in 2000 and 2001 respectively are also ageing cables.

The status of these existing cables leaves Ireland largely reliant on the subsea cables in the Dublin - Lancashire/Anglesey sector of the Irish Sea. This, together with increasing requirements for robustness, security, and resilience in overall network systems, establishes a need for a new and diverse cable system. The planned Beaufort Cable System is being developed to replace an out-of-service cable and upgrade the connectivity in the southern sea corridor from Ireland to the UK.

Significant turning points in the offshore section are listed as follows:

|                                           |           |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Irish 12 Mile Limit</b>                | KP – 39.3 |
| <b>Turning Point</b>                      | KP – 60.0 |
| <b>Greenlink Interconnector Crossing:</b> | KP – 58.8 |
| <b>EEZ Boundary</b>                       | KP – 78.1 |

The overall route configuration is presented on an Admiralty Chart base map in Figure 3.

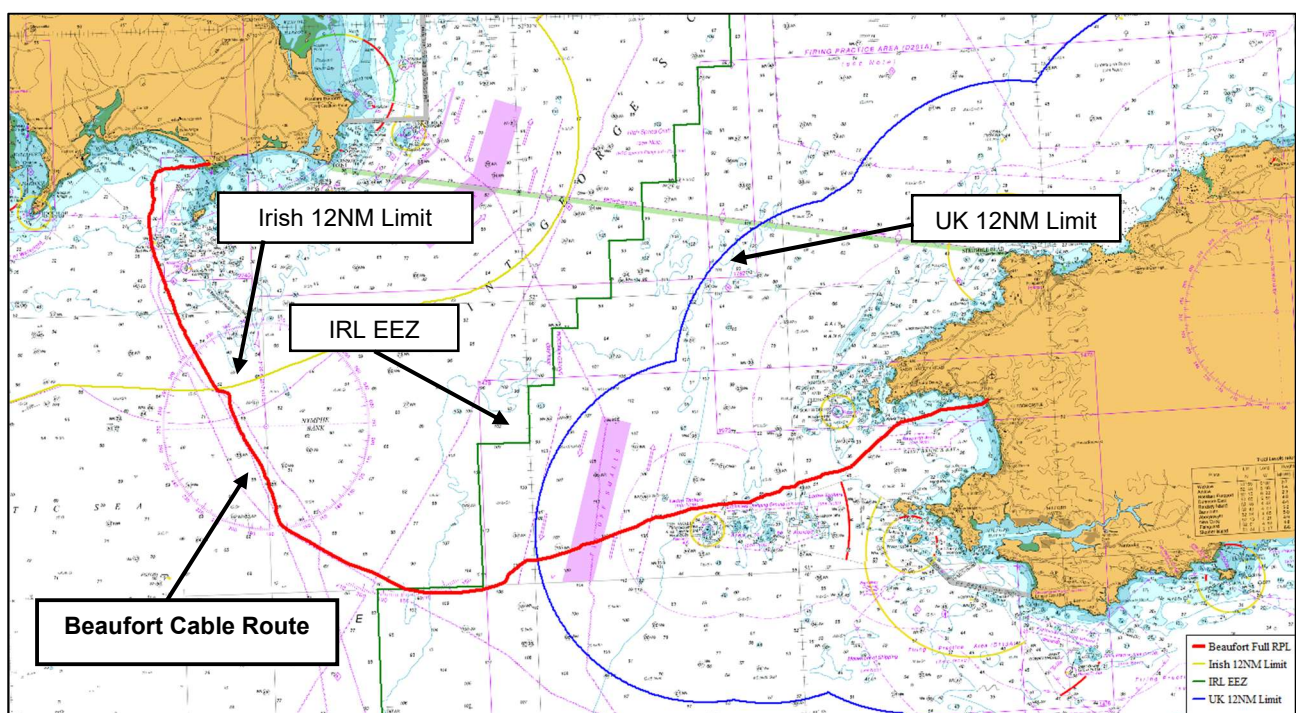


Figure 3. The Planned Beaufort Cable System Route (Source: MDM)

The Route Position List (RPL) corresponding to installation corridor of the Offshore Section of Beaufort (between the Irish 12nm limit to the EEZ boundary) is presented in Table 1. This corridor is 400m wide, 38.5 km in length and has a total area of approximately 15.38 km<sup>2</sup>.

| Table 1. Beaufort IRL Offshore Installation Corridor RPL |                    |                   |                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| ID                                                       | LATITUDE           | LONGITUDE         | COMMENT                    |
| 1                                                        | 51° 54' 35.3826" N | 6° 35' 37.2180" W | IRL 12NM Limit             |
| 2                                                        | 51° 54' 36.2943" N | 6° 35' 21.7787" W | IRL 12NM Limit             |
| 3                                                        | 51° 54' 37.7038" N | 6° 35' 01.6170" W | IRL 12NM Limit             |
| 4                                                        | 51° 54' 38.6017" N | 6° 34' 50.6195" W | IRL 12NM Limit             |
| 5                                                        | 51° 54' 34.5993" N | 6° 34' 34.7132" W |                            |
| 6                                                        | 51° 54' 28.6861" N | 6° 34' 19.0584" W |                            |
| 7                                                        | 51° 54' 20.9485" N | 6° 34' 06.7819" W |                            |
| 8                                                        | 51° 54' 11.1139" N | 6° 33' 57.6221" W |                            |
| 9                                                        | 51° 53' 59.5495" N | 6° 33' 52.4391" W |                            |
| 10                                                       | 51° 53' 45.6884" N | 6° 33' 51.0768" W |                            |
|                                                          | 51° 53' 45.5170" N | 6° 34' 01.9208" W | IRL – UK Crossing 1        |
| 11                                                       | 51° 53' 14.1252" N | 6° 33' 47.9203" W |                            |
| 12                                                       | 51° 52' 53.7233" N | 6° 33' 40.7627" W |                            |
| 13                                                       | 51° 52' 37.1581" N | 6° 33' 29.3758" W |                            |
| 14                                                       | 51° 52' 10.7185" N | 6° 33' 11.4243" W |                            |
| 15                                                       | 51° 51' 33.3104" N | 6° 32' 49.4773" W |                            |
| 16                                                       | 51° 49' 36.5792" N | 6° 31' 03.5939" W |                            |
| 17                                                       | 51° 49' 05.5611" N | 6° 30' 35.0001" W |                            |
| 18                                                       | 51° 48' 02.9995" N | 6° 29' 57.0942" W |                            |
| 19                                                       | 51° 47' 06.0227" N | 6° 29' 27.1952" W |                            |
| 20                                                       | 51° 46' 41.1144" N | 6° 29' 16.3548" W |                            |
| 21                                                       | 51° 46' 00.1548" N | 6° 29' 03.4950" W |                            |
| 22                                                       | 51° 45' 40.7520" N | 6° 28' 59.8563" W |                            |
| 23                                                       | 51° 45' 21.0376" N | 6° 28' 52.2292" W |                            |
|                                                          | 51° 45' 20.6984" N | 6° 29' 02.1085" W | Greenlink Interconnector   |
| 24                                                       | 51° 45' 19.8445" N | 6° 28' 51.7652" W |                            |
| 25                                                       | 51° 45' 02.1295" N | 6° 28' 41.4627" W |                            |
| 26                                                       | 51° 44' 52.8960" N | 6° 28' 31.8361" W |                            |
| 27                                                       | 51° 44' 44.7599" N | 6° 28' 17.6373" W |                            |
| 28                                                       | 51° 44' 24.8686" N | 6° 27' 34.0552" W |                            |
| 29                                                       | 51° 43' 39.8560" N | 6° 25' 33.8987" W |                            |
| 30                                                       | 51° 43' 21.6075" N | 6° 24' 47.6985" W |                            |
| 31                                                       | 51° 43' 10.3905" N | 6° 24' 18.7566" W |                            |
|                                                          | 51° 43' 04.2921" N | 6° 24' 24.1696" W | IRL – UK Crossing 1        |
| 32                                                       | 51° 42' 34.0198" N | 6° 22' 44.9476" W |                            |
| 33                                                       | 51° 41' 59.0889" N | 6° 21' 05.5635" W |                            |
| 34                                                       | 51° 41' 20.2014" N | 6° 18' 29.8712" W |                            |
| 35                                                       | 51° 41' 04.2676" N | 6° 17' 43.2754" W |                            |
|                                                          | 51° 40' 59.1939" N | 6° 17' 47.6817" W | Hibernia Atlantic Crossing |
| 36                                                       | 51° 40' 25.3143" N | 6° 15' 49.1535" W |                            |
| 37                                                       | 51° 40' 22.5346" N | 6° 15' 41.4168" W |                            |
| 38                                                       | 51° 40' 02.7628" N | 6° 14' 41.4159" W |                            |
| 39                                                       | 51° 40' 00.1217" N | 6° 14' 43.6674" W | IRL EEZ                    |
| 40                                                       | 51° 40' 00.1071" N | 6° 15' 17.8010" W | IRL EEZ                    |
| 41                                                       | 51° 40' 11.2094" N | 6° 15' 51.4998" W |                            |
| 42                                                       | 51° 40' 14.0380" N | 6° 15' 59.3727" W |                            |
| 43                                                       | 51° 40' 52.9247" N | 6° 17' 53.3022" W |                            |
| 44                                                       | 51° 41' 08.4850" N | 6° 18' 38.8063" W |                            |
| 45                                                       | 51° 41' 47.4001" N | 6° 21' 14.6130" W |                            |

|    |                    |                   |  |
|----|--------------------|-------------------|--|
| 46 | 51° 42' 22.8923" N | 6° 22' 55.5957" W |  |
| 47 | 51° 42' 59.4103" N | 6° 24' 29.7868" W |  |
| 48 | 51° 43' 10.6569" N | 6° 24' 58.8060" W |  |
| 49 | 51° 43' 28.8536" N | 6° 25' 44.8762" W |  |
| 50 | 51° 44' 14.0909" N | 6° 27' 45.6363" W |  |
| 51 | 51° 44' 34.7597" N | 6° 28' 30.9234" W |  |
| 52 | 51° 44' 44.4933" N | 6° 28' 47.9111" W |  |
| 53 | 51° 44' 56.3414" N | 6° 29' 00.2648" W |  |
| 54 | 51° 45' 16.1174" N | 6° 29' 11.7682" W |  |
| 55 | 51° 45' 18.0082" N | 6° 29' 12.5038" W |  |
| 56 | 51° 45' 38.4847" N | 6° 29' 20.4284" W |  |
| 57 | 51° 45' 58.1664" N | 6° 29' 24.1218" W |  |
| 58 | 51° 46' 38.1865" N | 6° 29' 36.6917" W |  |
| 59 | 51° 47' 02.3312" N | 6° 29' 47.2027" W |  |
| 60 | 51° 47' 58.7194" N | 6° 30' 16.7997" W |  |
| 61 | 51° 49' 00.0404" N | 6° 30' 53.9611" W |  |
| 62 | 51° 49' 30.2000" N | 6° 31' 21.7671" W |  |
| 63 | 51° 51' 27.8940" N | 6° 33' 08.5376" W |  |
| 64 | 51° 52' 05.9988" N | 6° 33' 30.8978" W |  |
| 65 | 51° 52' 32.1171" N | 6° 33' 48.6343" W |  |
| 66 | 51° 52' 49.7817" N | 6° 34' 00.7791" W |  |
| 67 | 51° 53' 12.3418" N | 6° 34' 08.6967" W |  |
| 68 | 51° 53' 44.8955" N | 6° 34' 11.9564" W |  |
| 69 | 51° 53' 57.4039" N | 6° 34' 13.1874" W |  |
| 70 | 51° 54' 06.0746" N | 6° 34' 17.0746" W |  |
| 71 | 51° 54' 13.0597" N | 6° 34' 23.5810" W |  |
| 72 | 51° 54' 18.4766" N | 6° 34' 32.1761" W |  |
| 73 | 51° 54' 23.0070" N | 6° 34' 44.1703" W |  |
| 74 | 51° 54' 26.3966" N | 6° 34' 57.6414" W |  |
| 75 | 51° 54' 29.8986" N | 6° 35' 18.9298" W |  |
| 76 | 51° 54' 30.3472" N | 6° 35' 20.8519" W |  |
| 77 | 51° 54' 35.3826" N | 6° 35' 37.2180" W |  |
| 78 | 51° 54' 35.3826" N | 6° 35' 37.2180" W |  |

A MAC (ref: MAC240030) has been granted by the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority for the cable segment from IRL 12nm to IRL EEZ.

#### **Provisional Timeline**

The provisional timeline for the project is as follows:

**Main-Lay**

**Q2/Q3 2027**

#### **Cable Specification**

The NSW MINISUB DA 192 has been chosen for the Beaufort project. The fibre optic cable will be 33mm in diameter and will be “un-repeatered” (i.e. not powered). It is to be an industry-standard cable with the capability to transmit high-speed data and voice via light waves through the 72 optical fibre pairs contained within the core Unit Fibre Structure (UFS). The cable will be double armoured (DA) in Irish waters, and a cut-away section of the cable is shown in Figure 4.

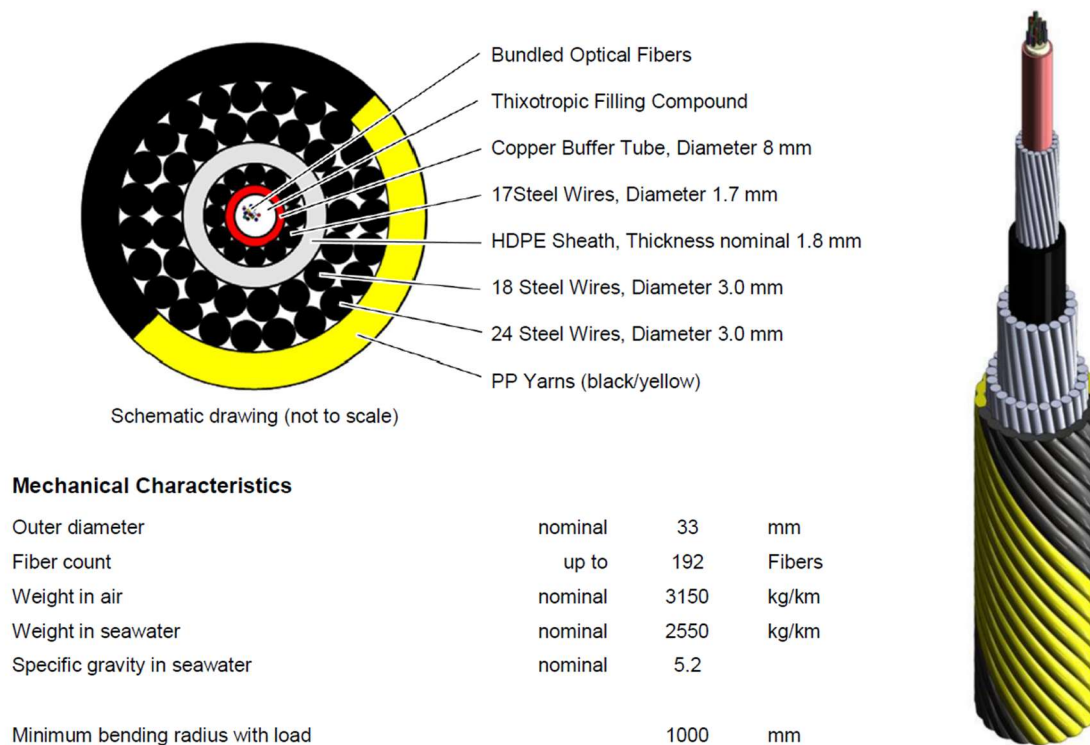


Figure 4. NSW MINISUB DA 192 Specification (Source: MDM)

The UFS is the innermost element of the cable and consists of 72 optical fibre pairs embedded in a buffer gel material inside a copper buffer tube. The buffer gel is a thixotropic material that protects the optical fibres from shear stresses associated with movement inside the tube. Ultra-high strength steel wires are helically wrapped around the UFS and together they act as a pressure vessel that protects the UFS from stresses greater or equal to 100 MPa. The interstices between the steel wires are filled with a hydrophobic elastomeric water-blocking material which resists longitudinal water ingress. A thin layer of ethylene-acrylic and copolymer plastic resin and a thick layer of polyethylene insulating jacket are co-extruded over the copper sheath. This HDPE sheath provides insulation, abrasion resistance and corrosion protection.

The double armour, consisting of two layers of galvanised wire wrapped around the cable, is coated with hot-blown asphalt and wound with polypropylene yarn. The finished DA Cable has an outer diameter of 33 mm.

#### 4.2.1 Subsea Crossings

The proposed route between the Irish 12nm limit and the EEZ boundary entails a total of 4 subsea crossings of existing in-service telecoms cables and an electrical interconnector. Further details of the crossings are shown in Table 2 below.

| Name                     | Type                      | Position | Water Depth | Latitude           | Longitude         |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| UK-IRL Crossing 1        | Telecom                   | KP 41.9  | 55m         | 51° 53' 45.5170" N | 6° 34' 01.9208" W |
| Greenlink Interconnector | Electrical Interconnector | KP 58.8  | 60m         | 51° 45' 20.6984" N | 6° 29' 02.1085" W |
| UK-IRL Crossing 1        | Telecom                   | KP 65.8  | 66m         | 51° 43' 04.2921" N | 6° 24' 24.1696" W |
| Hibernia Atlantic        | Telecom                   | KP 74.4  | 76m         | 51° 40' 59.1939" N | 6° 17' 47.6817" W |

Table 2: Subsea Crossings

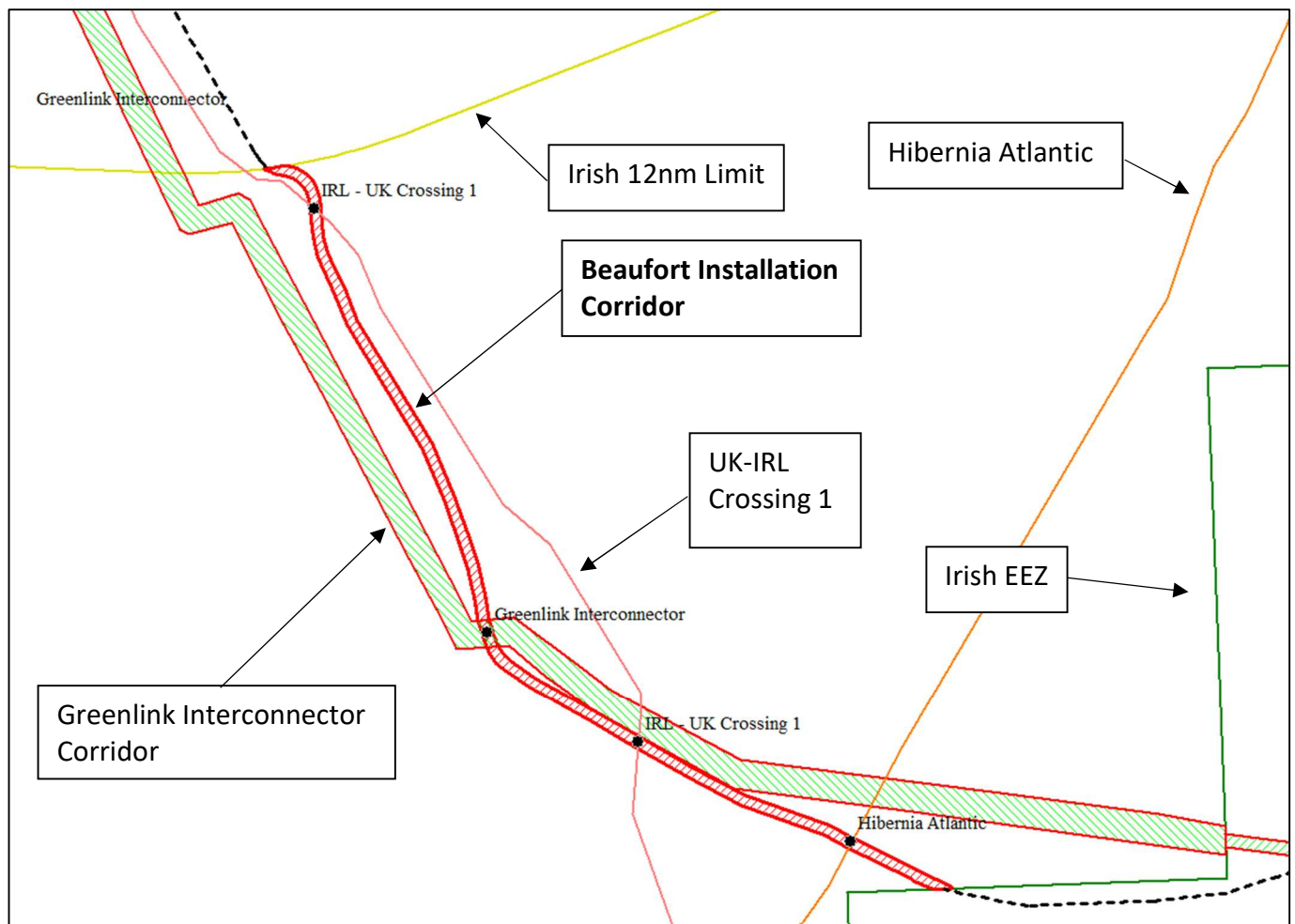


Figure 5: Beaufort Subsea Crossings

### **In-Service Telecoms Cables**

As highlighted in Table 2, the Beaufort cable has 3 crossings over in-service telecoms cables between the Irish 12nm limit and the EEZ boundary, crossing the Ireland-UK Crossing 1 twice and Hibernia Atlantic Seg D once. Crossing agreements will be put in place with the respective cable owners to allow the in-service cables to be crossed directly with the jetting sword in free-float mode. This enables both the crossed cable and the installed cable to be jetted to depth and precludes the need for pre and post crossing works.

The following methodology will be implemented at the cable crossings: the cable lay speed will be reduced when the cable lay vessel is approaching the crossing. At 20 m from the crossing the sword will be put in the free-floating mode. In the free-floating mode, the sword is pointing 45 degrees downwards, it is not locked in this position, and it will slide over obstructions as illustrated in Figure 6 below. In this mode the sword will trench the cable and the crossed product to a burial depth of approximately 1 metre. CAPJET cannot damage the crossed cable as the trenching method used is high pressure, focussed, water jetting. If requested by the 3<sup>rd</sup> party asset owner, further cable protection such as cast-iron shells, Uraduct plastic shells or silicon sleeves can be installed from the installation vessel.

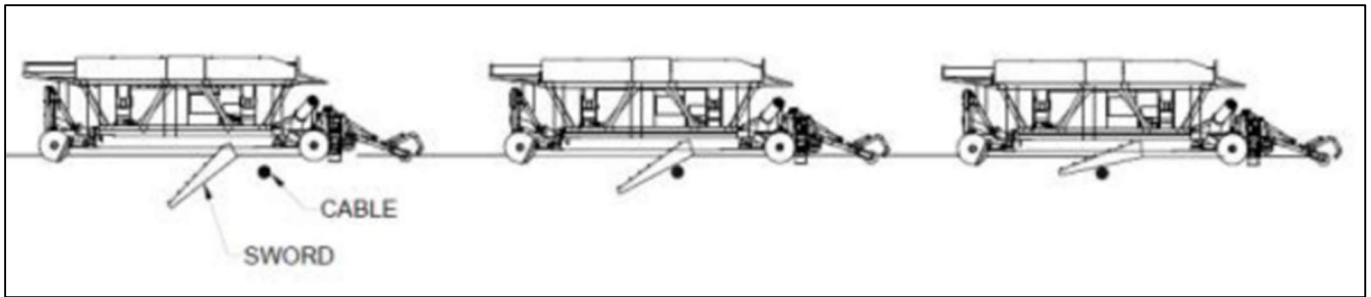


Figure 6: CAPJET in Free Floating Mode when Crossing a Cable

### **OOS Telecoms Cables**

The Beaufort cable will not cross any out of service (OOS) cables between the Irish 12nm limit and the EEZ boundary.

### **Greenlink HVDC Interconnector Cable**

The Greenlink Interconnector is a submarine power cable running from Baginbun Beach, Co. Wexford (east side of the Hook Peninsula) to Freshwater West, Pembrokeshire, Wales. It was installed in 2025, and its overall route is similar to that of Beaufort (shown in Figure 5). As shown in Table 1, The Beaufort cable route will cross the Greenlink Interconnector at:  $51^{\circ}45'20.6984''N$ ,  $6^{\circ}29'02.1085''W$ .

The preliminary crossing design for the Greenlink Interconnector intends to use the same Uraduct crossing cable protection and design as used in in-service telecom cable crossings. Should this not be agreeable with the Greenlink Interconnector owners, alternative forms of crossing protection will be explored. This may involve pre-lay crossing construction. This may involve the installation of an articulated concrete mattress over the crossing point of the interconnector cable (as shown in Figure 7) prior to the main lay cable installation. The interconnector cable is buried at the crossing location. The dimensions of a concrete mattress are 3.0m x 6.0m x 0.45m and the leading edge of each mattress is tapered for hydraulic stability and for cable installation (Figure 7). The Beaufort cable will then be laid over the concrete mattress. The exact crossing design will be confirmed following further consultation with the owners of the Greenlink Interconnector.



Figure 7: Example of Articulated Concrete Mattress

A summary of the pre-lay crossing construction works is as follows:

- It will be required to install additional protection on the Beaufort cable at the Greenlink crossing. This protection will be a product such as Uraduct, which is a specialized polyurethane ducting designed to wrap around the cable thus minimizing abrasion
- The concrete mattress will be installed on the seabed using the vessel crane and a mattress installation frame with touchdown monitoring. The installation location will also be verified via beacons mounted on the installation frame. The mattress installation frame slings will be released, and the frame recovered to the deck.
- It may also be required to install additional protection on the Beaufort cable at the Greenlink crossing. If required, This protection would likely be a product such as Uraduct, which is specialized polyurethane ducting designed to wrap around the cable thus minimizing abrasion.

#### 4.2.2 Cable Installation

The principal objective of the main lay installation works is to successfully deploy the fibre optic cable along the proposed route, obtaining the required burial depth to protect the system from external aggression and provide for a safe and secure system, with due regard for environmental, archaeological and ecological considerations.

##### **Subsea Cable Installation**

The Beaufort Cable System will feature a direct landing at Kilmore Quay. The Main Lay Vessel will bring the cable toward the shoreline until reaching the designated landing point. An inshore installation team will be in place to bring the cable ashore. Once the cable is securely landed, the required termination and testing activities will be completed onshore. The Main Lay Vessel will then proceed to deploy and bury the cable in the seabed. The burial tool is operated from and powered by the Main Lay Vessel and is designed to bury the cable at a depth such that the cable will be secure from fishing activities. The target burial depth of 1.5m is subject to reasonable endeavours and where the seabed geology allows.

Typical burial speed is generally of the order of 0.5 knots and is dependent on the stiffness of the seabed sediment. There is no significant noise generation during burial operations. Cable installation produces only a minor plume of suspension of seabed sediments in the water column, and this is transient and localised due to the nature of the burial and natural backfill activities.

Typical subsea cable burial tools used to simultaneously install and bury fibre optic cables in the seabed include cable plough (passive and jet assisted) or jetting trenchers (sled or self-propelled). The Nexans CAPJET jetting trencher will be deployed for the installation of the Beaufort cable system.

The Nexans CAPJET system is a remotely operated jetting trencher developed to bury subsea cables and pipelines into the seabed. It uses high-pressure focussed water jets to fluidize the sediment beneath the cable or pipeline, allowing it to settle into a trench without mechanical cutting. The CAPJET is capable of:

- Trenching to depths of up to 3 m, depending on soil conditions.
- Operating in waters up to 2,000 m deep.
- Performing in a variety of seabed types, from soft sediment to harder soils, with adjustable jet pressure (10–16 bar) and thrust.

It integrates multiple sensors (video cameras, sonar, gyros, pressure sensors) for precise control and real-time monitoring. The system's modular design enables different trenching configurations — for flexible pipelines, steel flowlines, and cable burial.

In the context of this project the CAPJET will be used to simultaneously lay and bury the Beaufort cable by forming a narrow trench (approx. 150mm) of fluidised seabed using a bespoke jetting sword into which the cable is installed to the target depth through the cable depressor. The seabed sediment is displaced temporarily to form the trench during the burial operation and then allowed to re-form naturally and 'backfill' the trench after the passage of the jetting tool. The CAPJET will be powered and controlled from the cable installation vessel via electrical umbilical. A visual representation of the CAPJET system is shown in Figure 8.

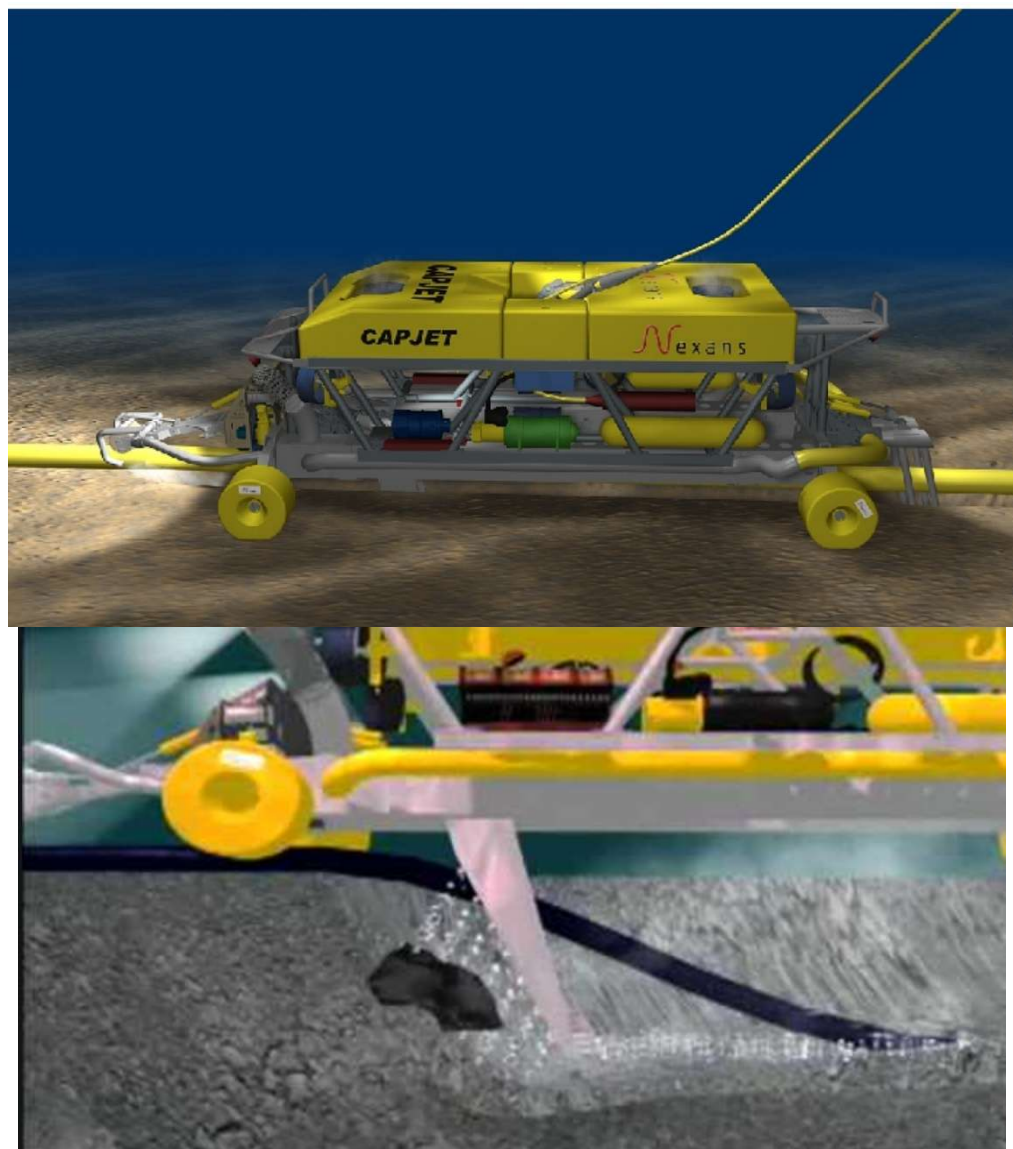


Figure 8: Nexans CAPJET Burial Tool

The target burial depth for the Beaufort cable system is 1.5 metres. In areas of stiff soil, the actual burial depth may be reduced but is planned to be still at a depth which will protect the cable from fishing operations and generally not less than 1 metre. Where seabed geology prevents burial such as areas of rock or reef, the cable will be directly laid on the seabed surface.

## Post Lay Operations

Following main lay operations, post-lay inspection and burial (PLIB) may be carried out in certain areas to inspect the proper laying and burial of the cable in the seabed. A post-lay burial operation may be performed in order to supplement the burial operations in the following instances:

- Planned recoveries of the burial tool.
- Initial and final splice positions within the buried sections – Post-Lay Inspection and Burial is planned for the initial splice location between the Pre-Lay Shore End and main lay section of the cable to 1.5 metre target burial depth.
- Unplanned recoveries due to burial tool breakdown, adverse weather, etc.
- Surface-laid sections due to burial tool malfunction where the burial tool is not brought back on board.

In limited areas requiring post-lay burial, the CAPJET system is also utilized. As described previously, the CAPJET uses a jetting burial tool to bury the cable to the required depth. The seabed is emulsified using high-pressure focussed water jets in the localised region of the burial, and a narrow trench is formed. The CAPJET system slowly moves along the seabed on the required cable track forming a narrow trench into which the cable is placed. The seabed sediment is displaced temporarily to form the trench during the burial operation and then allowed to re-form naturally and ‘backfill’ the trench after the passage of the CAPJET’s burial tool.

It should be noted that the surrounding seawater is used for the jetting system, i.e. nothing alien is introduced into the environment. The burial tool does not remove any seabed materials from the area. The CAPJET burial operation is controlled from the main vessel and monitored in real time using high-definition video cameras and imaging sonar mounted on the vehicle.

## Post-Lay Greenlink HVDC Interconnector Crossing Operations

If required, the Greenlink HVDC Interconnector crossing will be inspected following the Main Lay installation and necessary post lay burial activities within the Safety Zone will be undertaken. It is expected that, the Post-Lay Inspection and Burial will be undertaken using the Nexans CAPJET burial tool.

In summary, the Post-Lay Inspection and Burial (PLIB) works are as follows:

- The PLIB vessel will take position at the crossing location.
- The crossing will be inspected by ROV.
- The Nexans CAPJET will be docked on the Beaufort cable at the limit of the Jet Zone, and moving away from the HVDC cable will bury the temporarily surface laid section of the Beaufort cable at a target trenching speed of 400m/hr.

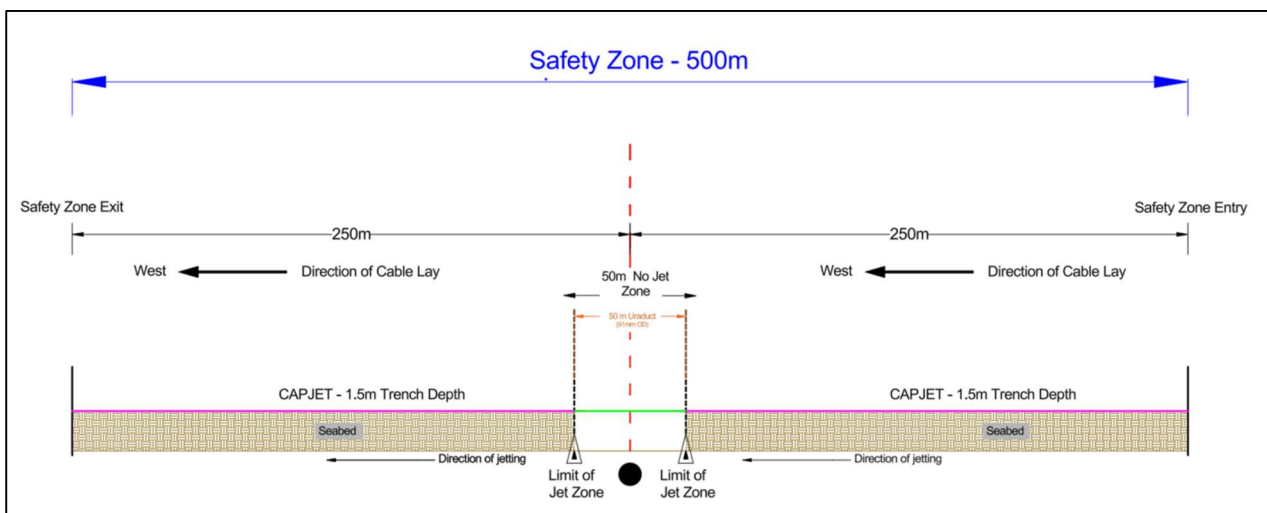


Figure 9: Greenlink HVDC Interconnector Crossing Safety Zone

### **Post-Lay Greenlink Interconnector Crossing Rock Berm Construction**

Should the previously presented Post-Lay proposal not be agreeable with the Greenlink Interconnector owners, additional post-lay construction of a rock berm to protect the Beaufort cable may be required at the Greenlink HVDC Interconnector crossing.

If required, the rock berm will extend 13.5m along the interconnector axis, centred at the crossing location, and a berm depth of 0.8m. This will cover the pre-lay concrete mattress. The rock berm along the cable axis will be 64m (total length) x 1.5m (top width). (Figures 10-13).

The side slopes will be installed to a 1:3 ratio to provide hydraulic stability and protection from snagging of fishing gear etc. The area of the rock berm is 463m<sup>2</sup> (including sloped sides) with a total volume of rock of approximately 220m<sup>3</sup>, accounting for a 10% loss in loose rock placement or discrepancies in the seabed geometry. The rock berm will be constructed with a mix of freshly crushed rock (granite/gneiss) with a maximum size of between 12 and 20 cm topped with a 20cm layer of smaller armourstone.

The height of the proposed rock berm will not interfere with navigation, and the crossing and rock placement is designed to be trawled over by fishing vessels.

A summary of the rock placement works is as follows:

- i. The rock material will be loaded and positioned on the vessel in accordance with its grading and characteristics.
- ii. The vessel hopper will be loaded with the rock.
- iii. The vessel will transit to the crossing location, and the flexible fall pipe will be deployed.
- iv. The vessel will take position over the crossing point and hold position using its Dynamic Positioning (DP) systems.
- v. Rock placement will be undertaken in a controlled manner with the position of the fall pipe 'nozzle' above the seabed adjusted in real time to ensure accurate construction of the rock berm (Figure 10).
- vi. The crossing will be surveyed by the observation ROV and, if successfully completed, the fall pipe will be recovered.

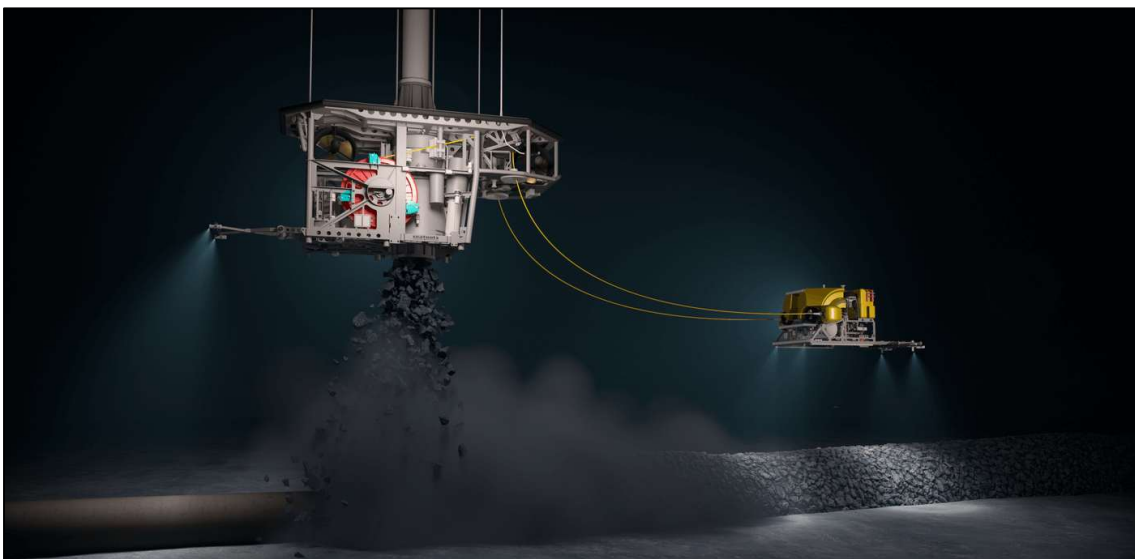


*Figure 10: Fall Pipe Discharging Rock*

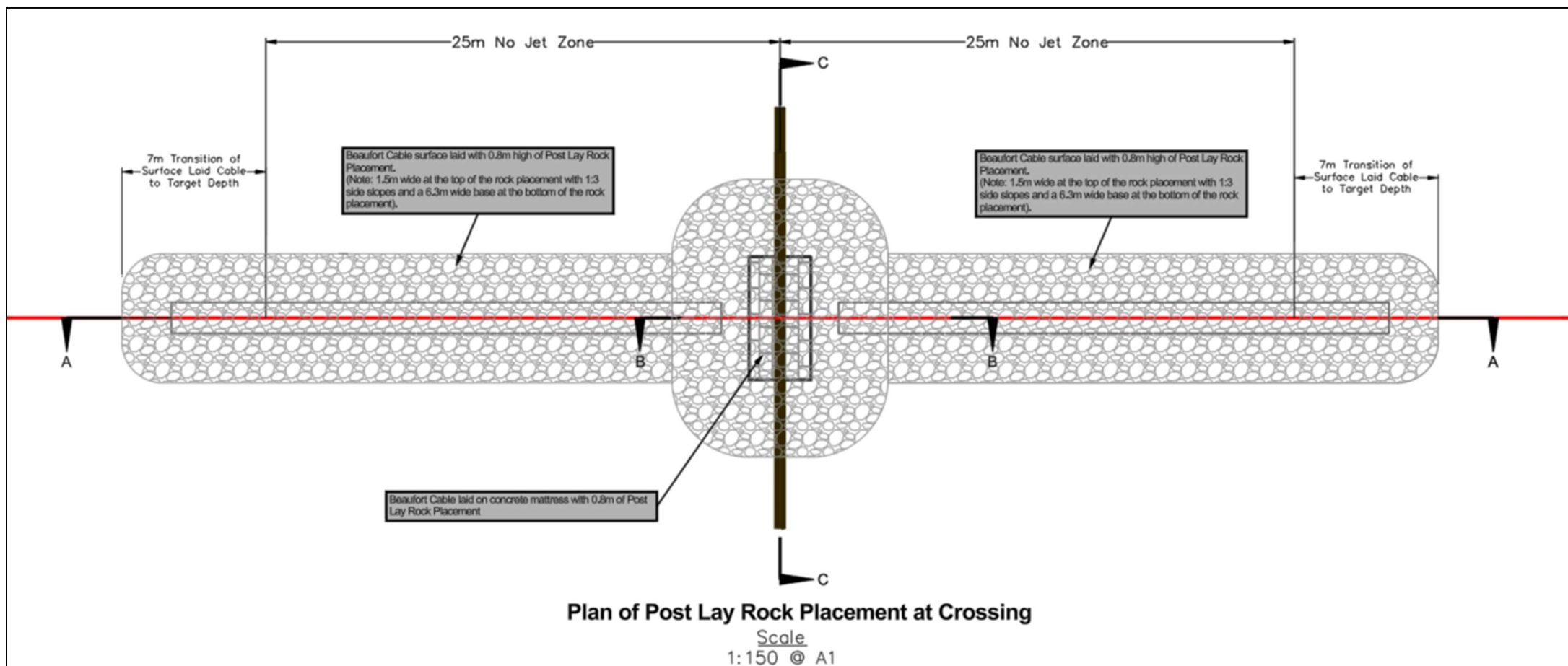


Figure 11: Plan View of Post Lay Rock Berm



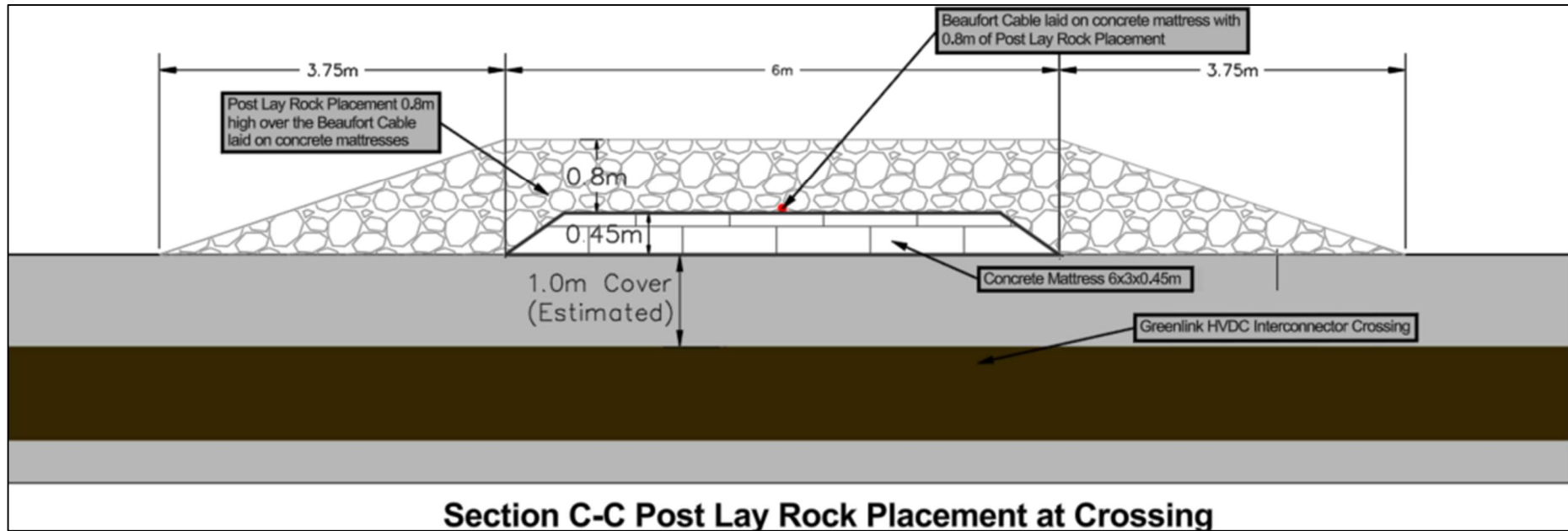


Figure 14: Cross Section C-C of Post Lay Rock Berm

### Ultra-Short Baseline (USBL) Subsea Positioning

An Ultra-Short Baseline (USBL) is a subsea positioning system widely used by the offshore marine industry and scientific research vessels to accurately track the position of towed equipment and sensors. The USBL system consists of a transceiver mounted to the cable vessel, and transponders on the towed burial tool.

To calculate a subsea position, the USBL calculates both a range and an angle from the transceiver to the subsea beacon. Angles are measured by the transceiver, which contains an array of transducers. The transceiver emits an acoustic signal at predetermined periods (often 0.5 seconds) which is returned by the transponder and allows for the bearing and distance to be calculated.

USBL systems are designed for close range transmission and thus typically emit pulses of medium frequency sound (20 to 50 kHz). Manufacturers report SPL values of 194 to 207dB re 1 $\mu$ Pa at 1m depending on the model used, taking as an example the higher range of USBL source (Kongsberg HiPAP) with a SPL of 207dB re 1 $\mu$ Pa at 1m.

All works that involve the use of acoustic instrumentation such as the USBL will follow the Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made Sound Sources in Irish Waters (Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht, 2014).

#### 4.2.3 Cable Installation Vessel

The main lay installation vessel will consist of a dedicated marine spread which will be suitable for the scope of work required, the water depth and the anticipated seabed conditions of the cable route. The Cecon CLV will be used to carry out the installation works. It is a newly built vessel and is 100m in length, 21m in breadth and can accommodate 100 personnel (consisting of the ship's crew, cable installation personnel and client representatives). A visual representation of the Cecon CLV is shown below.



*Figure 15: Cecon CLV*

Appointed contractors will be required to comply with all legislation relevant to the activities within their scope of work. Prior to installation works taking place, both Project Supervisor for Design Process (PSDP) and Project Supervisor for Construction Stage (PSCS) will be appointed under the relevant legislation and project specific HSE plans will be put in place which will form part of the project execution plans.

Cable installation vessels will generate some subsea noise in the marine environment from engine noise and dynamic positioning thrusters. Shipping noise is typically within the 50-300 Hz frequency band and is the dominant noise source in deeper water (DECC, 2011). Propellers on vessels all have the potential to produce cavitation noise. This sound is caused by vacuum bubbles that were generated by the collapse of bubbles created by the spinning of the propellers.

Acoustic broadband source pressure levels typically increase with increasing vessel size, with smaller vessels (<50 m) having source pressure levels 160-175 dB (re 1µPa at 1m), medium size vessel (50-100 m) 165-180 dB (re 1µPa at 1m) and large vessels (>100 m) 180-190 dB (re 1µPa at 1m) (DECC, 2011). Every vessel has a unique noise signature and for each vessel this can change in response to several factors, including ship speed, operational status, vessel load, the condition of the vessel and even the properties of the water that the vessel is operating in.

#### 4.2.4 Timeline and Duration of Cable Lay Activities

The intention is to commence the cable installation in Spring 2027 accounting for vessel availability, the overall cable installation programme, seasonality and suitable weather windows. The exact mobilisation dates will not be known until closer to the time and once all permits and authorisations are in place in Ireland and the UK. It is anticipated that the main lay operations within the offshore area between the Irish 12nm limit and the EEZ will take less than 2 weeks in total and will be completed over a 2 month period.

#### 4.2.5 Decommissioning

Once the cable system is designated 'out of service', a decision will be made to decommission the cable. Reasonable endeavours will be made to remove the cable. In the first instance, winching and vessel pull will be employed to pull the cable from the seabed. If this is not successful and if there is a risk of breaking the cable a jetting tool may be employed to fluidise the seabed and aid recovery. Winching is expected to be effective for recovery where the cable burial is less than 1.5m and depending on the stiffness of the seabed. Use of a jetting tool in soft (sandy) sediments may allow successful recovery where the burial is buried up to 1.5m. If the cable is buried greater than such depths or in stiff sediments it may not be feasible to recover, with the cable breaking before it can be recovered. In such cases there may be no alternative but to leave the cable in-situ with any exposed cable ends secured on the seabed with clump weights in accordance with *ICPC Recommendation 1* and the location will be recorded in the decommissioning file.

### 4.3 Spatial Scope and Zone of Influence

As outlined in Office of the Planning Regulator (2021) *“The zone of influence of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source- Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km).”*

IEEM (2006) defined the zone of influence as *“the areas/resources that may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by activities associated with a project”*. In order to define the extent of the study area for ecological assessment, all elements of the project were assessed and reviewed in order to identify the spatial scale at which ecological features could be impacted. Due to the limited temporal and geographical scale of the project and the use of Best Available Techniques (BAT), the slow speed of the cable lay (0.5kn), it is considered that the potential impacts of the proposed Beaufort Offshore (12nm-Irish EEZ) Cable works could only extend beyond 500 m of the subtidal elements of the project due to noise generation and potential disturbance of sediment. However, as outlined in IEEM (2010) *“in the marine environment it is more difficult to define the geographical framework precisely and to accommodate all factors that should influence the definition of value, e.g. size or conservation status of populations or the quality of habitats.”* As a result, *“it is very unlikely that the impacts on integrity can be evaluated without considering functions and processes acting outside the site’s formal boundary.”* It is important to note that unlike other maritime operations during main lay cable installation works, the installation vessel speed will be very slow (0.5 knots). In light of this, and based on the localised nature of the cable laying impacts (including maintenance and decommissioning works), the Zone of Influence in the subtidal was extended to 2 km either side of the cable route to take into account localised resuspension due to cable laying activity. It should be noted that the noise generated from the vessel laying activity is relatively minor, similar in nature to trawling activity. The proposed project is for main lay operations and not marine survey. However, despite the lack of extensive underwater acoustics that would be used in a traditional marine survey, the project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment particularly through the use of a USBL (Ultra Short Baseline) equipment used to locate underwater equipment e.g. plough and ROV’s etc. which may extend the effects of the project beyond 2km.

#### 4.3.1 Marine Mammals

##### Seals and Cetaceans

As outlined in NPWS<sup>2</sup> *“Cetaceans account for 48% of all the native species of mammals, both marine and terrestrial, recorded in Ireland and Irish waters are thought to contain important habitats for cetaceans within the northeast Atlantic. To date, 24 species of cetacean, or 28% of species described worldwide, have been recorded in Ireland. Irish cetaceans include six species of baleen whale and eighteen species of toothed whale, including five species of beaked whale. Twenty-two of these have been reported stranded ashore and 20 species observed at sea. Two species (Pygmy sperm whale and Gervais’ beaked whale) are only known from stranded individuals and two species (Northern right whale and White whale/beluga) have only been recorded historically, with neither species occurring in the stranding record so far.*

*Ireland also has two species of seals, the Common Seal (or Harbour Seal) and the Grey Seal. Whilst both species haul out on land for key stages of their life history, the majority of their time is spent in the marine environment.*

*In Ireland, the 1992 EC Habitats Directive as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) requires that both seal species and all cetaceans occurring in Ireland are maintained at favourable conservation status. Under Article 12 of the Directive, all cetaceans should receive strict protection within the Exclusive Economic Zone. Under Article 4 of the Directive, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) must be proposed for the following species:”*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.npws.ie/marine/marine-species>

- Bottlenose Dolphin
- Harbour Porpoise
- Common Seal
- Grey Seal

The protection afforded to marine mammals in Ireland is summarised below:

- Harbour Porpoise Annex II of EC Habitats Directive Annex IV of EC Habitats Directive/Protected species of Wildlife (Amendment) Act/OSPAR List of Threatened and Declining Species and Habitats
- Bottlenose Dolphin Annex II of EC Habitats Directive/Annex IV of EC Habitats Directive/Protected species of Wildlife (Amendment) Act
- All Cetacea Annex IV of EC Habitats Directive/Protected species of Wildlife (Amendment) Act
- Grey Seal/Harbour Seal Annex II of EC Habitats Directive/Protected species of Wildlife (Amendment) Act

Recent research suggests that there is the foraging range for grey seals is 448km (Carter *et al.*, 2022). Further, the foraging range for harbour seal is estimated at 273 km (Carter *et al.*, 2022). There are a number of SACs designated for cetaceans (harbour porpoise and common dolphin) in Ireland. As these species are a highly mobile species and designated as qualifying interests of Natura 2000 sites outside the Irish EEZ, specific Management Units (MU) are utilised to assess the potential impacts of a proposed project on these species. Management Units are based on the JNCC Review of Management Unit boundaries for cetaceans in UK waters (2023) methodology<sup>3</sup>. The proposed project is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for harbour porpoise, and the Offshore Channel, Celtic Sea & SW England MU for bottlenose dolphin (IAMMWG, 2015). As there is the potential for grey seal, harbour seal, harbour porpoise and common bottlenose dolphin (highly mobile marine mammal species) to enter the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable route, the ZoI of the proposed project has been extended to include Natura 2000 sites (designated for these species) within the relevant foraging range / MU of these species.

### Otter

Otters are a semi-aquatic species who use the marine environment for foraging and are protected under Annex II and Annex IV of the Habitats Directive. As detailed by Reid *et al.* (2013), female otters have territories of  $7.5 \pm 1.5$ km in length along a riverine environment and  $6.5 \pm 1.0$ km in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately  $13.2 \pm 5.3$ km in length with a high degree of variability. However, given the spatial and temporal nature of the proposed works, and the fact that the nearest point of the Beaufort Offshore Cable Route to the Irish mainland is approximately 29km, the proposed project is considered too distant from Natura 2000 sites where otter is a feature of interest for any significant interaction to occur.

#### 4.3.2 Migratory Fish

In relation to Atlantic salmon, it has been found that salmon populations from southeast Ireland appear to migrate towards the shelf edge before crossing the Atlantic towards Greenland for feeding (Rikardson *et al.*, 2021). The recorded areas of salmon migration are demonstrated in Figure A.1 in Appendix I.

Twaite Shad is a rare red listed (vulnerable) species that have an affinity for coastal habitats (Maitland & Hatton-Ellis, 2003), with recent studies recording movement of this species up to 950km from the River Severn with one individual detected in the Blackwater Estuary (Davies *et al.*, 2020). However, based on King *et al.* (2011) The twaite shad is restricted to the lower reaches of a handful of rivers in the south, with evidence of recruitment only from the Barrow, Suir and Munster Blackwater. The primary conservation objectives for Natura 2000 sites along the south coast of Ireland for which Twaite Shad are a designated Qualifying Interest (Slaney River Valley SAC [000781]; River Barrow and River Nore SAC [002162]; Lower River Suir SAC [002137]; Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC [002170]) relate to the

<sup>3</sup> <https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/b48b8332-349f-4358-b080-b4506384f4f7/jncc-report-734.pdf>

restoration of freshwater habitats for this species. The proposed works are located within the offshore subtidal (12nm – Irish EEZ Boundary) in an area of existing vessel and trawling activity. In the unlikely event that Twaite Shad may be present along the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route, vessel speeds will be slow (0.5 knots) and operations are on a continual basis, therefore, the vessel and equipment would be easily avoided by this species if encountered. The proposed works will be isolated to the route corridor and will not impact on spawning grounds or migratory routes of this species.

Similarly, no likely significant effects on lamprey species are foreseen as a result of the proposed project. As outlined in King *et al.* 2011 *'juvenile river/brook lamprey (the two species are indistinguishable at juvenile stage) are widely distributed in catchments where suitable habitat is available and, on this basis, both river and brook lamprey have now been classified as of 'least concern'. The same survey programmes have also demonstrated that sea lamprey can be found in many of our larger river systems. However, these surveys have shown that sea lampreys are normally scarce, with low densities of juveniles where they do occur and a tendency for migrating adult fish to be concentrated downstream of major weirs in rivers. This species is now listed as Near Threatened.'* At sea, sea lamprey are widely dispersed and their movements are largely dictated by their host fish (Igoe *et al.*, 2004). Within the marine environment, river lamprey inhabit estuarine and coastal waters (Igoe *et al.*, 2004).

Given the spatial and temporal nature of the proposed works (isolated to the works corridor within the offshore subtidal 12nm-EEZ), and given the minimum distance to Natura 2000 sites designated for sea and river lamprey (38.2 km to River Barrow and River Nore SAC), no likely significant effects on sea lamprey distribution or spawning habitats are foreseen as a result of the proposed project.

#### 4.3.3 Birds

The marine waters off the coast of County Wexford mark the boundary between the Irish and Celtic Seas. These waters constitute a valuable feeding resource for the seabirds that return every spring to Wexford's coastal and island colonies to breed. Outside of the summer months these relatively shallow coastal waters provide safe feeding and roosting opportunities for a range of marine birds overwintering here or on passage (NPWS, 2024). The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located within the offshore subtidal (12nm-EEZ Boundary), proximate to Wexford's coastal waters. Given the location of the proposed works to these valuable waters, and given the potential for seabirds to utilise offshore waters within the proposed works corridor for transiting / feeding, the ZOI has been extended to include Natura 2000 Sites designated for seabirds which utilise this area; namely, Seas Off Wexford SPA and Saltee Islands SPA.

## 4.4 Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

### 4.4.1 Management of the Site

The proposed works are not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of Natura 2000 sites.

### 4.4.2 Relevant Natura 2000 Sites to the Proposed Project

Works proposed as part of the Beaufort Offshore Cable are solely within the marine Irish EEZ Subtidal, outside of the inshore 12nm limit. No landfall works are proposed as part of this application. Detailed design following survey has resulted in the selection of an optimal route for burial. This has included discussions with Altamer in relation to sensitive habitats. As demonstrated in Figures 24-27, the proposed burial works are predominantly located in areas consisting of coarse sediment and sand. This route selection has been designed to avoid sensitive habitats and minimise potential environmental impacts. As evident in the data gathered from INFOMAR, the MSFD, and EUSeaMap (2025), the offshore Beaufort cable route does not pass through any areas containing rock or biogenic reef. As a result, and given the minimum distance of this cable route to the nearest SAC containing Reefs [1170] as a qualifying interest (16.5km to Saltee Islands SAC), no significant effects on reef habitats as a result of the proposed development are likely in the absence of mitigation. As seen in Figure 25 (Infomar backscatter) the proposed route runs parallel to the main sand waves utilising a troughs for optimal burial and then turns to the east once the larger sand waves cease.

The proposed project involves the subtidal laying of a marine cable in the offshore environment, the laying of concrete mattresses to protect the Beaufort cable at the Greenlink HVDC Interconnector crossing, and any associated maintenance and decommissioning works. As demonstrated in Figure 18, the proposed project is located 1.1km from Seas Off Wexford SPA. Waters within this SPA constitute a feeding resource for breeding seabirds in spring and provide safe feeding and roosting opportunities for birds overwintering / on passage<sup>4</sup>. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable route is located in the marine subtidal, in an area of existing vessel traffic and outside of waters designated for this SPA. Given the minimum distance between the proposed works area and this SPA (1.1 km) and the nature of the proposed works, no significant impacts on water quality are foreseen. However, out of an abundance of caution, despite the limited temporal and geographic scale of the proposed project, it is considered that there is the potential for visual and acoustic disturbance (via the works vessel) impacts on seabirds protected as SCIs of this SPA in the absence of mitigation.

In relation to marine mammals, given the proximity of the proposed cable route to the Saltee Islands SAC (16.5 km), there is potential for marine mammals from Saltee Islands SAC (*Halichoerus grypus* (Grey Seal)) to be in the vicinity of the proposed works. Further, following an examination of relevant MU's and foraging areas for grey seal and harbour seal, the following Natura 2000 sites have been screened IN due to the potential movements of harbour porpoise, common bottlenose dolphin, harbour seals, and grey seals (qualifying interests of these SAC):

- Saltee Islands SAC (IE)
- Slaney River Valley SAC (IE)
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (IE)
- Lambay Island SAC (IE)
- Roaring Water Bay and Islands SAC (IE)
- Glengarriff Harbour and Woodland SAC (IE)
- Kenmare River SAC (IE)
- Galway Bay Complex SAC (IE)
- Kilkieran Bay And Islands SAC (IE)
- Blasket Islands SAC (IE)
- Slyne Head Islands SAC (IE)
- Inishbofin and Inishshark SAC (IE)
- Slieve Tooey / Tormore Island / Loughros Beg Bay SAC (IE)
- Duvillaun Islands SAC (IE)

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004237.pdf>

- Inishkea Islands SAC (IE)
- Horn Head and Rinclevan SAC (IE)
- Pembrokeshire Marine / Sir Benfro Forol (UK)
- West Wales Marine / Gorllewin Cymru Forol (UK)
- Bristol Channel Approaches/Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren (UK)
- Cardigan Bay / Bae Ceredigion (UK)
- Lundy (UK)
- Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau (UK)
- North Anglesey Marine/Gogledd Môn Forol (UK)
- Isles of Scilly Complex (UK)
- Murlough (UK)
- North Channel (UK)
- The Maidens (UK)
- Humber Estuary (UK)
- Nord Bretagne DH (FR)
- Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne (FR)
- Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles (FR)
- Abers – Côtes des légendes (FR)
- Trégor – Goëlo (FR)
- Baie de Morlaix (FR)
- Ouessant-Molène (FR)
- Anse de Goulven, dunes de Keremma (FR)
- Récifs et landes de la Hague (FR)
- Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay (FR)
- Anse de Vauville (FR)
- Banc et récifs de Surtainville (FR)
- Rade de Brest, estuaire de l'Aulne (FR)
- Côtes de Crozon (FR)
- Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire (FR)
- Chaussée de Sein (FR)
- Cap d'Erquy-Cap Fréhel (FR)
- Cap Sizun (FR)
- Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin – Baie des Veys (FR)
- Baie de Seine occidentale (FR)
- Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est (FR)
- Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne (FR)
- Chausey (FR)
- Baie d'Audieme (FR)
- Littoral Ouest du Cotentin de Bréhal à Pirou (FR)
- Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l'Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard (FR)
- Roches de Penmarch (FR)
- Côte de Cancale à Parmè (FR)
- Estuaire de la Rance (FR)
- Baie du Mont Saint-Michel (FR)
- Baie de Seine orientale (FR)
- Littoral Cauchois (FR)
- Falaises du Cran aux Oeufs et du Cap Gris-Nez, Dunes du Chatelet, Marais de Tardinghen et Dunes de Wissant (FR)

Further information is required to assess the potential effects of the proposed works on these European Sites.

All Natura 2000 sites within 15km, and beyond 15km with the potential for significant effects on Natura 2000 sites (including Irish, French, and UK sites), are listed in Tables 3-5. The qualifying interests, and the potential impact of the development on each European site and qualifying interest, are screened in/out in Table 6a-6c.

The proposed Maritime Area Consent (MAC) Application Area in relation to the 12 nm limit, Designated Irish Continental shelf, and Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is demonstrated in Figure 16. Location SACs and SPAs (including Offshore SACs & SPAs) and the proposed MAC Area are demonstrated in Figures 17-19. IE, FR, & UK SACs designated for Grey Seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) within 448km of the Proposed Cable Route Corridor are demonstrated in Figure 20. IE, FR, & UK SACs designated for Harbour Seals (*Phoca vitulina*) within 273km of the Proposed Cable Route Corridor are demonstrated in Figure 21. IE, FR, & UK SACs located within the Management Units (MU) for Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) are demonstrated in Figures 22 & 23.

**Table 3.** Proximity to Natura 2000 designated sites.

| Code                          | NATURA 2000 Site                                      | Distance |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Special Areas of Conservation |                                                       |          |
| IE000707                      | Saltee Islands SAC                                    | 16.5 km  |
| IE000764                      | Hook Head SAC                                         | 20 km    |
| IE002269                      | Carnsore Point SAC                                    | 27.2 km  |
| IE000696                      | Ballyteige Burrow SAC                                 | 28.9 km  |
| IE000781                      | Slaney River Valley SAC                               | 44.4 km  |
| IE003000                      | Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC                        | 152.4 km |
| IE000204                      | Lambay Island SAC                                     | 179 km   |
| IE000101                      | Roaring Water Bay and Islands SAC                     | 196.3 km |
| IE000090                      | Glengarriff Harbour and Woodland SAC                  | 202.1 km |
| IE002158                      | Kenmare River SAC                                     | 205.8 km |
| IE000268                      | Galway Bay Complex SAC                                | 209.3 km |
| IE002111                      | Kilkieran Bay And Islands SAC                         | 250.1 km |
| IE002172                      | Blasket Islands SAC                                   | 265.7 km |
| IE000328                      | Slyne Head Islands SAC                                | 294.3 km |
| IE000278                      | Inishbofin and Inishshark SAC                         | 303.9 km |
| IE000190                      | Slieve Tooley / Tormore Island / Loughros Beg Bay SAC | 338 km   |
| IE000495                      | Duvillaun Islands SAC                                 | 338.5 km |
| IE000507                      | Inishkea Islands SAC                                  | 343.9 km |
| IE000147                      | Horn Head and Rinclevan SAC                           | 372.7 km |
| Special Protection Areas      |                                                       |          |
| IE004237                      | Seas Off Wexford SPA                                  | 1.1 km   |
| IE004002                      | Saltee Islands SPA                                    | 21 km    |
| IE004020                      | Ballyteige Burrow SPA                                 | 30.3 km  |

**Table 4.** Proximity to designated sites of conservation importance (UK)

| Designation | European Site                                      | Distance                                            |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| SAC         | Pembrokeshire Marine / Sir Benfro Forol            | 34.1 km                                             |
| SAC         | West Wales Marine / Gorllewin Cymru Forol          | 44.7 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b>  |
| SAC         | Bristol Channel Approaches/Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren   | 80.6 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b>  |
| SAC         | Cardigan Bay / Bae Ceredigion                      | 105.1 km                                            |
| SAC         | Lundy                                              | 118.4 km                                            |
| SAC         | Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau | 148.8 km                                            |
| SAC         | North Anglesey Marine/Gogledd Môn Forol            | 182.3 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC         | Isles of Scilly Complex                            | 184.4 km                                            |
| SAC         | Murlough                                           | 250.5 km                                            |
| SAC         | North Channel                                      | 263.1 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC         | The Maidens                                        | 357.6 km                                            |
| SAC         | Humber Estuary                                     | 427.8 km                                            |

**Table 5.** Proximity to designated sites of conservation importance (FR)

| Code | Natura 2000 Site                                             | Distance                                                                     |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SAC  | Nord Bretagne DH                                             | 280 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b>   |
| SAC  | Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne                  | 284.8 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles                                | 342.4 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Abers – Côtes des légendes                                   | 353.6 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Trégor – Goëlo                                               | 356.8 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Baie de Morlaix                                              | 357.6 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b>                          |
| SAC  | Ouessant-Molène                                              | 358.8 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Anse de Goulven, dunes de Keremma                            | 360.4 km                                                                     |
| SAC  | Récifs et landes de la Hague                                 | 367.8 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay | 375.2 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b>                          |
| SAC  | Anse de Vauville                                             | 376.5 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Banc et récifs de Surtainville                               | 386.4 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Rade de Brest, estuarie de l'Aulne                           | 393 km                                                                       |
| SAC  | Côtes de Crozon                                              | 393.8 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b>                          |

| Code | Natura 2000 Site                                                                                          | Distance                                                                     |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SAC  | Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire                                       | 397.1 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin)</b>                        |
| SAC  | Chaussée de Sein                                                                                          | 406.8 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Cap d'Erquy-Cap Fréhel                                                                                    | 412.5 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Cap Sizun                                                                                                 | 415 km                                                                       |
| SAC  | Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin – Baie des Veys                                                           | 418.3 km                                                                     |
| SAC  | Baie de Seine occidentale                                                                                 | 421.4 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin)</b>                        |
| SAC  | Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est                                                                                | 423.6 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne                                                                      | 424.9 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Chausey                                                                                                   | 428.9 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Baie d'Audieme                                                                                            | 431.4 km                                                                     |
| SAC  | Littoral Ouest du Cotentin de Bréhal à Pirou                                                              | 432.7 km                                                                     |
| SAC  | Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l'Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard                                    | 440 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b>   |
| SAC  | Roches de Penmarch                                                                                        | 444.8 km                                                                     |
| SAC  | Côte de Cancale à Parmè                                                                                   | 449.4 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin)</b>                        |
| SAC  | Estuaire de la Rance                                                                                      | 454.1 km<br><b>(Within MU for Harbour Porpoise)</b>                          |
| SAC  | Baie du Mont Saint-Michel                                                                                 | 457.2 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin &amp; Harbour Porpoise)</b> |
| SAC  | Baie de Seine orientale                                                                                   | 485.9 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin)</b>                        |
| SAC  | Littoral Cauchois                                                                                         | 503 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin)</b>                          |
| SAC  | Falaises du Cran aux Oeufs et du Cap Gris-Nez, Dunes du Chatelet, Marais de Tardighen et Dunes de Wissant | 552 km<br><b>(Within MU for Bottlenose Dolphin)</b>                          |

Initial screening of NATURA 2000 sites, Annex habitats and species within 15km of the proposed route.

**Table 6a.** Initial screening of IE Natura 2000 sites proximate to the Beaufort Offshore Cable Route.

| NATURA Site                          | NAME               | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Special Areas of Conservation</b> |                    |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| IE 000707                            | Saltee Islands SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]<br/> Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]<br/> Reefs [1170]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]<br/> Grey Seal (<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route (between the Irish 12nm limit and the Irish EEZ) is located 16.5 km from this SAC.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SAC (16.5km) from the Beaufort Offshore Cable Route across a substantial marine environment, no significant impacts on the following qualifying interests are foreseen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li>– Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]</li> <li>– Reefs [1170]</li> <li>– Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]</li> <li>– Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]</li> </ul> <p>However, initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seals via underwater noise during cable installation, maintenance, and decommissioning works. Mitigation measures are required to ensure that there are no impacts on grey seals, which are features of interest of this SAC. Given the distance from the works to this SAC, and the nature of the proposed works, there is no possibility of significant effects on the other features of interest of this SAC.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |

| NATURA Site | NAME               | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IE000764    | Hook Head SAC      | Out             | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]<br/> Reefs [1170]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed development site is located 20 km from the Hook Head SAC. The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is localised exclusively within the offshore marine environment and will not impact on the conservational interests of this SAC. Further, given that the SAC is located at least 20 km from the proposed works, any sediment resuspended from the proposed works would be expected to settle or be diluted to negligible levels prior to reaching this SAC. The proposed works are not proximate to any reef habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC. As such, the proposed works will not impact on the conservational objectives of this SAC.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, impacts caused by the project would be expected to be localised to the immediate environs of the proposed cable laying site. No impacts on the qualifying interests of this Natura 2000 site are foreseen.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p> |
| IE002269    | Carnsore Point SAC | Out             | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]<br/> Reefs [1170]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed development site is located 27.2 km from the Carnsore Point SAC. The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is localised exclusively within the offshore marine environment and will not impact on the conservational interests of this SAC. Further, given that the SAC is located at least 27.2 km from the proposed works, any sediment resuspended from the proposed works would be expected to settle or be diluted to negligible levels prior to reaching this SAC. The proposed works are not proximate to any reef habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC. As such, the proposed works will not impact on the conservational objectives of this SAC.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, impacts caused by the project would be expected to be localised to the immediate environs of</p>                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| NATURA Site | NAME                    | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|             |                         |                 | <p>the proposed cable laying site. No impacts on the qualifying interests of this Natura 2000 site are foreseen.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| IE000696    | Ballyteige Burrow SAC   | Out             | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Estuaries [1130]<br/> Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]<br/> Coastal lagoons [1150]<br/> Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]<br/> Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]<br/> Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]<br/> Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]<br/> Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]<br/> Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (<i>Sarcocornetea fruticosi</i>) [1420]<br/> Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]<br/> Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]<br/> Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]<br/> Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150]<br/> Humid dune slacks [2190]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed development site is located 28.9 km from the Ballyteige Burrow SAC. The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is localised exclusively within the offshore marine environment and will not impact on the conservation interests of this SAC. Further, given that the SAC is located at least 28.9 km from the proposed works, any sediment resuspended from the proposed works would be expected to settle or be diluted to negligible levels prior to reaching this SAC. As such, the proposed works will not impact on the conservational objectives of this SAC.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, impacts caused by the project would be expected to be localised to the immediate environs of the proposed cable laying site. No impacts on the qualifying interests of this Natura 2000 site are foreseen.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p> |
| IE000781    | Slaney River Valley SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Estuaries [1130]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

| NATURA Site | NAME | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|             |      |                 | <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]</p> <p><i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</p> <p><i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]</p> <p><i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]</p> <p><i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]</p> <p><i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaite Shad) [1103]</p> <p><i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</p> <p><i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p> <p><i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 44.4 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located within the foraging range of harbour seal (273 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this species enter the Zone of Influence. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located 44.4 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a substantial marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on designated habitats, Lamprey species (Sea, Brook, and River), or Freshwater pearl mussel protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>In relation to Atlantic salmon, it has been found that salmon from southeast Ireland tend to move out to the shelf edge before crossing the Atlantic towards Greenland (Rikardson et al., 2021). The proposed project is located within the area of salmon migration recorded as part of Rikardson et al.'s (2021) study (see Appendix All.1). However, given the nature of the proposed works, and the short timeframe of the proposed works, no significant impacts on salmon are foreseen as a result of the proposed project in the absence of mitigation.</p> <p>In relation to Twaite Shad, given the spatial and temporal nature of the proposed works, and the distance to this SAC, the</p> |

| NATURA Site | NAME                           | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|             |                                |                 | <p>proposed project is considered too far for any significant interaction to occur.</p> <p>Further, no significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5\text{km}</math> in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0\text{km}</math> in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3\text{km}</math> in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the distance between the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route and this SAC (44.4 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| IE003000    | Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Reefs [1170]<br/> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 152.4 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise (JNCC, 2023).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour porpoise (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The works area is located 152.4 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on reefs protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour porpoise. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |

| NATURA Site | NAME                              | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| IE000204    | Lambay Island SAC                 | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Reefs [1170]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]<br/> <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is located 179 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) and harbour seal (273 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour and grey seal (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 179 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour seal and grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000101    | Roaring Water Bay and Islands SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]<br/> Reefs [1170]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> European dry heaths [4030]<br/> Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]<br/> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]<br/> <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| NATURA Site | NAME                                 | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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|             |                                      |                 | <p>This SAC is 196.3 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise (JNCC, 2023) and is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal and harbour porpoise (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the ZOI. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 196.3 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a substantial marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Further, no significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5</math> km in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0</math> km in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3</math> km in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the significant distance between the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ and this SAC (196.3 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals and harbour porpoise. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000090    | Glengarriff Harbour and Woodland SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]<br/> Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]<br/> Geomalacus maculosus (Kerry Slug) [1024]<br/> Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303]<br/> Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]<br/> Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| NATURA Site | NAME              | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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|             |                   |                 | <p>This SAC is 202.1 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of harbour seal (273 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 202.1 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats, Kerry Slug, or Lesser Horseshoe Bat protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Further, no significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5</math> km in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0</math> km in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3</math> km in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the significant distance between the proposed cable route within the Irish EEZ and this SAC (202.1 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE002158    | Kenmare River SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]<br/> Reefs [1170]<br/> Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]<br/> Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]<br/> Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]<br/> Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]<br/> European dry heaths [4030]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| NATURA Site | NAME                   | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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|             |                        |                 | <p>Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]<br/> Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae [6130]<br/> Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]<br/> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]<br/> <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303]<br/> <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]<br/> <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is located 205.8 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed cable area within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of harbour seal (273 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC if harbour seal from this SAC were to enter the SAC. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>No significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5</math>km in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0</math>km in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3</math>km in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the significant distance between the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ and this SAC (205.8 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> <p>The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 205.8 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on all other habitats or species protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000268    | Galway Bay Complex SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

| NATURA Site | NAME | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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|             |      |                 | <p>Coastal lagoons [1150]<br/> Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]<br/> Reefs [1170]<br/> Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]<br/> Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]<br/> Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]<br/> Turloughs [3180]<br/> Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]<br/> Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210]<br/> Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210]<br/> Alkaline fens [7230]<br/> Limestone pavements [8240]<br/> <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]<br/> <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 209.3 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of harbour seal (273 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour seal (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the ZOI. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 209.3 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Further, no significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5</math> km in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0</math> km in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3</math> km in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the significant distance between the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ and this SAC (209.3 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> |

| NATURA Site | NAME                          | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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|             |                               |                 | <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| IE002111    | Kilkieran Bay And Islands SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]<br/> Coastal lagoons [1150]<br/> Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]<br/> Reefs [1170]<br/> Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]<br/> Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]<br/> Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]<br/> Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]<br/> Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]<br/> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]<br/> <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]<br/> <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]<br/> <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 250.1 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise (JNCC, 2023) and is located within the foraging range of harbour seal (273 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on harbour seal and harbour porpoise (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 250.1 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats or Slender Naiad protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> |

| NATURA Site | NAME                | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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|             |                     |                 | <p>Further, no significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5\text{km}</math> in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0\text{km}</math> in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3\text{km}</math> in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the significant distance between the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ and this SAC (250.1 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour seals and harbour porpoise. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| IE002172    | Blasket Islands SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Reefs [1170]<br/> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> European dry heaths [4030]<br/> Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]<br/> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 265.7 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed cable area within the Irish EEZ is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise (JNCC, 2023) and is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal and harbour porpoise (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 265.7 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for harbour porpoise and grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC. <b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |

| NATURA Site | NAME                          | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| IE000328    | Slyne Head Islands SAC        | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Reefs [1170]<br/> <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 294.3 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal and harbour porpoise (features of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>This SAC is located within the West Coast of Ireland MU for Bottlenose Dolphin. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located outside of this MU. No significant effects on bottlenose dolphin protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen in the absence of mitigation.</p> <p>The proposed cable area within the Irish EEZ is located 294.3 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on reefs protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000278    | Inishbofin and Inishshark SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Coastal lagoons [1150]<br/> Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]<br/> Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]<br/> European dry heaths [4030]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| NATURA Site | NAME                                                  | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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|             |                                                       |                 | <p><i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 303.9 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the ZOI. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed cable area within the Irish EEZ is located 303.9 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000190    | Slieve Tooley / Tormore Island / Loughros Beg Bay SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]<br/> Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]<br/> Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]<br/> Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]<br/> Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]<br/> Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]<br/> Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> [2140]<br/> Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetalia</i>) [2150]<br/> Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]<br/> Humid dune slacks [2190]<br/> Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]<br/> Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]<br/> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]<br/> <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p>                                                      |

| NATURA Site | NAME                  | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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|             |                       |                 | <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 338 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the ZOI. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 338 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats or Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Further, no significant impacts on otter are foreseen. As detailed by Reid et al. (2013), female otters have territories of <math>7.5 \pm 1.5</math> km in length along a riverine environment and <math>6.5 \pm 1.0</math> km in coastal environments, while male otter territory along rivers is approximately <math>13.2 \pm 5.3</math> km in length with a high degree of variability. Given the nature of the proposed works and the significant distance between the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ and this SAC (338 km), in the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on otter species are likely as a result of the proposed project.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000495    | Duvillaun Islands SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p><i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 338.5 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal and harbour porpoise (features of interest of this SAC) through</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| NATURA Site | NAME                        | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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|             |                             |                 | <p>underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Features of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>This SAC is located within the West Coast of Ireland MU for Bottlenose Dolphin. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located outside of this MU. No significant effects on bottlenose dolphin protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen in the absence of mitigation.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| IE000507    | Inishkea Islands SAC        | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]<br/> <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 343.9 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 343.9 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on Machairs and Petalwort protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |
| IE000147    | Horn Head and Rinclevan SAC | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| NATURA Site | NAME | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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|             |      |                 | <p>overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Qualifying Interests</b></p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]<br/> Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]<br/> Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]<br/> Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]<br/> Humid dune slacks [2190]<br/> Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]<br/> Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]<br/> <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013]<br/> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]<br/> <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]<br/> <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>This SAC is 372.7 km from the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ. The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located within the foraging range of grey seal (448 km) (Carter et al., 2022).</p> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there may be potential for impact on grey seal (feature of interest of this SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Feature of Interest of this SAC should this mobile marine mammal enter the Zol. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ is located 372.7 km from this conservation site. Given the nature of the proposed works, and the significant distance to this SAC across a marine environment, in the absence of mitigation measures, no significant impacts on habitats, Geyer's Whorl Snail, Slender Naiad and Petalwort protected as a qualifying interest of this SAC are foreseen from the proposed works.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are required for grey seals. Further information is required to determine the potential for adverse effects on this SAC.</p> <p><b>NIS is Required.</b></p> |

| NATURA Site                     | NAME                 | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <b>Special Protection Areas</b> |                      |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| IE004237                        | Seas Off Wexford SPA | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Special Conservation Interests</b></p> <p>Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001]<br/> Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]<br/> Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) [A013]<br/> Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>) [A016]<br/> Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]<br/> Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]<br/> Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065]<br/> Mediterranean Gull (<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>) [A176]<br/> Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]<br/> Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183]<br/> Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]<br/> Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]<br/> Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]<br/> Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]<br/> Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]<br/> Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199]<br/> Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]<br/> Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]<br/> Sandwich Tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>) [A863]<br/> Little Tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>) [A885]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is not within the boundaries of this SPA. This SPA is located approximately 1.1 km from the proposed works. Proposed works are located exclusively within the marine subtidal between the Irish 12nm and EEZ. The proposed cable route is within an area of existing vessel traffic and fishing activity.</p> <p>Waters within this SPA constitute a feeding resource for breeding seabirds in spring and provide safe feeding opportunities for birds overwintering / on passage<sup>5</sup>. Given the minimum distance between the proposed works area and this SPA (1.1 km) and the nature of the proposed works, no significant impacts on water quality are foreseen. However, out of an abundance of caution, despite the limited temporal and geographic scale of the proposed project, it is considered that there is the potential for visual and acoustic disturbance (via the works vessel) impacts on seabirds protected as SCIs of this SPA which may be foraging / resting in waters along the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route in the absence of mitigation. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SPA from significant effects.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004237.pdf>

| NATURA Site | NAME                  | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| IE004002    | Saltee Islands SPA    | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Special Conservation Interests</b></p> <p>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]<br/> Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>) [A016]<br/> Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]<br/> Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]<br/> Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183]<br/> Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]<br/> Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]<br/> Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199]<br/> Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]<br/> Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is not within the boundaries of this SPA. This SPA is located approximately 21 km from the proposed works. Proposed works are located exclusively within the marine subtidal between the Irish 12nm and EEZ. The proposed cable route is within an area of existing vessel traffic and fishing activity.</p> <p>Waters proximate to the Beaufort Offshore Cable Route constitute a feeding resource for breeding seabirds in spring and provide safe feeding opportunities for birds overwintering / on passage. Given the minimum distance between the proposed works area and this SPA (21 km) and the nature of the proposed works, no significant impacts on water quality are foreseen. However, out of an abundance of caution, despite the limited temporal and geographic scale of the proposed project, it is considered that there is the potential for visual and acoustic disturbance (via the works vessel) impacts on seabirds protected as SCIs of this SPA which may be foraging / resting in waters along the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route in the absence of mitigation. Mitigation measures are required to protect the SPA from significant effects.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |
| IE004020    | Ballyteige Burrow SPA | Out             | <p><b>Conservation Objectives</b></p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p><b>Special Conservation Interests</b></p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]<br/> Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]<br/> Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]<br/> Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]<br/> Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142]<br/> Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]<br/> Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

| NATURA Site | NAME | Screened In/Out | SSCO's/Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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|             |      |                 | <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed development site is located 30.3 km from the Ballyteige Burrow SPA. The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is localised exclusively within the offshore marine environment and will not impact on the conservational interests of this SPA. Further, given that the SPA is located at least 30.3 km from the proposed works, sediment resuspended from the proposed works would be expected to settle or be diluted to negligible levels prior to reaching this SPA.</p> <p>Due to short term scale of the project, the distance from the works to the SPA, and the nature of the proposed works, there is no possibility of significant noise or vibration effects on the bird species protected as qualifying interests of this SPA.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, impacts caused by the project would be expected to be localised to the immediate environs of the proposed works. No impacts on the qualifying interests of this Natura 2000 site are foreseen.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p> |

Table 6b. Initial screening of UK NATURA 2000 sites within 15km, and beyond with potential for significant effect

| Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Screened In/Out | Conservation Objectives, Features of Interest and potential for significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p>Pembrokeshire Marine / Sir Benfro Forol</p> <p>Cardigan Bay / Bae Ceredigion</p> <p>Lundy</p> <p>Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau</p> <p>Isles of Scilly Complex</p> <p>The Maidens</p> <p>Humber Estuary</p> | In              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the qualifying interests to favourable condition.</p> <p><b>Relevant Qualifying Interest</b></p> <p><i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located within 448km of the following UK SACs (within the identified 448km foraging range of grey seal (Carter <i>et al.</i>, 2022)):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pembrokeshire Marine / Sir Benfro Forol</li> <li>• Cardigan Bay / Bae Ceredigion</li> <li>• Lundy</li> <li>• Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau</li> <li>• Isles of Scilly Complex</li> <li>• The Maidens</li> <li>• Humber Estuary</li> </ul> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, and out of an abundance of caution, there may be potential for impact on grey seal (qualifying interests of the identified UK SACs) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Qualifying Interest of these SACs. Mitigation measures are required to protect these SACs from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment and mitigation measures are required to protect grey seal.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |
| Murlough                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | In              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the qualifying interests to favourable condition.</p> <p><b>Relevant Qualifying Interest</b></p> <p><i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Harbour Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located within 273km of the following UK SAC (within the identified 273km foraging range of harbour seal (Carter <i>et al.</i>, 2022)):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murlough</li> </ul> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, and out of an abundance of caution, there may be potential for impact on harbour seal (qualifying interest of the identified UK SAC) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

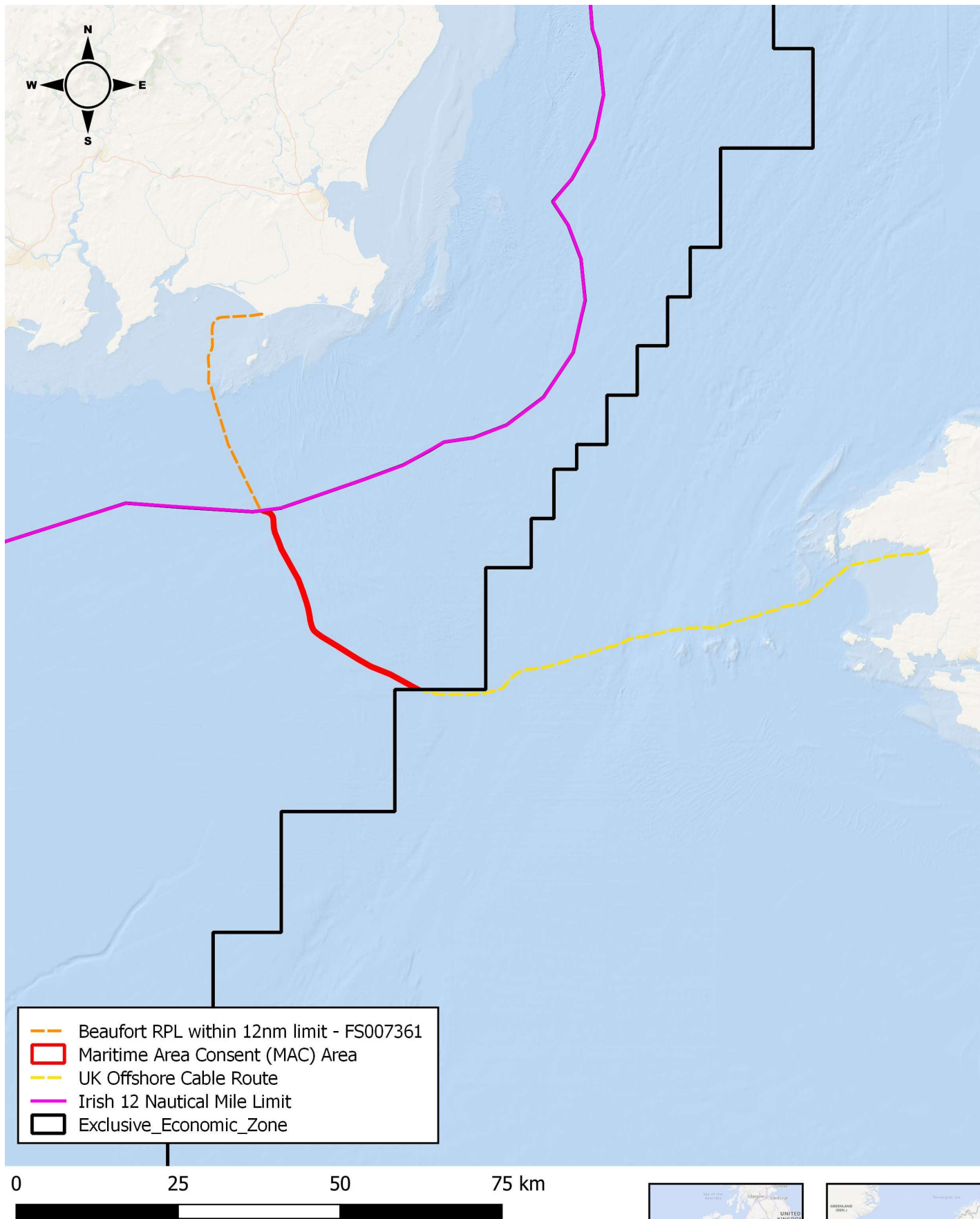
| Name                                                                                                                                                                         | Screened In/Out  | Conservation Objectives, Features of Interest and potential for significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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|                                                                                                                                                                              |                  | <p>impact the Qualifying Interest of this SAC. Mitigation measures are required to protect this SAC from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment and mitigation measures are required to protect harbour seal.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p>West Wales Marine / Gorllewin Cymru Forol</p> <p>Bristol Channel Approaches/Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren</p> <p>North Anglesey Marine/Gogledd Môn Forol</p> <p>North Channel</p> | <p><b>IN</b></p> | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the qualifying interests to favourable condition.</p> <p><b>Relevant Qualifying Interest</b></p> <p><i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route (12nm – Irish EEZ) is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise (JNCC, 2023). The Harbour Porpoise [1351] is a Qualifying Interest of the following UK SACs located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M West Wales Marine / Gorllewin Cymru Forol</li> <li>• Bristol Channel Approaches/Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren</li> <li>• North Anglesey Marine/Gogledd Môn Forol</li> <li>• North Channel</li> </ul> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, and out of an abundance of caution, there may be potential for impact on Harbour Porpoise (qualifying interests of the identified UK SACs) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Qualifying Interests of these SACs. Mitigation measures are required to protect these SACs from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment and mitigation measures are required to protect harbour porpoise.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |

Table 6c. Initial screening of FR NATURA 2000 sites within 15km, and beyond with potential for significant effect

| Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Screened In/Out | Conservation Objectives, Features of Interest and potential for significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p>Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles</p> <p>Abers – Côtes des légendes</p> <p>Trégor – Goëlo</p> <p>Récifs et landes de la Hague</p> <p>Baie de Morlaix</p> <p>Anse de Goulven, dunes de Keremma</p> <p>Ouessant-Molène</p> <p>Anse de Vauville</p> <p>Banc et récifs de Surtainville</p> <p>Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay</p> <p>Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire</p> <p>Rade de Brest, estuarie de l'Aulne</p> <p>Côtes de Crozon</p> <p>Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin – Baie des Veys</p> <p>Chaussée de Sein</p> <p>Baie de Seine occidentale</p> <p>Cap Sizun</p> <p>Chaucy</p> <p>Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est</p> <p>Littoral Ouest du Cotentin de Bréhal à Pirou</p> <p>Baie d'Audieme</p> <p>Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l'Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard</p> | In              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the qualifying interests to favourable condition.</p> <p><b>Relevant Qualifying Interest</b></p> <p><i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route is located within 448km of the following French SACs (within the identified 448km foraging range of grey seal (Carter <i>et al.</i>, 2022)):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles</li> <li>• Abers – Côtes des légendes</li> <li>• Trégor – Goëlo</li> <li>• Récifs et landes de la Hague</li> <li>• Baie de Morlaix</li> <li>• Anse de Goulven, dunes de Keremma</li> <li>• Ouessant-Molène</li> <li>• Anse de Vauville</li> <li>• Banc et récifs de Surtainville</li> <li>• Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay</li> <li>• Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire</li> <li>• Rade de Brest, estuarie de l'Aulne</li> <li>• Côtes de Crozon</li> <li>• Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin – Baie des Veys</li> <li>• Chaussée de Sein</li> <li>• Baie de Seine occidentale</li> <li>• Cap Sizun</li> <li>• Chaucy</li> <li>• Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est</li> <li>• Littoral Ouest du Cotentin de Bréhal à Pirou</li> <li>• Baie d'Audieme</li> <li>• Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l'Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard</li> </ul> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, and out of an abundance of caution, there may be potential for impact on grey seal (qualifying interests of the identified French SACs) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Qualifying Interest of these SACs. Mitigation measures are required to protect these SACs from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment and mitigation measures are required to protect grey seal.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |

| Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Screened In/Out | Conservation Objectives, Features of Interest and potential for significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <p>Nord Bretagne DH</p> <p>Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne</p> <p>Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles</p> <p>Abers – Côtes des légendes</p> <p>Trégor – Goëlo</p> <p>Baie de Morlaix</p> <p>Ouessant-Molène</p> <p>Récifs et landes de la Hague</p> <p>Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay</p> <p>Anse de Vauville</p> <p>Banc et récifs de Surtainville</p> <p>Côtes de Crozon</p> <p>Chaussée de Sein</p> <p>Cap d’Erquy-Cap Fréhel</p> <p>Baie de Saint-Brieuc – Est</p> <p>Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne</p> <p>Chausey</p> <p>Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l’Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard</p> <p>Estuaire de la Rance</p> <p>Baie du Mont Saint-Michel</p> | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the qualifying interests to favourable condition.</p> <p><b>Relevant Qualifying Interest</b></p> <p><i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route (12nm – Irish EEZ) is located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise (JNCC, 2023). The Harbour Porpoise [1351] is a Qualifying Interest of the following French SACs located within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nord Bretagne DH</li> <li>• Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne</li> <li>• Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles</li> <li>• Abers – Côtes des légendes</li> <li>• Trégor – Goëlo</li> <li>• Baie de Morlaix</li> <li>• Ouessant-Molène</li> <li>• Récifs et landes de la Hague</li> <li>• Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay</li> <li>• Anse de Vauville</li> <li>• Banc et récifs de Surtainville</li> <li>• Côtes de Crozon</li> <li>• Chaussée de Sein</li> <li>• Cap d’Erquy-Cap Fréhel</li> <li>• Baie de Saint-Brieuc – Est</li> <li>• Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne</li> <li>• Chausey</li> <li>• Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l’Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard</li> <li>• Estuaire de la Rance</li> <li>• Baie du Mont Saint-Michel</li> </ul> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, and out of an abundance of caution, there may be potential for impact on Harbour Porpoise (qualifying interests of the identified French SACs) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Qualifying Interests of these SACs. Mitigation measures are required to protect these SACs from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment and mitigation measures are required to protect harbour porpoise.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |

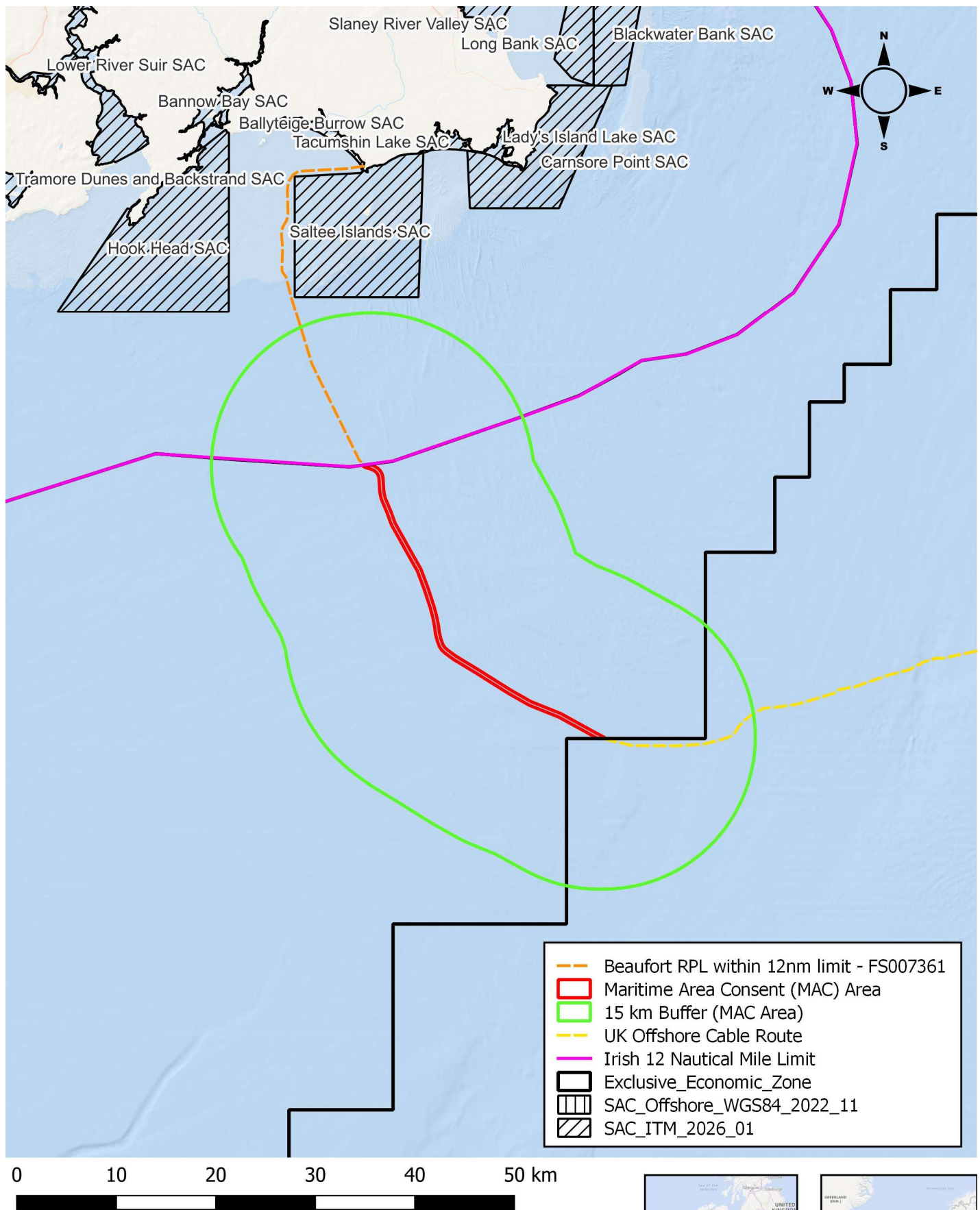
| Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Screened In/Out | Conservation Objectives, Features of Interest and potential for significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <p>Nord Bretagne DH</p> <p>Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne</p> <p>Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles</p> <p>Abers – Côtes des légendes</p> <p>Trégor – Goëlo</p> <p>Ouessant-Molène</p> <p>Récifs et landes de la Hague</p> <p>Anse de Vauville</p> <p>Banc et récifs de Surtainville</p> <p>Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire</p> <p>Chaussée de Sein</p> <p>Cap d’Erquy-Cap Fréhel</p> <p>Baie de Seine occidentale</p> <p>Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est</p> <p>Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne</p> <p>Chausey</p> <p>Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l’Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard</p> <p>Côte de Cancale à Parmè</p> <p>Baie du Mont Saint-Michel</p> <p>Baie de Seine orientale</p> <p>Littoral Cauchois</p> <p>Falaises du Cran aux Oeufs et du Cap Gris-Nez, Dunes du Chatelet, Marais de Tardinghen et Dunes de Wissant</p> | IN              | <p><b>Conservation Objective</b></p> <p>To maintain (or restore where appropriate) the qualifying interests to favourable condition.</p> <p><b>Relevant Qualifying Interest</b></p> <p><i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b></p> <p>The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route (12nm – Irish EEZ) is located within the Offshore Channel, Celtic Sea and SW England MU for Bottlenose Dolphin (JNCC, 2023). The Bottlenose Dolphin [1349] is a Qualifying Interest of the following French SACs located within the Offshore Channel, Celtic Sea and SW England MU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nord Bretagne DH</li> <li>• Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne</li> <li>• Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles</li> <li>• Abers – Côtes des légendes</li> <li>• Trégor – Goëlo</li> <li>• Ouessant-Molène</li> <li>• Récifs et landes de la Hague</li> <li>• Anse de Vauville</li> <li>• Banc et récifs de Surtainville</li> <li>• Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire</li> <li>• Chaussée de Sein</li> <li>• Cap d’Erquy-Cap Fréhel</li> <li>• Baie de Seine occidentale</li> <li>• Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est</li> <li>• Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne</li> <li>• Chausey</li> <li>• Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l’Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard</li> <li>• Côte de Cancale à Parmè</li> <li>• Baie du Mont Saint-Michel</li> <li>• Baie de Seine orientale</li> <li>• Littoral Cauchois</li> <li>• Falaises du Cran aux Oeufs et du Cap Gris-Nez, Dunes du Chatelet, Marais de Tardinghen et Dunes de Wissant</li> </ul> <p>Initial assessment identifies that, in the absence of mitigation measures, and out of an abundance of caution, there may be potential for impact on Bottlenose Dolphin (qualifying interests of the identified French SACs) through underwater noise and physical disturbance which could impact the Qualifying Interests of these SACs. Mitigation measures are required to protect these SACs from significant effects.</p> <p>The proposed project has the potential to introduce noise into the marine environment and mitigation measures are required to protect harbour porpoise.</p> <p><b>Natura Impact Statement Required</b></p> |



Project: Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable  
 Location: Celtic Sea  
 Date: 11th March 2026  
 Drawn By: Bryan Deegan (Altamar)



**Figure 16:** Proposed Beaufort Cable Route (incl. 12nm limit and EEZ)



Project: Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable  
 Location: Celtic Sea  
 Date: 11th March 2026  
 Drawn By: Bryan Deegan (Altamar)

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**Figure 17:** Special Areas of Conservation within 15 km of the Offshore Beaufort Cable.

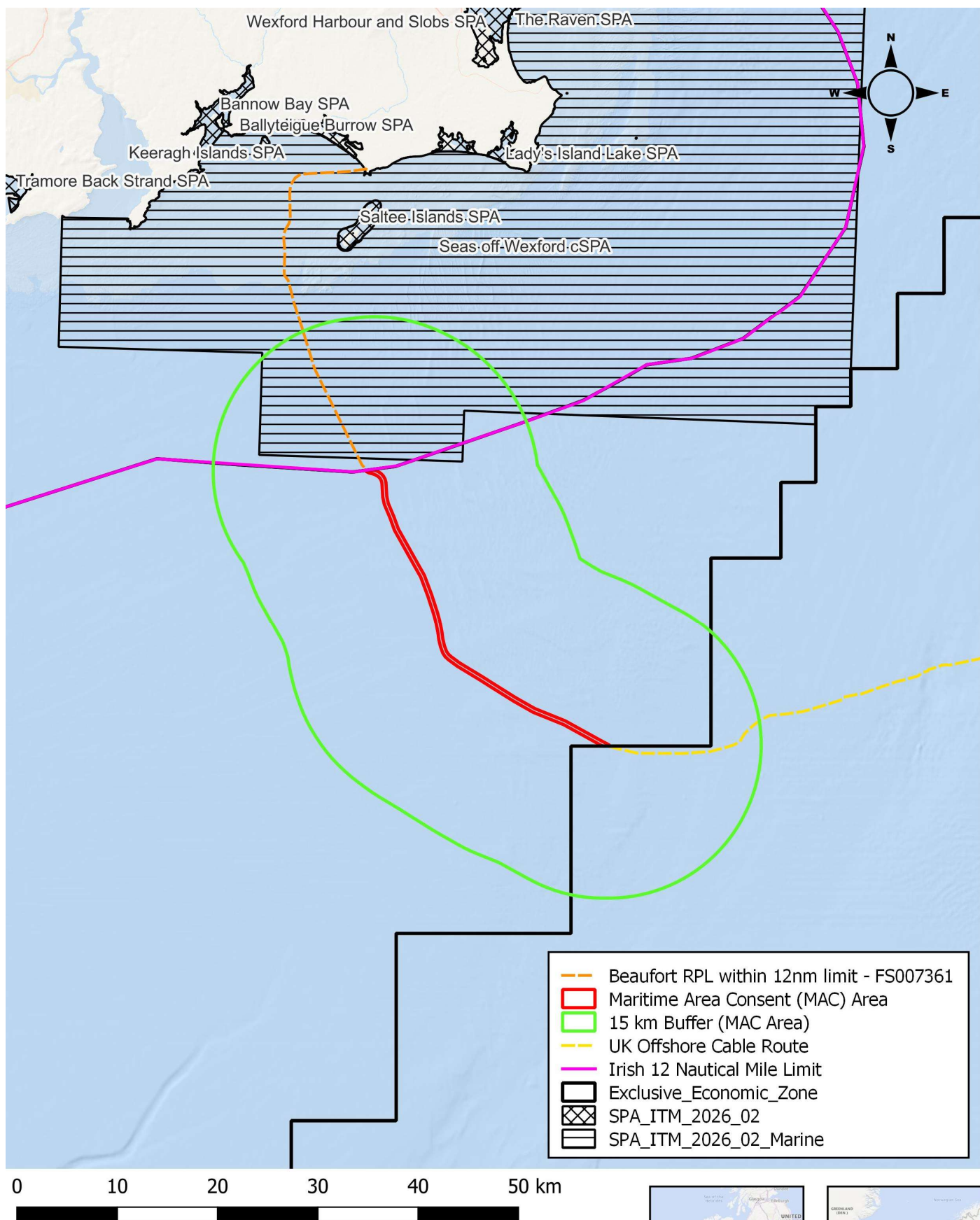
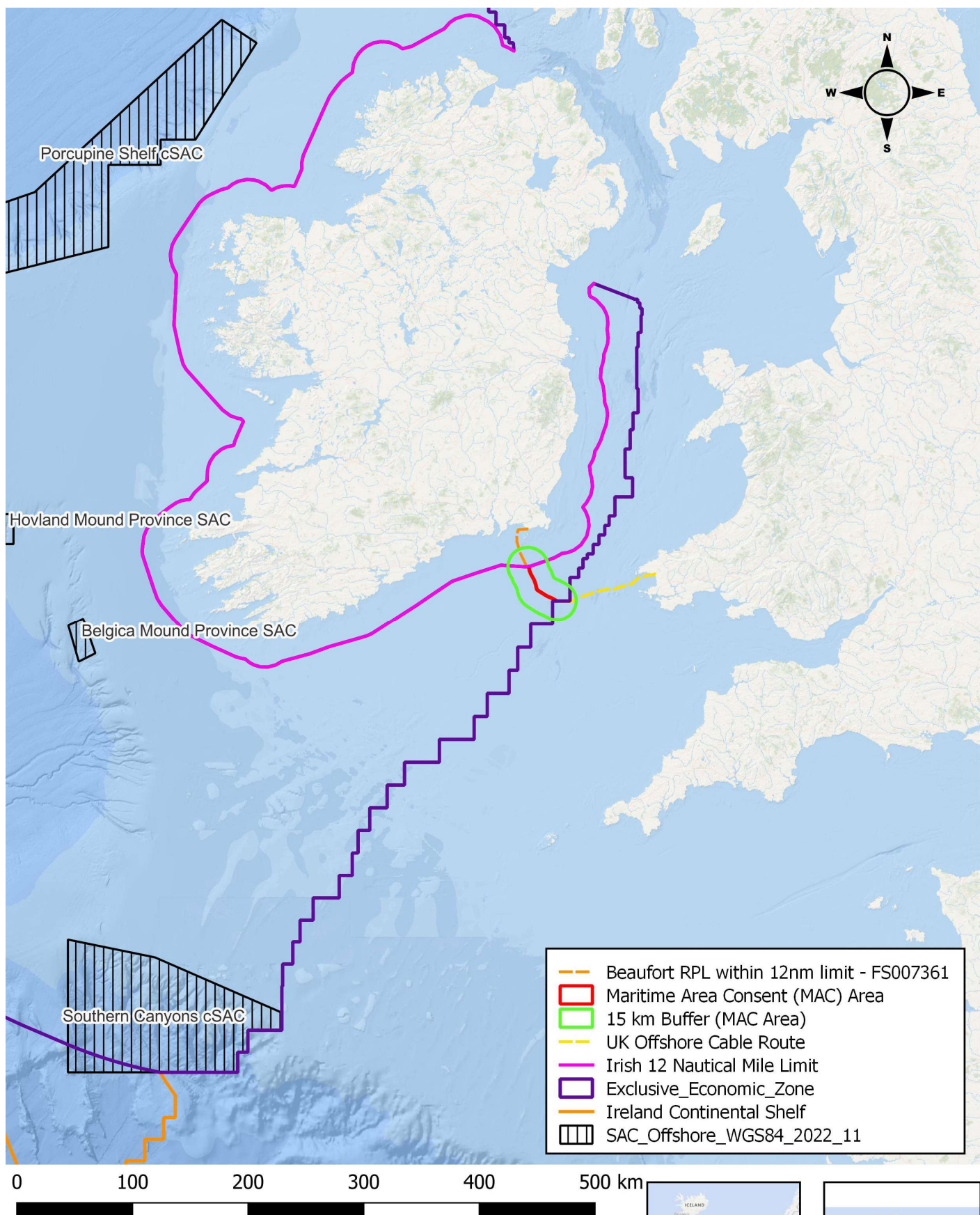


**Figure 18: Special Protection Areas (incl. Marine SPAs) within 15 km of the Offshore Beaufort Cable .**

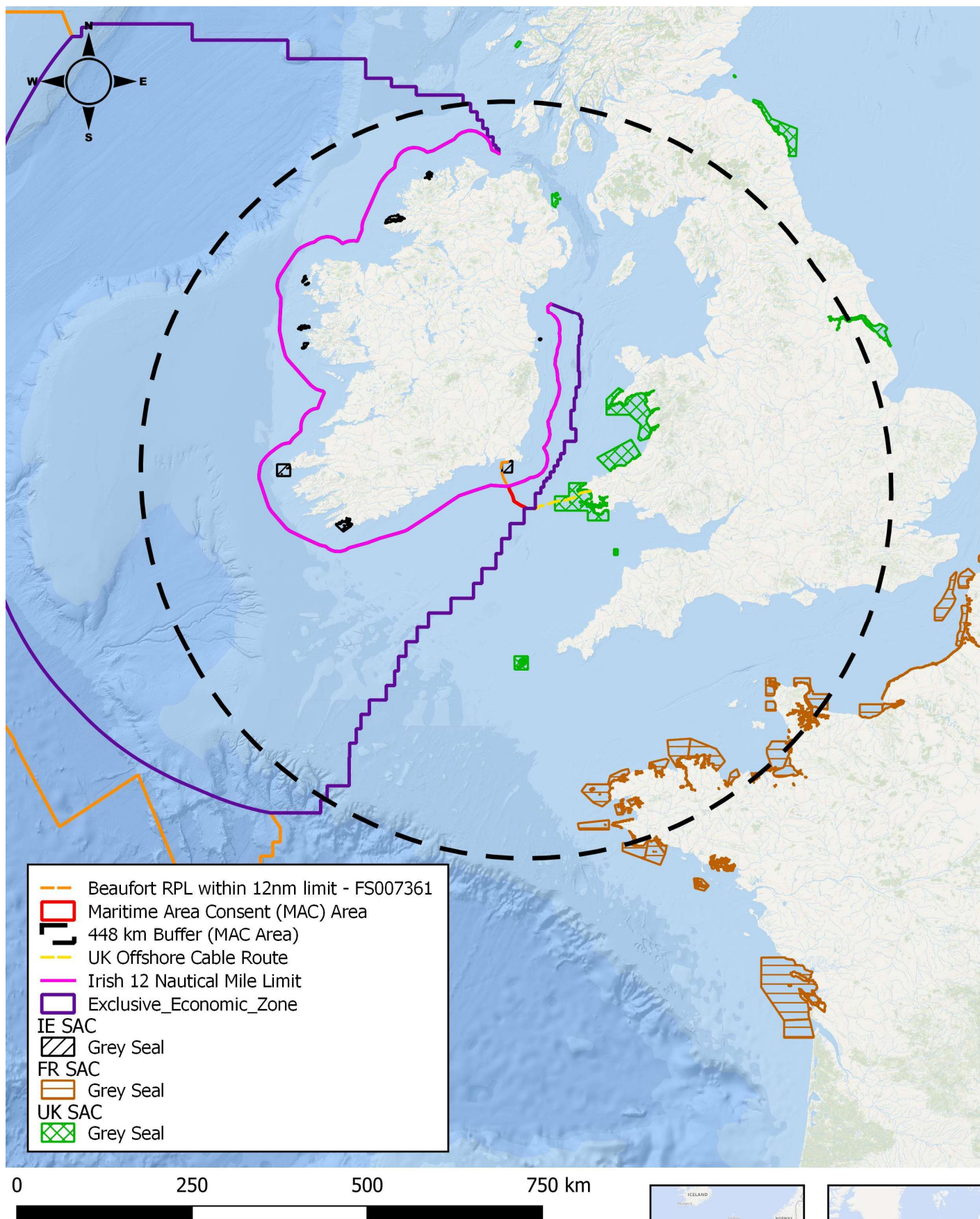


Project: Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable  
 Location: Celtic Sea  
 Date: 11th March 2026  
 Drawn By: Bryan Deegan (Altamar)

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**Figure 19:** Offshore Beaufort Cable Route in relation to the 12 nm limit, Designated Irish Continental shelf and Offshore SAC's (no offshore SAC's in the area).

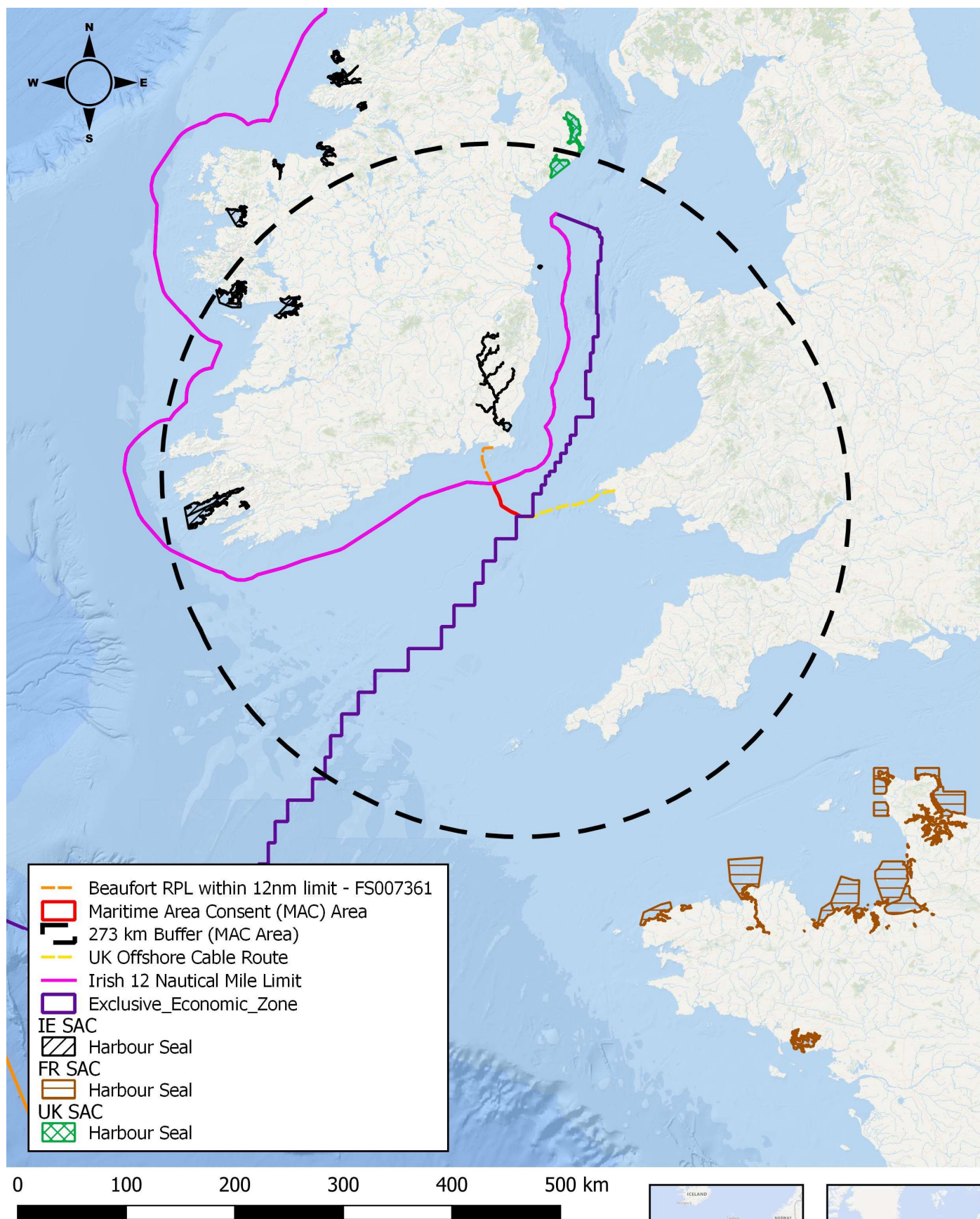


Project: Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable  
 Location: Celtic Sea  
 Date: 11th March 2026  
 Drawn By: Bryan Deegan (Altamar)

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**Figure 20:** IE, FR, & UK SACs designated for Grey Seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) within 448km of the Offshore Beaufort Cable Route



Project: Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable  
 Location: Celtic Sea  
 Date: 11th March 2026  
 Drawn By: Bryan Deegan (Altamar)

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**Figure 21:** IE, FR, & UK SACs designated for Harbour Seals (*Phoca vitulina*) within 273km of the Proposed Offshore Beaufort Cable Route

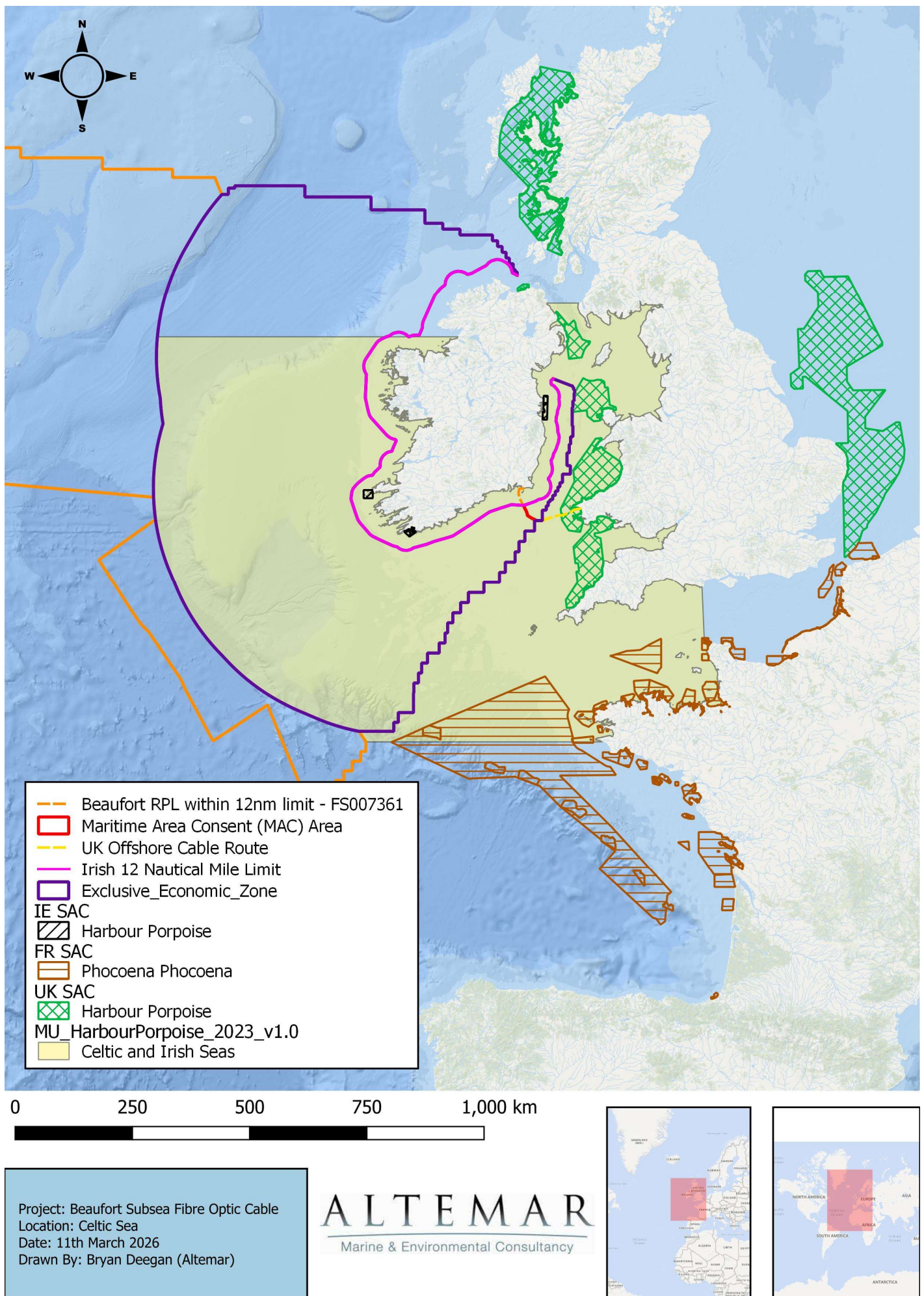
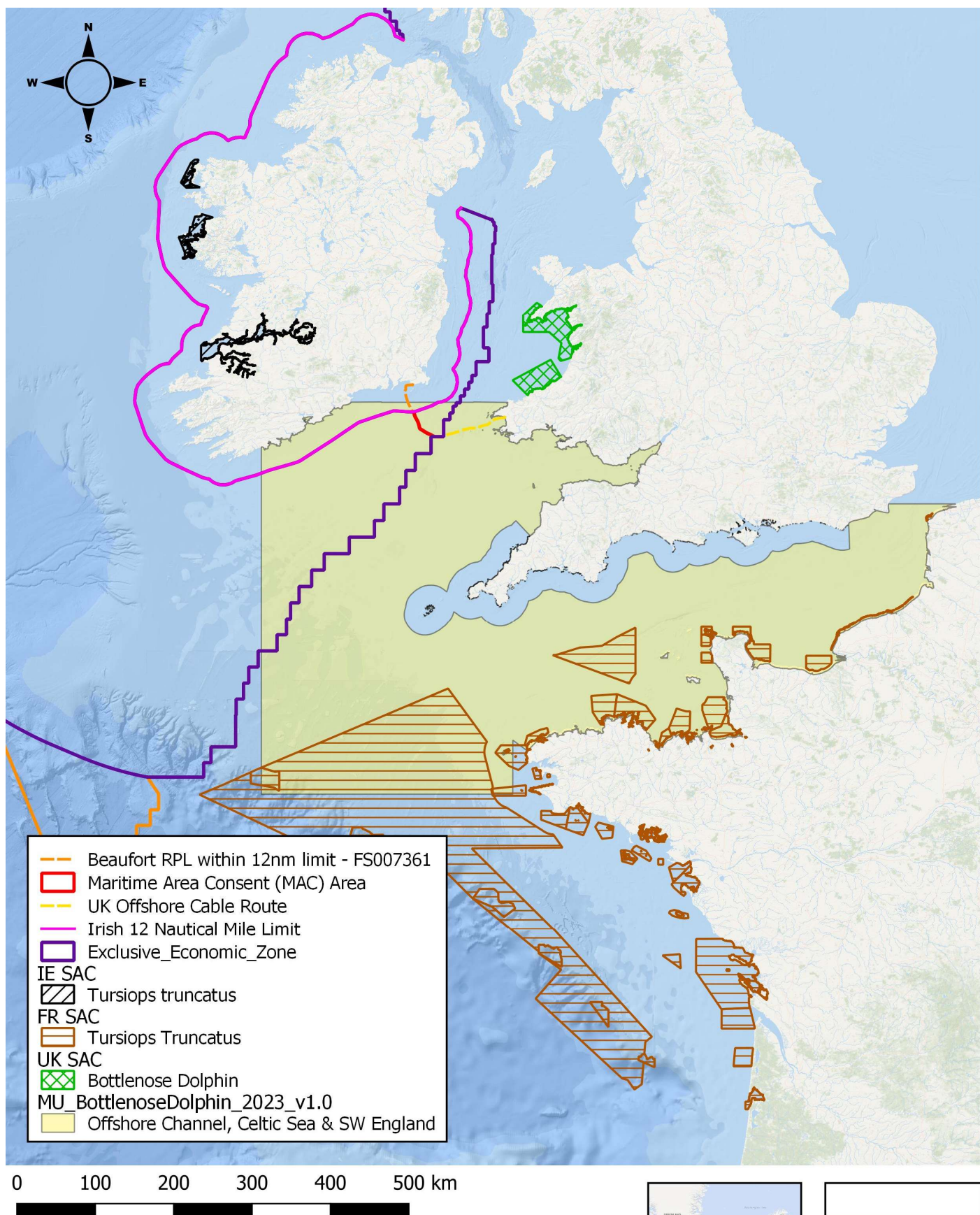


**Figure 22:** IE, FR, & UK SACs designated for Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) within the Celtic and Irish Seas MU for Harbour Porpoise



Project: Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable  
 Location: Celtic Sea  
 Date: 11th March 2026  
 Drawn By: Bryan Deegan (Altamar)

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**Figure 23:** IE, FR, & UK SACs designated for Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) within the Offshore Channel, Celtic Sea & SW England MU for Bottlenose Dolphin

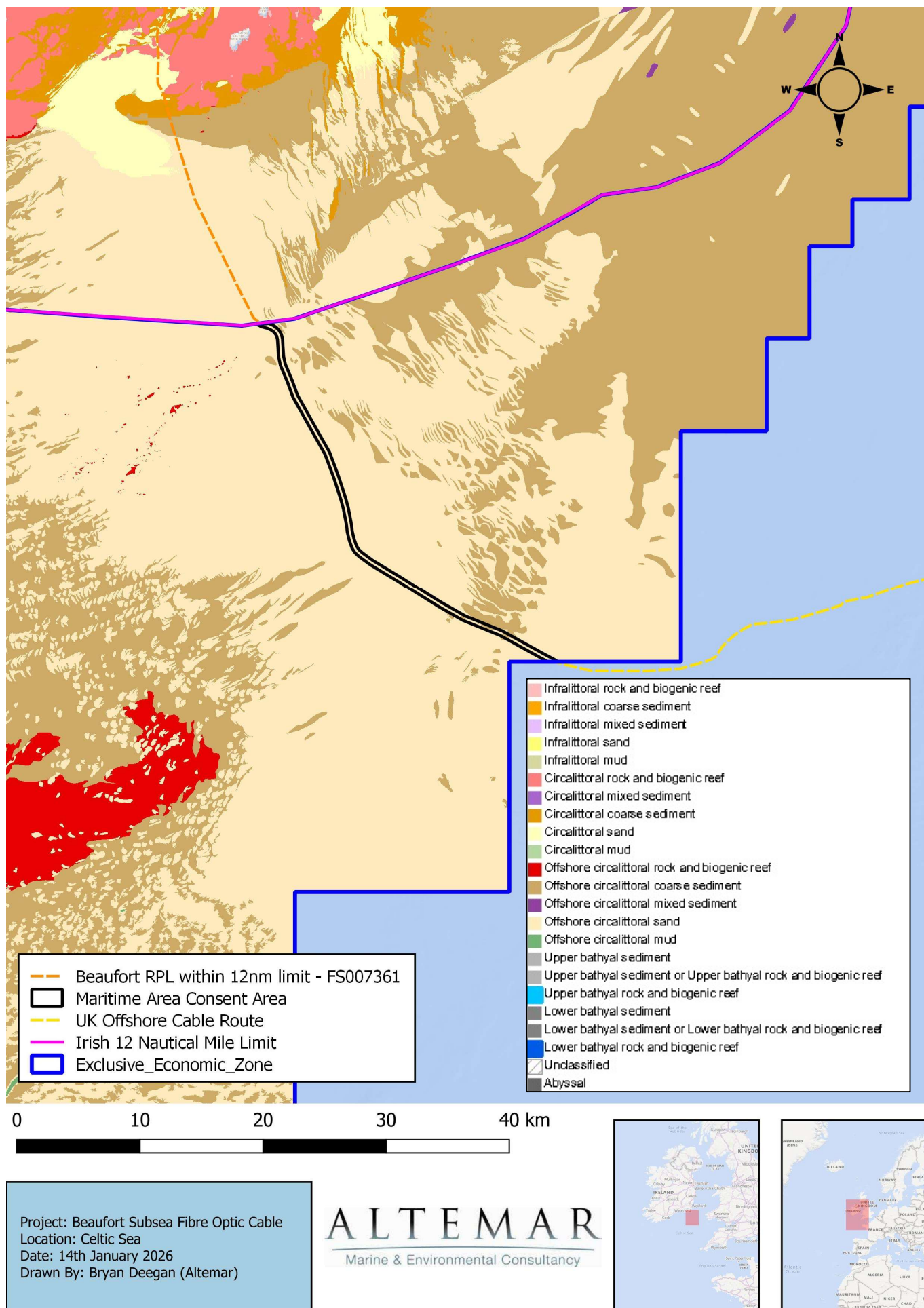


**Figure 24.** MSFD Benthic Boad Habitat Types along the Offshore Beaufort Cable Route (Primarily offshore circalittoral sand)

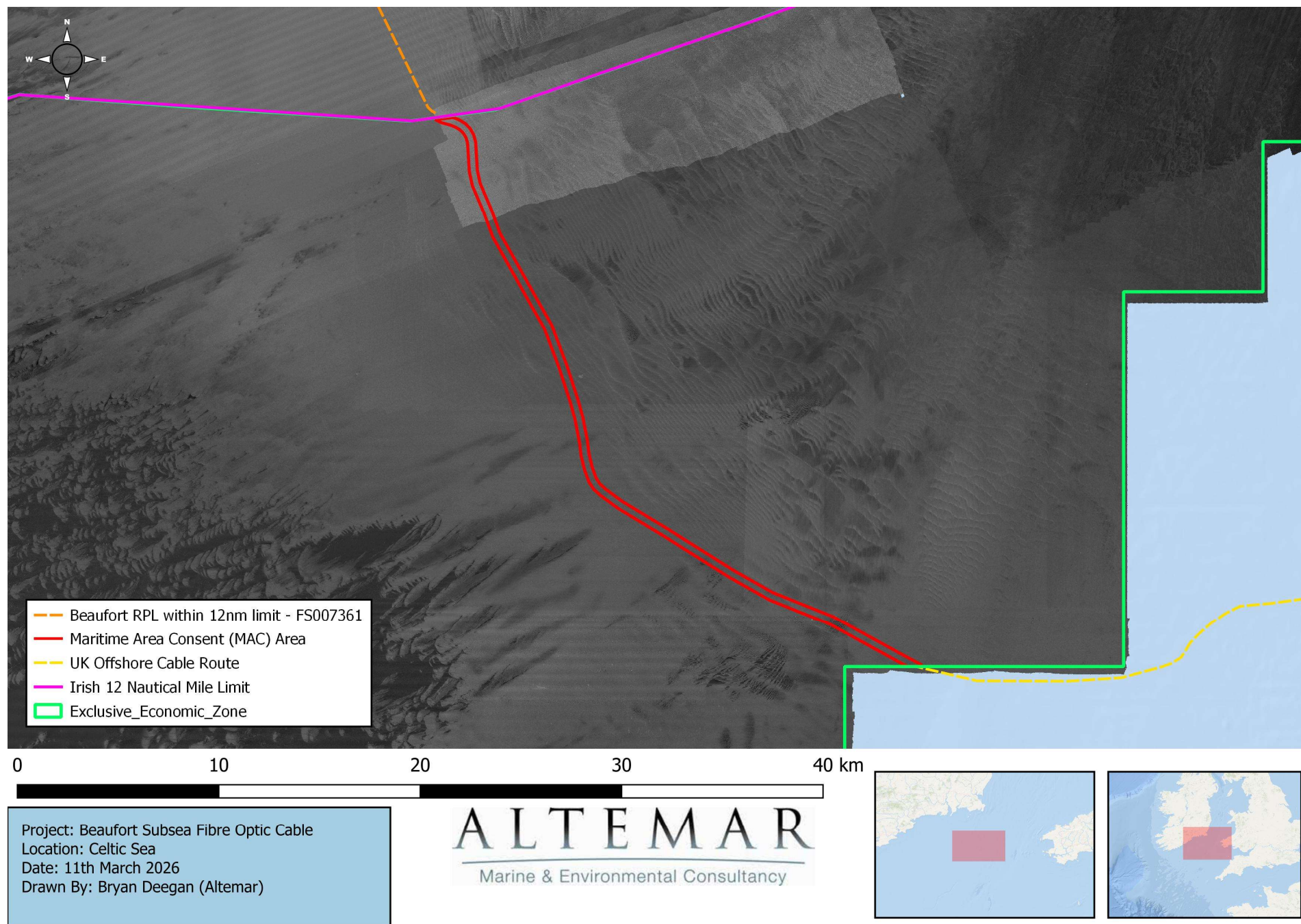


**Figure 25.** INFOMAR Backscatter along the Offshore Beaufort Cable Route

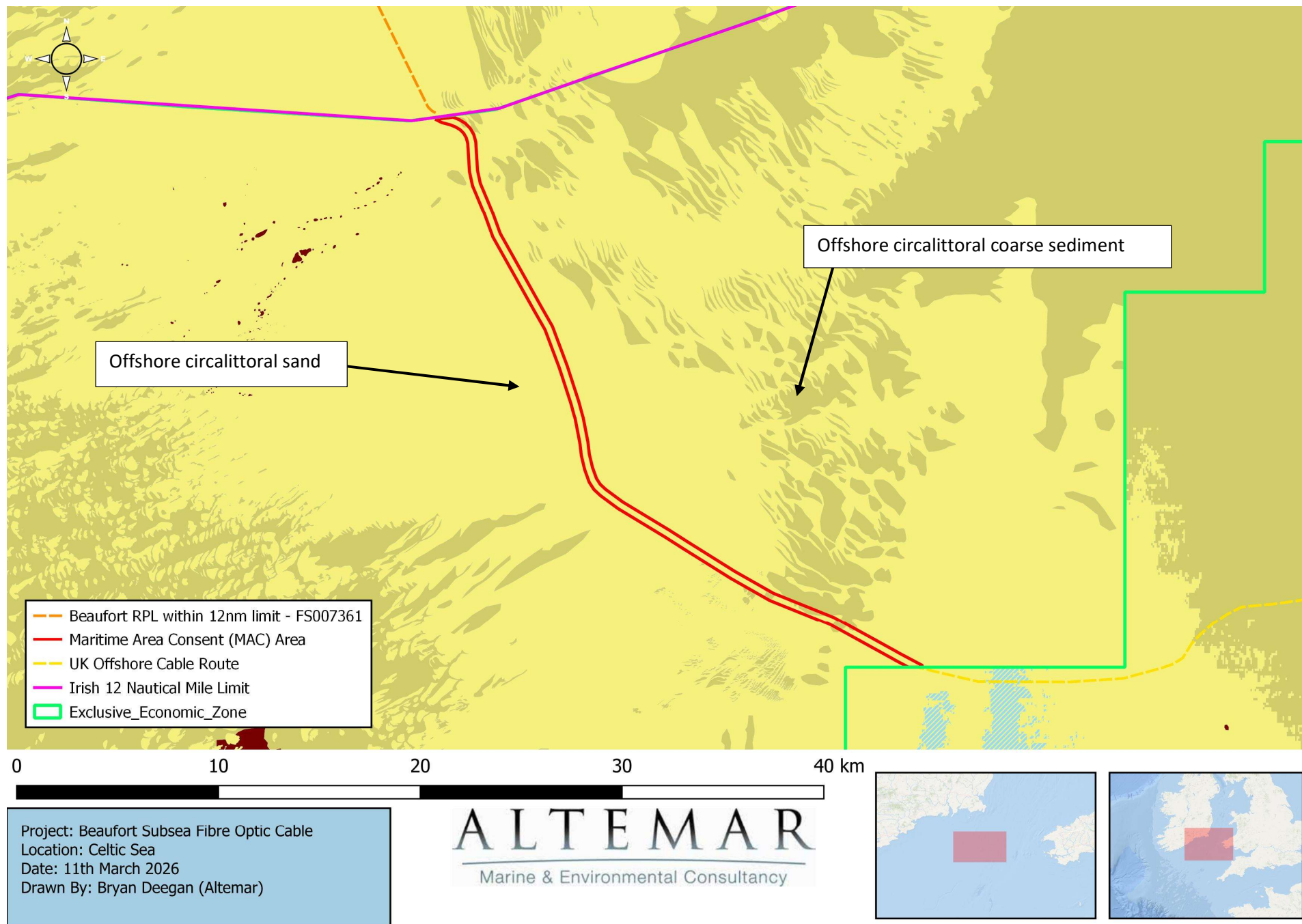


**Figure 26.** EUSeaMap (2025) Broad Scale Predictive Habitat Map along the Offshore Beaufort Cable Route

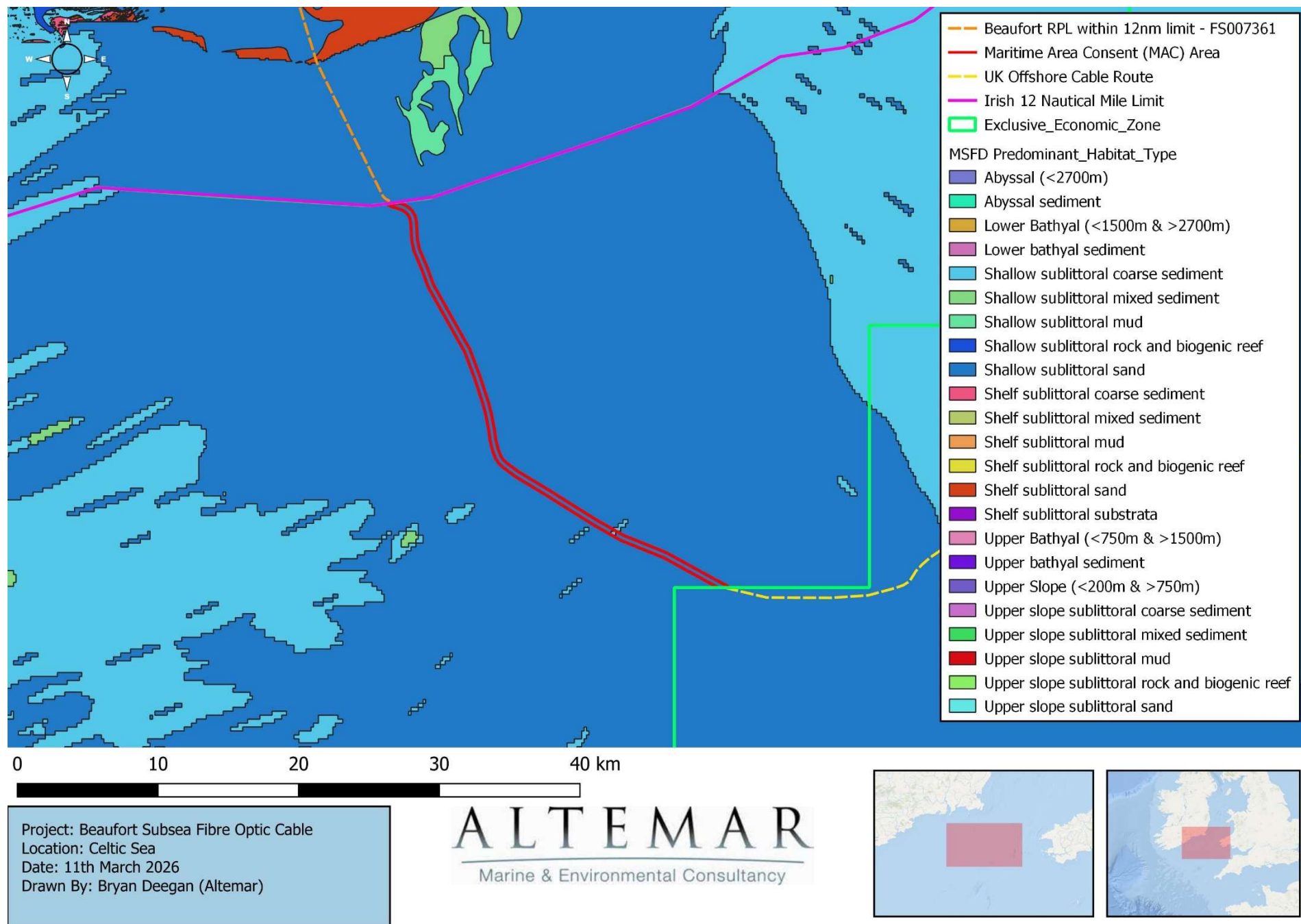


**Figure 27.** MSFD Predominant Habitat Types along the Offshore Beaufort Cable Route

## 4.5 In combination effects

As outlined by (OSPAR, 2012) “Cumulative effects, the combined effect of more than one activity, may reinforce the impacts of a single activity due to temporal and/or spatial overlaps”. The potential for in-combination effects within the ZOI that may occur as a result of the proposed project, during and post works has been assessed. The following cumulative impact assessment has been guided by the EC 2021 AA guidance document<sup>f</sup>, with particular reference to “Table 2. Cumulative impact assessment”.

### 4.5.1 Geographic Boundaries and the Timeline for Assessment

It should be noted that no terrestrial works are proposed on the Irish mainland as part of this application, which exclusively relates to the Beaufort Offshore Cable Route located between the 12 nautical mile limit and the Irish EEZ. The proposed cable installation works within the Irish EEZ associated with the proposed project are located exclusively in the offshore subtidal, approx. 29km from the Irish shoreline at its nearest point. The potential ZOI for in-combination effects for this assessment has been deemed to be projects located proximate to the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ, in addition to subtidal elements relating to underwater noise. The geographic boundaries of assessment were expanded to include coastal and offshore marine projects located proximate to the Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ.

MARA licencing in Ireland relates to licence applications out to the Irish EEZ limit. In order to assess the potential trans-boundary effects details of designated sites within UK waters were investigated. The cable routes within UK waters are subject to this UK permitting process and the potential impacts on designated sites are subject to a separate application process assessed by UK authorities. For the UK element of the proposed cable lay to proceed, it has to be approved by UK authorities and the reporting conclude that, following the implementation of appropriate mitigation, the proposed project would not adversely affect the integrity of UK designated sites, alone or in combination with other projects.

In relation to the timeline for assessment, given the short temporal nature of the proposed works, and the fact that the proposed works will be isolated to the cable route extents with potential for noise to extend beyond the cable route, the most recent projects located within the vicinity of the proposed works area have been examined for potential in-combination effects.

### 4.5.2 Identification of Plans/Projects that could act In Combination

Foreshore Applications, Maritime Area Consent (MAC) Applications, Maritime Usage Licence (MUL) Applications, EIA portal, and An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) Applications were examined for projects in proximity to the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable route. Projects within the potential ZOI of the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route are outlined in Tables 7-9. No projects of significance located within the ZOI of the proposed development were identified within the EIA portal / ACP Application search.

**Table 7.** Foreshore licence applications in vicinity of Beaufort Offshore Cable Route

| Reference       | Title                                                                    | Year | Location              | Activity                                 | Status        |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>FS007445</b> | Blackwater Offshore Wind – Marine Surveys                                | 2022 | Wexford               | Marine Surveys                           | Applied       |
| <b>FS007436</b> | Voyage Offshore Array Limited Site Investigations for proposed Wind Farm | 2022 | Waterford and Wexford | Site Investigations                      | Applied       |
| <b>FS007509</b> | Rosslare Europort Offshore Wind Hub Site Investigations                  | 2022 | Wexford               | Site Investigations                      | Determination |
| <b>FS007361</b> | Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable                                        | 2022 | Off Wexford Coast     | Installation of Subsea Fibre Optic Cable | Determination |
| <b>FS007318</b> | RWE Renewables Ireland East Celtic Ltd. Site Investigations              | 2022 | Wexford and Waterford | Site Investigations                      | Applied       |

<sup>f</sup> [Official Journal C 437/2021 \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1717/oj)

| Reference | Title                                                                                                    | Year | Location          | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Status        |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
|           | for proposed East Celtic Offshore Wind Park                                                              |      |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |               |
| FS007224  | Rosslare Europort Berth 3 Extension                                                                      | 2022 | Wexford           | Extension of Existing Berth 3                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Determination |
| FS007219  | Rosslare Europort Maintenance Dredging                                                                   | 2022 | Wexford           | Maintenance Dredging                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Determination |
| FS007038  | Lady's Island Pipeline                                                                                   | 2022 | Wexford           | Installation of 2 no. pipes and a flow control structure                                                                                                                                                                         | Determination |
| FS007351  | GDG Ltd. Deployment of 3 ADCP off the coast of Wicklow and Deployment of 1 ADCP off the coast of Wexford | 2021 | Wexford & Wicklow | Four Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) Trawl Resistant Bottom Mount (TRBM) units to be deployed on the seabed in the Irish Sea for a duration of 35 days to collect data on current speed and direction at each location. | Determination |
| FS007222  | Rosslare Europort Site Investigation                                                                     | 2021 | Wexford           | Site Investigation                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Determination |
| FS007050  | Greenlink Interconnector Wexford                                                                         | 2019 | Wexford           | Subsea and underground electricity interconnector cable                                                                                                                                                                          | Determination |
| FS006982  | Energia - Application for Site Investigation Licence for Windfarm off Helvick Head                       | 2019 | Waterford         | Site investigations for Offshore Wind Farm                                                                                                                                                                                       | Determination |
| FS007038  | Lady's Island Pipeline                                                                                   | 2021 | Wexford           | Installation of 2 no. pipes and a flow control structure                                                                                                                                                                         | Determination |

**Table 8. Maritime Area Consent (MAC) applications proximate to the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ (Accessed 15/03/2026)**

| Reference    | Year | Location                                         | Activity                                                                                                                                                                   | Status     |
|--------------|------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| MAC240057    | 2025 | Tonn Nua, off the coast of Co. Waterford         | The development of a 900 megawatt (MW) offshore windfarm                                                                                                                   | Applied    |
| MAC20240006  | 2025 | Courtown, Co. Wexford                            | The restoration of the north beach and construction of beach retaining coastal defence structures and the installation of a new marina and necessary supporting structures | Applied    |
| MAC20230005  | 2024 | Rosslare Europort, Co. Wexford.                  | Port Facilities to support the ORE Sector                                                                                                                                  | Determined |
| MAC240016    | 2025 | Duncannon, Co. Wexford and Crooke, Co. Waterford | Laying of a Fibre Optic Cable and auxiliary works                                                                                                                          | Applied    |
| MAC250029    | 2025 | Bray Head to Greystones North Beach, Co. Wicklow | Coastal Protection Works                                                                                                                                                   | Determined |
| MAC250031    | 2025 | Newcastle to Wicklow Murrough, Co. Wicklow       | Coastal Protection Works                                                                                                                                                   | Determined |
| MAC250030    | 2025 | Kilcoole to Newcastle, Co. Wicklow               | Coastal Protection Works                                                                                                                                                   | Determined |
| 2022-MAC-006 | 2024 | Off Wicklow Coast                                | Offshore Windfarm                                                                                                                                                          | Determined |
| 2022-MAC-002 | 2022 | Off Wicklow Coast                                | Offshore Windfarm                                                                                                                                                          | Determined |

**Table 9. Maritime Usage Licence (MUL) applications proximate to the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ (Accessed 15/03/2026)**

| Reference        | Year | Location                                               | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Status            |
|------------------|------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>LIC230033</b> | 2023 | Irish EEZ                                              | Proposed installation and operation of the 2Africa Submarine Cable System within the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The planned cable will extend from Widemouth Bay in Cornwall to a number of countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.                                                                                                                                     | Determined        |
| <b>MUL240036</b> | 2024 | South Coast of Ireland                                 | The maritime usage proposed is for marine site investigation (SI) works to inform the engineering design and environmental assessments for two offshore substations (OSS) in the Tonn Nua Area A (as identified in the South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan), potential offshore transmission cable corridors, approaches to seven potential landfall zones, and seven landfall zones. | Determination     |
| <b>LIC240006</b> | 2024 | Off the coasts of counties Wexford, Waterford and Cork | Deployment of the Marine Institute's R.V. to undertake a geophysical survey in the South Coast DMAP to inform future offshore renewable energy development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Determined        |
| <b>MUL250019</b> | 2025 | South Waterford - Maritime Area A – Tonn Nua           | The proposed site investigation (SI) works are activities required to characterise the physical, biological, and environmental conditions of Maritime Area A - Tonn Nua. The data collected will underpin project design, environmental assessment, and consenting, for any future offshore wind development within Maritime Area A – Tonn Nua                                              | Consultation Open |
| <b>MUL240026</b> | 2024 | South East Coast                                       | To conduct a strategic modelling study of water currents and bathymetry along the Southeast Coast of Ireland                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Minded To         |
| <b>MUL230026</b> | 2024 | Wicklow Port, Co. Wicklow                              | Maintenance dredging of the navigation channel, turning basin and berths within Wicklow Port.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Applied           |

**In addition to the above projects, the following plans and policies were reviewed and considered for possible in-combination effects with the Proposed Development:**

- The South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy (SC-DMAP)
- Project Ireland 2040: National Marine Planning Framework
- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework

#### 4.5.3 Impact Identification

The potential impacts of the proposed cable laying are Temporary (i.e. Effects lasting less than a year) and primarily to occur during the brief construction period (with the presence of boats, machinery and personnel in the vicinity of the works) as sediments redistribute over the cable. Impacts on infauna would be deemed to be temporary (i.e. Effects lasting less than a year). Maintenance works associated with the proposed project are Temporary in nature (i.e. Effects lasting less than a year) and will be isolated to specific areas along the cable route. In the event that the offshore cable is decommissioned, decommissioning works would be Temporary in nature (i.e. Effects lasting less than a year) and produce minor sediment dispersal that would diffuse and dilute within the expansive marine environment.

The proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route will cross the UK-IRL Crossing 1 and Hibernia Atlantic telecoms cables. The proposed Beaufort cable laying methodology has been designed to protect existing cables and thereby minimise any potential environmental impacts that may arise from the proposed works (see Section 4.2 for full details). In particular, the use of a CAPJET will ensure that the crossed cable will not be damaged and enable the burial of the Beaufort offshore cable at these crossings. The Beaufort Offshore Cable Route will also cross the Greenlink HVDC Interconnector cable, permitted and laid under **FS007050**. Similarly, the proposed Beaufort cable laying methodology has been designed to protect the Greenlink HVDC Interconnector cable through the pre-lay installation of articulated concrete mattresses at the crossing point (on which the Beaufort Cable will be laid) and construction of a rock berm over the Beaufort cable at this crossing point (see Section 4.2.1 for further details). As a result, the proposed Beaufort cable laying methodology has been designed to prevent any potential in-combination effects with existing subtidal cables within the Irish EEZ.

It is noted that there is potential for proposed plans and projects within the offshore subtidal waters between 12nm limit and Irish EEZ Boundary to have cumulative, negative impacts on marine mammals and seabirds via disturbance impacts. However, the core strategy, policies and objectives of the above SC-DMAP and Planning Frameworks have been developed to anticipate and avoid the need for developments that would be likely to significantly affect the integrity of any European site. Furthermore, such developments are required to conform to the relevant regulatory provisions and implement mitigation for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly affect the integrity of European sites. In addition, sustainable development is inherent in the objectives of all development plans within Irish waters in addition to compliance within the Habitats and Birds Directives.

#### 4.5.4 Pathway Identification

In the marine offshore subtidal of the Irish EEZ, there is a potential pathway for disturbance impacts to bird species protected as SCIs of Seas Off Wexford SPA and underwater noise to impact on marine mammals (protected as qualifying interests of proximate designated sites) through the use of main-lay equipment. As a result, given the nature and location of the proposed works, and out of an abundance of caution, it is considered that there is the potential for in-combination effects with the approved Beaufort Subsea Fibre Optic Cable project (**FS007361**), which entails the installation of Subsea Fibre Optic Cable from Kilmore Quay to the Irish 12 nautical mile limit, via noise and visual disturbance to marine mammals and protected seabirds.

There are no other projects, identified within the Foreshore Licence applications, EIA portal, ACP or MARA planning records, that have been granted planning or currently under construction, proximate to the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route within the Irish EEZ, that could potentially cause significant in combination effects on European sites via the identified pathways.

#### 4.5.5 Prediction

The proposed works would not be seen to have a significant impact on water quality of the area, including impacting the water quality status. A Natura Impact Statement was prepared by Altemar Ltd. to accompany the **FS007361** licence application. This report outlines mitigation measures to prevent significant disturbance impacts on marine mammals and seabirds. This report concludes with the following: *‘On the basis of the content of this report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct an Appropriate*

*Assessment and consider whether, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the sites conservation objectives, will adversely affect the integrity of the European site. **The proposed project will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site.*** Out of an abundance of caution, given the proximity of the proposed Beaufort Offshore Cable Route to the approved **FS007361** project, mitigation measures specific to marine mammals and protected seabirds are required to prevent in-combination effects.

Additionally, out of an abundance of caution, it is considered that there is the potential for in-combination effects with the UK element of the Beaufort subsea cable. Mitigation measures specific to marine mammals and protected seabirds are required to prevent in-combination effects.

Given the scale and the temporal nature of the proposed works, no significant in-combination effects with other identified plans or projects are foreseen. Any potential impacts from a pathway that the proposed project may share with other projects identified in Tables 7-9 are considered to be minimal, and no significant in-combination effects on designated conservation sites are foreseen.

#### 4.5.6 Assessment

Out of an abundance of caution, it is considered that, in the absence of mitigation measures, there is the potential for in-combination effects with the approved FS007361 project and UK element of the Beaufort subsea cable. All other projects outlined above are either completed or, are currently going through planning stages and are not expected to be carried out concurrently or are not at a scale or location where in combination effects are foreseen with the proposed project. This report pertains to the cable laying for a marine fibre optic cable in subtidal habitats. As can be seen from using the Best Available Techniques and mitigation measures during cable laying considerable effort has gone into minimising the potential environmental impact of the project. *“Generally all mitigation measures applied for individual cables also contribute to reduction of cumulative impacts”* (OSPAR, 2012). There is the potential for in-combination effects with FS007361 and UK element of the Beaufort subsea cable on protected marine mammals and seabirds if these projects are carried out concurrently.

## 5. Appropriate Assessment Screening Conclusions

An initial screening of the proposed works, using the precautionary principle (without the use of any mitigation measures) and Natura 2000 sites with the potential to result in significant effects on the conservation objectives and features of interest of the Natura 2000 sites was carried out in Table 6a-6c. Based on best scientific knowledge and objective information and assessment, the possibility of significant effects caused by the proposed project was excluded for the following Natura 2000 sites:

### **Special Protection Areas**

Ballyteige Burrow SPA

### **Special Areas of Conservation**

Hook Head SAC

Carnsore Point SAC

Ballyteige Burrow SAC

The project is limited in scale and extent. The potential zone of influence is restricted to the immediate vicinity of the Offshore Cable Route, with the exception of underwater noise that may extend beyond the works corridor to potentially impact on foraging marine mammals. The proposed works are located 1.1km from Seas Off Wexford SPA and 21 km from Saltee Islands SPA (Screened IN for potential disturbance impacts to seabird species). Further, it should be noted that the following Natura 2000 sites have been screened IN due to the potential movements of harbour porpoise, common bottlenose dolphin, harbour seals, and grey seals (qualifying interests of these SAC):

- Saltee Islands SAC (IE)
- Slaney River Valley SAC (IE)
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (IE)
- Lambay Island SAC (IE)
- Roaring Water Bay and Islands SAC (IE)
- Glengarriff Harbour and Woodland SAC (IE)
- Kenmare River SAC (IE)
- Galway Bay Complex SAC (IE)
- Kilkieran Bay And Islands SAC (IE)
- Blasket Islands SAC (IE)
- Slyne Head Islands SAC (IE)
- Inishbofin and Inishshark SAC (IE)
- Slieve Tooley / Tormore Island / Loughros Beg Bay SAC (IE)
- Duvillaun Islands SAC (IE)
- Inishkea Islands SAC (IE)
- Horn Head and Rinclevan SAC (IE)
- Pembrokeshire Marine / Sir Benfro Forol (UK)
- West Wales Marine / Gorllewin Cymru Forol (UK)
- Bristol Channel Approaches/Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren (UK)
- Cardigan Bay / Bae Ceredigion (UK)
- Lundy (UK)
- Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau (UK)
- North Anglesey Marine/Gogledd Môn Forol (UK)
- Isles of Scilly Complex (UK)
- Murlough (UK)
- North Channel (UK)
- The Maidens (UK)
- Humber Estuary (UK)

- Nord Bretagne DH (FR)
- Mers Celtiques – Talus du golfe de Gascogne (FR)
- Côte de Granit rose-Sept-Iles (FR)
- Abers – Côtes des légendes (FR)
- Trégor – Goëlo (FR)
- Baie de Morlaix (FR)
- Ouessant-Molène (FR)
- Anse de Goulven, dunes de Keremma (FR)
- Récifs et landes de la Hague (FR)
- Rivière Leguer, forêts de Beffou, Coat an Noz et Coat an Hay (FR)
- Anse de Vauville (FR)
- Banc et récifs de Surtainville (FR)
- Rade de Brest, estuaire de l'Aulne (FR)
- Côtes de Crozon (FR)
- Récifs et marais arrière-littoraux du Cap Lévi à la Pointe de Saire (FR)
- Chaussée de Sein (FR)
- Cap d'Erquy-Cap Fréhel (FR)
- Cap Sizun (FR)
- Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin – Baie des Veys (FR)
- Baie de Seine occidentale (FR)
- Baie de Saint-Brieuc - Est (FR)
- Récifs du talus du golfe de Gascogne (FR)
- Chausey (FR)
- Baie d'Audieme (FR)
- Littoral Ouest du Cotentin de Bréhal à Pirou (FR)
- Baie de Lancieux, Baie de l'Arguenon, Archipel de Saint Malo et Dinard (FR)
- Roches de Penmarch (FR)
- Côte de Cancale à Parmè (FR)
- Estuaire de la Rance (FR)
- Baie du Mont Saint-Michel (FR)
- Baie de Seine orientale (FR)
- Littoral Cauchois (FR)
- Falaises du Cran aux Oeufs et du Cap Gris-Nez, Dunes du Chatelet, Marais de Tardinghen et Dunes de Wissant (FR)

The distribution of these marine mammal species may bring them within the proximity of the subtidal works. Standard marine mammal mitigation measures will be in place (in compliance with NPWS guidance) and as a result it is required to go to NIS for these SACs.

Acting on a strictly precautionary basis, NIS is required in respect of the effects of the project on the Natura 2000 sites screened IN for NIS (potential disturbance effects in the absence of mitigation) because it cannot be excluded on the basis of best objective scientific information following screening, in the absence of control or mitigation measures that the plan or project, individually and/or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on the named European Site/s.

An NIS or Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required for the effects of the project on all other Natura sites because it can be excluded on the basis of the best objective scientific information following screening that the plan or project, individually and/or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on the European Site/s.

**A Stage 2 AA is required for the proposed project.**

## 6. Data Used for AA Screening

NPWS site synopses and Conservation objectives of sites within 15km and 30km were assessed. The most recent SAC and SPA boundary shapefiles were downloaded and overlaid on Bing road maps and satellite imagery.

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## Appendix I

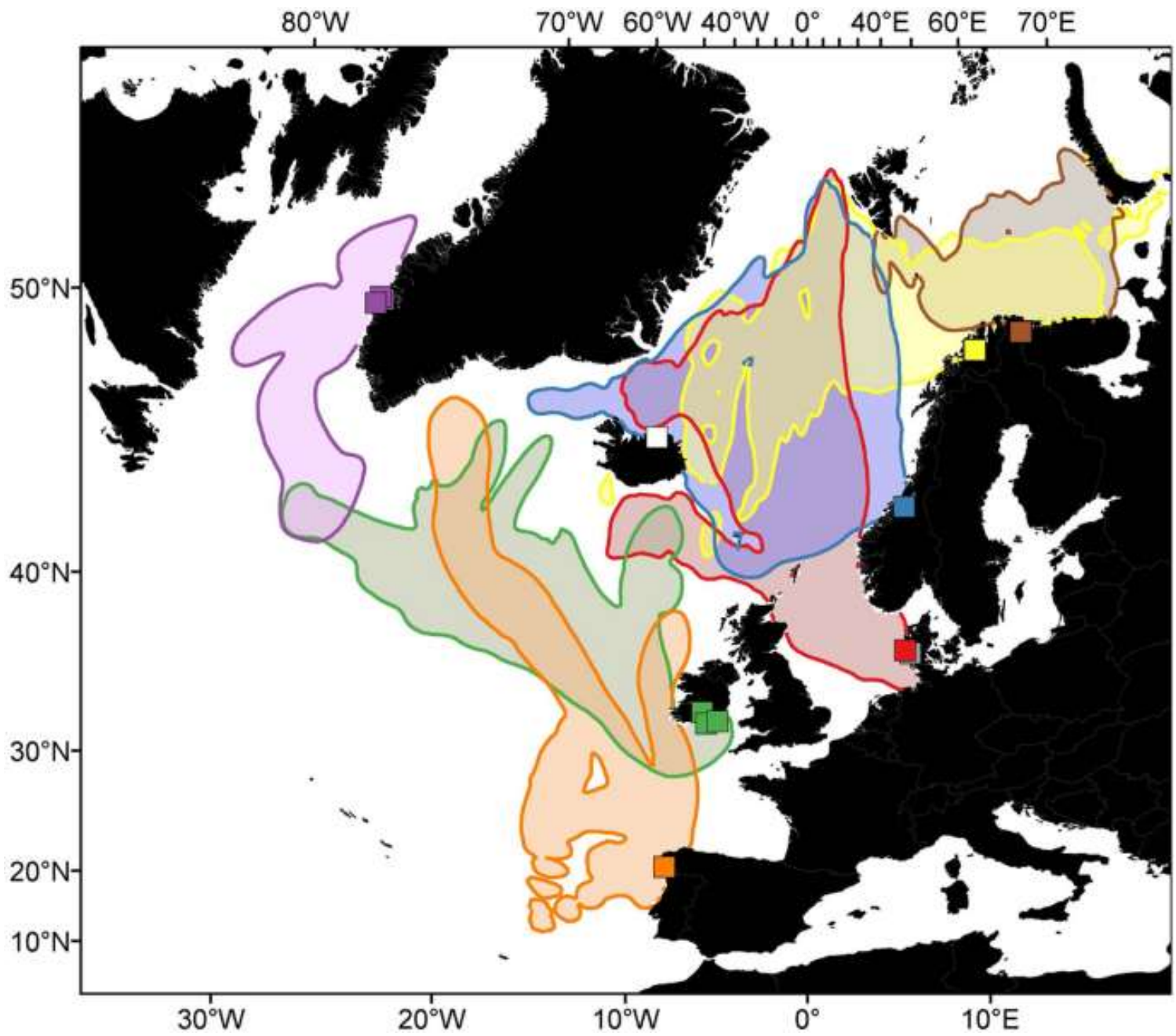


**Figure A.1.** Area use during the ocean migration of tagged Atlantic salmon (Ireland = Green) (Source: Rikardsen et al., 2021).