



Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Volume 2

Chapter 1 Introduction





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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term in Full
ABP	An Bord Pleanála
AC	Alternating current
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CO2	Carbon dioxide
CWP	Codling Wind Park
CWPE	Codling Wind Park Extension
CWPL	Codling Wind Park Limited
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
DECNR	Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DMAPs	Designated Maritime Area Plans
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
EDF	Électricité de France
EDF R	Électricité de France Renewables
EU	European Union
FORL	Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited
FOS	Fred. Olsen Seawind
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GW	Gigawatts
IAC	Inter-array cable
km	Kilometres
kV	Kilovolts
MAC	Maritime Area Consent
MAP	Maritime Area Planning
MARA	Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
MEC	Maximum export capacity
MW	Megawatts
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NTS	Non-Technical Summary
OECC	Offshore export cable corridor

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OfTI	Offshore transmission infrastructure
O&M	Operations and maintenance
OMB	Operations and maintenance base
OSS	Offshore substation structure
OTI	Onshore transmission infrastructure
OWF	Offshore wind farm
PDA	Planning and Development Act
TJB	Transition joint bay
WTG	Wind turbine generator



Definitions

Glossary	Meaning			
alternating current (AC)	A flow of electrical current which reaches maximum in one direction, decreases to zero, then reverses itself and reaches maximum in the opposite direction. The cycle is repeated continuously and the number of cycles per second is equal to the frequency. The Irish electrical system is an AC network that uses a frequency of 50 Hz.			
the Applicant	The developer, Codling Wind Park Limited (CWPL).			
array site	The area within which the wind turbine generators (WTGs), inter- array cables (IACs) and the offshore substation structures (OSSs) are proposed.			
Codling Wind Park (CWP) Project	The proposed development as a whole is referred to as the Codling Wind Park (CWP) Project, comprising the offshore infrastructure, the onshore infrastructure and any associated temporary works.			
Codling Wind Park Extension (CWPE) array site	In March 2009, Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited (FORL) applied for a Foreshore Lease for the Codling Wind Park Extension (CWPE), with an array site of a similar size to the original CWP array site, containing up to 200 additional WTGs with up to 1,000 MW generating capacity. The CWPE array site adjoined the original CWP array site and extended to what is now the southern portion of the current CWP array site.			
Codling Wind Park Limited (CWPL)	A joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind (FOS) and Électricité de France (EDF) Renewables, established to develop the CWP Project.			
EirGrid	State-owned electric power transmission system operator in Ireland and nominated Offshore Transmission Asset Owner			
ESB Networks	Owner of the electricity distribution system in the Republic of Ireland, responsible for carrying out maintenance, repairs and construction on the grid.			
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	A systematic means of assessing the likely significant effects of a proposed project, undertaken in accordance with the EIA Directive and the relevant Irish legislation.			
Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)	The report prepared by the Applicant to describe the findings of the EIA for the CWP Project.			
Future Framework Projects	The Future Framework is the long-term model for offshore renewable energy in Ireland. As with Phase 2 Projects, Future Framework Projects will be will be plan led and located in DMAPs. The Future Framework Projects will support delivery of the Government's target of 20 GW of offshore renewable energy by 2040 and at least 37 GW by 2050.			
generating station	Comprising the wind turbine generators (WTGs), inter array cables (IACs) and interconnector cables.			
high water mark (HWM)	The line of high water of ordinary or medium tides of the sea, tidal river or estuary.			

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inter-array cables (IACs)	The subsea electricity cables between each WTG and the OSSs.			
interconnector cables	The subsea electricity cables between OSSs.			
landfall	The point at which the offshore export cables are brought onshore and connected to the onshore export cables via the transition joint bays (TJB). For the CWP Project, the landfall works include the installation of offshore export cables within Dublin Bay out to approximately 4 km offshore, where water depths are too shallow for conventional cable lay vessels to operate.			
Maritime Area Consent (MAC)	A Maritime Area Consent (MAC) provides State authorisation for a prospective developer to undertake maritime usage and occupy a specified part of the maritime area. A MAC is required to be in place before planning consent can be sought.			
Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Act 2021	An Act to regulate the maritime area, to achieve such regulation by means of a National Marine Planning Framework, maritime area consents for the occupation of the maritime area for the purposes of maritime usages that will be undertaken for undefined or relatively long periods of time (including any such usages which also require development permission under the Planning and Development Act 2000), and licences for the occupation of the maritime area for maritime usages that are minor or that will be undertaken for relatively short periods of time.			
metocean	Meteorological and oceanographic data (for example metocean data or metocean conditions).			
offshore development area	The footprint of the offshore infrastructure and associated temporary works, including the array site and the offshore export cable corridor (OECC).			
offshore export cables	The cables which transport electricity generated by the wind turbine generators (WTGs) from the offshore substation structures (OSSs) to the TJBs at the landfall.			
offshore export cable corridor (OECC)	The area between the array site and the landfall, within which the offshore export cables will be installed along with cable protection and other temporary infrastructure for construction.			
offshore infrastructure	The permanent offshore infrastructure, comprising of the WTGs, IACs, OSSs, interconnector cables, offshore export cables and other associated infrastructure such as cable and scour protection.			
offshore substation structure (OSS)	A fixed structure located within the array site, containing electrical equipment to aggregate the power from the WTGs and convert it into a more suitable form for export to shore.			
OSS topside	The offshore substation topside structure resting on the OSS monopile foundation and housing all electrical and ancillary equipment.			
OSS monopile foundation	The bottom fixed structure piled into the seabed supporting the OSS topside.			
offshore transmission infrastructure (OfTI)	The offshore transmission assets comprising the OSSs and offshore export cables. The EIAR considers both permanent and temporary works associated with the OfTI.			

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onshore development area	The entire footprint of the onshore transmission infrastructure (OTI) and associated temporary works that will form the onshore boundary for the planning application.
onshore transmission infrastructure (OTI)	The onshore transmission assets, comprising the TJBs, onshore export cables and the onshore substation. The EIAR considers both permanent and temporary works associated with the OTI.
onshore substation	Site containing electrical equipment to enable connection to the national grid.
operations and maintenance (O&M) activities	Activities (e.g., monitoring, inspections, reactive repairs, planned maintenance) undertaken during the O&M phase of the CWP Project.
original CWP array site	In November 2005, FORL was awarded a Foreshore Lease under the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended for the installation of up to 220 WTGs within the original CWP array site with a generating capacity of up to 1,100 MW and associated infrastructure. The Original CWP array site was in the northern portion of the current CWP array site.
O&M phase	This is the period of time during which the CWP project will be operated and maintained.
Phase 1 Project	On 19 May 2020, the Irish Government announced that six offshore renewable energy projects had been designated as Relevant Projects, namely Oriel Wind Park, Arklow Bank II, Dublin Array, North Irish Sea Array, Codling Wind Park and Sceirde Rocks. These projects are now known as Phase 1 Projects and are expected to deliver a significant proportion of the 5 GW target in the Climate Action Plan (CAP).
Phase 2 Project	Phase 2 aims to procure the remainder of Ireland's 5 GW capacity target by 2030 through further competitive auctions, with Phase 2 Projects to be plan led and located within marine zones designated as suitable for offshore wind development, known as DMAPs.
planning application boundary	The area subject to the application for development consent, including all permanent and temporary works for the CWP Project.
transition joint bay (TJB)	This is required as part of the OTI and is located at the landfall. It is an underground bay housing a joint which connects the offshore and onshore export cables.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

- 1. Codling Wind Park Limited (CWPL) (hereafter 'the Applicant') is proposing to develop the Codling Wind Park (CWP) Project, a proposed offshore wind farm (OWF) located in the Irish Sea approximately 13–22 km off the east coast of Ireland, at County Wicklow.
- 2. The CWP Project has an expected generating capacity of 1,300 megawatts (MW), and comprises the following main components:
 - The Generating Station, which comprises the wind turbine generators (WTGs), inter-array cables (IACs) and interconnector cables;
 - The offshore transmission infrastructure (OfTI) which comprises the offshore substation structures (OSSs) and offshore export cables;
 - The landfall, which describes the point at which the offshore export cables are brought onshore and connected at transition joint bays (TJBs) to the onshore export cables. For the CWP Project, the landfall works include the installation of the offshore export cables within Dublin Bay out to approximately 4 km offshore, where water depths are too shallow for conventional cable lay vessels to operate; and
 - The onshore transmission infrastructure (OTI), which comprises the onshore export cables, the onshore substation and associated infrastructure.
- 3. A ten year planning permission is sought, with an operation lifetime of 25 years. The 25 year operational lifetime shall commence on full commercial operation of the project.
- 4. The planning application boundary for the CWP Project is provided in **Figure 1-1**. This includes the entire footprint of the Generating Station, OfTI and OTI, and the associated temporary works for which planning consent is being sought. The boundary between the offshore development area and the onshore development area is defined by the highwater mark (HWM).
- 5. To ensure the safety of marine users during the construction phase of the CWP Project, the Applicant will deploy temporary demarcation buoys around the perimeter of the array site in a maritime safety demarcation area (MSDA). This temporary buoyage will indicate a safe direction of navigation to all marine users in the area. No permanent infrastructure will be installed in the MSDA. The planning application boundary also accounts for the MSDA around the array site.
- 6. **Figure 1-1** is supported by **Figure 1-2**, showing the array site and MSDA, and **Figure 1-3** which highlights the extent of the onshore development area, located on Poolbeg Peninsula to the east of Dublin city centre.







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1.1.1 Purpose of this chapter

- 7. This chapter introduces the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the CWP Project, submitted in support of the Applicant's request for planning permission for all components of the CWP Project under Section 291 of the Planning and Development Act (PDA) 2000, as amended.
- 8. The purpose of the EIAR is to provide the consenting authority (An Bord Pleanála (ABP)), relevant stakeholders and all interested parties with the environmental information required to develop an informed view of any likely significant effects on the environment resulting from the development. This EIAR has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Directive'), which is transposed into Irish legislation by the PDA and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.
- 9. Further detail on the legislative context for the CWP Project is provided in EIAR **Chapter 2 Policy and Legislative Context**.
- 10. This EIAR describes the potential environmental effects of the CWP Project's offshore and onshore infrastructure during the construction, operation and maintenance (O&M) and decommissioning phases.
- 11. An Operations and Maintenance Base (OMB) is the preferred operation and maintenance solution, which will enable the safe operation and maintenance of the CWP Project over its expected 25-year operational lifetime. An alternative O&M solution to an OMB may involve the use of a Service Operations Vessel, which would enable OWF technicians to remain offshore without going back and forth on a daily basis from a shore-based OMB.
- 12. If and when a final decision is made to progress with an OMB, the Applicant will apply for planning permission for the OMB separately, under Section 34 of the PDA.

1.2 The Applicant

- 13. The CWP Project is being developed as a joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind and Électricité de France Renewables (EDF R).
- 14. Fred. Olsen Seawind is a dedicated offshore wind-farm developer, building on Fred. Olsen-related companies' long experience within renewable energy and on Fred. Olsen Renewables' 25 years of wind development experience and expertise. This now includes 12 wind farms with over 300 turbines in UK, Norway and Sweden. The wind-energy production in 2022 from the wind farms corresponds to a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction of an estimated 900,000 tonnes CO2 equivalent.
- 15. EDF R is one of the UK and Ireland's leading renewable energy companies, specialising in wind power, solar and battery storage technology. EDF R develops, builds, operates and maintains renewable technologies throughout their lifetime and has an operational portfolio of 38 wind farms, including two OWFs in the UK and five onshore wind farms in Ireland.

1.3 Project background

- 16. The historical background of the CWP Project provides important context for this EIAR. A short summary of this is provided below, with further detail included in EIAR **Chapter 3 Site Selection and Alternatives.**
- 17. The CWP Project was first initiated by Fred. Olsen Renewables Ltd (FORL) in 1999 with the initial aim of identifying a suitable location for the array site. This led to the identification of the current CWP

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Project array site; however, the scale of the site was considered too large to be developed in a single phase. A decision was taken by FORL to make a foreshore lease application for the northern part of the site, now referred to as the original CWP array site, with the opportunity to apply for the development of the southern part of the site, now referred to as the CWP Extension, at a later stage.

- 18. In November 2005, FORL was awarded a Foreshore Lease under the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended for the installation of up to 220 WTGs within the original CWP array site, with a generating capacity of up to 1,100 MW.
- 19. In March 2009, FORL applied for a Foreshore Lease for the Codling Wind Park Extension (CWPE), a similar-sized array site containing up to 200 additional WTGs with up to 1,000 MW capacity. The proposed CWPE array adjoined the original CWP array site and extended to the south; however, due to the lack of a viable route to market for OWF projects and grid connection delays, the application for the CWPE was not taken forward.
- 20. In 2019, the Irish Government published its Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2019, setting out the ambition of delivering 70% of Ireland's electricity from renewable sources by 2030, including at least 3.5 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind capacity by 2030.¹ Plans were also set out for a new consenting system for the maritime area, in the form of the now-established Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Act 2021. This provided a platform to reinitiate the CWP Project.
- 21. Although initially proposed as two projects, significant advances in WTG technology, combined with considerable reductions in the cost of energy from offshore wind, mean that the original CWP project and CWPE can now be developed as one project with a greatly reduced number of WTGs, while optimising renewable electricity production from the site.
- 22. The CWP Project that is the subject of this EIAR now consists of a single array site with up to 75 WTGs (dependent on the chosen WTG model), with an expected capacity of 1,300 MW. Once operational, the CWP Project will have the potential to generate renewable power for over one million Irish homes.
- 23. Electricity will flow from the WTGs via the IACs to the OSSs. At the OSSs, the generated power will be transformed to a higher alternating current (AC) voltage. The power will be exported through three export cable circuits to a landfall at Poolbeg Peninsula. At the landfall location, three TJBs will be installed to join the offshore export cables with the onshore export cables.
- 24. The onshore export cables will then be routed north, approximately 0.7 km across Poolbeg Peninsula to an onshore substation located on the northern bank of Poolbeg Peninsula. Finally, three ESBN Network cable circuits will connect the onshore substation to the existing Poolbeg 220 kilovolt (kV) Substation, which will then transfer the electricity onwards to the Irish National Grid.
- 25. A full description of the CWP Project is provided in **Chapter 4 Project Description**.

1.4 Maritime Area Consent

- 26. The MAP Act 2021 established a new Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA). MARA has taken over responsibility from the Minister for the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) for the issuing of licences for maritime usages, including conducting surveys in the marine environment. MARA also has the power to grant Maritime Area Consents (MACs).
- 27. The MAC process provides for a new 'State consent' to allow the occupation of a specified part of the maritime area.

¹ These targets have since been updated, with CAP 2023 setting out the Irish Government's intention to meet up to 80% of electricity consumption from renewable power by 2030, including 5 gigawatt (GW) of installed, fixed bottom offshore wind capacity. This plan is the first to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.



- 28. Prior to the establishment of MARA, the Minister for the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) invited applications for a MAC from 'Phase 1 Projects'. Phase 1 Projects are OWF projects that either applied for or were granted a lease under the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended or were eligible to be processed to receive a valid grid connection offer in December 2019.
- 29. The CWP Project was designated as a Phase 1 Project by virtue of its existing Foreshore Lease for the original CWP array site and the Foreshore Lease application for the CWPE. This enabled the Applicant to apply to the Minister for the DECC for a MAC for the CWP Project in June 2022.
- 30. In December 2022 a MAC was granted for the CWP Project, conditional on securing planning permission from ABP (MAC reference 2022-MAC-006). Subsequent amendments were made to the MAC boundary to include additional areas to facilitate the construction of the onshore substation and the deployment of temporary demarcation buoys within a maritime safety demarcation area around the array site during the construction of the offshore wind farm.

1.5 Need for the CWP Project

- 31. Climate change is a global issue and one of the main challenges of our time. This is recognised in the Irish Government's Climate Action Plan (CAP) (as published in 2019 and updated in 2021, 2023 and 2024), which makes reference to unequivocal evidence that human influence has warmed the climate at a rate that is unprecedented in the last 2,000 years.
- 32. The Irish Government has committed, through the CAP, as updated in 2024, to a target of 80% of electricity demand from renewable energy by 2030. This is supported by a commitment set out in the 2020 Programme for Government to achieve 5 GW of electricity from offshore wind by 2030 (Department of the Taoiseach, 2020), which shall be delivered by the Phase 1 and some early Phase 2 OWF projects².
- 33. With an expected capacity of 1,300 MW, the CWP Project is the largest of the Phase 1 Projects, with potential to provide approximately 26% of the targeted 5 GW of offshore wind by 2030. The use of existing, proven technology and good geographic access for grid connection enables the CWP Project to play a crucial role in delivering this target, alongside other Phase 1 Projects.
- 34. The generation of renewable energy over the anticipated 25-year operation lifetime of the CWP Project will also help reduce Ireland's reliance on imported energy and improve energy security. This is a key objective set out within the White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015–2030' (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DECNR), 2020), which states that the ability to attract and retain investment and build Irish enterprise depends on Ireland's ability to guarantee a reliable supply of energy, at competitive cost.

1.6 The EIA process

- 35. The projects which require EIA are listed in Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive. In transposing Annex II of the EIA Directive into Irish Legislation, Schedule 5 (Part 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets mandatory thresholds for each project class.
- 36. The CWP Project is subject to the EIA process as it falls within the project class definitions specified in Schedule 5 (Part 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended. Specifically, Part 2 Category 3(i) states that EIA is required for the following project type:

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² Phase 2 Projects refer to other offshore wind energy projects that the Irish Government is seeking to have built before 2030. These will bridge the gap between whatever is delivered in Phase 1 and the five GW target in the CAP.



"Installations for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (wind farms) with more than 5 turbines or having a total output greater than 5 megawatts".

- 37. The overall objective of the EIA process is to identify, assess and describe the potential direct and indirect significant effects resulting from a project on the environment. Where potentially significant adverse effects on the environment are identified, appropriate measures to avoid, reduce, and if necessary, offset these effects are prescribed.
- 38. The findings from the EIA process for the CWP Project are reported within this EIAR, submitted to support the application for planning permission.
- 39. The principal elements of the EIA process and the assessment methodology that has been applied to the development of the EIAR are detailed in EIAR **Chapter 5 EIA Methodology**, with reference to relevant EIA guidance.

1.7 Structure and content of the EIAR

40. This EIAR covers both the offshore and onshore development areas. It comprises five volumes:

- Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary (NTS);
- Volume 2: Introductory Chapters;
- Volume 3: Topic Chapters;
- Volume 4: Appendices; and
- Volume 5: Summary Chapters
- 41. A summary of the EIAR volumes is outlined in **Table 1-1**.

Table 1-1 Structure and content of the EIAR

Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary

This document provides an overview and summary of the EIAR using non-technical language. It is a standalone document and is intended to offer a clear and concise summary of the EIAR.

Volume 2 – Introductory Chapters		
Chapter 1	Introduction	
Chapter 2	Policy and Legislative Context	
Chapter 3	Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives	
Chapter 4	Project Description	
Chapter 5	EIA Methodology	
Volume 3 – Topic Chapters		
Chapter 6	Marine Geology, Sediments and Coastal Processes	
Chapter 7	Marine Water Quality	
Chapter 8	Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology	
Chapter 9	Fish, Shellfish and Turtle Ecology	
Chapter 10	Ornithology	



Chapter	Title	
Chapter 11	Marine Mammals	
Chapter 12	Commercial Fisheries	
Chapter 13	Offshore Bats	
Chapter 14	Marine Archaeology & Cultural Heritage	
Chapter 15	Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts	
Chapter 16	Shipping and Navigation	
Chapter 17	Aviation, Military and Radar	
Chapter 18	Material Assets: Marine Infrastructure	
Chapter 19	Land Soils and Geology	
Chapter 20	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	
Chapter 21	Onshore Biodiversity	
Chapter 22	Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage	
Chapter 23	Landscape and Visual Impacts	
Chapter 24	Noise and Vibration	
Chapter 25	Air Quality	
Chapter 26	Material Assets - Built Services	
Chapter 27	Traffic and Transport	
Chapter 28	Climate: Carbon Balance Assessment	
Chapter 29	Population	
Chapter 30	Human Health	
Chapter 31	Waste & Resource Management	
Chapter 32	Risk and Major Accidents and Disasters	
Volume 4 – Appendices Contains the technical appendices to support the topic chapters (Chapters 6–32).		

Volume 5 – Summary Chapters	
Chapter 35	Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring
Chapter 36	Summary of Residual Effects

1.8 The Applicant's team and contributors to the EIAR

- 42. An experienced team of specialist EIA and environmental professionals have contributed to the preparation of this EIAR.
- 43. An overview of the team of competent experts, including details of professional qualifications, is provided in **Appendix 1.1**.

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44. Additionally, A&L Goodbody LLP has provided legal advice throughout the preparation of the EIAR and the application process, alongside planning advice from MacCabe Durney Barnes.

1.9 Supporting information

- 45. Alongside the EIAR, the following information has been prepared in support of the planning application for the CWP Project:
 - Planning Documents
 - Planning Drawings
 - Planning Report
 - Planning Report Appendices
 - Public and Stakeholder Consultation Report
 - Natura Impact Statement (NIS):
 - Volume 1 Summary
 - Volume 2 Introduction
 - Volume 3 Screening
 - Volume 4 Assessment of Implications for Special Areas of Conservation
 - Volume 5 Assessment of Implications for Special Protection Areas Part 1
 - Volume 5 Assessment of Implications for Special Protection Areas Part 2
 - Volume 6 In-combination Assessment Part 1
 - Volume 6 In-combination Assessment Part 2
 - Volume 7 Appendices
 - Supporting Documents:
 - Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy
 - Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol
 - o Ecological Vessel Management Plan
 - Navigational Safety Plan
 - Lighting and Marking Plan
 - In Principle Project Environmental Monitoring Plan
 - Construction Environmental Management Plan
 - o Onshore Substation Site Drainage and Water Supply Design Report
 - Onshore Invasive Species Management Plan
 - o Construction & Demolition Waste Management Plan
 - o Onshore Substation Architectural Design Statement
 - o Rehabilitation Schedule



1.10 References

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