codling wind park

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Volume 4

Appendix 15.4 Seascape Character Assessment


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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term in Full
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CDP	City / County Development Plan
CWP	Codling Wind Park
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
km	Kilometres
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LCAs	Landscape Character Areas
LCAss	Landscape Character Assessment
LCU	Landscape Character Unit
LoD	Limits of Deviation
MCAs	Marina Character Areas
NRW	Natural Resource Wales
NHAs	Natural Heritage Areas
nm	Nautical Mile
OECC	Offshore Export Cable Corridor
OfTI	Offshore Transmission Infrastructure
OSS	Offshore Substation Structure
OWF	Offshore Wind Farm
MCA	Marine Character Area
RSCA	Regional Seascape Character Area
RSCT	Regional Seascape Character Types
SCA	Seascape Character Assessment
SAA	Special Amenity Area
SAAO	Special Amenity Area Order
TCA	Townscape Character Area
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UK	United Kingdom
WTG	Wind Turbine Generator
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Definitions

Glossary	Meaning
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 Project	The proposed development as a whole is referred to as the Codling Wind Park (CWP) Project, comprising of the offshore infrastructure, the onshore infrastructure, and any associated temporary works (construction / decommissioning).
Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)	The report prepared by the Applicant to describe the findings of the EIA for the CWP Project.
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 the offshore export cables within Dublin Bayout to approximately 4 km offshore, where water depths that are too shallow for conventional cable lay vessels to operate.
landscape	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.
landscape areas	See landscape character areas
landscape categories	See landscape character types
landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape Character Assessment (LCAss)	The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscape distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.
Landscape Character Types (LCTs)	Distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.
limit of deviation (LoD)	Locational flexibility of permanent and temporary infrastructure is described as a LoD from a specific point or alignment.
magnitude (of change)	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or

Glossary	Meaning
	irreversible (temporary or permanent) and whether it is short or long term in duration
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 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 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.
Phase 1 Projects	Under the special transition provisions in the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, as amended (the MAP Act), the Minister for the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) has responsibility for assessing and granting a Maritime Area Consent (MAC) for a first phase of offshore wind projects in Ireland. The Phase 1 Projects include Oriel Wind Park, Arklow Bank II, Dublin Array, North Irish Sea Array, Codling Wind Park and Skerd Rocks. A MAC has since been granted by DECC for each of the Phase 1 Projects.
seascape / landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
seascape / landscape effects	An assessment of seascape / landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource
seascape	An area of sea, coastline, and land, as perceived by people, whose character results from the actions and interactions of land with sea, by natural and/or human factors
seascape character	Seascape character is a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements in the seascape that makes one seascape different from another, rather than better or worse. (Natural England, 2012 and Marine Management Organisation, 2019a)
seascape character area	*Seascape Character Areas (SCAs) provide a good framework within which to draw out patterns of local distinctiveness and those factors influencing sense of place. They can be used to develop more tailored policies or strategies, reflecting the things that make a particular area of the seascape different, distinctive or special. SCAs may also be more recognisable and identifiable for non-specialists (e.g. local communities).* (Regional SCA 2020 Final Report prepared for the Marine Institute).
seascape character type	*These are distinct types of seascape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different locations but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, bathymetry, ecology, human influences and perceptual and aesthetic attributes. For example, sheltered bays, rocky coves, sandy beaches or harbours are recognisable and distinct*

Glossary	Meaning
	seascape character types (Regional SCA 2020 Final Report prepared for the Marine Institute).
study area	SLVIA study area is a 50 km buffer from the outer most wind turbine generator (WTG
Townscape Character Area	Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) are unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular townscape type (GLVIA 3
wind turbine generator (WTG)	All the components of a wind turbine, including the tower, nacelle, and rotor.
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land and sea within which, a development is theoretically visible.

APPENDIX 15.4 SEASCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

1 Introduction

1. This appendix forms part of **Chapter 15 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** (**SLVIA**) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the offshore elements of the Codling Wind Park (CWP) Project and should be read in conjunction with the following Appendices and Figures:

- **Appendix 15.2 Representative Scenario and Limits of Deviation;**
- **Appendix 15.3 SLVIA Methodology;**
- **Appendix 15.5 Landscape Character Assessment (LCAss);**
- **Appendix 15.6 Viewpoint Assessment**; and
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    - **Figure 15.17.10** Viewpoint 10 Greystones;
    - **Figure 15.17.11** Viewpoint 11 Kilcoole;
    - **Figure 15.17.12** Viewpoint 12 Six Mile Point;
    - **Figure 15.17.13** Viewpoint 13 Wicklow Town Harbour;
    - **Figure 15.17.18** Viewpoint 18 Brittas Bay;
    - **Figure 15.17.19** Viewpoint 19 Arklow Pier;
    - **Figure 15.17.20** Viewpoint 20 Kilmichael Point; and
    - **Figure 15.17.23** Viewpoint 23 Maheramore Beach.

2. This appendix has identified and assessed seascape character within a 50 km study area (from the array site boundary and the outermost WTG) as referred to in **Chapter 15**.

3. To avoid duplication, it was agreed by the client team that the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) would concentrate on impacts of the landfall works on landscape and townscape character landward of the Low Water Mark (LWM) which includes the littoral / intertidal zone. The SLVIA assessed the impacts of the landfall works seaward of the LWM on seascape, landscape and townscape character and nationally designated landscapes.

4. Visual impacts arising from infrastructure and activities within the full extent of the landfall works (i.e. up to approximately 4 km from the shoreline) were assessed in the LVIA. Visual effects arising from vessel movements seaward of approximately 4 km of the shoreline were assessed in the SLVIA.

5. The seascape assessment concentrated on the areas identified in the Regional Seascape Character Assessment (SCA) 2020 Final Report, prepared for the Marine Institute (seaward of the low water mark). Consideration was given to Marine Character Areas (MCAs) defined by National Resource Wales (NRW), but these were scoped out for reasons outlined in **Section 2.2** below.

6. This assessment considered both WTG Option A and B layouts. It should be read alongside **Chapter 4 Project Description** and **Appendix 15.2 Representative Scenario and Limits of Deviation. Appendix 15.2** refers to the construction, operational and maintenance and decommissioning phase impacts (day and nighttime) summarised as follows:

    - Impact 1: Construction (daytime);
    - Impact 2: Construction (nighttime);
    - Impact 3: Operation and maintenance (daytime);
    - Impact 4: Operation and maintenance (nighttime);
    - Impact 5: Decommissioning (daytime); and
    - Impact 6: Decommissioning (nighttime).

7. Details of visual variations in the layout and height of WTGs and OSSs for Option A and B, are described in **Appendix 15.6 Viewpoint Assessment** with reference to visualisations presented at **Appendix 15.11 Visualisations**. Details of the Limits of Deviation (LoD) presented in **Appendix 15.2**

[1] Each viewpoint included a visualisation pack with baseline, wireframes and photomontages. These were presented for both Option A and B (daytime) and referred to with the suffix A to G. Specific nighttime images were prepared for viewpoints 7,10, 11 and 13 covered by the suffix I to N.

Representative Scenario and Limits of Deviation concluded that the LoD would be insufficient to alter the magnitude of effect between WTG Option A and B for all phases CWP Project.

8. For reference and to inform the assessment process the definition of impact significance is illustrated in **Plate 1** below with a more detailed matrix presented in **Chapter 15 SLVIA, Table 15.14** Illustrative matrix of significant effects,

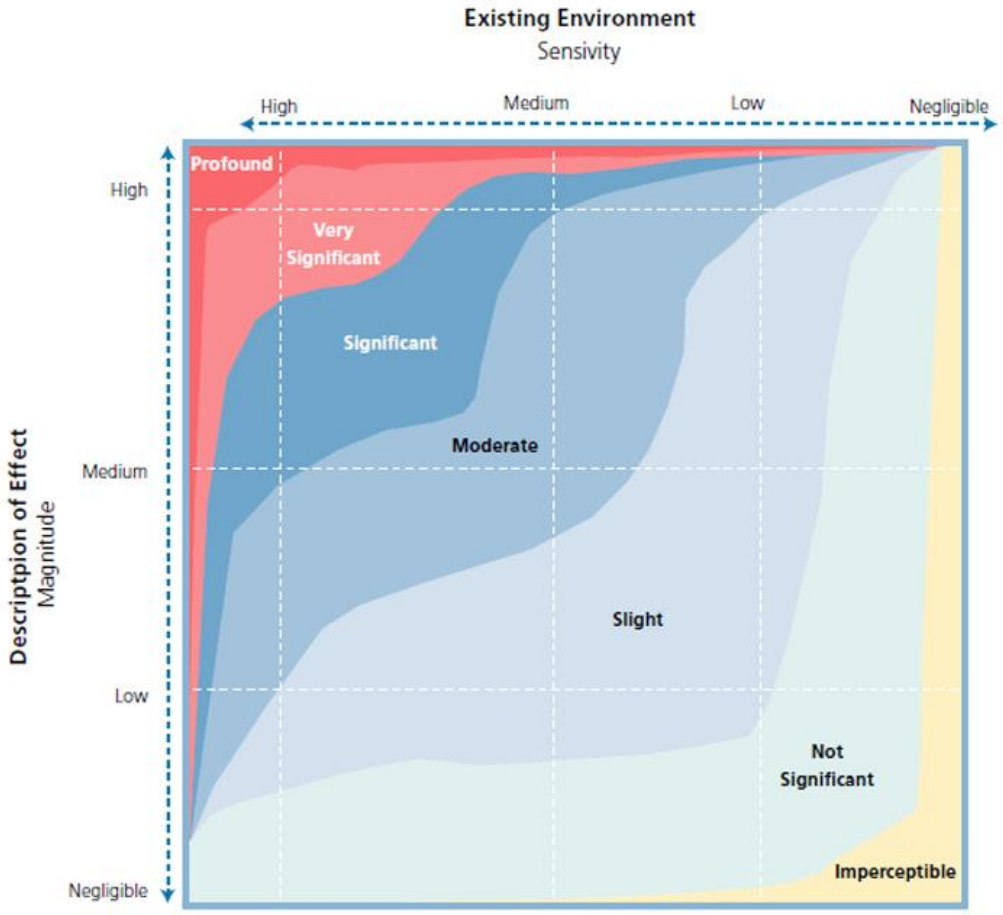

Plate 1 Definition of impact significance (edited from EIAR Guidelines, 2022)

2 Seascape Character

9. Within the study area, seascape character ranges from broad estuaries and bays, complex coastlines, low lying plains, narrow beaches to shallow offshore waters with sand banks. The value of the coastline is varied, with headlands and promontories of national importance, coastal Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), key vistas, and views and prospects to locations of importance for visitors and local residents all represented. The seascape is of mixed character; from large expansive open seas where development onshore and offshore is less influential, to more complex busy and active seascapes, influenced by commercial shipping routes and recreational craft. The whole coastline has strong cultural links with navigation and human settlement evident by castles, Martello towers and lighthouses. Intervisibility is strong from landward and seaward views, across to headlands, points and bays as well as the Welsh coastline on clear days.

10. The study area extends across both Irish and Welsh inshore waters-character areas of relevance are summarised below, alongside the baseline and key characteristics.

2.1 Seascape Character for Ireland

11. Seascape character is defined in the Regional SCA 2020 Final Report prepared for the Marine Institute. Regional Seascape Character Types (RSCTs) and Regional Seascape Character Areas (RSCAs) are identified at a regional scale covering the coastline of Ireland, with a seaward boundary of 12 nautical miles (nm). The document will form a key component of the evidence base of the forthcoming Marine Spatial Planning and marine policy formulation.

12. Seascape is defined as follows:

'an area of sea, coastline and land, as perceived by people, whose character results from the actions and interactions of land with sea, by natural and/or human factors'

13. The Regional SCA has identified thirteen RSCTs covering the coastline of Ireland which are defined in the assessment as follows:

'These are distinct types of seascape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different locations but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, bathymetry, ecology, human influences and perceptual and aesthetic attributes. For example, sheltered bays, rocky coves, sandy beaches or harbours are recognisable and distinct seascape character types.'

14. The thirteen RSCTs have been refined further to RSCA which are defined as follows:

'*Seascape Character Areas (SCAs) provide a good framework within which to draw out patterns of local distinctiveness and those factors influencing sense of place. They can be used to develop more tailored policies or strategies, reflecting the things that make a particular area of the seascape different, distinctive or special. SCAs may also be more recognisable and identifiable for non-specialists (e.g. local communities).'*

15. Analysis of ZTV mapping identified RSCAs that would potentially be affected by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure taking cognisance of the methodology detailed in **Appendix 15.3 SLVIA Methodology**. This is discussed further in the tables below.

16. Within 50 km of the array site, four RSCAs were predicted to receive widespread theoretical visibility of the proposed Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) as follows (numbered south to north) and summarised below:

- RSCA 13 - South East Irish Sea;

- RSCA 14 - Irish Sea, Sandbanks and Broad Bays;
- RSCA 15 - Dublin Bay; and
- RSCA 16 - North Eastern Irish Sea Islands.

Figure 15.4 Regional Seascape Types and Regional Seascape Areas, in **Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures** illustrates the location of these RSCAs and RSCT's relative to the array site.

17. As the extent of the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure's effect on aesthetic and perceptual seascape qualities would extend seaward beyond the 12 nm boundary defined in the Regional SCA 2020 Final Report, prepared for the Marine Institute, the descriptions in the above RSCAs have been reviewed and revised to cover a wider eastward extent reaching the western edge of the 12 nm boundary of Welsh waters and Marine Character Areas (MCAs) defined by National Resource Wales (NRW). Where changes have been made these are reflected by emboldened text.

2.1.1 RSCA 13 – South East Irish Sea

18. This RSCA is located between Wicklow Head and Carnsore Point, covering approximately 90 km of the southeastern coastline of Ireland. Within the study area, the RSCA extends between Wicklow Head and Toberpatrick, for approximately one kilometre (km) inland, and seaward to 12 nm covering an area of 771.74 km². Beyond 12 nm this RSCA continues to exhibit similar characteristics with, though, a diminishing relationship to the coastline.

19. The baseline review and assessment are supported by the following viewpoint visualisations included in **Appendix 15.11 Visualisations**:

- Viewpoint 18: Brittas Bay (**Figure 15.17.18**);
- Viewpoint 19: Arklow Pier (**Figure 15.17.19**);
- Viewpoint 20: Kilmichael Point (**Figure 15.17.20**); and
- Viewpoint 23: Maheramore Beach (**Figure 15.17.23**).

Baseline

20. The RSCA is diverse and includes the following RSCTs:

- RSCT 7 Broad Estuarine Bays and Complex Low Plateau and Cliff Coastline;
- RSCT 8 Low Lying and Estuarine Coastal Plain with Long, Narrow Sandy Beaches; and
- RSCT 12 Shallow Offshore Waters.

21. The RSCA also overlaps with the following landscapes considered in **Appendix 15.5 Landscape Character Assessment**:

- 2b The Southern Coastal Area (Wicklow County LCA);
- 4 Coastal (Wexford County LCA);
- 5a Distinctive Landscapes (Kilmichael Point) (Wexford County LCA);
- 6d Urban – Wicklow (Wicklow County LCA); and
- 6l Urban – Arklow (Wicklow County LCA).

22. The RSCA covers the southwestern extent of the Irish Sea and is less exposed in comparison to the neighbouring Celtic Sea to the south. Approximately 10 km offshore are a series of sandbanks which run parallel to the coastline and are permanently covered by the tide.

23. Commercial shipping vessels are a regular feature passing through the RSCA seeking the more sheltered waters of the Irish Sea, or to access the ports at Dublin, or of the United Kingdom (UK). Anchorages are limited to the harbour on the mouth of the Avoca River at Arklow, which comprises a busy commercial port with marinas.

24. Arklow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) comprising seven WTGs at 124 m to blade tip height is located approximately 21.3 km south west-southwest of the array site within this RSCA.

25. Within the study area, the coastline broadly follows a northeast to southwest direction and is rocky with a series of notable headlands, interspersed by moderate to small-scale narrow sandy beaches, and the ecologically protected Magheramore Dunes.

26. Inland, the landscape is predominantly agricultural comprising mainly of pasture, with some arable fields, bounded by a network of well-maintained hedgerows, and in places sheltered from the sea by gorse covered dunes and small-scale hills. The European Club and Blainroe Golf Clubs are located on the coastline and take advantage of the coastal setting.

27. Settlement is limited along this section of coastline to individual properties with views towards the sea, and the larger settlements of Arklow and Ballynacarrig.

28. To the south of Arklow is Parnell's Quarry which includes a purpose-built pier to transport quarry products by sea.

29. Recreation is an important interest along the coastline including playing golf, visiting beaches, and walking on the numerous promoted coastal paths.

30. At night-time, **Figure 15.11 Night-time light pollution (**see **Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures)** shows that the darkest skies are experienced between settlements on the coastline where light pollution is limited. There are regular lights observed on the seascape as a consequence of navigation lights of passing vessels which reduces the levels of darkness within 12 nm of the coastline.

Key Characteristics

31. The key characteristics of the RSCA are as follows:

- '*This SCA includes the most south easterly point in Ireland at Carnsore Point and forms the juncture between the Celtic and Irish Sea;*
- *Ireland's most southeasterly island Tuskar Rock is within this SCA;*
- *Coastal form comprises broad, medium scale bays and estuaries;*
- *The SCA is renowned for its long sandy beaches and is well established coastal resorts such as Courtown;*
- *Long established historical towns that retain a fishing function, including Arklow and Wexford. These are active, busy settlements with strong connections to the sea;*
- *Dynamic coastline that has seen considerable effects of erosion and deposition associated with Wexford Harbour as at Rosslare Island;*
- *Views vary from south to north, with low headlands framing those in the south, as the land rises further north, the mountains provide a montane setting to the coastal areas from Arklow onwards.'; and*
- ***This SCA includes an active shipping lane – the southern sea approach to Dublin Port (Dublin Cherbourg route).***

32. In terms of views and vistas:

- *'Views along the coast comprise mostly low-lying headlands that frame the view but do not dominate.*

- *With islands largely absent, visual reference points and clues are provided by these headlands and sometimes by the offshore turbines.*
- *The increasing elevation further north provides for longer visibility in certain areas, for example at Wicklow Head.*
- *Views from sea to land are possible from the passenger and freight ferries from Rosslare Port, the fishing vessels and recreational users such as kayakers and inshore fishermen.'*

2.1.2 RSCA14 – Irish Sea, Sandbanks and Broad Bays

33. This RSCA is located entirely within the study area between Shankill in the north, and Wicklow Head in the south, approximately 33 km in length, extending inland to approximately 1 km, and seaward to 12 nm covering an area of 799.00 km². Beyond 12 nm this RSCA continues to exhibit similar characteristics with, though, a diminishing relationship to the coastline.

34. The baseline review and assessment are supported by the following viewpoint visualisations:

- Viewpoint 7: Bray Promenade (**Figure 15.17.7**);
- Viewpoint 8: Bray Head (**Figure 15.17.8**);
- Viewpoint 10: Greystones (**Figure 15.17.10**);
- Viewpoint 11: Kilcoole (**Figure 15.17.11**);
- Viewpoint 12: Six Mile Point Newcastle (**Figure 15.17.12**);
- Viewpoint 13: Wicklow Town (**Figure 15.17.17**); and
- Viewpoint 21: Shankill Beach (**Figure 15.17.21**).

Baseline

35. The RSCA is diverse and includes the following RSCTs:

- RSCT 7 Broad Estuarine Bays and Complex Low Plateau and Cliff Coastline; and
- RSCT 12 Shallow Offshore Waters.

36. The RSCA also overlaps with the following landscapes:

- 1c The Bray Mountain Group (Wicklow County LCA);
- 2a The Northern Coastal Area (Wicklow County LCA);
- 6a Urban – Greystones (Wicklow County LCA);
- 6d Urban – Wicklow (Wicklow County LCA);
- 6v Urban – Bray (Wicklow County LCA);
- 7 Shankill Townscape Character Area (TCA) (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA); and
- 12 Shanganagh LCA (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone County LCA).

37. Commercial shipping vessels are a regular feature passing through the RSCA accessing the Port of Dublin. Fishing vessels and recreational craft are also a common sight sailing through the RSCA. Anchorages are limited to the harbours at Bray, Greystones, and Wicklow.

38. The coastline overlooks Wicklow Bay and Killiney Bay, includes a long stretch of shingle shore between Greystones and Wicklow, Bray and Wicklow headlands with sea cliffs from the eastern most point of Ireland. Most of the shoreline is backed by a 15 km long coastal wetland referred to as Murrough.

39. The northern section of the coastline is heavily built up and includes the residential area at Shankill, set back from the coastal edge and surrounded by a series of connected greenspaces, which together with Woodbrock Golf Club, provide a separation to the settlement of Bray to the south.

40. Approximately 10 km offshore are the India and Codling sandbanks which run parallel to the coastline and are permanently covered by the tide.

41. The Greystones to Wicklow (Dublin to Rosslare) Main Line linking with the DART line (terminating at Greystones) is located close to the coastline and passes through a series of tunnels at Bray Head southwards to Wicklow. A shingle bar was constructed to provide protection to the railway line from the sea; this in turn led to the creation of a wetland known as Murroughs, which now forms the longest continual coastal wetland in Ireland.

42. The settlement of Bray includes a promenade and a small harbour situated at the north end of the settlement, at the mouth of the Dargle River. To the south of the settlement, Bray Head (a Special Amenity Area (SAA) and covered by a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO)) with its distinctive cross at the summit forms an important backdrop to the settlement and provides a visual buffer to the coastline further south.

43. To the south of Bray Head (designated as a SAA), elevation reduces and the coastline changes from rocky cliffs to narrow beaches of sand and shingle, with agricultural land forming the hinterland as far as Greystones.

44. The settlement of Greystones extends up to the coastal edge and includes a small harbour, mainly used by recreational craft, and a promenade. A series of rocky promontories cover the coastal edge at Greystones with small-scale sandy coves between.

45. To the south of Greystones, the coastline is formed by a continuous narrow beach southwards to Wicklow, with a hinterland of agricultural land, interspersed with forestry plantations.

46. The town of Wicklow is located in the south of the RSCA at the mouth of the River Varity and includes a harbour used for commercial fishing, sailing clubs, and the Round of Ireland Yacht race starts and ends at Wicklow.

47. To the east of Wicklow is Wicklow Head, a rocky promontory that includes the ruins of the 12 Century Black Castle and Wicklow Lighthouse. From here the coastline rises to small-scale cliffs with some small-scale sandy coves to the east of Wicklow.

48. At night-time, **Figure 15.11 Nighttime light pollution, refer to Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures** shows that the sky is influenced by light pollution from nearby settlements including skyglow and from the network of roads in the vicinity of the coastline. Regular lights are also observed seaward side because of navigation lights of passing vessels.

Key Characteristics

49. The key characteristics of the RSCA are as follows:

- *'A busy and active SCA with long history and navigation and human settlement;*
- *The busy towns of Wicklow, Greystones and Bray nowadays within the commuter zone but retain a strong link to the sea with the former the most significant fishing port in the SCA;*
- *Bray, well established seaside resort. The railway has afforded easy access to the town;*
- *The increasing presence of the Wicklow Mountains and rising topography creates a highly scenic landscape in parts with long views and panoramas afforded from Bray to Greystones and Wicklow Head Cliff Walks;*
- *Longest coastal wetlands at the Murroughs, created due to the construction of the shingle bar to facilitate the railway line; and*
- *Increasingly urbanised towards the north, the hinterland comprises primarily agriculture and forestry.'*
- **This SCA includes an active shipping lane – the southern sea approach to Dublin Port (Dublin Cherbourg route).**

50. In terms of views and vistas:

- *'Well known views particularly of Killiney Bay, or the Sugarloaf and views towards Bray Head from the elevated coast have been popular with artists, and frequently used in tourism promotion.*
- *Long views across the Irish Sea are possible from the elevated heads or points and viewpoints along the coastal road, or accessed via pathways for example at Killiney Hill or Wicklow Head.*
- *A view can vary and are not constant, particularly where the coastal topography is lower.*
- *The shingle shores that extend for much of this area allow for sea level views and the sunrises can be spectacular from this SCA.*
- *Dalkey Island and the small islands that cluster around it are a key seascape feature in views from the shorelines and elevated parts of the northern area of this SCA.*
- *Views to the land are possible from the day trips to Dalkey Island, chartered boats and sightseeing tours from Wicklow Harbour and recreational boats. From the sea, close to shore the sea cliffs and caves around Wicklow and Bray Head are visible though the detail retreats further offshore.*
- *The distinctive cone shape of the Sugarloaf mountains and the coastal headlands provide a scenic backdrop to sea views towards the land.*
- *Lighting – the urbanised character of much of this SCA, particularly around the main towns and northern part result in a density of lighting associated with housing and the railway line Where areas are more remote/or at headlands, lighting is less visible. The Wicklow Head Lighthouse, now automated, has a range of 23 nautical miles.'*

2.1.3 RSCA15 – Dublin Bay

51. This RSCA extends between Portmarnock in the north and Shankill in the south for approximately 20.6 km, extending inland by 1 km, and seaward by 12 nm, covering 482.22 km². Beyond 12 nm this RSCA continues to exhibit similar characteristics with, though, a diminishing relationship to the coastline.

52. The baseline review and assessment are supported by the following viewpoint visualisations:

- Viewpoint 1: Howth, Summit (**Figure 15.17.1**);
- Viewpoint 2: North Bull Island (**Figure 15.17.2**);
- Viewpoint 3: Great South Wall (**Figure 15.17.3**);
- Viewpoint 4: Dun Laoghaire, East Pier (**Figure 15.17.4**); and
- Viewpoint 5: Killiney Hill (**Figure 15.17.5**).

Baseline

53. The RSCA is diverse and includes the following RSCTs:

- RSCT 7 Broad Estuarine Bays and Complex Low Plateau and Cliff Coastline;
- RSCT 6 High Granite/Sandstone Cliffs and Plateau;
- RSCT 8 Low Lying and Estuarine Coastal Plain with Long, Narrow Sandy Beaches;
- RSCT 10 Modified Historic Bay; and
- RSCT 12 Shallow Offshore Waters.

54. The RSCA also overlaps with the following landscapes:

- 1 Booterstown / Blackrock (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA);
- 2 Dun Laoghaire (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA);
- 3 Sandy Cove (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA);
- 4 Dalkey (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA);
- 5 Dalkey Island (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA);
- 6 Killiney Bay (Dun Laoghaire-Rathstone TCA);

- 1 Clontaf (Dublin City TCA);
- 2 Dublin Docklands (Dublin City TCA);
- 3 East Wall (Dublin City TCA);
- 4 South Dockland, Irishtown and Ringsend (Dublin City TCA);
- 5 Merrion (Dublin City TCA);
- 6 North Bull Island (Dublin City TCA);
- 7 Poolbeg Peninsula (Dublin City TCA);
- 8 Sandymount (Dublin City TCA);
- 9 Kilbarrack and Baldoyle (Dublin City TCA);
- 10 St Anne's Park (Dublin City TCA);
- 1d Coastal (Howth)(Fingal County LCA);
- 1e Coastal (Ireland's Eye) (Fingal County LCA); and
- 2c Estuary (Balydole) (Fingal County LCA).

55. The sea of this RSCA is busy with commercial and recreational vessels and is where the northern and southern approach to Dublin Port converge in proximity to the Kish Bank Lighthouse. Vessels are guided to Dublin Port by a series of buoys which direct vessels alongside pilots from Dublin Port Authority. The RSCA also includes seasonal yacht racing marks to the east of South Bull and east of Dun Laoghaire Harbour which includes several marinas for recreational boats and Dublin Bay cruises.

56. Approximately 12 km offshore are a series of sandbanks which run parallel to the coastline and are permanently covered by the tide and include the Kish and Burford and Bennet Banks.

57. The coastline and hinterland of this RSCA is heavily developed, comprising what is known as the suburbs of Dublin which extend from the distinctive quartzite headland, which frames the northeastern part of the bay at Howth Head, across the isthmus joining Howth to Dublin, to Dun Laoghaire in the south, including Dublin Port at the mouth of the River Liffey and Poolbeg Peninsula and Great South Wall which terminates at the Baily Lighthouse. Less developed areas include North Bull Island which includes two golf courses, a nature reserve, and a long broad beach on its eastern side, Howth Head which forms a distinctive feature in the north of Dublin Bay, Portmarnock Golf Course, and Irelands Eye, an island northeast of Howth.

58. To the north of Bull Wall is North Bull Island, and to the south of the Great South Wall, South Bull Island. Formed following the construction of the breakwaters at the mouth of the River Liffey during the 18th and 19th Centuries, both areas form a large sandbar that is popular recreationally for a variety of pursuits.

59. The RSCA encompasses Howth Head and Ireland's Eye to the north, eastern Dublin including North Bull Island, Dublin Port, the residential areas of Baldoyle, Kilbarrick, Clontarf, Sandymount, Merion, Blackrock, and Dun Laoghaire which are addressed in **Appendix 15.5 Landscape Character Assessment**.

60. At night-time, **Figure 15.11 Nighttime light pollution, refer to Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures** shows that the sky is heavily influenced by several sources of artificial lighting, including built development along the coastline, navigation boys, the Baily and Bull lighthouses, and vessels entering and leaving Dublin Port.

Key Characteristics

61. The key characteristics of the RSCA are as follows:

- *'Distinctive and active bay framed by two resistant headlands that offer extensive views across the Bay, the Irish Sea and along the coast, north and southwards. Busy navigational area with commercial and recreational shipping and boats.*
- *Kish Lighthouse and Kish Bank, a common sight for navigators in and out of the bay.*

- *Long and extensive coastal settlement and history has created a modified coastline and bay for much of this SCA.*
- *Both Howth Head and Killiney Hill, that frame the bay, are less developed and offer more tranquil space within this urbanised area. Recreational use of the coast and sea is popular.*
- *Significant ecological and biodiversity areas reflected in the UNESCO Biosphere and the importance of the estuarine and tidal habitats.*
- *The view across Dublin Bay is a much painted vista, and described in writing, songs and poetry.'*
- **This SCA includes two active shipping lanes – the southern sea approach to Dublin Port (Dublin Cherbourg route) and the northern sea approach to Dublin Port) (Liverpool to Dublin and Holyhead to Dublin).**

62. In terms of views and vistas:

- *'Key views are from the elevated heads that frame this SCA and allow long views along the coast north and south, into Dublin Bay and out to the Irish Sea.*
- *Long views northwards are possible under clear conditions from Howth Head and can extend to the Mourne Mountains at the horizon, a range of almost 70 km as the crow flies.*
- *Equally panoramas from Killiney Hill are possible and considered in the design of such features as the Obelisk and Wishing stones atop Killiney Hill. Here again the eye is drawn south over Killiney Bay, northwards to Sorrento Terrace and Dalkey Island.*
- *Closer to the sea the promenades associated with places such as Clontarf and Sandymount, as well as the east and west pier at Dun Laoghaire and the South Wall offer closer views at sea level. The opening up of the East Pier Lighthouse during summer months allows for a contrast in views and experience between the more sheltered harbour proper and the seaward view from the eastern pier.*
- *The Dart (the Dublin Area Rapid Transit) trainline runs along the edge of the bay on the south side of the city from Booterstown to Killiney (and onto Greystones) offering commuters views across the water. From the headlands, notably Howth Head and Killiney Hill, panoramic views across the bay, along the coast and across the sea are dominant.*
- *Key vistas and landmarks associated with this SCA include the Poolbeg Chimneys, Howth Head, Killiney and Bray Head in the distance.*
- *Views from the sea to the land are possible via recreational and passenger boats; the Dublin Bay Cruise offers views across the bay from Dun Laoghaire to Howth. The Victorian frontage of Dun Laoghaire is eminent from the sea, with the newer Library referencing the Ferry in its structure. The views to and from the port are more industrial with the freight and container docks replaced and the sea and the Kish Lighthouse further beyond the Port itself.*
- As the most densely populated and urbanised part of the country, lighting is considerable within this RSCA associated with residential, transport, commercial buildings at the Docks and navigational tools.'

2.1.4 RSCA16 – North Eastern Irish Sea Islands

63. This RSCA stretches from Ireland's Eye, north of Howth Head, towards Greenore at the mouth of Carlingford Lough, and extends inland for approximately 1 km, and 12 nm seaward. Within the study area, the RSCA extends between Rush and Howth Head covering an area of 573.78 km². Beyond 12 nm this RSCA continues to exhibit similar characteristics, though with a diminishing relationship to the coastline.

Baseline

64. The RSCA is diverse and includes the following RSCTs:

- RSCT 8 Low Lying and Estuarine Coastal Plain with Long, Narrow Sandy Beaches;
- RSCT 11 Large Islands; and
- RSCT 12 Shallow Offshore Waters.

65. The RSCA also overlaps with the following landscapes:

- 1a Coastal (Rush) (Fingal County LCA);
- 1b Coastal (Portrane) (Fingal County LCA);
- 1c Coastal (Porthmarnock) (Fingal County LCA);
- 2a Estuary (Rogerstown) (Fingal County LCA); and
- 2b Estuary (Swods/Malahide) (Fingal County LCA).

66. The sea within this RSCA forms the northern approach route to Dublin Port and commercial vessels are a common feature alongside recreational boats.

67. This RSCA includes several estuaries covering Rogerstown, Malahide and Portmarnock, and in between the estuaries are a series of long sandy beaches, backdropped by settlements, golf courses, agricultural land, and caravan parks. Lambey Island is located 4 km offshore to the east of Port Demense.

68. At night-time, **Figure 15.11 Nighttime light pollution, (see Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures)** shows that the sky is influenced by light pollution from nearby settlements, including skyglow and from the network of roads in the vicinity of the coastline. Regular lights are also observed seaward side as a consequence of navigation lights of passing vessels.

Key Characteristics

69. The key characteristics of the RSCA are as follows:

- '*Long, extensive coastline comprising gently indented bays and some large estuaries draining to the Irish Sea;*
- *Expansive character of seascape at height and at shoreline, with the long views to Mourne Mountains and Howth and Bray Head creating a sense of large-scale seascape character;*
- *Where present islands concentrate the view to inshore and coast and include Lambay, Skerries, Irelands Eye and Rockabilly;*
- *Extensive evidence of human activity and settlement within this SCA along the coast and across the Irish Sea;*
- *Strong influence of Viking and Norse within this SCA;*
- *Attractive series of medium / small scale harbours and fishing harbours with good examples of 18th and 19th century stonework at piers and harbours;*
- *Coastal fringe comprises small to medium sized towns, some within the commuter belt and historically developed as fishing villages;*
- *Dundalk Harbour, a wide and deep bay with an established port mainly dealing in bulk cargo; and*
- *Popular sandy beaches with supporting tourism accommodation and activities.*'
- ***This SCA just edges an active shipping lane; the northern sea approach to Dublin Port) (Liverpool to Dublin and Holyhead to Dublin).***

70. In terms of views and vistas:

- *'As the only significant headland between Howth to the Cooley Peninsula, views from Clogherhead are expansive and long.*
- *Sunrises are a key view given virtually all beaches and heads front the east coast. The exception to this is Giles quay and views possible from southern shores of Cooley Peninsula west across Dundalk Bay that allows sunset views.*

- *Views for much of the coast are drawn to the distant hills and mountains north and south; this increases the sense of scale for this area.*
- *Key views of the nearshore islands (the Skerries Islands: Rockabill Island, St Patricks Island, Colt Island, Shenick Island) frame the vistas from towns such as Skerries and Rush.*
- *Lambay island (4 km off the coast at Portrane) provides a dominant focal point on the coast between Rush and Loughshinny. This island forms the most easternmost point of the Province of Leinster.*
- *Ireland's Eye, an island at the southern end of this SCA is a prominent coastal feature when viewed from the beaches of Portmarnock and Malahide.*
- *Where land is at, or close to, sea level such as southern area of the SCA, views across are drawn to the distinctive profile of islands; for example, around Portmarnock.*
- *Views from the sea are possible from recreational and fishing craft. The Dublin Bay cruises offer trips from Howth to Irelands Eye'.'*

2.2 Seascape Character Areas – Wales

71. Whilst the CWP Project is located wholly in Irish Sea waters, the study area overlaps into Welsh waters, with the nearest WTGs approximately 46 km away from the western extent of Welsh SCAs. NRW defined 29 MCAs and these were used to inform the Wales National Marine Plan, prepared by Welsh Government, November 2019. As referred to in the National Seascape Assessment for Wales, LUC, NRW Evidence Report No. 80, November 2015, the MCAs were prepared for use in developing the draft Marine Plan and to provide opportunity for public discussion and identification. The MCAs covered Welsh inshore waters (between the high-water mark and 12 nm out to sea).

72. The study area's eastern extents include the seaward boundary of two MCAs as shown on **Figure 15.4 Regional Seascape Types and Regional Seascape Areas,** see **Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**

- MCA 08 West Anglesey Open Water; and
- MCA 12 Llyn and South West Anglesey Open Water.

2.2.1 MCA 08 West Anglesey Open Water

73. MCA 08 covers a large area of open water to the west of Anglesey in northwest Wales.

Key Characteristics

74. The key characteristics of the MCA are as follows:

- *"An offshore MCA to the west of Holyhead with a water depth of 40-60 metres with deeper sections in the far north and in Holyhead Deep.*
- *Mostly coarse sediment in deep water with exposed Precambrian schist bedrock in the east.*
- *Robust polychaetes, crustaceans and bivalves make up the infaunal community while rocky habitats are colonised by a varied community that includes sponges, ascidians, hydroids and bryozoans among many other taxa.*
- *High energy water due to strong tidal currents and wave action, and high turbidity due to suspended particulate matter.*
- *A variety of fishing activity with towed mobile gear used offshore.*
- *Commercial shipping and ferries seen offshore, with recreational boats more common close to the coast, particularly close to Trearddur.*

- *Long history and key role in shipping and trade, comprising the location where the western trade routes of Britain converge. The cargo ship Slieve Bloom was wrecked in 1918 while carrying passengers, cattle and mail from Dublin to Holyhead.*
- *The Dublin to Holyhead and Dublin to Liverpool ferry routes pass through the north of this MCA.*
- *Holyhead Mountain is a landmark which can be viewed from the southern part of the MCA, with the Isle of Man visible from the northern part of the MCA in clear conditions."*

2.2.2 MCA 12 Llyn and South West Anglesey Open Water

75. MCA 12 is formed of the westerly and southerly inshore waters surrounding the Llyn Peninsula in north-west Wales.

Key Characteristics

76. The key characteristics of the MCA are as follows:

- *"MCA includes the offshore waters to the west and broadly outlines the AONB designated Llŷn Peninsula.*
- *Most of the water in this MCA is between 30 and 80 metres in depth, although there are some trenches which plunge to 115 metres.*
- *Mudstone and sandstone bedrock overlain by a layer of sandy-gravelly sediment. The Devil's Tail sandbank is located in the south of the MCA.*
- *A small portion of this MCA is contained within the Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau SAC, recognised for its reefs, shallow inlets and estuaries.*
- *Numerous cetaceans have been sighted in these waters. It is part of a bottlenose dolphin migratory route towards Anglesey.*
- *Generally, the area has a low wave exposure, although rougher waters occur in the area around the Devil's Tail sandbank.*
- *Wrecks provide evidence of war time losses including the Erica, Knut and the Chelford and a busy, crowded shipping lane (e.g. Amethyst sunk by collision in 1897).*
- *War Grave site at wreck of H5 Submarine, a British submarine rammed by a British ship in 1918 whilst on surface patrol. The site is now controlled under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1989.*
- *This MCA contains part of Aberporth Firing Range, a large firing practice area used by the Royal Navy which stretches down to the south of Cardigan Bay. Part of the MCA is also licenced for oil and gas exploitation.*
- *Commercial ships can be seen moving through this MCA.*
- *Fishing uses include heavy beam trawling and lobster and crab potting.*
- *A vast, empty seascape with high levels of wildness and remoteness – perceptual qualities are dominated by the wind, waves and a feeling of being at the mercy of nature.*
- *Iconic views including to Bardsey Island and St Tudwal's Islands in MCA 13, the distinctive flat-topped Llŷn Mountains, and the more distant mountains of Snowdonia National Park to the east (and the Wicklow Hills, Ireland, to the west).*
- *Forms an important maritime setting to the Llŷn AONB, and features as part of a wider seascape setting for the Anglesey AONB to the north-east and Snowdonia National Park to the east."*

77. Given the seaward boundary of MCA 8 and 12 are approximately 49 km and 46 km respectively from the nearest WTG, and that the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would be largely perceived from the Irish coast, the MCAs have been scoped out of the assessment. This was determined following a baseline review and site visits on the basis that the distance was great enough that views of the WTGS and OSSs would be barely perceptible.

3 Seascape Character Assessment (SCA)

78. The following paragraphs outline the baseline, sensitivity, and assessment for each of the RSCAs. The sensitivity is assessed based on value and susceptibility to change and is presented in **Table 1** Table **1 and Table 2** present the value and susceptibility to change to inform seascape sensitivity.**and Table 2**. The sensitivity and magnitude for change during construction / decommissioning and operation /maintenance (day and nighttime-) and the consequential effects for both WTG Option A and B are presented in **Table 3, Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6**. The approach was informed by **Chapter 15 SLVIA, Section 15.4 Methodology** and **Appendix 15.3 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**.

4 Seascape sensitivity

79. **Table 1 and Table 2** present the value and susceptibility to change to inform seascape sensitivity.

Table 1 Regional Seascape Character Area – Sensitivity Criteria Assessment

Main criteria	RSCA13 South Irish Sea	RSCA14 Irish Sea, Seabanks and Broad Bays	RSCA15 Dublin Bay	RSCA16 North Eastern Irish Sea Islands and Beaches
Designation	Local / County	National – Local / County	National – Local / County	Local / County
	Landward much of the Wicklow coastline between Dunbur Head and Kilmichael Point is designated as an AONB at a county level within the County Development Plan (CDP) and is divided in two by the settlement of Arklow. In the Wexford LCA, Kilmichael Point is identified as a Distinctive Landscape Coastal Promontory. RSCA is covered by other designations including SACs.	Landward there are areas of higher value, including the Wicklow coastline which is designated as an AONB in the Wicklow LCA and Wicklow CDP. Bray Head is covered by a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) and considered a national designation.	Within the RSCA, there are areas of higher value including much of the bay being designated as a UNESCO Biosphere for its rare and internationally important habitats and species of wildlife. Howth and North Bull Island are designated a SAAO, a national landscape designation, and the latter has a Nature Reserve	Landward the majority of the coastline of southern section of the RSCA which falls within the study area (between Balbriggan and Howth) is designated as a Highly Sensitive Landscape.
Quality	Local / County	Local / County	Local / County - Community	Local / County
	Well defined in the form of long narrow beaches with smaller bays and low-lying headlands which frame views with landform rising northwards and forming part of the Wicklow Mountain National Park (an ecological designation).	High scenic landscape with the distinctive coastline and Wicklow Mountain and Great Sugar loaf forming the backdrop. Inland relatively low elevation, except at Wicklow Head and adjacent hills.	Distinctive horseshoe bay framed by Howth Head to the north and Killiney Hill to the south and the mouth of the River Liffey. Inshore sandbanks, the North Bull and South Bull with Bull Wall and South Wall built to create North Bull Island.	Expansive character of seascape with several estuaries covering Rogerstown, Malahide and Portmarnock, long sandy beaches, smaller scale sheltered harbours and bays. Lambey Island is located 4 km offshore to the east of Port Demense.
Rarity	National – Local / County	National – Local / County	National – Local / County	National – Local / County

Main criteria	RSCA13 South Irish Sea	RSCA14 Irish Sea, Seabanks and Broad Bays	RSCA15 Dublin Bay	RSCA16 North Eastern Irish Sea Islands and Beaches
	Presence of sub tidal banks relating to offshore SACs alongside estuarine and dune habitats such as Buckrony-Brittas Dunes with a SPA to the south near Kilmichael Point. Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) along the coastline.	Indian and Codling Banks lie at shallow depths of 10-20 m. Presence of SPAs / SACs and Proposed NHAs along the coastline.	Dublin Bay Biosphere with Bull Island designated first in 1981 and extended to the whole Bay covering the core, buffer and transition zone. Presence of Ramsar sites, SPAs / SACs and Proposed NHAs along the coastline. Strong sense of place, although, it includes several locally distinctive areas.	Presence of Ramsar sites, SPAs / SACs and Proposed NHAs along the coastline.
Aesthetic/ scenic	Local / County	Local / County	Local / Country	Local / Country
	Coastal panoramas expand further north as elevation increases. Long open views and framed views by embayments.	Strong sense of intervisibility between headlands and points with long and panoramic views. Extensive shingle shores allow sea level views across to islands at its further points.	Panoramic views from headlands including Howth Head with views north to the Mourne Mountains and east to Snowdonia, Wales during clear weather. Key views and long views along the coast and out to sea as well as panoramas. Key landmarks and vistas, Poolbeg chimneys, Howth, Killiney and Bray Head, DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) railway line offers commuters views across the water and there are views from recreational/passenger boats, Dublin Bay cruise boats and ferries.	Long, open views along the coastline and to the Mourne mountains in the north and Howth and Bray Head to the south with framed views from harbours. Key views to the Skerries and Lambay island which are distinctive features. Coastal and inland topography is generally low with a coastal hinterland and historic towns.
Perceptual qualities	Local / County	Local / County	Local / Country	Local / Country
	Not remote or wild owing to the presence of routes shipping traffic and recreational craft passing through, alongside the presence of Arklow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004). Sound of gulls notable in harbours. Largely low topography and micro tides create medium swells, particularly in sheltered bays or where slobs are present, small waves.	Not remote or wild, owing to the presence of navigational and trade activity as well as recreational craft. Well known panoramic views including Killieny Bay and Daley Island. Sound of gulls and summer seabirds in harbours. Rolling waves along the shingle beaches make a distinctive sound. Railway line introduces transient movement and sound.	Busy and active with commercial and recreational vessels and is where the northern and southern approach to Dublin Port converge in proximity to the Kish Bank Lighthouse. Vessels are guided to Dublin Port by a series of buoys which direct vessels alongside pilots from Dublin Port Authority. Sounds and smells associated with the tidal nature of the bay, barley and hops from the Guinness Brewery, gulls and waves.	Not remote or wild, owning to the presence of navigational activity and recreational craft. Sounds and smells associated with seaweed and mudflats in smaller bays and harbours. Micro tidal range in small bays contrast with choppy waters around islands and east of Lambay. In elevated positions sound of waves are stronger and more exposed.
Recreational	Local / County	Local / County	National – Local / County	Local / County
	Well known and well used beaches including Brittas Bay.	Popular coastal walks with access by rail. Well known beaches.	Popular recreational area for water sports including bathing, kayaking and wind surfing as well as a popular area for walking – Howth Head, Bull	The RSCA includes the northern approach route to Dublin Port and commercial vessels are a common feature,

Main criteria	RSCA13 South Irish Sea	RSCA14 Irish Sea, Seabanks and Broad Bays	RSCA15 Dublin Bay	RSCA16 North Eastern Irish Sea Islands and Beaches
		Promenades at Greystones and Bray.	Island, South Wall, Dun Laoghaire Piers and Killiney Hill. The RSCA also includes seasonal yacht racing marks to the east of South Bull and east of Dun Laoghaire Harbour which includes several marinas for recreational boats and Dublin Bay cruises. National Yacht club at Dun Laoghaire and National Maritime Museum. Access by rail.	alongside recreational boats. Several sailing clubs are present and the coastal fringe and beaches are popular visitor destinations.
Cultural associations	Local / County	Local / County	Local / County	Local / Country
	Strong links back to the Vikings and later the Anglo-Saxons, the latter evidenced through churches and graveyards, historic towns of Wexford and Arklow, castles and tower houses. Strong maritime character with Arlow which has an active working harbour and presence of 109 recorded wrecks and monuments. Links with folklore and fishing particularly in Arklow.	Greatly influenced by Anglo-Normans in the later medieval time, evidenced through the iconic Black Castle at Wicklow, churches and graveyards and historic towns of Wicklow and Bray. A Martello tower and lighthouses are also a feature of this coastline with 44 recorded wrecks.	Wealth of cultural heritage though much has been lost, disturbed or covered by land reclamation over time. An area greatly influenced by the Vikings and Anglo-Normans in the later medieval period. There is evidence of castles, Martello towers, lighthouses, fortifications with 121 recorded wrecks. Links with Maritime Art, Una Sealy RHA based in Howth, James Joyce lived for a time in Martello tower in Sandycove, James Stephens wrote about Dublin Docks, Poolbeg towers now a popular feature of art symbolising the bay and Dublin is one of 28 UNESCO cities of literature.	Considerable evidence of trading and due to its proximity with Dublin the area served as a place of hiding, source of food, military defence and of navigational importance. This is evidenced in Roman and Viking activity as well as the Anglo-Normans in the later medieval period. Castles, Martello towers, lighthouses, piers and mills with 73 recorded wrecks. Lough Craft mark designers network in County Louth. Several folklore tales associated with this area.
Overall value	**Local / County**	**Local / County**	**National-Local / County**	**Local / County**

Table 2 Regional Seascape Character Area - Susceptibility Criteria Assessment

Main criteria – long list	RSCA 13	RSCA 14	RSCA15	RSCA16
Strength and robustness	Medium	Medium	Medium-High	Medium
	Relatively robust seascape capable of accommodating change	Relatively robust seascape capable of accommodating change	Mixed – complex seascape which is already busy.	Relatively robust seascape capable of accommodating change.
Landscape scale	Medium	Medium	Medium-High	Medium
	Large relatively homogenous landscape with low headlands and points.	Variable landscape with a mix of low headlands and bays contrasting with rising topography in the distance. Scale defined by rising hills and mountains to the north.	A complex scale of headlands, rock outcrops, bay with sandbanks and reclaimed island of North Bull. Scale defined by rising hills and mountains to the south.	Broadly consistent at a regional scale with a long extensive coastline of indented bays and some large estuaries. Scale is defined by rising hills and mountains to the north and south.
Openness/enclosure	Medium	Medium	Medium – High	Medium
	Relatively open landscape with small scale landforms altering northwards with rising topography. Small bays and points creating some sense of enclosure and contrast to larger beaches such as Brittas Bay.	Extensive open coastline with little variation in landform, although the increasing presence of Wicklow Mountains and rising topography forms a prominent backcloth.	Relatively enclosed with wide variation in landform from headlands and rocky outcrops with a backcloth inland of the Dublin Hills and beyond Wicklow Mountains and outliers.	Extensive, open coastline framed by low cliffs with a sense of enclosure created by the Mourne Mountains to the north and Bray Head to the south.
Skyline	Medium	Medium	Medium-Low	Medium-Low
	Partially developed seaward skyline associated with Arklow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004). Landward limited extent of lighting with a focus on key settlements, whilst elsewhere lighting is less visible.	Partially developed seaward skyline. Landward strong sense of urbanisation due to the density of lighting associated with housing and the railway line with headlands more remote and lighting less visible.	Partially developed skyline seawards with lighthouses and navigational tools. Lighting is considerable, associated with residential, transport, commercial buildings at the Docks and navigational tools.	Partially developed skyline seaward with regular lights observed as a consequence of navigation lights of passing vessels. The sky is influenced by light pollution from nearby settlements, including skyglow and from the network of roads in the vicinity of the coastline.
Relationship with other development	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
	Strong associations linked with coastal ports and marine industries, alongside tourism.	Increased urbanisation and relationship with Dublin with modifications of the coastline.	Urbanisation and influence of Dublin port and associated commercial and recreational activity.	Strong relationship with the sea evidenced in the historic settlements and associated harbours with fishing, tourism and water sports.
Perceptual qualities	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Settled cultivated landscape.	Settled cultivated landscape interrupted by naturalistic headlands and wetlands.	Busy developed landscape with small pockets of naturalistic landscape, such as Bull Island and Howth Head.	Settled cultivated landscape.
	Medium	Medium	High	Medium

Main criteria – long list	RSCA 13	RSCA 14	RSCA15	RSCA16
Seascape association	Strong association with surrounding landscape largely gently sloping landform which alters in elevation northwards forming a strong contrast.	A significant strategic area with coastal towns linked by the railway line and a strong sense of engagement with the sea.	Strong relationship and engagement with the surrounding landscape through its marine activity both commercially and recreationally.	A clear relationship and engagement with the surrounding landscape through its marine activity both commercially and recreationally.
Overall susceptibility	Medium	Medium	Medium-High	Medium

5 Assessment of RSCAs

80. The sensitivity, magnitude for change during construction / decommissioning and operation / maintenance (day and night-time) and the consequential effects for both WTG Option A and B are presented in **Table 3**, **Table 4**, **Table 5** and **Table 6** below.

Table 3 Seascape Assessment of RSCA 13 South Irish Sea

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
Sensitivity Value is assessed as **Local / County** and susceptibility to change as **Medium** resulting in an overall sensitivity of **Medium** (see **Figure 15.17.18, 15.17.19 and 15.17.20) Appendix 15.11 Visualisations**	The array site would be located approximately 2 km to the north of the RSCA. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option A (**Figures 15.12a to f and 15.13 a to f, Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure's theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland. Impacts on the character and features would be direct, associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. The RSCA covers a wide area and as distances increase from the array site, the size and scale of the change would reduce, and the underlying experience of the open sea would be the dominant feature. From this RSCA, the array site would be seen in combination with Arklow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) from the sea to the south and east, and from the coastline to the west. The presence of Arklow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) would already have a localised effect on the existing seascape character creating broad zones in which "being at a wind farm" or "being near a wind farm" are experienced. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in the concentration of construction / decommissioning vessels (including Jack Up Vessel or Dynamic Positioning Vessels) for seabed preparation, foundation piling and construction / decommissioning of WTGs / OSSs (topside) around the proposed location of the array site including vessels for the inter array cables and OfTI and vessels towing / transporting structures as well as the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographic extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** (large in scale, short-term and localised in terms of geographical extent) reducing with distance to the south, west and east. Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character introducing further development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.	The array site would be located 2.3 km to the north of the RSCA. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option B (**Figures 15.12a to f and 15.13 a to f, Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure's theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland. Impacts on the character and features would be direct associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. The RSCA covers a wide area and as distances increase from the array site, the size and scale of the change would reduce, and the underlying experience of the open sea would be the dominant feature. From this RSCA, the array site would be seen in combination with Arklow Bank Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) from the sea to the south and east, and from the coastline to the west. The presence of Arklow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) would already have a localised effect on the existing seascape character creating broad zones in which "being at a wind farm" or "being near a wind farm" are experienced. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in the concentration of construction / decommissioning vessels (including Jack Up Vessel or Dynamic Positioning Vessels) for seabed preparation, foundation piling and construction / decommissioning of WTGs / OSSs (topside) around the proposed location of the array site including vessels for the inter array cables and OfTI and vessels towing / transporting structures well as the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographic extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** (large in scale, short-term and localised in terms of geographical extent) reducing with distance to the south, west and east. Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character introducing further development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.
	Construction / Decommissioning (nighttime): Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array site and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the sense of development at sea altering the extent of dark skies. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (medium in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and localised in terms of geographical extent) diminishing with distance to the south, west and east.	**Construction / Decommissioning (nighttime):** Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array site and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the sense of development at sea altering the extent of dark skies. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (medium in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and localised in terms of geographical extent) diminishing with distance to the south, west and east.

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
	Operation / Maintenance: The character of the seascape would alter, particularly in the north of the RSCA, reducing the large and open scale nature of the seascape and creating a stronger degree of visual enclosure on the skyline in northeasterly views. The addition of the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would consolidate and extend the wind farm influence alongside Arlow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) introducing further manmade features. Intervisibility across the wide, open sea would be interrupted by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure. There would be a perceived change by people at sea and from onshore coastal edges, coastal settlements and the coastal AONB in seaward panoramic views which extend northwards along the coastline. Inland views typically experience the sea within partially developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from the sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project set within an expansive seascape context. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** (medium in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent) reducing with distance to the south, west and east. Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing further development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape, through visibility of the manmade structures.	**Operation / Maintenance:** The character of the seascape would alter particularly in the north of the RSCA. reducing the large and open scale nature of the seascape and creating a stronger degree of visual enclosure on the skyline in northeasterly views. The addition of the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would consolidate and extend the wind farm influence alongside Arlow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) introducing further manmade features. Intervisibility across the wide, open sea would be interrupted by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure. There would be a perceived change by people at sea and from onshore coastal edges, coastal settlements and the coastal AONB in seaward panoramic views which extend northwards along the coastline. Inland views typically experience the sea within partially developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from the sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project set within an expansive seascape context. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** (medium in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent). reducing with distance to the south, west and east. Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing further development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape, through visibility of man-made structures.
	Operation / Maintenance Night-time: The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the sense of development at sea, though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting associated with Arlow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) and transient shipping vessels. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).	**Operation / maintenance (night-time):** The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the sense of development at sea, though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting associated with Arlow Wind Farm (commissioned June 2004) and transient shipping vessels. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).
LOD	**Note:** There would be subtle variations in the layout due to LoD, however, the extent of change would be insufficient to alter the magnitude of change and consequential effects.	
Significance of Effect:	**WTG Option A:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases - construction / decommissioning (day) has been assessed as **Medium** resulting in a **Moderate** (not significant) effect. For operation / maintenance (day)the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** resulting in a **Moderate** (not significant) effect. At night-time during construction the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (**not significant)** effect. At night-time during operation/maintenance the magnitude of change has been	**WTG Option B:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases - construction / decommissioning (day) has been assessed as **Medium** resulting in a **Moderate** (not significant) effect. For operation / maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** resulting in a **Moderate** (not significant) effect. At night-time during construction the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (**not significant)** effect. At night-time during operation/maintenance the magnitude of change has

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
	assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect.	been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect.

Table 4 Seascape Assessment of RSCA 14 Irish Sea, Sandbank and Broad Bays

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
Sensitivity Value is assessed as -**Local / County** and susceptibility to change as **Medium** resulting in an overall sensitivity of **Medium. (**The overall extent of Bray Head which forms part of the coastline relative to the RSCA14 is limited). (see **Figure 15.17.7, 15.17.8, 15.17.10, 15.17.11, 15.17.12 and 15.17.13 and 15.17.22), Appendix 15.11 Visualisations.**	The array site would be located within the RSCA. The entire array site, covering approximately 125 km², including the WTGs and inter array cables and approximately 25 km of the OfTI are located within this RSCA, which would receive both direct and indirect effects. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option A (**Figures 15.12a to f and 15.13 a to f see Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the array's theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland, including to the west and south of Bray due to Bray Head, north of Wicklow and west of Dunbur Head. Impacts on the character and features would be direct, associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in the concentration of construction /decommissioning vessels (including Jack Up Vessel or Dynamic Positioning Vessels) for seabed preparation, foundation piling and construction / decommissioning of WTGs / OSSs (topside) around the proposed location of the array site, including vessels for the inter array cables and OfTi and vessels towing / transporting structures, as well as the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographic extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** (large in scale, short-term and intermediate in terms of geographical extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.	The array site would be located within the RSCA. The entire array site, covering approximately 125 km², including the WTGs and inter array cables and 24.9 km of the OfTI are located within this RSCA, which would receive both direct and indirect effects. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option B (**Figures 15.12a to f and 15.13 a to f see Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the array's theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland, including to the west and south of Bray due to Bray Head, north of Wicklow and west of Dunbur Head. Impacts on the character and features would be direct, associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in the concentration of construction / decommissioning vessels (including Jack Up Vessel or Dynamic Positioning Vessels) for seabed preparation, foundation piling and construction / decommissioning of WTGs / OSSs (topside) around the proposed location of the array site, including vessels for the inter array cables and OfTI and vessels towing / transporting structures, as well as the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographic extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** (large in scale, short-term and intermediate in terms of geographical extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.
	Construction / Decommissioning (night-time): Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array site and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would alter the seascape character and extent of dark skies. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium - Low** (medium in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and intermediate in terms of geographical extent).	**Construction / Decommissioning (night-time):** Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array site and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would alter the seascape character and extent of dark skies. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium - Low** (medium in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and intermediate in terms of geographical extent).
	Operation / Maintenance: The character of the seascape would alter across most of the RSCA, reducing the large and open scale of the seascape and creating a strong sense of visual enclosure on the skyline in easterly views. Intervisibility across the wide, open sea would be interrupted by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure, as well as intervisibility across headlands and points further north and south along the coastline and across to the Welsh coastline on a very clear day.	**Operation / Maintenance:** The character of the seascape would alter across most of the RSCA, reducing the large and open scale of the seascape and creating a strong sense of visual enclosure on the skyline in easterly views. Intervisibility across the wide, open sea would be interrupted by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure, as well as intervisibility across headlands and points further north and south along

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
	There would be a perceived change by people at sea and from onshore coastal edges, coastal settlements and the coastal AONB and Bray Head SAAO in seaward panoramic views eastwards along the coastline. Inland views typically experience the sea within a largely developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from the sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project, set within an expansive seascape context with views. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **High** (large in scale, long-term and intermediate in terms of geographic extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through the introduction of static man-made features.	the coastline and across to the Welsh coastline on a very clear day. There would be a perceived change by people at sea and from onshore coastal edges, coastal settlements and the coastal AONB and Bray Head SAAO in seaward panoramic views eastwards along the coastline. Inland views typically experience the sea within a largely developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from the sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project, set within an expansive seascape context with views. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **High** (large in scale, long-term and intermediate in terms of geographic extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through the introduction of static man-made features.
	Operation / Maintenance Night-time: The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting, as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would alter the seascape's night-time character, though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting from commercial shipping vessels and lighthouses. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium -- Low** (medium-small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).	**Operation / Maintenance Night-time:** The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting, as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would alter the seascape's night-time character though, this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting from commercial shipping vessels and lighthouses. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** - **Low** (medium-small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).
LOD	**Note:** There would be subtle variations in the layout due to LoD, however, the extent of change would be insufficient to alter the magnitude of change and consequential effects.	
Significance of Effect:	**WTG Option A:** Sensitivity has been assessed as -**Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases - construction / decommissioning (day) has been assessed as **Medium** resulting in a **Moderate** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **High** resulting in a **Significant** (significant) effect. At night-time during construction the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium-Low** resulting in a **Slight** (**not significant)** effect. At nighttime during operation / maintenance the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** - **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect.	**WTG Option B:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases - construction / decommissioning (day) has been assessed as **Medium** resulting in a **Moderate** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **High** resulting in a **Significant** (significant) effect. At night-time during construction the magnitude of change has been assessed as Medium-**Low** resulting in a **Slight** (**not significant)** effect. At nighttime during operation / maintenance the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Medium** - **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect.

Table 5 Seascape Assessment of RSCA 15 Dublin Bay

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
Sensitivity Value is assessed as National-**Local / County** and susceptibility to change as **High-Medium** resulting in an overall sensitivity of **High-Medium** **(The overall extent of SAAs including Howth Head and North Bull Island forms just under half of the coastline relative to the RSCA15).** (see **Figure 15.17.1, 15.17.2, 15.17.3. 15.17.4 and 15.17.5), Appendix 15.11 Visualisations**	From the sea and coastline, mid to long distance views of the WTGs and OSSs would be experienced. Approximately 12 km of the OfTI, extending from 4 km from the landfall site would be located within the RSCA. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option A (**Figures 15.12 a to f and 15.13 a to f see Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the offshore infrastructure's theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland with topographical features such as Howth Head, Dalkey Head, Poolbeg Peninsula, part of North Bull Island and coastal development providing some screening to inland areas. Impacts on the character and features would be direct, associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in construction / decommissioning activity within the offshore development area, as vessels tow and install the foundations, WTGs, OSSs, inter array cables and OfTI including the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. This would be visible in mid to distant views alongside the project components. There would also be an intensification of vessels along the offshore export cable corridor (OECC) plus the presence of the Mid Support Platform (MS), this would be experienced in combination with the busy southern passage in and out of Dublin Port. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographic extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (medium-small in scale, short-term and localised in terms of geographical extent), reducing with distance to the north. Effects generated would relate to a slight change to the seascape character, introducing further development into an already developed, busy and active seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.	From the sea and coastline, mid to long distance views of the WTGs and OSSs would be experienced. Approximately 12 km of the OfTI, extending from km from the landfall site would be located within the RSCA. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option B **(Figures 15.12 a to f and 15.13 a to f see Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the offshore infrastructure's theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland with topographical features such as Howth Head, Dalkey Head, Poolbeg Peninsula, part of North Bull Island and coastal development providing some screening to inland areas. Impacts on the character and features would be direct. associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in construction / decommissioning activity within the offshore development area, as vessels tow / install the foundations, WTGs, OSSs, inter array cables and OfTI including the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. This would be visible in mid to distant views alongside the project components. There would also be an intensification of vessels along the OECC plus the presence of the Mid Support Platform (MSP). This would be experienced in combination with the busy southern passage in and out of Dublin Port. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographic extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (medium-small in scale, short-term and localised in terms of geographical extent), reducing with distance to the north. Effects generated would relate to a slight change to the seascape character, introducing further development into an already developed, busy and active seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.
	Construction / Decommissioning (nighttime): Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels including the MSP seen in context with other activities around the Port. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the extent of development at sea and therefore alter seascape character. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (small in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and localised in terms of geographical extent).	**Construction / Decommissioning (nighttime):** Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels including the MSP seen in context with other activities around the Port. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the extent of development at sea and therefore alter seascape character. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (small in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and localised in terms of geographical extent).
	Operation / Maintenance: The seascape character would alter slightly to the south of the RSCA beyond Kish Rock and Dalkey Island. The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would add to an already complex, busy and active seascape and contribute to contrasting scales between the rising hills and mountains to the south and lower coastal elevations. The CWP	**Operation / Maintenance:** The seascape character would alter slightly to the south of the RSCA beyond Kish Rock and Dalkey Island. The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would add to an already complex, busy and active seascape and contribute to contrasting scales between the rising hills and mountains to the south and lower coastal elevations. The CWP

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
	Project's offshore infrastructure would reduce the partially open scale nature of the seascape and create a stronger degree of visual enclosure on the skyline in southeasterly views, introducing further manmade features. Whilst intervisibility across the bay would remain uninterrupted by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure there would be a perceived change by people at sea and in panoramic seaward views from onshore coastal edges, Dublin, its suburbs and associated coastal settlements and North Bull SAAO. Inland views typically experience the sea within a largely developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure, set within a developed seascape context and across to the Welsh coastline on a very clear day with views possible of Snowdonia. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing further development into a largely developed seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the manmade structures.	Project's offshore infrastructure would reduce the partially open scale nature of the seascape and create a stronger degree of visual enclosure on the skyline in southeasterly views, introducing further manmade features. Whilst intervisibility across the bay would remain uninterrupted by the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure there would be a perceived change by people at sea and in panoramic seaward views from onshore coastal edges, Dublin, its suburbs and associated coastal settlements and North Bull SAAO. Inland views typically experience the sea within a largely developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure, set within a developed seascape context and across to the Welsh coastline on a very clear day with views possible of Snowdonia. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing further development into a largely developed seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the manmade structures.
	Operation / Maintenance Night-time: The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn. In both onshore and seaward views lighting associated with the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would alter the seascape's night-time character though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting associated with Dublin Port, Poolbeg Peninsula, commercial shipping vessels entering and exiting the Port and lighthouses. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (small – negligible in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).	**Operation / Maintenance Night-time:** The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn. In both onshore and seaward views lighting associated with the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would alter the seascape's night-time character though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting associated with Dublin Port, Poolbeg Peninsula, commercial shipping vessels entering and exiting the Port and lighthouses. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (small – negligible in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).
LOD	**Note:** There would be subtle variations in the layout due to LoD, however, the extent of change would be insufficient to alter the magnitude of change and consequential effects.	
Significance of Effect:	**WTG Option A:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **High** – **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases – construction / decommissioning (day and night-time) has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (night-time) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect.	**WTG Option B:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **High** – **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases -construction / decommissioning (day and night-time) has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (night-time) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect

Table 6 Seascape Assessment of RSCA 16 North Eastern Irish Sea Islands and Beaches

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
Sensitivity Value is assessed as **Local / County** and susceptibility to change as **Medium** resulting in an overall sensitivity of **Medium.**	The array site would be located approximately 27.0 km to the south of the RSCA and none of the project components of the array site would be located within this RSCA. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option A (**Figures 15.12 a to f and 15.13 a to f, Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures**) demonstrate that the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland with topographical features such as Howth Head providing some screening to inland areas. Impacts on the character and features would be direct, associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. The RSCA covers a wide area and as distances increase from the array site to the south, the size and scale of the change would reduce, and the underlying experience of the open sea would become the dominant feature. From this RSCA, the array site would be seen in the far distance. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in construction / decommissioning activity within the offshore development area as vessels tow / install the foundations, WTGs, OSSs, inter array cables and OfTI, including the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. This would be visible in distant views mainly experienced from the seaward side of the RSCA. There would also be an intensification of vessels along the OECC to the south, this would be experienced in combination with the busy northern passage in and out of Dublin Port. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographical extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low – Negligible** (medium-small in scale, short-term and localised in terms of geographical extent), reducing with distance to the north. Effects generated would relate to a slight change to the seascape character, introducing further development into an already developed, busy and active seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.	The array site would be located approximately 27.0 km to the south of the RSCA and none of the project components of the array site would be located within this RSCA. Both the bare earth and obstructed ZTVs to blade tip and hub height for WTG Option B (**Figures 15.12 a to f and 15.13 a to f, Appendix 15.10 SLVIA Figures)** demonstrate that the CWP Project's offshore infrastructure theoretical visibility would cover the entire extent of the RSCA seaward. Onshore the extent of theoretical visibility would be partially obstructed by intervening topography, landform and woodland with topographical features such as Howth Head providing some screening to inland areas. Impacts on the character and features would be direct, associated with intervisibility and aesthetic and perceptual influences. The RSCA covers a wide area and as distances increase from the array site to the south, the size and scale of the change would reduce, and the underlying experience of the open sea would become the dominant feature. From this RSCA, the array site would be seen in the far distance. **Construction / Decommissioning:** There would be a noticeable increase in construction / decommissioning activity within the offshore development area as vessels tow / install the foundations, WTGs, OSSs, inter array cables and OfTI, including the use of vessel cranes for construction of offshore infrastructure. This would be visible in distant views mainly experienced from the seaward side of the RSCA. There would also be an intensification of vessels along the OECC to the south, this would be experienced in combination with the busy northern passage in and out of Dublin Port. Works would be temporary in nature, short term in duration (up to 2 years) and limited in terms of geographical extent. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low - Negligible** (medium-small in scale, short-term and localised in terms of geographical extent), reducing with distance to the north. Effects generated would relate to a slight change to the seascape character introducing, further development into an already developed, busy and active seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the construction / decommissioning activities.
	Construction / Decommissioning (night-time): Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array site and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the extent of development at sea and therefore alter seascape character. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low - Negligible** (medium-small in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and localised in terms of geographical extent).	**Construction / Decommissioning (night-time):** Temporary construction / decommissioning safety lighting would be visible intermittently associated with the array site and deployment of construction / decommissioning vessels. In both onshore and seaward views such lighting would increase the extent of development at sea and therefore alter seascape character. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low - Negligible** (medium-small in scale, short-term (up to 2 years) and localised in terms of geographical extent).
	Operation / Maintenance: The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure will form an apparent though small seascape element within the existing open and largely undeveloped seascape context. The character of the seascape would alter particularly in the south of the RSCA. reducing the large and open scale nature of the seascape and creating	**Operation / Maintenance:** The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure will form an apparent though small seascape element within the existing open and largely undeveloped seascape context. The character of the seascape would alter particularly in the south of the RSCA. reducing the large and open scale nature of the seascape and creating

RSCA	WTG Option A	WTG Option B
	a degree of visual enclosure on the skyline in southeasterly views. There would be a perceived change by people at sea and from onshore coastal edges, coastal settlements and the coastal AONB in seaward panoramic views. Inland views typically experience the sea within partially developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from the sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project set within an expansive seascape context. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing further development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the manmade structures.	a degree of visual enclosure on the skyline in southeasterly views. There would be a perceived change by people at sea and from onshore coastal edges, coastal settlements and the coastal AONB in seaward panoramic views. Inland views typically experience the sea within partially developed context beyond intervening landscape influences. Coastal views and views from the sea offer a direct visual outlook towards the CWP Project set within an expansive seascape context. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** (small in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent). Effects generated would relate to a change to the seascape character, introducing further development into a largely undeveloped seascape and altering the perceived character of the wider seascape through visibility of the manmade structures.
	Operation / Maintenance Night-time: The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn, though seen at a distance. In both onshore and seaward views lighting associated with the offshore infrastructure would alter the seascape's night-time character, though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting associated with commercial shipping vessels entering and exiting the Port and lighthouses. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low - Negligible** (small-negligible in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).	**Operation / Maintenance Night-time:** The CWP Project's offshore infrastructure would generate additional sources of lighting from permanent navigational / marine lighting, WTG identifier markings, aviation lighting as well as occasional maintenance vessels visible at dusk, during the night and at dawn, though seen at a distance. In both onshore and seaward views lighting associated with the offshore infrastructure would alter the seascape's night-time character, though this would be offset by the presence of existing lighting associated with commercial shipping vessels entering and exiting the Port and lighthouses. The resultant magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low - Negligible** (small-negligible in scale, long-term and localised in terms of geographic extent).
LOD	**Note:** There would be subtle variations in the layout due to LoD, however, the extent of change would be insufficient to alter the magnitude of change and consequential effects.	
Significance of Effect:	**WTG Option A:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases -construction / decommissioning (day and night-time) has been assessed as **Low-Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (night-time) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low-Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect.	**WTG Option B:** Sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**, and magnitude of change for phases -construction / decommissioning (day and night-time) **has ben assessed Low-Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect. During operation/maintenance (day) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** resulting in a **Slight** (not significant) effect. During operation / maintenance (night-time) the magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low-Negligible** resulting in a **Not Significant** (not significant) effect.

6 Summary

81. Four RSCAs were assessed, informed by RSCAs mapped and described in the Regional Seascape Character Assessment 2020 Final Report prepared for the Marine Institute. The SLVIA determined that the CWP Project has the potential to generate Significant (significant) adverse seascape effects on seascape within RSCA 14, Irish Sea, Seabank and Broad Bays in which the CWP Project would be located during operation and maintenance (daytime) associated with Impact 3.

82. There would be no significant effects during construction / decommissioning on any of the RSCAs assessed and remaining RSCAs would experience no significant effects for all phases of the CWP Project development (Impact 1-6) ranging from Slight to Not Significant (not significant).

7 References

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