



APPENDIX 2-1
NMPF COMPLIANCE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) was published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in 2021. The NMPF sets out core principles to inform evolving marine planning and development management processes. The NMPF includes overarching marine planning policies along with sectoral marine planning policies.

Table 1-1 below sets out the marine planning policies contained in the NMPF and provides a description of how the Project complies with each policy, including reference to where the policy is addressed in the application, where relevant.

Table 1-1: Project compliance with the National Marine Planning Framework overarching marine policies.

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
<p>Environmental – Ocean Health</p>	<p>Environmental – Ocean Health</p>	<p><i>Ocean Health Policy 1:</i> <i>Compliance with NMPF policies relating to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Biodiversity</i> • <i>Non-Indigenous Species</i> • <i>Water Quality</i> • <i>Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity</i> • <i>Marine litter</i> • <i>Underwater Noise</i> <p><i>should include demonstration of contribution to the relevant Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) targets identified.</i></p>	<p>The Project has been designed to ensure that the overall health of the ocean is not adversely impacted upon during the construction, operational or decommissioning phase of the Project. Compliance with Ocean Health Policy 1 is outlined below, with further detail in relation to each topic provided under the relevant NMPF policies addressed within this document (<i>Biodiversity Policy 1-4, Non-Indigenous Species Policy 1, Water Quality Policy 1 & 2, Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 1-3, Marine litter Policy 1, Underwater Noise Policy 1</i>)</p> <p>The impact of the Project on biodiversity is assessed in Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology, Chapter 12 Marine Mammals, Chapter 20 Biodiversity – Flora and Fauna and Chapter 21 – Terrestrial Ornithology of the EIAR. The assessments within these chapters conclude that, when mitigation measures are considered, there will be no significant adverse impact on biodiversity or non-indigenous species as a result of the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are in place to reduce the potential for the introduction and/or spread of non-indigenous species. There will be mitigation by reduction in the form of reducing the effect through the implementation of an Offshore Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) (Appendix 5.2 of the EIAR) and Marine Invasive Non-Native Species Management Plan (Appendix 5-8 of the EIAR), including measures to avoid the introduction and spread of non-indigenous species and containment procedures in the unlikely event that non-indigenous species are found.</p> <p>In relation to water quality, Chapter 8 of the EIAR, Water and Sediment Quality, concludes that no significant adverse impacts will arise from the proposed Project. A Water Framework Directive Compliance Assessment was conducted for the Offshore and Onshore Site and are included in Appendix 8-1 (Offshore) and 23-2 (Onshore) of the EIAR. The assessment finds that the Project complies with the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>The development application for the Project includes an Offshore Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) as Appendix 5-2 of the EIAR. The OEMP includes a Resource Waste Management Plan, included as Appendix 5-5. The Resource Waste</p>

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			<p>Management Plan outlines the predicted waste arising from the Project and the waste management measures that will be put in place to ensure that waste is kept to a minimum. Waste management practices will be applied in accordance with the relevant legislation, policy and guidance.</p> <p>The impacts of underwater noise impacts are assessed in the Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 fish and Shellfish, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology, and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals of the EIAR. As the Project will utilise a gravity-based foundation, no underwater drilling or blasting is proposed, reducing underwater noise created as a result of the proposed project and impacts on the sea floor. It is concluded in Chapters 9, 10, 11 and 12 that underwater noise created as a result of the Project will not cause a significant adverse impact on marine fauna.</p> <p>Compliance with MSFD’s Environmental Targets under Article 10 is demonstrated across all relevant EIAR Chapters. The draft updated Article 10 Environmental Targets, published in July 2024, are also considered where relevant.</p> <p>Having regard to the above, it is submitted therefore, that the Project complies with Ocean Health Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Biodiversity</p>	<p><i>Biodiversity Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals incorporating features that enhance or facilitate species adaptation or migration, or natural native habitat connectivity will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPP. Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on species adaptation or migration, or on natural native habitat connectivity must demonstrate that they will, in order of</i></p>	<p>The Project has been designed to avoid and mitigate against any significant adverse impacts on species adaption or mitigation, or on natural native habitat, where possible. Where impacts are identified, appropriate mitigation measures have been incorporated in order to ensure that no significant adverse impact will occur.</p> <p>In Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, the benthic ecology impact assessment has assessed potential effects likely to be incurred from the construction, operational and decommissioning phases. The impact assessment has concluded that given the mitigation, the residual effect for all impact pathways is Not Significant for all the benthic ecology receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, the potential effects resulting from underwater noise, temporary and long-term habitat loss and disturbance, temporary increases in suspended sediment concentrations, accidental release of pollutants, habitat creation and fish aggregation, EMF effects, thermal emissions, barrier effects and ghost fishing during</p>

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		<p><i>preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate</i> <p><i>significant adverse impacts on species adaptation or migration, or on natural native habitat connectivity.</i></p>	<p>construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning have been assessed. The assessment concluded that with mitigation considered, the residual effect pathway would be Not Significant for all fish and shellfish receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology, the potential effects resulting from the disturbance and displacement on key bird species as a result of increased vessel activity and other construction/decommissioning activity, indirect effects on foraging seabirds as a result of habitat loss/displacement of prey species, disturbance and displacement on key bird species as a result of increased vessel activity and other maintenance activities, displacement and barrier effects on key bird species within the OAA and appropriate buffer from offshore infrastructure, mortality of key bird species as a result of collision with offshore wind turbines, and disturbance from aviation and navigation lighting over the lifetime of the Project have been assessed. The assessment has concluded that the residual effects would be Not Significant for all offshore ornithology receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 12 Marine Mammals, the potential effects resulting from underwater sound, disturbance and the risk of collision from the presence of vessels, temporary increases in suspended sediment concentrations, accidental releases of pollutants, EMF effects, displacement and barrier effects, and habitat change during construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning have been assessed. The assessment concluded that with mitigation measures considered, the residual effect will be Not Significant for all marine mammal and megafauna receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 20 Biodiversity - Flora and Fauna and Chapter 21 biodiversity - Terrestrial Ornithology, it is concluded that provided that the Onshore Site is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.</p> <p>The potential for effects on the integrity of European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the site is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. Both Volume 1 (Offshore) and Volume 2 (Onshore) conclude that following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its</p>

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			<p>conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Biodiversity Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Biodiversity Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals that protect, maintain, restore and enhance the distribution and net extent of important habitats and distribution of important species will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals must avoid significant reduction in the distribution and net extent of important habitats and other habitats that important species depend on, including avoidance of activity that may result in disturbance or displacement of habitats.</i></p>	<p>The disturbance or displacement of habitats is assessed in Chapter 7 Marine Physical Processes, Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals.</p> <p>Important habitats are defined by the NMPF as:</p> <p><i>Important habitats are those defined under Annex I of the Habitats Directive and threatened and/or declining habitats as defined by OSPAR and associated Recommendations thereon that have been adopted by Contracting Parties.</i></p> <p>Important species are defined by the NMPF as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Habitats Directive Annex II and Annex IV species that are known to occur (or to have occurred in recent times) as native populations within Irish waters;</i> ➤ <i>Threatened and/or declining species as defined by OSPAR;</i> ➤ <i>Those protected under the Wildlife Acts;</i> ➤ <i>Those assessed as threatened in IUCN Red Lists for Ireland ;</i> ➤ <i>Those listed as special conservation interests for relevant SPAs; and</i> ➤ <i>Those with Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland red status.</i> <p>The potential for effects on the integrity of European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the site is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. Both Volume 1 (Offshore) and Volume 2 (Onshore) conclude that following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p>

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			<p>The presence of important species and habitats are identified in Chapter 7 Marine Physical Processes, Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals. The EIAR assessments conclude that, with mitigation measures in place, no adverse impacts on important species and habitats, including other habitats that important species depend on, will take place as a result of the Project.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Biodiversity Policy 2.</p>
		<p><i>Biodiversity Policy 3:</i> <i>Where marine or coastal natural capital assets are recognised by Government:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Proposals must seek to enhance marine or coastal natural capital assets where possible.</i> • <i>Proposals must demonstrate that they will in order of preference, and in accordance with legal requirements:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoid,</i> b) <i>minimise, or</i> c) <i>mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine or coastal natural capital assets, or</i> d) <i>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine or coastal natural capital assets proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>Marine and coastal natural capital assets have been considered from the beginning of the project. A key factor in site selection was the absence of designated sites. The EIAR assess the Project and its impact on the environment.</p> <p>Marine and Coastal natural capital assets define the stock of renewable and non-renewable resources such as flora and fauna, water, soils, mineral and the blue economy found on the coast and that provide benefits to people. Marine and Coastal natural assets have been considered in the following chapters:</p> <p>Chapter 7 Marine Physical and Coastal Processes assessed the potential effects likely to be incurred from the construction, operational and decommissioning phases. With the mitigation measures considered, the residual effects will be Not Significant for all marine physical and coastal processes receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, the potential effects of the Project likely to be incurred from the construction, operational and decommissioning phases have been assessed. Mitigation has been included during project design and additional mitigation measures are proposed and considered within the assessment, for example, the use of trenchless technologies and GBS foundations to minimise seabed disturbance amongst other mitigations strategies. The assessment concluded that due to the low levels of sediment contamination and the highly localised and temporary nature of the impacts, no significant effects to any water and sediment quality receptors are predicted.</p> <p>In Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, the benthic ecology impact assessment has assessed potential effects likely to be incurred from the construction, operational and</p>

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			<p>decommissioning phases. The impact assessment has concluded that given the mitigation, the residual effect for all impact pathways is Not Significant for all the benthic ecology receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, the potential effects resulting from underwater noise, temporary and long-term habitat loss and disturbance, temporary increases in suspended sediment concentrations, accidental release of pollutants, habitat creation and fish aggregation, EMF effects, thermal emissions, barrier effects and ghost fishing during construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning have been assessed. The assessment concluded that with mitigation considered, the residual effect pathway would be Not Significant for all fish and shellfish receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology, the potential effects resulting from the disturbance and displacement of key bird species as a result of increased vessel activity and other construction/decommissioning activity, indirect effects on foraging seabirds as a result of habitat loss/displacement of prey species, disturbance and displacement on key bird species as a result of increased vessel activity and other maintenance activities, displacement and barrier effects on key bird species within the OAA and appropriate buffer from offshore infrastructure, mortality of key bird species as a result of collision with offshore wind turbines, and disturbance from aviation and navigation lighting over the lifetime of the Project have been assessed. The assessment has concluded that the residual effects would be Not Significant for all offshore ornithology receptors.</p> <p>In Chapter 12 Marine mammals, the potential effects resulting from underwater sound, disturbance and the risk of collision from the presence of vessels, temporary increases in suspended sediment concentrations, accidental releases of pollutants, EMF effects, displacement and barrier effects, and habitat change during construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning have been assessed. The assessment concluded that with mitigation measures considered, the residual effects will be Not Significant for all marine mammal and megafauna receptors.</p> <p>Chapter 13 Commercial Fisheries has assessed potential effects resulting from loss of access to fishing grounds, displacement of fishing activity into other areas, interference with fishing activity as a result of increased vessel traffic, increased steaming times and safety issues for fishing vessels during construction, operation and decommissioning. The likely</p>

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			<p>significant effects assessment has concluded that, taking into account the mitigation, the residual effect for all will be Not Significant for all commercial fisheries receptors.</p> <p>Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation has assessed the potential effects arising from the displacement of third-party vessels and resulting increased collision risk, collision risk between third-party and Project vessels, reduced access to local ports, creation of third-party allision risk (where one object only is moving), reduction in under-keel clearance, anchor interaction with subsea infrastructure, and emergency response capability. With the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the chapter in place, as well as consideration of a safety justification (Annex to Appendix 14-1 of the EIAR) for the array layout, these impacts result in effects that are entirely either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is Not Significant.</p> <p>Chapter 17 Marine Archaeology and Cultural Heritage identified one shipwreck within the marine archaeology study area. The wreck is deemed to be of low archaeological potential. No other features of archaeological potential were identified and embedded mitigation/ mitigation by design is set out in order to assure that no significant impact occurs to marine archaeological receptors. With respect to the effects of the Offshore Site on the setting of onshore archaeological monuments, the proximity of St MacDara’s Monastery means that the Project will have a significant effect. All other monuments would experience lesser, Not Significant effects.</p> <p>While the Project will have a significant effect due to its proximity to St MacDara’s Monastery, the impact is limited to a visual impact. While the impact is acknowledged, there remains a strong rationale for the progression of the Project. MacDara’s Island is an uninhabited island that is not easily accessible, which is visited once a year on the 16th of July as part of a pilgrimage by residents of the local area. As such the Significant visual impact on MacDara’s Monastery will be limited due the infrequency of visits. The Project is a nationally significant infrastructure project, supported through policy from a local to an international level. The Project is crucial for the achievement of the 5GW target for offshore wind energy by 2030 set out in the Climate Action Plan 2024. The Project is also important to Ireland’s energy security and Ireland’s ability to achieve the legally binding emissions reduction target set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015, as amended.</p>

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			<p>Chapter 18 Other Sea Users considers the likely effects of the Offshore Site on other sea users during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. With mitigation measures considered, no likely significant residual effects are identified.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Biodiversity Policy 3.</p>
		<p>Biodiversity Policy 4: <i>Proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) avoid, b) minimise, or c) mitigate <p><i>significant disturbance to, or displacement of, highly mobile species.</i></p>	<p>The impact of the Project on highly mobile species is assessed in Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals.</p> <p>The NMPF describes highly mobile species as:</p> <p><i>“Those that range over large distances and include plankton, jellyfish, fish and cephalopods, elasmobranchs, birds, marine mammals and turtles. Individuals are often part of more widespread international populations and may only be present in Ireland on a seasonal basis or for part of their life cycle”</i></p> <p>Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals conclude that with mitigation considered, the residual effect pathway would be Not Significant for all highly mobile species.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Biodiversity Policy 4.</p>
	<p>Protected Marine Sites</p>	<p>Protected Marine Sites Policy 1: <i>Proposals must demonstrate that they can be implemented without adverse effects on the integrity of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Where adverse effects from proposals remain following mitigation, in line with Habitats Directive Article 6(3), consent for the proposals cannot be granted unless the prerequisites set by Article 6(4) are met.</i></p>	<p>An EIAR accompanies the application for the Project. SACs and SPAs are considered in Chapters 7 Marine Physical Processes, Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals.</p> <p>The potential for effects on the integrity of European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the site is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. Both Volume 1 (Offshore) and Volume 2 (Onshore) conclude that following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its</p>

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			<p>conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Protected Marine Sites Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Protected Marine Sites Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals supporting the objectives of protected marine sites should be supported and:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>be informed by appropriate guidance</i> • <i>must demonstrate that they are in accordance with legal requirements, including statutory advice provided by authorities relevant to protected marine sites.</i> 	<p>The potential for effects on the integrity of European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the site is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. Both Volume 1 (Offshore) and Volume 2 (Onshore) conclude that following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p> <p>Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, applications for planning permission are obliged to implement the provisions of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, applies to both terrestrial and maritime applications. The NIS has been prepared in accordance with this legal requirement. The NIS also has regard to the appropriate guidance documents and statutory guidelines.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Protected Marine Sites Policy 2.</p>
		<p><i>Protected Marine Sites Policy 3:</i> <i>Proposals that enhance a protected marine site's ability to adapt to climate change, enhancing the resilience of the protected site, should be supported and:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>be informed by appropriate guidance</i> • <i>must demonstrate that they are in accordance with legal requirements, including statutory</i> 	<p>The Project will provide a significant amount of clean, renewable energy, reducing the carbon emissions from the electricity sector. By providing clean, renewable energy the Project will reduce the amount CO2 emissions, contributing to a reduction in the severity of the impacts associated with climate change. Any reduction to the severity of climate change impacts will have a positive impact on all protected sites.</p> <p>Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, applications for planning permission are obliged to implement the provisions of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, applies to both terrestrial and maritime applications. The NIS has been prepared in accordance with this legal requirement. The NIS also has regard to the appropriate guidance documents and statutory guidelines.</p>

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		<p><i>advice provided by authorities relevant to protected marine sites.</i></p>	<p>Therefore, the Project complies with Protected Marine Sites Policy 3.</p>
		<p><i>Protected Marine Sites Policy 4:</i> <i>Until the ecological coherence of the network of protected marine sites is examined and understood, proposals should identify, by review of best available evidence (including consultation with the competent authority with responsibility for designating such areas as required), the features, under consideration at the time the application is made, that may be required to develop and further establish the network. Based upon identified features that may be required to develop and further establish the network, proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference, and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate significant impacts on features that may be required to develop and further establish the network, or</i> <i>d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>The potential for effects on the integrity of European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the site is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. Both Volume 1 (Offshore) and Volume 2 (Onshore) conclude that following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p> <p>The NIS considers all Sites of Community Importance, SPAs, SACs and all Candidate Sites.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Protected Marine Sites Policy 4.</p>

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	<p>Non-Indigenous Species</p>	<p><i>Non-indigenous Species Policy 1:</i> <i>Reducing the risk of the introduction and/or spread of non-indigenous species is a requirement of all proposals. Proposals must demonstrate a risk management approach to prevent the introduction of and/or spread of non-indigenous species, particularly when:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) moving equipment, boats or livestock (for example fish or shellfish) from one water body to another,</i> <i>b) introducing structures suitable for settlement of non-indigenous species, or the spread of non-indigenous species known to exist in the area of the proposal.</i> 	<p>The Project demonstrates a proactive and comprehensive approach to reducing the risk of introducing non-indigenous species. Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce the risk of spreading non-indigenous species.</p> <p>The potential for the introduction of invasive or non-native species as a result of the Project is considered in Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology and Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish. The assessments conclude that, with the proposed mitigation measures considered, the residual effect pathway would be Not Significant for all benthic ecology and fish and shellfish receptors.</p> <p>There will be mitigation by reduction in the form of reducing the effect through the implementation of an Offshore Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 5-2 of the EIAR) and a Marine Invasive Non-Native Species Management Plan (Appendix 5-8 of the EIAR) prior to construction, including measures to avoid the introduction and spread of non-indigenous species and containment procedures in the unlikely event that non-indigenous species are found.</p> <p>The Project demonstrates a risk management approach to prevent the introduction and spread of non-indigenous species.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Non-Indigenous Species Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Water Quality</p>	<p><i>Water Quality Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts upon water quality, including upon habitats and species beneficial to water quality, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate</i> 	<p>In Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, the potential effects of the Project likely to be incurred from the construction, operational and decommissioning phases. Mitigation measures are proposed and considered within the assessment, for example, the use of trenchless technologies and GBS foundations to minimise seabed disturbance amongst other mitigations strategies. The assessment concluded that due to the low levels of sediment contamination and the highly localised and temporary nature of the impacts, no significant effects to any water and sediment quality receptors are predicted. The Project will adhere to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and Ballast Water Management (BWM) Conventions to minimise the risk of marine pollution.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Water Quality Policy 1.</p>

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		<p><i>significant adverse impacts.</i></p>	
		<p>Water Quality Policy 2: <i>Proposals delivering improvements to water quality, or enhancing habitats and species, which can be of benefit to water quality, should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project will not result in significant adverse effects on water quality as outlined in Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality.</p>
	<p>Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity</p>	<p>Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 1: <i>Proposals that incorporate measures to support the resilience of marine habitats will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals which may have significant adverse impacts on marine, particularly deep sea, habitats must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine habitats, or</i> <i>d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine habitats must set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>The impact of the Project on marine habitats is assessed in Chapter 7 Marine Physical Processes, Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals. These assessments have not identified any significant adverse impacts on marine habitats.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 1.</p>

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		<p><i>Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals, including those that increase access to the maritime area, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate</i> <p><i>adverse impacts on important habitats and species.</i></p>	<p>Important habitats are defined by the NMPF as:</p> <p><i>Important habitats are those defined under Annex I of the Habitats Directive and threatened and / or declining habitats as defined by OSPAR and associated Recommendations thereon that have been adopted by Contracting Parties.</i></p> <p>Important species are defined by the NMPF as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Habitats Directive Annex II and Annex IV species that are known to occur (or to have occurred in recent times) as native populations within Irish waters;</i> ➤ <i>Threatened and / or declining species as defined by OSPAR;</i> ➤ <i>Those protected under the Wildlife Acts;</i> ➤ <i>Those assessed as threatened in IUCN Red Lists for Ireland ;</i> ➤ <i>Those listed as special conservation interests for relevant SPAs; and</i> ➤ <i>Those with Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland red status.</i> <p>The potential for effects on the integrity of European Designated Sites (including Annex II and Annex IV species) in the vicinity of the site is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. Both Volume 1 (Offshore) and Volume 2 (Onshore) conclude that following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p> <p>The impact of the Project on important species and habitats is assessed in Chapter 7 Marine Physical Processes, Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 11 Marine Ornithology and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals. The EIAR assessments conclude that, with mitigation measures in place, no adverse impacts will occur on important species and habitats, including other habitats that important species depend on.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 2.</p>

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		<p><i>Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 3:</i> <i>Proposals that protect, maintain, restore and enhance coastal habitats for ecosystem functioning and provision of ecosystem services will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals must take account of the space required for coastal habitats, for ecosystem functioning and provision of ecosystem services, and demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise , or</i> <i>c) mitigate</i> </p> <p><i>for net loss of coastal habitat.</i></p>	<p>The impact of the Project on coastal habitats is assessed in Chapter 7 Marine Physical Processes, Chapter 8 Water and Sediment Quality, Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Chapter 12 Marine Mammals, Chapter 20 Biodiversity – Flora and Fauna and Chapter 21 Terrestrial Ornithology. The EIAR assessments conclude that, with mitigation measures in place, no adverse impacts on coastal habitats will arise as a result of the Project. Mitigation measures include mitigation by design such as the selection of a landfall point which avoids coastal SPAs and SACs and the proposed trenchless construction methodology.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 3.</p>
	<p>Marine Litter</p>	<p><i>Marine Litter Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that facilitate waste re-use or recycling, or that reduce marine and coastal litter will be supported, where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals that could potentially increase the amount of litter that is discharged into the maritime area, either intentionally or accidentally, must include</i></p>	<p>The development application for the Project includes an Offshore Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) as Appendix 5-2 of the EIAR. The OEMP includes a Resource Waste Management Plan, included as Appendix 5-5. The Resource Waste Management Plan outlines the predicted waste arising from the Project and the waste management measures that will be put in place to ensure that waste is kept to a minimum. Waste management practices will be applied in accordance with the relevant legislation, policy and guidance.</p> <p>Marine pollution prevention under the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) convention requirements will be followed during</p>

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		<p><i>measures (such as development of a waste management plan)</i></p> <p><i>to, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a) <i>avoid,</i> b) <i>minimise, or</i> c) <i>mitigate</i></p> <p><i>the litter. Demonstration of these measures must provide satisfactory evidence that the proposal is able to manage all waste without creation of litter.</i></p>	<p>construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning. A Marine Pollution Contingency Plan is provided in Appendix 5-3 of the EIAR.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Marine Litter Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Underwater Noise</p>	<p><i>Underwater Noise Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals must take account of spatial distribution, temporal extent, and levels of impulsive and /or continuous sound (underwater noise) that may be generated and the potential for significant adverse impacts on marine fauna. Where the potential for significant impact on marine fauna from underwater noise is identified, a Noise Assessment Statement must be prepared by the proposer of development. The findings of the Noise Assessment Statement should demonstrably inform determination(s) related to the activity proposed and the carrying out of the activity itself.</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will be constructed using a variety of underwater methodologies and therefore is expected to create some level of underwater noise. Underwater noise modelling was undertaken as part of the preparation of the EIAR to assess the likely significant effects on marine fauna.</p> <p>The Project is in compliance with all legal requirements with regard to the assessment of underwater noise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate Assessment (AA): An AA Screening Report and NIS have been prepared and are submitted as part of the application. • Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): An EIAR has been prepared and is submitted as part of the application. • Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): An SEA was conducted for the west coast, in which the Project is located, as part of the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan. • Article 12 of the Habitats Directive: The potential disturbance of species has been specifically assessed in this EIAR. • Wildlife Acts: Particular attention has been paid to species and habitats of ecological importance including species and habitats with national and

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>The content of the Noise Assessment Statement should be relevant to the particular circumstances and must include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Demonstration of compliance with applicable legal requirements, such as necessary assessment of proposals likely to have underwater noise implications, including but not limited to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appropriate Assessment (AA);</i> • <i>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);</i> • <i>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA);</i> • <i>Specific response to ‘strict protection’ requirements of Article 12 of the Habitats Directive in relation to certain species listed in Annex IV of the Directive; and</i> • <i>Species protected under the Wildlife Acts.</i> • <i>An assessment of the potential impact of the development or use on the affected species in terms of environmental sustainability;</i> • <i>Demonstration that significant adverse impacts on marine fauna resulting from underwater noise will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements be:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoided,</i> b) <i>minimised, or</i> c) <i>mitigated, or</i> 	<p>international protection under the Wildlife Acts 1976 (as amended), EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.</p> <p>The impact of underwater noise on marine fauna is assessed in Chapter 10 – Fish and Shellfish Ecology and Chapter 12 – Marine Mammals. The assessments are supported by the Underwater Noise Modelling and Assessment (Appendix 12-1).</p> <p>Chapter 12 – Marine Mammals, assesses the potential effects of underwater sound on marine mammal species and megafauna during the construction, operational and decommissioning phase. With the implementation of underwater sound mitigation, the assessment concludes that the residual effects will be Not Significant for all marine mammal and megafauna receptors. Similarly, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology concludes that, with mitigation measures considered, the residual effect pathway relating to underwater noise will be Not Significant for all fish and shellfish receptors.</p> <p>Underwater noise impacts have also been considered in the NIS where marine fauna species are identified as Qualifying Interests of protected marine sites. The NIS Volume 1 (Offshore) concludes following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts from the Project, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.</p> <p>As the WTG’s and OSS utilise a gravity-based foundation, there will be no piling or drilling activities required for their installation. This construction method reduces the level of underwater noise associated with the construction of the Project and is an example of where significant impacts (in terms of noise and vibration) have been avoided, minimised and mitigated by design.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Underwater Noise Policy 1.</p>

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		<p><i>d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine fauna, the reasons for proceeding must be set out.</i></p> <p><i>This policy should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessments require consideration of underwater noise.</i></p>	
	<p>Air Quality</p>	<p><i>Air Quality Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that support a reduction in air pollution should be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals must demonstrate consideration of their contribution to air pollution, both direct and cumulative.</i></p>	<p>An assessment of the Project’s contribution to air pollution, both direct and cumulatively, is provided in Chapter 19 Offshore Air Quality and Noise and Chapter 26 Onshore Air Quality. Chapter 19 Offshore Air Quality and Noise concludes that, with mitigation measures considered, the residual effect will be not significant for all air quality receptors. Chapter 26 Onshore Air Quality concludes that, with mitigation measures considered, the Onshore Site will not result in any significant effects on air quality in the area surrounding the Onshore Site.</p> <p>The Project will have a positive impact on air quality by replacing fossil fuel generation with clean renewable energy. Chapter 30 Climate calculates the emissions displaced by the electricity generated by the project. The projected total generation of electricity over the lifetime of the Project is 76,395,960 MWh (assumed lifetime of 38 years – 2029 to 2067). The CO_{2e} (carbon dioxide equivalent) emissions displaced from the national grid over the proposed 38-year lifetime of the Project is 17.56 million tonnes of CO_{2e}.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Air Quality Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Air Quality Policy 2:</i> <i>Where proposals are likely to result in or facilitate an increase in air pollution, proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference in accordance with legal requirements and standards:</i></p>	<p>An assessment of the Project’s contribution to air pollution, both direct and cumulatively, is provided in Chapter 19 Offshore Air Quality and Noise and Chapter 26 Onshore Air Quality. Chapter 19 Offshore Air Quality and Noise concludes that, with mitigation measures considered, the residual effects will be not significant for all air quality receptor. Chapter 26 Onshore Air Quality concludes that, with mitigation measures considered, the Onshore Site will not result in any significant effects on air quality in the area surrounding the Onshore Site.</p>

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		<p>a) <i>avoid,</i> b) <i>minimise, or</i> c) <i>mitigate</i></p> <p><i>air pollution.</i></p>	<p>Measures to mitigate against any potential impacts on Air Quality during the construction phase are set out in the OEMP (Appendix 5-2) and the Vessel Management Plan (Appendix 5-10).</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Air Quality Policy 2.</p>
	<p>Climate Change</p>	<p><i>Climate Change Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals should demonstrate how they:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>avoid contribution to adverse changes to physical features of the coast;</i> • <i>enhance, restore or recreate habitats that provide a flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem services where possible.</i> <p><i>Where potential significant adverse impacts upon habitats that provide a flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem services are identified, these must be in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <p>a) <i>avoided,</i> b) <i>minimised,</i> c) <i>mitigated,</i> d) <i>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, the reasons for proceeding must be set out.</i></p>	<p>The Project aims to minimise its contribution to adverse changes to physical features of the coast through site selection, project design and mitigation measures. The impact of the Project on the physical features of the coastline are assessed in Chapter 7 Marine Physical Processes. Chapter 7 assess the impact of the Project on offshore and coastal morphology, on features of designated sites, impacts due to the introduction of scour, and on changes to water column structure with impact to stratification. With mitigation measures considered, the Project will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on marine physical processes, features or habitats that provide flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem services.</p> <p>Chapter 30 Climate includes a biogenic carbon assessment. The biogenic carbon assessment considers how the Project could affect carbon stored in the marine environment and in the terrestrial environment. Chapter 30 concludes that due to the localised nature of seabed disturbance associated with the Project (including from dredging and disposal activities), and the absence of key blue carbon ecosystems at the Offshore Site, the Project is expected to result in a negligible loss of blue carbon stores or release of carbon due to any direct disturbance of marine ecosystems.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Climate Change policy 1.</p>

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		<p><i>This policy should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessments are required.</i></p> <p>Climate Change Policy 2</p> <p><i>For the lifetime of the proposal, the following climate change matters must be demonstrated:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>estimation of likely generation of greenhouse gas emissions, both direct and indirect;</i> • <i>measures to support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions where possible;</i> • <i>likely impact of climate change effects upon the proposal from factors including but not limited to: sea level rise, ocean acidification, changing weather patterns;</i> • <i>measures incorporated to enable adaptation climate change effects;</i> • <i>likely impact upon climate change adaptation measures adopted in the coastal area relevant to the proposal and/or adaptation measures adopted by adjacent activities;</i> • <i>where likely impact upon climate change adaptation measures in the coastal area relevant to the proposal and/or adaptation</i> 	<p></p> <p>In Chapter 30 Climate, the carbon intensity of the project is calculated. The carbon intensity of the Project is a measure of the emissions generated per unit of electricity produced. The total carbon intensity associated with the Project was calculated to be 29.9 gCO₂e/kWh. This accounts for the total Project emissions, over the entire lifecycle of the Project, equating to 2,287,973 tCO₂e (2.287973E+12 gCO₂e) and the total MWh generation over the operational phase of 76,395,960 MWh (76,395,960,000 kWh). For comparison, as of 2023, the net marginal carbon intensity of electricity production for Ireland, including existing renewable energy sources, was 229.9g CO₂e/kWh. The payback period for the Project, the period of time before the Project has avoided more carbon dioxide equivalent emissions than has been produced by its construction and operation, is estimated to be 3 years once fully operational.</p> <p>The likely effects of climate change including sea level rise, ocean acidification, changing weather patterns, are described and the associated impacts on receptors are assessed in Chapter 27 – Climate. Overall, for both the Onshore Site and the Offshore Site, there is low potential for in-combination and future climate impacts to adversely impact offshore or onshore receptors.</p> <p>Chapter 2 Background of the EIAR and this planning report provides an assessment of the Project against climate policy at a European and national level. As a ‘Phase 1’ project, the Project is a critical part of the national strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, legally required under the Climate Act.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Climate change Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>measures adopted by adjacent activities is identified, these impacts must be in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoided,</i> <i>b) minimised,</i> <i>c) mitigated,</i> <i>d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, the reasons for proceeding must be set out.</i> 	
<p>Economic-Thriving Maritime Economy</p>	<p>Co-existence</p>	<p><i>Co-existence Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals should demonstrate that they have considered how to optimise the use of space, including through consideration of opportunities for co-existence and co-operation with other activities, enhancing other activities where appropriate. If proposals cannot avoid significant adverse impacts (including displacement) on other activities they must, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) minimise significant adverse impacts,</i> <i>b) mitigate significant adverse impacts, or</i> <i>c) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>The co-existence of the Project with other marine activities is assessed in Chapter 13 – Commercial Fisheries, Chapter 14 - Shipping and Navigation, Chapter 15 - Civil and Military Aviation, and Chapter 18 –Other Sea Users. Embedded mitigation measures are proposed to minimise adverse impacts on other marine users.</p> <p>With mitigation measures considered, the Project will not give rise to a significant adverse effect on the marine activities and users. In relation to fishing activities, Chapter 13 concludes that there will be no significant long-term impact on fishing activities that currently take place at the site.</p> <p>The project will also have a substantial Community Benefit Fund (CBF), estimated to amount to c. € 3.5 million per annum. The community will determine which projects receive funding from the CBF. The Applicant strongly supports ringfencing a proportion of the fund to support marine related activities. The CBF has the potential to significantly enhance marine related and other activities in the area.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Co-existence Policy 1.</p>

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	Infrastructure	<p><i>Infrastructure Policy 1:</i> <i>Appropriate land-based infrastructure which facilitates marine activity (and vice versa) should be supported. Proposals for appropriate infrastructure that facilitates the diversification or regeneration of marine industries should be supported.</i></p>	<p>There are offshore and onshore elements included in the Project. The main onshore elements are the onshore export cable and the onshore compensation compound. This infrastructure is necessary to bring electricity generated by the Project on to the national electricity grid. The Project will diversify the marine economy by creating new employment at all stages of the project (construction, operation and decommissioning) and will contribute to the emerging offshore wind energy sector.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Infrastructure Policy 1.</p>
Social-Engagement with the Sea	Access	<p><i>Access Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals, including in relation to tourism and recreation, should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate</i> <p><i>significant adverse impacts on public access.</i></p>	<p>As part of the assessment of the Project, an independent tourism study was undertaken to establish the impact of the Project on the area. The tourism assessment, which included 19 in depth interviews with representatives of local communities and members of the tourism industry, and 212 interviews with visitors to south Connemara, concludes that the tourism performance of south Connemara will not be affected with no adverse tourism impact in the short to long term. The Tourism Impact Assessment Report, prepared by Repucon Consulting, is included as Appendix 6.1 of the EIAR.</p> <p>In relation to fishing activities, Chapter 13 Commercial Fisheries concludes that there will be no significant long-term impact on fishing activities that currently taking place at the site. Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, which includes an assessment of the Projects obstruction to marine recreational users concludes that the Project will not give rise to any significant adverse effects.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Access Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Access Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals demonstrating appropriate enhanced and inclusive public access to and within the maritime area, and that consider the future provision of services for tourism and recreation activities, should be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the</i></p>	<p>Although tourism and recreation activities are not specifically proposed, it is envisaged that there will be opportunities for marine tourism and recreation activities, which will allow tourists to visit the Offshore Site. The potential opportunities for tourism and recreational activities at the Offshore Site is outlined in the Tourism Impact Assessment Report, included as Appendix 6.1 of the EIAR.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Access Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF.</i></p>	
	<p>Employment</p>	<p><i>Employment Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals should demonstrate contribution to a net increase in marine related employment in Ireland, particularly where the proposals are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>in line with the skills available in Irish coastal communities adjacent to the maritime area,</i> • <i>improve the sustainable use of natural resources,</i> • <i>diversify skills to enable employment in emerging industries.</i> 	<p>This Project will contribute to marine-related employment by creating jobs in construction, operation, maintenance, survey, monitoring and support services. These jobs span a wide range of disciplines and skill levels, providing opportunities for career growth and development in the marine sector. The Project provides an opportunity to apply valuable existing skills and local knowledge to the offshore wind energy sector, developing capabilities within the region’s workforce to provide the services required to construct and operate an offshore wind farm. The benefits to employment extend beyond the Project subject of this application, with a national ambition to install 37GW of offshore renewable energy by 2050 (Future Framework for ORE), the upskilling, training and development arising from the Project will be invaluable for the future of the offshore renewable energy sector in the region.</p> <p>An Economic Impact Assessment Report, prepared by Biggar Economics, is included as Appendix 6-2 of the EIAR. During the lifetime of the Project, it is estimated that approximately €2.4 billion will be spent on the development, construction, operation and decommissioning of the wind farm. It is estimated that the Project will support 174 full time equivalent jobs over the operational phase, with Project lifetime Gross Value Added amounting to approximately €564 million.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Employment Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Heritage Assets</p>	<p><i>Heritage Assets Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that demonstrate they will contribute to enhancing the significance of heritage assets will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals unable to contribute to enhancing the significance</i></p>	<p>The impact of the Project on heritage assets is assessed in the EIAR Chapter 17 Marine Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and Chapter 24 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>Chapter 17 Marine Archaeology and Cultural Heritage identified one shipwreck within the marine archaeology study area. The wreck is deemed to be of low archaeological potential. No other features of archaeological potential were identified, and mitigation is set out in order to ensure that no impact occurs to marine archaeological receptors. With respect to the effects of the Offshore Site on the setting of onshore archaeological monuments, the proximity of St MacDara’s Monastery means that the Project will have a</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>of heritage assets will only be supported if they demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate harm to the significance of heritage assets, and</i> <i>d) if it is not possible, to mitigate harm, then the public benefits for proceeding with the proposal must outweigh the harm to the significance of the heritage assets. (see definition of ‘Public Benefits’ in the Glossary)</i> 	<p>Significant effect. However it should be noted that St MacDara’s island is uninhabited, difficult to access with no pier, and infrequently visited.</p> <p>All other monuments would experience lesser, Not Significant effects.</p> <p>While the Project will have a significant effect due to its proximity to St MacDara’s Monastery, the impact is limited to a visual impact. While the impact is acknowledged, there remains a strong rationale for the progression of the Project. The Project is a nationally significant infrastructure project, supported through policy from a local to an international level. The Project is crucial for the achievement of the 5GW target for offshore wind energy by 2030 set out in the Climate Action Plan 2024. The Project is also important to Ireland’s energy security and Ireland’s ability to achieve the legally binding emissions reduction target set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015, as amended.</p> <p>Chapter 24 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage found no significant effects to the cultural heritage resource as a result of the Onshore Site.</p> <p>The project is located off Connemara's Gaeltacht coastline. The cultural significance of the Irish language and the Gaeltacht region is an important part of the Project, and public consultation and communication strategies. Given the Projects connection to the Connemara Gaeltacht, the Irish language and unique culture of the region will continue to be strongly supported by the Project through the Community Benefit Fund.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Heritage Assets Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Rural Coastal and Island Communities</p>	<p><i>Rural Coastal and Island Communities Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals contributing to access, communications, energy self-sufficiency or sustainability of rural coastal and / or island communities should be supported. Proposals should ideally be inclusive of continual education, skills development and training in marine sectors, thus</i></p>	<p>As the only ‘Phase 1’ project on the west coast of the country, the Project is important to achieve balanced regional development and to ensure communities off the west coast are not excluded from economic and social benefits of offshore renewable energy development. The development of the offshore renewable energy sector in rural communities through training and education has been a key aspect while preparing the application and over the course of the Project to date. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Údarás na Gaeltachta has been signed to formally continue collaboration on education and training initiatives within the Gaeltacht and the Connemara Region. The Applicant is also a member of the EU supported T-shore CoVE (Centre of Vocational</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>improving the sustainability, social benefits and economic resilience of rural and island communities.</i></p>	<p>Excellence) project, which aims to develop education and training modules to develop the technical skills required for offshore renewable Energy. Opportunities for education and training were explored throughout the community engagement process. A public information event with a focus on the skills, training, and employment was held.</p> <p>The Project will contribute to marine-related employment by creating jobs in construction, operation, maintenance, survey, monitoring and support services. These jobs span a wide range of disciplines and skill levels, providing opportunities for career growth and development in the marine sector. It is estimated that the Project will support 174 full time equivalent jobs over the operational phase, with Project lifetime Gross Value Added amounting to approximately €564 million. The project will therefore contribute to the sustainability and economic resilience of the rural Atlantic Region in line with Rural Coastal and Island Communities Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Seascape and Landscape</p>	<p><i>Seascape and Landscape Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals should demonstrate how the likely significant impacts of a development on the seascape and landscape of an area have been considered. Proposals will only be supported if they demonstrate that they, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoid,</i> <i>b) minimise, or</i> <i>c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on the seascape and landscape of the area.</i> <i>d) If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> <p><i>This policy should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments.</i></p>	<p>A Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) has been prepared as part of the EIAR (Chapter 16 - SLVIA). The assessment includes 38 no. photomontage viewpoints, which are included in Volume 2 of the EIAR.</p> <p>The SLVIA concludes that the Project is considered to give rise to Major / Negative seascape effects only within approximately 10km of the site, which envelops the coastal waters and nearshore Islands of Macdara, Mason and Mweenish as well as the complex Connemara coastline of the seaward end of the promontory peninsula they extend from. Major / Negative visual effects are also assessed from two of the representative viewpoint locations within this part of the central study area that are afforded open coastal vistas towards the site. This includes from the uninhabited Macdara Island and from Mweenish Island. These are the only SLVIA effects that are considered to be significant in EIA terms. It is important to note that these represent localised significant effects and there are also many visual receptors within 10km of the site that incur little or no visual effect where open sea views are more restricted.</p> <p>While the impacts of the Project on seascape and landscape are acknowledged, there is a need for balance with regards landscape and seascape protection and the need to develop nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure. As noted in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, under policies ‘<i>LCM 2 - Landscape Sensitivity Classification</i>’ and ‘<i>PVSR 1 – Protected Views and Scenic Routes</i>’, the implementation of these</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
			<p>landscape policies and objectives ‘shall be balanced against the need to develop key strategic infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the plan’. The strategic aims of the Galway County Development Plan align with the national climate and energy objective to install 5GW offshore wind energy in Irish waters by the end of the decade.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Seascape and Landscape Policy 1.</p>
	<p>Social Benefits</p>	<p><i>Social Benefits Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that enhance or promote social benefits should be supported. Proposals unable to enhance or promote social benefits should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a) <i>minimise, or</i> b) <i>mitigate</i></p> <p><i>significant adverse impacts which result in the displacement of other existing or authorised (but yet to be implemented) activities that generate social benefits.</i></p>	<p>The Project will drive economic activity through the Gross Value Added (GVA) and jobs that it supports. As with spending, GVA and employment impacts are inclusive, i.e., impacts in Ireland include those occurring in the Atlantic Region. During the development and construction phase, it is expected that the Project will support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 140 Annualized Full-Time Equivalent Jobs (aFTEs) and generate €13 million GVA in County Galway; • 250 aFTEs and generate €22 million GVA in the Atlantic Region; and • 610 aFTEs and generate €53 million GVA in Ireland. <p>The economic impacts during the operational phase of the Project will be long term and this phase represents a significant opportunity to both the regional and Irish economies. In an average year, the operational expenditure on Sceirde Rocks Windfarm the Project is expected to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 jobs and €3 million GVA per annum in County Galway; • 110 jobs and €5 million GVA per annum in the Atlantic Region; and • 130 jobs and €8 million GVA per annum in Ireland. <p>A detailed report outlining the impact of the Project on the local and national economy is included in Appendix 6-2 of Chapter 6 - Population and Human Health</p> <p>The Project will also directly contribute to the communities which are local to the development in line with the Community Benefit Funding proposals. The annual value of the fund will be approximately €3.5 million once the project is fully operational. The communities that will benefit from this funding will be along the western coastline of Connemara, the Aran Islands and the surrounding areas. The fund will be managed by a committee sourced from the local community, which will determine the aims and</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
			<p>objectives of the fund, in line with the guidance published by the Department for Energy, Climate Action and Communications.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Social Benefits Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Social Benefits Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals that increase the understanding and enjoyment of the marine environment (including its natural, historic and social value), or that promote conservation management and increased education and skills, should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The project will promote an increased understanding of the marine environment and offshore renewable energy directly through the surveys and assessments carried out to inform the design and assessment of the Project and through the creation of maritime employment opportunities. The Project will also indirectly contribute to increased understanding of the marine environment and increased education and skills as the creation of maritime employment opportunities will likely lead to an increase in marine related fields of study in universities across Ireland, including the west of Ireland. This is already evident, with the Atlantic Technological University - Galway Mayo commencing a Postgraduate Certificate in Marine Spatial Planning in 2023.¹</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Social Benefits Policy 2.</p>
	<p>Transboundary</p>	<p><i>Transboundary Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that have transboundary impacts beyond the maritime area, on either the terrestrial environment or neighbouring international jurisdictions, must show evidence of consultation with the relevant public authorities, including terrestrial planning authorities and other country authorities. Proposals should consider transboundary impacts throughout the lifetime of the proposed activity.</i></p>	<p>Transboundary impacts are limited due to the location of the Project off Ireland’s West Coast. The Project has been assessed cumulatively with other projects, including projects in other national jurisdictions. It is concluded in the Cumulative Impact Assessment in the Chapter 4 Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology of the EIAR and in Appendix 4-1 and 4-2, that the Project will not have a transboundary impact on any neighbouring international jurisdictions. No transboundary bodies or states were listed as prescribed bodies by An Bord Pleanála at the close out of the pre-application consultation stage.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Transboundary Policy 1.</p>
<p>Key Sectoral/ Activity Policies</p>			

¹ <https://springboardcourses.ie/index.php/details/13719>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
Aquaculture	Aquaculture	<p><i>Aquaculture Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals for sustainable development of aquaculture that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>demonstrate use of innovative approaches, and / or</i> • <i>contribute to diversification of species being grown in a given locality, particularly proposals applying a multi-trophic approach, and / or</i> • <i>enhances resilience to the effects of climate change</i> <p><i>should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not relate to an Aquaculture development.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project does not conflict with the objectives of Aquaculture Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Aquaculture Policy 2:</i> <i>Non-aquaculture proposals in aquaculture production areas must demonstrate consideration of, and compatibility with, aquaculture production.</i></p> <p><i>Where compatibility is not possible, proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoid;</i> b) <i>minimise;</i> c) <i>mitigate</i> d) <i>significant adverse impacts on aquaculture.</i> <p><i>If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts upon aquaculture,</i></p>	<p>The Project is not located within an aquaculture production area.</p> <p>Chapter 13 Commercial Fisheries has assessed potential effects resulting from loss of access to fishing grounds, displacement of fishing activity into other areas, interference with fishing activity as a result of increased vessel traffic, increased steaming times and safety issues for fishing vessels during construction, operation and decommissioning. The likely significant effects assessment has concluded that, taking into account the mitigation, the residual effect for all effects will be Not Significant for all commercial fisheries receptors. Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, which includes an assessment of the Projects obstruction to marine recreational users concludes that the Project will not give rise to any significant adverse effects.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Aquaculture Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i></p> <p><i>Aquaculture Policy 3:</i> <i>Land-based coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports development of aquaculture should be supported, in accordance with any legal requirements and provided environmental safeguards contained within authorisation processes are fully met.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not include any Land-based coastal infrastructure related to aquaculture. Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Aquaculture Policy 3.</p>
<p>Defence and Security</p>	<p>Defence and Security</p>	<p><i>Defence and Security Policy 1:</i> <i>Any proposal that has the potential to interfere with the performance by the Defence Forces of their security and non-security related tasks must be subject to consultation with the Defence Organisation.</i></p> <p><i>This includes potential interference with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Safety of navigation and access to naval facilities;</i> • <i>Firing, test or exercise areas;</i> • <i>Communication, and surveillance systems;</i> • <i>Fishery protection functions.</i> <p><i>Proposals should only be supported where, having consulted with the Defence Organisation, they are satisfied that it will not result in unacceptable interference with the performance by the Defence Forces of their security and non-security related tasks.</i></p>	<p>The Department of Defence was consulted and provided with details of the Project during the EIAR scoping process. The Department of Defence stated that they had no observations to make at this time.</p> <p>Chapter 15 of the EIAR, Civil and Military Aviation, assess the impact of the Project on military aviation. It is concluded that the Project will not have a significant adverse effect on military aviation operations.</p> <p>Chapter 14 of the EIAR, Shipping and Navigation concludes that the effects of all potential impacts are assessed as being either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is Not Significant. No interference with military vessels or their operations is foreseen.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Defence and Security Policy 1.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>Any proposal will be subject to the relevant Environmental Assessments, as set out in the introduction to this NMPP.</i></p>	
Energy- Natural Gas Storage		<p>Natural Gas Storage Policy 1</p> <p><i>Subject to assessments required for the protection of the environment, and only where in keeping with the outcome of the review of the security of energy supply of Ireland's electricity and natural gas systems (which is being carried out by Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications), natural gas storage proposals should be supported.</i></p>	<p>As the Project does not include natural gas storage, there is no conflict with the objectives Natural Gas Storage Policy 1.</p>
Energy - Offshore Renewable	Energy & Security	<p>ORE Policy 1:</p> <p><i>Proposals that assist the State in meeting the Government's offshore renewable energy targets, including the target of achieving 5GW of capacity in offshore wind by 2030 and proposals that maximise the long-term shift from the use of fossil fuels to renewable electricity energy, in line with decarbonisation targets, should be supported. All proposals will be rigorously assessed to ensure compliance with environmental standards and seek to minimise impacts on the marine environment, marine ecology and other maritime users.</i></p>	<p>As a 'Phase 1' project, this Project is critical for the State to achieve the 5GW target for offshore wind by 2030. Proposals, such as the Project, are required to facilitate the shift from the use of fossil fuels to renewable electricity. The Project will have a maximum export capacity of 450 MW. The 'Phase 1' projects represent an opportunity to install approx. 4.2 GW of offshore wind energy in Irish waters and are likely to be the only offshore wind energy projects to be consented and operational by 2030.</p> <p>The Project has been comprehensively assessed in the EIAR and NIS to ensure that the environmental standards are complied with and to minimise the impact on the marine environment.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 1.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>ORE Policy 2: <i>Proposals must be consistent with national policy, including the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPA) and its successor. Relevant Projects designated pursuant to the Transition Protocol and those projects that can objectively enable delivery on the Government's 2030 targets will be prioritised for assessment under the new consenting regime. Into the future, areas designated for offshore energy development, under the Designated Marine Area Plan process set out in the Maritime Area Planning Bill, will underpin a plan-led approach to consenting (or development of our marine resources).</i></p>	<p>The Project is supported by the OREDP, which has identified the West Coast (assessment area 5) as being capable of accommodating 500MW of fixed wind without likely significant adverse effect on the environment.²</p> <p>The Project is a 'Relevant Project' (now 'Phase 1') designated pursuant to the Transition Protocol. The Project will directly support the State's climate goal of reaching 5GW of offshore wind by 2030. The Project, and the prioritisation of its assessment, is therefore directly supported by ORE Policy 2.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 2.</p>
		<p>ORE Policy 3: <i>Any non- ORE proposals that are in or could affect sites held under a permission or that are subject to an ongoing permitting or consenting process for renewable energy generation (wind, wave or tidal should demonstrate that they will order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) avoid b) minimise c) mitigate d) adverse impacts, or 	<p>As the Project is an ORE proposal, there is no conflict with the objectives of ORE Policy 3.</p>

² Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources: Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (2014), <https://assets.gov.ie/27215/2bc3cb73b6474beebbe810e88f49d1d4.pdf>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>e) <i>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i></p> <p><i>Applicants for non-ORE proposals in or affecting ORE sites should engage ORE developers in consultation during pre-application processes as appropriate.</i></p>	
		<p>ORE Policy 4: <i>Decisions on ORE developments should be informed by consideration of space required for other activities of national importance described in the NMPP.</i></p>	<p>The cumulative impact of the Project and other nationally important marine activities has been assessed across all chapters of the EIAR. The Project has been designed to allow for other marine activities, such as fishing and aquaculture, to continue.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 4.</p>
		<p>ORE Policy 5: <i>Proposals for activity that may adversely impact ORE test projects by virtue of being within or adjacent to ORE test sites, or between site and landfall of ORE test projects that may adversely impact ORE test site projects, should demonstrate that they will in order of preference:</i></p> <p>a) <i>avoid</i> b) <i>minimise</i> c) <i>mitigate adverse impacts</i></p>	<p>The Project will not give rise to any adverse impacts on ORE test sites.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 5.</p>
		<p>ORE Policy 6: <i>Proposals for infrastructure enabling local use of excess energy generated from emerging marine technologies (wave, tidal, floating wind) should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not include any infrastructure to utilise excess energy from emerging marine technologies (wave, tidal or floating wind). Therefore, there is no conflict with ORE Policy 6.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>ORE Policy 7: <i>Where potential for ports to contribute to ORE is identified, plans and policies related to this port must encourage development in such a way as to facilitate ORE and related supply chain activity.</i></p>	<p>The Project will utilise ports on the west coast during the construction period and for operation and maintenance activities. Local policy, at ports such as Ross an Mhíl and Shannon Foynes, is supportive of the offshore renewable energy and related supply chain uses. The Applicant strongly supports the development of ports and port infrastructure to facilitate the construction and operation of offshore renewable energy projects.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 7.</p>
		<p>ORE Policy 8: <i>Proposals for ORE must demonstrate consideration of existing cables passing through or adjacent to areas for development, making sure ability to repair and carry out cable-related remedial work is not significantly compromised. This consideration should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessments are required.</i></p>	<p>Existing cables in the vicinity of the offshore site are identified and fully assessed as part of the cumulative impact assessment of the EIAR and are shown on figure 18.1 of Chapter 18 – Other Sea Users.</p> <p>The Offshore Export Cable Corridor (OECC) directly overlaps/crosses with the IRIS submarine cable (privately owned and operated by Farice). The IRIS cable system, which is approximately 1,700 km in length, connects southwest Iceland to Ballyloughane Strand in Galway and was ready for service in March 2023 (Submarine Cable Networks, 2023). As set out in Chapter 18, works associated with the construction of the OECC will take place over a local scale (within the OECC boundaries), short-term duration and at a low intensity. The significance of the of likely interaction between construction activities and any operation and maintenance works associated with the IRIS submarine cable, and the magnitude of the effect is therefore considered to be low.</p> <p>Mitigation measures to reduce impact on the existing IRIS cable are set out in Section 18.6.2.2.4 of Chapter 18 Other Sea Users and include the development of a Cable Plan, which will include a cable crossing methodology, including the need for any cable protection measures. Any crossing and /or proximity agreements will be agreed between the Applicant and Farice to ensure no damage or detrimental interference occurs to this asset or the Project offshore export cable(s). The crossing has been designed to be perpendicular to reduce overlap in so far as possible.</p> <p>There are no other known active or disused submarine cables and pipelines that directly interact with the Other Sea Users Study Area (Figure 18-3).</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
			<p>As set out in Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, due to the short-term nature of the works and with consideration given to the embedded mitigation measures identified in section 18.6.2.2.4 of Chapter 18, significant effects associated with the temporary obstruction to and maintenance of electricity cable installations as a result of safety zones around Project vessels are not expected.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 8.</p>
		<p><i>ORE Policy 9:</i> <i>A permission for ORE must be informed by inclusion of a visualisation assessment that supports conditions on any development in relation to design and layout. Where a development consent is applied for in an area already subject to permission, proposals must include a visualisation assessment to inform design and layout. Visualisation assessments should demonstrate consultation with communities that may be able to view the proposal, in addition to any other ORE development, which had received consent to proceed at a given site at the time the consent application is made, with the aim of minimising impact. Visualisation assessments will be informed by specific emerging guidelines (detailed in the actions set out in Annexes to this NMPP). Prior to specific guidelines being available, policy and best practice relating to visualisation assessment should be used. This consideration must be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessment is required.</i></p>	<p>A Seascape, Landscape and Visual Assessment (Chapter 16 LVIA) was undertaken as part of the EIAR. The assessment included the production of photomontages from various viewpoints from the surrounding coastline. The SLVIA was undertaken following best practice. The Project photomontages were used during the pre-application and public consultation processes and selected photomontages were also available on the Project website from April 2024.</p> <p>The photomontages are provided in Volume 2 of the EIAR. Further details in relation to the public consultation undertaken can be found in Appendix 2-3 of the EIAR.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 9.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>ORE Policy 10: <i>Opportunities for land-based, coastal infrastructure is critical to and supports development of ORE should be prioritised in plans and policies, where possible.</i></p>	<p>The land-based elements of the Project are required to transport the energy generated at the offshore array to the national electricity grid. The land-based elements of the Project are supported at all policy levels.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 10.</p>
		<p>ORE Policy 11: <i>Where appropriate, proposals that enable the provision of emerging renewable energy technologies and associated supply chains will be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project uses the most advanced offshore wind energy technologies and construction methodologies. For example, the WTG and OSS will avail of gravity-based foundation technology, removing the need for loud pile driving, reducing the noise impact on marine species. The Project has recently been awarded a STEP Seal from the EU. The Seal is the EU's new quality label awarded by the European Commission and recognises this as a high-quality project proposal in a highly competitive evaluation process, following an evaluation by an international panel of independent experts. The STEP Seal is aimed at facilitating access to funding opportunities under EU funding programmes covered by STEP. The Seal will remain with awarded projects over their duration.</p> <p>The technology and processes involved in installing the gravity base foundations has overlaps with aspects of offshore floating wind foundations. The skills and knowledge gained in the development of the Project will assist the Atlantic region take advantage of future opportunities in offshore floating wind off the west coast of Ireland which is considered to be vital to meeting 2050 net zero targets.</p> <p>Overall, the Project will contribute to the emerging offshore wind energy sector, including the associated supply chains.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with ORE Policy 11.</p>
Energy-Petroleum	Petroleum Policy	<p>Petroleum Policy 1: <i>Proposals in areas where petroleum activities or petroleum production infrastructure have already been approved, or where applications consistent with the Government's prohibition on new</i></p>	<p>The Project does not interfere with any areas where petroleum activities are ongoing. Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Petroleum Policy 1.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>exploration activity are under consideration, should only be authorised where compatibility with the existing, authorised or proposed activity can be satisfactorily demonstrated or the proposal is clearly of strategic or national importance. Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoiding, or</i> b) <i>minimising, or</i> c) <i>mitigating adverse impacts.</i> d) <i>If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	
		<p><i>Petroleum Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals potentially affecting future potential activity in areas (blocks) subject to existing petroleum authorisations should avoid sterilisation of that area for future petroleum-related activity consistent with Government policy, and demonstrate how they, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoid, or</i> b) <i>minimise, or</i> c) <i>mitigate potential adverse impacts on those activities.</i> d) <i>If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts,</i> 	<p>The Project is not located in an area subject to an existing petroleum authorisation. Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Petroleum Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.	
Energy-Transmission	Energy – Transmission	<p>Transmission Policy 1: <i>Subject to the appropriate environmental assessments, electricity transmission proposals that maintain or improve the security and diversity of Ireland’s energy supply should be supported, including interconnectors, relevant EU Projects of Common Interest (PCIs), and projects in receipt of relevant alternative EU priority energy infrastructure classification provided for by the EU TEN-E regulations. This should include development of the offshore transmission system and connection with the onshore transmission system necessary to meet the Government’s target of 5 GW of offshore renewables by 2030, as well as development of associated transmission system / interconnector infrastructure for hybrid offshore projects, connecting offshore renewable energy installations with Ireland and one or more other electricity transmission systems.</i></p>	<p>The Project is a designated ‘Phase 1’ offshore wind farm with an MEC of 450MW. The Project is crucial to the achievement of Ireland’s 5GW offshore wind energy target, set out in CAP24. The Project is also significant for national energy security, diversification of the national energy supply and in reducing Ireland’s energy import dependency. The Project includes a transmission grid connection to Moneypoint 220 kV substation in Co. Clare.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Transmission Policy 1.</p>
		<p>Transmission Policy 2: <i>Proposals for activities that are in or could affect energy transmission proposals in sites held under a permission or that are subject to an ongoing permitting or consenting process for energy transmission proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p>	<p>The Project does not impact on any existing or proposed energy transmission, interconnector or other offshore transmission infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Transmission Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate adverse impacts, or d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</p>	
		<p>Transmission Policy 3: <i>Decisions on transmission developments should be informed by consideration of space required for other activities of national importance described in the NMPP.</i></p>	<p>Consideration of the space required for other activities is assessed in Chapter 13 Commercial Fisheries, Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation, Chapter 15 Civil and Military Aviation, and Chapter 18 Other Sea Users. Across the assessments included in the above-mentioned chapters, it is concluded that the Project will not give rise to any significant effects.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Transmission Policy 3.</p>
		<p>Transmission Policy 4: <i>Where possible, opportunities for land-based, coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports energy transmission should be prioritised in plans and policies. Designation of land-based zones for the purposes of the co-ordination and integration with relevant Marine Plans must be considered, where appropriate.</i></p>	<p>The Project includes an offshore substation, an offshore export cable along with landfall using trenchless technology and an onshore grid connection and an onshore compensation compound, which are critical elements of the Project facilitating the transmission of energy generated by the Project to the national electricity grid at Moneypoint. The onshore aspects of the grid connection are supported by the policies and objectives of the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project is supported by Transmission Policy 4.</p>
		<p>Transmission Policy 5: <i>Proposals for construction or operation activities within one nautical mile of either of the two existing natural gas interconnector pipelines shall be avoided. If construction or operation activities are proposed to take place within one nautical mile of either of the two existing natural gas</i></p>	<p>The Projects construction and operational activities will not take place within one nautical mile of either of the two existing natural gas interconnector pipelines.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Transmission Policy 5.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>interconnector pipelines, the views of Gas Networks Ireland in relation to how such activities could impact the pipelines shall be taken into account and either appropriate mitigation measures put in place or the proposed activities altered. If construction or operation activities involve the crossing of either of the two existing natural gas interconnector pipelines by other pipelines or cables, the views of Gas Networks Ireland in relation to how such activities could impact the pipelines shall be taken into account and either appropriate mitigation measures be put in place or the proposed activities altered.</i></p>	
		<p>Transmission Policy 6: <i>Subject to required assessments for the protection of the environment, and only where in keeping with the outcome of the review of the security of energy supply of Ireland's electricity and natural gas systems (which is being carried out by Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications), and not involving the importation of fracked gas, additional proposals for natural gas transmission/ import infrastructure should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not include natural gas transmission or import infrastructure. Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Transmission Policy 5. .</p>
Fisheries	Fisheries	<p>Fisheries Policy 1: <i>Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on access for existing fishing activities, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p>	<p>Chapter 13 Commercial Fisheries has assessed potential effects resulting from loss of access to fishing grounds, displacement of fishing activity into other areas, interference with fishing activity as a result of increased vessel traffic, increased steaming times and safety issues for fishing vessels during construction, operation and decommissioning. The likely significant effects assessment has concluded that, taking into account the mitigation by</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>a) <i>avoid</i> b) <i>minimise, or</i> c) <i>mitigate such impacts.</i> d) <i>If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on fishing activity, the public benefits for proceeding with the proposal that outweigh the significant adverse impacts on existing fishing activity must be demonstrated.</i></p>	<p>design, the residual effect for all effects will be Not Significant for all commercial fisheries receptors.</p> <p>The Applicant has engaged with the fishing industry on an ongoing basis throughout the course of the Project. Local fisheries were identified as a key stakeholder at an early stage in the Project and the primary objective of the Applicant was to engage with local fisheries from this early stage in an honest, open and transparent manner. Meetings with key stakeholders within the fishing industry, commenced in early 2022 and have continued since then.</p> <p>These meetings built a two-way collaborative relationship between the Applicant and the fishing industry. The engagement allowed the Applicant to understand the fishing practices that exist within and surrounding the Offshore Site, and to take on board the feedback and concerns of the fishing industry. This feedback was communicated to the Project team, allowing for fisheries to be a central consideration during all stages of the iterative design process of the Project. At the same time, the meetings provided a platform for the fishing industry to learn about the Project and the proposed infrastructure, the design process, planned surveys, and more.</p> <p>The Applicant is also a contributor to the Seafood/Offshore Renewable Energy Working Group through industry representatives. The role of the Seafood/ORE Working Group is to facilitate discussion on matters arising from the interaction of the Irish seafood and offshore renewable energy industries, to promote and share best practice, and to encourage liaison with other sectors in the marine environment. The working group is independently chaired by Captain Robert McCabe and the current membership comprises organisations representing the Seafood Sector, organisations representing the ORE sector, Government Departments, and state agencies. The Applicant supports the discussions and any recommendations arising from this working group.</p> <p>The project will also have a substantial Community Benefit Fund, estimated to amount to ca €3.5 million per annum. The community will decide what types of projects will be supported by the fund. The Applicant strongly supports ringfencing a proportion of the fund to support marine related activities. This has the potential to significantly enhance fishing activities in the area.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>Fisheries Policy 2:</i> <i>Where significant impact upon fishing activity arising from any proposal is identified, a Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) should be prepared by the proposer of development or other maritime area use, in consultation with local fishing interests and other interests as appropriate. All efforts should be made to agree the FMMS with those interests. Those interests should also undertake to engage with the proposer and provide best available, transparent and accurate information and data in a timely manner to help complete the FMMS. The FMMS should be drawn up as part of readying a proposal prior to submission, with measures identified to be considered in finalising conditions of any authorisations granted. Development of the strategy should be coordinated with other relevant assessments such as EIA where possible.</i></p> <p><i>The content of the Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) should be relevant to the particular circumstances and could include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>An assessment of the potential impact of all stages of the development or other suggested use on the affected</i> 	<p>Therefore, the Project complies with Fisheries Policy 1.</p> <p>An FMMS was prepared and is submitted with this application. The FMMS is included as Appendix 5-7 of the EIAR.</p> <p>The final version of the FMMS is subject to the outcome of discussions ongoing at the Seafood/ORE Working Group as there is an intention to prepare an agreed position on co-existence between ORE projects and local fishing communities. Any such agreement and any other agreements arising from the Seafood ORE Working Group will be integrated into the FMMS as appropriate. The FMMS will be circulated with the local fishing community for discussion, adaption and agreement when the appropriate details arising from the Seafood/ORE Working Group are available and integrated with the FMMS and in advance of the commencement of construction at the Offshore Site.</p> <p>Chapter 13 Commercial Fisheries has assessed potential effects resulting from loss of access to fishing grounds, displacement of fishing activity into other areas, interference with fishing activity as a result of increased vessel traffic, increased steaming times and safety issues for fishing vessels during construction, operation and decommissioning. The likely significant effects assessment has concluded that, taking into account the mitigation by design and co-operation measures, the residual effect for all effect pathways will be Not Significant for all commercial fisheries receptors.</p> <p>This will ensure compliance with Fisheries Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>fishery or fisheries, both in socio-economic terms and in relation to environmental sustainability. This assessment should include consideration of any impact upon cultural identity within fishing communities, as well as identifying indirect / in-combination matters.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A recognition that the disruption to existing fishing opportunities / activity should be minimised as far as possible.</i> • <i>Demonstration of the public benefit(s) that outweigh the significant impacts identified.</i> • <i>Reasonable measures to mitigate any constraints which the proposed development or use may place on existing or proposed fishing activity.</i> • <i>Reasonable measures to mitigate any potential impacts on sustainability of fish stocks (e.g. impacts on spawning grounds or areas of fish or shellfish abundance) and any socio economic impacts.</i> • <i>Where it does not prove possible to agree the FMMS with all interests:</i> • <i>Divergent views and the reasons for any divergence of views between the parties should be fully explained in the FMMS, and dissenting views should be given a platform within the said FMMS to make their case.</i> 	

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where divergent views are identified, relevant public authorities should be engaged to identify informal and formal steps designed to enable proposal(s) to progress. 	
		<p>Fisheries Policy 3: <i>Proposals that enhance the sustainability of fisheries or support a sustainable fishing industry, including the industry’s diversification and or enhanced resilience to the effects of climate change, should be supported provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within authorisation processes.</i></p>	<p>The Applicant has supported initiatives that support a sustainable fishing industry and is developing additional schemes to support the diversification of the local fishing industry.</p> <p>The project will have a substantial Community Benefit Fund, estimated to amount to ca € 3.5 million per annum. The community will decide what types of projects will be supported by the fund. The Applicant strongly supports ringfencing a proportion of the fund to support marine related activities. This has the potential to support initiatives intended to promote and enhance sustainable fisheries in the area.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Fisheries Policy 3.</p>
		<p>Fisheries Policy 4: <i>Infrastructural proposals that enable access to fishing activities should be supported provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within authorisation processes.</i></p>	<p>There will be no long-term significant impact on access to fishing activities associated with the Project. Any short-term impacts will be mitigated as set out in Chapter 13 – Commercial Fisheries and in the FMMS (Appendix 5-7).</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Fisheries Policy 4.</p>
		<p>Fisheries Policy 5: <i>Proposals, regardless of the type of activity they relate to, enhancing essential fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds, and migratory routes should be supported. If proposals cannot enhance essential fish habitat, they must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <p>a) avoid,</p>	<p>The impact of the Project on fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds and migratory routes, is assessed in Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology. The assessment concluded that with mitigation considered, the residual effect pathway would be Not Significant for all fish and shellfish receptors.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Fisheries Policy 5.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>b) <i>minimise,</i> c) <i>mitigate</i> d) <i>significant adverse impact on essential fish habitat, including spawning, nurse and feeding grounds, and migration routes.</i></p> <p><i>If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impact on essential fish habitat, proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding.</i></p> <p><i>Fisheries Policy 6:</i> <i>Ports and harbours should seek to engage with fishing and other relevant stakeholders at an early stage to discuss any changes in infrastructure that may affect them. Any port or harbour developments should take account of the needs of the dependent fishing fleets with a view to avoiding commercial harm where possible. Where a port or harbour has reached a minimum level of infrastructure required to support a viable fishing fleet, there should be a presumption in favour of maintaining this infrastructure, provided there is an ongoing requirement for it to remain in place and that it continues to be fit for purpose.</i></p>	<p>The Applicant supports the development of local ports and harbours that can enhance facilities for the fishing community as well as providing infrastructure to support offshore renewable energy development. In particular, the Applicant supports the proposed development of Rosamh�il harbour where there are plans for expansion to improve fisheries facilities and which could be used by the Project.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Fisheries Policy 6.</p>
<p>Mineral Exploration and Mining</p>	<p>Mineral Exploration and Mining</p>	<p><i>Mineral Exploration and Mining Policy 1:</i> <i>Only proposals which are in line with national policy on mineral exploration and mining should be considered, provided they fully meet the environmental</i></p>	<p>The Project is not a mineral exploration or mining project.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Mineral Exploration and Mining Policy 1.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>safeguards contained within the mineral exploration and mining consent processes.</i></p>	
<p>Ports, Harbour and Shipping</p>	<p>Ports, Harbour and Shipping</p>	<p><i>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 1</i></p> <p><i>To provide for shipping activity and freedom of navigation the following factors will be taken into account when reaching decisions regarding development and use:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The extent to which the locational decision interferes with existing or planned routes used by shipping, access to ports and harbours and navigational safety. This includes commercial anchorages and approaches to ports as well as key littoral and offshore routes;</i> • <i>A mandatory Navigation Risk Assessment;</i> • <i>Where interference is likely: whether reasonable alternatives can be identified; and</i> • <i>Where there are no reasonable alternatives: whether mitigation through measures adopted in accordance with the principles and procedures established by the International Maritime Organisation can be achieved at no significant cost to the shipping or ports sector.</i> 	<p>Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation has assessed the potential effects arising from the displacement of third-party vessels and resulting increased collision risk, collision risk between third-party and Project vessels, reduced access to local ports, creation of third-party allision risk (where one object only is moving), reduction in under-keel clearance, anchor interaction with subsea infrastructure, and emergency response capability. With the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the chapter in place, as well as consideration of a safety justification (Annex to Appendix 14-1 of the EIAR) for the array layout, these impacts result in effects that are entirely either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which are Not Significant.</p> <p>A Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA) was undertaken and is included as Appendix 14.1 of the EIAR. The NRA provides a risk statement which takes into consideration the outputs of consultation, lessons learnt from previous offshore wind farm developments, the baseline characterisation of the existing environment, outputs of collision and allision risk modelling, and expert opinion and the potential Shipping and Navigation hazards due to the presence of the Offshore Site. The significance of risk has been determined as either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation (and As Low As Reasonably Practicable) for all shipping and navigation hazards assessed.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals that may have a significant impact upon current activity and future</i></p>	<p>The potential for reduced access to ports and harbour activities is assessed in Chapter 14 - Shipping and Navigation of the EIAR. Given the relative distance to ports in the area and the anticipated deviations for the main commercial routes, it is not anticipated that there</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoid</i> b) <i>minimise, or</i> c) <i>mitigate significant adverse impacts, and</i> d) <i>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on current activity and future opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>will be any substantial effect on vessel approaches to and from the local ports due to the Project. Embedded mitigation measures are proposed to reduce the significance of effect are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting and marking; • Marine coordination for project vessels; • Marking on nautical charts; • Project vessel compliance with international marine regulations; and • Promulgation of information. <p>The Applicant supports the expansion and improvement of port facilities that will enable the construction and operation of the Project although this is a matter for the relevant port authorities and government.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 2.</p>
		<p><i>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 3:</i> <i>Proposals that may have a significant impact upon current activity and future opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities must demonstrate consideration of the National Ports Policy, the National Planning Framework, and relevant provisions related to the TEN-T network.</i></p>	<p>The potential for reduced access to ports and harbour activities is assessed in Chapter 14 - Shipping and Navigation of the EIAR. Given the relative distance to ports in the area and the anticipated deviations for the main commercial routes, it is not anticipated that there will be any substantial effect on vessel approaches to and from the local ports due to the Project.</p> <p>The Applicant supports the National Ports Policy, the National Planning Framework and relevant provisions related to the TEN-T network as improving the capacity of Irish ports will improve facilities for offshore renewable energy development and deployment</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 3.</p>
		<p><i>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 4:</i> <i>Proposals within ports limits, beside or in the vicinity of ports, and / or that impact upon the main routes of significance to a port, must demonstrate within applications that they have:</i></p>	<p>Consultation with the relevant port authorities, the Department of Transport, MSO and Commissioners of Irish Lights is described in Section 14.3 – Scoping and Consultation of Chapter 14 – Shipping and Navigation in the EIAR.</p> <p>A Navigational Risk Assessment was undertaken and is included as Appendix 14.1 of the EIAR. Given the low levels of commercial traffic in the region, all commercial operators</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>been informed by consultation at pre-application stage or earlier with the relevant port authority;</i> • <i>have carried out a navigational risk assessment including an analysis of maritime traffic in the area; and</i> • <i>have consulted Department of Transport, MSO and Commissioners of Irish Lights.</i> <p><i>Applicants must continue to engage parties identified in pre-application processes as appropriate during the decision-making process.</i></p>	<p>identified were contacted. The full list of Regular Operators is provided in Appendix C of the Navigational Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 4.</p>
		<p><i>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 5:</i> <i>Proposals for capital dredging will be supported where it is necessary to safeguard national port capacity and Ireland’s international connectivity, and where required compliance assessments associated with authorisations have been carried out and incorporated into subsequent competent authority decision(s).</i></p>	<p>The Project does not relate to a capital dredging project.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 5</p>
		<p><i>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 6:</i> <i>In areas of authorised dredging activity, including those subject to navigational dredging, proposals for other activities will not be supported unless they are compatible with the dredging activity.</i></p>	<p>The Project is not located in an area of authorised dredging activity.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 6.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 7: <i>Proposals for maintenance dredging activity will be supported where:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>relevant decisions by competent authorities incorporate the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes, as well as necessary compliance assessments associated with authorisations, including in relation to the planning process;</i> • <i>there will be no significant adverse impact on marine activities or uses or the maritime area. Any potential adverse impact will be, in order of preference, avoided, minimised or mitigated;</i> • <i>dredged waste is managed in accordance with internationally agreed hierarchy of waste management options for sea disposal;</i> • <i>if disposing of dredged material at sea, existing registered disposal sites are used, in preference to new disposal sites; and</i> • <i>where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPP.</i> 	<p>While the Project does not relate to a maintenance dredging project, dredging and disposal are required for the construction of the Project. The impact of dredging and disposal areas at the Offshore Site has been assessed as part of the EIAR.</p> <p>The impact of dredging and disposal on marine physical processes and on water and sediment quality are assessed in Chapters 7 and 8 of the EIAR. Both Chapters conclude that dredging and disposal activities will not give rise to any significant effects when mitigation measures are considered.</p> <p>The impact of dredging and disposal on marine species and habitats is assessed in Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals. All three Chapters conclude that with mitigation measures considered, the residual effects will be not significant for all receptors.</p> <p>The impact of dredging and disposal on other marine activities is assessed in Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, with mitigation measures considered, no likely significant residual effects are identified.</p> <p>A Dumping at Sea permit is required for the Project. An application will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency in accordance with the Foreshore and Dumping at Sea (Amendment) Act 2009. All permit application documents will be available to view on the EPA website and will be subject to a public consultation process.</p> <p>The Project contributes to the policies and objectives of the NMPP by facilitating an offshore renewable energy project of national importance, which is directly supported by ORE Policies 1 and 2.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 7.</p>
		<p>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 8: <i>Proposals that cause significant adverse impacts on licenced disposal areas should not be supported Proposals that cannot</i></p>	<p>Other licenced disposal areas have been considered where relevant in the EIAR. These are all distant from proposed site activities or will expire prior to any works commencing in the area. No significant impacts on licenced disposal areas have been identified.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>avoid such impact must, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) minimise,</i> <i>b) mitigate, or</i> <i>c) if it is not possible to mitigate the significant adverse impacts, proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 8.</p>
		<p>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 9: <i>Proposals for the management of dredged material must demonstrate that they have been assessed against the waste hierarchy (see Glossary).</i></p>	<p>The management of all waste relating to the Offshore site is set out in the OEMP (Appendix 5-2) and the associated Resource and Waste Management Plan (Appendix 5-5). The waste hierarchy was used as the guiding principle in the creation of these plans and provides the general direction to which waste will be treated.</p> <p>The potential impacts of dredging and disposal on marine physical processes and on water and sediment quality are assessed in Chapters 7 and 8 of the EIAR. Both Chapters conclude that dredging and disposal activities will not give rise to any significant effects when mitigation measures are considered.</p> <p>The potential impact of dredging and disposal on marine species and habitats are assessed in Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals. All three Chapters conclude that with mitigation measures considered, the residual effects will be not significant for all receptors.</p> <p>The potential impact of dredging and disposal on other marine activities is assessed in Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, with mitigation measures considered, no likely significant residual effects are identified.</p> <p>A Dumping at Sea permit is required for the Project. An application will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency in accordance with the Foreshore and Dumping at Sea (Amendment) Act 2009. All permit application documents will be available to view on the EPA website and will be subject to a public consultation process.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 9.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 10</p> <p><i>Proposals identifying new dredge disposal sites which are subject to best practice and guidance from previous studies should be supported where:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>competent authority decisions incorporate necessary compliance assessments associated with authorisations; and</i> • <i>they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF.</i> <p><i>Proposals must include an adequate characterisation study, be assessed against the waste hierarchy and must be informed by consultation with all relevant stakeholders.</i></p>	<p>The potential impacts of dredging and disposal on marine physical processes and on water and sediment quality are assessed in Chapters 7 and 8 of the EIAR. Both Chapters conclude that dredging and disposal activities will not give rise to any significant effects when mitigation measures are considered.</p> <p>The potential impact of dredging and disposal on marine species and habitats are assessed in Chapter 9 Benthic Ecology, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish and Chapter 12 Marine Mammals. All three Chapters conclude that with mitigation measures considered, the residual effects will be not significant for all receptors.</p> <p>The potential impact of dredging and disposal on other marine activities is assessed in Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, with mitigation measures considered, no likely significant residual effects are identified.</p> <p>A Dumping at Sea permit is required for the Project. An application will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency in accordance with the Foreshore and Dumping at Sea (Amendment) Act 2009. All permit application documents will be available to view on the EPA website and will be subject to a public consultation process.</p> <p>The Project contributes to the policies and objectives of the NMPF by facilitating an offshore renewable energy project of national importance, which is directly supported by ORE Policies 1 and 2.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 10.</p>
Safety at Sea	Safety at Sea	<p>Safety at Sea Policy 1:</p> <p><i>Proposals for installation, operation, and decommissioning of Offshore Wind Farms must demonstrate how they will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minimise navigational risk between commercial vessels arising from an increase in the density of vessels in</i> 	<p>The impact on commercial and recreational vessels is assessed in Chapter 14 - Shipping and Navigation and Chapter 18 Other Sea Users of the EIAR. Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation, which includes consideration of the turbine blade height in relation to recommended clearance height for vessels, concludes that the effects of all potential impacts are assessed as being either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is Not Significant. Chapter 18 Other Sea Users, which includes an assessment of the Projects obstruction to marine recreational users concludes that the Project will not give rise to any significant adverse effects.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>maritime space as a result of wind farm layout; and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Allow for recreational vessels within the Offshore Wind Farm (including consideration of turbine height) or redirect recreational vessels, minimising navigational risk arising between recreational and commercial vessels.</i> 	<p>Mitigation measures are proposed to ensure the navigational risk between commercial and recreational vessels and the Project is minimised. Mitigation measures include the following, which are described in further detail in the Vessel Management Plan, included as Appendix 5-10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory safe passing distances; • Buoyed construction area; • Guard vessel(s); • Lighting and marking; • Marine coordination for project vessels; • Marking on nautical charts; • Pollution planning; • Project vessel compliance with international marine regulations; and • Promulgation of information. <p>A Navigational Risk Assessment was undertaken and is included as Appendix 14-1 of the EIAR. The NRA provides a risk statement which takes into consideration the outputs of consultation, lessons learnt from previous offshore wind farm developments, the baseline characterisation of the existing environment, outputs of collision and allision risk modelling, and expert opinion and the potential Shipping and Navigation hazards due to the presence of the Offshore Site. The significance of risk has been determined as either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation (and As Low As Reasonably Practicable) for all shipping and navigation hazards assessed. Therefore, the Project complies with Safety at Sea Policy 1.</p>
		<p>Safety at Sea Policy 2: <i>Proposals for infrastructure that have the potential to significantly reduce under-keel clearance must demonstrate how they will, in order of preference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoid,</i> b) <i>minimise,</i> c) <i>mitigate adverse impacts, or</i> 	<p>The reduction of under-keel clearance is assessed in Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation of the EIAR. Mitigation measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cable protection; • Marking on charts; • Pollution planning; and • Promulgation of information.

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	<p>d) <i>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i></p>	<p>With mitigation measures considered, Chapter 14 concludes that overall, the effects of all potential impacts are assessed as being either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is Not Significant. Therefore, the Project complies with Safety at Sea Policy 2.</p>
		<p>Safety at Sea Policy 3: <i>All proposals for temporary or permanent fixed infrastructure in the maritime area must ensure navigational marking in accordance with appropriate international standards and ensure inclusion in relevant charts where applicable.</i></p>	<p>As set out in Chapter 14 – Shipping and Navigation, Lighting and marking of the array will be in compliance with IALA Recommendation O-139 and Guideline G1162 (IALA, 2021b/2021a) and agreed with Irish Lights. A Lighting and Marking Plan is provided in Appendix 5-9 - Lighting and Marking Plan.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Safety at Sea Policy 3.</p>
		<p>Safety at Sea Policy 4: <i>Establishing, changing or disestablishing Aids to Navigation (AtoN) must be sanctioned, in advance of works, by the Commissioners of Irish Lights.</i></p>	<p>A Lighting and Marking Plan is provided in Appendix 5-9 - Lighting and Marking Plan and will be agreed in advance of work with the Commissioners of Irish Lights. Any proposed temporary or permanent Aids to Navigation will only be installed following a grant of Statutory Sanction from the Commissioners of Irish Lights.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Safety at Sea Policy 4.</p>
		<p>Safety at Sea Policy 5: <i>Proposals must identify their potential impact, if any, on Maritime Emergency Response (Search and Rescue (SAR), Maritime Casualty and Pollution Response) operations. Where a proposal may have a significant impact on these operations it must demonstrate how it will, in order of preference:</i></p> <p>a) <i>avoid</i> b) <i>minimise,</i> c) <i>mitigate adverse impacts, or</i></p>	<p>Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation, identifies and assess the potential impact on Emergency Response and Search and Rescue (SAR). Chapter 14 concludes that the effects of all potential impacts are assessed as being either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is Not Significant. Chapter 14 is supported by a Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA) which includes a safety justification (Annex to Appendix 14-1 of the EIAR) for the array layout. The NRA concludes that the significance of risk has been determined as either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation (and As Low As Reasonably Practicable) for all shipping and navigation hazards assessed.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Safety at Sea Policy 5.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p>d) <i>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i></p>	
Sport and Recreation	Sport and Recreation	<p><i>Sport and Recreation Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals that promote sustainable development of water-based sports and marine recreation, while enhancing community health, wellbeing and quality of life, should be supported, provided that due consideration is given to environmental carrying capacities and tourism pressures.</i></p>	<p>The Project will not have significant impact on marine recreation or marine based sports, as demonstrated in Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation and Chapter 18 Other Sea Users. Both Chapters conclude the Project will not give rise to any significant effects when mitigation measures are considered.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sport and Recreation Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Sport and Recreation Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals should demonstrate the following in relation to potential impact on recreation and tourism:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact sports clubs and other recreational users, including the extent to which proposals may interfere with facilities or other physical infrastructure.</i> • <i>The extent to which any proposal interferes with access to and along the shore, to the water, use of the resource for recreation or tourism purposes and existing navigational routes or navigational safety.</i> • <i>The extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact on the natural environment.</i> 	<p>The Project will not have significant impact on marine recreation or marine based sports, as demonstrated in Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation and Chapter 18 Other Sea Users. Both Chapters conclude the Project will not give rise to any significant effects when mitigation measures are considered.</p> <p>The impact of the Project on Tourism is assessed in Chapter 6 – Population and Human Health and is support by an independent Tourism Impact Assessment Report included as Appendix 6-1 of the EIAR. It is concluded in the EIAR that the Project will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on tourism.</p> <p>The impact of the Project on existing navigational routes and navigational safety is assessed in Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation. Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation concludes that the effects of all potential impacts are assessed as being either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is not significant.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sports and Recreation Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<p><i>Sport and Recreation Policy 3:</i> <i>Opportunities to promote inclusive development of water-based sports and marine recreation should be supported, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with a focus on facilities for people with disabilities.</i></p>	<p>The Project has supported the development of water-based sports and marine recreation through its sponsorship of the Galway Hookers Association and other water-based sport and marine recreation groups. The Project will have a substantial Community Benefit Fund, estimated to amount to ca € 3.5 million per annum. The community will decide what types of projects will be supported by the fund. The Applicant strongly supports ringfencing a proportion of the fund to support marine related activities. This has the potential to support initiatives intended to promote and enhance water-based sports and marine recreation in the area.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sport and Recreation Policy 3.</p>
		<p><i>Sport and Recreation Policy 4:</i> <i>Proposals that improve access to marine and coastal resources for tourism activities, and sport and recreation should be supported, where appropriate, at the applicable scale and aligned with existing development plans.</i></p>	<p>The Project will have a substantial Community Benefit Fund, estimated to amount to ca € 3.5 million per annum. The community will decide what types of projects will be supported by the fund. The Applicant strongly supports ringfencing a proportion of the fund to support marine related activities. This has the potential to support initiatives intended to promote and enhance water-based sports and marine recreation in the area.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sport and Recreation Policy 4.</p>
		<p><i>Sport and Recreation Policy 5:</i> <i>Proposals should seek to enhance water safety through provision of appropriate International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and European Committee for Standardization (CEN) compliant safety signage. In general, the safety of persons should be a key consideration for planners and due consideration should be given to best practice guidance for marine and coastal recreation areas endorsed by the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group.</i></p>	<p>As demonstrated in Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation, mitigation measures have been adopted as part of the Project design process in order to reduce the potential for adverse water safety impacts. Chapter 14 Shipping and Navigation concludes that overall, the effects of all potential impacts are assessed as being either Broadly Acceptable or Tolerable with Mitigation, which is Not Significant.</p> <p>During construction/ decommissioning, buoyed construction area around the array area will be implemented during the construction phases in agreement with the Commissioners of Irish Lights. Lighting and marking of the array will be in compliance with IALA Recommendation O-139 and Guideline G1162 (IALA, 2021b/2021a) and agreed with Irish Lights. A Lighting and Marking Plan is provided in Appendix 5-9.</p> <p>Information for vessel routes, timings and locations, advisory safe passing distances will be circulated principally via Notices to Mariners but also via any other appropriate media including the Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO). A Vessel Management Plan, included as</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
			<p>Appendix 5-10, details the navigational safety measures to be implemented during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Sport and Recreation Policy 5.</p>
Telecommunications	Telecommunications	<p>Telecommunications Policy 1: <i>Proposals that guarantee existing and future international telecommunications connectivity which is critically important to support the future needs of society, Government, the provision of Public Services and enterprise in Ireland, should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not include infrastructure for telecommunications connectivity other than that required for the operation of the Project. The impact of the Project on telecommunications cables is assessed in Chapter 18 Other Sea Users and concludes that during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases, with mitigation measures considered, no likely significant residual effects are identified.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Telecommunications Policy 1.</p>
		<p>Telecommunications Policy 2: <i>Preference should be given to proposals where evidence is provided of an integrated approach to development and activity, such as the bundling of cables (electricity and communications) where suitable, as well as pipelines for multiple activities, to minimise impacts on the marine environment, infrastructures and other users. Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) avoiding, or</i> <i>b) minimising, or</i> <i>c) mitigating adverse impacts, or</i> <i>d) If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding.</i> 	<p>There is no scope for an integrated approach with existing cabling as there are no suitable cables in the vicinity of the offshore site. All offshore cable infrastructure proposed as part of the Project is bundled, including the electricity export cable, and fibre optic, telecommunication cabling within a single cable.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Transmission Policy 2.</p>

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		<p>Telecommunications Policy 3: <i>Preference should be given to proposals that protect submarine cables whilst achieving successful seabed user coexistence, such as the bundling of cables (electricity and communications) as well as pipelines for multiple activities where suitable. Proposals should specify if separate access to cables for the purposes of repair and maintenance is required. With regard to decommissioning redundant submarine cables, a risk-based approach should be applied with consideration given to cables being left in situ where this would minimise significant impacts on the physical, natural, societal, historic, and economic value of the area.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not include infrastructure for telecommunications connectivity other than that required for the operation of the Project. The impact of the Project on telecommunications cables is assessed in Chapter 18 Other Sea Users and concludes that during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases, with mitigation measures considered, no likely significant residual effects are identified.</p> <p>In relation to the decommissioning of cables, all cabling associated with the Project will be cut and removed where exposed and accessible. Any cabling that is buried or protected with rock berms, mattresses or rock/grout bags will be retained in-situ to minimise significant impacts on the physical, natural, societal, historic and economic value of the area. Further detail with regard to the decommissioning of Project cables is provided in the rehabilitation plan included as Appendix 5-18.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Transmission Policy 3.</p>
		<p>Telecommunications Policy 4: <i>Proposals that ensure and enhance connectivity of Ireland's rural and island communities to high quality telecommunications networks should be supported.</i></p>	<p>The Project does not include infrastructure for telecommunications connectivity other than that required for the operation of the Project.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Telecommunications Policy 4.</p>
<p>Tourism</p>	<p>Tourism</p>	<p>Tourism Policy 1: <i>Where appropriate, proposals enabling, promoting or facilitating sustainable tourism and recreation activities, particularly where this creates diversification or additional utilisation of related facilities beyond typical usage patterns, should be supported.</i></p>	<p>Although tourism and recreation activities are not specifically proposed, the Project will have a substantial Community Benefit Fund, estimated to amount to ca € 3.5 million per annum. The community will decide what types of projects will be supported by the fund. It is likely that projects that support and promote sustainable tourism and recreation activities will be supported by the fund.</p> <p>Chapter 6 Population and Human Health assesses the impact of the Project on tourism. Chapter 6 concludes that the Project will not result in any significant effects on tourism. Chapter 6 is supported by a Tourism Impact Assessment included as Appendix 6.1 of the</p>

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			<p>EIAR. The Tourism Impact Assessment Report concludes that the tourism performance of south Connemara will not be affected with no adverse tourism impact in the short to long term.</p> <p>It is envisaged that there will be opportunities for marine tourism and recreation activities, which will allow tourists and recreational users to visit the offshore development area. The potential opportunities for tourism and recreational activities at the Offshore Site is outlined in the Tourism Impact Assessment Report, included as Appendix 6.1 of the EIAR.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Tourism Policy 1.</p>
		<p><i>Tourism Policy 2:</i> <i>Proposals must identify possible impacts on tourism. Where a potential significant impact upon tourism is identified it should be demonstrated how the potential negative consequences to tourism in communities will be minimised. This must include assessment of how the benefits of proposals are not outweighed by potential negative impacts.</i></p>	<p>The impact of the Project on tourism is assessed in Chapter 6 Population and Human Health of the EIAR.</p> <p>As part of the assessment, an independent tourism study was undertaken to establish the impact of the Project on the area. The tourism assessment concludes that the tourism performance of south Connemara will not be affected with no adverse tourism impact in the short to long term. The Tourism Impact Assessment Report is included as Appendix 6-1 of the EIAR.</p> <p>Chapter 6 Population and Human Health of the EIAR concludes will be no significant adverse impact on tourism.</p> <p>The Project will have a substantial Community Benefit Fund, estimated to amount to ca € 3.5 million per annum. The community will decide what types of projects will be supported by the fund. It is likely that projects that support and promote sustainable tourism and recreation activities will be supported by the fund.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Tourism Policy 2.</p>

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		<p><i>Tourism Policy 3:</i> <i>Proposals for tourism development should seek to optimise facilities and use of space by taking a cross sectoral development approach that provides for multiple activities, whilst minimising the extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact on the natural environment.</i></p>	<p>The Project is not a tourism development.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Tourism Policy 3.</p>
<p>Wastewater Treatment and Disposal</p>	<p>Wastewater Treatment and Disposal</p>	<p><i>Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 1:</i> <i>Proposals by Irish Water related to the treatment and disposal of wastewater that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) service the social and economic development of the country under the National Planning Framework;</i> <i>ii) resolve environmental issues at priority areas identified by the EPA;</i> <i>iii) contribute to the realisation of the objectives of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Ireland’s River Basin Management Plan 2018 – 2021</i> <i>• The Water Services Policy Statement 2018 – 2025</i> <i>• Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2012 – 2020</i> 	<p>The Project does not relate to the treatment of wastewater.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no conflict with the objectives of Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 1.</p>

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		<p><i>should be supported, provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within relevant authorisation processes.</i></p> <p><i>Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 2</i> <i>Proposals that have the potential to significantly adversely affect existing and planned wastewater management and treatment infrastructure where a consent or authorisation or lease has been granted or formally applied for by Irish Water should not be authorised unless:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>compatibility with the existing, authorised, proposed or otherwise identified in consultations with Irish Water activity, can be satisfactorily demonstrated;</i> • <i>the proposal is clearly of strategic or national importance.</i> <p><i>Where possible, proposals that may affect Irish Water activities or plans should engage with Irish Water at the earliest available opportunity. Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>avoiding adverse impacts on those activities; and / or</i> b) <i>minimising impacts where they cannot be avoided; and / or</i> 	<p>The Project has been assessed cumulatively with other projects, including wastewater management and treatment infrastructure sites. The Cumulative Impact Assessment methodology is included in Chapter 4 Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology and corresponding Appendices 4-1 and 4-2 in the EIAR. The cumulative impact assessment included wastewater treatment plants and their associated activities. The Project will have no significant adverse impact on Irish Water activities.</p> <p>Therefore, the Project complies with Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 2.</p>

High Level Objective	Policy Grouping	Planning Policy	Compliance
		<i>c) mitigating impacts where they cannot be minimised.</i>	