

From: [Louise Gahan](#)
To: [Marine](#)
Cc: [Diarmuid Houston](#)
Subject: ABP-319864-24 Arklow Bank Wind Park 2
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Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Arklow_Bank_Offshore_Wind_ABP-319864-24_CE_Report.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon,

In accordance with section 292(3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), please find submission attached from Wexford County Council in relation to the above.

Kind regards,

Louise

Louise Gahan | Staff Officer | Planning Department

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Comhairle Contae Loch Garman
Wexford County Council

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To: An Cathaoirleach and Elected Members of Wexford County Council

Date: 8th July 2026

Re: ABP-319864-24. Proposed development of an offshore wind farm, located off the coast of Co Wicklow and Co Wexford, on the east coast of Ireland

Wexford County Council, as a designated coastal planning authority, has been notified by An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 291(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (amended) that further information has been submitted regarding the above development. Further information was requested by An Coimisiún Pleanála on 10 April 2025, and a response was received on 10 April 2026. The further information was deemed to be significant, and notices were published inviting further submissions up to 29 July 2026. The full plans and the further information have been available for viewing by the public at the Planning Department counter and online at www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/319864 and www.arklowbank2offshoreplanning.ie

Context

Currently SSE Renewables operate the Arklow Bank Wind Park which consists of 7 wind turbines generating 25.2 MW of renewable energy. The current proposed Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 was granted a Maritime Area Consent (MAC) in December 2022 under the ORESS 1 Auction by the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications commencing in December 2022. The MAC allows the project to proceed to make an application for planning in the maritime area to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

The development proposes two design options of 56 or 47 turbines located off the coast of Wicklow and Wexford on the Arklow Bank. The application site for the proposed development includes an 'Array Area' covering approximately 63.4 km², located roughly 6 km to 15 km off the east coast of Ireland. The application site will extend down the east coast, crossing the county boundary between Co Wexford and Co Wicklow, with the proposed development visible from the majority of the eastern portions of County Wexford.

The height of the turbines will depend on each proposed option for development. The turbines' height will either be 273 m (56 turbines) or 287 m (47 turbines). It is expected that the development will generate 800 MW of renewable clean energy contributing to the government climate action plan to increase to 80% renewable electricity and 5 GW of wind energy by 2030. It is estimated that the development has the potential to deliver 16% of the Climate Action Plan's 2024 offshore wind capacity target for 2030.

Wexford County Council's Submission

In September 2024, following a report being presented and agreed by the Members at the County Council Meeting, Wexford County Council made a submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála (then known as An Bord Pleanála). The submission covered the following key areas:

1. Views on the effects of the proposed development on the environment.
2. Implications of the proposed development on maritime spatial planning.
3. Effects on any European site where relevant.
4. Proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the authority.

At that meeting of the Council the Members expressed concerns in relation to the potential impact on the local fishing industry and those reliant on it for their livelihood.

The following motion was proposed by Cllr Jim Codd, seconded by Cllr Ger Carthy, and agreed by all to be included with Wexford County Council's submission to An Bord Pleanála:

"We call on An Bord Pleanála to establish the full impact of the construction and operation of the Arklow Bank Windfarm on the livelihood of our fishing industry and all those who benefit from it in the short, medium and long term."

Assessment of further information-response to significant issues raised in Wexford County Council's submission

Wexford County Council provided a detailed submission on the proposed development which has been referred to in the response of further information. There were a number of points which related to the application of the Wexford County Council Development Plan 2022 to 2028 policies and objectives, and these have now been referenced within the revised reports. There are a number of significant points that were raised and are assessed under the following headings:

Appropriate Assessment

The Council requested that the Appropriate Assessment take into account the wider areas along the east coast and the impacts of cumulative developments. The applicant has responded that the NIS has been revised to inform an Appropriate Assessment of Implications on European Sites. The Planning Authority considers the response to be adequate on this issue to enable the competent authority to make a determination.

Noise and Water Quality

The submission from the Council raised issues regarding water quality sampling and noise. The applicant has undertaken additional offshore surveys and has fully updated Volume II, Chapter 7: Marine Water and Sediment Quality. A benthic characterisation survey (study of marine habitats on, beneath and near sea floor) was undertaken with the results incorporated into the EIAR which will provide monitoring baseline data. The Planning Authority considers the response to be satisfactory on this issue.

The applicant has responded to the submission on noise, stating the baseline characterisation that has been presented in the EIAR is considered thorough and appropriate for the assessment that has been undertaken. As the “noise sensitive receptors and the landfall of the Proposed Development are within County Wicklow, it was not deemed appropriate to consider survey results from County Wexford.” The Council is concerned that noise impacts could be generated that may impact onshore in County Wexford. It is therefore recommended that should An Coimisiún Pleanála be minded to grant consent, that a condition be included to monitor predevelopment noise levels, operational noise levels from the north Wexford coast and provide measures to mitigate against any breach of noise limits.

Potential Risk of Spills

The Council expressed concerns regarding the risks of spills from oils and lubricants from the development. The applicant has reaffirmed a detailed assessment of the risk of accidental pollution in relation to water quality of the wider marine environment, designated coastal and transitional waterbodies and designated bathing waters. The assessment identifies mitigation measures which ensure that potential pollution risks are minimised and provide clear guidance for managing accidental spills and reducing associated environmental impacts. The Planning Authority considers the response to be satisfactory on this issue.

Resource and Waste Management

The Council raised the issue of the levels of waste and requested conditions to require that the waste is disposed of properly. The applicant has confirmed that a proposed planning condition on waste disposal is acknowledged and would be deemed acceptable.

Fishing Community

The Council noted the project employed a designated Fisheries Liaison Officer who met with fishermen at Courtown and held meetings with relevant organisations. One of the issues identified was that a fisheries fund to facilitate impacted fishermen would be considered and would welcome this initiative, but that the principle of co-existence would be adhered to in the proposed development. The Council stated that the project should provide for community investment and Wexford County Council would welcome a designated community benefit fund for the coastal communities of North Wexford and its hinterlands to support the development of economic, community and social infrastructure as outlined in key policies. The applicant has stated that they are committed to delivery of a Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy and has an appointed Fisheries Liaison Officer and will continue structured engagement with fishermen and representative bodies throughout. The applicant has confirmed that a Community Benefit Fund is incorporated into the proposed development. Since 2018 over €500,000 has been invested on a voluntary basis across County Wicklow and North Wexford and the developer has committed to providing a fund of €3m per annum for the duration of an alternative route to market. The Planning Authority considers the response to be satisfactory on this issue.

Tourism Activity

The Council expressed concerns regarding the data used in the assessment on public attitudes to offshore wind. The applicant has undertaken additional analysis and updated the EIAR. Whilst noting there is less research on the relationship between

offshore wind and tourism than onshore wind, references have been provided from UK studies which found no notable impacts on tourism activity associated with the nearby offshore wind developments.

The Council also expressed concerns regarding the limited surveys on tourist perception. The applicant has undertaken additional analysis and updated Volume II, Chapter 21: Population and Human Health and Volume III, Appendix 21.2: Supplementary Socio-economic Analysis. A comprehensive assessment has now been included in the EIAR, which individually assessed the potential impact of the proposed development on 33 major tourist attractions in both County Wicklow and County Wexford. It has been concluded that there will be no significant effects on tourism (including those assets in County Wexford) arising from the proposed development during the construction, operation and maintenance, or decommissioning phases. Having regard to the further information submitted, the Planning Authority considers the response to be satisfactory on this issue.

Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

The Council expressed concerns regarding landscape assessments from Wexford viewpoints. A revised Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has been provided which affords a comprehensive review and provides clarity of the impact of the development. Whilst the revisions demonstrate the changes to the coastal landscape, the information is considered to be a reasonable assessment on the impact of the development on County Wexford.

Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk

The Council raised concerns regarding the possible impact on coastal erosion on the Wexford coastline. The applicant has responded that they have amended the Planning Report (revised March 2026) and has considered the EIAR's findings that the proposed development will not alter shoreline behaviour, sediment transport processes or coastal flood risk. The proposed development will not impact upon coastal processes in the region by reference to these technical assessments and modelling results. Having regard to the further information submitted, the Planning Authority considers the response to be satisfactory on this issue.

Conclusions

Upon reviewing the application and accompanying documentation, Wexford County Council acknowledges that the proposal has been presented with sufficient detail to allow the examining authority to make a well-informed decision. The further information has covered the majority of the issues relating to the issues raised by Wexford County Council. There are some points which, if An Coimisiún Pleanála were minded to permit consent, which the council would recommend as conditions including:

- noise monitoring at locations to be agreed on the Wexford coast, predevelopment, during construction and operation to ensure compliance with the agreed noise limits
- pollution protection mitigation measures during construction and operations to ensure avoidance of any materials into the sea

- continued monitoring of the marine life and fish stocks and measures to mitigate against any damage occurring to the fishing industry
- continued liaison with representative groups of the fishing industry during the lifespan and decommissioning of the project
- community benefit fund to include the communities impacted in both Wexford and Wicklow.

The proposed development, which includes substantial onshore and offshore components, is poised to contribute significantly to the region's renewable energy supply.

In conclusion, Wexford County Council supports the development and recognises the importance of the proposed development in contributing to renewable energy targets at national level as critical infrastructure in addition to the need to secure energy supply to the County. The Council also recognises, subject to the mitigation measures outlined, the positive economic impacts the development can bring to the coastal communities of North Wexford and Wicklow.



Eddie Taaffe
Chief Executive