



**IRELAND SOUTH EAST
OFFSHORE WIND
PARTNERSHIP**

Ireland South East Regional Enterprise Plan

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An Coimisiún Pleanála

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20/07/2026

**Observation by the Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership on Arklow Bank
Wind Park 2 marine application**

Re: Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 Offshore Infrastructure Application

An Coimisiún Pleanála Reference: 319864

The Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership welcomes the opportunity to make this submission in support of the Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 offshore infrastructure planning application.

The Partnership was established to maximise the economic, enterprise and skills opportunities arising from the development of Ireland's offshore renewable energy sector across the South East. It brings together the four South East local authorities, enterprise agencies, higher and further education providers, ports, industry representatives and other regional stakeholders to ensure the region is well positioned to support Ireland's offshore wind ambitions.

Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 represents one of Ireland's most strategically important offshore renewable energy projects. As an advanced offshore wind development on Ireland's east coast, it has the potential to make a significant contribution to Ireland's

climate objectives, energy security, regional economic development and the long-term growth of Ireland's offshore wind industry.

Supporting National Energy Security

The project will strengthen Ireland's energy security by delivering up to 800 MW of indigenous renewable electricity, reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels while contributing towards national renewable energy and decarbonisation targets.

Once operational, the project is expected to generate enough clean electricity to power the equivalent of approximately 850,000 homes annually while avoiding more than 800,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year. Developments of this scale are fundamental to achieving Ireland's transition to a secure, low-carbon energy system.

Regional Economic Development

Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 has the potential to generate up to €800 million in economic benefit, with approximately €400 million expected to be realised within the Wicklow and Wexford region.

The project is expected to support approximately 2,300 direct and indirect jobs throughout construction and operation, while creating around 80 permanent, highly skilled operational roles based at the Operations and Maintenance facility in Arklow.

The economic opportunity extends well beyond the immediate project area. Offshore wind developments create demand across engineering, manufacturing, fabrication, logistics, ports, marine services, environmental consultancy, digital technologies and professional services, creating opportunities for indigenous businesses throughout the South East and across Ireland.

Building Ireland's Offshore Wind Supply Chain

The Partnership believes projects such as Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 are essential to developing a competitive Irish offshore wind supply chain.

Providing certainty around the delivery of offshore wind projects enables businesses to invest in new capability, supports innovation and strengthens collaboration between industry, enterprise agencies and education providers. This investment is fundamental to ensuring Ireland captures the long-term economic value associated with offshore renewable energy.

The project also provides an important opportunity for Irish companies to gain experience across the offshore wind lifecycle, strengthening their ability to compete for future projects both nationally and internationally.

Supporting the South Coast DMAP

The Partnership considers Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 to be an important catalyst for the wider development of Ireland's offshore wind sector, particularly in supporting the successful delivery of the proposed developments identified within the South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (South Coast DMAP).

The South Coast DMAP represents the next major phase of Ireland's offshore wind programme and has the potential to unlock several gigawatts of offshore renewable energy off the coasts of Waterford and Wexford. The delivery of these projects will require substantial investment in port infrastructure, supply chains, skills development, research capability and business capacity.

The experience gained through Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 will help build the skilled workforce, operational expertise and industrial capability required to support future offshore wind developments along Ireland's south coast. It will also provide confidence for businesses to invest, encourage greater participation by Irish suppliers and strengthen collaboration between industry, education providers and public agencies.

For the South East, where the Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership has been working to develop the regional ecosystem required to support offshore wind, maintaining momentum through projects such as Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 is essential. Progress on early commercial-scale projects helps position the region to maximise the economic and employment opportunities associated with the South Coast DMAP and Ireland's wider offshore renewable energy ambitions.

Skills Development

The Partnership has been actively supporting offshore wind skills development across the South East through collaboration with South East Technological University, Education and Training Boards, the Regional Skills Forum and industry partners.

Projects of this scale create opportunities for apprenticeships, graduate employment, specialist technical training and long-term career pathways across engineering, marine operations, construction and renewable energy.

The proposed Sustainable Education Centre within the Arklow Operations Base will also make an important contribution to education, public engagement and future workforce development.

Community Benefits

The Partnership welcomes the commitment to establish a multi-million euro Community Benefit Fund.

Meaningful community benefit arrangements ensure that local communities share directly in the long-term value created by offshore renewable energy developments while

supporting local initiatives, sustainability projects and community-led economic development.

Strategic Importance

Ireland has set ambitious offshore renewable energy targets and significant progress will be required over the coming decade to realise these ambitions.

The South East possesses many of the assets needed to support this transition, including strategically located ports, engineering expertise, advanced manufacturing capability, world-class education and research institutions and an experienced maritime sector.

Projects such as Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 are critical to maintaining momentum within the sector, providing certainty for investment and helping to establish the capability needed to deliver the next generation of offshore wind developments around Ireland's coastline.

Conclusion

The Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership strongly supports the progression of Arklow Bank Wind Park 2.

The project represents an important opportunity to advance Ireland's clean energy ambitions while delivering substantial economic, employment and supply chain benefits for the South East and the wider Irish economy.

Importantly, it will also help build the industrial capability, skilled workforce and regional ecosystem required to support the successful delivery of future offshore wind developments, including those proposed within the South Coast DMAP.

The Partnership therefore respectfully supports the application and welcomes its continued progression through the planning process.

Submission by:

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On behalf of the Ireland South East Offshore Wind Partnership