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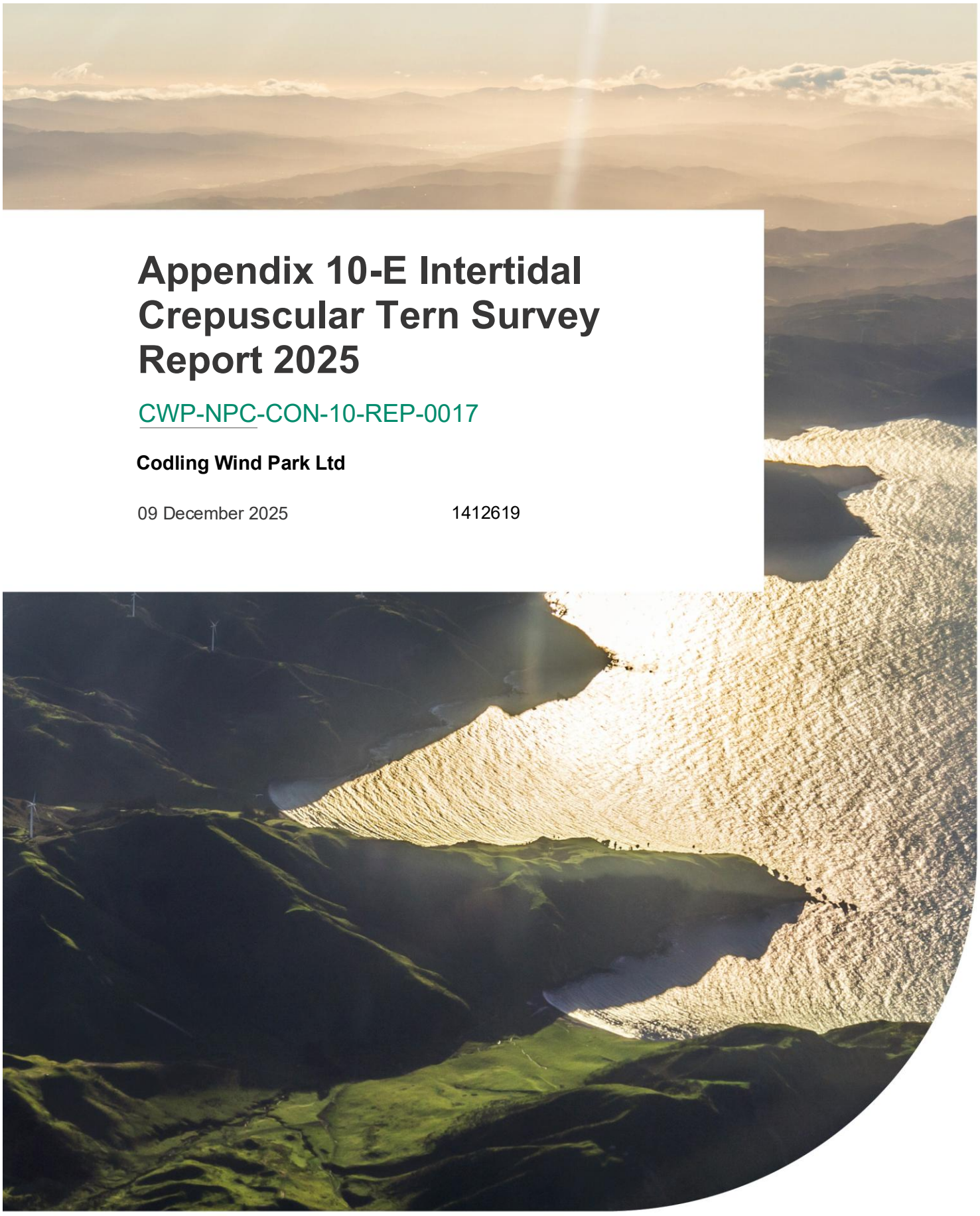
EIAR Addendum

Appendix 10-E Intertidal Crepuscular Tern Survey Report 2025



Appendix 10-E Intertidal Crepuscular Tern Survey Report 2025

CWP-NPC-CON-10-REP-0017

Codling Wind Park Ltd

09 December 2025 1412619

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Document history

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Contents

1. Introduction

This document provides a summary of ornithological fieldwork undertaken to describe the distributions and numbers of staging terns around South Dublin Bay. These surveys were undertaken in relation to the intertidal landfall site for sub-sea cable infrastructure associated with the proposed Codling Wind Park (hereafter CWP), the array being located in the Irish Sea, some 13 km offshore between Greystones and Wicklow, Ireland. Aggregations of post-breeding terns have been identified as being a notable feature of ornithological interest within South Dublin Bay, where the cable will make landfall.

Cable infrastructure will pass through South Dublin Bay to the proposed landfall in the vicinity of Poolbeg Power Station. Works are planned to be undertaken within the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) survey area 'Dublin Bay South Wall to West Dun Laoghaire'. This area occurs within the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), which is designated for its wintering wader and wildfowl populations and post-breeding aggregations of common (*Sterna hirundo*), Arctic (*S. paradisea*) and roseate terns (*S. dougallii*). Dalkey Islands SPA, which is designated for three species of tern, namely common, Arctic and roseate tern, is situated approximately 4 km from the southernmost point of the Poolbeg survey area and it is anticipated that a proportion of post-breeding terns congregating within South Dublin Bay will be from this SPA.

This report covers 2025 post-breeding crepuscular tern surveys carried out between July 2025 and September 2025, inclusive.

The purpose of these reports is as follows:

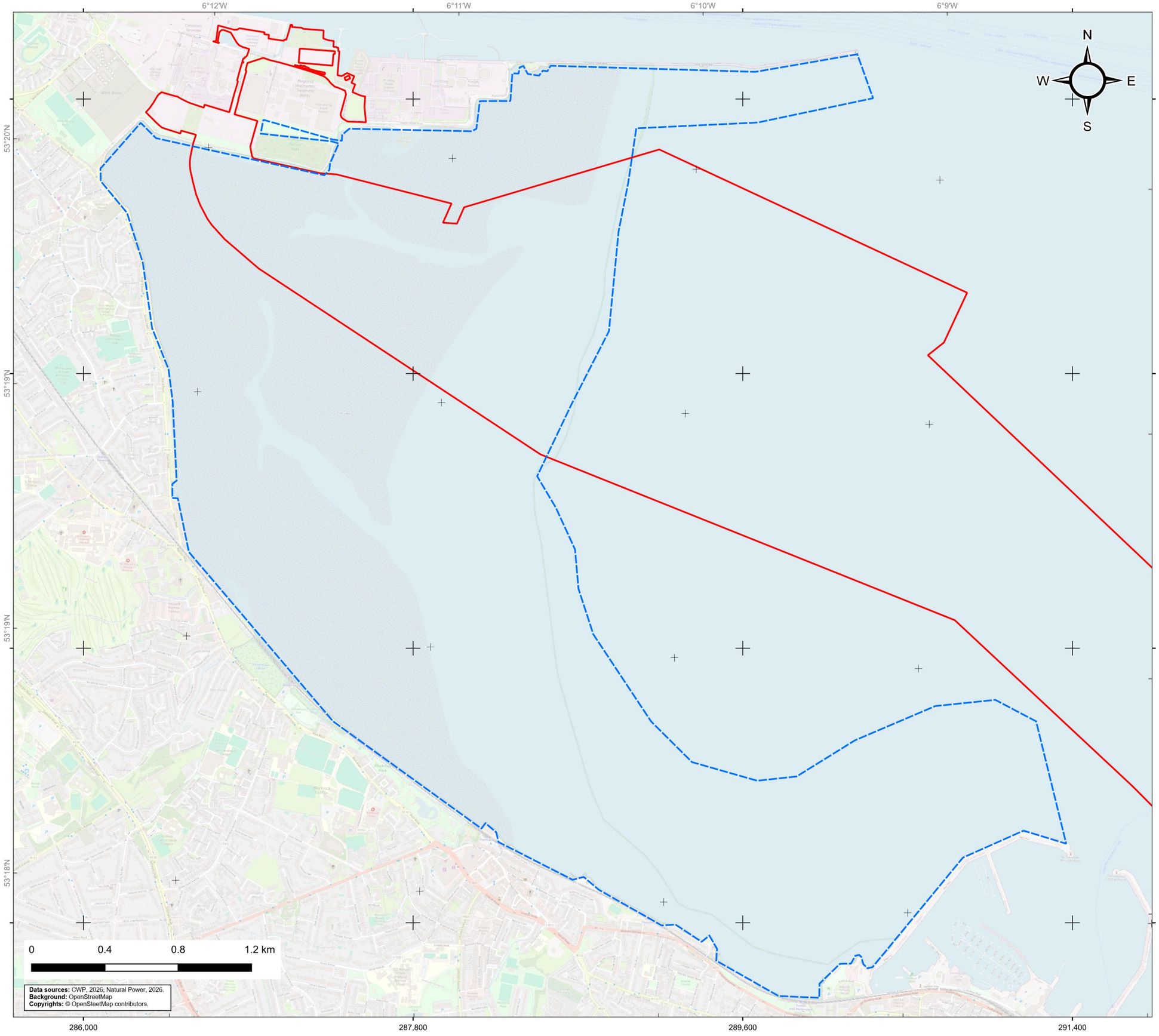
- to summarise survey effort in relation to staging crepuscular tern surveys;
- to document compliance with health and safety procedures.
- to present an overview of data collected during these surveys, including validation of the data that formed the basis of the EIAR; and

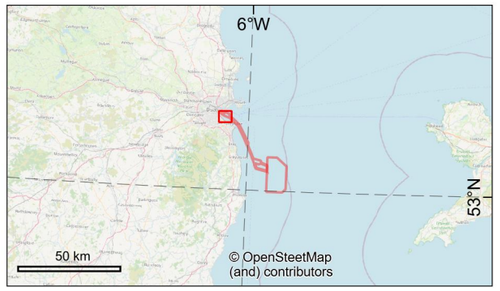
2. Survey details

A total of four staging tern surveys were undertaken between July and September 2025; one in July (21st), two in August (18th & 28th) and one in September (17th). Surveys aimed to capture the numbers, distributions and species compositions of post-breeding tern aggregations present within the Poolbeg survey area. The survey methodology was adapted from that used for post-breeding aggregations of roosting terns counts carried out by BirdWatch Ireland between 2013 and 2016[1] .

Visits were timed to begin approximately 1.5 to 2 hours before sunset and continued until approximately civil twilight (c.30 to 45 minutes after sunset). Visits were timed to take place on a high or rising tide if possible (with high water occurring within one to two hours of sunset), so that the birds were more concentrated. It is noted that surveying across different tidal states can during influence the observed distributions of roosting terns due to the variation in the availability of intertidal habitat. During low tide, when more areas are uncovered by receding water, birds have a greater range of potential roosting sites, whereas high tide restricts available habitat and may concentrate birds into fewer locations, thereby affecting the patterns recorded in survey results. The surveyor recorded all terns within the survey area and included as much additional information as possible with details such as numbers, species composition of flocks, behaviour etc. The survey area in relation to the landfall location is presented in **Figure 1**.

[1] Tierney, N., Whelan, R., & Valentín, A. (2016). Post-breeding aggregations of roosting terns in south Dublin Bay in late summer. Irish Birds, 10, 339-344.





Legend

- Planning Application Boundary (PAB)
- Intertidal landfall survey area

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Project: Codling Wind Park

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Figure 1
Intertidal landfall survey area

CWP doc. number: CWP-NPC-ENG-08-01-MAP-0674

Internal descriptive code: PB..DLH - PAB - S.BIRD.INTERTIDAL - (EIAR.Vol.04. Ch.10.Ap.05.FIG.01.03)

Size: A3

Scale: 1:20,000

CRS: EPSG 25830

Rev.	Updates	Date	By	Chk'd	App'd
01	For FIR submission	2026/04/20	AC	FM/EA	CM

3. Health and Safety Reporting

The project Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS)[2] was read and signed by all surveyors. There were no reportable incidents during the 2025 staging tern survey period.

4. Survey Effort

Staging tern surveys recorded numbers and distributions of tern flocks present within the CWP landfall survey area at Poolbeg. Survey methodology was adapted from that used by Tierney[1] and carried out by two experienced ornithological field surveyors.

Four surveys were undertaken during the post-breeding period and timed as far as possible to coincide with both dusk and a high or rising tide (i.e. both as birds are coming into roost and when flocks were concentrated into smaller areas by high water). One survey (August visit 2) was conduct during a falling tide. Surveys aimed to collect data on the numbers and locations of terns, as well as environmental data. The dates, times and environmental conditions recorded during each survey each month are provided in **Table 4.1** below.

[2] Codling Wind Park Risk Assessment and Method Statement: Codling Landfall Coastal bird surveys_ (Natural Power document number 1402192; 7th of July 2025).

Table 4.1 Survey details and weather conditions

July 2025		
Date:	21/07/2025	
Dusk:	21:38	
Tide Time and State:	Rising/High (21:42)	
Survey Start / End	20:24	22:15
Weather	Wind: NW Force 3, Visibility 2, Cloud 7/8	Wind: WNW Force 3, Visibility 2, Cloud 8/8
August 2025 – visit 1		
Date:	18/08/2025	
Dusk:	20:46	
Tide Time and State:	Rising/High (20:20)	
Survey Start / End	18:45	21:30
Weather	Wind: E Force 3, Visibility 2, Cloud 2/8	Wind: ESE Force 2, Visibility 1, Cloud 3/8
August 2025 – visit 2		
Date:	28/08/2025	
Dusk:	20:23	
Tide Time and State:	High (15:25) Low (21:03)	
Survey Start / End	18:30	21:00
Weather	Wind: SW Force 3, Visibility 2, Cloud 6/8	Wind: SW Force 3, Visibility 2, Cloud 6/8
September 2025		
Date:	17/09/2025	
Dusk:	19:35	
Tide Time and State:	Low 14:50 High (21:27)	
Survey Start / End	18:06	20:15
Weather	Wind: SW Force 2, Visibility 2, Cloud 6/8	Wind: SW Force 2, Visibility 1, Cloud 6/8
Wind: 16-pt compass/Beaufort scale. Visibility: 1 = Poor (< 1 km); 2 = Moderate (1 – 2 km); 3 = Good (> 2 km). Cloud cover: eighths, from 0/8 = Clear sky to 8/8 = Overcast.		

5. Results

The following section summarises data relating to the numbers and species of terns observed during each of the 2025 staging tern survey visits. These surveys recorded terns within the Poolbeg survey area, along with their behaviours and locations with relation to Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) (i.e. terrestrial, supratidal, intertidal or subtidal).

Terns of the genus *Sterna* (i.e. roseate, common and Arctic terns) are similar in appearance and difficult to differentiate to species level when observed from a distance and/or in poor light conditions (c.f. dusk). *Sterna* terns not identified to species level were assigned as "*Sterna* sp".

Total Counts

Total numbers of each tern species recorded within the Poolbeg survey area during July 2025 to September 2025 survey visits are provided in **Table 5.1**.

It should be noted that due to the large number of roosting terns that were observed in the survey area and the difficulty associated with counting groups during low-light conditions, count estimates are considered to represent minimum numbers of individuals within the survey area.

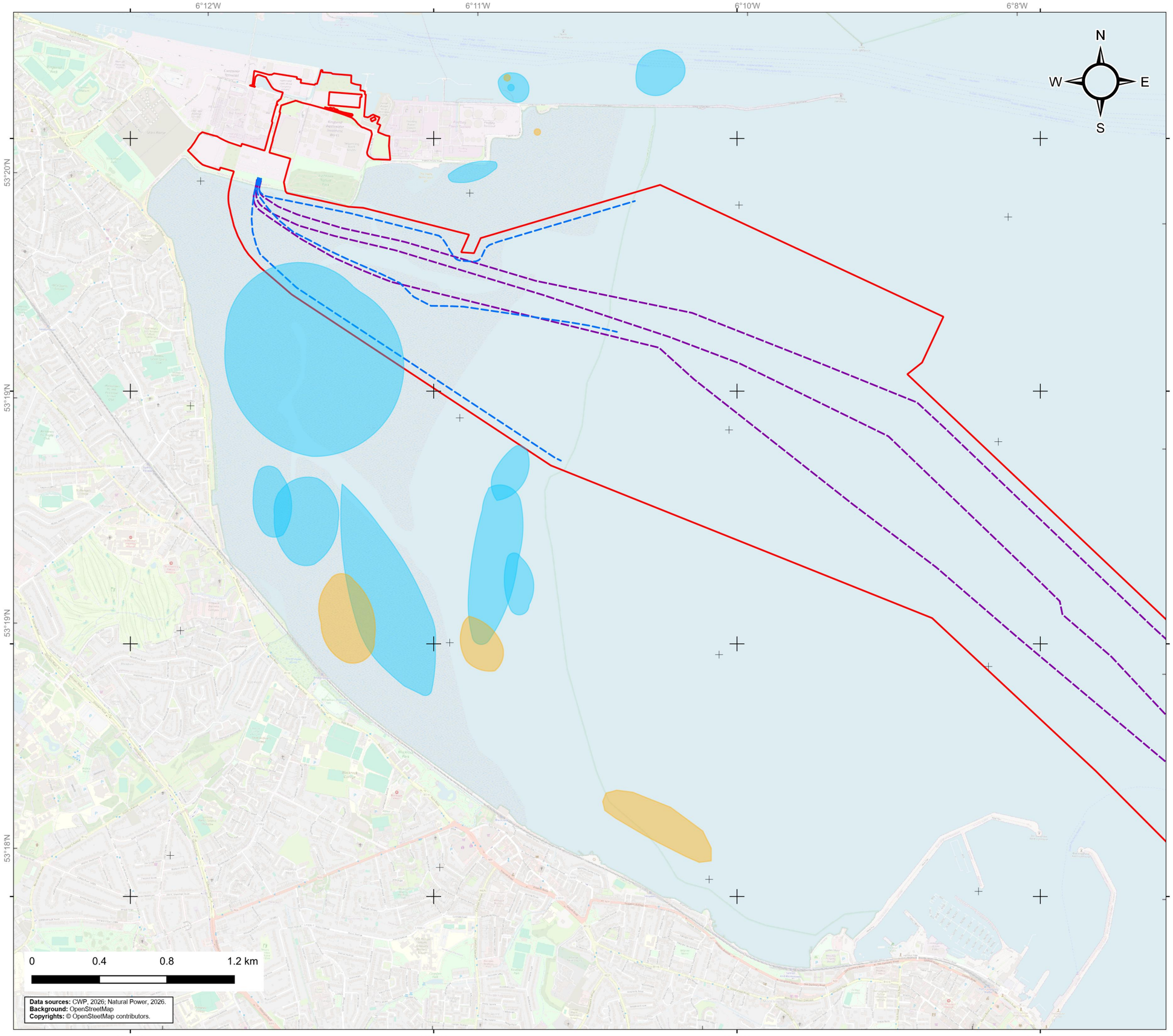
Table 5.1: Total counts recorded during the 2025 surveys

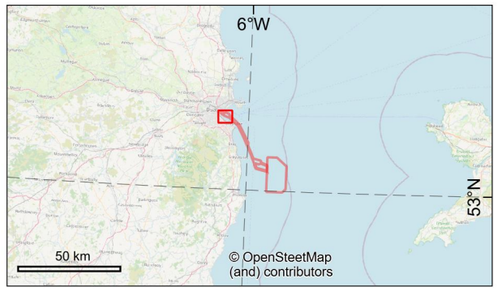
Species	Minimum count on each survey			
	Survey 1: 21/07/2025	Survey 2: 18/08/2025	Survey 3: 28/08/2025	Survey 4: 17/09/2025
Common tern	500	1132	368	210
Arctic tern	436	360	30	15
Roseate tern	1	56	7	0
Unidentified *Sterna* sp.	300	819	0	400
Sandwich tern	16	32	13	78
Black tern	0	2	0	0
TOTAL	**1253**	**2401**	**418**	**703**

Source: Natural Power

Distribution

In addition to the numbers and species of terns present, their distributions within the survey area were mapped and supplementary information on behaviour and habitat use was recorded wherever possible. Distributions of tern roosts recorded within the survey area in relation to intertidal cable route scenarios is shown in **Figure 2** below.





Legend

- Planning Application Boundary (PAB)
- Offshore export cable
- Offshore export cable – alternative alignment

Post-breeding tern roosting locations

- Sandwich tern
- Sterna tern species (Roseate tern, Common tern, Arctic tern and unidentified Sterna terns)

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Figure 2
Distribution of post-breeding tern roosting locations recorded during the 2025 surveys

CWP doc. number: CWP-NPC-ENG-08-01-MAP-1692

Internal descriptive code: DU.BAY - PAB..OECx.3PB.Opt8..OECx.3PB.Opt8.INTERTIDAL.ALTER.ALIGN - ROOST.TERNs.STERNA.SANDWICH - (NIS.Vol.05.a.Sec.02.FIG.01)

Size: A3

Scale: 1:22,000

CRS: EPSG 25830

Rev.	Updates	Date	By	Chk'd	App'd
01	For FIR submission	2026/04/20	AC	FM/EA	CM

6. Discussion

A total of four crepuscular tern survey visits conducted by a team of two surveyors were undertaken in South Dublin Bay following the 2025 breeding season.

No health and safety incidents were recorded during this work.

The survey methodology as described in Tierney[1] *et al.*, along with the data recording techniques presented in the baseline methodology document (Natural Power document number 1402192) proved a practical means of implementing the survey;

Five tern species were identified to species level during the crepuscular tern surveys:

- Sandwich tern;
- Roseate tern;
- Black Tern;
- Common tern; and
- Arctic tern

Roosting areas were identified and are shown in **Figure 2**.

The tern species identified during the 2025 crepuscular tern surveys are the same as those identified from the previous intertidal land surveys undertaken in 2020 and 2021 and previous Irish Wetland Bird Surveys (I – WeBS). The identified roosting areas are also similar to those previously identified in South Dublin Bay (Merne *et al.,* 2008[3]) and from previous intertidal land surveys. The total counts of Sterna sp and Sandwich terns recorded in the 2025 crepuscular tern surveys are lower than has been recorded previously, however, inter-annual variability is expected, and this does follow a general overall decline in the number of terns recorded at the site since a peak count of 17,440 terns in 2016.

Data presented within this report are used to provide further information that was requested by An Coimisiún Pleanála.

[3] Merne, O. J., Madden, B., Archer, E., & Porter, B. (2008). Autumn roosting by terns in south Dublin Bay. Irish Birds, 8, 335-340.

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