

Celtic Interconnector

Volume 8A: Planning and Consultation Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and project overview

The Celtic Interconnector Project ('the Project') is a proposed electrical link between Ireland and France that will enable the import and export of electricity between the two countries. It will be the first direct energy link between Ireland and France and is being jointly developed by EirGrid plc (EirGrid) and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité (RTE) ('the Project Promoters'), the Transmission System Operators (TSOs) in Ireland and France, respectively. EirGrid and RTE are joint Project Promoters of the Celtic Interconnector Project, although for the purpose of the Foreshore Licence Application, EirGrid is the sole Applicant.

The Celtic Interconnector cable route is approximately 497 kilometres (km) long with 34km in Ireland's Territorial Waters, 117km in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), 211km in the United Kingdom's (UK) EEZ, 87km in the French EEZ, and 48km in French Territorial Waters (all distances stated are approximate). The cable route does not enter the Territorial Waters of the UK.

A detailed description of the project is provided in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall and Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable.

1.2 Project Need

The need for, and the benefits of the project are summarised below and are further discussed in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Introductory Chapters) - Chapter 2: Project Need. The proposed Celtic Interconnector, with an estimated cost of €930M, is recognised as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) by the European Union. In addition, it will:

- Support Europe's transition to the Energy Union;
- Increase competition in the electricity market by applying downward pressure on the cost of electricity to the benefit of consumers in Ireland, France and Europe;
- Enhance the security of supply for both Irish and French electricity consumers;
- Support Europe's transition to a low carbon energy future by increasing the market available for renewable electricity and supporting the development of the renewable energy sector; and
- Provide Ireland's only energy connection to an EU Member State following the UK's departure from the EU.Foreshore Licence Application Process.

1.3 Foreshore Licence application process

In Ireland, for the marine components of the Project require the submission of a Foreshore Licence application under the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended) to Foreshore Unit (MEFU) within the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) as the regulator for activities in the Irish foreshore.

1.4 Purpose of the Planning and Consultation Report

The purpose of this Planning and Consultation Report ('the Report') is to provide a summary of the planning policies of relevance to the Foreshore Licence Application and confirm how the Project meets these policy requirements.

The Report also provides summary of the engagement and consultation carried out to support the development of the Foreshore Licence Application. This includes EirGrid's engagement with MEFU and other statutory and non-statutory consultees as part of the Foreshore Licence application process. The Report sets out how EirGrid has had regard to the comments received in the development of the application.

2 Planning Policy

2.1 Introduction

This section of the report summaries the legislation and planning policies that are relevant to the delivery of the marine activities of the Celtic Interconnector Project within the Irish foreshore.

2.2 Legislative Context

2.2.1 TEN-E Regulation (EU) 347/2013 – Trans-European Networks for Energy

The European Union (EU) recognised the Celtic Interconnector as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) under the guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure EU 347/2013 (TEN-E Regulation). EirGrid is required to make a 'draft application file' available to consultees and the public for comment as part of the PCI process, which is co-ordinated by An Bord Pleanála as the National Competent Authority (NCA). The draft application file will include the documents forming part of the Foreshore Licence Application.

2.2.2 Foreshore Licence Act 1933

The Irish marine components of the Celtic Interconnector require consent under the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended).

New legislation is being prepared to replace the Foreshore Act (known as the Maritime Planning Bill); however this has not come into force at the time of submission of the foreshore licence application to DHLGH.

2.2.3 EIA Directive 2014/52/EU

The Project does not qualify as EIA development under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive. However, EirGrid have elected to produce an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) (Volume 3D EIAR for Ireland Offshore) on a voluntary basis due to the large-scale and transboundary nature of the Project.

2.2.4 The Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive aims to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) of the EU's marine waters by 2020 and protect the resource bases upon which marine related economic and social activities depend.

To achieve GES by 2020, each Member State is required to develop a strategy for its marine waters (or Marine Strategy). In addition, because the Directive follows an adaptive management approach, the Marine Strategies must be kept up-to-date and reviewed every 6 years.

2.2.5 Maritime Spatial Planning Directive 2014/89/EU

The Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD) establishes a framework for maritime spatial planning across the EU member states. The Directive requires European Member States to develop Maritime Spatial Plans by 31 March 2021. It sets out the fundamental elements that must be reflected in Maritime Spatial Plans including the promotion of the coexistence of relevant uses and activities.

2.2.6 Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning Regulations 2016

Ireland has transposed the Marine Spatial Planning Directive into the Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning Regulations. Under the Regulations, the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government is the competent authority for the purposes of the Directive and, by extension, for purposes of preparing Ireland's first maritime spatial plan. Marine planning will enable the Government of Ireland to set a clear direction for managing Irish seas informing decisions about the current and future development of the marine area, aiming to integrate social, economic, and environmental needs.

There are four stages in the development and implementation of marine spatial planning in Ireland:

- Publication of a roadmap outlining a proposed approach to developing Ireland's first marine spatial plan;
- Publication of an evidence and issues overview, a full plan in draft and public consultation;
- Preparation of a final plan with supporting environmental assessments for submission to Government and then to the European Commission ahead of the March 2021 deadline set out under the MSP Directive; and
- Implementation of the final Marine Spatial Plan.

See further explanation under National Marine Planning Framework in Section 2.3.1 below.

2.3 Policy Context

2.3.1 European Policy

Energy Union Package COM(2015) 80

The Energy Union Package Framework Strategy aims to give European Union (EU) consumers, households and businesses, secure, sustainable, competitive, and affordable energy. The strategy includes a specific minimum interconnection target has been set for electricity at 10% of installed electricity production capacity of the Member States, which should be achieved by 2020. The latest State of the Energy Union report, published 14 October 2020, looks at the energy union's contribution to EU's long-term climate goals and stated that eight EU member states, including Ireland, have failed to meet the 10% interconnection target for 2020.

2.3.2 National Policy

National Planning Framework 2018

The goal of the National Planning Framework (NPF) is to inform and guide sustainable (economic, social, and environmental) planning and development. There are 10 national strategic outcomes set out in the planning framework including the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

National Development Plan 2018 – 2027

The NPF is accompanied by the National Development Plan (NDP) which sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the implementation of the NPF. The Celtic Interconnector Project is referenced as one of the Major National Infrastructure Projects supporting the transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient society.

National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development 2013 (updated 2021)

This National Policy Position (NPP) establishes the national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. The NPP stresses the importance of harnessing the energy potential and deliver demand from Ireland's natural energy sources such as wind, wave and solar, new energy systems and transmission grid.

Government White Paper – Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015 - 2030

The Government White Paper sets out a framework to guide Ireland's energy policy development. The White Paper acknowledges that an uninterrupted supply of energy is vital to the functioning of Irish society and economy.

Climate Action Plan 2019

The objective of the Plan is to enable Ireland to meet its EU targets to reduce its carbon emissions by 30% between 2021 and 2030 and drive forward the achievement of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The action plan recognises that new infrastructure will need to be in place to achieve the Government of Ireland's ambition.

National Policy Statement on Electricity Interconnection (2018)

This NPS details the current position of electricity interconnection in Ireland. The policy statement sets out how Ireland will seek to continue to benefit from the strategic and economic benefits of electricity interconnection, while aligning with EU energy targets on interconnection and decarbonisation.

Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure 2012

This statement published by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DECC), underlines the need and urgency for new energy infrastructure in the national interest and in the interests of individual consumers.

National Marine Planning Framework (Draft)

In accordance with the Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning Regulations 2016, a draft Marine Planning Policy Statement outlining the future development of the marine planning system has been published by the DHLGH and subject to public consultation. It is currently at Stage 3 of development process (finalisation) prior to implementation. The proposed reform of national planning of the marine environment will create a national plan of Ireland's maritime area, which will be known as the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF). The NMPF will establish an overarching plan for the entire Irish marine area, to function as the maritime counterpart to the National Planning Framework. The NMPF will set long-term objectives for the sustainable development of Ireland's maritime area over a 20-year term.

2.3.3 Regional Policy

Southern Regional Assembly Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) sets out a 12-year strategic regional development framework for the Southern Region of Ireland. The primary aim of the RSES is to support and implement the NPF and NDF.

The Celtic Interconnector Project is referenced in Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 223 – International Energy Interconnection Infrastructure.

RPO223 - It is an objective to support the sustainable development of international energy interconnection infrastructure and support the sustainable development (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) of the Celtic Interconnector project between Ireland and France from a location in the Region.

The transboundary nature of the Celtic Interconnector project is also referenced in RPO220 – Integrated Single Electricity Market (I-SEM):

RP0220 – It is an objective to support the Integrated Single Electricity Market (I-SEM) as a key priority for the Region and seeks the sustainable development and reinforcement of the energy grid including grid connection, transboundary networks into and through the Region and between all adjacent Regions subject to appropriate environmental assessment and planning processes.

2.3.4 Local Policy

Cork County Council Development Plan 2014

This Development Plan is relevant to the location in which the Celtic Interconnector Project will be sited. Objective ED 6-1: Electricity Network states:

- *Support and facilitate the sustainable development, upgrade and expansion of the electricity transmission grid, storage, and distribution network infrastructure;*
- *Support the sustainable development of the grid including strategic energy corridors and distribution networks in the region to international standards;*

- *Facilitate where practical and feasible infrastructure connections to wind farms and other renewable energy sources subject to normal proper planning considerations; and*
- *Proposals for development which would be likely to have a significant effect on nature conservation sites and/or habitats or species of high conservation value will only be approved if it can be ascertained, by means of an Appropriate Assessment or other ecological assessment, that the integrity of these sites will not be adversely affected.*

Cork County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 (under preparation)

A background document has been prepared on Energy (Background Document No.9) for the purposes of the Pre-Draft Plan public consultation and preparation of the Draft Plan. The Draft Development Plan is scheduled for publication and public consultation in April 2021.

The key issues for the review of Development Plan set out in the Background Document included the need to support improvements to the transmission network including electricity transmission grid, gas infrastructure, the storage and distribution network and international energy interconnection infrastructure. The Celtic Interconnector is referenced as an example. It also states that the Plan needs to safeguard strategic energy corridors from encroachment by other developments that could compromise the delivery of energy networks.

2.3.5 Other Policy

All-Island Generation Capacity Statement 2019 - 2028

This statement was published by EirGrid and SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland), outlining the expected electricity demand and the level of generation capacity that will be required on the island over the next ten years.

Strategy 2020-2025 Transform the power system for future generation

Published by EirGrid, this document sets out a strategic response to the transition of electricity generation to a sustainable low-carbon future. The primary goal of the strategy is to support the continued decarbonisation of electricity generation within Ireland in response to the climate crisis.

Transmission Development Plan 2019-2028

The Transmission Development Plan (TDP) fulfils EirGrid's statutory obligation to deliver a plan for the development of the Irish transmission network and interconnections in line with the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity. The Celtic Interconnector is listed as one of four Irish Projects of Common Interest within the TDP aimed at ensuring the security and reliability of electricity supply.

2.4 Planning History

There is limited development history for the landfall site, the landfall location is partially made up of Claycastle beach; public carpark serving the beach, which has been in-situ for over 25 years; and undeveloped land between the public carpark and Summerfield Holiday Park.

2.5 Planning Applications

There is one development within the foreshore area of relevance to the Project – the Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park¹. This project is at the pre-application stage and a planning application is not due to be submitted until Q3 2023. The regard given to the Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park is outlined in the approach to the cumulative impact assessment Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) – Chapter 21: Summary of Transboundary and Cumulative Impacts.

2.6 Planning Appraisal

2.6.1 Project Need

The need for the project has been briefly outlined in section 1.2 of this report and is further detailed in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Introductory Chapters) - Chapter 2: Project Need.

As a designated PCI, the Celtic Interconnector is considered a strategic development of European importance and will facilitate the movement of electricity between Ireland and France via a subsea cable. The project is required to promote the large-scale movement of electricity, strengthen the security of supply between countries, and support a more sustainable supply of electricity. Without the project, the electricity transmission network in Ireland and Europe would be constrained, and there would be a failure of the nation to provide a secure supply of electricity and facilitate connections for renewable energy projects, contributing to a low-carbon economy.

The need for the Celtic Interconnector is further emphasised at a national, regional, and local level in Ireland, including within the NDP, the NPS on Electricity Interconnection, the RSES and the Cork County Council Development Plan (see Section 2.3).

The need for the project is therefore firmly supported by the published and emerging planning policy framework.

2.6.2 Policy Accordance

As emphasised in Section 2.3 above, the need for the Celtic Interconnector Project is recognised at a European level through the TEN-E Regulations as a critical electricity transmission project. Within its latest report, the EU Energy Union Package highlights the failure of Ireland to meet its 10% interconnection target for 2020, and therefore there is an increased emphasis on the Project to contribute towards the established interconnection targets.

¹ <https://dpenergy.info/inisealga/>

At a national level, the NPF, NDP, and the NPS on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development provide strong support towards the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. The NDF specifically references the Celtic Interconnector as a major infrastructure project that is vital to contributing towards this goal.

The criticality of the low carbon agenda is further emphasised in the Government White Paper – Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future and the Climate Change Action Plan 2019. The White Paper stresses the importance of maintaining an uninterrupted supply of energy, and ensuring diversification of energy supply, both aims being facilitated by the Celtic Interconnector Project.

The NPS on Electricity Connection recognises that few interconnectors exist in Ireland to provide strategic and economic benefits to the nation and provides support towards those that align with EU energy targets on interconnection and decarbonisation. The Celtic Interconnector Project will support an enhanced European scale transmission system.

At a regional level, the RSES provides specific recognition to the Celtic Interconnector as a project to reinforce the electricity transmission system for the nation and cross borders. The RSES acknowledges that the development of the Project is subject to the appropriate environmental impact assessment. This has been achieved through the completion of a robust EIAR (Volume 3D EIAR for Ireland Offshore) and Natural Impact Statement (NIS) for Ireland Offshore (Volume 6B).

At a local level, Policy ED 6-1 of the adopted Development Plan for Cork County Council provides support for the sustainable development of the electricity transmission grid. The Policy stresses that any Project likely to have a significant effect on nature conservation sites and/or habitats of high conservation value should be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. The Celtic Interconnector Project meets this test through the assessment carried out and presented in the NIS for Ireland Offshore (Volume 6B), which concludes that the likely significant effects identified will not affect the integrity of the European sites.

The future Development Plan for Cork County Council is at the early stages of preparation and the draft plan has not been published. For the purpose of this application, the adopted Plan therefore remains relevant. The Background Document recognises the Celtic Interconnector Project as a Project that will support improvements to the electricity transmission network, and therefore it is anticipated that the Draft Plan will reflect this aspiration.

EirGrid owns and operates the electricity grid in Ireland and has a duty to maintain and enhance transmission infrastructure to ensure it is fit for the future. EirGrid has a suite of policy and strategic development documents which set out how they intend to develop a sustainable transmission network. The Celtic Interconnector Project is specifically identified in the TDP as a PCI aimed at ensuring the security and reliability of electricity supply. It is also required to support the electricity demand requirements established in the All-Island Generation Capacity Statement 2019-2028. The Project will also support EirGrid’s aspiration to decarbonise electricity generation in response to the ongoing climate crisis.

There are strategic Directives at a European level present that seek to protect the marine environment and provide a revised planning framework against which marine activities

should be considered. In response to the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, a specific assessment has been produced, which demonstrates the Celtic Interconnector will not affect the ability of Ireland to achieve GES of the relevant objectives (Volume 8B- MSFD Assessment).

The marine planning framework in Ireland, required to accord with the MSPD, remains in the process of development. At the time of writing, a draft NMPF had been published which sets out the proposed approach to the future development of the planning system, including the adoption of a Marine Spatial Plan, however this has not been finalised or implemented. The draft NMPF recognises the proposed Celtic Interconnector and the benefits it will have on connectivity with other countries and Ireland's security of electricity supply.

2.7 Conclusion

The Planning Appraisal presented in Section 2.6 of this Report demonstrates the critical need for the Celtic Interconnector Project from a European, national, regional, and local level which is firmly supported and referenced within the established and emerging policy framework.

3 Consultation

3.1 Introduction

This section of the Report summarises the approach to consultation in relation to the Foreshore Licence Application. It explains the outcomes of the consultation and engagement undertaken as part of the pre-application process and explains how 'due regard' has been given to the comments received and how they have been taken into account in the ongoing development of the Project.

Further consultation has been undertaken to support the overarching PCI project, taking account of the onshore activities in Ireland, the works in the UK EEZ, and within French territorial waters. The outcomes of these consultation activities are provided in separate reports, which do not form part of the Foreshore Licence Application documents, but will form part of the draft application file submitted as part of the PCI process.

3.2 Legislation

3.2.1 Foreshore Regulations 2011

As part of their duty in determining the Foreshore Licence Application, MEFU within DHLGH has an obligation to consult a range of prescribed consultees as set out within the Foreshore Regulations 2011 SI No. 353/2011.

3.2.2 EIA Directive 2014/52/EU

The Foreshore Licence application is accompanied by a non-statutory EIAR. Although there is no legal requirement to undertake any consultation in accordance with the EIA Directive, EirGrid has considered it pertinent to engage with key environmental stakeholders in producing the EIAR.

3.3 Guidance

3.3.1 Framework for Grid Development

EirGrid has developed a bespoke 'Framework for Grid Development', which sets out how engagement with stakeholders and members of the public feeds into the development of a project. It sets the methods of engagement at the various stages in a project's development, who will be consulted, and by what means.

3.4 Engagement with MEFU

EirGrid conducted regular engagement with the MEFU as the regulator for the Licence when preparing the Foreshore Licence Application. This section of the report provides a record of this engagement and explains how advice from MEFU was taken into account.

3.4.1 Meetings

A record of the meetings carried out with MEFU is set out in Table 3.1. A copy of the meeting minutes is provided in [Appendix 3A: MEFU Meeting Minutes](#).

Commented [NH1]: Appendix to be added

Table 3.1 Record of meetings with MEFU

| Meeting date | Summary of advice received | Summary of how advice has been addressed |
|----------------|---|--|
| 8 July 2020 | MEFU requested information on the materials intended for concrete mattressing (noting that Gabions disintegrate over time). | A description of concrete mattressing materials is provided in Section 2.2.8 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable. |
| | MEFU advised that whilst the licencing process was only up to the 12nm territorial water, the Project should be considered in its entirety from an environmental perspective. | The EIAR has presented an environmental impact assessment of the project as a whole, presented in Volume 3 Irish Territorial Waters and EEZ), Volume 4 for the UK EEZ, and Volume 5 for the French EEZ and Territorial Waters. Volumes 4 and 5 have not been provided as part of the Foreshore Licence Application but do form part of the PCI draft application file. |
| | MEFU advised that all qualifying interests and migratory species such as birds/cetaceans should be taken into account. | An assessment of the effects on qualifying interests and migratory species is presented in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 13: Biodiversity, and Volume 6B: NIS for Ireland Offshore. |
| | MEFU advised that fishing interests in Youghal will have to be considered. | An assessment of the effects on the fishing industry in Youghal, in particular the Classified Bivalve Mollusc Production Area is presented in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 19: Commercial Fisheries. |
| 20 August 2020 | MEFU outlined the approach to EIA screening and scoping. | The EIA screening and scoping process carried out by EirGrid reflects the advice received from MEFU. |

| Meeting date | Summary of advice received | Summary of how advice has been addressed |
|------------------|--|---|
| | MEFU provided advice on the key consultees to engage with during the development of the Project. | The consultees identified by MEFU have been consulted as part of the Project and the responses have informed the EIAR. |
| 24 November 2020 | MEFU and EirGrid discussed difficulties in engaging with the Naval Service to obtain more information on UXO management procedures and MEFU agreed to contact the Naval Service regarding this matter. | See details against the 1 February 2021 meeting below. |
| 1 February 2021 | MEFU confirmed that the Foreshore Act 1933 will remain the relevant consenting route if the application is submitted in May 2021 or up to the middle of 2021. | The application will follow the requirements of the Foreshore Act 1933 if submitted before the middle of 2021. |
| | MEFU confirmed that they would not be issuing a Scoping Opinion to EirGrid, but they would provide a copy of all consultation responses received. | EirGrid will take account of the scoping consultation responses in the Foreshore licence application (see Table 3.3). |
| | MEFU agreed to issue the most up to date Foreshore Licence Application Form. | The most up to date application form will be adopted for the application. |
| | MEFU requested copies of draft drawings for review. | Draft drawings were provided to the Unit for comment in February 2021. |
| | A request was made to confirm the correct licence number. | EirGrid confirmed via email to MEFU on [DATE] that the correct licence number was [INSERT]. This has been included on the licence application form. |
| | MEFU agreed to review correspondence received from the Navy and confirm what legislation / methodology was required to deal with UXO. | TBC – a response from MEFU is awaited. |
| | The Unit advised that UXO could be dealt with in the licence if it has been assessed in the EIAR and NIS documents. | Measures to address the potential presence of UXO are included in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 15: Archaeology & Cultural Heritage). The biodiversity assessment concluded that the |

Commented [NH2]: Confirmation to be inserted

Commented [NH3]: Confirmation to be inserted

| Meeting date | Summary of advice received | Summary of how advice has been addressed |
|--------------|---|--|
| | | presence of UXO is not expected, and scopes UXO out for further assessment, including in the NIS. |
| | The Unit confirmed that they would advise on the definition of the High Water Mark for the purpose of the licence application following the submission of the draft drawings. The Unit advised that they would send a copy of guidance on the HWM to EirGrid. | This guidance has been received from the MEFU and taken into account when finalising the draft drawings. |
| | The Unit advised EirGrid to continue consultee engagement to address any issues that may arise through MEFU's consultation process. | EirGrid will continue engagement with stakeholders throughout the remainder of the pre-application phase prior to submission of the Foreshore Licence Application. |

3.4.2 Correspondence

A record of relevant correspondence received from the MEFU is set out in Table 3.2. A copy of the email correspondence is provided in [Appendix 3B: Copies of MEFU correspondence.](#)

Commented [NH4]: Appendices to be added.

Table 3.2 Record of correspondence with the MEFU

| Date of correspondence | Summary of advice received | Summary of how advice has been addressed |
|------------------------|--|--|
| 13 October 2020 | MEFU confirmed the list of prescribed consultees in respect to S.I. No. 353/2011 Foreshore Regulations 2011. | The consultees identified by MEFU have been consulted as part of the project and the responses have informed the EIAR. |
| 3 February 2021 | MEFU confirmed that five consultation responses had been received as a result of their consultation on the scoping report. | See Table 3.3 below for a summary of how the advice received during the scoping consultation process was taken into account. |

3.5 Approach to stakeholder engagement

3.5.1 Defining stakeholders

Table 4.1 in the EIAR Scoping Report set out the key stakeholders that EirGrid proposed to consult and engage with in developing the Foreshore Licence.

This included the prescribed consultees who will be formally consulted by MEFU following the submission of the Foreshore Licence Application. These consultees were confirmed by MEFU via email on 13 October 2020 (see Table 3.2).

Additional stakeholders have been identified since the EIAR Scoping Report was produced, for example, where a material asset was identified within the study area that merited consultation with the owner/operator. The final list of consultees and the anticipated focus of engagement is set out in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Key stakeholders

| Stakeholder | Engagement focus |
|--|---|
| Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage (MEFU) | General information about the project – both in terms of application progress, stakeholder engagement activities and approach to the Foreshore Licence application. |
| An Chomhairle Ealaíon (Arts Council of Ireland) Commission for Regulation of Utilities Health Service Executive Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Minister for Transport | General information about the project; feedback on key topics of interest and engagement activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application. |
| An Taisce (National Trust for Ireland) National Parks and Wildlife Service | Feedback on key topics of conservation and heritage interest, including marine ecology and NIS, and engagement activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application. |
| Cork County Council | General information about the project; feedback on key topics of interest and engagement activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application. In particular to discuss protection of Claycastle beach Blue Flag status. |
| Environmental Protection Agency | General request for comments on planning and environment. |
| Fáilte Ireland (National Tourism Development Authority of Ireland) | To seek feedback about potential impacts on tourism and to ensure correct approach in EIAR; engagement activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application. |
| Irish Coast Guard Irish Maritime Administration Marine Safety Policy Division Marine Institute | To seek feedback concerning navigational safety (including recreational boating) and to ensure correct approach in EIAR; engagement |

| Stakeholder | Engagement focus |
|---|--|
| Marine Survey Office Marine Survey Office Administration Maritime Services Division Maritime Transport Division Mercantile Marine Office | activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application. |
| Heritage Council National Monuments Service Underwater Archaeology Unit of the National Monuments Service | To seek feedback about potential impacts on marine archaeology and heritage and to ensure correct approach in EIAR; engagement activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application |
| Irish Sea Fisheries Board South Western Fisheries Board Sea Fisheries Protection Authority Inland Fisheries Ireland | To seek feedback concerning potential impacts on commercial fisheries and to ensure correct approach in EIAR; engagement activities to resolve any issues prior to submission of Foreshore Licence application. |

3.5.2 Approach to consultation

All stakeholders identified in Table 3.3 were issued a consultation letter (Appendix 3C) inviting comments on the project and an opportunity to feed into the EIAR.

Commented [NH5]: Appendix to be added.

The consultation letter provided a brief overview of the Project and the Project Promoters. It also provided a link to a dedicated project page on EirGrid's website², where the stakeholder could find out more information on the Project.

Stakeholders were invited to provide comments on the project in writing and were offered a meeting with EirGrid to discuss the Project. Given the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020-2021, all stakeholder meetings were carried out as online video meetings rather than face-to-face.

3.6 Record of Engagement for the Irish Foreshore Licence Application

A summary of all stakeholder meeting and correspondence received in relation to the development of the Foreshore Licence Application is summarised in Table 3.4 below.

² www.eirgridgroup.com/the-grid/projects/celtic-interconnector/the-project/

Table 3.4 Summary of stakeholder engagement

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---|---|--|--|
| An Chomhairle Ealaíon (Arts Council of Ireland) | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| An Taisce (National Trust for Ireland) | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. Email received from stakeholder on 26 November 2020. | The project consultation letter was acknowledged – no specific comments were provided. | n/a |
| Commission for Regulation of Utilities | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. Email received from stakeholder on 8 December 2020. | The project consultation letter was acknowledged – no specific comments were provided. | n/a |
| Cork County Council (CCC) | Meeting held between EirGrid and CCC on 23 November 2020. A copy of the meeting minutes is provided in Appendix 3x) | CCC raised concerns regarding the extraction of peat on Claycastle beach and asked if leaving a hole would cause a safety issue. | Any excavated holes on the beach would be backfilled with sand (see Section 5.1.1 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: |

Commented [NH6]: Responses from the MEFU scoping consultation will be appended to the report.

The table will be updated as further consultation takes place.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| | | | Description of the Landfall. |
| | | CCC asked whether works in the carpark could be done outside of the busy summer season and queried what the 'worst' case for reduced beach access would be. | Phase 1 of the Irish landfall installation would take place in the winter months (see Section 5.5.1 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall). Phase 2 of the landfall installation must take place in the summer months to coincide with favourable weather windows (see Section 5.5.2 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall). |
| | | CCC requested that activities on the beach should be programmed around events such as the IronMan scheduled for 13-15 June 2021. | Landfall installation works are not programmed to take place until 2025 which will allow events to be programmed around installation activities (see Section 5.5.2 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| | | | Description of the Landfall.) |
| | | CCC queried whether HDD would be an option for installation of the cable at the beach. | EirGrid confirmed in the meeting that HDD was a low feasibility option due to the bathymetry and a pull in vessel for cable installation was preferred. A description of this activity is provided in (see Section 5.1 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall.) |
| | | CCC queried whether jetting is a possibility for cable installation in place of open cut trenching. | EirGrid confirmed that it would be difficult to retain the correct buoyancy of the cable using jetting and therefore open cut trenching was the preferred technique. A description of this activity is provided Section 5.1 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable. |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Department of Defence | Email received from stakeholder on 15 October 2020. | EirGrid contacted the Department seeking input on Submarine Cable Systems. The Department confirmed that they are no longer the contact for such projects and applications should be made to the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (DCCAIE). | EirGrid contacted the DCCAIE via email on 19 October 2020 following the advice from the Department of Defence (see next row). |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAIE) | Email received from stakeholder on 2 November 2020. | DCCAIE confirmed that they were not the appropriate Department to speak to regarding the Project and advised that matters should be directed to MEFU. | Response noted. |
| | | DCCAIE advised that the Petroleum Affairs Division of DCLGH should also be contacted to ensure no conflicts with current or planned uses of the seabed for hydrocarbon exploration/production activities. | EirGrid consulted the Division on 22 December 2020. The Division responded on 6 January 2021 to confirm that the Project did not cross any currently licenced areas, provided information on the closest well approach and the closest suspended well. In addition, the Division confirmed the North Celtic Sea Protection of |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---|---|--|--|
| | | | Installation orders. This information has been captured in Volume 3D Part 2 EIA for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 16: Material Assets. |
| | | DCCAIE drew attention to online resources which map submarine cables such as https://kis-orca.eu/map/ . | Data held by the Kingfisher Information Service (Offshore Renewable and Cable Awareness Project) (KISCORCA) was referred to in 2020 and used to inform the assessment of material assets in the Volume 3D Part 2 EIA for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 16: Material Assets. |
| Department of the Environment, Energy and Communications (DECC) | Email received from stakeholder on 7 December 2020. | DECC confirmed that Ministerial Consent under Section 5 of the Continental Shelf Act is not required for the Celtic Interconnector Project. | Response noted. |
| | EIA Scoping Report email response dated circulated by | EirGrid is required to engage/consult with the | See response against DCCAIE row above. |

Commented [NH7]: Placeholder to capture this response in the chapter.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| | MEFU on 22 December 2020) (Appendix 3x). | Petroleum Affairs Division at DECC in respect of the interconnector cable's proposed route and any planned uses of the seabed for hydrocarbon extraction activities. | |
| | | Engagement would be necessary with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with regard to any environmental issues in proximity to the proposed route of any cable on the Irish Continental Shelf. | The Department was issued a consultation letter on 26 November 2020. Please see relevant row for a summary of their advice. |
| DP Energy | Meeting held between EirGrid and DP Energy (22 January 2021). No meeting minutes were drafted for this meeting although DP Energy summarised the meeting discussions via email on 22 January 2021. | DP Energy provided a summary of available information on the Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park including the status of the Foreshore Site Investigation Application and a link to the available documents. DP Energy confirmed the timescale of their project – application submission in Q3 | The assumptions shared by DP Energy have been factored into the cumulative assessment Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 22: Summary of Transboundary and Cumulative Impacts. |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | 2023 with date of operation in 2023. | |
| Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | Meeting held between EirGrid and the EPA (23 September 2020) A copy of the meeting minutes is provided in Appendix 3x. | EirGrid confirmed that the project cannot be defined as an 'offshore installation'. | Comment noted. |
| | | The EPA stated that Plough Dredging is a Licensable activity as it concerns the deliberate disposal of material at sea and anything that is deliberate is a licensable activity that requires a DaS Permit / License. | EirGrid issued email to EPA on 4 February 2021 confirming that no material would be disposed, and a Dumping at Sea Licence is not required. The EPA responded on 17 February 2021 to confirm their agreement that a Dumping at Sea Licence would not be required. |
| | | The EPA suggested that if there is disposal of material as part of the project, beneficial uses should be considered for this. The EPA referenced the EPA STRIVE report by Cork Institute of Technology, 'Guidance on the Beneficial Use of Dredge Material in Ireland as a document that may assist. | See response above. |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|--|--|---|---|
| | | The EPA confirmed their jurisdiction in relation to a DaS permit both the Irish Territorial Waters and the Irish EEZ. | See response above. |
| | | The EPA advises that moving sand, via sand-wave sweeping in the Irish EEZ and this material is not reused, this activity likely requires a DaS Permit. | See response above. |
| | Meeting held between EirGrid and the EPA (14 October 2020). A copy of the meeting minutes is provided in Appendix 3x. | The EPA advised that it should be determined whether a Dumping at Sea Licence is required. EirGrid advised that there would be no deliberate disposal of material at sea. | See response above. |
| | Email received from stakeholder on 20 January 2021. | The EPA requested clarification on what EPA consents are required for the onshore and offshore elements. | See response above. |
| Fáilte Ireland (National Tourism Development Authority of Ireland) | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. | n/a | n/a |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | No response received. | | |
| Health Service Executive | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. Email received from stakeholder on 26 November 2020. | An automated response was received confirming receipt of the email. | n/a |
| Heritage Council | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. Email received from stakeholder on 26 November 2020. | The Heritage Council confirmed that they would be unable to comment due to a lack of resources. | n/a |
| Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. Email received from stakeholder on 1 December 2020. | IFI confirmed that they would assess the details of the project at the application stage. | n/a |
| Irish Coast Guard | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Irish Maritime Administration | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Irish Sea Fisheries Board | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) | Email received from stakeholder on 4 December 2020. | The IDWG requested a copy of the Marina Mammal Observer and Passive Acoustic Monitoring reports and data sheets from offshore surveys already completed to better inform route proposals. | The Group will be issued a copy of the final EIAR which will contain the relevant information. |
| | | The IWDG recommended a conservative approach to mitigation and provided their offshore windfarm policy document which included advice on this matter. | The Group's policy has been taken into consideration in the preparation of the Biodiversity assessment (Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 13 Biodiversity). |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Email received from stakeholder on 15 January 2021. | The IWDG requested confirmation on the regulatory framework for the Project. | EirGrid provided a response by email on the 3 February 2021 confirming the regulatory position. |
| | Email received from stakeholder on 3 February 2021. | The IWDG acknowledged the clarification provided by EirGrid in the email dated 3 February 2021. They sought clarity on contacts within DECC to discuss the regulatory position. | The DECC contact details were issued to the IWDG on 17 February 2021. |
| Kinsale Energy Ltd | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Marine Institute | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Marine Safety Policy Division | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. Email received from stakeholder | In response to the consultation letter, the Division advised that they are not normally involved in the EIA of project and suggested that the matter is raised with | n/a |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| | on 9 December 2020. | DHLGH (MEFU). | |
| Marine Survey Office (MSO) | EIAR Scoping Report email response circulated by MEFU on 22 December 2020 (Appendix 3x). | The MSO requested the publication of a marine notice through the Irish Maritime Administration providing a general description of operations and approximate dates of commencement and completion. | A Fisheries Liaison Officer will be appointed and there will be regular Notice to Mariners (see Section 15.11 in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 19: Commercial Fisheries). |
| | | The MSO recommended consultation with Youghal and associated harbour authorities. | TBC |
| | | The MSO recommended liaison with the Irish Coast Guard to arrange the broadcast of appropriate navigation warnings to advise marine traffic approaching the works area. | The Irish Coast Guard was issued a consultation letter on 27 November 2020. Please see relevant row for a summary of their advice. |
| | | The MSO requested a list containing the names of all vessels associated with the installation within the territorial | A summary of the vessels that would be utilised during the cable installation is provided in Section 5.4.3 of Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR |

Commented [NH8]: The outcome of this consultation will be confirmed.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | | seas, including proposed interaction with an Irish Port Facility. The M.S.O. Dublin will then make an assessment regarding the requirements if any in relation to Irish Load Line Certification and possible passenger boat licence requirements. | for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall and Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable. |
| Marine Survey Office Administration | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Maritime Services Division | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Maritime Transport Division | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---|--|---|--|
| Mercantile Marine Office | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine | Email received from stakeholder on 27 November 2020. | The Department confirmed that they had received documentation from DHLGH regarding the EIAR scoping request and confirmed they would respond to DHLGH if there were any comments relevant to the possible impact on fisheries and or aquaculture. | DHLGH have not issued any scoping correspondence from the Agriculture, Food and the Marine Department and therefore it is assumed they had no comments to raise. |
| | EIAR Scoping Report email response circulated by MEFU on 16 February 2021 (Appendix 3x). | The Department recommended that cable laying to shore should be done from March to October so that the shrimp fishery is not affected | |
| | | The Department requested that once the cable is installed, access to the fishing grounds must be resumed unhindered. | |
| | | The Department requested no | |

Commented [NH9]: The responses to the Departments comments will be populated with reference to the EIAR.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---|--|---|--|
| | | exclusion zones. | |
| | | The Department advised that the extent of the fisheries likely to be impacted should be identified and local fishermen should be consulted. | |
| | | The Department requested that post-consent monitoring should be undertaken to reduce uncertainty identified in the [Scoping] Report, | |
| | | The Department advised that the impacts of electromagnetic fields on sensitive species should be examined. | |
| Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) | Email received from stakeholder on 16 December 2020. | DCHG requested an Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) and set out a list of factors that they expected to see within the assessment. | An assessment of underwater archaeological remains and deposits of geoarchaeological or palaeoenvironmental interest has been undertaken and is presented in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 15 |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | | | <p>Archaeology & Cultural Heritage. This assessment considers the potential effects of the proposed development on the peat deposits and associated archaeological remains on the foreshore at Claycastle, submerged land surfaces and marine archaeological remains. Mitigation of disturbance of peats and submerged land surfaces would be through the implementation of an agreed programme of archaeological investigation under licence from the NMS. Proposals developed with regard to advice from the NMS for monitoring marine construction works to allow for appropriate archaeological intervention where archaeological remains or deposits are identified are set out in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 15</p> |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| | | | Archaeology & Cultural Appendix x |
| | | DCHG recognised that the intertidal portion of the cable route is outside of the Ballymacoda Bay SPA, but suggested that the EIA and NIS should consider birds of conservation concern use this area in winter and may be disturbed by the works. | A NIS has been produced and is presented in Volume 6B: NIS for Ireland Offshore and considers works within the intertidal area of the cable route. |
| | | DCHG suggested that works should be carried out outside of the period where wintering birds may be present. | Works will be carried out in the winter period (Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 5: Description of the Landfall and Chapter 6: Description of the Offshore Cable) and the NIS for Ireland Offshore (Volume 6B) has assessed this as a worst case scenario. |
| | | DCHG advised that a NIS is submitted with the application. | An NIS has been produced and is presented in Volume 6: NIS for Ireland Offshore. |

Commented [NH10]: Appendix reference to be added.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | | <p>The Unit advised that the assessment should include details of noise characteristics at source (i.e., sound pressure levels, sound exposure levels, frequency, bandwidth, duration of exposures) and information concerning propagation in air/water if applicable and proposed measures to mitigate the effects of noise.</p> <p>The unit advised that a suitability qualified marine mammal ecologist should be involved in undertaking the assessments.</p> | <p>Full details of noise characteristics arising from the installation of the Celtic Interconnector are provided within Volume 3D Part 2 EIA for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 17:Noise and Vibration, with an assessment of how this has the potential to affect marine wildlife (including marine mammals) presented in Volume 3D Part 2 EIA for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 13:Biodiversity. Full details of the team's experience is provided in <u>Volume X, Chapter X</u>.</p> |
| | | n/a | n/a |
| Minister for Transport | <p>EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020.</p> <p>No response received.</p> | n/a | n/a |
| National Inshore Fisherman's | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 | n/a | n/a |

Commented [NH11]: Reference to be added

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Association | November 2020. No response received. | | |
| National Monuments Service | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | n/a | n/a |
| National Parks and Wildlife Service | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 26 November 2020. No response received. | The Unit advised that a NIS should be submitted with the application. | A NIS has been produced and is presented in Volume 6: NIS for Ireland Offshore. |
| Nature Conservation Unit, DHLGH | EIAR Scoping Report email circulated by MEFU on 8 January 2021 (Appendix 3x) | The Unit advised that an assessment of impacts on marine mammals should be undertaken. | The marine mammals assessment is presented in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 13: Biodiversity. |
| | | The unit advised that records of survey should include the months when sampling occurred and the numbers of animals encountered in the vicinity of the proposed | Targeted surveys in the vicinity of the Celtic Interconnector were not undertaken. However, qualified Marine Mammal Observers were present on all surveys with the potential to disturb marine |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|--|---|
| | | development. | mammals, with the findings of these surveys included within the EIAR. This has been supported by a desk-based literature review. Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 13: Biodiversity. |
| | | <p>The Unit advised that the assessment should include details of noise characteristics at source (i.e. sound pressure levels, sound exposure levels, frequency, bandwidth, duration of exposures) and information concerning propagation in air/water if applicable and proposed measures to mitigate the effects of noise.</p> <p>The unit advised that a suitability qualified marine mammal ecologist should be involved in undertaking the assessments.</p> | Full details of noise characteristics arising from the installation of the Celtic Interconnector are provided within Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 17: Noise and Vibration, with an assessment of how this has the potential to affect marine wildlife (including marine mammals) presented in Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 13: Biodiversity. Full details of the team's experience is provided in |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|--|--|---|---|
| | | | Volume X, Chapter X. |
| | | n/a | n/a |
| Sea Fisheries Protection Authority | EirGrid issued a project consultation letter on 25 November 2020. No response received. | The NMS provided extensive advice on known and potential wreck locations. | The EIAR sets out the locations of recorded, identified and potential wreck sites within the CSC and a wider study area and has regard to the investigations and records cited by the NMS in their consultation (Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 15: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage). |
| Underwater Archaeology Unit of the National Monuments Service (NMS), DHLGH | EIAR Scoping Report email circulated by MEFU on 8 January 2021 (Appendix 3x). | The NMS requested that a 100m AEZ is placed around anomalies with archaeological potential. Where the anomalies are shallow (less than 50m depth) and a sufficient AEZ is not possible, the anomalies should be subject to archaeological diver inspection. | Appropriate AEZ will be established around recorded and identified wreck sites and proposals for further investigation where AEZ cannot be avoided during construction area set out at [Reference]. |

Commented [NH12]: Reference to be added.

Commented [NH13]: Reference to be added.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| | | <p>The result of all SI works should be subject to detailed archaeological interpretation, including geo-archaeological analysis, with results of this analysis submitted as Further Information to the National Monuments Service.</p> | <p>All SI work to date has been subject to archaeological interpretation. This has already been provided to NMS for comment and will be included as appendices to the EIAR. Any further SI works will be subject to an appropriate level of archaeological interpretation and analysis and results consulted with NMS. See (Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Chapter 15: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage).</p> |
| | | <p>The identified potential 'metal' pot, located on the foreshore at Claycastle Beach, to be the focus of archaeological testing.</p> | <p>The potential 'metal pot' is located outwith the working area of the proposed foreshore works. Therefore, it is proposed that mitigation be by demarcation of a buffer zone and avoidance, with a provision for excavation under licence where avoidance cannot be achieved. See</p> |

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| | | | (Volume 3D Part 2 EIA for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - Volume 3D EIA – Chapter 15: Archaeology and Cultural and Appendix 15xxx). |
| | | Foreshore: All works on the foreshore, for all cable landings to be the subject of archaeological monitoring. | Works on the foreshore will be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation to be agreed with NMS, to include monitoring where appropriate. See [reference] |
| | | Offshore: A proposal for the archaeological monitoring of the main offshore cable-laying works to be submitted to NMS for consideration and approval. | Draft proposals for monitoring of offshore construction work are set out at [reference] |
| | | The NMS should be provided with up-to-date mapping to indicate all agreed exclusion zones around identified known or potential wrecks, anomalies of cultural potential and areas of | Maps and plans of proposed exclusion zones will be supplied to NMS. The timing and format of this request remains under discussion with the NMS. |

Commented [NH14]: Reference to be added.

Commented [NH15]: Reference to be added.

Commented [NH16]: Reference to be added.

| Stakeholder name | Form of engagement | Summary of engagement | Summary of how stakeholder comments have been addressed |
|---|---|--|---|
| | | archaeological potential (i.e. such as exposed peats), etc. | |
| | | The NMS advised that a NIS should be provided due to the proximity to the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford SAC). | A NIS has been provided in Volume 6B: NIS for Ireland Offshore. |
| | | The NMS provided extensive advice on the approach to assessing the effects on marine mammals. | These comments have been addressed in (Volume 3D Part 2 EIAR for Ireland Offshore (Specialist Chapters) - - Chapter 13: Biodiversity. |
| | | [TBC] | |
| US Naval Seafloor Cable Protection Unit | Meeting held between EirGrid and the NMS (5 March 2021). A copy of the meeting minutes is provided in Appendix 3x. | The Unit requested a shapefile of the current cable route. | EirGrid confirmed that this would be released in a project information pack. |

Commented [NH17]: A record of the meeting notes and actions will be provided.

Commented [NH18]: Date of release to be confirmed.

4 References

- Cork County Council, 2014. Cork County Council Development Plan 2014.
- Cork County Council, 2020. Cork County Council Development Plan 2022 – 2028 Background Documents. Available online at <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/stage-one-pre-draft-plan> [accessed February 2021].
- DCENR, 2012. Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure.
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- DECC, 2019. Climate Action Plan 2019.
- DECC, 2020. Government White Paper – Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015 – 2030.
- DHPLG, 2019. National Marine Planning Framework Consultation Draft.
- EirGrid Group, 2017. Ireland’s Grid Development Strategy.
- EirGrid Group, 2019. All-Island Generation Capacity Statement 2019 – 2028.
- EirGrid Group, 2019a. Strategy 2020 – 2025 Transform the power system for future generations.
- EirGrid Group, 2019b. Transmission Development Plan 2019 – 2028.
- European Commission, 2015. Energy Union Package COM(2015) 80, A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy.
- European Union, 2008. Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive).
- European Union, 2013. Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC and amending Regulations (EC) No 713/2009, (EC) No 714/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009.
- European Union, 2014. Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.
- European Union, 2014a. Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning.
- Government of Ireland, 2018. National Policy Statement Electricity Interconnection.
- Government of Ireland, 2018a. Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2018 – 2027.
- Government of Ireland, 2018b. Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework.

S.I. No. 12 of 1933. Foreshore Act, 1933.

S.I. No 352/2016. European Union (Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning Regulations 2016.

Southern Regional Assembly, 2020. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

Appendices