



Your Ref: FS007062

[REDACTED]
Foreshore Unit,
DHPLG,
Newtown Road,
Wexford.

23/06/2020

INSPECTORS REPORT.

RE: FORESHORE LICENCE APPLICATION BY SAIPEM-SEAI – SITE INVESTIGATIONS FOR AFLOWT PROJECT AT AMETS SITE OF THE NORTH MAYO COAST FS007062

I'm writing in response to your email dated the 2/05/2020 requesting observations in relation to the above.

The following documents were submitted as part of the application:

- Completed Application Form
- Foreshore Licence Map
- Site Location Map
- Schedule of Works
- AMETS Distance Summary
- Support Document
- AA Screening

Please note that due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions I have not visited the site which I normally would do.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

The Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site (AMETS) is located in an area of open marine water located west of the Mullet Peninsula/Annagh Head, Co. Mayo. AMETS holds a Foreshore Lease from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) since January 2016. Since the original Foreshore lease was granted the applicant states that development of wave energy devices has not developed as anticipated. The applicant now considers floating wind technology offers a more realistic technology for deployment and testing and that the AMETS site is suited for this purpose. SEAI is a partner in the AFLOWT (Accelerating Market Uptake of Floating Offshore Wind Technology) consortium which was recently awarded Interreg North West Europe funding under the Low Carbon theme. One of the main objectives of the project is the demonstration of a high-survivability, cost-competitive Floating Offshore Wind (FOW) technology. The AFLOWT project proposes the development of AMETS to cater for FOW by developing a subsea electrical cable and the fabrication, deployment and operation of a FOW turbine and platform and connection to the grid. The AFLOWT project plans to deploy an up to 6 MW test FOW turbine at the AMETS site. As part of the development of the AMETS to accommodate a test FOW turbine a need has been identified to obtain more detailed geophysical information. In this regard, this



application relates to a site investigation only which requires the use of Sub-bottom Profiling (SBP) and Core Penetration Testing (CPT) and bathymetric surveys utilising a Multi Beam Echo Sounder (MBES) and Side Scan Sonar (SSS) are required. In addition, sampling of the benthos to

inform Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment will be required.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

These SI activities (geophysical and geotechnical) are required in order to provide the potential AFLOWT project team with more information on the make-up of the various layers of sediment and / or rock under the seafloor at the AMETS site and the soils / sediments and stratigraphy of the seabed. The benthic sampling will form part of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and AA for a technology deployment Foreshore Licence application.

Further detailed information on techniques, equipment and timing of the SI are included in the report which accompanies this application, 'Report to Accompany Foreshore Licence Application for Site Investigation'. This licence application is solely for the purposes of the completion of the surveys.

The site investigations includes:

- Sub-bottom Profiling (SBP)
- Core penetration testing (CPT)
- Multi-beam bathymetric survey (MBES)
- Side-Scan Sonar survey (SSS)
- Benthic sampling of the subtidal sediment (Day grab sampling)
- Benthic sampling of the intertidal sediment (Intertidal core sampling)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The following SACs are within 15km: West Connacht Coast SAC 002998, Mullet/Blacksod Bay Complex SAC 000470, Erris Head SAC 001501, Broadhaven Bay SAC 000472, Duvillaun Islands SAC 000495, Iniskea Islands SAC 000507 while the following SPAs are within 20km Mullet Peninsula SPA 004227, Blacksod Bay/Broadhaven SPA 004037, Termoncarragh Lake and Annagh Machair SPA 004093, Duvillaun Islands SPA 004111, Iniskea Islands SPA 004004, Inishglora & Inishkeeragh SPA 004084, Illanmaster SPA (004074), Stags of Broad Haven SPA (004072)

As part of the duties as a consent authority, DHPLG through the MLVC are to prepare an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for this application in accordance Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011.

LICENCE MAP

The location for all of the proposed survey works are shown on Drawing VB-000450-01-D460-002-000 entitled “**Foreshore Site Investigation Map**” dated 08/01/2020 attached to the application. This is the map should be attached to any licence issued.



CONCLUSIONS/RECCOMENDATIONS

I have no objection to the granting of a Licence subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The Licensee shall notify this Department of the date of commencement of the Site Investigation/Survey operations at least 2 weeks prior to commencement.
- 2 At the end of each calendar year, the Licensee shall inform the Department of the work completed to date and the works planned for the coming year.
- 3 All works must be completed in accordance with the drawings and documents submitted in support of the application.
- 4 During the course of the Site Investigation/Survey operations the Applicants shall ensure that;
 - (a) All necessary precautions are put in place to protect the public in accordance with relevant Health and Safety Legislation;
 - (b) Existing public access arrangements to the general foreshore area are not impeded by any vessels, plant or materials used in connection with the site investigations/surveys, and where relevant this access should be made safe and guaranteed by the provision of appropriate signage/notices/barriers etc. to the satisfaction of the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government;
 - (c) Procedures are adopted to ensure that the site investigations/survey operations are not injurious to fishing, navigation, adjacent lands or the public interest
- 5 On completion of the Site Investigation/Surveys the Licensee should ensure that all equipment and materials are removed and the foreshore is reinstated to its original condition, to the satisfaction of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

[Redacted]
Engineer Inspector (WMAU)