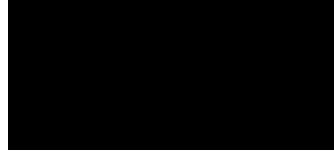


# Submission HLG 00256-21: FS006915 Celtix Connect Ltd - Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination

TO: Minister of State Burke  
STATUS: Completed  
PURPOSE: For Decision and Signature

AUTHOR:  
OWNER:  
REVIEWERS:



DIVISION: Foreshore  
DECISION BY:

## Final comment

Approved by minister, 26/07/2021

## Action required

Ministerial determination on the Screening for Appropriate Assessment on the Foreshore Licence Application in connection with the installation of the Havhingsten subsea fibre-optic telecommunication cable, with landfall at Loughshinny, Fingal, Co .Dublin.

## Executive summary

Celtix Connect Limited, under section 3 of the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended, has submitted a foreshore licence application for the purpose of carrying out works in connection with the installation of a subsea fibre-optic telecommunication cable, with landfall at Loughshinny, Fingal, County Dublin.

As part of the assessment of this application the Minister is required to make a Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended ("the Regulations").

Having considered all relevant material a recommendation has been made that the Minister reaches the following Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination:

In accordance with Regulation 42(7) of the Regulations, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment is not required as the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is not likely to have a significant effect on any European sites. The risk of likely significant effects on European sites can be excluded on the basis of objective evidence. This determination is based on the location, scale, extent and duration of the proposed development, including temporary works, and has not taken account of measures intended to avoid or reduce significant effects on European sites.

## Detailed information

Celtix Connect Limited submitted an application to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (formerly the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government) for a foreshore licence under section 3 of the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended, for a term of 35 years to facilitate the installation, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of the Havhingsten telecommunication subsea fibre-optic cable with landfall at Loughshinny in North Dublin.

The Havhingsten cable in its entirety will extend from Loughshinny to Squires Gate Lane (south of Blackpool in England) with two branches to the Isle of Man and another element in the North Sea which will extend from Newcastle (UK) to Denmark. The Isle of Man branches and the Denmark element are beyond the foreshore boundary and not part of this application. The cable route will extend more than 940km in total and deliver a boost to telecommunications capacity between Ireland/Isle of Man/UK and Denmark. The proposed cable route, the subject of this application, is 29.8km in length from landfall (HWM) at Loughshinny in North Dublin to the 12nm limit of State owned foreshore.

### The proposed development includes:

- Pre-installation works - including grapnel run

- Cable installation works - offshore cable laying operations, burial and nearshore ducting
- Post lay burial and reinstatement

It is anticipated that the overall works will be completed in up to 6 weeks. This is dependent on licencing/permitting process, weather and operational factors. The below are also included as part of the post lay operations, maintenance, and decommissioning should it be undertaken:

- Cable maintenance and repair
- Decommissioning

As part of the assessment of the foreshore licence application MERC Consultants Limited were commissioned to conduct a Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) (stage 1 screening) and if required, an AA (stage 2), of the likelihood of significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites from the application for a foreshore licence.

A number of application documentation, submitted by Celtix Connect Limited, informed the Screening for Appropriate Assessment conclusions by MERC Consultants Limited, including:

- Application form
- Drawing No. P2228-CORR-002-B "Installation Corridor Republic of Ireland Route"
- Drawing No. P2228-CORR-006-B "Foreshore Licence Map"
- Drawing No. P2228-CORR-007-B "Foreshore Licence Map Landfall"
- Planning Report
- Appendix A – Environmental Assessment Methodology
- Appendix B – Application Corridor Coordinates
- Appendix C – Cable Burial Report
- Appendix D – Fisheries Activities Report
- Appendix E1 – Marine Archaeology Desk Based Assessment
- Appendix E2 – Marine Archaeology Foreshore Surveys
- Appendix E3 – Marine Archaeology Geophysical Survey
- Appendix F – Appropriate Assessment Stage 1 Screening
- Appendix G – Underwater Sound Modelling
- Appendix H – Sediment Suspension and cable installation
- Appendix L1 – Marine Survey report – BU Port Erin to BMH Loughshinny
- Appendix L2 – Intertidal Habitat report
- Appendix L3 – Benthic Characterisation report
- Appendix J – Pre-Application Consultation
- Observations received during the prescribed bodies and public consultation periods, and the Applicant's responses to these observations, including the imposition of the licence conditions proposed by the prescribed bodies.

In addition, and with respect to the Habitats Directive, an Article 12 Assessment of the proposed project was prepared based on information provided in the application. This examination is under Article 12 of the Habitats Directive and does not form part of the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report which has examined the Natura 2000 sites and their qualifying interests.

The licence application was open for public consultation initially between 21 August 2019 and 27 September 2019, however, due to discrepancies between the display documentation and the application information published on the Department's website, the public consultation period was deemed unsatisfactory and was repeated.

A second consultation concerning this licence application was open for public consultation between 29 January 2020 and 29 February 2020. Observations in relation to environmental matters received from prescribed bodies and submissions from the public were considered as part of this assessment.

Having considered all relevant material a recommendation has been made that the Minister adopts the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report and reaches the following Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination:

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/ECC) and Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended ("the Regulations"), the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has undertaken a Screening for Appropriate Assessment to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of relevant European sites, if the proposed project for the installation, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of a subsea fibre-optic cable individually or in combination with other plans or projects would be likely to have significant effect(s) on a European site(s).

In accordance with Regulation 42(7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, S.I. 477 as amended, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has made a determination following the screening, that an Appropriate Assessment is not required as the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is not likely to have a significant effect on any European sites. The risk of likely significant effects on European sites can be excluded on the basis of objective evidence. This determination is based on the location, scale, extent and duration of the proposed development, including temporary works, and has not taken account of measures intended to avoid or reduce significant effects on European sites.

The Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report prepared by MERC Consultants Limited is attached at **Tab 1**, and the adoption of this report is recommended. The Article 12 Assessment and Non-Statutory Environmental Analysis prepared by MERC Consultants Limited are attached at **Tabs 2** and **3**, for reference. Attached at **Tabs 4, 5** and **6**, respectfully, are the MLVC Report and EIA pre-screening. The Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination, prepared by the Department's Recommending Officer, for Ministerial determination and signature, is attached at **Tab 7**.

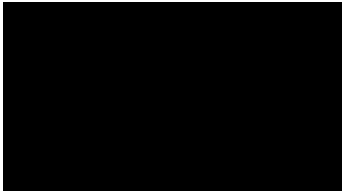
A copy of all relevant consideration material, to inform the Screening for Appropriate Assessment determination, including the material considered by MERC Consultants Limited in preparing the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report, the report prepared by the Marine Licence Vetting Committee (MLVC) recommending adoption, and the Screening for Appropriate Assessment determination prepared for this application is linked below.

## Related submissions

There are no related submissions.

## User details

INVOLVED:



READ RECEIPT:

