



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Offshore Renewable Energy

Maritime Area Consent Assessment for
Relevant Projects

Application Guidance

March 2022



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1 Glossary

Abbreviation or Term	Definition or Meaning
ABP	An Bord Pleanála
COD	Commercial Operation Date
CRU	Commission for Regulation of Utilities
CPPA	Corporate Power Purchase Agreement
CSSO	Chief State Solicitors Office
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
DMAP	Designated Maritime Area Plan
GCA	Grid Connection Assessment
GW	Gigawatt
MAC	Maritime Area Consent
MARA	Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
MECC	Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications (“The Minister”)
MAP	Maritime Area Planning Act, 2021
MEC	Maximum Export Capacity
MW	Megawatt
ORE	Offshore Renewable Energy
OREDPA	Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
ORESS	Offshore Renewable Electricity Support Scheme
TSO	Transmission System Operator (EirGrid)

2 Introduction

The Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Act 2021 ('the Act') is the State's leading response to the reform of marine governance. The Act provides the legal underpinning to an entirely new marine planning system, which will balance harnessing Ireland's huge offshore wind potential with protecting our rich and unique marine environment.

One of the main features of the Act is the creation of a new State consent, the Maritime Area Consent (MAC), as a first step in the new planning process. Over the course of 2021/22, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications ('the Department') has developed a suite of assessment processes and Guidance materials, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, which relate to the operation of the new consenting regime for the Relevant Projects (see Section 2.1.3 below).

These processes have been informed by ongoing engagement with stakeholder groups, including via regular workshops with the Relevant Projects and bilateral engagement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), EirGrid, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), the Chief State Solicitor's Office (CSSO) and others.

A consultation on the proposed MAC assessment regime concluded on 18 February 2022 ('the consultation'). The careful evaluation of responses received at this consultation are reflected in the final MAC assessment processes and applicant Guidance as applicable to the Relevant Projects, contained in this document.

2.1 Policy Background

2.1.1 Offshore Renewable Energy and Ireland's Climate Targets

Ireland's increased climate and energy ambition is reflected in the Government target set under the Climate Action Plan 2021¹ to increase the proportion of renewable electricity to up to 80% by 2030, including an increased target to achieve up to 5 GW of installed offshore wind generation by 2030. There is a further commitment in the Programme for Government to develop a longer-term plan to utilize the potential 30GW of offshore floating wind power in our Atlantic waters. The 5GW target will be primarily met through development of offshore renewable energy (ORE) in Ireland's eastern and southern coastal regions. This reflects the suitability of water depths in these regions for deployment of conventional fixed bottom offshore wind turbines and existing electricity grid infrastructure to connect these projects to the onshore grid. Subsequent cost-effective deployment of renewables in deeper waters off the west coast, to take advantage of stronger and more consistent wind speeds, should be increasingly feasible through future advances in floating turbine technology. Because of Ireland's location at the Atlantic edge of Europe, it has more offshore energy potential than most other European countries and Ireland's maritime area is seven times the size of its landmass.

2.1.2 Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Act and the legislative basis for MAC

The Act is the State's leading response to the much-needed reform of marine governance. The Act provides the legal underpinning to an entirely new marine planning system, which will balance harnessing our huge offshore wind potential with protecting our rich and unique marine environment. The Act is a key enabler of Ireland's decarbonisation goals and as such, Government was committed to prioritising the passage of the MAP Bill through the Oireachtas, with enactment in December 2021. The Act provides for a completely new regime for the entire maritime area underpinned by the National Marine Planning Framework. Foreshore Authorisations will be replaced by a more focused and streamlined MAC regime. The planning permission system will be extended into the entire maritime area with development subject to a single comprehensive environmental assessment by An Bord Pleanála (ABP). Compliance and enforcement activities are supported through robust provisions.

¹ [gov.ie - Climate Action Plan 2021 \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/en/publications/2021-03-14-climate-action-plan-2021/)

Development of the Act was led by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, with DECC leading development of provisions specific to ORE.

2.1.3 Maritime Area Consent and the Relevant Projects

One of the main features of the Act is the creation of a new State consent, the MAC, as a first step in the new planning process.² To enable achievement of Ireland's 2030 targets, a pathway was provided to permit a select number of projects which had advanced under the existing Foreshore regime to transition to the new MAC regime once established.

The Transition Protocol, as set out in the General Scheme of the Marine Planning and development Management (MPDM) Bill gave guidance regarding the treatment of certain offshore wind projects in the context of the anticipated progression of the Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Bill. 'Relevant Projects' are those that either applied for or were granted a lease under the Foreshore Act 1933, or offshore wind projects that were eligible to be processed to receive a valid grid connection offer in December 2019.

The protocol allowed these projects to continue to work and update a number of project aspects, including the grid offer application process, so that they could be in a position to apply under the new marine planning regime. Under direction from the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), Eirgrid has been and continues to engage with those projects to progress grid offer applications.

Under the special transition provisions in the Act, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications ("the Minister") has the responsibility for assessing and granting MACs for this first phase of offshore projects. These are the projects which satisfy the definition of "relevant maritime usage", which mirrors the definition of Relevant Project set out under the Transition Protocol, under the legislation.³

2.1.4 MARA

The Act will establish a new agency to regulate development in the Maritime Area, which is to be called the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA). MARA will have four key roles:

² A MAC is consent for the occupation of a specific part of the maritime area for the purposes of the proposed maritime usage (Section 81 MAP Act 2021).

³ Projects meeting the definition of relevant maritime usage under Section 100 of the MAP Act may still be considered eligible to become a Relevant Project.

- Granting of all MACs for the maritime area,
- Granting Maritime licences for specific scheduled activities, including environmental surveys,
- Ensuring robust compliance and enforcement measures,
- Managing the existing State Foreshore portfolio of leases and licences.

After the assessment and grant of the first batch of ORE projects by the Minister, responsibility for managing any MACs that have been granted and for assessing future applications will be transferred to MARA, which will be established and operational from 2023. The establishment of MARA is of the highest priority for Government.

2.2 Phased Approach to Offshore Wind Deployment

Following a public consultation in 2020⁴, the Government adopted in April 2021 a policy statement⁵ adopting a three-phased approach to offshore wind deployment. This consultation relates to the proposed MAC consenting approach to the first (Phase One) of these three phases only. Phase One is outlined in broad terms below.

2.2.1 Phase One

Policy Objective. Phase One is intended to deliver the maximum competitively procured offshore wind capacity at the earliest feasible deployment stage, from the most advanced offshore wind projects.

Maritime Area Consent. The Minister will open an application window in April 2022 during which time applications for a MAC can be made by the Relevant Projects. MAC applications will be assessed simultaneously, and individual application assessment will begin in the Department from the date of submission of a complete MAC application, rather than awaiting the closing of the application window.

Development Permission. Following receipt of a MAC (expected by Q3 2022), projects will be eligible to proceed to consult with An Bord Pleanála and then apply for development permission, otherwise known as planning permission, directly from ABP. This process will include full statutory consultation and environmental assessment processes. Application for development permission is not required for ORESS 1 eligibility or a Grid Connection Assessment (GCA).

Grid. All transmission assets for Phase One projects will be built by the developers, and will be transferred, at an agreed stage, to EirGrid. The timing of asset transfer will be determined by EirGrid, with the approval of the CRU, following engagement with the Phase One projects. The process for obtaining a GCA is under development by the CRU⁶ with the intention that EirGrid will issue GCAs to qualifying Phase One projects by Q3 2022.

⁴ <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/d5fb5-consultation-to-inform-a-grid-development-policy-for-offshore-wind-in-ireland/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5ec24-policy-statement-on-the-framework-for-irelands-offshore-electricity-transmission-system/>

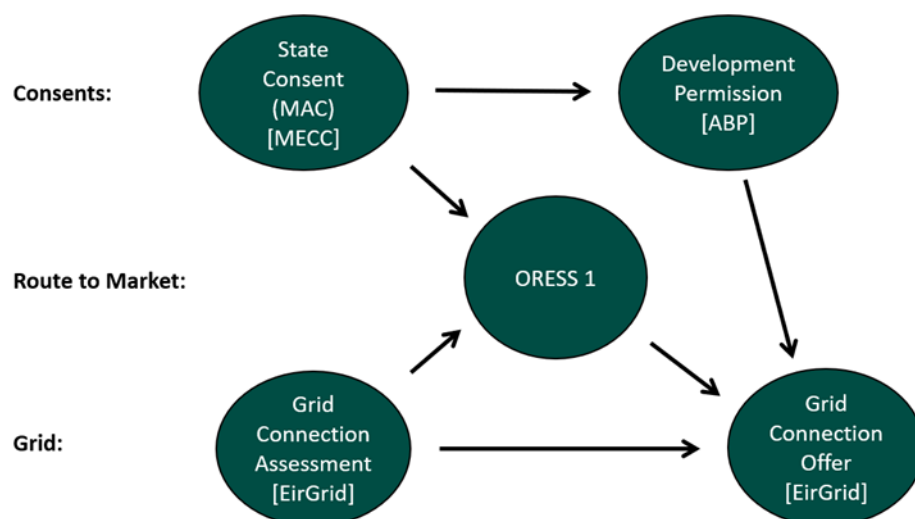
⁶ <https://www.cru.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CRU21112-Proposed-Decision-Offshore-Grid-Connection-Assessment-Phase-1-projects.pdf>

Route to Market. The first offshore wind specific auction in Ireland, ORESS 1, is expected to be the main, if not exclusive, route to market for Phase One projects. This is a competitive auction process, with project eligibility contingent on receipt of both a MAC and a GCA. For the avoidance of doubt, development permission will not be required for auction eligibility in ORESS 1.

Attrition. It is recognised that not all Phase One potential project capacity will be built as a result of ORESS 1. In order for the ORESS 1 to function competitively, at least one project must be unsuccessful at this auction. Further, projects successful at auction may not subsequently secure development permission or secure development permission for the full capacity sought. There may be additional reasons for attrition.

Summary: Phase One projects will require a MAC to apply for development permission. A MAC and a GCA will be required to compete in ORESS 1. Route to market, by ORESS 1 or otherwise, and development permission are expected to be required for a full grid connection offer. GCAs are proposed to expire if a route to market is not secured prior to Phase Two.

Figure 1 - Phase One Process ⁷



⁷ Figure one based on assumption of route to market via ORESS.

2.2.2 Phase Two

While necessary to achieve 5GW by 2030, the Phase One offshore wind projects alone, which includes the Relevant Projects, will not be sufficient to reach this goal. Additional projects which can deliver by 2030 will be required.

As set out in the Act, MAC applications from Phase Two onwards will be processed by MARA, which is expected to be established in Q1 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the Minister cannot invite or process any MAC applications beyond those which satisfy the definition of “relevant maritime usage” under the MAP Act, i.e., the Relevant Projects within Phase One.

The Department has recently concluded a public consultation, the purpose of which is to gather views on this Phase Two of offshore wind deployment.⁸ The responses are currently being evaluated.

While it is expected that the consenting processes and Guidance developed for Phase One will be transferred to the MARA as the basis for future rounds of consenting, it is likely that modifications to the Phase One regime will be made for Phase Two and beyond.

Interested parties are reminded that the guidance outlined in this paper is relevant to Phase One only.

2.2.3 The Enduring Regime

It should also be noted that an enduring plan-led regime for offshore wind projects that will deliver post-2030 offshore capacity beyond the Government’s 5GW target remains under development by the Department. The work being undertaken on the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (ORED P) II will inform this approach. Public consultation will be undertaken on ORED P II and other aspects of work as this enduring regime is developed.

⁸ [gov.ie - Offshore Wind – Phase Two Consultation \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/offshore-wind-phase-two-consultation)

3 Using this Guidance

This Guidance provides applicants with the necessary information needed to make an application to the Minister for a MAC. It applies to the Relevant Projects only.

Furthermore, this Guidance includes additional important information on the operation of the MAC consenting regime which is not specifically related to submitting a MAC application (see Section 4 below).

Applicants for a MAC should consider this Guidance as part of a suite of three distinct yet interrelated MAC assessment documents, which comprises of:

- “Maritime Area Consent Assessment for Relevant Projects Application Guidance” **(this document)**
- “Guidance for the Technical Capability Assessment of Maritime Area Consent Applications (Applying to Relevant Projects)” – **Annex 1**
- “Guidance for the Financial Viability Assessment of Maritime Area Consent Applications (Applying to Relevant Projects)” – **Annex 2**

Templates required to support an application for a MAC are contained as appendices in each of the three documents, and an applicant checklist is provided at Section 5.5 below.

4 Important information on the operation of the MAC regime for Relevant Projects

Applicants should read the following section before they submit a MAC application. This section contains important information on the operation of the MAC regime for Relevant Projects as approved by the Minister.

4.1 MAC application window

The MAC is a gateway into the planning system and represents one consent in the overall journey of an ORE project (see Section 2.2.1 above).

The assessment of first MACs must be completed by Q3 2022 in order for the first ORESS to open in Q4, and to enable pre-application engagement by developers with ABP. With this in mind, the MAC application window will be open for an 8-week period.

The MAC application window will open **for a period of eight weeks from 25 April 2022, closing at 5.30pm on 22 June 2022**, allowing for 2 public holidays during this period.

4.2 MAC application fee

A fee will be charged to cover the costs involved in assessing MAC applications. The estimated costs involved in the various areas of assessment of each application have been calculated and form the basis of the charge outlined below.

The Department's staff will review MAC applications on receipt to ensure they are complete. Once this is confirmed to the applicant, the applicant will then be invoiced for the application fee which must be paid before the MAC assessment can be completed (see Section 4.1).

A MAC application fee of €25,000 will apply. This has been calculated based on the projected workload and costs involved in processing a MAC application.

The application fee will be charged on a once off basis to each Relevant Project at the point of a MAC application, and subsequently, should a material change to the corporate composition of the developer necessitate a full MAC reassessment.

4.3 Levy Framework

The agreed levy framework which will apply to the Relevant Projects, outlined hereunder, has been informed by a benchmarking review against international best practice. With the approval of the Minister and the consent of the Minister for PER, the following levy framework will apply.

Two different levy rates will apply; a development stage levy, which will apply from the point of award of a MAC until when a project reaches Commercial Operation Date (COD) and an operational stage levy from COD to the decommissioning stage.

- **Development Stage Levy.** A levy based on square area occupied by the MAC is the most suitable development-stage metric to incentivise swift deployment and to incentivise efficient use of the marine area space.
 - o A development levy rate of €20,000/km²/annum will apply, indexed to HICP⁹
- **Operational Stage Levy.** A levy based on a percentage of gross revenue is the most suitable operational-stage metric, balancing revenue risk to both the project and the State.
 - o An operational levy rate of 2% of gross revenue will apply, with a minimum annual levy equal to the development stage levy.

4.3.1 Exemption of cable corridors from the development stage levy

The windfarm area which is the subject of the MAC will be taken as the basis for the calculation of the development stage levy for the Relevant Projects. **The associated cable corridors will be exempt from the development levy.** This approach is proposed for the Relevant Projects and might not be applied to the subsequent Phase Two or Enduring consenting regimes, with the approach subject to review at a future date.

4.4 Duration of a MAC

Having considered the planning and construction timeframes, and operational lifespan of offshore wind projects, alongside the benefits to be accrued to the State, the MAC duration will be for 45 years subject to the provisions of the MAC and the Act. The duration will be a condition of the MAC.

⁹ Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices

A MAC duration will be for 45 years and will be a condition of the consent awarded.
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4.5 Material amendment to a MAC

A material amendment to a MAC is one that would necessitate the full reassessment of the MAC application, particularly any changes that would impact the financial or technical assessment.

Under Section 86(1) of the Act, where the Holder wishes to amend the MAC in any material way, the other provisions applicable to a MAC application shall apply (i.e., including the fit and proper person test).

Both the Technical and Financial Guidance (appendices 1 and 2) contain full information on the various circumstances in which a technical or financial assessment/reassessment is required.

4.6 Commercially sensitive information

The Department acknowledges that some of the information provided in support of the application may be considered commercially sensitive. Where the exemptions for commercially sensitive information in the Freedom of Information Act 2014 or commercial or industrial confidentiality in the Access to Information on the Environment Regulations 2007-2018 apply the information will not be released to the public.

The Department intends to publish a Data Policy Statement prior to the opening of the MAC application window which will provide further information on the approach to any data collected as part of the MAC application and assessment process.

4.7 Surrender of an existing Lease

Any MAC applicants who hold a Foreshore Lease will need to serve notice of their intent to surrender their interest in the relevant leasehold area to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in the event that their application for a MAC is successful.

Documentary evidence of this undertaking to surrender will need to be provided to the Department before the MAC assessment can be completed.

5 Making a MAC application

The following section constitutes the substantive Guidance and complete suite of templates a Relevant Project will need to complete in order to submit a MAC application.

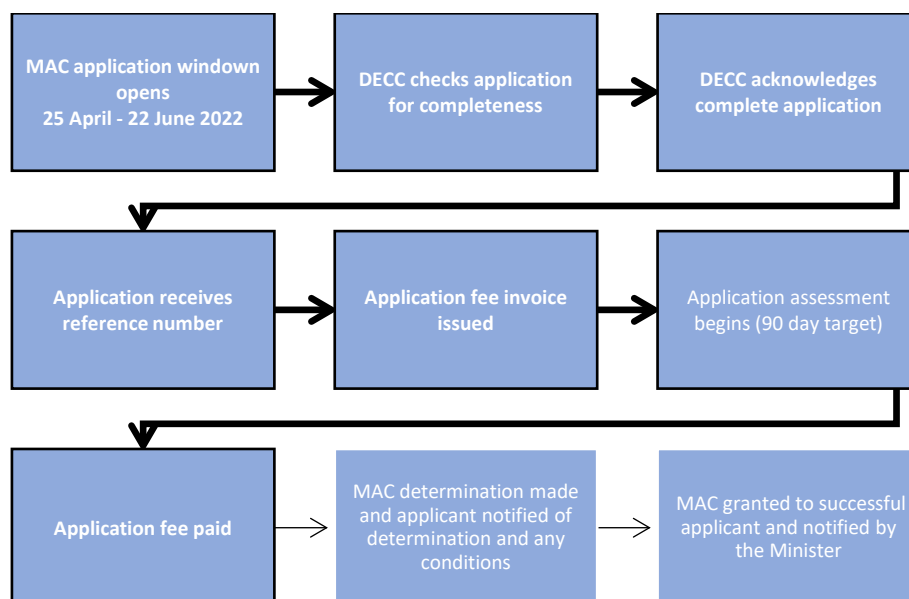
MAC applications from Relevant Projects should be emailed to oreconsenting@decc.gov.ie

When submitting their MAC applications, applicants should bear in mind the following:

- The complete MAC application **must be submitted within the application window (i.e., between 25 April 2022, and 5.30pm on 22 June 2022)**
- MAC applications must contain all relevant completed templates and required information (contained in this document and its appendices) to be ‘deemed complete’ by the Minister and receive an application reference number
- All templates and information submitted as part of the MAC application must be clearly marked using the template lettering system outlined in this document
- Once the detailed assessment of applications is underway, further information may need to be sought from applicants. Tracking of the time taken to undertake the assessment will be paused while a response is awaited. A timely response from applicants to any such requests will ensure overall timeframes remain on track.
- Applicants who have not paid the full application fee will not be awarded a MAC

5.1 Overview of the application process

The below graphic outlines at a high level the various steps involved in submitting and processing a MAC application.



5.2 Maritime Area Consent - Assessment Methodology

5.2.1 Pass/Fail vs Weighted approach

The assessment of the Relevant Projects for MAC will be conducted on a basis of **pass/fail**, rather than a competitive or weighted approach. While a competitive approach to MAC assessment is also provided for in the Act, such a basis for assessment is not appropriate for the first batch of projects, which are geographically distinct from each other and therefore not competing for the same maritime area.

In future rounds of consenting, as Ireland moves towards a more plan-led approach to maritime area development, it may be appropriate to introduce a level of competition for MAC applicants. The purpose of this future approach would be to ensure that a viable pipeline of projects is developed to deliver our 2030 targets and beyond. Applicants for a MAC in Phase One will be required to satisfy a pass standard in certain assessment areas to be deemed viable projects and granted a MAC.

5.2.2 Areas of assessment and how Relevant Projects will be evaluated

To be successfully granted a MAC, Relevant Projects will need to demonstrate their suitability in certain MAC assessment areas, including the 'fit and proper persons' checks outlined in Schedule 2 of the Act (which includes the Financial and Technical viability assessment), and the criteria which the Minister shall have regard to when determining a MAC application, as outlined herein.

As part of its due diligence in assessing a MAC application, background checks into the financial backing and other 'fit and proper person' checks will be conducted into each MAC applicant. Any MAC applicant or supporting entity which is the subject of EU and/or domestic sanctions will not be awarded a MAC.

The success or failure of a MAC applicant in each of the individual assessment areas will be informed by the strength of the information, documentation, evidence, or statements received from the applicant. The exact details of what will be required to be submitted by applicants in each assessment area is outlined in this document (see templates) and appendices.

The table below provides a summary of the elements of a MAC application assessment, the objective of each, and the finalised approach to assessment in each of these areas.

Criteria	Assessment or Information	Approach
Technical Assessment	Assessment	Pass/Fail
Financial Assessment	Assessment	Pass/Fail
Fit and Proper Person Assessment	Assessment	Self-declaration and background check on certain criterion
Geographic coordinates	Must be consistent with original Foreshore Lease application Must provide evidence of intent to surrender an existing lease if applicable.	Self-certification and accurate shapefiles, mapping data
Consistency with offshore energy policy	Assessment	Pass/Fail on short statements proving

		consistency with wider ORE policy
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Further to the above assessment areas, there are a number of additional areas in which information will be sought from Relevant Projects. While applicants will not be assessed in these areas for Phase One, they may be considered as assessment areas for future rounds of consenting.

Stakeholder engagement	Information only	Short statement required from applicants
Public interest	Information only	Short statement required from applicants
Grid connection	Information only	Proof of complete GCA application from EirGrid

5.3 Grant of a MAC

Upon completion of the application assessment, the Minister may be minded to grant a MAC for part only of the MAC sought or with conditions. In such cases, the Minister will give notice to the applicant setting out how the Minister is minded to determine the application and the reasons why it is so minded and the applicant, if it wishes, within the period specified in the notice, may provide supplementary material for the Minister's further consideration.

Once a final decision is made by the Minister to grant or not to grant a MAC, the applicant will be notified and the Minister will publish a notice on its website as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.4 Transfer to MARA

The functions pertaining to Special MAC Cases that have been assigned to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications under the Act will expire once MARA has been formally established. This is expected to be at the latest by Q1 2023.

After the assessment and grant of the first batch of ORE MACs by the Minister, responsibility for managing any MACs that have been granted in Phase 1 (including in respect of overseeing compliance with MAC conditions and any subsequent enforcement etc.) will be assigned to MARA.

In addition, all future ORE MAC applications will be assessed, and if successful, granted by MARA rather than the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications.

Appendix 1: MAC Application Templates

5.5 Developer Application Checklist

The assessment of MAC applications made to the Minister will not begin until all of the required supporting information has been submitted. The Department has developed standardized templates which are to be fully completed and returned – as per the instructions in this Guidance – in order for an application to be ‘deemed complete’ and to enable the assessment to begin.

To assist developers in ensuring they have submitted a complete application, the Department has developed the below checklist which should be completed and submitted along with the completed MAC application templates.

MAC Templates Checklist	
Template	Completed (Insert X if completed)
Template A: Consistency with Offshore Renewable Energy policy	
Template B: Geographic boundaries of the proposed project	
Template C: Fit and Proper Person Checklist	
Template D: Stakeholder Engagement	
Template E: Grid Connection	
Template F: Public Interest	
MAC Technical Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix TecA: Description of MAC Applicant's Experience in Offshore Wind Delivery - Appendix TecB: Description of Project Senior Delivery Teams Experience - Appendix TecC: Delivery Timelines - Appendix TecD: Documentation List - Appendix TecE: Technical Capability Self-Assessment - Appendix TecF: Supporting Entities Guarantees 	
MAC Financial Assessment	

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appendix FinA: Relevant Person information- Appendix FinB: Supporting Entity information- Appendix FinC: Consortium Information- Appendix FinD: Description of the ORE Project- Appendix FinE: Total Outstanding Financial Commitment- Appendix FinF: Details of Funding Arrangements- Appendix FinG: Documentation List- Appendix FinH: Post Balance Sheet Events- Appendix FinI: Going Concern- Appendix FinJ: Financial Viability Self -assessment- Appendix FinK: Supporting Entity Guarantees | |
|---|--|

5.6 Template A: Consistency with Offshore Renewable Energy policy

It is important that a viable pipeline of projects is developed to deliver to 2030 targets. Projects will therefore need to prove to the Department that they are consistent with the Government's climate targets, as set out in the Climate Action Plan 2021.

Each applicant will be required to provide high level information on the nature of the project and **how it aligns with policy but not project specific details**.

Template A is to be completed and returned to the Department as part of a complete MAC application. It should be clearly marked for ease of the Department's review.

Template A	<Developer name>
Please provide, in the section below, A statement of no more than 1000 words outlining how the project helps meet 2030 climate targets, including consistency with targets set out in the Climate Action Plan, the National Marine Planning Framework, or other national ORE policies.	
<Applicant input here>	
Please indicate the expected Maximum Export Capacity (MEC) of final development and maximum energy output, expressed in GWh/annum.	
<Applicant input here>	
Please provide Indicative timelines, including proposed start and duration of project energisation	
<Applicant input here>	
Please indicate the proposed Wind turbine technology	
<Applicant input here>	

Applicants that cannot demonstrate how their proposed project can deliver to 2030 targets and are consistent with broader ORE policy will not be granted a MAC.

5.7 Template B: Geographic boundaries of the proposed project

While some project-level detail may not be available at MAC stage, all Relevant Projects must be within the coordinates of the original foreshore lease application. As per Section 4.3 above, the development stage MAC levy will be calculated on basis of square area covered by the MAC. It is important, therefore, that MAC applications contain accurate geographic coordinates.

If applicable, applicants must provide evidence of intent to surrender an existing Foreshore Lease.

Template B is to be completed and returned to the Department as part of a complete MAC application. It should be clearly marked for ease of the Department's review.

Template B	<Developer name>
Provide the geographic coordinates of the area under application. Where the area can also be identified on the Ordnance Survey map, specify Ordnance Survey coordinates also	
<Applicant input here>	
Indicate the proposed coordinates of the transmission cable route, including any alternative as appropriate the subject of the MAC	
<Applicant input here>	
Please confirm that the coordinates of the MAC application are within the coordinates of the original Foreshore Lease application	
<Applicant input here>	
Indicate any adjacent counties and relevant local authorities	
<Applicant input here>	
Indicate the distance of the project from the shore	
<Applicant input here>	
Indicate the total size in kilometres squared of the MAC area under consideration, both including and excluding the proposed cable routes	

<Applicant input here>
Applicants must provide, along with their MAC application, an accurate map of the MAC area applied for, and shapefile data
If applicable , applicants must provide, along with their MAC application, evidence of their intent to surrender an existing lease

5.8 Template C: Fit and Proper Person Statement

In conducting the 'Fit and Proper Person' test for MAC applicants, the Department will require the self-certification of MAC applicants using the below template. In addition, the Department will also carry out a detailed background check during the MAC assessment stage into these areas. These background checks will consist of corporate/company level examination only.

The 'fit and proper person' criteria to which the Minister shall have regard when assessing and granting a MAC application are set out in Schedule 2 of the Act. Applicants are advised to consult Schedule 2 of the Act before completing Template C.

Template C	<Developer name>
Please include any information that the Minister should be aware of when assessing whether an applicant is a 'fit and proper person' as per the criteria contained in Schedule 2 of the Act	
<Applicant input here>	

5.9 Template D: Stakeholder Engagement

The Department will request any relevant information from MAC applicants which can illustrate any considerations given to other stakeholders or maritime users.

Template D is to be completed and returned to the Department as part of a complete MAC application. It should be clearly marked for ease of the Department's review.

For Relevant Projects, **the review of responses received under this heading will be for information purposes only. However, failure to provide the requested information will deem the application incomplete.**

Template D	<Developer name>
Please provide a high-level statement of no more than 1000 words , outlining the nature, duration and frequency of stakeholder engagement. Applicants can also refer to any planned stakeholder engagement.	
<Applicant input here>	

5.10 Template E: Grid Connection

Under the Act, the Minister can assess the consistency of the MAC application with the development plans of the Transmission System Operator.

A Grid Connection Assessment (GCA) process is under development by the CRU with the intention that EirGrid will issue GCAs to qualifying Phase One projects by Q3 2022. The terms and conditions for the full grid offer will be subject of a CRU consultation and decision in 2022.

The Relevant Projects have been engaging in the grid connection process. It is proposed that these applicants for MAC under Phase One will be aligned to the development plans of the transmission system operator on completion of the Grid Connection Assessment (GCA) process **and this criterion will not be evaluated on a pass/fail basis**.

EirGrid has confirmed that evidence will be provided to all Phase 1 projects in respect of their completed GCA applications as required to support the MAC application process.

Template E	<Developer name>
Applicants must provide, along with their MAC application, evidence that they have received from EirGrid confirmation that their completed GCA applications have been received	

5.11 Template F: Public Interest

In reviewing a MAC application, the Department requires that the applicant considers how the project serves the wider public interest. The purpose is to promote the wider use of sustainability, inclusivity and equality considerations in the company/companies applying for a MAC.

Template F is to be completed and returned to the Department as part of a complete MAC application. It should be clearly marked for ease of the Department's review.

For Relevant Projects, **the review of responses received under this heading will be for information purposes only and will not be assessed on a pass/fail basis. However, failure to provide the requested information will deem the application incomplete.**

Template F	<Developer name>
Please provide a brief statement of no more than 1000 words, outlining any sustainability, equality or inclusivity practices that are currently in place , and demonstrate how they will incorporate these principles throughout the lifetime of the MAC.	
<Applicant input here>	

5.12 MAC Technical Assessment

The Department has developed specific Guidance for the assessment of the technical capability of applicants for, and holders of, MACs in respect of Relevant Projects (**Annex 1**).

Templates in Appendix TecA to TecF of Technical Assessment Guidance

Templates are provided in Appendix TecA to TecF of the Technical Assessment Guidance which should be used by the applicant to provide the information requested in the 'Guidance for the Technical Capability Assessment of Maritime Area Consent Applications (Applying to Relevant Projects)'.

5.13 MAC Financial Assessment

The Department has developed specific Guidance for the assessment of the financial viability of applicants for, and holders of, MACs in respect of Relevant Projects (**Annex 2**).

Templates in Appendix FinA to FinK of the Financial Assessment Guidance

Templates are provided in Appendix FinA to FinK of the Financial Assessment Guidance which should be used by the applicant to provide the information requested in the 'Guidance for the Financial Viability Assessment of Maritime Area Consent Applications (Applying to Relevant Projects)'.