

Submission HLG 00249-22: FS006916 EirGrid Celtic Interconnector Electricity Cable

TO: [REDACTED]
STATUS: Completed
PURPOSE: For Decision and Signature

AUTHOR: [REDACTED]
OWNER: [REDACTED]
REVIEWERS: [REDACTED]

DIVISION: Foreshore
DECISION BY: 01/06/2022

Final comment

Approved by [REDACTED] 27/5/2022

Action required

Ministerial approval is sought to grant a Foreshore Licence to EirGrid Plc under Section 3 of the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended for the Celtic Interconnector Electricity cable with landfall at Claycastle Beach, Youghal, Co Cork.

Executive summary

The approval of the Minister is sought to grant a Foreshore Licence to EirGrid Plc under Section 3 of the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended, for a term of 40 years, for the purpose of carrying out associated works in connection with the laying of a new Subsea electricity interconnector cable between Irish and French electricity grids, landing at Claycastle Beach in Youghal, Co. Cork.

As part of the assessment of this application the Minister was required to make a Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) 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').

The Screening for AA determined that an Appropriate Assessment was required.

An Appropriate Assessment determination was completed and signed by the Minister 24 May 2022 (**Tab 4**).

The application has been reviewed by the MLVC and is recommending that the Minister consents to the issuing of a licence under section 3 of the 1933.

Detailed information

The Celtic Interconnector comprises of

- Two no. high voltage direct current (HVDC) electricity power cables, cable diameter 100mm to 200mm;
- One no. fibre optic cable for control and communication purpose, cable diameter approx. 20mm;
- All associated works and work sites required to construct, install, test, and commission the three no. cables; and
- All associated works and work sites required to operate, maintain, repair and decommission the three no. cables over the approximately 40 year lifetime of the Project.

The Cable Route:

The proposed Celtic Interconnector cable route extends from the land fall at Claycastle Beach, Youghal County Cork to 12nm Limit. The route follows a south easterly course from the landfall to offshore where it turns south westerly until it crosses the 12nm limit and the seaward limit of state owned foreshore, a total of approx. 35km. It continues then in a south easterly direction across the Irish, UK and French EEZs until making land fall at Kerradence, France. The entire cable route is approx. 497km with 35km on state owned foreshore

Marine Construction Works

Pre-Lay Grapple Run:

Pre-lay grapnel runs will be required along the cable route on the seabed to ensure debris, for example redundant cables, fishing gear, discarded ropes, are cleared in advance of cable lay. The cable footprint on the seabed is anticipated to be approximately 5.0m wide. However, this may increase to approximately 15.0m during seabed preparation and cable installation works due to the size of the equipment deployed for these activities.

Cable Lay & Burial:

It is proposed that the submarine cable will be installed in a bundled configuration, with the fibre optic cable also installed within the bundle. The submarine cable is loaded on to the cable laying vessels into a carousel located on-board and is fed to the laying arm at the stern of the vessel and on to its position on the ocean floor. The cable laying vessels have the ability to simultaneously lay and bury the cables. The target burial depth of the cable is 0.8m to 2.5m for offshore.

The burial technique will vary depending on geology of the seabed. The sediment coverage along the cable route is considered good, consisting of a combination of loose to dense sand, dense sandy gravel and high strength clay. Cable installation is envisaged using standard burial tools such as plough or jetting tools. Some rock protection may be required where the target depth is not fully achieved through burial.

Landfall Installation Construction Works:

The cable landfall installation method selected for Claycastle Beach is an open cut installation method with temporary cofferdams to install the conduits to take the cables ashore. Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) is not feasible due to the distance to the 5m water depth required. The target burial depth of the cable is 1.8m to 3.0 m for the land fall. It is envisaged by applicants that landfall installation construction works will take up to approximately 10 days max. For further information the application form **(Tab 1)**, foreshore licence map 1 **(Tab 2)**, foreshore licence map 2 **(Tab 3)** and supporting documents can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/7bfb1-eirgrid-celtic-interconnector-electricity-cable/>

Policy Context

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) have advised that from the perspective of Government policy, support for enhanced electricity interconnection is emphasised in the National Policy Statement on Electricity Interconnection, published by DECC in July 2018. The National Policy Statement has assisted Ireland's independent energy regulator, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), in determining an appropriate regulatory approach to electricity interconnection, by drawing attention to key policy parameters for consideration in its evaluation of interconnection applications from project promoters. In this regard, the CRU determined in 2019 that the development of the Celtic Interconnector is in the interest of Irish electricity consumers.

Government support for enhanced interconnection, explicitly including development of the Celtic Interconnector, as a means of driving the transition to a low carbon energy future is further reflected in the 2019 Climate Action Plan and in the 2020 Programme for Government. Government support for enhanced electricity interconnection, including interconnectors that have been designated EU Projects of Common Interest (PCI), such as the Celtic Interconnector, is further emphasised in the National Marine Planning Framework published in July 2021. Irish and French Government support for development of the Celtic Interconnector was reiterated in the Ireland France Joint Plan of Action 2021-25, signed by the Foreign Ministers of Ireland and France on 26 August 2021.

In addition to the above, electricity interconnection is viewed as critical infrastructure by the European Commission, with enhanced interconnection between EU member states an essential component of creating a pan-EU internal energy market. EU policy is therefore explicit in its support of electricity interconnection, with interconnection projects facilitated under the EU PCI process. In this regard, it is important to note that the Celtic Interconnector has been awarded €530 million in EU grant funding by the European Commission to ensure project development and the return of direct electricity interconnection between Ireland and the European Internal Energy Market, following the UK's exit from the EU.

In summary, the DECC can confirm that development of the Celtic Interconnector, subject to receipt of all necessary associated consents and permits, is consistent with related Government energy and climate policy.

Letter of support from DECC is attached at **(Tab 5)**.

Companion Consents

Planning Permission for the Onshore Ireland components of the development was granted by An Bord Pleanála under Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, subject to twenty four (24) Conditions, on 19 May 2022 under An Bord Pleanála Reference Number: ABP-310798-21 **(Tab 6)**.

Consultations

Public Consultation under Section 19 of the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended)

The Foreshore Section of the DHLGH conducted the public consultation. All consultation was undertaken to conform to the requirements of the Section 19 of the Foreshore Act 1933 as amended and the European Directive 2003/35/EC (known as the Public Participation Directive or "PPD").

The initial consultation period ran for eight weeks, opening on the 11 October 2021 and concluded on the 06 December 2021. The Application was advertised on the 8 October 2021 in the "Irish Examiner", "The Echo" and in the November 2021 issue of "The Skipper" and "Marine Times".

The relevant documents were on display in the following four locations:

- Cork County Council Planning Office, Ground Floor, County Hall, Carrigrohane Road, Cork.
- Waterford County Council Planning Office, Planning Department, 1st Floor, Menapia Building, The Mall, Waterford, X91 PK15.
- Youghal Garda Station, O'Briens Place, Youghal, P36 DV79, County Cork.
- Youghal Library, Rivergate Shopping Mall, North Main Street, Youghal, Co. Cork, P36 FF99.

The relevant documents were also available on Celtic Interconnector dedicated website at the following link: <https://www.celticinterconnector.eu/ga/> and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage website at the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/7bfb1-eirgrid-celtic-interconnector-electricity-cable/>

Public Consultation Submissions

The Department received two submissions from the public during the Public Consultation period, which are attached at **(Tab 7 Public Sub Under S 19)**. The applicant's responses to the submissions are attached at **(Tab 8 Applicant's Response to Public Sub Under S 19)**. These documents are also available on the Departments website.

Summary of the 2 public submissions received during the first consultation period.

These related to concerns raised in respect of possible impacts on local fish industry, particularly the short term disruption during construction of the project. A fisheries management plan is asked for to mitigate possible impacts. It is asked that particular attention be given to the timing of the works not to affect the shrimp season, which is of local economic importance. Doubt is expressed as to the capacity of mitigation measures to be effective in limiting the potential impact on the local fishing industry.

The submissions have been considered and concerns expressed will form part of the assessment of the overall application. It is recognised that the fishing industry, particularly shrimp fishing, is important to the local economy.

Public Consultation under Reg. 42 of S.I. No. 477/2011 - European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011

Following the determination that an Appropriate Assessment was required, a further Public Consultation was initiated and a Public Notice was issued that invited public submissions for the purpose of conducting the Appropriate Assessment, in accordance with Section 42 (1) of S.I. No. 477 of 2011, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended.

The 30 calendar day Public Consultation commenced on **29 March 2022** and ended close of business on **27 April 2022**. The Public Notice was advertised in the "Irish Examiner" and "The Echo". All documents that informed the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination (links available above) were made publicly available at the following locations:

- **Cork County Council Planning Office**
- **Waterford County Council Planning Office**
- **Youghal Garda Station**
- **Youghal Library**

In addition to the application documents submitted by EirGrid PLC, the following documents were also on public display at the above locations:

- Screening for Appropriate Assessment Submission
- Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination Approved
- Marine Advisor Environmental Report (Prepared by MA-Environment)
- Screening for AA (Prepared by IEC)

The additional information was also available to view on the Celtic Interconnector dedicated website and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage website at the following Link:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/7bfb1-eirgrid-celtic-interconnector-electricity-cable/>

The Department received one submission from the public during the Public Consultation period, which is attached at **(Tab 9 Public Sub Under R.42)**. The applicant's response to the submission is attached at **(Tab 10 Applicants Response to Public Sub Under R.42)**.

Public Consultation Submissions and Assessment

From the one public submission received during the Public Consultation under Reg. 42 which can be seen in the Consolidated Public Submissions document on the Departments website, the issues raised were considered and assessed by the MLVC as follows:

This submission is noted and has been considered. It appears to relate to onshore activities and suggests particular technical processes to efficiently and effectively bury the cabling. The submission is considered and while it does not appear to be relating to the marine environment, nonetheless its contents will be considered during the assessment of this application. **(Tab 18)**

Prescribed Bodies Consultation on Foreshore Licence Application:

Foreshore Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 353 of 2011) provides under regulation 3 that when considering a foreshore application, as set out under section 18A (1) of the Act of 1933, the Minister may seek observations from a number of prescribed bodies. For this application requests for PBC observations were requested on 16 September 2021 from the following and returned:

Marine Institute;

Inland Fisheries Ireland;

Geological Survey Ireland;

Health and Safety Authority;

Department of the Environment;

Climate and Communications;

Environment Protection Agency;

Underwater and Archaeology Unit/National Parks and Wildlife Service;

Department of Agriculture;

Food and the Marine;

Marine Survey Office;

Bord Iascaigh Mhara;

Commissioner of Irish Lights;

Sea-Fisheries Policy Management Division;

Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine;

Marine Advisor Ecologist;

Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage, Marine Advisors;

Department of Housing. Local Government and Heritage, Sea Fisheries Protection Authority;

Met Eireann;

Department of Defence;

Irish Coast Guard and Maritime Service;

Bird Watch Ireland.

Prescribed Bodies Consultation for Appropriate Assessment:

Request for PBC observations were requested on 24 March 2022 from the following:

Marine Institute;

Inland Fisheries Ireland;

Geological Survey Ireland;
Health and Safety Authority;
Department of the Environment;
Climate and Communications;
Environment Protection Agency;
Underwater and Archaeology Unit/National Parks and Wildlife Service;
Department of Agriculture;
Food and the Marine;
Marine Survey Office;
Bord Iascaigh Mhara;
Commissioner of Irish Lights;
Sea-Fisheries Policy Management Division;
Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine;
Marine Advisor Ecologist;
Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage, Marine Advisors;
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Sea Fisheries Protection Authority;
Met Eireann;
Department of Defence;
Irish Coast Guard and Maritime Service;
Bird Watch Ireland.

There were no objections in principle to the proposed works. A number of the submissions from the Prescribed Bodies raised particular observations and put forward suggested conditions to be included in any licence issued **(Tab 11 PBC 2021 Obs) (Tab 12 PBC 2022 Obs)**

Detailed responses to the Prescribed Bodies submissions were received from the applicant and these have to be considered as part of the overall assessment of the proposed application. The applicant's responses to the Prescribed Bodies' observations are attached at **(Tab 13 Applicant's Response 2021) (Tab 14 Applicant's Response 2022)**

Transboundary Notification

While the Proposed Development has been identified as not being a project within the scope of paragraph 2 of Appendix 1 to the Espoo Convention and EU Directive 2011/92/EU, (as amended) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ("the EIA Directive"), nevertheless the applicant submitted a voluntary EIAR with the application therefore both the UK and France were notified of proposed project and with details of the location and activities involved and no response was received from same.

Given the nature of the proposed works and in view of the various assessments carried out as part of its consideration, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a negative transboundary impact on material assets associated with providing a high capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and France.

Environmental Assessment

In addition to the Department's in-house Marine Advisors, the Department engaged the services of Ove Arup & Partners Ireland Ltd (ARUP) with Hartley Anderson Limited as Independent Environmental Consultants (IEC), to provide assistance with regard to the statutory and non-statutory environmental assessments of this Foreshore Licence application. The IEC conducted independent assessments of the information provided by the Applicant, having regard to the Habitats Directive, the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations and the EIA Directive, as well as the public and prescribed bodies' consultations. This work has informed the consideration of the proposed development and conclusions of the Department with respect to its responsibilities under the various environmental obligations applying.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

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'), the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has undertaken Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of relevant European sites, if the proposed project to construct and operate a subsea electrical interconnector cable, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect (s) on a European site(s).

In accordance with Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 SI 477 as amended, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment is required as the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect European sites. The risk of likely significant effects on European sites cannot 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.

Upon a review of all materials of the application, Minister of State Burke concurred with the IEC and Recommending Officer and **accepted and adopted** the Screening for AA and its conclusions **Related submission link:** ([HLG 00103-22 Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination. Foreshore Licence application by EirGrid plc](#)).

Appropriate Assessment Determination

The Screening for Appropriate Assessment process determined that likely significant effects could not be ruled out with respect to disturbance to Annex II species, accidental loss of pollutant and in-combination effects.

In accordance with Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 SI 477 as amended, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment was required as the project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect the integrity of European sites, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

Measures to mitigate against the likely significant effect are identified in the Onshore AA Screening and Natura Impact Statement (March 2022). The adherence to these measures is considered appropriate mitigation to avoid significant effects on conservation objectives of any European site.

An Appropriate Assessment report was prepared by the Independent Environmental Consultant ARUP April 2022, which adopts the comments from the Public Consultation and the Prescribed Bodies comments on Appropriate Assessment. The IEC identified the mitigation measures required to ensure that the proposed project, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any Europeans Site.

Request for Further Information:

Further information was requested and received during the decision making process. This information was submitted in the form of an updated NIS dated March 2022. This was included in the documents submitted as part of the second public consultation process.

Upon a review of all materials of the application, Minister of State Burke concurred with the IEC and Recommending Officer and **accepted and adopted** the Appropriate Assessment Determination and its conclusions **Related submission link:** ([HLG 00226-22 Appropriate Assessment Determination. Foreshore Licence Application by Eirgrid PLC](#))

Article 12 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)

The IEC ARUP undertook a Risk Assessment for Annex IV species following a review of the proposed project. This assessment, concludes that the proposed project will not give rise to significant impacts on species listed under Annex II or IV of the Habitats Directive. The report concluded that with the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, it is very unlikely that there will be negative residual impacts from the proposed works any annex IV species in the area. Following consideration of the application by Eirgrid and in particular the objective Article 12 Assessment carried out, it is considered that the proposed development will not give rise to significant detrimental impacts on species listed H under Annex II or IV of the Habitats directive. (**Tab 15** Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species Prepared by IEC).

On the 24th May 2022, the Minister adopted the determination statement prepared by Department's Recommending Officer.([HLG 00226-22 Appropriate Assessment Determination. Foreshore Licence Application by](#)

National Marine Planning framework

The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) is a national plan for Ireland's marine area including the Foreshore. It sets out, over a 20-year horizon, how we want to use, protect and enjoy our marine area.

Having reviewed, considered the report by the IEC undertaken to inform NMPF compliance and assessed this application against the objectives of the NMPF, it is considered that the proposed development is in line with the objectives of the NMPF. In particular Transmission Policy 1 of the National Marine Planning Framework, is most relevant it states subject to the appropriate environmental assessments, electricity transmission proposals that maintain or improve the security and diversity of Ireland's energy supply should be supported, including interconnectors, relevant EU Projects of Common Interest (PCIs), and projects in receipt of relevant alternative EU priority energy infrastructure classification provided for by the EU TEN-E regulations.

This proposed development is in line with this objective its objective is to facilitate electricity connectivity between Ireland and other countries which this proposal seeks to do so. Furthermore the project improves energy security which gives further resilience to the State and its citizens.

EIA Assessment

Submitted with this application is an EIAR. It is considered that the proposed application does not fall within the developments requiring an EIAR as outlined in Annex 1 or II of the EIA directive. However, an EIAR was submitted and it is appropriate that it be considered as part of the assessment of this application. To support and inform the Department in discharging its duties under the EIA directive Independent Environmental consultants considered the submitted EIAR. Their report is considered to form part of this overall assessment and having considered the report, it is considered to form a comprehensive and reasoned basis for coming to a reason conclusion on the EIAR submitted.

Reasoned Conclusion on submitted EIAR

The submitted EIAR is concluded to be comprehensive and has been complied by suitably qualified individuals. It is concluded that the submitted information is sufficient to arrive at a reasoned conclusion with respect considering the likely significant effects on the environment arising from this development.

Having considered the IEC's report, the submitted EIAR and having regard to the totality of the documentation on file, it is concluded that the main non-significant direct and indirect effects of the proposed development on the environment are:

- No residual significant direct or indirect impacts on Population and human health are predicted.
- The proposed development will have a beneficial impact on Air Quality by supporting renewable power generation and reducing the requirement for generation of power by fossil fuels sources, the emissions to air from fossil fuel generation will be reduced.
- It is anticipated that the proposed development will have a net positive effect on Climate by reducing GHG emissions as it will support renewable power generation and reducing the requirement for generation of power by fossil fuels sources.
- No residual significant direct or indirect impacts on Land and soil are predicted.
- There will be no residual risk of flooding of the Celtic Interconnector landfall areas and the project is not expected to have any impact on the risk of flooding of surrounding areas.
- With the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, no residual significant direct or indirect impacts on water quality are predicted.
- There will be a temporary slight adverse but not significant impact on benthic biodiversity and resident fish communities due to habitat loss. There will be a temporary adverse impact from cable installation on benthos, but no residual impacts are expected as a rapid recovery to pre cable lay levels for faunal biomass and diversity is expected. The residual impacts on benthic biodiversity associated with the cable lay activities will be not significant permanent adverse.
- No long-term impacts on fish distribution or abundance are predicted, thus the likelihood of significant indirect impacts on prey abundance and distribution for marine mammals is low.
- No significant residual direct or indirect impacts on marine mammals are predicted with the effective implementation of mitigation measures proposed.
- There will be no residual significant direct impacts on non-breeding waterbirds or their habitats.
- With the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, no residual significant direct or indirect impacts are predicted on any designated site because of the construction and operation of the Celtic Interconnector Project.
- The impact of the Celtic Interconnector Project on European Sites was assessed separately as outlined above.
- Neither the construction nor the operation of the Celtic Interconnector Project will have a significant direct or indirect impact on the landscape or seascape or on visual amenity.

- In relation to archaeology and cultural heritage, the Celtic Interconnector Project will have a slight adverse residual effect on near-shore peat deposits and offshore deposits of geoarchaeological interest. There is also the potential to uncover and expose previously unrecorded archaeological material, most notably shipwrecks.
- In relation to existing material assets, existing cables have a high sensitivity due to damage and economic implications. With the mitigation measures proposed, there will be a slight adverse residual impact to existing cables. The proposed development will have a positive transboundary impact on material assets associated with providing a high capacity electricity transmission line between Ireland and France.
- The construction and the operation of the Celtic Interconnector Project will have no significant noise or vibration impacts on the nearest sensitive terrestrial receptors on land at the landfall.
- Cable installation and the shipping associated with the Celtic Interconnector Project, are not expected to have a significant adverse effect on the underwater noise environment or on noise sensitive marine species.
- There is a potential temporary adverse impact to shipping and navigation due to the presence of work vessels with limited ability to manoeuvre during the installation phase. Though not anticipated for the majority of the cable route within the Irish Foreshore, additional cable protection may be required which will result in localised reduction in water depth. Additionally, the Commissioner of Irish Lights indicated the presence of a marine aid to navigation (bar rocks buoy) and requested consultation prior to construction.
- Mitigation measures and cable route design have minimised the impacts to shipping and navigation and no significant residual impacts are identified.
- A permanent, localised displacement of commercial fisheries activities due to seabed obstructions resulting from cable protection measures may occur within the Irish Foreshore. There will also be temporary displacement to fishing activity from installation and maintenance work as a result of temporary exclusion zones. The magnitude of this effect has been assessed as imperceptible or Minor and Not significant.
- The Celtic Interconnector Project does not pose an increased risk of significant adverse effects on the environment due to its vulnerability to risks of major accidents and/or disasters.

It is noted that a draft Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (EirGrid, June 2021) was submitted with the application. The draft CEMP sets out the minimum requirements which will be adhered to during the construction phase of the Celtic Interconnector Project. The draft CEMP includes all the construction phase mitigation measures proposed in the EIAR and stipulates revisions to include construction-related conditions attached to granting the Foreshore Licence. The draft CEMP sets out the minimum requirements which will be adhered to during the construction phase of the Celtic Interconnector Project. It is proposed that the draft CEMP will be updated as the project progresses. This document is considered to be both reasonable and prudent in view of the scale, complexity and importance of the project. The report and assessment of the IEC has been considered in conjunction with a review of the submitted documentation and it is considered that the submitted information is comprehensive.

It is concluded that following consideration of the submitted reports including the assessment report on the EIAR undertaken by our IEC (**Tab 16**), the EIAR complies with the EIA Directive and the relevant Irish legislation. The impacts of the Celtic Interconnector are concluded to be acceptable in terms of population and human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air and climate, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape. In the interests of clarity of decision making a separate reasoned conclusion statement has been prepared, the contents of this section of the report reflect that of the reasoned conclusion statement by the Department's Senior Planning Adviser (**Tab 17**). A holistic set of recommended conditions is set out in the MLVC report (**Tab 18**) that includes the environmental conditions and reflects the assessment of the totality of the documentation on file relating to this proposed development.

Conclusion of Environmental assessments

A range of detailed considerations have been given to the compliance of this proposed development with the various environmental directives. It is concluded that the submitted EIAR has identified and taken measures to mitigate possible effects of the development on the environment and that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect individually or in combination on designated European sites.

On the 24th May 2022, the Minister adopted the EIA Reasoned Conclusion Report prepared by the IEC and EIA Reasoned Conclusion prepared by the Department's Recommending Officer.

Marine Licence Vetting Committee (MLVC)

MLVC Considerations:

The following documentation was considered and assessed:

- Foreshore Application Form
- Vol. 3B_NTS for Ireland Offshore Celtic Inter. June21
- Vol. 3D1 EIAR Introd.Chapters for Irl Offshore
- Vol. 3D2 EIAR Tech Chapters Irl Offshore Celtic Inter.
- Vol. 3D2 EIAR App-Irl Offshore CelticInter.Part1 - Part 11
- Vol. 4 Environmental Report for UK Offshore
- Vol. 4 Appendices for Environmental Report Part 1 – Part 5
- Vol. 5 Joint Environmental Report (JER) Part 1 – Part 2
- Vol. 6B Offshore AA Screening Report and NIS (SISAA)
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter. TEN-E Reg. Concept for Public Partic.
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter.Connecting Elect Grids of Irl & France
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter. Appendix A Geographic co-ordinates
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter. Appendix B Size Area
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter.Appendix D Constitution of EirGrid
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter.Appendix E Certificate of Inc.of EirGrid PLC
- Vol. 7A Celtic Inter. Appendix F EIA Portal Confirmation
- Vol. 7B Ireland Offshore Celtic Inter. Foreshore Licence Map 1 400584-PL-DWG-009 Rev D
- Vol. 7B Ireland Offshore Celtic Interconnector Foreshore Licence Map 2 400584 -PL -DWG-009 Rev D
- Vol. 7B Ireland Offshore Celtic Interconnector Irish Shore Approach and Landfall at Claycastle Option 1 - Phase One 400584-PL-DWG-001 Rev F and - Phase Two 400584-PL-DWG-002 Rev F
- Vol. 7B Ireland Offshore_Celtic Inter. Irish Shore Approach and Landfall at Claycastle Option 2 - Phase One 400584-PL-DWG-007 Rev D and Phase Two 400584-PL-DWG-008 Rev D
- Vol. 7B Ireland Offshore Celtic Interconnector Irish Shore Approach and Landfall at Claycastle Typical Section 400584-SK-DWG-005 Rev D
- Vol. 8A Ireland Offshore Celtic Inter Planning and Consultation Report
- Vol. 8B Ireland Offshore Celtic Inter Marine Strategy Framework Directive Assessment - Ireland
- Vol. 8C Irl Offshore Celtic Inter Water Framework Directive Assess
- Written submissions and recommendations received from Prescribed Bodies
- The applicant's responses to the Prescribed Bodies submissions.
- The public submissions received from the public consultation.
- The applicant's responses to the public submissions received.
- Independent Environmental Consultants submissions
- EIA Reasoned Conclusion report by Arup
- NMPF compliance report prepared by ARUP
- Marine Advisers report both Engineering and Environmental
- Following requests for further information (RFI), the following documents were provided to DHLGH by EirGrid:
 - EirGrid Information to Inform 2nd Public Consultation revised NIS March 2022

The Marine Licence Vetting Committee (MLVC) reviewed both technical and scientific aspects of the documentation supplied by Eirgrid PLC. The Committee is satisfied that the purpose and objective of the proposed works on the foreshore are adequately explained.

In addition, the MLVC is satisfied that the environmental information provided is sufficient to allow an assessment of the environmental impacts of the proposed development be carried out and to make a recommendation.

Environmental Considerations

However consideration has to be given to the environmental effects of the proposed development directives. The possible environmental effects of the proposed development have been considered as part of a comprehensive formal assessment, including an appropriate assessment. Further consideration has been given to assessing the possible environmental effects of the development under considerations relating to compliance with the EIA directives, in the form of a reasoned conclusion. It is considered that in view of the number of environmental reports and their consideration by the marine adviser (environmental), the IEC and as part of this holistic assessment that there will be no significant detrimental environmental effects arising from this proposed development.

Conclusions

The proposed development seeks to improve national electricity infrastructure by further linking into the wider European network. This particular development is needed to improve energy security and resilience in our national electricity transmission infrastructure. It is considered that the proposal is appropriate and following extensive environmental considerations it is

determined that the proposed development will not have adverse effects on designated European sites either individually or in combination or the wider environment.

Therefore it is recommended that having regard to the totality of the documentation on file relating to this proposed development, a foreshore licence be granted for this proposed development (subject to the recommended conditions).

Proposed Site Specific Conditions:

The Proposed Site Specific Conditions are attached in **(Tab 19)**.

Agreement of the Applicant:

EirGrid PLC have agreed to the recommended site specific conditions, which will be attached to the licence, if granted **(Tab 20)**

Financial Considerations:

EirGrid PLC have agreed to pay a one-off payment of [REDACTED] for a 40 year licence.

The letter of agreement from EirGrid PLC is attached at **(Tab 21)**

Basis for Recommendation

Having regard to:

- The application, together with accompanying documentation;
- The submissions received from prescribed bodies (statutory consultees);
- The public consultations undertaken and submissions received;
- The Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report
- Appropriate Assessment Screening (Stage 1) – Determination
- The Appropriate Assessment Determination
- Non-Statutory Environmental Analysis
- The assessment of the proposed development by the MLVC, its conclusions and recommendations in this regard; and
- The consent conditions to be attached to the foreshore licence, if granted.

It is considered that the proposed development on the Foreshore would not have a significant negative impact on the marine environment and would not adversely affect the integrity of the European sites, and the proposal is in the public interest.

It is recommended that a foreshore licence be granted to Eirgrid Plc, subject to the conditions recommended by the MLVC, and the financial considerations set out above.

Notification of Ministerial Determination:

If approval is granted by the Minister, EirGrid PLC will be informed accordingly, an appropriate licence will issue for execution, and a Notice of Determination regarding the decision (including the reasons) will be published on the Department's website.

The Notice of Determination will address:

- The outcome of the Minister's determination of the application.
- The main reasons and considerations for the Minister's determination.
- A statement that all relevant documentation on which the determination is based is available for inspection on the website of this Department.
- Confirmation that a review procedure is available before the High Court whereby the substantive or procedural legality of the Minister's determination may be challenged, together with practical information on the review procedure.

Submitted for approval.

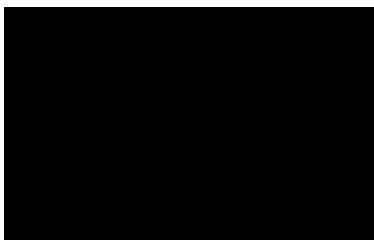
Related submissions

HLG 00226-22: Appropriate Assessment Determination on Foreshore Application FS006916 application by Eirgrid PLC Celtic Interconnector

HLG 00103-22: Screening for Appropriate Assessment Determination. Foreshore Licence application by Eirgrid PLC.

User details

INVOLVED:



READ RECEIPT:

