

DoHLGH ref: FS006886



Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.
Millhouse, Buttevant
Co. Cork, Ireland

E-mail: [REDACTED]@dpenergy.com

20th January 2023

John Fayne
Foreshore Unit
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90

Re: FS006886 Clarus Offshore Wind Farm - Site Investigations off Counties Kerry and Clare – Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.'s Response to Public & Prescribed Body Submissions on Public Consultation in accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011

Dear Mr. Fayne,

I refer to the emails from your office dated 13th December 2022, 5th January 2023 and 18th January 2023 in relation to the above application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, and the submissions made to your office by Public and Prescribed Bodies. Please note Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.'s response as follows:

Public Submissions

Submission 1:

"I think for a project this size that the plans should be viewable online on this site, and not just in kerry. A plan of this size doesn't just affect kerry but is of national interest."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: The documentation and information pertaining to the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 is available on the Government of Ireland Foreshore notices website, at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/213d9-clarus-offshore-wind-farm-site-investigations-off-counties-kerry-and-clare/>

Public Notices directing interested parties to the documents and information relating to this application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, both online and in hard copy format at various exhibition spaces, were published within the following newspapers:

- Irish Independent;
- Clare Champion;
- Kerry Eye.

The application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 documents were put on display to the public at the following locations:

- Kilkee Garda Station, Dough, Kilkee, Co. Clare.
- Kilrush Garda Station, Ennis Road, Kilrush, Co. Clare.
- Ballybunion Garda Station, Main Street, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry.
- Tarbert District Garda Station, Bridewell Street, Tarbert, Co. Kerry.
- Kilrush Civic Offices, Town Hall, Kilrush, Co. Clare.
- Kilkee Library, O'Connell St, Dough, Kilkee, Co. Clare.
- Kilrush Library, O'Gorman Street, Kilrush, County Clare.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. recognises the area covered by the fishing community that work in the proposed Foreshore Licence Application Area, and so the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 documents were also sent to the Harbour Masters of Dingle, Fenit and Galway Harbours for ease of access by the fishing community.

An email was sent to fishers, each Fish Producers Organisation, Regional Inshore Fisheries Forums and National Inshore Fisheries Forums to inform members that the Public Consultation in accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 was underway. This communication directed interested parties to the documents and information relating to this application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, both online and in hard copy format at various exhibition spaces. This was followed by phone calls from the FLO appointed by Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. to a subset of fishers known not to have access to email.

Submission 2:

"As the representative body for the farming community in County Clare and on behalf of farmers and landowners potentially impacted by the proposed Clarus Offshore Windfarm Ltd.,

The IFA wish to request that the views and concerns of the farming community would be taken into consideration in respect of the project and that the IFA and the farming community would be fully consulted in respect of the project on an on-going basis.

The IFA Aquaculture section represents members already operating in the foreshore area in West Clare and as such may also be potentially impacted by the proposed Clarus Offshore Windfarm Ltd.

As a stakeholder in the Marine space and foreshore licenced holders, there should be identified meaningful engagement with these operators while also being mindful of land-sea interactions in respect of landowners in the area."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. thanks the IFA for its submission on the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886. To date, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has engaged with IFA Aquaculture as follows:

- 03/10/2022 – Telephone call to the IFA Aquaculture Executive - Introduction to Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.
- 03/10/2022 – Email to the IFA Aquaculture Executive – Meeting invite to provide an overview of Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. and other projects within the DP Energy Ireland portfolio.
- 11/10/2022 – Online meeting held with the IFA Aquaculture Executive – Overview of Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. and other projects within the DP Energy Ireland portfolio.
- 14/10/2022 - Email to the IFA Aquaculture Executive – Follow up with additional reference material relevant to the meeting held on the 11/10/2022.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has ongoing engagement with aquaculture interests in the Foreshore Licence Application Area. All of those parties are regularly updated on developments for the wider Clarus Offshore Wind Farm development, with the project as and when they arise, and are furnished with the direct contact details of the project Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) to facilitate ongoing and technical engagement on any concerns.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. acknowledges the IFA's request for consideration and further engagement with the wider farming community. While this Public Consultation pertains to the application for Foreshore Licence to undertake proposed site investigations within the foreshore, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is in the early stages of project design and is in the process of identifying landowners who could potentially be affected directly by any future proposed onshore infrastructure, including for example an underground cable. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. will as a matter of course engage with the IFA and its members as the project progresses.

Submission 3: Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG)

Geophysical Surveys

IWDG Submission Point 1:

“Table 4-2 of the Annex IV Risk Assessment details Sound Pressure Level (SPL) Thresholds for impulsive noise from Southall et al. (2019). Southall et al. (2019) recommends the use of a dual metric with a weighted SEL threshold as well as an unweighted SPL. Therefore, both should be displayed, and both should be considered for impulsive noise and this is not found mentioned anywhere in the documentation. Without evidence that noise impacts have been appropriately addressed and understood approval cannot be granted nor a screening determination made as to do so would be contrary to the EIA Directive which requires consideration of characteristics and nuisances. The IWDG dispute the claims made in the proposed foreshore application FS006886, Clarus OWF site investigations including.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Thresholds used in the assessment were those shown in Table 4-2 (copied below) of the document entitled ‘Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886. The thresholds used for the non-impulsive sound sources and the impulsive sound sources were

different. While it is acknowledged that Southall *et al.* (2019) recommend a dual approach, incorporating both an Sound Exposure Level (SEL) and an Sound Pressure Level (SPL) threshold, only the latter was applied in this case. The limitation with using a SEL threshold for multiple impulsive noise is that SEL assumes exposure for 24 hours. As set out by Nedwell (2007), the likely response of marine mammals to high perceived sound levels is to flee the vicinity. As the animals and source move constantly in relation to each other, and as the key behavioural change that has been repeatedly observed is a movement away from the source, this movement will occur long before the SEL threshold is reached and before 24 hours of exposure. Sound levels for the non-impulsive sound sources (Multi Beam Echosounder, Side Scan Sonar, Chirper/Pinger, survey vessel) were given as SEL (rms), with the units of dB re 1µPa².s. Sound levels for impulsive sound sources (boomer) were given as SPL (peak) with units of dB re 1µPa.

Table 4-2 Injury thresholds for marine mammals from impulsive (SPL, unweighted) and continuous (SEL, weighted) sound

Auditory group	Impulsive noise		Continuous noise	
	SPL (unweighted) – dB re 1 µPa (peak)		SEL (24 hr, weighted) - dB re 1 µPa ² .s	
	PTS onset	TTS onset	PTS onset	TTS onset
LF	219	213	199	179
HF	230	224	198	178
VHF	202	196	173	153
OCW	232	226	219	199

IWDG Submission Point 2:

“The potential for disturbance of common bottlenose dolphin in the River Shannon SAC from geophysical survey is temporary and slight. The IWDG would dispute the disturbance on the dolphins from the geophysical survey will be temporary and slight. Disturbance includes auditory impacts as well as behavioural, therefore noise impacts depending on the distance from the sources can be significant whilst behavioural impacts by eliminating an animal from an important foraging area can have significant impact. Therefore, more information is required to back up such declarations. Gray and Van Waerebeek (2011) recorded abnormal behaviour including erratic locomotion in a pantropical spotted dolphin 600 m ahead of an airgun array during 3D seismic explorations. The authors suggest a cause–effect relationship as the behaviour was spatially and temporally closely associated with firing seismic airguns. This is one case of geophysical surveys injuring marine mammals. The potential for auditory injury and disturbance from geotechnical survey is nil or negligible.

- The IWDG would like to know what published literature this finding was based on? Auditory injury and disturbance would be based on the type of equipment used and the distance of the animals from the source? Auditory injury and disturbance can not be considered nil or negligible. The potential for physical injury and disturbance from all survey vessels and equipment associated with other surveys is nil or negligible.*
- The IWDG would like to know what evidence this statement is based on? Pirotta et al. (2014). was the first study to conclusively show that the physical presence of a boat, not just noise, plays a large role in disturbance on bottlenose dolphin foraging activity.”*

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response:

- a. Section 4.1.2 of the document entitled '*Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*' submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 sets out the assessment made for each of the proposed survey activities including the survey vessel movement and equipment. Within each subsection, listed below, multiple references to published literature are made that resulted in the conclusions set out within the Risk Assessment.
- 4.1.2.2 Vessel movements
 - 4.1.2.3 MBES
 - 4.1.2.4 Side Scan Sonar and Sub-bottom Profiler
 - 4.1.2.5 Vibrocore and Borehole Drilling

IWDG's Submission Point 2 makes reference to one study where abnormal behaviours in marine mammals have been recorded in response to 3D seismic explorations using an airgun array. It is important to highlight that such an example is not proportionate to the proposed site investigations to which the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 pertains.

- b. IWDG's Submission Point 2 b. references Pirodda *et al.*'s study on the potential impacts of vessel presence on bottlenose dolphins. Section 4.1.2.2 of the document entitled '*Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*' sets out that the proposed site investigations should be considered in the context of the existing baseline environment. The assessment states that marine traffic density originating from the River Shannon Estuary is high, ranging from 251 to >250,000 routes per 0.02 km² per year. The assessment also considers vessel movements in the wider Foreshore Licence Application Area and available literature on potential vessel movement impacts. As set out in Section 4.1.2.2 of the *Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*, the assessment concluded that the change in underwater sound caused by the addition of the survey vessel(s) for the proposed site investigations will not be noticeable above the natural and anthropogenic noise in the region. This assessment, alongside consideration of other potential impacts associated with the proposed site investigations, supported the conclusion set out in Section 6 of the *Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*:

"Temporary behavioural impacts (disturbance) to cetaceans will not be extensive, severe or biologically significant, given the transient and short-term nature of the activities. It is highly unlikely that disturbance would negatively impact upon the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of any species which may be present in the Investigative Foreshore Licence Application Area. The activities are temporary and transitory and set within a region where shipping noise is common, suggesting animals will exhibit a degree of habituation."

IWDG Submission Point 3:

"We recommend the use of MMOs to implement NPWS (2014) if sub-bottom profilers are to be used. We note this is a recommended mitigation measure within estuaries. And because of the importance of this protected site further mitigations should be applied to ensure the continuity of the SAC and the bottlenose dolphins such as real-time PAM and any other tools that can be employed. The IWDG would also highlight because of the importance of this site that shutdowns be enforced to ensure that animals are not exposed to thresholds of TTS and PTS. This is especially important to bottlenose dolphins

who use the inner and outer estuary, for example if inner estuary animals flee from the sound source and continue into the estuary then mitigation will be more difficult to implement.”

IWDG Submission Point 4:

“We note that survey activity will continue 24 hours while typically observation ceases at dusk and this does not provide 24 hour mitigation. The frequently applied continuous use of source to avoid shutdown is not appropriate and will increase impact. Some discussion on how the surveys will apply night time mitigation if operating at night is required. In, or adjacent to an SAC consideration should be given to using thermal imaging if operating at night as well as Passive Acoustic Monitoring to be used using updated JNCC advice (in draft) when available.”

IWDG Submission Point 5:

“Some discussion on how mitigation methods will detect animals underwater, where some marine mammals spend a great deal of their time is required. Therefore, PAM recommended in particular for night time operations.”

IWDG Submission Point 6:

“The NPWS guidelines state that Article 12 of the Habitats Directive prohibit “all forms of deliberate capture or killing of specimens of these species in the wild” and “deliberate disturbance of these species, particularly during the period of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration”. It is not clear how disturbance will be mitigated by guidelines which only prevent commencement of works and do not allow for a shutdown even when animals are within an established PTS (Permanent Threshold Shift) zone. Mitigation strategies are not adaptive and based on assumption and leave no room for mitigation when an impact is identified, Especially when in and adjacent to an SAC and when bottlenose dolphins are known to move in and out.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. notes that IWDG’s Submission Points 3-6 above primarily relate to perceived shortcomings of the existing 2014 DAHG Guidance entitled ‘Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made Sound Sources in Irish Waters’. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. will adhere to the 2014 DAHG guidance and will consider any relevant updates to this guidance ahead of the proposed site investigations. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. also commits to employing a suitably qualified PAM operator, and the relevant PAM equipment (i.e., towed hydrophone array), to facilitate real-time monitoring of PAM during periods of darkness or poor conditions where visual observations are not possible.

IWDG Submission Point 7:

“Statement 4.1.2.3 of the Risk Assessment states “The equipment which will be used in the surveys has a minimum frequency of 200 kHz” yet the licence application states “The R2 Sonic 2024 or the Kongsberg EM2040 may be taken as typical examples of equipment that could be used”. The R2 Sonic 2024 has a frequency range from 170 kHz to 400 kHz (see <https://www.r2sonic.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/MBES-Spec-US-03-2020.pdf>). As this information is carried forward into the Scanning for Environmental Assessment Report this report is also incorrect.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Section 2.3 of the document entitled ‘*Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement*’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 sets out two examples of Multibeam Echosounders (MBES) as typical examples of equipment that could be used in the proposed site investigations. These are indicative examples only, and the exact equipment used will be known following the appointment of the survey contractor. In its submission Point 7, IWDG notes that the manual for one of the examples, R2 Sonic 2024, states that the device has a frequency range from 170 kHz to 400 kHz. The assessment of potential impacts of the proposed site investigations on Annex IV species has been undertaken considering the following statements set out within Section 4.1.2.3 of the document entitled ‘*Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886: “*the MBES used in the survey will not be operated at a frequency less than 200 kHz*” and it is expected that the “*Sound frequencies emitted, in water depths of less than 200 m, are typically between 300 and 400 kHz (Danson 2005, Hopkins 2007, Lurton and DeReutier 2011)*”. The specifications outlined in the statements above, and assessed within the ‘*Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*’ have informed the scope of the proposed site investigations and will be communicated with the appointed contractor.

IWDG Submission Point 8:

“Multi-beam and similar systems have been shown while operating at 200 kHz to emit side-lobes of energy at lower frequencies which has impacted the behaviour of marine mammals (Deng et al., 2014).”

IWDG Submission Point 9:

“To date few Marine Mammal Observer (MMO) reports detail sound producing equipment and while an operators report is required by the guidelines these are not submitted as required under the NPWS guidelines. Therefore there is oversight on whether the equipment characteristics stated will match those stated in the licence application. There is therefore a danger that especially in deeper waters lower frequency and higher source level acoustics may be used as deemed appropriate for surveying.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: The January 2014 DAHG guidance document entitled ‘*Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made Sound Sources in Irish Waters*’, includes guidance in Section 4.3.4 (ii) specific to ‘Multibeam, single beam, side-scan sonar & sub-bottom profiler surveys’.

As per Section 4.3.4 (ii) ‘Multibeam, single beam, side-scan sonar & sub-bottom profiler surveys’ of the 2014 DAHG guidance, full reporting on MMO operations and mitigation undertaken will be provided to the Regulatory Authority. This reporting will include details of all geophysical equipment, including model numbers.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. also commits to employing a suitably qualified PAM operator and to using the relevant PAM equipment (i.e., towed hydrophone array) to facilitate real-time monitoring of PAM during periods of darkness or poor conditions where visual observations are not possible.

IWDG Submission Point 10:

"The licence application states "The Innomar parametric SES-2000 or similar will be used for the shallow investigation". This equipment operates as standard with a primary frequency between 85 and 115 kHz and at a source level >240 dB re1μPa@1m and with a secondary frequency of 2 to 22 kHz with centre frequencies in a range from 4 to 15 kHz (see <https://www.innomar.com/products/shallow-water/standard-sbp>). None of this is mentioned in the Annex IV Risk Assessment and as frequencies and modulation match that of mid-frequency naval sonar this should be assessed for impact in the SAC in particular."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Section 2.3 of the document entitled 'Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement' submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 provides "Innomar parametric SES-2000 or similar" as a typical example of Side Scan Sonar (SSS) equipment that could be used in such site investigations. This is provided as an indicative example only and the exact equipment used will be known following the appointment of the survey contractor. As stated in Section 4.1.2.4 of the *Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species*, the SSS equipment used for the proposed site investigations will be a dual frequency hydrographic sonar with a lowest operating frequency of not less than 100 kHz. The higher frequency of the SSS will be between 300 and 900 kHz.

IWDG Submission Point 11:

"There is no information available on survey lines for geophysical surveys and therefore it is impossible to assess the impact precisely. Survey lines within the SAC may be particularly relevant. If survey lines are running in and out of the estuary this may have impacts that require consideration. While exact line position may not be known some indication of likely surveys lines will help in assessing impact."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Any indicative line plans, if they were to have been submitted alongside this application for Foreshore Licence, would have been subject to significant change as the contract for the proposed site investigation works has yet to be awarded. It is not possible to define the exact equipment and vessels, and so line plan, until the site investigation works are procured. As such, the inclusion of early indicative line plans alongside the application for Foreshore Licence would not help to inform any assessments within the documents submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886.

Ecological Survey

IWDG Submission Point 1:

"We are pleased to note that for the Ecological Survey to determine to identify the distribution and abundance of birds, marine mammals and reptiles, that SAM is proposed. However we recommend FPODs as CPODs have been discontinued and acoustic recorders such as Soundtraps to record other cetacean vocalisations and to include low frequency baleen whales. In an SAC we recommend at least one year (which is minimal) acoustic data should be available for assessment of acoustic behaviour of marine mammals and fish in the estuary, but ideally two years. How else can you begin to assess acoustic impact."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: IWDG's Submission Point 1 above, under the subheading of Ecological Surveys, is in relation to the methodology proposed for the characterisation and monitoring of the receiving environment relevant to the future Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for Clarus Offshore Wind Farm, and not the proposed site investigations for which this application for Foreshore Licence pertains.

Nonetheless, IWDG's recommendation for the deployment of FPODs alongside acoustic recorders such as Soundtraps is noted. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. remains open to the use of Soundtraps and acknowledges the recommendation from IWDG to consider the use of these. As committed to IWDG at a meeting held in April 2022 in relation to two other projects that are also within the DP Energy Ireland and Iberdrola Ireland Joint Venture portfolio (Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm and Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park), Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. will seek future consultation with IWDG prior to the proposed site investigations to discuss specifications of acoustic monitoring devices for marine mammals.

IWDG Submission Point 2:

"We note boat-based may be used to compliment aerial but IWDG are concerned that aerial surveys, while efficient at surveying during weather windows may not obtain the relevant data to explore connectivity between populations for example through photo-id of bottlenose dolphins to see which population they belong too (Shannon or Coastal) as well as humpback whales which are known to occur within the site. Additionally aerial surveys have been suggested as ineffective for detecting minke whales (see Webb et al. 2018)."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: IWDG's Submission Point 2 above, under the subheading of Ecological Surveys, states concerns on the methodology proposed for the characterisation of the receiving environment relevant to the future Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for Clarus Offshore Wind Farm, and not the proposed site investigations for which this application for Foreshore Licence pertains.

As outlined in the document entitled '*Schedule of Survey Works*', Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. proposes the use of Digital Aerial Surveys (DAS) to help characterise the baseline environment. Aerial surveys are often regarded as the most effective method for site characterisation for marine mammals and sea birds, collectively, as they provide a good indication of the species present in the vicinity of the project, allow larger areas to be surveyed in a single day, and if digital methods are employed, allow for the retention of an auditable record of the survey data (Buckland *et al.*, 2001; Thaxter and Burton, 2009). Such methods of site investigation are particularly important where there is a paucity of data and/or data are considered historic. Nonetheless, it is important to note that there are pros and cons to all marine mammal data gathering methods used for site characterisation, be that using DAS, boat-based surveys, vantage point surveys or Passive Acoustic Monitoring surveys.

The Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (DCCAE) Guidance on Marine Baseline Ecological Assessments & Monitoring Activities for Offshore Renewable Energy Projects published in April 2018 outlines survey methods applicable to potential ecological receptors in Irish waters, including Marine Mammals and large fish species. Within this guidance, the recommendation from DCCAE and the contributors within the Environmental Working Group of the Offshore Renewable Energy Steering Group is that offshore visual surveys are to be carried out via "*Line transect with distance sampling, from vessels or from the air*". This guidance, informed by Irish experts and international precedence, supports the use of

either boat-based or aerial methods in such site characterisation surveys. These recommendations, alongside an extensive review of best practice established internationally, informed the approach as described and discussed in meetings with IWDG to date in relation to two other projects (Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm and Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park) that are also within the DP Energy Ireland and Iberdrola Ireland Joint Venture portfolio.

When using data from DAS, it is important to note that every animal within the surveyed strip will have an equal probability of being detected (i.e., recorded by photographic survey equipment). This removes the need to apply a detection function (the reduction in probability of sighting an animal within increasing distance from the transect line), which presents a challenge for all other survey types. Another important consideration during marine mammal surveys is availability bias, defined as the proportion of animals on the transect line that are missed (e.g., due to being under water or because of sighting conditions); this is an issue for all survey types. With respect to DAS, there are established methods for calculating a correction factor for availability bias for harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) (Voet *et al.*, 2017).

Where boat-based surveys could be considered as an alternative, they do cover smaller areas and are often constrained to inshore regions, which tends to make them a less suitable option for site characterisation, particularly for large areas further offshore. However, they will survey at slower speeds than DAS, which may lead to an increased likelihood of detecting animals on the transect line. However, as noted above, this approach is subject to detection and availability bias, both of which can be corrected for / calculated for most cetacean species. Lastly, vessels can influence animal behaviour, either by evasion or attraction.

With respect to the EIAR, as discussed with IWDG at a meeting held on 1st April 2022 in relation to two other projects that are also within the DP Energy Ireland and Iberdrola Ireland Joint Venture portfolio (Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm and Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park), the best available data will be used to estimate density of a species within the project area. This will then typically be placed into the context of the Management Unit for that species and any relevant protected area(s) (e.g., Special Area of Conservation) in the region, when assessing potential impacts. Defining best available data will take into consideration spatial and temporal aspects, including how recent the data are. Often, where uncertainties in density estimates exist, a proportionate but precautionary approach is recommended by the regulator, for example using the higher density estimate available at the time of the project impact assessment (which may be derived from the project-specific DAS or other, pre-existing data).

IWDG Submission Point 3:

“We recommend Static Acoustic Monitoring to be carried out before during and after site surveys to ensure there is no long-term change in the use of the Shannon estuary by bottlenose dolphins. Post-survey monitoring should ideally be at least 12 months but ideally 24 months.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Given the temporary and transient nature of the proposed site investigations to which this application for Foreshore Licence pertains, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. does not think that any such monitoring is proportionate to the proposed site investigations as suggested in IWDG Submission Point 3.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. remains open to the use of Static Acoustic Monitoring to inform site characterisation and monitoring relevant to a future Environmental Impact Assessment Report for an offshore wind farm development in this area (noting that application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 is for proposed site investigations-only), and in that context acknowledges the

recommendation from IWDG to consider the use of Static Acoustic Monitors. As committed to IWDG at a meeting held on 1st April 2022 in relation to two other projects that are also within the DP Energy Ireland and Iberdrola Ireland Joint Venture portfolio (Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm and Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park), Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. will seek future consultation with IWDG prior to site investigations to discuss the specifications of acoustic monitoring devices for marine mammals.

Appropriate Assessment

IWDG Submission Point 1:

“We note that bottlenose dolphin has been screened in for potential impacts of changes in noise. This refers to both the Shannon population and the West Connacht Coast SAC regarding the “coastal population”. The presence and thus exposure to either population can only be determined through photo-id and/or DNA sampling. Mitigation measures implementing NPWS (2014) may be appropriate for both populations but consideration should be made during ecological surveys to distinguish habitat use of both populations. This might be reflected in the summary that the Conservation Objectives of two SACs with bottlenose dolphins as qualifying interests may be affected without mitigation.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Table 5-2 of the document entitled ‘Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 sets out the assessment of potential effects of the proposed site investigations on the bottlenose dolphin. Measures that can be implemented to mitigate the significance of the likely adverse impact into insignificance are detailed within same as follows:

“The contractor for the proposed site investigations will follow the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) ‘Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made sound sources in Irish Waters’ (DAHG 2014); in particular Section 4.3.4 Geophysical Acoustic Surveys and Section 4.3.2 Drilling. This will include:

- *The commensal of survey activity at the innermost part of the estuary and working outwards to ensure animals are not driven into or artificially confined within the estuary;*
- *Use of Marine Mammal Observers (MMO);*
- *Pre-start monitoring for 30 minutes of 500m radial distance;*
- *If output source exceeds 170dB re 1uPA@1m, and equipment technically allows, then a ramp up procedure will be used;*
- *Breaks in sound output; and*
- *Reporting.”*

Given the temporary and transient nature of the proposed site investigations to which this application for Foreshore Licence pertains, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. does not think that any works to determine the origin of individual animals (e.g., “through photo-id and/or DNA sampling”) are proportionate to the proposed site investigations as suggested in IWDG Submission Point 1 under the heading of Appropriate Assessment.

With respect to the future Environmental Impact Assessment Report for a potential offshore wind farm, the best available data will be used to estimate density of a species within the offshore wind farm project area. This will then typically be placed into the context of the Management Unit for a given species and any relevant protected area(s) (e.g., Special Area of Conservation) in the region, when assessing potential impacts of the offshore wind farm.

General

IWDG Submission Point 2:

“The Annex IV Risk Assessment describes possible cumulative effects but does not identify any specific effects such as other geophysical or geotechnical surveys that are likely to occur over the same or similar time period. It would be useful if these could be identified and common data needs highlighted with a view to carrying out one geophysical and geotechnical survey in the SAC in particular rather than having each survey done independently costing more money and increasing significantly cumulative impacts. All other works proposed in the area should be considered in the application including FS007141, FS007801, FS007083, FS007366 and FS007435. Foreshore licence application FS007435 is for the exact same works to be carried out over much the same area and will repeat disturbances in this application and it is anticipated further such works will be applied for in the future. Therefore monitoring for such impacts should already be underway to establish a clear baseline position with full acoustic monitoring to establish vocal patterns and ambient and anthropogenic noise levels currently. Note that cumulative effect consideration is a requirement of the EIA Directive Article 3 Annex IV.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Section 4.2.3 of the document entitled ‘*Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement*’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 sets out the assessment of potential in-combination effects, and demonstrates consideration given to all other developments, including other applications for Foreshore Licence that were published on the Government of Ireland Foreshore Notices [website](#), and industry knowledge available at the time of preparation of the application for Foreshore Licence. This includes consideration of applications for Foreshore Licence FS007141 and FS007083.

IWDG’s Submission Point 2 makes reference to 3 other applications for Foreshore Licence ‘FS007801’, ‘FS007366’ and ‘FS007435’. On review of the applications for Foreshore Licence that were published on the Government of Ireland Foreshore Notices [website](#), FS007801 was not found and we believe this is a typographical error within IWDG’s submission. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. are aware of the application for Foreshore Licence FS007081 within the Shannon Estuary and for completeness in the response, we have assumed this is the application for Foreshore Licence being referred to within IWDG’s submission. Applications for Foreshore Licence FS007366 and FS007435 were submitted after the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, and were therefore not referenced within the ‘*Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement*’ document. On review of the applications for Foreshore Licence FS007081, FS007366 and FS007435 as part of the preparation of this Response to Submissions on Public Consultation in accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, please see Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.’s response as follows:

- FS007801 DesignPro Cahiracon Quay Tidal Energy Testing application for Foreshore Licence published on the Government of Ireland Foreshore Notices website [here](#) sets out the deployment of two test devices off the pier at Inishmurry (Cahiracon, Co Clare) approximately 18 km from the eastern limit of the Foreshore Licence Application Area to which the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 pertains. Given the distance between the FS006886 Foreshore Licence Application Area and that for FS007081, the lack of proposed geophysical survey works associated with FS007081, and the lack of

both spatial and temporal overlap in vessel activity, there is no potential for in-combination effects.

- FS007366 *Munster Sea Wind Limited Site Investigations for proposed Offshore Wind Farm, off County Clare* was considered within the assessment of potential in-combination effects outlined in Section 4.2.3 of the document entitled '*Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement*'. At the time of preparation of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, an application for Foreshore Licence had not been submitted by the developer (*Munster Sea Wind Limited*) and the site (referred to as '*Inis West One and Two*') was included based on industry knowledge, see Section 4.2.3 of the document entitled '*Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement*'.
- FS007435 *Rian Offshore Array Limited Site Investigations for proposed Offshore Wind Farm, off Counties Kerry and Clare* application for Foreshore Licence was submitted on 22nd July 2022. The documents supporting that application for Foreshore Licence FS007435 are not available on the Government of Ireland Foreshore Notices [website](#), in particular the '*Schedule of Works*' referenced within the [application form for Foreshore Licence FS007435](#) that would be required to understand the potential temporal overlap between the proposed site investigations. Taking a precautionary approach, there could potentially be overlap between the site investigations proposed within FS007435 and FS006886. Any such overlap would not affect the conclusions reached within the document entitled '*Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement*' submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, specifically Section 4.4 Assessment of Likely Significant Effect (LSE). As outlined in Tables 4-3 and 4-4 of that section, screening assessments for SACs and SPAs considered the potential for in-combination effects with other proposed site investigations that have potential for overlap both spatially and temporally, as described in Section 4.2.3.

Submission 5:

"The minister for housing local government and heritage. Having been fishing most of my adult life I have grave concerns to what is going to happen in our fishing area. Firstly with the applications of site investigations and then later with the wind FARMS . I know the state has signed up to all these agreements on reducing fossil fuels which I whole heartily agree with but on every interview about these wind farms on tv or radio on how good this will be for the country not one mention of the fishers and aquaculture projects that will be affected. In the last decade local boats have been potting further and further out to sea many of them in these areas, Now the powers that be tell us that fishing within these farms may be possible as happens in the uk the problem is most of the wind farms there are fixed too the seabed in our area the application is for floating wind farms which will move with tides and weather and therefore they will not be any fishing permitted which means the boats fishing there will have no option but to return fishing closer to shore and start to displace the boats fishing there. To make matters worse the state has signed up to 30 per cent of the bay's in Ireland to be MPA,s by 2030 so this in turn may prevent us from fishing closer to shore . Also commercial salmon fishing and the dogfish fishery have been stopped for a number of years and everyone now fishes pots as there main fishery. So I would like to see a plan written in stone on how to protect these fishers and their livelihood we have heard about the community fund from the wind energy company's but at the end of the day it is not the communities been displaced it's the

fishers and aquaculture projects in these areas. Finally another problem for some of the fishers is proving they are fishing in certain areas as Many boats are not required to have log sheets. I'm sure many of these problems can be ironed out with dialogue and hopefully we can all work out a solution that works for all."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: To address specific concerns, and recognising the importance of the fishing industry to coastal communities and the economy as a whole, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has appointed a specialist Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) John Power to work closely with the fishing community, and with Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd., in ensuring ongoing engagement and to provide technical feedback on fisheries concerns raised.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is currently collating, assessing and responding to the concerns raised by the members of fishing industry concerning survey zoning and mitigation methods for the proposed site investigations, including the proposed geophysical and geotechnical works. Such exercises are not limited to the identification of fishing activities as recorded by Vessel Monitoring System or logbook data. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is committed to engagement with fishers, as facilitated by the appointed FLO, and will consider information obtained through same.

Submission 6:

"We write this email with serious concern on the future of our family run fishing business. We have been involved in fishing with over 40 years and in recent years have invested millions in gear and state of the art vessels namely ATLANTIC CHIEFTAIN S703, OCEAN PREDATOR S685 and our new vessel ATLANTIC DEFENDER which will arrive in the next few weeks. These vessels fish 90% of the area of Licence Application by DP ENERGY and CLARUS OFFSHORE.

Firstly we would like to Thank you for the opportunity to have our voices heard on this matter through this consultation.

*We have operated our fishing activities in these areas for years. We have invested in larger and more efficient working vessels to work in these areas. Given the size of the Area 93622 HA we expect this to have a huge impact on our livelihoods and our younger generation family members who are Fishers. **We have observed that large exclusions zones imminent for the survey work. The exclusion zones are larger than the survey area due to towed equipment, multibeam and sidescan and the size of vessels involved on the surveys plus the weather etc. The surveys rarely finish within their timeframe depriving us of our ability to conduct our business under the terms of our Licences.***

This planning and survey phase is the beginning of such intrusions and interruptions to our business which in turn will effect our customer base /markets which has taken many years of building and forging good customers relations not to the mention the construction phase, surveys, routine operation and maintenance phase when its all up and running. As we see we will need to be compensated for any interruptions to to our fishing as its going to severely effect our income going forward.

We would like to say we would be interested in working with CLARUS offshore windfarm as long as they work with us, as we have greater knowledge of the area in question.

*We can see new assets and infrastructure coming from our cooperation but we need constructive dialogue so we can all work together. We also have some smaller vessels fishing the Shannon Estuary which will also be effected.
Nobody wants another Shell to Sea”*

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is currently collating, assessing and responding to the concerns raised by the members of fishing industry concerning survey zoning and mitigation methods for the proposed site investigations, including the proposed geophysical and geotechnical works. To address specific concerns, and recognising the importance of the fishing industry to coastal communities and the economy as a whole, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has appointed a specialist Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) John Power to work closely with the fishing community, and with Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd., in ensuring ongoing engagement and to provide technical feedback on fisheries concerns raised.

Further, prior to the proposed site investigations, timely notice including key information on the survey vessels being used (vessel name, vessel type, bridge telephone number, bridge email details, Call Sign and MMSI number) and also the planned location/duration of works will be given to maritime users (all Shipowners, Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Shipmasters, Skippers, Fishers, Yachtsmen, Yachtswomen and Seafarers) through the publication of Marine Notices. As outlined in Section 4.9 of the document entitled ‘*Environmental Supporting Information*’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, the contractor for the proposed site investigations will define specific ‘blocks’ in which survey activities will be completed before the next block starts. This will minimise the time a particular area is subject to any disturbance resultant from the proposed site investigations. The surveys will use an experienced offshore FLO to further minimise and mitigate any impacts to fishing activities where possible.

Submission 7: Conways Solicitors on behalf of Southwest Coast fishers

The following points within Conways Solicitors’ submission have been responded to by Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.

Conways Solicitors Submission Point 1:

“The first element of the objection is regarding the type of surveying envisaged in the application submitted, to include: -

- *Metocean surveys*
- *Geophysical surveys.*
- *Geotechnical surveys.*
- *Fish & Shellfish surveys.*
- *Benthic & Intertidal surveys.*
- *Marine Mammal PAM surveys; and*
- *Archaeological surveys.*

Our clients are aware that certain types of the surveys listed above which are intended to be carried out on these fishing grounds will have a clear detrimental effect on the marine species fished thereon. This has not been taken into consideration in this current Application.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: The submission refers to “*certain types of the surveys*” posing a risk to fishing grounds in the area. It is understood by Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. that these concerns relate to the proposed geophysical and geotechnical survey activities.

As suggested in the submission, it is not the case that potential effects of the proposed site investigations on fisheries “... *has not been taken into consideration in this current Application*”. Section 4 of the document entitled ‘*Environmental Supporting Information*’ submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 sets out potential effects of the proposed site investigation on Fish (Section 4.5) and Commercial Fisheries (Section 4.9). This assessment is built upon a detailed review of the Environmental Baseline of the Foreshore Licence Application Area, including fish spawning and nursery grounds (Section 3.4.1), Annex II species (Section 3.4.2) and Aquaculture and Shellfish (Section 3.4.3).

The assessment concluded that in relation to the proposed site investigations, potential effects on Fish was assessed as ‘*Temporary and Not Significant*’. Whilst it is acknowledged there may be temporary disruption to individual vessels using the Foreshore Licence Application Area during the proposed site investigations, the effects will be localised. In the context of the whole commercial fishery, the assessment concludes that the significance of effects on commercial fisheries will be ‘*Temporary and Imperceptible*’.

To address specific concerns, and recognising the importance of the fishing industry to coastal communities and the economy as a whole, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has appointed a specialist Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) John Power to work closely with the fishing community, and with Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd., in ensuring ongoing engagement and to provide technical feedback on fisheries concerns raised.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is currently collating, assessing and responding to the concerns raised by the members of fishing industry concerning survey zoning and mitigation methods for the proposed site investigations, including the proposed geophysical and geotechnical works.

Conways Solicitors Submission Point 2:

“Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. may have appointed a Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) to act as a first point of contact with fishers on behalf of the project. Our clients have not had any recent contact with the FLO and it would appear that no effort has been made to build relationships with fishers and to bolster the publicly available information on the type and extent of fishing within the site. Engagement with our client fishers has been negligible, and this is deeply concerning to our clients.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. may have committed to fully engaging with all stakeholders at all stages of the project and DP Energy’s Community and Stakeholder Liaison Manager, who has been working on the project since 2020, but this has not occurred to date.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. appointed John Power of Emerald Marine Ltd. as the designated Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) for Clarus Offshore Wind Farm in 2020, and as stated, has been engaging with the fishing community since 2020.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has had pier meetings (attended by both DP Energy Ireland's Community and Stakeholder Liaison Manager and FLO John Power of Emerald Marine Ltd.) with fishers, including <10 m fishers, at all fishing harbours from Ros an Mhíl to Dingle to introduce them to DP Energy, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. and to inform them about the Clarus Offshore Wind Farm project. An email was also sent to Fish Producers Organisations with advance notice of pier meetings with a request that members be contacted. Individual fishers were also contacted via email and telephone call by the project FLO and DP Energy Ireland's Community and Stakeholder Liaison Manager. Minutes of the meetings were sent to each attendee and fishing representative bodies after the events. A record of the time series of these engagements is captured below:

- 15/02/2022 – Ros an Mhíl Harbour
- 15/02/2022 – Aran Mór
- 16/02/2022 – Fenit
- 16/02/2022 – Dingle
- 16/02/2022 – The Maharees
- 09/03/2022 – Carrigaholt
- 09/03/2022 – Doonbeg

Undertaking such engagement ensures that the fishing community is notified of any relevant updates or changes to the project in a timely manner. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is aware that it is not practical for fishers to take time out of their fishing day to meet with Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) developers. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. endeavours to restrict engagement to meaningful meetings and does not hold meetings or conduct calls without valid reason.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. made all of the documentation and information pertaining to this application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 (as available on the Government of Ireland Foreshore Notices website [here](#)) widely available to all interested parties. Public Notices directing interested parties to the documents and information relating to this application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, both online and in hard copy format at various exhibition spaces, were published within the following newspapers:

- Irish Independent;
- Clare Champion;
- Kerry Eye.

The application for Foreshore Licence documents for FS006886 were also put on display to the public at the following locations:

- Kilkee Garda Station, Dough, Kilkee, Co. Clare.
- Kilrush Garda Station, Ennis Road, Kilrush, Co. Clare.
- Ballybunion Garda Station, Main Street, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry.
- Tarbert District Garda Station, Bridewell Street, Tarbert, Co. Kerry.
- Kilrush Civic Offices, Town Hall, Kilrush, Co. Clare.
- Kilkee Library, O'Connell St, Dough, Kilkee, Co. Clare.
- Kilrush Library, O'Gorman Street, Kilrush, County Clare.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. recognises the area covered by the fishing community that work in the proposed Foreshore Licence Application Area, and as such the application for Foreshore

Licence documents were also sent to the Harbour Masters of Dingle, Fenit and Galway Harbours for ease of access by the fishing community.

An email was sent to fishers, Fish Producers Organisations, Regional Inshore Fisheries Forums and National Inshore Fisheries Forums to inform members that the Public Consultation in accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 was underway. This communication directed interested parties to the documents and information relating to this application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, both online and in hard copy format at various exhibition spaces. This was followed up with phone calls from the FLO appointed by Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd to a subset of fishers known not to have access to email.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is acutely aware of the risk of stakeholder fatigue and the long and varied hours worked by fishers. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. strives to ensure that correct and factual information is shared with the fishing community and as such only requests meetings when it is necessary to impart important information.

Conways Solicitors Submission Point 3:

“Our client’s vessels will be requested to remain at 500m radial distance from survey vessels for safety purposes, but no detail has been given to our clients on the continual use of their fishing grounds. This is a source of great distress to our clients. Our clients, who are trawlermen, have fished in a particular manner for decades without disturbance. Our clients cannot be expected to have to guess when and where these projected surveys may take place.

These fishing grounds have been exploited for commercial gain for many years by our clients and others, and like all grounds, are susceptible to seasonal variations. We are unaware whether the projected survey will take place during the good fishing months or not. This information is not apparent from the application submitted.”

Conways Solicitors Submission Point 4:

“There is no mention of a structure in facilitate the compensating of our clients for losses that will foreseeably arise.

There are no measures proposed to mitigate possible impacts on the fishing community of the surveying phase.”

Conways Solicitors Submission Point 5:

“There is reference to “[a] full baseline assessment on commercial fisheries will be undertaken as part of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report for any potential future planning application for the Clarus Offshore Wind Farm” in the application Environmental Supporting Information, but no reference is made to any earlier baseline assessment prior to the investigation phase. Our clients are not comforted by this ex-post facto arrangement, without assurance from the Applicant (or even the State) that the real effect on our clients’ livelihoods will be comprehensively addressed prior to the commencement of this survey if the licence application is granted.”

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: The exact timing of the surveys is yet to be determined as contractors will not be in place to complete the proposed site investigations ahead of determination of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886. Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. will engage with the fishing community as early as possible to provide a timeline for the proposed site investigations on receipt of a determination.

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. is currently collating, assessing and responding to the concerns raised by the members of fishing industry concerning survey zoning and mitigation methods for the proposed site investigations, including the proposed geophysical and geotechnical works. To address specific concerns, and recognising the importance of the fishing industry to coastal communities and the economy as a whole, Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. has appointed a specialist Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) John Power to work closely with the fishing community, and with Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd., in ensuring ongoing engagement and to provide technical feedback on fisheries concerns raised.

Prior to the proposed site investigations, timely notice including key information on the survey vessels being used (vessel name, vessel type, bridge telephone number, bridge email details, Call Sign and MMSI number) and also the planned location/duration of works will be given to maritime users (all Shipowners, Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Shipmasters, Skippers, Fishers, Yachtsmen, Yachtswomen and Seafarers) through the publication of Marine Notices. As outlined in Section 4.9 of the document entitled '*Environmental Supporting Information*' submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886, the contractor for the proposed site investigations will define specific 'blocks' in which survey activities will be completed before the next block starts. This will minimise the time a particular area is subject to any disturbance resultant from the proposed site investigations. The surveys will use an experienced offshore FLO to further minimise and mitigate any impacts to fishing activities where possible.

Section 4 of the document entitled '*Environmental Supporting Information*' submitted in support of the application for Foreshore Licence FS006886 sets out the potential effects of the proposed site investigation on Fish (Section 4.5) and Commercial Fisheries (Section 4.9). This assessment is built upon a detailed review of the Environmental Baseline of the Foreshore Licence Application Area, including fish spawning and nursery grounds (Section 3.4.1), Annex II species (Section 3.4.2) and Aquaculture and Shellfish (Section 3.4.3). The assessment concluded that in relation to the proposed site investigations, potential effects on Fish was assessed as '*Temporary and Not Significant*'.

Conways Solicitors Submission Point 6:

"Volume of Windfarms

The second Objection is the failure address cumulative effect of all the West Coast Windfarms on the fisheries off the coast. There are currently we understand, seven windfarms planned off the Irish Coast in the Irish Sea. The Irish Sea projects are Oriel Wind Park off County Louth; two wind farms by RWE at Bray and Kish Banks off Dublin, two wind farms by Codling Wind Park off County Wicklow and a development by North Irish Sea Array Ltd off counties Meath and Dublin."

Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Response: Conways Solicitors' Submission Point 6 does not appear to be directly related to Clarus Offshore Wind Farm Ltd.'s application for Foreshore License FS006886 for proposed site investigations that underwent Public Consultation in

accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. The concern outlined within the submission appears to be predominantly related to potential impacts associated with the presence of offshore wind farms across the Irish Sea.