An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Marine Engineering Division

Report on Aquaculture Licence Application

Application Reference No: T32-028

Report Prepared By:	**Raphael Crowley**
Date:	30 September 2024
Applicant	Wicklow Seaweed Company, 30 Marian Villas, Arklow, Co. Wicklow
Location	Arklow Bay
Applicant Type	Aquaculture/Foreshore Licence Application
Sites	T32-028
Site Area (Ha)	146.79
Species	Native seaweeds
Cultivation Method	Rope longlines
Intertidal/Non-Intertidal	Sub-tidal
Source of seed	Irish Hatchery
Annual Production Estimates	3901Tonnes (Year 5)
Shellfish Waters Designation Reference:	Yes ☐ No ☒
Environmental Designation Reference:	Yes ☐ No ☒
Development Plans Reference:	Yes ☒ No ☐ Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 Objectives: CPO 9.50; CPO 19.3
Pre-Consultation Meeting	Yes ☐ No ☒

Drawing Validation Sheet

OSI Maps **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Comment: 6” scale maps prepared by GIS Mapping Section.

BA Chart **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Comment: BA Charts prepared by GIS Mapping Section.

Farm Layout Drawing **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐

Directional Arrow	Yes	☐	No	☒
Scale	Yes	☒	No	☐
Title Block	Yes	☒	No	☐
Date	Yes	☒	No	☐

Comment: Drawings submitted are suitable.

Drawings of structures **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Comment: Drawings submitted are suitable.

Details of Proposed Navigation Marking **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Comment: Drawings Submitted.

Site Access Indicated **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Comment: Site access map is suitable.

Site Co-Ordinates Indicated **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Comment:

Site Overlap **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒
Comment:

Oyster Fishery Order Overlap **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒
Comment:

☒ **The application is submitted with each of the requirements listed and is therefore deemed to be a valid application.**

☐ **AFMD should be aware that insufficient details have been submitted as per above.**

Site Suitability Assessment

Site Location
The site is located north of Arklow Harbour off the coast of Wicklow in the Irish Sea. The site location maps provided are suitable for advertising. Aquaculture is limited on this section of coast, with a licenced site 8.5km away to the south of Arklow Harbour.

Site Management
This application is for new aquaculture activity in Arklow Bay, Co. Wicklow. Access is by boat from Arklow Harbour. This applicant proposes to cultivate native seaweeds sourced from an Irish hatchery on a site 146.79Ha in size. It is expected to produce 3901 Tonnes of biomass from the site by year 5.

Proposed Site Layout and Structures
The proposed aquaculture site has been configured to maintain the site within the red sector of the Arklow light and in line with the coastline. The application proposes 248 No. x 180.25m longlines with a spacing of 20m between adjacent longlines and 89m between blocks of longlines. Moorings will be a screw-in type anchor. Droppers will be placed such that there is a 2m clearance to the seabed which suggests droppers varying from 5 to 10m in depth depending on available depth across the site. The drawings indicate an adequate buffer between the moorings and the end boundaries of the site. The applicant proposes navigation markers around the perimeter of the site.

Land Based Facilities / Site Access
The operator proposes to access the site using a boat from Arklow Harbour located 4.5km to the south. Details of the access route were included with the application. This access drawing should be included in any licence, if issued.

Navigation
This site may affect navigation for small inshore vessels along this section of coast. The site is located in the “Red” sector of the Arklow light and as such is not on the main navigation channel into Arklow and should not have a significant impact on commercial traffic operating on or inside the Arklow Bank approximately 9 kilometres away to the east of the site. The proposed navigational marking scheme should be approved by CIL.

Visual Impact
The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 indicates there are scenic routes surrounding Arklow Bay. The CDP indicates View 23 of Special Amenity Value or Special Interest and Prospect 31 of Special Amenity Value or Special Interest to the northwest of this site. There are no extensive or significant views of this site from scenic routes.

The types of structures proposed adhere to the best practices outlined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Marine Aquaculture, 2001. There are a number of beaches along this section of coast, but the visual impact is not significant.

Impact / Cumulative Impact
There has been licensed aquaculture activity in Arklow Bay in recent years. There is tourism, fishing, commercial port activities and marine leisure in the area. Aquaculture operations should not interfere with these amenities.

Marine Engineering Division has no objection to the licencing of this site.