

ORIEL WIND FARM PROJECT

Environmental Impact Assessment Report Chapter 6: Consultation

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6 CONSULTATION

6.1 Introduction

Throughout the development of the Oriel Wind Farm Project (hereafter referred to as 'the Project') and as part of the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), an extensive stakeholder consultation process was undertaken. This included public consultation events and engagement with key statutory and non-statutory stakeholders. The core purpose of the consultation was to provide the public and stakeholders with information on the Project and to obtain information to inform the development of the Project and the EIAR.

This chapter provides a summary of the public consultation undertaken for the Project (see section 6.4), consultation undertaken during the EIA process (see section 6.6) including consultation on potential transboundary issues (see section 6.6.1) and details on the pre-application consultation (see section 6.7). A list of organisations consulted is also provided (see Table 6-2) and details on how the information and feedback provided have informed the Project is provided in section 6.8. Information on the consultation process on submission of the application is set out in section 6.9.

Appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report provides details on the public engagement that has been undertaken for the Project including the approach, details of the events and a summary of the issues raised during public engagement. Details on engagement with fisheries groups is also outlined in this report.

6.2 Project background

The Project was one of the first offshore wind projects in Ireland to be planned. Initial studies for the Project were undertaken in 2006 and 2007 and an application was made to the then Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources for a Foreshore Lease under the Foreshore Act. In advance of this application, the project team engaged in a sustained and proactive community consultation, which included contacting 360 local groups. In addition to this over 90 individual meetings were held between the Project team, local groups, residents and other interested parties. To broaden consultation, a project information office in the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) was established for the duration of the consultation period (this office has now reopened and is in place for meetings). During this period, the project team also communicated the nature of the Project through the local and regional media and held a public forum in Blackrock. A draft foreshore lease with a draft conditional offer letter was issued for the Project in 2010. This draft offer required certain financial and technical assurances to be met including all agreements for the grid connection.

Following the issuance of the draft lease in 2010, the subsequent recession and the resulting reduction in energy demand led to the Project being temporarily put on hold. Faced with the increased challenge of meeting our climate change objectives and the significant reduction in the cost of technology, offshore wind subsequently re-emerged as an important element of Ireland's future energy policy; therefore in 2018 the Project development recommenced along with public consultation as outlined in this chapter.

6.3 Approach to consultation

The consultation on the Project has sought to ensure that the requirements under Irish law and the Aarhus Convention have been met and exceeded. The process has ensured that clear, factual information has been made available to all and that an open and transparent approach has been undertaken at all times. The consultation used a number of engagement methods both online and in person events and has advertised the consultation through email, public participation networks, online media, regional newspapers and posted leaflets to local residents. A local project office was opened in DkIT in December 2020 and remains in place for consultation meetings and engagement as required. All the above methods have sought to ensure that all interested persons have had access to the information necessary and opportunity to engage with the project team. All observations made were responded to within an appropriate timeframe and considered by the team in the project design.

6.4 Public consultation

In tandem with the recommencement of the Project, the project team continued consultation with the public and other stakeholders. A Community Liaison Officer was appointed to the Project in 2018 (see section 6.4.4) and a Fisheries Liaison Officer was also appointed (see section 6.5.1). These officers met and consulted with relevant stakeholders to understand any concerns that could inform the evolving Project. In addition, a project website (www.orielwindfarm.ie) was set up in October 2019, which provides detail of all the up-to-date project information. More recently, two focussed public consultation events were undertaken for the Project, the first in 2021 and the second in 2023.

The 2021 consultation took place from 18 January to 19 February and was advertised extensively in local media. To control the spread of Covid-19, restrictions in Ireland were introduced in March 2020. Although a public exhibition was considered, it was soon recognised as unfeasible due to the uncertain nature of restrictions on public gatherings. Therefore, online solutions were identified which allowed the display of project information and engagement with members of the public. For those without access to the internet, a phone line was advertised in local media as a point of contact to enable questions to be asked and discussions to be held on the Project.

The 2023 consultation took place from 11 January to 20 February and, similar to the 2021 consultation, it was advertised extensively in local media. Key elements of the consultation included face to face public consultation events, an online virtual exhibition and a public online webinar.

Overall, both the 2021 and 2023 consultations achieved their intended goals of increasing awareness of the Project and seeking feedback from the public regarding the Project.

The following sections describe the key public consultation events in 2021 and 2023 in further detail.

6.4.1 Online exhibition

An online exhibition of the Project was hosted on the Project website (<https://www.orielwindfarm.ie/>) during the consultation periods in January and February 2021 and 2023, which provided the most up to date project information. The project website includes the consultation panels displayed during the Public Consultation 2023. The online exhibitions were made available to members of the public which included all stakeholders. The online exhibition utilised technology to allow people to access a detailed level of information about the Project including a virtual walk-through of the online site. A photomontage viewer showing visual representations of the Project from various locations was also made available during the 2021 and 2023 online exhibition. The photomontages displayed during the 2023 online exhibitions are available on the Project website. During the 2023 consultation phase, there were more than 500 visits to the online exhibition.

6.4.2 Face to face public consultation events 2023

Face-to-face public consultation events were held in 2023:

- 24 to 25 January - Public consultation in Dundalk, DkIT;
- 31 January - Public consultation in Ardee, Brian Muldoon & Sons; and
- 1 February - Public consultation in Kilkeel, Kilmorey Arms Hotel

Information panel displays were prepared which were used for the public consultation events, these were similar to those presented on the online virtual exhibition. The panels included information on the Project including updates from previous consultations, details of the onshore and offshore project proposals, survey activity and research, local and national benefits, information on the planning process and a panel demonstrating how earlier feedback was considered including information on key issues raised. In addition, the project photomontages were displayed. Further details of these public consultation events are included in appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report.

6.4.3 Public online webinar (2021 and 2023)

An online public webinar was held on 10 February 2021, 260 people registered for this event, including several public representatives. The online public webinar included a presentation lasting 35 minutes and a 45 to 50-minute-long question and answer session. During this webinar, approximately 70 questions were

submitted, many of which were responded to during the event, those that were not responded to were followed up to the questioner by email and addressed through an updated Frequently Asked Questions made available on the project website. Details of the feedback received and a response is provided in appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report.

A second online public webinar was held on 10 February 2023, using a similar format to 2021, 58 people registering their attendance including several public representatives. The project team gave a presentation lasting 40 minutes which was followed by a 25-minute-long question and answer session to address questions submitted. This presentation included addressing questions from the 2021 webinar. The main issues which were raised during the webinars are detailed in appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report.

6.4.4 Community Liaison Officer (CLO)

A Community Liaison Officer was appointed to the project in 2018, with the role of engaging with members of the local community and acting as a contact point for any group or individual with questions about the project. Covid restrictions reformed the role slightly as the usual face-to-face meetings were replaced with emails, phone and zoom calls.

6.4.5 Engagement with public representatives

In addition to their role as representing the public, it was recognised that the public representatives have a key role in communicating the details of the consultation to the public. From the outset, communication with these representatives was prioritised.

In the Republic of Ireland, Local Authority members, TDs (Teachta Dála), Senators, and MEPs (Members of European Parliament) based in Louth were contacted, as well as councillors in the Balbriggan area of Fingal County Council and the Laytown Bettystown area of Meath County Council.

In Northern Ireland, the Newry and Mourne District Council were contacted, as well as local MLAs (Members of the Legislative Assembly) in South Down and the MP for South Down.

6.4.6 Community group meetings

The project team has made itself available to meet virtually or in person with groups who wished to learn more about the project. The civic society groups who were met include:

- Togher Residents Community Group;
- Dundalk Chamber;
- Dunleer Environmental Group;
- Dundalk Sailing Club;
- Skerries Sailing Club;
- Cooley Residents Group; and
- Louth Birdwatch Ireland Group.

All of this engagement allowed the project team to understand and address the key concerns of the local community groups.

6.4.7 Ongoing information provision

In addition to the above-mentioned formal consultation events and meetings the project has made information on the project available throughout the development process. This has included a detailed project website (www.orielwindfarm.ie) where all of the consultation materials are available to view and download.

The project team has provided regular updates on the Project through the Louth Public Participation Network (PPN), newsletters issued regularly to parties who registered their interest in staying up to date on the project. Regular press releases and advertising campaigns were also used to provide information on key stages of the Project.

6.4.8 Issues raised and addressed from the public consultation

The consultation reached its intended goals of increasing awareness of the Project and seeking feedback from the public regarding the Project. As part of the engagement, the project team received a lot of positive comment about the Project and its environmental benefits. There was also significant interest in the local community benefit scheme and the use of local ports for operation and maintenance.

The responses received through the website, one-to-one meetings, group meetings and at the public webinar are detailed in chapter 8 of appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report. A summary of the issues raised and where these issues are addressed in the EIAR, is outlined in Table 6-1 below.

Table 6-1: Summary of key public consultation issues related to the EIAR.

Issues / concerns raised	Addressed in EIAR chapter:
Concerns about EMF impacts.	Volume 2C, chapter 18: Population and Human Health
Will jobs be created, local engineering opportunities and opportunities for lesser-skilled employees?	Volume 2C, chapter 18: Population and Human Health
Questions on how much space the onshore components of the Project will take up.	Volume 2C, chapter 20: Land and Agriculture
Concerns about noise impacts on land.	Volume 2C, chapter 25: Noise (Airborne) and Vibration
Will access to homes be maintained during onshore construction?	Volume 2C, chapter 20: Land and Agriculture Volume 2C, chapter 28: Traffic and Transport
Will there be waste from construction of underground cables?	Volume 2C, chapter 30: Resource and Waste Management
Will there be impacts on water quality?	Volume 2B, chapter 7: Marine Processes Volume 2B, chapter 16: Infrastructure, Marine Recreation and Other Users Volume 2C, chapter 22: Hydrology and Flood Risk
Will there be impacts on birds?	Volume 2B, chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology Volume 2C, chapter 19: Onshore Biodiversity
Will there be impacts on fishing, fishing industry and inshore fishermen during construction and operation?	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries
Will fishing boats be displaced due to the choice of port?	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries
Will there be impacts on fish stocks?	Volume 2B, chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish Ecology
Will there impacts from noise and vibration on shellfish?	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries
Will there be a fishing exclusion zone?	
Will there be noise impacts on sea animals?	Volume 2B, chapter 10: Marine Mammals and Megafauna
How will key heritage aspects along the cable route be mapped?	Volume 2C, chapter 26: Cultural Heritage
How will you consider impact of future projects in relation to seascape, landscape and visual amenity?	Volume 2C, chapter 27: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity
Will there be access to the public walkway along N33?	Volume 2C, chapter 28: Traffic and Transport
Can shadow flicker occur from the offshore turbines?	Volume 2C, chapter 27: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity
What is the distance of turbines from shore?	Volume 2A, chapter 5: Project Description Volume 2C, chapter 27: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity
What is the carbon footprint of the Project?	Volume 2C, chapter 17: Climate

Issues / concerns raised	Addressed in EIAR chapter:
Questions on the turbine colour and impacts on landscape. What type of lighting system will be used for the project?	Volume 2C, chapter 27: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity Description
Questions regarding the Project including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions regarding the heights of turbines; • Types of foundations and water depth the turbines are to be installed in; • Cable burial depth (onshore and offshore); and • Metres of cable expected to be laid per day. 	Volume 2A, chapter 5: Project Description provides a description of the proposed onshore and offshore infrastructure.

6.4.9 Conclusions and commitments

The public consultation process has provided useful feedback for the project team. The Project has had the benefit of engaging previously in 2006 and 2007 so there was an awareness of many of the issues. Where relevant, the results of this consultation have been considered in the final design or addressed as part of the EIAR. The project team are determined to address concerns which people have raised and where issues lie (in appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report), to provide mitigation where possible. The project team will continue to meet stakeholders, to use the website and other channels to ensure that the project information is communicated. This engagement will continue throughout the planning process and through the construction phase and operational and maintenance phase.

6.5 Engagement with local fisheries groups

Engagement with fishing organisations was undertaken initially as part of activity associated with the original Foreshore Lease Application. Since the reactivation of the Project, there has been ongoing engagement with representatives of commercial fishing organisations active in the area. Key organisations include:

- Dunany Lobster and Crab Association;
- Clogherhead Fisherman’s Association;
- Clogherhead Fish Co-Op;
- Anglo Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation (ANIFPO);
- Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation (NIFPO);
- Dundalk Bay Razor Fisherman’s Organisation;
- Individual inshore fishers not aligned to any organisation;
- Sea fisheries protection authority; and
- Bord Iascaigh Mhara.

The main fishing activity in the area is static pot fishing for lobster and crab with very occasional Nephrops fishing in a small part of the site. Extensive engagement with all of these organisations and with groups representing the fishers that are active around the offshore wind farm area and offshore cable corridor has been undertaken. These groups include:

- Dunany Lobster and Crab Association;
- ANIFPO;
- NIFPO; and
- Individual fishers not aligned to any organisation.

6.5.1 Fisheries Liaison Officer

Due to the importance of the fisheries sector as a stakeholder in the Project, a senior member of the project team was appointed as the Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO), with the assistance of marine science specialists from Bluewise Marine Ltd. During survey activities, a well-regarded local fisher from ANIFPO in Kilkeel was appointed as the offshore FLO. The FLO was successful in ensuring that fishers in the area were well-informed of the project activities and were easily able to engage with the project team. This approach will be maintained for any future offshore survey activities.

It was key for the project team to foster good relations and to encourage a sustainable way of co-existence with the fishing industry active in the offshore wind farm area. As part of this strategy, a number of commitments were made:

- Clear communication lines will be established with the fishing associations in order to facilitate the mutual sharing of information;
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the activities of the fishing community;
- Identify all project activities which could potentially impact on existing fishing;
- Clear arrangements need to be made with the fishing associations to enable and facilitate each other's activities on site;
- Partnerships with the fishermen through fishing associations are encouraged and their services will be engaged where possible;
- Establishment of the Oriel Fisheries Fund, managed and administered by SECAD Partnership, to show the Project's commitment to making a positive contribution to the local fishing communities (further information is provided in chapter 7 of appendix 6-1: Public and Other Stakeholders Consultation Report.).

6.5.2 National Seafood Offshore Renewable Energy Forum

The Applicant is participating in the National Seafood Offshore Renewable Energy Forum as part of its membership in Industry Associations and is committed to adhering to the principles of engagement agreed by this forum. As part of the agreed engagement approach, the Applicant have written to the following list of organisations on two occasions offering to meet to discuss the Project:

- IFA Aquaculture;
- Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association (IFPEA);
- Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO);
- Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO);
- Irish Seafood Producers Group (ISPG) (Aquaculture);
- Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation (ISWFPO);
- Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation (ISEFPO);
- Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO);
- National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA);
- National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF);
- Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum – North (NRIFF);
- Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum – North East (NERIFF);
- Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum – North West (NWRIFF);
- Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum – South East (SERIFF);
- Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum – South West (SWRIFF);
- Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum – West (WRIFF);

- Anglo North Irish Fish Producers Organisation (ANIFPO);
- Northern Irish Fish Producers Organisation (NIFPO);
- North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC);
- Pelagic Advisory Council (PAC); and
- Bottom Grown Mussel Consultative Forum (BGMCF).

While no meetings have been requested to date, the Applicant will continue to inform these organisations of any developments as the Project progresses.

6.6 EIA consultation

Consultation was undertaken with stakeholders at the EIA scoping stage. This included issuing the EIA Scoping Report (RPS, 2019) with a request for feedback on the proposed content of the EIAR and on the proposed assessment methodologies.

EIA scoping seeks to identify the aspects of the environment where there is an interaction (either direct or indirect, positive, or negative) with a proposal and the potential effects, which need to be assessed. This enables the appropriate level of detail to be provided to specific areas of the EIAR, ensuring the assessment of the significant effects of the proposed development is appropriate.

The responses received have been considered as part of the topic assessments of the EIAR in chapters 7 to 31 (see section titled ‘Consultation’ in each chapter). Where matters relevant to the chapter topic were raised these are summarised and a response is provided to where the issue raised is addressed in that specific chapter.

During preparation of the EIAR, consultation continued with key stakeholders to obtain feedback on the Project and ensure the most up to date datasets were available to inform the baseline environment. Consultation which included providing a project update was undertaken with key bodies between 2021 and 2024, details of which are provided in Table 6-2.

Table 6-2 provides details on the organisations and when they were consulted with during the preparation of the EIAR. Where feedback was provided, an EIAR reference to where this feedback is addressed is also provided.

Table 6-2: List of organisations (listed in alphabetical order) contacted and details on feedback.

Stakeholder	When consulted	Where feedback is summarised and addressed within the EIAR:
2RN	2019, 2020, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Airspeed	2019	No feedback provided.
An Taisce	2019	No feedback provided.
Anglo Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation (ANIFPO)	2019, 2020, 2022, 2024	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries.
Arqiva	2019	No feedback provided
Atkins Global	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Bat Conservation Ireland	2019	No feedback provided
Belfast City Airport	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Belfast International Airport	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
BirdWatch Ireland	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology; volume 2C, chapter 19: Onshore Biodiversity.
Irish Brent Goose Research Group (IBGRG)	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology; volume 2C, chapter 19: Onshore Biodiversity.
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	2019	No feedback provided.

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Stakeholder	When consulted	Where feedback is summarised and addressed within the EIAR:
BT	2019	No feedback provided.
Carlingford Lough Commissioners	2019	No feedback provided.
Carlingford Lough Yacht Club	2021	Volume 2B, chapter 16: Infrastructure, Marine Recreation and Other Users.
Carlingford Sailing Club	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 16: Infrastructure, Marine Recreation and Other Users.
Celtic Adventures Ltd.	2021	Volume 2B, chapter 16: Infrastructure, Marine Recreation and Other Users.
Canadian Helicopters Corporation (CHC) (Helicopter provider)	2019	No feedback provided.
Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) (UK)	2019	No feedback provided.
Clogherhead Fisherman's Association	2019	No feedback provided.
Clogherhead Fishing Co-operative	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries.
Commission for Regulation of Utilities	2019	No feedback provided.
Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL)	2019, 2021, 2022, 2023	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation.
ComReg	2019	No feedback provided.
Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ)	2019, 2024	CIÉ consulted regarding requirement to cross under the Dublin-Belfast railway line.
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 8: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology
Department of Defence (DoD)	2019, 2022, 2023	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Department of Regional Development, Ports and Public Transport Division (Northern Ireland (NI))	2019	No feedback provided.
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	2019	No feedback provided.
Marine Survey Office of the Department of Transport	2019	No feedback provided.
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	2019	No feedback provided.
Drogheda Harbour	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation.
Drogheda Port	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation.
Dublin Airport Authority (DAA)	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Dunany Lobster and Crab (Seafood supplier)	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries.
Dundalk Port Company	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation.
Dundalk Sub Aqua Club	2021	No feedback provided.
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	2023	No feedback provided
eir	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Eircom	2019	No feedback provided.

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Stakeholder	When consulted	Where feedback is summarised and addressed within the EIAR:
EirGrid	2019	No feedback provided.
Environmental Protection Agency	2019, 2024	Volume 2C, chapter 8: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology
Ericsson	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Electricity Supply Board (ESB)	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
ESB Networks	2019	No feedback provided.
Fáilte Ireland	2019	Volume 2C, chapter 18: Population and Human Health.
Fingal County Council	2019	No feedback provided.
Gas Networks Ireland (GNI)	2019, 2022	Volume 2C, chapter 29: Material Assets.
Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)	2019, 2022, 2023	Volume 2C, chapter 21: Soil, Geology and Hydrogeology (and see Table 6-7)
Greenore Port	2019, 2022, 2023	No feedback provided.
Health and Safety Authority	2019	No feedback provided.
Health Service Executive	2019	No feedback provided.
Heritage Council	2019	No feedback provided.
Imagine Group	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Industrial Development Authority of Ireland	2019	No feedback provided.
Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapters 9 and 12 (Fish and Shellfish Ecology; Commercial Fisheries).
Irish Powered Paragliding and Hang Gliding Association (IPPHA)	2019	No feedback provided.
Irish Aviation Authority (IAA)	2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Irish Coast Guard (IRCG)	2019, 2021, 2022, 2024	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation; volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Irish Cruising Association	2021	No feedback provided.
Irish Cruising Club	2021	No feedback provided.
Irish Environment Network	2019	No feedback provided.
Irish Fish Producer's Organisation (IFPO)	2024	No feedback provided.
Irish Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (IHPA)	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail)	2019, 2020	Volume 2C, chapter 29: Material Assets.
Irish Sailing	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 16: Infrastructure, Marine Recreation and Other Users.
Irish Water (IW) (Uisce Éireann)	2019, 2022	Volume 2C, chapter 22: Hydrology and Flood Risk
Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG)	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 10: Marine Mammals and Megafauna.

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Stakeholder	When consulted	Where feedback is summarised and addressed within the EIAR:
Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology.
Joint Research Centre (European Commission) (JRC)	2019	No feedback provided.
Local Bird Watch	2019	No feedback provided.
Louth County Council	2019, 2021, 2022	Chapter 2: Policy and Legislation; volume 2C, chapter 26: Cultural Heritage; volume 2C, chapter 27: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity.
Marine Institute	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 8: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology; chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology
Marine Protected Area Management and Monitoring (MarPAMM)	2019	No feedback provided.
Marine Survey Office (MSO)	2019, 2021, 2022, 2023	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation.
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA)	2023	No feedback provided.
Meath County Council	2019	No feedback provided
Meteor	2019	No feedback provided.
Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine	2019, 2023	No feedback provided
Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	2019	No feedback provided.
Minister for Defence	2023	No feedback provided
Minister for Foreign Affairs	2023	No feedback provided
Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage	2023	No feedback provided
Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government	2019	No feedback provided.
Minister for Rural and Community Development	2023	No feedback provided
Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications	2023	No feedback provided
Minister for Transport	2023	No feedback provided
Ministry of Defence (MoD) (UK)	2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
National Monuments Service (NMS) (and Underwater Archaeology Unit)	2019, 2020, 2021, 2023	Volume 2B, chapter 15: Marine Archaeology; volume 2C, chapter 26: Cultural Heritage.
National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)	2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023	Volume 2B, chapters: 8 to 11 (Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology; Fish and Shellfish Ecology; Marine Mammals and Megafauna; Offshore Ornithology); volume 2C, chapter 19: Onshore Biodiversity.
National Transport Authority	2019	No feedback provided.
National Air Traffic Services (NATS)	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Netshare	2019	No feedback provided.
Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation (NIFPO)	2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries.
ObSERVE	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology.

Stakeholder	When consulted	Where feedback is summarised and addressed within the EIAR:
Ofcom (UK)	2019	No feedback provided.
Office of Public Works	2019	No feedback provided.
Ronaldsway Airport	2024	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Royal National Lifeboat Institution	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 13: Shipping and Navigation.
Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries.
Sea Watch Foundation (UK)	2019	No feedback provided.
Skerries Sailing Club	2021	Volume 2B, chapter 16: Infrastructure, Marine Recreation and Other Users.
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)	2019	No feedback provided.
TETRA Ireland	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon	2019	No feedback provided.
The Irish Tourist Industry Confederation	2019	No feedback provided.
Loughs Agency	2019, 2023	Volume 2B, chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish Ecology.
Three (Ireland)	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	2019, 2023	Volume 2C, chapter 28: Traffic and Transport (and see Table 6-7).
UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme	2019	Volume 2B, chapter 10: Marine Mammals and Megafauna.
Viatel	2019	No feedback provided.
Vodafone	2019, 2021	Volume 2B, chapter 14: Aviation, Military and Communications.
Warrenpoint Harbour Authority	2019 to 2023	No feedback provided.
Westmeath County Council – Westmeath National Roads Office	2020	No feedback provided.
Weston Airport	2019	No feedback provided.

6.6.1 Consultation on transboundary issues

As part of EIA scoping, consultation was undertaken with the departments and ministries in Northern Ireland, Great Britain (Scotland, England and Wales) and the Isle of Man regarding the potential for the transboundary impacts from the Project (see Table 6-3). As outlined in Table 6-2, many other organisations in these jurisdictions were contacted also, but the focus of the consultation was topic specific (e.g. airports were contacted regarding the assessment on aviation, communications providers were contacted regarding assessment on communications).

Table 6-3: Ministries and departments contacted regarding potential for transboundary impacts.

Country	Ministry / representative	Feedback provided?
Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) (consulted 2019 and 2023). Department for Infrastructure (consulted in 2023). Loughs Agency (consulted in 2019 and 2023). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback provided by DAERA in 2019 and 2023. Feedback provided by the Loughs Agency in 2023.
Great Britain (Scotland, Wales and England)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (consulted in 2023). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No feedback provided.
Isle of Man	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (consulted in 2019, 2023); and Department of Infrastructure (consulted in 2023). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback provided by the Department of Infrastructure in 2023.

A summary of the key issues raised by the ministries and departments that returned feedback regarding potential for transboundary impacts is included in Table 6-4 along with details on where the issues are addressed in the EIAR.

Table 6-4: Summary of key issues raised during consultation with transboundary ministries and departments.

Comments or issues raised:	Addressed in EIAR chapter:
DAERA	
The transboundary environmental effects should be fully considered across the relevant marine area within Northern Ireland, focusing on designated Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and their associated features (marine mammals, ornithology etc.)	The potential for transboundary environmental effects are addressed in volume 2B, chapter 8: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology, chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish, chapter 10: Marine Mammals and Megafauna and chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology
Recommend that consideration is given to how litter from the development will be managed to prevent this entering the marine environment.	Volume 2A, appendix 5-2: Environmental Management Plan includes controls for marine litter.
A number of recommendations were made with regard to the content and scope of the assessment on landscape.	These recommendations have been considered in chapter 27: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Amenity (volume 2C)
Consideration to be given to Northern Ireland Marine policies.	Northern Ireland marine policies are considered in chapter 2: Policy and Legislation (volume 2A).
Potential for impacts on the NI fishing industry to be examined.	This is addressed in chapter 12: Commercial Fisheries (volume 2B).
Potential for impacts from Electro-magnetic fields created from the transmission cables on migratory fish.	This is addressed in chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish (volume 2B).
Loughs Agency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validity of data and consideration of climate change; Consideration of surveys to support the knowledge gap; Consequences of climate change; Suggested modelling of receptor effects and their interactions; Consideration of quantitative assessments; and Value of fish be given weighting. 	These issues are addressed in chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish (Volume 2B).

Comments or issues raised:	Addressed in EIAR chapter:
Isle of Man – Department of Infrastructure	
The transboundary and cumulative environmental effects should be considered for habitats and species found within Isle of Man waters.	The potential for transboundary environmental effects are addressed in volume 2B, chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish, chapter 10: Marine Mammals and Megafauna and chapter 11: Offshore Ornithology
Consider if the turbine blades will be visible to our PSR (primary surveillance radar) at Ronaldsway Airport.	The potential for impact on Ronaldsway Airport PSR is included in chapter 14: Aviation, Military, and Communications.
Will the wind farm have the potential to disrupt hydrological patterns and sediment transport	This is addressed in chapter 7: Marine Processes (volume 2B).
Potential effects on <i>Nephrops</i> (note that this comment is in relation to the fishing ground).	The potential impacts of the Project on <i>Nephrops</i> are assessed in chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish (volume 2B).

6.7 Pre-application consultation

6.7.1 An Bord Pleanála

Four pre-application meetings were held with An Bord Pleanála in June, August, November and December 2023. The issues raised, and how they have been addressed either as updates to the EIAR or application documents are provided Table 6-5.

Table 6-5: Summary of relevant issues raised by the Board during pre-application consultation and where they have been addressed in the EIAR.

Topic area	Summary of issues raised by ABP	Response to issue raised and/or where considered in the EIAR
Public access	Will there be restrictions to the public access to the beach at Dunany.	As outlined in chapter 5: Project Description, there will only be restrictions to access during construction of the offshore cable across the beach and for the installation of the Transition Joint Bay. The potential impacts of temporary disruption of public open spaces is considered in chapter 18: Population and Human Health (volume 2C).
Reasons for selection of site	Provide reasons for selection of site and details of how the Project evolved.	Chapter 4: Consideration of Alternatives provides the reasons for the selection of the site and the project infrastructure.
Cumulative impact assessment	Engage with other wind farm developers to inform the cumulative impact assessment.	Cumulative impact assessments are provided for each specialist topic assessment. As outlined in chapter 3: EIA methodology, engagement with the other east coast wind farm projects (that hold a Maritime Area Consent) informed the following cumulative impact assessments: ornithology, marine mammals and megafauna, fish and shellfish, bats and seascape, landscape and visual impact
Consultation	Provide a thorough account of all consultation on the Project and the issues and feedback received.	The details of consultation are set out in this chapter 6: Consultation. A summary of the feedback is provided in this chapter and in the specialist assessment chapters in volumes 2B and 2C.
Data validity	Provide information on data validity	Each of the specialist assessment chapters in volume 2B and 2C provide information on data validity and limitations.
Heritage	Examine potential for heritage issues from Project viewpoints.	An assessment of the potential for the offshore infrastructure to impact on cultural heritage setting features is provided in chapter 26: Cultural Heritage (volume 2C).

Topic area	Summary of issues raised by ABP	Response to issue raised and/or where considered in the EIAR
Herring spawning	Examine potential for any impacts on feeding areas and interactions with preying or preyed species for herring and associated spawning grounds.	The potential for impact on herring spawning is provided in chapter 9: Fish and Shellfish and a supporting technical report in appendix 9-2: Herring Technical Report. Assessment of impacts on prey species are examined in Chapter 10: marine Mammals and Megafauna and chapter 11: Ornithology.
NMPF	Assess NMPF in relation to the Project.	Chapter 7-31 of the EIAR examine the relevant policies from the NMPF for each specialist topic. The planning report also includes as an Appendix A, a NMPF compliance, which examines the relevant NMPF policies.
Project description	Provide detail in the EIAR on the activities that would take place if obstacles are encountered when installing the inter-array and export cable routes. Also provide information on the installation of WTG foundations.	Chapter 5: Project Description provides information on both these activities. Further information on construction of foundations is provided in appendix 5-11: Supporting Information Demonstrating the Applicant's Experience on Other Offshore Wind Farm Projects
Wake effects	Provide details on potential for impacts caused by wake effects in the marine environment	Details are provided in chapter 7: Marine Processes.

6.7.2 Louth County Council

Seven pre-application meetings were held with different sections of Louth County Council in July 2019, Nov 2019, March 2020, December 2020, February 2022, September 2023 and January 2024. These informed the relevant sections on the development of the Project and enabled issues to be discussed. The issues raised, and how they have been addressed either as updates to the EIAR or application documents are provided Table 6-5.

Table 6-6: Summary of relevant issues raised by Louth Co. Co. during pre-application consultation and where they have been addressed in the EIAR.

Topic area	Summary of issues raised by Louth County Council	Response to issue raised and/or where considered in the EIAR
Traffic	The land acquisition proposals for the passing bays; Reinstatement of roads; LCC to review the Construction Traffic Management Plan prior to submission of the planning application and provide comments.	See chapter 28: Traffic and Transport (volume 2C) and appendix 5-9: Construction Traffic Management Plan (volume 2A).
Ports	Which ports were under consideration for the operational and maintenance of the Project.	See chapter 5: Project Description (volume 2A)
Employment	What local and regional employment will be created by the Project.	See chapter 5: Project Description (volume 2A) and chapter 18: Population and Human Health (volume 2C)

6.8 How feedback informed the Project

All feedback received during consultation has been reviewed by the project team.

Much of the feedback and issues raised relate to the assessment of the Project and how it may impact on the community and the environment and what measures will be put in place to minimise/avoid impacts. As

such the feedback and issues raised have informed decision making by providing knowledge to the project team, which has been used to inform the EIAR and the specialist impact assessments (see Table 6-2). Table 6-7 presents details on the specific feedback that has informed the design of the Project.

Table 6-7: Details on feedback that informed the design of the Project.

Consultee	Summary of feedback	Changes made to Project	Reference
TII	TII requested that the onshore cable along the N33 be installed within the grass verge.	The route of the onshore cable was amended to instal the cable in the grass verge instead of the hard shoulder.	See chapter 5: Project Description for details on the onshore cable route.
GSI	GSI requested that the construction of the Transition Joint Bay (TJB) consider the potential to damage and increase erosion at the Dunany Point County Geological Site (CGS).	The location of the TJB option 1 and the construction methodologies for both TJB option 1 and 2 were developed to reduce impact on the CGS.	See chapter 5: Project Description for details on the TJB construction.
Public	Concerns raised about the potential visual impact of the project.	The updated design of the Project reduced the number of turbines from 55 to 25 and the minimum distance to shore was increased by approximately 20%.	See chapter 4: Considerations of Alternatives.

6.9 Ongoing and statutory consultation

The Project website, www.orielwindfarm.ie remains in place to provide updated information on the Project including an option to receive regular email updates, and details of alternative ways to engage on the Project.

An Bord Pleanála will conduct a statutory public consultation on the planning application, where the public can make submissions on the application, for consideration by An Bord Pleanála as part of the decision-making process.

On lodgement of the application, a standalone website www.orielwindfarm-marineplanning.ie will be available for download of all application documents.

References

RPS (2019) Oriel Wind Farm Project EIA Scoping Report. Available at: <https://www.orielwindfarm.ie/project-information-1>