

Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site

Environmental Screening Report: Addendum I

November 2015

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENTS	3
2.1.	APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING	3
2.2.	LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT.....	4
2.3.	MARINE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT	4
3.	CONSULTATION RESPONSE	5

1. Introduction

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) in association with the Marine Institute (MI) established the ¼ scale wave energy test site for prototype wave energy converters (WECs) in Galway Bay in 2006.

The Marine Institute was granted a foreshore lease (SJM/10380/2005) by the then Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources in 2006 for an area of foreshore off the Spiddal coast in Galway Bay.

The Marine Institute now intend to apply for a new foreshore lease to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government for a period of 35 years for the same area of foreshore.

The purpose of the lease application for the Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site is to allow for the upgrade of the current site infrastructure and the deployment of a wider range of renewable energy devices and novel marine sensors and technologies.

Included in this addendum to the original Environmental Screening Report are details of the various assessments being undertaken in support of the foreshore lease application to supplement the existing baseline data already detailed in the Environmental Screening Report.

2. Additional Assessments

2.1. Appropriate Assessment Screening

Although the proposed Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site is not located within any designated, nor protected, sites under EU or Irish legislation an Appropriate Assessment Stage 1 screening report has been prepared in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service which presents details of the analysis of any potential effects on the designated and protected sites arising from the development of the proposed Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site.

The nearest designated and protected sites to the proposed Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site are the Black Head – Poulsallagh SAC site located approximately 7.5km to the south, the Galway Bay Complex site and the Inner Galway Bay site both located approximately

9km to the east of the proposed Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site. The designations of the aforementioned sites are detailed below (Table 1).

Designated Area	Site Code	SAC	NHA	SPA
Black Head – Poulsallagh	IE000020	Yes	Yes	
Galway Bay Complex	IE000268	Yes	Yes	
Inner Galway Bay	IE004031			Yes

Table 1: Designated Protected Areas

2.2. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

In developing and upgrading the Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site the Marine Institute propose to install specific infrastructure at the site to improve the service offered to end-users. While most of the proposed wave energy devices will have a shallow draft and a low profile above the waterline, two proposed devices (floating wind turbine & SeaStation) may have the potential to intrude on the visual landscape.

The floating wind turbine would be expected to be approximately 20 – 25m high with 6-7m radius blades. It is envisaged that a floating wind turbine would only be deployed on site for a period of weeks, rather than months as would be the case for wave energy devices.

The SeaStation platform would take the form of a vessel or barge and be permanently stationed at the Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment study will assess the cumulative impacts of devices on the site and propose mitigation measures to minimise any potential impacts.

2.3. Marine Archaeological Assessment

The assessment comprises of a desktop assessment of background historical and archaeological data relating to the site and assessment of third party acquired marine geophysical data. It provides an overview of the site data and the proposed test site operations. It also outlines the potential impact of the proposed development on the receiving environment and suggests measures to mitigate any impact.

3. Consultation Response

All responses should be sent directly Mr Alan Berry at the following address:

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