

Dear Pat

Many thanks for your note on the updates to the application. Our current comments in support of the site still stand.

Kind regards

Patricia

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From: Pat O'Neill - (DECLG) [<mailto:Pat.ONeill@environ.ie>]

Sent: 06 April 2016 11:37

To: Tara Higgins; KENNEDY Tom; O'Brien, Grainne (obrien@bim.ie); catherine.madden@defence.ie; david.fitzgerald@met.ie; lkavanagh@cer.ie; Dermot O'Callaghan (dermot_ocallaghan@hsa.ie); Comiskey Patricia; BKelly@heritagecouncil.ie

Subject: Marine Institute- Galway Bay Marine Renewable Energy Test Site - File ref. FS 006566

Dear Addressee,

Thank you for your respective observations/comments on this application which were received recently and have been noted.

Please find attached a revised application form submitted by the applicant. The only change (other than the date) is in Item number 25.

In the original application form the heights of the wind turbine blades and wave energy converters were 60m and 30m, respectively above UKHO Admiralty Chart Datum.

In the revised application form the heights of the turbine blades and wave energy converters are 35m and 5m respectively and these heights are relative to sea level.

For purposes of clarity, please confirm if the above changes your observations or if your initial comments still stand.

Regards

Pat

31st of March 2016

Dear Pat

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the recent submission from the Marine Institute for a foreshore application in respect of the Galway Bay Test Site for prototype wind, wave and tidal devices.

As noted in the submission SEAI is a significant supporter of the Galway Bay Test Site and the Ocean Energy Team within SEAI work *'hand in glove'* with the OSIS team in Marine Institute to ensure the site is appropriately supported, managed and developed in line with requirements under the current lease.

The Galway Bay Test Site forms an integral part of the testing infrastructure in Ireland. It is the midway point between the test tanks in Lir the National Ocean Test facility in UCC Cork and the Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site (AMETS) which is an extreme open ocean test site in Mayo. It is unique in its offerings to the ocean energy sector in that it provides testing opportunities in wave conditions which are quarter scale of the open Atlantic Ocean and for many technologies provides the first step into real sea testing conditions for scaled down versions of emerging technology.

Given that the site is a testing facility the deployments tend to be significantly smaller than the final planned commercial product (generally quarter to half scale) and the deployment times tend to be short-term (maximum 18 months). Deployments are closely monitored while at sea to assess operational aspects of the technology as well as any potential impacts on the environment.

In the last ten years the site has provided suitable testing conditions for a number of wave technologies, including OE buoy which is now progressing its pre-commercial testing in sites in the US. The test site also provides opportunities to marine researchers to collect and observe real time information via the recently laid subsea observatory. The observatory enables the use of cameras, probes and sensors to permit continuous and remote live underwater monitoring.

Currently, financial support for the site is provided via an agreement between SEAI and the Marine Institute. Mechanisms to continue support for the site have been included in the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPP) which was published by the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources in 2014 and provides a plan for the development of the Offshore Renewable Industry to 2030.

The OREDP forecasts that Ireland has the potential to provide up to 6GW of energy from Ocean Energy by 2030, in addition to provision of up to 52,000 jobs and NPV of €10bn to the Irish exchequer. Testing of technologies at sites such as Galway Bay is the key to unlocking this potential.

In short the site is vital to the development of the ocean energy sector within Ireland. It is an integral point on a pathway of appropriately sized and serviced testing sites which ensure that all aspects of technologies and their impacts on the environment can be monitored closely. Therefore we strongly support the ongoing use of this site for testing of ocean energy devices and would request that the current lease be renewed to facilitate vital research and appropriate development of this sector.

Kind regards



Patricia Comiskey

Programme Manager Ocean Energy

SEAI