

Comhairle Contae Chorcaí Cork County Council

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Offshore Wind Grid Development Consultation

Energy Division,

Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

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30th June, 2020

RE: Submission to the Offshore Grid Delivery Model Option Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam,

Cork County Council welcomes the opportunity to make the following submission on the Grid Development Policy for Offshore Wind in Ireland. The consultation document has outlined Ireland's Climate targets towards 2030, to develop a 3.5 GW of offshore wind energy, as set out by the Climate Action Plan (CAP) in June 2019.

The development of our off-shore wind resources is of particular relevance to County Cork as the second longest shoreline of any County in Ireland, including Cork Harbour. Off-shore wind development is also very important to our island and coastal communities, harbour locations and other local indigenous industries operating in the coastal / marine environment including fisheries, aquaculture, marine leisure tourism and tourism generally. In this context Cork is uniquely positioned to play a lead role from both a Marine Spatial Planning perspective and in terms of developing our marine economy, particularly given the effective collaborative relationships enjoyed with State Agencies, the 3rd Level Education Sector and in addition, to close working relationships with the commercial sector and local communities through the Bantry Bay Coastal Zone Charter, and COREPOINT projects and more recently through the IMCORE project.

Cork has a wide range of infrastructural and industry supports available to support the development of the Offshore Wind Energy sector including:

Port facilities

The Port of Cork is the primary sea port in the south of the country. It is one of two ports in Ireland that can facilitate all six shipping modes i.e. Lift-on, lift-off, roll-on, roll-off, liquid-bulk, Dry Bulk and

Cruise, and could facilitate transport and deployment of wind energy devices through its deep water berths.

Cork has other significant ports and harbours at Cobh, Bantry, Castletownbere, Kinsale, Baltimore, Ballycotton, Union Hall, Schull and Youghal. Cork harbour and Castletownbere/ Bere Island port and dry dock facilities also have significant potential to service future on and off shore wind energy. There are also a wide range of experienced engineering service companies within the area.

Expertise and Research facilities

A partnership between the Irish Naval Service (INS), Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and University College Cork (UCC) has developed a maritime research and enterprise campus at Ringaskiddy and created a new entity, Beaufort Research which is specialising in marine energy, shipping logistics, transport, maritime security etc. The renewable energy and maritime courses will provide a specialised skillset for graduates and create a strong workforce in the region to support Cork's Energy industry.

Grid connections

Cork harbour is an international Energy Hub. County Cork has significant infrastructure which is either in place or being developed which will support the development of ocean and off shore wind energy. The proposed Celtic Inter-connector project will link Ireland to France via Youghal in Co. Cork, further strengthening the electricity infrastructure for the region.

Conclusion

Cork County Council is fully supportive of the delivery of off shore wind energy projects, and the required land based supports that will be needed, and as a first mover in the Marine Spatial Planning area would like to continue to contribute to the development of policy in this area.

We hope that you will consider our comments above, and should you have any queries or areas that would benefit from further discussion, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Planning Policy Unit.