

Offshore Wind Grid Development Consultation  
Energy Division  
Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment  
29-31 Adelaide Road  
Dublin 2  
D02 X285

By email: ([offshoreWind@dccae.gov.ie](mailto:offshoreWind@dccae.gov.ie))

22 July 2020

**Re: Offshore Wind Grid Development Consultation**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ibec, the group that represents Irish business, welcomes the opportunity to present its views on the Offshore Wind Grid Development Consultation.

Ibec is the largest business representative organisation in Ireland. We speak for businesses across a range of industrial, commercial, and non-profit sectors. The organisation and its sector associations strive for business conditions that enable sustainable economic growth.

Ibec members recognise the national imperative to transition to a low carbon economy and achieve greater energy security and resilience. Ibec supports the 2019 Climate Action Plan's ambition to deliver a 70% renewable electricity share, and target at least 3.5 GW of offshore wind energy by 2030. Ibec notes that the offshore target has been increased to 5 GW in the new Programme for Government. How we achieve these goals in the smartest and most cost-effective way needs to be a strategic priority for the new Government.

Ibec has reviewed the four models set out in the consultation document and has considered the advantages and disadvantages of each approach. Ibec believes that some variant of the plan-led/developer-build model is the optimum model for Ireland as it will allow for greater coordination, less infrastructure, a greater likelihood of public acceptance, and greater economies of scale. Specifically, the need to coordinate development and linkages of the on-shore and off-shore grids will require the involvement of the System Operators (EirGrid and ESB Networks) in the determination of the overall optimum method(s) and means of connection and in particular the location of the "connection point".

However, because offshore projects can take up to ten years to bring from concept to operation, the adoption of a planned approach now, must not add further delays,

undermine the build-out of live projects, or otherwise prevent Ireland from reaching its 2030 ambition. On the other hand, to deliver all these live projects, and those which are in prospect, requires judicious coordination and assistance. As such, Ibec believes that a variant of the developer-led approach is needed for all these projects - relevant or otherwise- that can contribute to the 2030 ambition.

Ibec believe certain elements of the planned approach could be incorporated in this developer-led approach to ensure greater coordination and reduced environmental impact, without putting the projects at risk. A more plan-led/developer-build approach should be adopted for any projects with a go-live beyond 2030 target.

Ibec notes that Ireland is already off track to meeting its 2030 targets. Therefore, whatever approach is selected, a timely decision is needed to give certainty to the industry, secure investment, progress the build-out of critical enabling infrastructure, and develop the supply chains and services needed to deliver the offshore capacity.

If you have any questions or require more information, please feel free to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]