

Ref: 23686
3rd April 2025

Maritime Area Consenting MARA,
Floor 2,
Menapia House,
Drinagh Business Park,
Drinagh,
Wexford,
Y35 RF29

Re: RFI MUL240042 Application for Site Investigation Surveys at Dognose, Corkbeg, Whitegate, Co. Cork

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to address the queries that came from MARA in an RFI dated 24th February 2025. The contents of this RFI included the following:

1. Clarify the duration of the licence being applied for and the reasons for the proposed duration.
2. Clarify the duration of the various environmental surveys (benthic, intertidal and marine mammal surveys).
3. The application states that there will be 11m³ of drill risings generated per borehole (20 boreholes), which will be dispersed around the drill site as a cuttings pile. Provide detailed information on the content of the drill risings and the potential impact of the drill risings on water quality in particular in terms of dispersion and pollution.
4. In reference to Section 121 of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 and in line with MARA's technical guidance note, provide the following:
 - a. A statement of the project's consistency with the National Marine Planning Framework.
 - b. Consideration and reasoned conclusions in relation to the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC and the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) (having regard to Schedules 5 and 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001).

To clarify these, an Assessment of Impacts on Marine Usage (AIMU) Report has been submitted in response to the RFI, and in line with MARA's technical guidance, with clarification to the requested points addressed and highlighted below:

Directors Peter Fay BSc CEng MIEI MStructE FConsEI | Paul Collins BE CEng MIEI MStructE | John Lee BE HDipSHWW CEng FIEI |
Brian Sayers BE MSc CEng MIEI | Ian Brosnan BE CEng MIEI MICE MStructE

Technical Directors Ken Fitzgerald BSc Surv Dip CEcon PG Dip Planning EIA CZM | David Aherne BE CEng MIEI MCIBSE

Associate Directors Tim Hurley BEng MEngSc CEng MIEI | Micheál Fenton BE CEng MIEI | Caitríona Fox BA MSc

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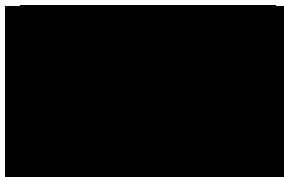
Company Registration Number 133445 VAT Number 4726135H

Registered Office Park House, Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork, Ireland



1. The duration of the MUL being applied for is **5 years**. This allows appropriate time for the completion of tendering and all required SIs. This is found in **Chapter 5** of the AIMU.
2. Environmental Survey details and durations are found in **Section 3.1.3** of the AIMU. Survey periods for benthic and intertidal surveys are between **April to September**. Survey duration for the benthic and intertidal surveys will be determined once tendering has been complete and a contractor has been appointed. The Marine Mammal surveys will be performed at the same time as the geotechnical (**12 weeks**) and geophysical (**3 weeks**) surveys.
3. The statement that each borehole would have 11m³ of drill risings was incorrect. The 20 boreholes would cumulatively generate 15m³ of risings. These drill cuttings will be brought up to surface level in a casing to prevent contact with the seawater. Once aboard the survey vessel, the sediment will be bagged and taken off site to be disposed of at a suitable facility. This negates the impact on water quality questioned in the RFI. This is found in **Section 4.13** of the AIMU Report.
4. **Chapter 2** of the AIMU Report considers the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive, and EIA Directive in relation to the survey works at Dognose. A National Marine Framework Planning Statement of Consistency document was originally submitted with the application.

The information provided here in this cover letter and outlined in the AIMU Report addresses the queries sent in the RFI.



For and behalf of MWP.