



**Licence Ref:** MUL250014

(Please quote in all related correspondence)

26 March 2026

Maritime Area Regulatory Authority  
2nd Floor  
Menapia House  
Drinagh Business Park  
Drinagh  
Wexford  
Y35RF29

Via: [licence@mara.gov.ie](mailto:licence@mara.gov.ie)

**Re:** Maritime usage licence application for the harvesting of seaweed, *Ascophyllum Nodosum* and *Fucus vesiculosus*, from the intertidal foreshore in sustainable quantities at Cashla Bay.

A chara

I refer to correspondence on 28 January 2026 received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit under the stated headings.

### **Nature Conservation**

The National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has reviewed the Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment submitted in support of the proposed seaweed harvesting operation within Cashla Bay. The proposal involves the annual harvesting of up to 1,467 tonnes of *Ascophyllum nodosum* and *Fucus* spp. from the intertidal foreshore within the proposed Maritime Usage Licence area. Following review of the documentation provided, the National Parks and Wildlife Service considers that likely significant effects on European sites cannot be excluded and that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required. It is requested that the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) should include high-resolution habitat mapping of the entire proposed harvest area, including:



- Distribution and extent of furoid canopy habitats, including:
  - *Ascophyllum nodosum* beds
  - *Fucus* spp. dominated communities
- Mapping resolution sufficient to identify habitat structure and patchiness.

The NIS must include a detailed assessment of potential impacts on marine mammals, including:

- Harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*)
- Grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)
- Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*)
- Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*).

The assessment must include an evaluation of mapping of seal haul-out sites, otter resting sites (holts/couches), and marine mammal use of the intertidal zone. Furthermore, it must provide an evaluation of vessel operations, harvesting activity, and human presence.

The NIS must include a detailed assessment of potential impacts on Special Protection Areas (SPAs) whose bird species may utilise the harvest area. This assessment must include:

- identification of relevant SPAs
- species-specific foraging ecology
- dependence on intertidal habitats.

The assessment must evaluate:

- disturbance from harvesting activity
- disturbance from vessel traffic
- changes to prey availability.

The analysis must be linked to the conservation objectives of the relevant SPAs.

You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) [fem.dau@npws.gov.ie](mailto:fem.dau@npws.gov.ie), or to the following address:



The Manager  
Development Applications Unit (DAU)  
Government Offices  
Newtown Road  
Wexford  
Y35 AP90

Is mise, le meas

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Amy Thornton'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is located below the text 'Is mise, le meas'.

Amy Thornton  
Development Applications Unit  
Administration