

19/062 - WO064 Marine Modelling Studies - Lot 1 Greater Dublin & Northeast Region

Compliance with National or European Strategic or Policy
Objectives

Uisce Éireann

March 2026

Quality Information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Laura Hearnden Senior Marine Ecologist	Alison Donnelly Senior Marine Ecologist	Brian Cuthbert Associate Director	Sundarrajan Rangasamy Associate Director

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
P1	27 March 2026	Draft for Client review	SR	Sundar Rangasamy	Project Manager

Distribution List

# Hard Copies	PDF Required	Association / Company Name

Prepared for:

Uisce Éireann

Prepared by:

AECOM

AECOM Ireland Limited
4th Floor, One Burlington Plaza
Burlington Road
Dublin 4
D04 RH96
Ireland

T: +353 1 696 6220
aecom.com

© 2026 AECOM Ireland Limited.

Table of Contents

1.	Compliance with National or European Strategic or Policy Objectives	1
1.1	Introduction.....	1
1.2	Quality Assurance and Statement of Authority.....	1
1.3	National or European Strategic or Policy Objectives	1
1.4	Compliance Check.....	2
1.5	Conclusion.....	3
1.6	References	4

1. Compliance with National or European Strategic or Policy Objectives

1.1 Introduction

This Attachment has been prepared in support of the Maritime Usage Licence (MUL) Application for marine surveys associated with the Marine Modelling Study (MMS) being undertaken by Uisce Éireann along the Irish coast, from Carlingford Lough to Kilcoole. The marine surveys comprise the deployment and recovery of Acoustic Doppler Current Profilers (ADCPs), bathymetric surveys, and passive water quality sampling (hereafter referred to as the Marine Surveys), within Proposed Licence Areas A–D. Further details of the marine surveys and Proposed Licence Areas A-D can be found in Part 3 of the MUL Application.

This attachment forms one of eleven attachments (the current attachment is highlighted in **bold**) submitted in support of included as part of the MUL Application:

- Attachment 3.1: Proposed Maritime Usage
- Attachment 3.4: MUL Map and GIS Shapefiles
- Attachment 3.5: Other Maps and Drawings
- Attachment 4.1: Compliance with Objectives of the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF);
- Attachment 4.3.1: Supporting Information for Screening of Appropriate Assessment (SISAA);
- Attachment 4.4: Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species;
- Attachment 4.5: Compliance with Objectives of the Water Framework Directive;
- Attachment 4.6: Compliance with Marine Strategy Framework Directive;
- Attachment 4.7: Information for EIA Screening; and,
- **Attachment 4.11: Compliance with National or European Strategic or Policy Objectives.**

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear and proportionate assessment of compliance with any National or European Strategic or Policy and its implementing Irish legislation. It demonstrates that the proposed Marine Surveys will not compromise the achievement of these Directive's biodiversity objectives.

1.2 Quality Assurance and Statement of Authority

This report, and the assessment described within it, has been completed in accordance with the AECOM Integrated Management System (IMS). AECOM's IMS places emphasis on professionalism, technical excellence, quality, as well as covering health, safety, environment and sustainability management. All AECOM staff members are committed to maintaining this accreditation to those parts of BS EN ISO 9001:2015 and 14001:2015, as well as BS OHSAS 18001:2007 that are relevant to the provision of consultancy services.

1.3 National or European Strategic or Policy Objectives

There are several national and European policies with which the proposed Marine Surveys require compliance with. These are listed below along with the key objectives for these policies:

Key objectives of National Marine Planning Framework include:

- Environmental Protection and Enhancement: Ensuring healthy, resilient marine ecosystems by tackling biodiversity loss and mitigating climate change.
- Sustainable Economic Development: Supporting marine industries (e.g., offshore renewable energy, aquaculture, tourism) while ensuring long-term prosperity.
- Social and Cultural Wellbeing: Supporting coastal communities and protecting natural/cultural heritage.
- Good Governance: Providing a clear, consistent structure for decision-making by public authorities.
- Effective Decision-Making: Using sound science to guide planning and promoting the coexistence of multiple marine users.

Key objectives of Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 include:

- Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE): Drive Ireland's decarbonization by creating a robust structure for developing offshore wind farms to meet 2030 climate goals.
- Streamlined Consent System: Replace the previous foreshore licensing regime with a streamlined process involving a Maritime Area Consent (MAC)—a legal right to occupy the maritime area—followed by development permission.
- Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP): Establish a national strategy that balances ecological, economic, and social priorities.
- Regulator Establishment: Create the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) to handle ongoing MAC assessments and enforcement.
- Sustainable Coexistence: Apply an ecosystem-based approach to promote coexistence of different maritime uses (e.g., fishing, shipping, and energy).
- Legacy Project Management: Provide clear pathways for existing, long-standing offshore development proposals to transition into the new system.

Key objectives of the Draft Strategy for Marine Research, Knowledge & innovation, 2025-2030 include:

- Guide Strategic Investment: Align marine research, knowledge, and innovation investments with national, EU, and international priorities, as described in the Ocean Knowledge 2030 strategy.
- Advance Sustainable Blue Economy: Develop a sustainable, climate-neutral blue economy that addresses biodiversity loss and supports ecosystem restoration.
- Strengthen Marine Knowledge and Data: Build, manage, and share marine data and knowledge to support Evidence-Based Policy (EBP), as discussed in Ocean Knowledge 2030 - Marine Institute.
- Promote Ocean Literacy and Awareness: Engage stakeholders and the public to raise awareness of the ocean's value and improve ocean literacy across society.
- Invest in Infrastructure and Technology: Develop essential infrastructure for ocean observation, monitoring, and technology development.
- Foster International Cooperation: Strengthen partnerships, networks, and research collaboration to foster innovation.

Key objectives of Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021-2030) include:

- Over 300,000 new homes will be built by the end of 2030, including a projected 90,000 social homes, 36,000 affordable purchase homes and 18,000 cost rental homes.

Key objectives of Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (NPF) include:

- Compact Growth: Focus on rejuvenating cities, towns, and villages to avoid sprawl, targeting 40% of new housing within existing built-up areas.
- Regional Accessibility: Enhancing connectivity between rural areas, cities, and towns.
- Sustainable Mobility: Developing safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly public transport.
- Sustainable Water Management: Investing in infrastructure for water quality and supply.
- Transition to Low Carbon Economy: Prioritizing renewable energy and climate change adaptation.
- Sustainable Rural Development: Revitalising rural communities and diversifying their economies.
- Regional Economic Development: Balanced growth across all regions, enabling cities like Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford to grow by 50-60%.
- Access to Quality Childcare, Education, and Health:

1.4 Compliance Check

The overall purpose of a Maritime Usage License (MUL) is to conduct Marine Surveys to support a strategic modelling study of water currents along the Irish coast from Carlingford Lough to Kilcoole. The class of usage is marine environmental surveys for the purposes of scientific discovery or research. The proposed surveys are not

only essential for the design and consenting of wastewater infrastructure to facilitate community growth and housing provision, but they also deliver critical data to support sustainable marine planning, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and compliance with international obligations.

The activities to be carried out during the Marine Surveys align with several key national and European frameworks and objectives including the National Marine Planning Framework and Maritime Area Planning Act 2021. Additionally, the Marine Surveys also support Ireland's Draft Strategy for Marine Research, Knowledge & innovation, 2025-2030 which has an objective to ensure marine research, knowledge and innovation delivers maximum impact and value to users and stakeholders. The project also supports relevant national housing and infrastructure policies, such as Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021-2030) and the Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (NPF), which both aim to ensure that citizens have access to good-quality homes and sustainable infrastructure development which includes the objective of ensuring water and wastewater systems can accommodate planned housing and population growth in a sustainable manner.

Table 1. National Policy Compliance Assessment

Policy / Strategy		Overall Intent	Policy and Project Interaction	Potential Effects	Compliance Check
National Planning Framework	Marine	Environmental Protection and Enhancement	Localised seabed disturbance and temporary vessel presence	Effects are highly localised, temporary and reversible, with no impact on species populations, habitats or ecological functioning. No disruption to ecosystem processes is predicted	Compliant
Maritime Planning Act 2021	Area	Sustainable Coexistence and Legacy Management	Localised seabed disturbance and temporary vessel presence	Effects are highly localised, temporary and reversible, with no impact on species populations, habitats or ecological functioning. No disruption to ecosystem processes is predicted	Compliant
Draft Strategy for Marine Research, Knowledge & innovation, 2025-2030			Localised seabed disturbance and temporary vessel presence	Effects are highly localised, temporary and reversible, with no impact on species populations, habitats or ecological functioning. No disruption to ecosystem processes is predicted	Compliant
Housing for All		300,000 new homes will be built by the end of 2030	Localised seabed disturbance and temporary vessel presence	Effects are highly localised, temporary and reversible, with no impact on species populations, habitats or ecological functioning. No disruption to ecosystem processes is predicted. Project ensures water and wastewater systems can accommodate planned housing and population growth in a sustainable manner	Compliant
National Planning Framework	Planning	40% of new housing existing within built-up areas	Localised seabed disturbance and temporary vessel presence	Effects are highly localised, temporary and reversible, with no impact on species populations, habitats or ecological functioning. No disruption to ecosystem processes is predicted. Project ensures water and wastewater systems can accommodate planned housing and population growth in a sustainable manner	Compliant

1.5 Conclusion

The Marine Surveys are intended to contribute positively to wider biodiversity goals by providing essential data to support wastewater upgrades in areas currently discharging untreated or non-compliant effluent. These improvements reduce long-term pressures on marine ecosystems and strengthen environmental protection.

The Marine Surveys are therefore considered to be fully compliant and consistent with National or European Strategic or Policy Objectives.

1.6 References

National Parks & Wildlife Service (2025). Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 - 2030. [Online]. Available at: https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/4th_National_Biodiversity_Action_Plan.pdf [Accessed: 27th March 2026]