Maritime Usage Licence and Planning Advisory Directorate

Appropriate Assessment Screening and Determination Report

To:	Dr. Ciar O'Toole, Senior Marine Advisor	**From:**	Tom Manning, Ross Fitzgerald Marine Analysts
Date:	30/10/2026	**Maritime Usage Licence Application No:**	MUL260049
MUL Applicant Name:		Uisce Éireann	
MUL Applicant Registered Address:		Colvill House, 24-26 Talbot Street, Dublin 1, D01 NP86.	
Type of maritime usage activity in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021:		3. Marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation or in support of an application under Part XXI of the Act of 2000.	
Location of proposed maritime usage:		The Irish Sea from Carlingford Lough, Co. Louth to Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow.	
Licence application received:		19/08/2026	

1. Background

Uisce Éireann (the applicant) has applied to the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) for a Maritime Usage Licence (MUL) to undertake marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation, falling under Schedule 7(3) of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (the MAP Act). The proposed site investigation is required for the calibration of hydrodynamic and water quality models in support of essential wastewater infrastructure along the Irish east coast. The site investigation area is referred to in the application as *Marine Modelling Studies - Lot 1 Greater Dublin & Northeast Region.*

2. Description of maritime usage and local site characteristics

2.1 Brief description of the maritime usage

Figure 1 shows the proposed MUL area which is sub-divided into areas A-D from Carlingford Lough down to Wicklow Head. The details of the proposed site investigations are shown in Table 1. The proposed bathymetrical surveys are located within discrete areas of the overall MUL application area (see Table 1).

Table 1. Summary details of site investigations.

Site investigation	Proposed methodology and quantities
Acoustic Doppler Current Profilers (ADCP)	Deployment and recovery of 14 bottom mounted ADCPs. ADCPs have an operating frequency between 200 kHz to 500 kHz and will be deployed from the vessel's deck onto the seabed. Four additional vessel-mounted ADCPs are proposed for data collection purposes.
Geophysical surveys	Bathymetric surveys using single beam (SBES) & multibeam echosounders (MBES) with operating frequencies between 200-700 kHz for MBES and an operational frequency of 200 kHz for SBES. Two bathymetric survey locations are proposed within Area B around Skerries and at Malahide Bay, one in Area C around Dalkey and within Area D off the Dalkey and Greystones coast.
Tide gauges	Deployment of nine tide gauges mounted on existing fixed structures, quaysides or navigation markers.
Oceanographic and other surveys	Conductivity, temperature and depth (CTD) measurements collected at ADCP and tidal gauge locations. Water quality sampling from the shoreline and from a vessel at multiple locations within each proposed licence area A-D using handheld Niskin bottles or sondes.

The proposed survey duration is for a maximum of 60 days and will utilise two survey vessels. The ADCPs will be left in place on the seabed for a minimum of 35 days and a maximum of 60 days. The tide gauges will be in place for 35 concurrent days. The bathymetric surveys may be undertaken during the 35-day survey period or be carried out at other times during the proposed licence duration as separate surveys. A five-year licence is sought to provide for survey scheduling contingencies.

2.2 Brief description of the site characteristics

The proposed MUL area stretches for approximately 130 km along the east coast of Ireland, extending offshore to a distance of 15km at the widest point at Dundalk Bay in the north, to 600 m in the south along the County Wicklow coastline. The total proposed MUL application area covers 109,537 ha. The proposed MUL area is divided into four contiguous survey areas. Area A includes the southern portion of Carlingford Lough, Dundalk Bay and the coast of Louth south to Clogherhead Point; Area B encompasses the Boyne Estuary, the coast of Louth, Meath and north county Dublin south to Howth Harbour, excluding the islands off the Dublin coast; Area C includes the north and south of Dublin Bay to Dalkey Islands SPA and; Area D covers the South Dublin and the Wicklow coastline south to Wicklow Head.

The broadscale coastal habitats within the MUL application area are large shallow inlets and bays, estuaries, mudflats and sandflats, coastal lagoons, beaches and rocky shores. Broadscale benthic soft sediment habitats within the proposed MUL area include infralittoral and circalittoral coarse, sand, mixed and mud sediments. Hard substrate rocky and subtidal cobble reefs likely to be present around offshore islands along the Dublin coast and at the southern area of the MUL application boundary. Water depths range from 0 - > 50 m, with low to moderate current energy.

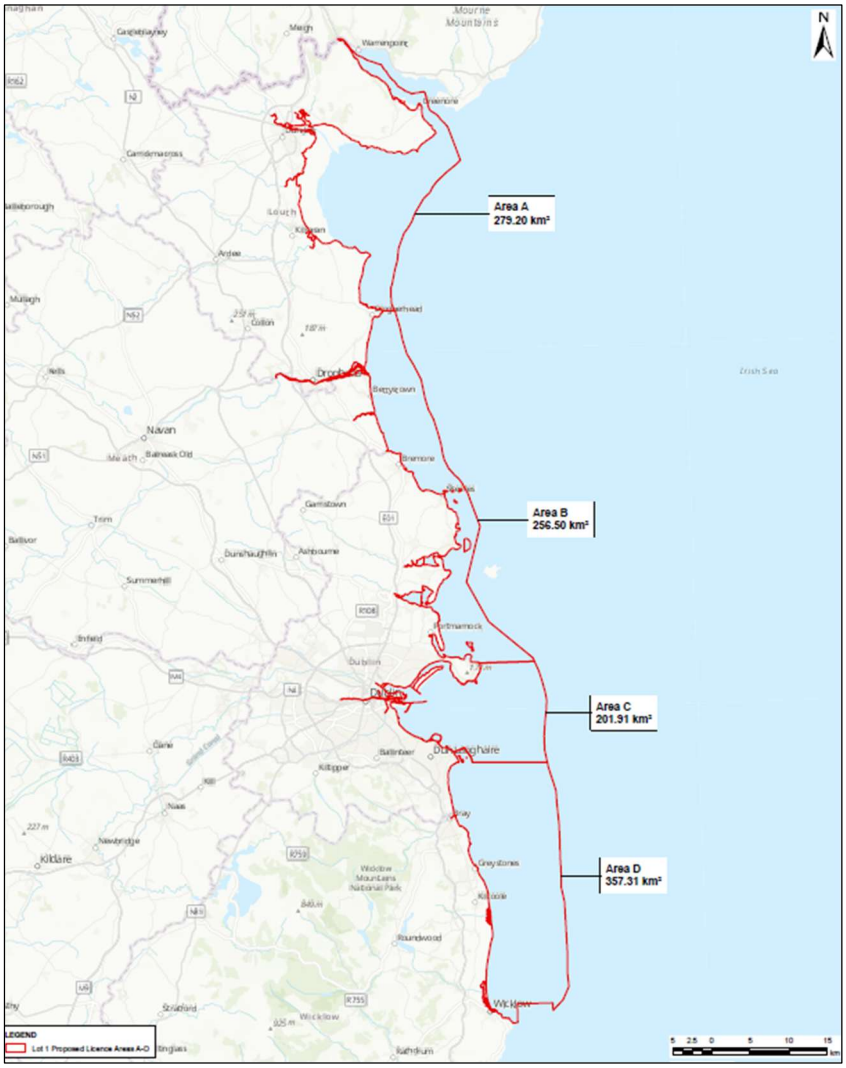


Figure 1. Map showing proposed MUL area which is sub-divided into areas A-D.

3. Identification of relevant European sites

The MUL application is subject to screening for appropriate assessment in accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended, to determine if it alone, or in-combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a European site(s), in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the sites. The applicant submitted a Supporting Information for Screening of Appropriate Assessment (SISAA) report in support of the application which was referred to during this assessment**.**

The proposed maritime usage is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site(s). The European sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)) listed on Table 2 have been considered for appropriate assessment, given the nature, scale and Zone of Influence of the maritime usage, the conservation objectives of the European sites and using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model.

Table 2. Identification of relevant European sites, their qualifying interests and site-specific conservation objectives.

European site & site code	Distance from proposed MUL area (km)	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-pathway-receptor)	European Site Screened in	Site-specific conservation objectives
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)					
Dundalk Bay SAC [000455]	Within MUL Area	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows *(Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)* [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows *(Juncetalia maritimi)* [1410]	No	No	NPWS 2011 Conservation Objectives: Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA 0455 &4026, Version 1, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC [001957]	Within MUL Area	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Estuaries [1130] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows *(Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]* Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]	No	No	NPWS 2012 Conservation Objectives: Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC 001957. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
River Boyne and River Blackwater [SAC 002299]	Within MUL Area	Alkaline fens [7230] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)* [91E0]	No	No	NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC

		Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] *Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106] *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]			002299. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Rogerstown Estuary SAC [000208]	Within MUL Area	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rogerstown Estuary SAC 000208. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Lambay Island SAC [000204]	Within MUL Area	Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] *Phocoena phocoena* (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] *Halichoerus grypus* (Grey Seal) [1364] *Phoca vitulina* (Harbour Seal) [1365	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Lambay Island SAC 000204. Version 2. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Malahide Estuary SAC [000205]	Within MUL Area	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Spartina swards (*Spartinion maritimae*) [1320], Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SAC 000205. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

		Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]			
Baldoyle Bay SAC [000199]	Within MUL Area	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410]	No	No	NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Baldoyle Bay SAC 000199. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
North Dublin Bay SAC [000206]	Within MUL Area	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] Petalwort *Petalopyllum ralfsii* [1395] Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: North Dublin Bay SAC 000206. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
South Dublin Bay SAC [000210]	Within MUL Area	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	No	No	NPWS (2026) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay SAC 000210. Version 2.

					National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC [0003000]	Within MUL Area	Reefs [1170] Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* [1351]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC 003000. Version 1. NPWS, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Wicklow Reef SAC [002274]	<1	Reefs [1170]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Reef SAC 002274. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Carlingford Shore SAC [002306]	Within MUL Area	Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Carlingford Shore SAC 002306. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)					
Carlingford Lough SPA [004078]	Within MUL Area	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Carlingford Lough SPA 004078. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

North-west Irish Sea SPA [004236]	Within MUL Area	Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) [A001] Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*) [A003] Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) [A009] Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) [A013] Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017] Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) [A018] Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) [A065] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183] Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) [A187] Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188] Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) [A199] Razorbill (*Alca torda*) [A200] Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) [A204] Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) [A862] Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) [A885]	No	No	NPWS (2023) Conservation Objectives: North-west Irish Sea SPA 004236. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
Dundalk Bay SPA [004026]	Within MUL Area	Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* [A005] Greylag Goose *Anser anser* [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota* [A046] Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* [A048] Teal *Anas crecca* [A052] Mallard Anas platyrhynchos [A053]	No	No	NPWS (2023) Conservation Objectives: North-west Irish Sea SPA 004026. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

		Pintail *Anas acuta* [A054] Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* [A065 Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* [A069] Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* [A130] Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* [A137] Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* [A140] Grey Plover *Pluvialis* squatarola [A141] Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* [A142] Knot *Calidris canutus* [A143] Dunlin *Calidris alpina* [A149] Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* [A157] Curlew *Numenius arquata* [A160] Redshank *Tringa totanus* [A162] Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* [A179] Common Gull *Larus canus* [A182] Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* [A184] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA [004158]	Within MUL Area	Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA 004158. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Boyne Estuary SPA [004080]	Within MUL Area	Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169] Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) [A885] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Boyne Estuary SPA 004080. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Rockabill SPA [004014]	Within MUL Area	Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*) [A148] Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rockabill SPA 004014. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Lambay Island SPA [004069]	<5	Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) [A009] Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017] Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) [A018] Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043] Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183] Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188] Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) [A199] Razorbill (*Alca torda*) [A200] Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) [A204]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Lambay Island SPA 004069. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Skerries Islands SPA [004122]	Within MUL Area	Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017] Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) [A018] Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*) [A148] Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169] Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Skerries Islands SPA 004122. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Rogerstown Estuary SPA [004015]	Within MUL Area	Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rogerstown Estuary SPA 004015. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Malahide Estuary SPA [004025]	Within MUL Area	Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) [A005] Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) [A067] Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) [A069]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SPA 004025. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

		Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
Baldoyle Bay SPA [004016]	Within MUL Area	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit *(Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Baldoyle Bay SPA 004016. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Irelands Eye SPA [002193]	Within MUL Area	Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017] Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188] Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) [A199] Razorbill (*Alca torda*) [A200]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Ireland's Eye SPA 004117. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Howth Head Coast SPA [004113]	Within MUL Area	Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Howth Head Coast SPA 004113. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
North Bull Island SPA [004006]	Within MUL Area	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica) [A157] Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: North Bull Island SPA 004006. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA [004024]	Within MUL Area	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Ringed Plover *(Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Dalkey Islands SPA [004172]	Within MUL Area	Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Dalkey Islands SPA 004172. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
The Murrough SPA [004186]	Within MUL Area	Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) [A001] Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: The Murrough SPA 004186. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

		Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*) [A855] Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) [A885] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
Wicklow Head SPA [004127]	Within MUL Area	Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188]	No	No	NPWS (2024) Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Head SPA 004127. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

4. Assessment of likely significant effects

Table 3. Identification of potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of European sites, taking into account the nature and scale of the proposed maritime usage.

Potential Impacts	Possible significance of Potential impacts (duration, magnitude, etc.)
Visual and above water noise disturbance	The potential disturbance from the proposed site investigations would not have a likely significant effect on breeding, wintering, diving or roosting Qualifying Interest (otherwise known as Special Conservation Interest (SCI) bird species within SPA sites due to the small scale and low impact nature of the activities and their duration and location. No negative impacts on cetacean, seal or otter species are predicted due to the scale and nature of the proposed activities and their duration and location.
Disturbance from underwater noise	The underwater noise from the proposed site investigations on marine mammals and diving birds is not likely to have a significant effect on European Sites due to the sound frequencies of the proposed survey equipment which do not overlap with those of harbour porpoise or bottlenose dolphin and the low intensity and short duration of possible underwater noise disturbance from proposed survey equipment or vessel use.
Habitat Disturbance	The potential habitat disturbance as a result of the deployment and recovery of ADCPs on the seabed is not likely to cause significant effects on European Sites due to the proposed locations, the small areas potentially disturbed and the short term of the proposed deployment of ADCPs on the substrate.

In-combination effects

The potential impacts of the proposed site investigations must be considered individually and also in combination with other plans or projects. All types of plans or projects that could, in-combination with this application, have a significant effect, have been considered. This in-combination assessment has been undertaken using professional and scientific judgement and is assessed primarily in terms of potential spatial and temporal impacts.

The spatial scope of the in-combination assessment is the extent of the proposed maritime usage licence area. The temporal scope of the in-combination assessment is based on the period over which the activities are proposed. The applicant has applied for a five-year licence and thus the temporal scope is five years.

A search of relevant databases was undertaken on 30/10/2026, including:

- MARA's internal GIS database (MUL, MAC & Foreshore consents),
- Local Authority Planning applications,
- An Comisiún Pleanála applications,
- Marine Plan database of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage,
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine map viewer, and
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) map viewer.

Table 4 outlines those projects which are considered to have the potential to act in-combination with the proposed maritime usage.

Table 4. List of projects which were considered to have potential in-combination impacts on European sites

Application Ref.	Project description	Distance from proposed MUL area (km)	Project Status
ABP-320768-24	Codling Wind Park, 75 turbines, offshore substation platforms and export cables	Overlap	Applied
ABP-319866-24	North Irish Sea Array, 35 to 49 wind turbines, offshore substation platforms and export cables	Overlap	Applied
ABP-321992-25	Dublin Array Offshore Wind Farm, 39 to 50 wind turbine generators, inter-array cabling and sub-sea export cables	Overlap	Applied
ABP-319864-24	Arklow Bank Wind Park, 56 turbines, offshore substation platforms and export cables	Overlap	Applied
MUL260051	Oriel Windfarm Limited - site investigations	Overlap	Applied
MUL230034	Codling Wind Park Ltd. - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
MUL240010	EirGrid plc. - Site investigations for proposed electrical cable	Overlap	Granted
MUL240011	Bremore Ireland Port Company - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
MUL240026	Uisce Éireann - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
MUL260007	Uisce Eireann - subtidal and intertidal marine ecology surveys for the Dundalk WWTP Capacity Upgrade Project	Overlap	Granted
MUL230026	Wicklow County Council - maintenance dredging at Wicklow Port	Overlap	Granted
MUL250003	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
MUL250013	Uisce Éireann - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
MUL240008	MaresConnect Ltd. - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
MUL260056	Marina Quarter Ltd. - intertidal and subtidal marine ecological surveys	Overlap	Granted
MUL240023	Iarnród Éireann – site investigations	Overlap	Granted

LIC230018	Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd. – site investigations	Overlap	Granted
LIC230016	Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd. – site investigations	Overlap	Granted
LIC230001	North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Ltd. - Site investigations	Overlap	Granted
FS007605	Uisce Eireann - benthic sampling and environmental surveys	Overlap	Granted
FS007358	North Irish Sea Array (NISA) Windfarm - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
FS007339	Arklow Bank Wind Park - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
FS007132	Dublin Port - maintenance dredging	Overlap	Granted
FS007223	Dundalk Port- maintenance dredging	Overlap	Granted
FS007164	Dublin Port - capital dredging project	Overlap	Granted
FS007359	Drogheda Port Company - maintenance dredging	Overlap	Granted
FS007635	MaresConnect - electricity interconnector site investigations	Overlap	Granted
FS007555	Arklow Bank Wind Park - survey to maintain up to date baseline information for the site.	Overlap	Granted
FS007583	Wicklow County Council - dredging	Overlap	Granted
FS007188	Dublin Array Wind Farm - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
FS007546	Codling Wind Park - site investigations	Overlap	Granted
FS007383	Oriel Wind Farm, Louth - site investigations	Overlap	Granted

The following plans, related to the development of the maritime environment were also considered:

- River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) 2022-2027,
- Relevant County Development Plans, and
- National Designated Maritime Area Plan (DMAP) for Offshore Renewable Energy

Likely significant in-combination effects between this application and the plans listed above and projects listed on Table 4 on the conservation objectives of the European sites considered in this report can be excluded at this stage. The proposed vessel types, low intensity and short duration of the site investigation activity, considered in combination with other activities, would not be likely to cause significant effects on the QIs/SCIs of any European Site.

Were mitigation measures considered during the screening process?
No

5. Screening Determination Statement

The assessment of significant effects:

Having considered the legal framework applicable to appropriate assessment, the information on file, and having regard to:

- The nature and scale of the proposed site investigation activities;
- The location of the proposed site investigation activities;
- Possible visual and above water noise disturbance;
- Possible disturbance from underwater noise;
- Possible habitat disturbance, and
- The potential for in-combination effects with other plans and projects,

it was concluded that the proposed maritime usage by Uisce Éireann, Colvill House, 24-26 Talbot Street, Dublin 1, D01 NP86 to carry out marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation at the Irish Sea from Carlingford Lough, Co. Louth to Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow (MUL260049) will not require Stage 2 appropriate assessment.

It can be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information, that the proposed project, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Signature and Date of Recommending Officers	[redacted] Tom Manning, Ross Fitzgerald Marine Analysts	30/10/2026
Signature and Date of Decision Maker	[redacted] Dr. Ciar O' Toole Senior Marine Advisor	30/10/2026