ABWP Phase I Decommissioning

Non-Technical Summary

Volume 1



RAMBØLL

Bright ideas.
Sustainable change.

Project name ABWP Phase I Decommissioning

Project no. 1620011606-002

Ramboll
240 Blackfriars Road
London
SE1 8NW
United Kingdom
https://ramboll.com

Document revision history

Version	Reason for issue	Author	Date	Checked	Date	Approved	Date
1	Client First Issue	JR	31.07.2026	SMR, MR	03.08.2026	KB	06.08.2026
2	Client Final Issue	JR	07.09.2026	MR	08.09.2026	MR	08.09.2026

Contents

1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY 13
1.1 Introduction 13
1.1.1 What is this document? 13
1.1.2 Who is the applicant and what is ABWP Phase I? 13
1.1.3 What is meant by decommissioning and why is it needed? 15
1.2 What will the Proposed Works Involve? 15
1.2.1 Proposed Works Offshore 15
1.2.2 Proposed Works Onshore 16
1.3 What Alternatives have been Considered? 17
1.3.1 Approach to the Consideration of Alternatives 17
1.3.2 Alternatives to Proposed Works Offshore 17
1.3.3 Alternatives to Proposed Works Onshore 18
1.4 How has the Environmental Assessment been Carried Out? 19
1.5 What Potential Environmental Impacts have been Assessed? 20
1.5.1 Introduction 20
1.5.2 Coastal Processes, Water and Sediment Quality 20
1.5.3 Marine Biodiversity 22
1.5.4 Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture 23
1.5.5 Shipping and Navigation 23
1.5.6 Marine Archaeology 24
1.6 What does the Application include? 25
1.7 What is next? 25
1.8 References 27

List of Tables

Table 1: Alternatives to Proposed Works Offshore considered and preferred approach identified 17
Table 2: EIA step-by-step process 19
Table 3: Project public consultation information 26

List of figures

Figure 1: ABWP Phase I Offshore and Onshore Infrastructure 14

Statement of Authority

Author	Qualifications	Relevant Experience
Jorge N. Rosenvinge	Graduate in Environmental Engineering	Over three years' experience in environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA), due diligence, permitting and environmental management for renewable energy and linear infrastructure projects (including waste and transport management planning) under IFC Performance Standards, Equator Principles and OECD Common Approaches across multiple geographies.
Sara Méndez Roldán	BSc Environmental Sciences, University of Salamanca (Spain) MSc Coastal and Marine Resources Management, University of Portsmouth (UK)	Over 11 years' international experience in permitting and environmental impact assessment for a wide range of coastal and marine developments, including offshore wind farms and subsea cables across a number of geographies, including Spain, the UK, Ireland, Poland and Denmark, among others.
Matt Royall	BSc (Hons) Natural Environmental Science (Earth Sciences), University of Sheffield (UK) MSc Environmental Pollution Control, University of Leeds (UK) Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv)	Over 25 years' experience of environmental impact assessment for a wide range of sectors, including windfarms. Experience is across a number of geographies including Ireland, UK, Poland, Lithuania and Romania.
Kim Bridge	Master of Oceanography (MOcean), University of Southampton (UK)	Over 13 years' experience in permitting, consenting and environmental assessment for a wide range of coastal and marine projects including offshore wind farms, subsea cables, ports and harbours and coastal development in geographies of UK and Ireland.

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Arklow Bank Wind Park (ABWP) Phase I	Arklow Bank Wind Park (ABWP) Phase I comprises: • Offshore infrastructure seaward of High Water Mark (HWM), including: – Seven Wind Turbine Generators (WTG) with a combined capacity of 25.2 MW; – One meteorological (met) mast; – Inter-array cables connecting the WTGs and met mast; and – One offshore export cable connecting WTG T4 with landfall at HWM; • Onshore infrastructure landward of HWM including: – One onshore cable connecting landfall at HWM with the onshore substation; and – One onshore substation compound, where the onshore substation and ancillary infrastructure are located.
ABWP Phase II	ABWP Phase II comprises: • Offshore Infrastructure, including: – 53 or 47 WTGs and two Offshore Substation Platforms (OSPs) located within the "Array Area"; – Inter-array cables connecting WTGs with the OSPs; and – Two offshore export cables;

Term	Meaning
	• Onshore grid connection infrastructure, including a 220 kV substation at Shelton Abbey with an associated connection to the existing National Electricity Transmission Network; • Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) at South Dock, Arklow Harbour; and • EirGrid Upgrade Works.
Additional mitigation	Actions that will be required to reduce the significance of environmental effects of the Proposed Works, which will be dependent on the significance of effects assessed in the EIAR. Also referred to as secondary mitigation in Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2024). IEMA is now the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP).
Alternatives	A description of other options that have been considered during the conception of the Proposed Works (Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2022). Article 5(1) and Annex IV of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive) require "a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, including a comparison of the environmental effects" (EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended)).
Arklow Energy	Arklow Energy Limited, the entity seeking planning permission for the Proposed Works, i.e. the applicant.
Appropriate Assessment (AA)	An assessment of the likely significant effects of a plan or project (in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site network, which in Ireland comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). These sites are protected by National and European law. The assessment is underpinned by the precautionary principle whereby a proposal cannot be granted permission if significant impacts are anticipated or cannot be ruled out. It entails the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) for projects, or a Natura Impact Report (NIR) for plans under the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
AA screening	A process undertaken by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if a proposed development, individually or in combination with other plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, and whether an appropriate assessment (AA) is required or not (Section 177U(1), Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)).
Archaeological Exclusion Zone (AEZ)	Area around a known or suspected archaeological feature within which specified activities or works are prohibited.
Archaeology Management Plan (AMP)	Document that sets out clear protocols to follow in the course of a project to ensure compliance with archaeological legislation by all parties, and mitigation of works in accordance with existing national monuments legislation.
Baseline	A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) (EIA Directive 2014/52/EU).
Bathymetry	Ocean's depth relative to sea level.
Commercial Fishing	Any form of fishing activity legally undertaken where the catch is sold for taxable profit.
Comparative Assessment	Systematic process that evaluates different decommissioning options in a structured way providing the information needed to make a robust decommissioning recommendation (International Association for Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP), 2024).
Competent authority	Are those authorities that are entitled to give authorisation or consent to a plan or project. In the planning system, this means planning authorities and An Coimisiún Pleanála. There are, however, a wide range of other competent authorities in respect of other consent regimes e.g. EPA (environmental licencing), Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (forestry, aquaculture and foreshore management), and various state bodies that have authority to undertake development under Part 9 of the Planning and Development Regulations (e.g. An Garda Síochána, defence forces, the courts service). The competent authority for this planning application is An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP).

Term	Meaning
Consent	This shall include any licence, permission, permit, approval or other such authorisation granted by a public authority for any activity, or project where the authority is obliged to have regard to the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or Habitats Directive(s) (MDB, 2017).
Cooperation Agreement	A formal agreement – which may also be referred to as a disruption agreement - between Arklow Energy and a fisher, intended to reduce disturbance or displacement to a fishery caused by the Proposed Works Offshore. Such agreements may be supported by monetary payment only where loss or access results from Proposed Works Offshore activities and that loss of access results in an evidenced financial loss, or a demonstrable risk of financial loss, to active fishing vessels.
Cumulative effect	The addition of many minor or insignificant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects (EPA, 2022). Cumulative effects within this EIAR comprise those arising from the Proposed Works with other developments, i.e. plans and projects that are 'reasonably foreseeable' (Planning Inspectorate (PINS), 2024).
Cumulative effects assessment	Assessment of potential environmental effects resulting from the Proposed Works cumulatively with other plans, projects or reasonably foreseeable activities.
Decommissioning	The final closing down and putting into a state of safety of a development, project or process when it has come to the end of its useful life (EPA, 2022).
Designated sites	Unless otherwise specified, the term 'designated' is used to refer to international sites, European sites and national sites (that are legally designated, or are going through the process of designation (MDB, 2017).
Detailed Lighting and Marking Plan (LMP)	The contractor-developed version of the Outline LMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.7**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Offshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
Detailed Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol (MMMP)	The contractor-developed version of the MMMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 5.3**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Offshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
Detailed Offshore Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP)	The contractor-developed version of the Outline Offshore DEMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.4**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Offshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
Detailed Offshore Waste Management Plan (WMP)	The contractor-developed version of the Outline Offshore WMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.8**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Offshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
Detailed Onshore Decommissioning Management Plan (DEMP)	The contractor-developed version of the Outline Onshore DEMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.1**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Onshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
Detailed Onshore Waste Management Plan (WMP)	The contractor-developed version of the Outline Onshore WMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.3**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Onshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
Detailed Traffic Management Plan (TMP)	The detailed, contractor-prepared version of the Outline TMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.2**), to be finalised prior to commencement of the Proposed Works Onshore once the Principal Decommissioning Contractor, final methodology, routes, programme and authority requirements are confirmed.
Detailed Vessel Management Plan (VMP)	The contractor-developed version of the Outline VMP (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.5**), to be prepared before Proposed Works Offshore commence and maintained as a live document until completion.
'Do-nothing' scenario	The situation or environment which would exist if the Proposed Works were not carried out. This scenario needs to take account of the continuation or change of current management regimes, as well as the continuation or change of trends currently evident in the environment (EPA, 2022). In this EIAR, the do-nothing scenario is described under "Future Baseline Conditions" in **Volume 2, Chapters 4 – 8**.
Draught	Vertical distance between the waterline and the lowest point of a vessel's hull (usually the keel). It essentially measures how deep a vessel sits in the water.

Term	Meaning
Dredged material	Seabed material arising from localised dredging potentially required to facilitate safe vessel access during Proposed Works Offshore, and / or extraction of seabed material located inside monopile (MP) foundations, as part of MP decommissioning.
Dumping	Any deliberate disposal in the maritime area (including side-cast dredging, plough dredging, water injection dredging and other such dredging techniques of a substance or material from or in conjunction with a vessel or aircraft or offshore installation (Dumping at Sea Act 1996 (as amended)).
Ecosystem Services	The benefits that humans derive from marine ecosystems through their processes, functions and structures (SEMRU, 2018).
Effect	The consequence of an impact on a receptor. For example, in the offshore environment, vessel activity (activity) results in increased levels of underwater noise (impact), with the potential to disturb marine mammals (effect).
Embedded mitigation	Mitigation measures included as part of the Proposed Works. Include modifications arising through the iterative design process; and standard industry practice that would occur even without input from the EIA process, e.g. actions undertaken to meet other existing legislative requirements, or actions that are standard practices used to manage commonly occurring environmental effects. Correspond to primary and tertiary mitigation defined in Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (now Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)) (2024).
Environmental factor	Refers to environmental factors used to present the characteristics of the environment (EPA, 2022) that are used to organise the description of the environment in the EIAR.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Process of assessment of the effects of a project or development proposal on the environment. In the planning area, it is undertaken by a planning authority or An Coimisiún Pleanála during the consideration of applications for planning permission, taking account of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The projects which require EIA are listed in Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive, as amended (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)	A report or statement of the effects, if any, that Proposed Works, if carried out, would have on the environment. It is prepared by the developer to inform the EIA process (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
EIA Scoping	The scoping stage provides an opportunity for both developers and the Competent Authority to determine those key environmental impacts and issues of concern that are likely to be of the utmost importance to the Project proposal's decision-making and eliminates those that are less of a concern (European Commission (EC) 2017).
EIA Scoping Presentation	Presentation scoping the likely environmental impacts of the Proposed Works to be further considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The EIA Scoping Presentation is included in **Volume 3, Appendix 1.1** of the EIAR.
Embedded mitigation	Mitigation measures included as part of the Proposed Works. Include modifications arising through the iterative design process; and standard industry practice that would occur even without input from the EIA process, e.g. actions undertaken to meet other existing legislative requirements, or actions that are standard practices used to manage commonly occurring environmental effects. Correspond to primary and tertiary mitigation defined in Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (now Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)) (2024).
European site	Meaning assigned to it in the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, which is also commonly known as a Natura 2000 site (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)	Area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, subject to the specific legal regime established in this Part (UNCLOS, 1982). The EEZ in Ireland extends up to 200 nautical miles (nm) from the outer edge of the territorial sea.

Term	Meaning
Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO)	An individual (or individuals) identified with the responsibility of liaising with the fishing industry to provide communication associated with the Proposed Works Offshore. Liaison duties are undertaken while at sea or from an onshore location.
Good Environmental Status (GES)	Environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive within their intrinsic conditions, and the use of the marine environment is at a level that is sustainable, thus safeguarding the potential for uses and activities by current and future generations (Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (2008/56/EC)).
High Water Mark (HWM)	Level reached by the sea at high tide, measured as the mean of high tides.
Impact	A change brought about by the Proposed Works.
Indirect impact	Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the Proposed Works, often produced away from (the Offshore / Onshore Site) or as a result of a complex pathway (EPA, 2022).
Inter-array cables	Subsea power lines that link individual wind turbine generators (WTGs) together in an offshore wind farm, forming an electrical network. In ABWP Phase I, inter-array cables connect WTGs and the met mast to each other and have an overall length of 7.4 km.
Landfall	The point where the offshore export cable transitions from the offshore marine environment to the onshore terrestrial environment.
Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT)	Exact, lowest theoretical sea level that can be predicted to occur under average meteorological conditions.
Maximum design scenario (MDS)	Represents 'realistic worst case' assessment parameters for each impact.
Meteorological (Met) mast	A mast with a number of meteorological sensors located at different heights to record meteorological and sea condition data
Mitigation measures	Measures to avoid, prevent or reduce impacts (EPA, 2022), which comprise both embedded and additional mitigation, see separate definitions for these.
Monitoring	The periodic or continuous observation of biodiversity indicators and of other parameters that may affect biodiversity for any changes that may occur over time, so as to confirm predictions made with respect to likely effects and identify adverse changes that may require remedial action (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
Monopile (MP)	Hollow steel cylinder driven into the seabed typically used to anchor an offshore wind turbine generator (WTG). In ABWP Phase I, MPs support the seven WTGs as well as the meteorological (met) mast.
Natura 2000	Network EU-wide network of nature conservation areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive (and 1979 Birds Directive). The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It includes Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
Natura Impact Statement (NIS)	A statement, for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a proposed development, on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, for one or more than one European site, in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites. This is prepared by the applicant (Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d.).
Nautical mile (nm)	Measurement used for distances at sea. 1 nm equates to 1.852 km.
Offshore export cable	Subsea power cable that transports the total generated power from an offshore wind farm to the onshore power grid. In ABWP Phase I, the offshore export cable connects the wind turbine generator (WTG) T4 to landfall with an approximate overall length of 15.6 km. At landfall, the offshore export cable transitions to the onshore cable connecting to the onshore substation.
Offshore Site	Part of the Site where Proposed Works Offshore are proposed to take place. In this application for planning permission, the Offshore Site comprises the Sub Lease Area, where the ABWP Phase I wind turbine generators (WTGs), met mast and inter-array cables are located, and the offshore export cable 10 m corridor

Term	Meaning
	connecting WTG T4 to the landfall at high water mark (HWM) near Arklow Harbour.
Onshore cable	Land-based portion of the power cable that transports the total generated power from an offshore wind farm to the onshore power grid. In ABWP Phase I, the onshore cable connects the landfall point at HWM to the onshore substation building.
Onshore Site	Part of the site where Proposed Works Onshore are proposed to take place. In this application for planning permission, the Onshore Site comprises the onshore substation compound that hosts the onshore substation building and ancillary facilities; the onshore cable 10 m corridor connecting the landfall point from high water mark (HWM) to the onshore substation, and the area that will temporarily be used for temporary storage of plant, vehicles, machinery, excavated soil and materials.
Onshore substation compound	Fenced compound that hosts the onshore substation building and ancillary facilities, including the 38 kV transformer.
Pathway	The route by which an effect is conveyed between a source and a receptor (EPA, 2022).
Planning permission	Formal, legal approval required from a local planning authority or An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) to carry out development. The Proposed Works require planning permission submitted from ACP under Section 291 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.
Principal Decommissioning Contractor	In this document, meaning the contractor(s) appointed to undertake the Proposed Works Onshore / Offshore and to prepare, implement and update the detailed management plans, keeping them as live documents until completion.
Proposed Works	The Proposed Works include decommissioning of ABWP Phase I offshore infrastructure (Proposed Works Offshore) and decommissioning of ABWP Phase I onshore infrastructure (Proposed Works Onshore).
Qualifying Features	In Ireland, habitats and/or species which are the reason(s) for the designation of an SAC are referred to as 'Qualifying Interests' (QIs). For SPAs, bird species and their habitats which are the reason for a particular site designation are referred to as 'Special Conservation Interests' (SCIs). In this AA Screening Report, QIs and SCIs are together referred to as qualifying features.
Receptor	Any element in the environment which is subject to impacts (EPA, 2022).
Reinstatement	The restoration of areas affected by excavation, cable removal, dismantling or other Proposed Works Onshore, including any road, footway, verge or site surface affected by the works.
Residual effect	The final predicted effect / impact remaining after mitigation (EPA, 2022).
Scour protection	Engineered barrier typically placed on the seabed around WTG foundations and subsea cables to prevents sediment erosion caused by accelerated water currents and waves, safeguarding the WTG's stability and protecting subsea cables. In ABWP Phase I, scour protection was originally introduced in the form of rock armour, however, this proved ineffective, and was removed in 2005. Since then, scour protection has been introduced through sandbags.
Sensitivity	The potential of a receptor to be significantly affected (EPA, 2022).
Significance	The importance of the outcome of the impact (or the consequence of change) for the receiving environment (EPA, 2022).
Statutory consultee	An organisation or authority stipulated by legislation to be notified by a competent authority or developer if an application is made which might give that organisation a cause for concern. These are specified in the applicable legislation, e.g. Article 28 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) (EPA, 2022).
Study Area	Area covered in the characterisation of the baseline environment and considered in the assessment of potential environmental effects relevant to the relevant environmental factor it refers to.

Term	Meaning
Sub Lease Area	Area where the ABWP Phase I WTGs, met mast and inter-array cables are located, as defined in the Sub Lease granted by Sure Partners Limited (SPL) to Arklow Energy Limited (Arklow Energy) to construct and operate ABWP Phase I.
Transboundary effects	Potential environmental effects that may occur across jurisdictional boundaries (MDB, 2017).
Transition Piece	The steel connection structure between the tower and the monopile (MP) foundation.
Waste	Any substance or object belonging to a category of waste specified in the First Schedule or for the time being included in the European Waste Catalogue which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard, and anything which is discarded or otherwise dealt with as if it were waste shall be presumed to be waste until the contrary is proved (Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended)).
Wind Turbine Generator (WTG)	Structure that converts the kinetic energy of ocean winds into electrical energy. ABWP Phase I includes seven GE Energy 3.6s WTGs with a rated capacity of 3.6 megawatts (MW) per WTG.
Zone Of Influence (ZoI)	The potential geographic area that could be affected by the implementation of the Proposed Works, having regard to the source-pathway-target risk assessment concept.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AA	Appropriate Assessment
ABWP	Arklow Bank Wind Park
ACP	An Coimisiún Pleanála
AEZ	Archaeological Exclusion Zone
AIS	Automatic Identification System
AMP	Archaeology / Archaeological Management Plan
BHD	Backhoe Dredger
CEA	Cumulative Effect Assessment
CSD	Cutter Suction Dredger
DaS	Dumping at Sea
DCEE	Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment
DEMP	Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
EU	European Union
FLO	Fisheries Liaison Officer
FMMS	Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy
GES	Good Environmental Status
GHD	Grab Hopper Dredger
HWM	High Water Mark
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

Acronym	Meaning
IOGP	International Association for Oil & Gas Producers
IROPI	Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest
ISEP	Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals
LAT	Lowest Astronomical Tide
LMP	Lighting and Marking Plan
MAC	Maritime Area Consents
MARA	Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario
MMMP	Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol
MP	Monopile
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
NIR	Natura Impact Report
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NTS	Non-Technical Summary
OMF	Operations and Maintenance Facility
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
QI / QIs	Qualifying Interest(s)
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCI / SCIs	Special Conservation Interest(s)
SEMRU	Socio-Economic Marine Research Unit?
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPL	Sure Partners Limited
SSC	Suspended Sediment Concentrations
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
TSHD	Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UKHO	UK Hydrographic Office
VMP	Vessel Management Plan
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WID	Water Injection Dredging
WMP	Waste Management Plan
WTG	Wind Turbine Generators
ZoI	Zone of Influence

Units

Unit	Meaning
km	Kilometres
kV	Kilovolts
m	Metres
MW	Megawatts
nm	Nautical mile

1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 What is this document?

1.1.1.1 This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) presents a plain-language summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) prepared in support of the application for planning permission submitted for the proposed decommissioning of Arklow Bank Wind Park (ABWP) Phase I, referred to throughout this document as the 'Proposed Works'.

1.1.1.2 The NTS is intended to help members of the public and stakeholders understand why the Proposed Works are required, how potential environmental effects have been considered, and how the project team proposes to manage those effects.

1.1.1.3 Where readers require detailed technical information, relevant EIAR chapters and associated appendices should be consulted.

1.1.2 Who is the applicant and what is ABWP Phase I?

1.1.2.1 The applicant is Arklow Energy Limited (Arklow Energy), owner and operator of ABWP Phase I offshore wind farm, which was constructed between 2003 and 2004 off the coast of Arklow, County Wicklow, and has now reached the end of its design life, with electricity generation ceasing in May 2024.

1.1.2.2 ABWP Phase I is depicted in **Plate 1** and mapped in **Figure 1**, and comprises:

- Offshore infrastructure seaward of the High Water Mark (HWM), within the Offshore Site, including:
  - Seven wind turbine generators (WTGs) (T1 – T7) with a combined capacity of 25.2 megawatts (MW) and one meteorological (met) mast. WTGs and the met mast sit on transition pieces and monopile (MP) foundations;
  - Inter-array cables connecting WTGs and the met mast to each other;
  - One offshore export cable connecting WTG T4 to the landfall point at HWM; and
  - Scour protection in the form of sandbags around MPs.
- Onshore infrastructure, located landward of the HWM in Arklow Harbour, within the Onshore Site, including:
  - One onshore cable connecting the landfall point from HWM to the onshore substation (Section 1), and the onshore substation to the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) Networks 220/110 kV substation located in Killiniskyduff, Arklow (section 2); and
  - A fenced onshore substation compound that hosts the onshore substation building and ancillary facilities.

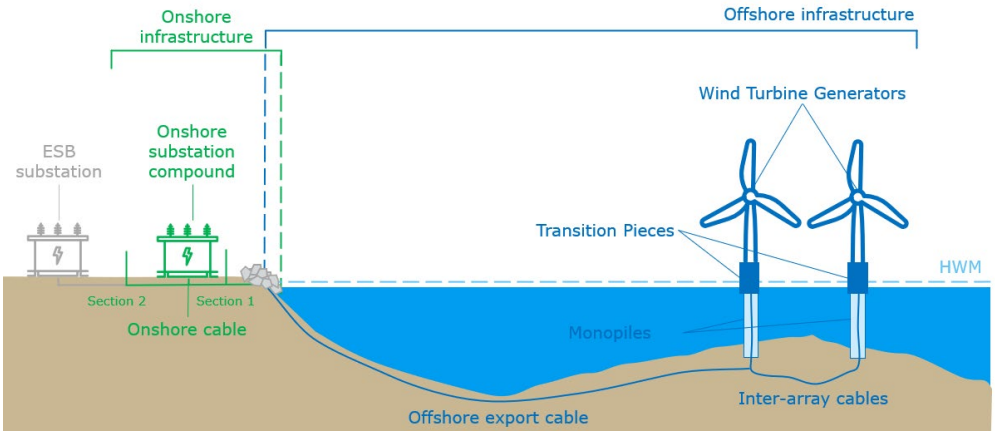


Plate 1: Overview of ABWP Phase I offshore and onshore infrastructure

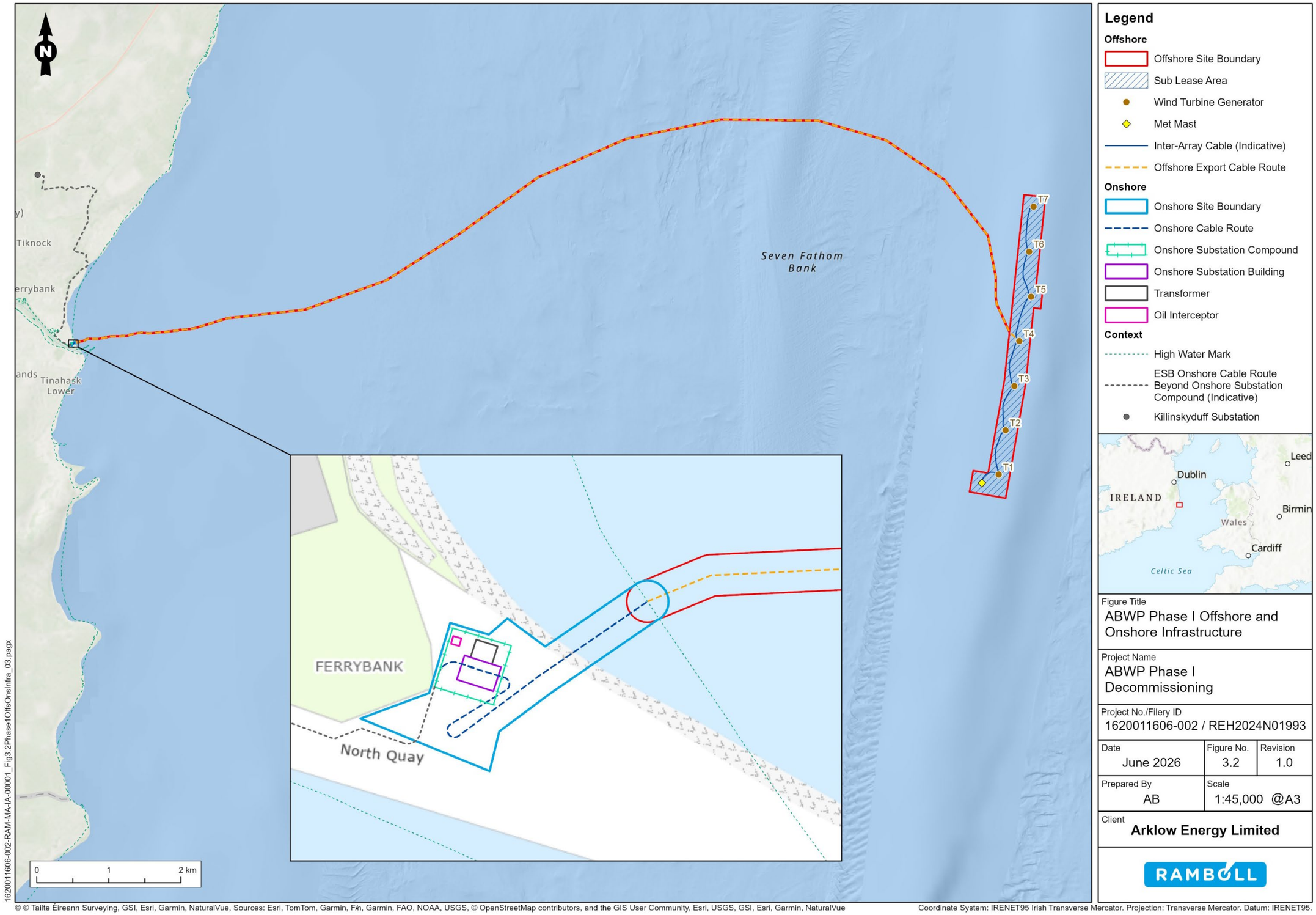


Figure 1: ABWP Phase I Offshore and Onshore Infrastructure

1.1.3 What is meant by decommissioning and why is it needed?

1.1.3.1 Decommissioning is the process of safely closing down and removing infrastructure that has reached the end of its useful life, and making sure that any remaining materials, equipment or affected areas are properly managed, restored or made safe.

1.1.3.2 The Foreshore Lease Documentation governing the construction and operation of ABWP Phase I offshore requires Arklow Energy to make provision for and to carry out decommissioning works. Additional information about the Foreshore Lease Documentation, policy and legislative context surrounding the Proposed Works can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 1: Introduction**.

1.1.3.3 The Proposed Works are therefore proposed to address long-term safety, environmental and legal obligations associated with end-of-life infrastructure and comprise the decommissioning of ABWP Phase I offshore infrastructure (Proposed Works Offshore) and of ABWP Phase I onshore infrastructure (Proposed Works Onshore).

1.2 What will the Proposed Works Involve?

1.2.1 Proposed Works Offshore

1.2.1.1 The Proposed Works Offshore will include:

- **Pre-decommissioning surveys**, non-intrusive geophysical surveys, undertaken in order to confirm seabed levels, identify any obstructions and hazards, and update the decommissioning methodology and programme before Proposed Works Offshore commence;
- **Potential dredging works**, which may be required to facilitate safe vessel access, depending on the seabed levels found at the time of decommissioning. Any dredging required will be localised within the vicinity of WTGs / met mast and undertaken with a combination of dredging (and associated disposal) methods, and in line with the Dumping at Sea (DaS) permit that Proposed Works Offshore will be required to secure. Pre-dredging surveys will be undertaken to confirm dredging requirements and refine required methods;
- **Permanent and full removal of WTGs, met mast and associated transition pieces**, which will broadly follow a reversal of the installation process, i.e. components would be prepared, isolated, cut or disconnected as necessary, lifted from the structures and transferred to suitable vessels for transport to a suitable port for onward disposal;
- **Removal of MP foundations**, will require the sediment material inside the monopile (also referred to as soil plug) to be extracted, and then the hollow MP foundation will be cut below the seabed level, at a depth intended to minimise exposure above the seabed following decommissioning, as determined through a dedicated seabed mobility assessment (see **Volume 3, Appendix 4.1: Seabed Mobility Assessment**). The cut portion of the MP foundation will then be lifted and transferred to a suitable vessel for transport to a suitable port for onward disposal;
- **Removal of scour protection**, using a grab dredger to lift any sandbags identified, mapped and considered accessible during pre-decommissioning surveys, releasing their contents (sand) back into the seabed;
- **Permanent and full removal of inter-array and offshore export cables**, using a running method comprising a grapnel run or similar that 'under runs' the cable while being slowly towed from a vessel across the seafloor, cut into manageable sections and deposited in containers before transfer to a suitable port for onward disposal. Within the vicinity of the landfall, the offshore export cable will be severed by grapple and shears;
- **Post-decommissioning surveys**, post-decommissioning monitoring of Proposed Works Offshore will include a number of surveys to confirm seabed levels and site conditions: :
  - A post-decommissioning geophysical survey within three months of completion of all decommissioning works to verify seabed condition and inform the Close Out Report;
  - Annual bathymetric surveys during years 1 – 4; and

- Final bathymetric survey at year 5.

1.2.1.2 Proposed Works Offshore will be undertaken using specialist marine equipment and vessels. Temporary work areas and marine safety controls will be established to allow the works to proceed safely. Proposed Works Offshore will be executed in line with the Detailed Offshore Decommissioning Environmental Plan (DEMP), which will outline standard industry practice and legal requirements for environmental management and mitigation to be implemented, including any required additional mitigation identified in relevant EIAR chapters (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.4**). The Detailed Offshore DEMP will also include dedicated management plans for specific environmental factors, including:

- A Detailed Vessel Management Plan (VMP) (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.5**);
- A Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.6**);
- A Detailed Lighting and Marking Plan (LMP) (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.7**); and
- A Detailed Offshore Waste Management Plan (WMP) (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.8**).

1.2.1.3 The ports that will support Proposed Works Offshore will be selected by the appointed Principal Decommissioning Contractor and may be any of Arklow (for survey vessel deployment), Rosslare, Waterford, Dublin or Greenore.

1.2.1.4 The Proposed Works Offshore will be programmed during favourable weather / sea state conditions and may be phased depending on seabed and weather conditions. Proposed Works Offshore will, in any case, be of short duration, e.g. under a single campaign scenario, Proposed Works Offshore could be completed within six months (excluding pre-/post-decommissioning surveys).

1.2.1.5 Additional information about Proposed Works Offshore can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 3: Proposed Works Description.**

1.2.2 Proposed Works Onshore

1.2.2.1 The Proposed Works Onshore will include:

- **Permanent and full removal of the onshore substation and ancillary facilities**:
  - Electrical equipment will be isolated, made safe, dismantled and removed;
  - The onshore substation building will be dismantled and removed;
  - Grey water from the submerged oil interceptor tank will be removed; and
  - The oil interceptor tank and concrete bund will be excavated and removed.
- **Permanent and full removal of the onshore cable** between landfall at HWM and the onshore substation compound boundary:
  - Exclusion zones and signage along the onshore cable route (approximately 30 m long) will be set up, with exact location and depth of the cable verified using a cable detector;
  - The cable will then be excavated and cut into sections, stored in appropriate containers for transport and disposal; and
  - Excavated trenches will be backfilled and compacted with excavated soil

1.2.2.2 Reasonable endeavours will be undertaken to fully remove the onshore cable, however, some sections may be left *in situ* if cable pulling becomes unfeasible, for instance below the rock revetment (approximately 5 m in length).

1.2.2.3 The Onshore Site will be reinstated in line with Wicklow County Council requirements.

1.2.2.4 Proposed Works Onshore will be executed in line with the Detailed Onshore DEMP, which will outline standard industry practice and legal requirements for environmental management and mitigation to be implemented (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.1**). The Detailed

Onshore DEMP will also include dedicated management plans for specific environmental factors, including:

- A Detailed Traffic Management Plan (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.2**); and
- A Detailed Onshore WMP (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.3**).

1.2.2.5 The Proposed Works Onshore are expected to be undertaken separately from the Proposed Works Offshore, programmed during favourable weather and sea state conditions to minimise potential downtime and risks to personnel and be undertaken during daytime hours between Monday and Saturday, having a maximum duration of five weeks.

1.2.2.6 Additional information about Proposed Works Onshore can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 3: Proposed Works Description.**

1.3 What Alternatives have been Considered?

1.3.1 Approach to the Consideration of Alternatives

1.3.1.1 The EIAR describes the reasonable alternatives studied by Arklow Energy when defining the Proposed Works. A detailed Comparative Assessment was undertaken to evaluate options for the removal of MP foundations and of inter-array and offshore export cables (see **Volume 3, Appendix 2.1: Comparative Assessment Report**) using five main criteria:

- Safety – risks to decommissioning workers, other sea users and offshore infrastructure;
- Environment – potential environmental effects during and following Proposed Works;
- Technical feasibility – practical and engineering considerations;
- Societal considerations – potential effects on stakeholders and other users; and
- Cost – decommissioning costs and potential long-term liabilities.

1.3.1.2 The same criteria were applied at a proportionate, high level to other options and offshore and onshore components.

1.3.1.3 Additional information about alternatives to Proposed Works can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 2: Description of alternatives.**

1.3.2 Alternatives to Proposed Works Offshore

1.3.2.1 Alternative decommissioning methods and alternatives to specific offshore infrastructure components were identified and compared to determine preferred alternatives that offered the most appropriate overall balance on safety, environmental performance, technical feasibility, societal considerations and cost, summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Alternatives to Proposed Works Offshore considered and preferred approach identified

Proposed Works Offshore	Main alternatives considered	Preferred approach and rationale
Dredging method alternatives	• Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger (TSHD) • Cutter Suction Dredger (CSD) • Backhoe Dredger (BHD) • Grab Hopper Dredger (GHD) • Water Injection Dredging (WID) Additional information regarding the above dredging alternatives can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 2: Description of alternatives**	Should dredging for vessel access be required, CSD and/or BHD were identified as preferred. These methods are considered technically feasible in relation to anticipated seabed conditions and provide a comparatively high degree of control over the dredging footprint and sediment plume generation management when compared to other methods.

Proposed Works Offshore	Main alternatives considered	Preferred approach and rationale
Disposal of dredged material location and method alternatives	Disposal location: • Disposal within the Sub Lease Area (see **Figure 1**) • Disposal at another offshore location • Disposal onshore Disposal methods: • Pipeline discharge • Side casting	Disposal within the Sub Lease Area was preferred over other options because it will help to retain sediment within the local sedimentary system and avoid unnecessary transport. Regarding disposal methods, discharge via pipeline was preferred for dredged material to be removed from inside MP foundations, as it will increase control over disposal operations. Side casting was, however, preferred for any potential vessel access dredging required, identified as more technically simple and safe.
Alternatives for WTG and met mast decommissioning	• 'Do-nothing' • Retain *in situ* • Life-extension maintenance • Repowering • Conversion or repurposing • Full removal.	Full removal of WTGs / met mast was preferred given the fact that 'do-nothing' or retention would result in ongoing maintenance, safety and long-term liabilities. Given that these components have now reached the end of their operational life, life extension and repowering were identified to be extremely complex and/or technically unfeasible, whilst full removal would not only comply with Foreshore Lease requirements but also allow the reuse, recycling and recovery of some of the components and materials.
Alternatives for transition pieces and MP foundations decommissioning	• 'Do-nothing' • Retain *in situ* • Life-extension maintenance • Repowering • Conversion or repurposing • Partial removal • Full removal	Full removal of the transition pieces and partial removal of the MP foundations were the preferred solutions. The partial removal of MPs (cutting at depths below the seabed which minimise future MP exposure risks) reduces shipping and navigation risks whilst avoiding greater seabed disturbance, technical complexity and health and safety risks associated with full removal alternatives.
Alternatives for scour protection removal	• 'Do-nothing' • Partial removal • Full removal	Partial removal was preferred, comprising recovery of sandbags that are visible and reachable at the time of decommissioning, reducing the risk of debris release while avoiding extensive dredging to locate material that may have moved, degraded or become buried within the dynamic sandbank.
Alternatives for inter-array and offshore export cables removal	• 'Do-nothing' • Retain in situ • Life-extension maintenance • Repowering • Partial removal • Full removal	Full removal was preferred, as it will reduce the potential for future cable exposure above the seabed, interaction and snagging risks, maximising material recovery for recycling.

1.3.3 Alternatives to Proposed Works Onshore

1.3.3.1 For onshore infrastructure, alternatives considered included:

- 'Do-nothing';
- Conversion or repurposing; and
- Full removal.

1.3.3.2 Life-extension maintenance, repowering and partial removal were not considered applicable because of the age, condition and characteristics of the existing onshore infrastructure.

1.3.3.3 Full removal was identified as preferred for both the onshore substation and the onshore cable. For the onshore substation, this will allow electrical equipment and hazardous materials to be safely removed, infrastructure and the building to be dismantled, and recoverable materials to be sent for recycling or appropriate treatment. Conversion or repurposing was not considered

viable because of the age of infrastructure, with insufficient capacity for modern renewable-energy projects.

1.3.3.4 Full removal of the onshore cable was also preferred, as it removes ageing infrastructure and allows the recovered cable materials to be recycled, while the temporary excavation and reinstatement works can be managed using standard construction and environmental controls.

1.4 How has the Environmental Assessment been Carried Out?

1.4.1.1 The EIAR describes the Proposed Works and reasonable alternatives considered, establishes the existing and future baseline conditions, identifies potential impacts on environmental receptors, sets out mitigation and monitoring measures, and reports the residual environmental effects expected after mitigation has been applied.

1.4.1.2 The EIAR has been prepared in accordance with relevant Irish and European requirements and applicable guidance, namely the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines on the information to be contained in EIARs (EPA, 2022).

1.4.1.3 The EIA has been undertaken through the steps summarised in **Table 2**.

Table 2: EIA step-by-step process

EIA step	Description
Scoping	Potential environmental effects from Proposed Works were initially reviewed to identify those to be considered in detail in the EIAR. Environmental factors and potential environmental effects were scoped out (or excluded from the EIAR) where there was no credible source–pathway–receptor relationship or where a significant effect could reasonably be excluded. The scoping outcomes were captured in the EIA Scoping Presentation (see **Volume 3, Appendix 1.1**), which was shared with prescribed bodies in March 2026. Feedback on the EIA Scoping Presentation and discussions held during the preparation of the EIAR were taken into account in the final scope of the EIAR. The environmental factors scoped in (or included in the EIAR) form the technical chapters of the EIAR, and include: • Coastal Processes, Water and Sediment Quality (**Volume 2, Chapter 4**); • Marine Biodiversity (**Volume 2, Chapter 5**); • Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture (**Volume 2, Chapter 6**); • Shipping and Navigation (**Volume 2, Chapter 7**); and • Marine Archaeology (**Volume 2, Chapter 8**).
Definition of study areas and temporal scope	Each technical chapter defined a study area and/or Zone of Influence appropriate to the extent over which relevant receptors could be affected by Proposed Works. The assessment considered temporary effects during the Proposed Works and long-term effects post-decommissioning, where applicable.
Baseline characterisation	Existing and reasonably foreseeable future environmental conditions were described using site-specific surveys, monitoring data, published datasets, technical reports, stakeholder information and professional judgement. Each technical chapter explains the data sources used and any assumptions or limitations associated with these.
Maximum Design Scenario	Given that certain details may only become available after planning permission is granted, e.g. following appointment of the Principal Decommissioning Contractor, each technical chapter sets out the assumptions made in the assessment of potential environmental effects, considering the Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) for each potential impact, which represents a 'realistic worst case'.
Identification of receptors and potential impacts	Within each technical chapter, the activities capable of causing change, the pathways through which that change could occur and the environmental receptors that could be affected have been identified and assessed in detail: • For each receptor / receptor group, sensitivity has been evaluated using relevant criteria that considered the receptor's importance, value, vulnerability, rarity, legal or policy protection, capacity to adapt, resilience and ability to recover;

EIA step	Description
	• For each potential impact pathway, the magnitude of impact has been determined using relevant criteria that considered the scale, spatial extent, duration, frequency, probability, reversibility and consequences of the predicted change, informed by published evidence, modelling, technical studies and professional judgement; and • Receptor sensitivity and magnitude of impact have been combined to determine to what extent potential environmental effects can be considered significant or otherwise in EIA terms.
Transboundary effects, interaction of effects, and cumulative effects	The assessment considered potential effects across jurisdictional boundaries (transboundary effects) (see **Volume 3, Appendix 1.3: Transboundary Screening**) interactions between Proposed Works and post-decommissioning phases on individual receptors, and between environmental factors (see **Volume 2, Chapter 9: Summary of Interaction of Effects**), and potential effects arising together with other reasonably foreseeable developments (cumulative effects) (see technical chapters, **Volume 3, Appendix 1.2: Cumulative Screening** and **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Summary of Cumulative Effects**).
Mitigation, residual effects and monitoring	Embedded mitigation incorporated into the Proposed Works was taken into account in the assessment, where required, e.g. to address potential significant effects, additional mitigation was identified. The residual effect is the effect remaining after all relevant mitigation has been applied. Monitoring was identified where necessary to verify assumptions, demonstrate compliance, evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation or provide an appropriate post-decommissioning record (see technical chapters and **Volume 2, Chapter 11: Summary of Mitigation, Residual Effects and Monitoring**).

1.5 What Potential Environmental Impacts have been Assessed?

1.5.1 Introduction

1.5.1.1 This section provides a non-technical summary of the assessments undertaken for the Proposed Works. Further information can be found in **Volume 2, Chapters 4 - 8**.

1.5.2 Coastal Processes, Water and Sediment Quality

How has the assessment been carried out?

1.5.2.1 The assessment considered potential effects from the Proposed Works Offshore on coastal processes (including waves, currents, sediment transport and seabed morphology), surface water quality and sediment quality.

1.5.2.2 The assessment was informed by historical and contemporary information relevant to the Offshore Site, including bathymetry (ocean's depth relative to sea level) survey and sediment sampling data and dedicated technical studies, including:

- **Volume 3, Appendix 4.1: Seabed Mobility Assessment**, which summarises historic conditions, including the influence of ABWP Phase I on seabed mobility, and estimates future seabed levels within the Sub Lease Area (see **Figure 1**), located within the Arklow Bank sandbank;
- **Volume 3, Appendix 4.2: Coastal Processes Modelling**, which presents numerical sediment plume modelling undertaken to predict the temporal and spatial distribution of suspended sediments generated during the Proposed Works Offshore;
- **Volume 3, Appendix 4.3: Scour Assessment,** which predicts scour development around residual MPs in the unlikely case that these become exposed above the seabed level following decommissioning;

- **Volume 3, Appendix 4.5: Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment**, which provides an assessment of Proposed Works under the WFD, aimed at protecting and enhancing ecological status of inland surface waters, groundwater and coastal waters.

What is the existing environment?

1.5.2.3 The Sub Lease Area, where WTGs, met mast, inter-array cables and scour protection are located (see **Figure 1**), is located within Arklow Bank, a long, narrow and naturally dynamic sandbank located approximately 10 km offshore. Arklow Bank's shallow sandy crest acts as a partial barrier to storm waves, reducing wave energy at the coastline.

1.5.2.4 Tidal currents are strong and generally aligned with the north to south orientation of the sandbank. The seabed within the Sub Lease Area is dominated by mobile sand, with coarser sediments occurring locally.

1.5.2.5 Along the offshore export cable route, seabed conditions become more varied and include muddy sand closer to Arklow Harbour.

1.5.2.6 Along the south-east coast of Ireland, coastal erosion is characterised by strong spatial variability, regionally considered broadly stable but with a tendency for some localised erosion. Sediment exchange between the sandbank and the coastline occurs primarily during high energy events rather than through continuous transport.

1.5.2.7 Historical and contemporary surveys show that sand waves and seabed levels at Arklow Bank sandbank vary naturally over time. The existing WTGs and associated foundations and cables have had minimal influence on the large-scale morphology of the sandbank when compared with the dominant natural tidal and sediment transport processes.

1.5.2.8 Water quality within the Offshore Site, particularly within the Sub Lease Area, is characterised by fluctuating turbidity, rarely remaining high. The status of WFD waterbodies is reported as moderate – high. Contaminant concentrations within the sediment at the Offshore Site, have been reported below sediment quality threshold values.

What potential impacts have been assessed?

1.5.2.9 A number of potential impacts have been assessed:

- Impacts to water quality from increased suspended sediment concentrations (SSC);
- Impacts to water quality from disturbance / remobilisation of sediment bound contaminants;
- Impacts to the Arklow Bank morphology and the coastline due to changes in seabed morphology; and
- Post-decommissioning MP exposure causing scour impacts on Arklow Bank.

1.5.2.10 These potential impacts were predicted to result in Minor Adverse, Negligible or Neutral effects, which are considered to be **not significant** in EIA terms.

1.5.2.11 No significant transboundary effects with regard to coastal processes, water and sediment quality were predicted, and no significant effects were identified when considering impact interactions or interaction with other foreseeable developments.

1.5.2.12 In order to minimise any potential environmental impacts on coastal processes, water and sediment quality receptors, Arklow Energy has committed to the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, such as the cutting of MPs at depths that minimise residual MP exposure risks following decommissioning; disposal of dredged material updrift from dredging locations (if required); commissioning of pre-dredging surveys to refine and minimise dredging / disposal areas, and development and adherence to a Detailed Offshore DEMP and associated management plans. In addition, post-decommissioning monitoring surveys will be undertaken to verify resulting seabed conditions.

1.5.3 Marine Biodiversity

How has the assessment been carried out?

1.5.3.1 The assessment considered potential effects from the Proposed Works Offshore on intertidal and subtidal benthic habitats and species, fish and shellfish, marine mammals and marine ornithology. Potential effects on European sites were considered separately through the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process, see **AA Screening Report** and **Natura Impact Statement (NIS)** prepared in support of the application for planning permission.

1.5.3.2 The assessment was informed by historical and contemporary information relevant to the Offshore Site, including site-specific surveys and surveys undertaken for the proposed ABWP Phase II offshore wind farm, adjacent to the Offshore Site, as well as dedicated technical studies, including:

- **Volume 3, Appendix 5.2: Underwater Sound Modelling**, which presents the methodology and results of the underwater sound propagation associated with Proposed Works Offshore.

What is the existing environment?

1.5.3.3 The Offshore Site supports benthic communities adapted to naturally dynamic conditions, with the wider supporting a range of pelagic, demersal and migratory fish and shellfish species.

1.5.3.4 Fish spawning and nursery grounds occur within the wider area, while migratory species may pass through the Irish Sea. Marine mammals that may occur within the Offshore Site and surroundings include harbour porpoise, common dolphin, bottlenose dolphin, grey seal and harbour seal, including species associated with nearby Special Areas for Conservation (SACs). Their occurrence varies spatially and seasonally, and individuals are generally mobile and able to move away from temporary disturbance.

1.5.3.5 Marine birds recorded in the wider area include species that forage, rest or pass through offshore waters, including species associated with nearby Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

What potential impacts have been assessed?

1.5.3.6 A number of potential impacts have been assessed, including:

- Temporary habitat loss / disturbance;
- Increased SSC and deposition;
- Disturbance / remobilisation of sediment bound contaminants;
- Alteration of seabed habitat from changes in physical processes;
- Removal of hard offshore infrastructure;
- Injury and/or disturbance from underwater noise;
- Injury and/or disturbance from vessels activity;
- Increased risk of invasive non-native species introduction / spread;
- Changes in the fish and shellfish community affecting prey resources; and
- Disturbance and / or displacement of birds.

1.5.3.7 These potential impacts were predicted to result in Minor Adverse or Negligible effects, which are considered to be **not significant** in EIA terms.

1.5.3.8 No significant transboundary effects with regard to marine biodiversity were predicted, and no significant effects were identified when considering impact interactions or interaction with other foreseeable developments.

1.5.3.9 In order to minimise any potential environmental impacts on marine biodiversity, Arklow Energy has committed to the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, such as the development and adherence to a Detailed Offshore DEMP and associated management plans, including additional mitigation in the form of implementing a dedicated Marine Mammal

Mitigation Protocol (MMMP) (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.5**) to further minimise potential impacts from underwater noise during Proposed Works Offshore.

1.5.4 Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture

How has the assessment been carried out?

1.5.4.1 The assessment considered potential effects from the Proposed Works Offshore on commercial fisheries and aquaculture.

1.5.4.2 The assessment was informed by historical and contemporary information relevant to the Offshore Site, including fisheries landings data, vessel-activity datasets, information on fishing methods and target species, mapped fishing grounds, aquaculture licensing information and consultation with fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders, see **Volume 3, Appendix 6.1: Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Report**.

What is the existing environment?

1.5.4.3 Commercial fishing within the Offshore Site is limited to static-gear potting for whelk, particularly in nearshore waters and along the offshore export cable route.

1.5.4.4 Other fishing activities within the wider area include lower levels of mobile and static-gear fishing targeting demersal fish, shellfish and pelagic species. These fisheries are generally less dependent on the Offshore Site and immediate surroundings.

1.5.4.5 The Proposed Works Offshore do not overlap any licensed aquaculture site, with the nearest located approximately 4.5 km from the offshore export cable route.

What potential impacts have been assessed?

1.5.4.6 A number of potential impacts have been assessed, including:

- Loss of fishing grounds or restricted access to fishing grounds in the Sub Lease Area;
- Loss of fishing grounds or restricted access to fishing grounds in the offshore export cable route;
- Displacement of fishing activity into other areas;
- Interference with fishing activity;
- Increased fishing gear snagging risk; and
- Effects on commercially exploited species.

1.5.4.7 Additional mitigation in the form of fisheries liaison, activity planning and implementation of Cooperation Agreements (to minimise disruption and offset any potential economic effects) has been proposed, with potential residual impacts predicted to result in Minor Adverse or Negligible effects, which is considered to be **not significant** in EIA terms.

1.5.4.8 No significant transboundary effects with regard to commercial fisheries and aquaculture were predicted, and no significant effects were identified when considering impact interactions or interaction with other foreseeable developments.

1.5.4.9 Along with additional mitigation noted above, in order to minimise any potential environmental impacts on commercial fisheries and aquaculture, Arklow Energy has committed to the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, such as the development and adherence to a Detailed Offshore DEMP and associated management plans, including the implementation of a Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) (see **Volume 3, Appendix 3.6**).

1.5.5 Shipping and Navigation

How has the assessment been carried out?

1.5.5.1 The assessment considered potential effects from the Proposed Works Offshore on shipping and navigation.

1.5.5.2 The assessment was informed by historical and contemporary information relevant to the Offshore Site, including Automatic Identification System (AIS) data, radar and visual vessel surveys, Admiralty charts and sailing directions, maritime incident records, emergency-response information and consultation with relevant maritime stakeholders.

1.5.5.3 In addition, a dedicated Navigational Risk Assessment, see **Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**, was prepared to identify and analyse hazards to shipping associated with the Proposed Works Offshore, with residual risks categorised as Broadly Acceptable, Tolerable (if As Low As Reasonably Practicable), or Unacceptable.

What is the existing environment?

1.5.5.4 Commercial shipping generally avoids Arklow Bank sandbank because of its shallow nature and its associated grounding risk. Larger commercial vessels use established routes further offshore, while fishing and recreational activity is more concentrated in nearshore waters, around the sandbank and near port approaches.

1.5.5.5 Available information indicates a comparatively low existing incident rate within the Offshore Site, with no vessel-related incidents attributed to ABWP Phase I.

What potential impacts have assessed?

1.5.5.6 A number of potential risks and associated impacts have been assessed, including:

- Increased collision (vessel-to-vessel) risk, considering vessel-to-vessel collision in transit, and powered / drifting collision with decommissioning vessels; and
- Increased allision (vessel-to-structure) risk, considering powered / drifting allision with structures.

1.5.5.7 These potential impacts were predicted to result in Broadly Acceptable risks, which are considered to be **not significant** in EIA terms.

1.5.5.8 No significant transboundary effects with regard to shipping and navigation were predicted, and no significant effects were identified when considering impact interactions or interaction with other foreseeable developments.

1.5.5.9 In order to minimise any potential environmental impacts on shipping and navigation, Arklow Energy has committed to the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, such as the development and adherence to a Detailed Offshore DEMP and associated management plans, including a Detailed VMP (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.5**), and a Detailed LMP (see outline version in **Volume 3, Appendix 3.7**), which requires charting of residual MPs left *in situ* under the seabed in conjunction with the Marine Survey Office (MSO) and the UK hydrographic Office (UKHO).

1.5.6 Marine Archaeology

How has the assessment been carried out?

1.5.6.1 The assessment considered potential effects from the Proposed Works Offshore on marine archaeology.

1.5.6.2 The assessment was informed by historical and contemporary information relevant to the Offshore Site, including archaeological records, historic mapping, shipwreck databases, previous archaeological monitoring reports and geophysical surveys, see **Volume 3, Appendix 8.1: Marine Archaeology Technical Report**.

What is the existing environment?

1.5.6.3 Arklow Bank sandbank and the sea area to its west have a long history of navigation and shipwrecking. Known wreck sites occur within and adjacent to the Offshore Site and offshore export cable corridor. Earlier dredging near WTG T5 recovered a flint scraper and flint core,

demonstrating that prehistoric material may survive within the marine environment and that buried palaeo landscapes may contain further unknown archaeological material.

1.5.6.4 Four known wreck sites are particularly relevant: W02648 and W02782 which lie within the Offshore Site boundary, and W02650 and W02781, which lie within the offshore export cable corridor.

What potential impacts have been assessed?

1.5.6.5 A number of potential impacts have been assessed, including:

- Sediment disturbance and deposition leading to effects on known and unknown heritage assets;
- Direct impact on historic shipwreck sites; and
- Direct impact on unknown heritage assets associated with buried palaeo landscapes.

1.5.6.6 These potential impacts were predicted to result in Minor / Moderate Adverse effects, which are considered to be **not significant** in EIA terms.

1.5.6.7 No significant transboundary effects with regard to marine archaeology were predicted, and no significant effects were identified when considering impact interactions or interaction with other foreseeable developments.

1.5.6.8 In order to minimise any potential environmental impacts on marine archaeology, Arklow Energy has committed to the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, including the development and adherence to a Detailed Offshore DEMP and associated management plans, including an Archaeological Management Plan (AMP) and licensed archaeological monitoring.

1.6 What does the Application include?

The application for planning permission (under Section 291 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended) includes:

- The EIAR:
  - Volume 1: NTS, this document, which provides the summary of the EIAR in plain language;
  - Volume 2: EIAR main report (including introductory and technical chapters); and
  - Volume 3: EIAR Appendices.
- The AA Screening Report and NIS;
- Planning documents, including:
  - Application form and associated Appendices;
  - Planning Report, which demonstrates compliance of Proposed Works with relevant international, European, national, regional and local policy frameworks;
  - Statement of Consistency with the National Marine Planning Framework, appendix to the Planning Report;
  - Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Report; and
  - Notices.
- Planning drawings.

1.7 What is next?

1.7.1.1 Following submission of the planning application, An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) will undertake the statutory public-consultation process.

1.7.1.2 The public notice will identify the period during which the application documents may be inspected and the closing date for submissions or observations.

1.7.1.3 The application documents will be available on the dedicated project planning website, through ACP's public-access arrangements and at the physical inspection locations identified in the statutory public notice.

Table 3: Project public consultation information

Public consultation information	Details
Project	ABWP Phase I Decommissioning
Applicant	Arklow Energy Limited
Planning authority	An Coimisiún Pleanála
Project planning website	http://www.arklowbank1decomm-planning.ie/
Application inspection locations	The planning application, including the EIAR and the NIS, may be inspected free of charge or purchased on payment of a specified fee (which fee shall not exceed the reasonable cost of making such copy) during public opening hours for a period of eight weeks commencing on the 25th September 2026 at the following locations: • The Offices of An Coimisiún Pleanála 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1. • The Offices of Wicklow County Council, County Building, Station Road, Whitegates, Wicklow, A67 FW96. The application, including the EIAR and NIS may also be viewed/downloaded on the following website: http://www.arklowbank1decomm-planning.ie/ Submissions or observations may be made only to An Coimisiún Pleanála 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 in writing or online via the website www.pleanala.ie by the 20th November 2026.
Public-consultation period	25th September 2026 to 20th November 2026 (inclusive)
Submissions or observations	Submissions or observations must be made directly to ACP, using the procedure and within the period stated in the statutory public notice. The notice will specify the applicable fee, accepted submission methods and information required for a valid submission or observation. General correspondence sent to the project team will not constitute a formal submission or observation.

1.8 References

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2022. Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports. Available at: https://www.epa.ie (Accessed: February 2026)

European Commission (EC), 2017. Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Scoping. Available at: https://circabc.europa.eu (Accessed: March 2026)

Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), 2024. Impact Assessment Guidelines: Implementing the Mitigation Hierarchy from Concept to Construction. Available at: https://www.iema.net

International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP), 2024. Guideline for comparative assessment in decommissioning. IOGP Report 678. Available at: https://www.iogp.org (Accessed: March 2026)

MacCabe Durney Barnes (MDB), 2017. Guidance on EIS and NIS preparation for Offshore Renewable Energy Projects. Prepared for the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (DCCAE) and Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). Available at: https://assets.gov.ie (Accessed: February 2026)

Office of the Planning Regulator, n.d. Planning Library. Environment and Climate Glossary. Available at: https://www.opr.ie (Accessed: June 2026)

UK Planning Inspectorate (PINS), 2024. National Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Cumulative Effects Assessment. Available at: https://www.gov.uk (Accessed: February 2026)

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982. 1833 UNTS 3. Adopted 10 December 1982, entered into force 16 November 1994. Available at: https://www.un.org (Accessed: March 2026)