

A New Planning and Consent Architecture for Development in the Marine Area

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Policy Context

Four main drivers of developments in this area;

- 1) Programme for Government commitments
- 2) *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth*
- 3) Marine Spatial Planning
- 4) *Putting People First* - Local Government Reform Programme

Programme for Government commitments:

- *The need for efficient foreshore licensing and leasing for marine energy*
- *The development of an integrated marine and coastal planning process in order to maximise the potential for Ireland's coastline in fishing, aquaculture, ocean energy and tourism*
- *Promote and support investment in technology research, development and commercialisation, removing barriers to innovation*
- *Reduce the cost of Government imposed Red Tape*

Foreshore & Marine Area Development Bill

Options under consideration;

- Focus only on Strategic Infrastructure
- Include all developments requiring EIA
- Fully devolve the function to the planning system and local authorities

Option 1 – Strategic Consent System

- ABP would deal with planning and foreshore decisions
- Single EIA for entire project
- DoECLG would retain property management role
- Provide for lease/licence options
- Developer would have set period to secure consent before lease/licence granted or surrendered
- Would include:
 - Large scale energy projects – offshore renewables, exploration, interconnectors
 - Port developments

Non-Strategic Projects

Two elements – mid-level and smaller scale

- Mid-level (e.g. EIA class) to ABP
- Smaller scale to LAs
- DoECLG would retain property management role

Option 2 – All EIA Class Development to ABP

- DoECLG would retain property management role
- First step would be to seek a lease/licence option from DoECLG
- An Bord Pleanála would deal with planning and foreshore decisions
- An integrated consent for all foreshore projects/developments requiring EIA
- Single EIA for such projects
- If permission granted, full lease from DoECLG

Option 3 – Devolve the entire function to Local Authorities

- Referenced in *Putting People First* (LG Reform Programme)
- Local Authorities would be responsible for planning and foreshore decisions
- Strategic Infrastructure (incl. foreshore development) would still go to An Bord Pleanála
- Could limit this element to projects with a physical attachment to land (not by way of pipeline or cable)

The Marine Area

- Ireland's Exclusive Economic Zone
- Rights to energy resources
- Considering defining this in law
- Provide for 'zoning' within the EEZ/Marine Area
- Building Blocks for a future Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland
- Develop a legislative framework for development in the Marine Area

Consultation

- Department has already consulted widely on an individual and informal basis
- Formal consultation now in progress, inviting submissions on the issues raised above
- Closing Date is Friday 1 March, 5:30pm
- Consultation paper is available online at <http://www.environ.ie/en/Foreshore/PublicConsultations/>
- Please avail of the opportunity to make your views known