**Neart na Gaoithe Onshore Works EIA**

### Key Issues –
The onshore works (i.e. underground grid connection) is an integral part of the overall development of the Offshore Wind Farm.

A separate EIA was undertaken for the onshore works and for the offshore wind farm. The former was prepared by LUC, a predominantly land based consultancy and the latter by Fugro EMU a specialist marine practice.

This case study recognises the differences between EIA for onshore and offshore works.

This includes differences in respect of the consenting regimes. The offshore scheme will be consented under the Electricity Act, 1989 (s.36) and a Marine Licence is required under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. Both of these applications are processed by Marine Scotland although Scottish Ministers make a decision on s.36 consent.

By contrast, planning permission for the onshore works was granted under The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).*

Despite the different consenting regimes there is overlap between the land use and marine planning systems – land use planning extends down to the mean low water mark whereas marine planning extends up to the mean high water mark.

There is potential for in combination effects i.e. when the two works combine to have an overall additive effect and the potential for offshore works to have ‘onshore’ effects and vice versa.

* Since the submission of this application a statutory provision in the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013, amending s57 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 will enable Scottish Ministers to recommend that planning permission is granted for the onshore components and related onshore infrastructure for a marine based electricity generating station under Section 36. Developers may however still choose to submit separate planning applications.

### Purpose of the project
The purpose of the project is to provide an onshore grid connection to the proposed Neart na Gaoithe Offshore Wind Farm which is located off the coast of East Lothian in Scotland.

The client is renewables developer Mainstream Renewable Power.

### Description of the project
The development comprises a 12km underground cable running from the beach at Thorntonloch in East Lothian to a new substation close to an existing wind farm known as Crystal Rig. The onshore cables would connect to the offshore cables at the intertidal area. The onshore works lie entirely within the East Lothian local authority boundary on land which is primarily agricultural – with high grade agricultural land at the eastern end of the route, close to the beach, changing to land of an upland character as the topography rises towards the substation.

Construction is scheduled to last 18 months and the connection would be operational for the lifespan of the wind farm.
Lessons learnt

Close coordination between the onshore and offshore consultants is key.

Agree the point at which the onshore EIA finishes and the offshore EIA begins and who will undertake survey work of overlapping areas, e.g. of the intertidal area.

Agree the scheme parameters with potential for overlapping effects early on – for example, timings of construction works close to the shore, likely construction plant involved etc.

Agree which sensitive receptors may be affected by onshore and offshore works e.g. users of the beach, sensitive birdlife, marine users (e.g. sailors, yachtsmen).

Recognise differences – i.e. onshore EIA is not undertaking an assessment of views of the wind farm from onshore viewpoints – this is the point of the seascape assessment which accompanies the offshore EIA.

Decide whether to prepare one or two Environmental Statements – if preparing two, a common format is vital.

Make sure the applications join up. Regular meetings between on and offshore consultants are key. Nominate a client representative to attend key meetings for both on and offshore schemes for the duration of both projects. This will ensure a common understanding of both schemes and EIAs is maintained.

Contact details
Juliette Young
LUC
Juliette.Young@landuse.co.uk
020 7383 5784

Lessons learnt cont.
Case Study Author: Juliette Young
Name of Registrant: LUC
Contact Email Address and Telephone Number:
Juliette.Young@landuse.co.uk: 020 7383 5784

For access to more EIA case studies and hundreds of non-technical summaries of Environmental Statements visit:
www.iema.net/qmark