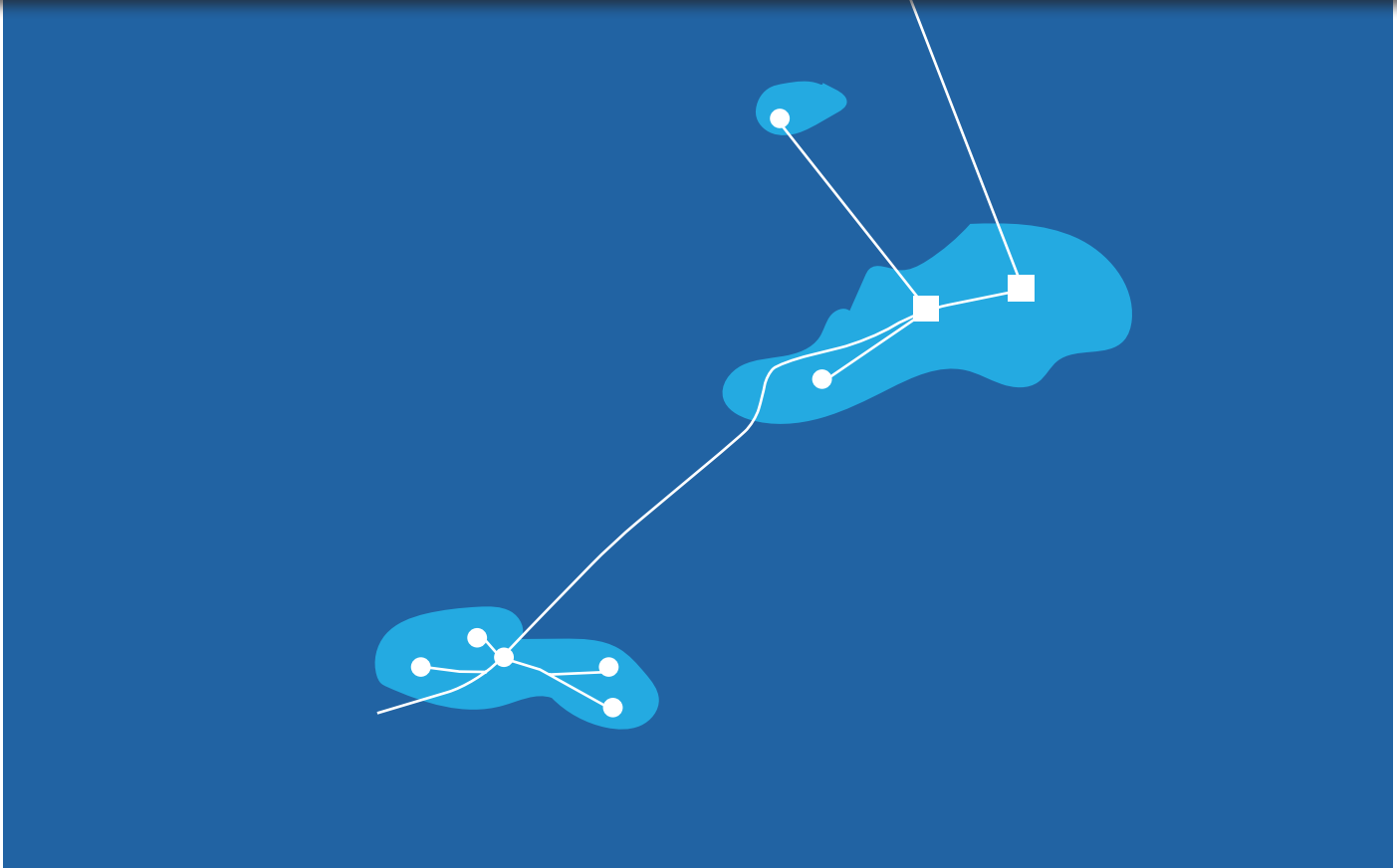




Kinsale Area Decommissioning Project
**Appropriate Assessment
Screening and Article 12
Assessment Screening
Addendum No.2**



Contents

	Page	
1	Introduction and Background	2
1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Consent application process	2
1.3	Current application	3
1.4	Document Purpose and Scope: Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Article 12 Addendum	4
2	AA Screening for likely significant effects	6
2.1	Identification of relevant Natura 2000 Sites	6
2.2	Identification of Potential Sources of Effects	6
2.3	Consideration of Potential In-Combination Effects	6
3	AA Screening Statement and Conclusion	9
4	Annex IV Species Screening for likely effects	10
4.1	Introduction	10
4.2	Consideration of Potential In-Combination Effects with Other Plans and Projects in the Area	11
5	Annex IV Species Screening Conclusions	13
6	References	1



Kinsale Area Decommissioning Project

Section 1

Introduction and Background

1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

PSE Kinsale Energy Limited (Kinsale Energy) is progressing with the decommissioning of the Kinsale Area gas fields and facilities (incorporating the Kinsale Head gas fields and facilities and the Seven Heads gas field and facilities), which have come to the end of their productive life. Gas production from the wells ceased on 5 July 2020. Together the decommissioning of the entirety of the Kinsale Area gasfields and facilities is collectively referred to as the Kinsale Area Decommissioning Project (KADP).

The entire KADP plan consists of:

- Facilities preparation: disconnect and degas process plant and pipelines (all pipelines displaced with seawater).
- Wells: plug and abandon all platform and subsea wells and removal of any surface component of these wells, including wellhead structures and platform conductors.
- Platform topsides: complete removal in accordance with OSPAR Decision 98/3.
- Subsea structures: (e.g. manifolds, wellhead protection structures): full removal in accordance with OSPAR Decision 98/3, including the removal of connecting spool pieces, umbilical jumpers and associated protection materials.
- Platform jackets: complete removal in accordance with OSPAR Decision 98/3.
- Offshore pipelines and umbilicals: rock cover of freespans and pipeline ends.
- Export pipeline (offshore and onshore section): fill onshore section with grout and rock cover of freespans in offshore section.
- Decommissioning the Inch Terminal (full removal and reinstatement to agricultural use, as per the terms of the site planning permission, Cork County Council planning reference 2929/76).

Kinsale Energy is submitting further plans for decommissioning to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications (formerly the Minister for Communications, Climate Action & Environment) (the “**Minister**”) for approval pursuant to Section 13 of the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development Act 1960 as amended (1960 Act), as addenda to the existing plans of development relevant to the Kinsale Area and Seven Heads Petroleum Leases.

1.2 Consent application process

To reflect project scheduling requirements and to facilitate studies on the potential for any re-use options for the Kinsale Area facilities, a two stage consent application process for the Decommissioning Plans was originally proposed by Kinsale Energy.

Decommissioning Plans covering the first stage (**Consent Application no. 1**) were submitted on 28th June 2018 covering the following works:

- Facilities preparation: disconnect and degas process plant and pipelines (pipelines displaced with seawater, and inhibited seawater in the case of the 24" export pipeline and the 18" Seven Heads pipeline).
- Wells: plug and abandon all platform and subsea wells and removal of any surface component of these wells, including wellhead structures and platform conductors.
- Platform topsides: complete removal in accordance with OSPAR Decision 98/3.
- Subsea structures: (e.g. manifolds, wellhead protection structures): full removal in accordance with OSPAR Decision 98/3, including the removal of connecting spool pieces, umbilical jumpers and protection materials.

Consent Application no. 1 was approved on 26th April 2019.

For Kinsale Head only, a subsequent application (**Consent Application no. 2**) was submitted on 8th August 2019 to cover the removal of the Kinsale Alpha and Bravo jackets. Consent Application no. 2 was approved on 27th February 2020.

1.3 Current application

Consent applications are now being made for the remaining works required to complete the KADP (**Consent Application no. 3 for Kinsale Head Petroleum Lease (OPL 1)** and **Consent Application no. 2 for Seven Heads**).

At the time of Consent Application no. 2 (for OPL1), Section 5 of the Dumping at Sea Act did not yet apply to "offshore installations" and there were ongoing studies by third parties that might have identified a future re-use of one or more of the offshore pipelines. Accordingly, Consent Application no.2 was limited to a request for approval for the decommissioning of the Kinsale Head platform jackets only. Consent Application no. 2 did not address the offshore pipelines and umbilicals. As no further use has been identified for any of the offshore pipelines or umbilicals, these are now the subject of this consent application.

Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 3 includes for the following facilities:

- To leave *in situ* all infield pipelines and umbilicals associated with the Kinsale Head gas fields
- To leave *in situ* the 24" export pipeline (offshore and onshore section)
- To use engineering materials to protect the pipelines and umbilicals *in situ*

Seven Heads Consent Application no. 2 includes the following:

- To leave *in situ* all infield pipelines and umbilicals associated with the Seven Heads gas field
- To leave *in situ* 18" Seven Heads export pipeline and umbilical

- To use engineering materials to protect the pipelines and umbilicals *in situ*

1.4 Document Purpose and Scope: Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Article 12 Addendum

In accordance with regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and Section 13A of the 1960 Act, an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (“**AA Screening Report**”) was prepared to accompany the Consent Application no. 1. The AA Screening Report was updated for Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 2 (“**AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1**”), and is again updated for Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 3 and Seven Heads Consent Application no. 2 (“**AA Screening Report Addendum no. 2**”). The AA Screening Report informs the competent authority, the Minister, in carrying out its screening for Appropriate Assessment as to whether or not the Project is likely to have any significant impacts on any European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, taking into account their conservation objectives in light of the best scientific knowledge in the field.

This AA Screening Report Addendum has been produced to reflect the additional relevant environmental information which has been published since February 2020. This document should be read in conjunction with the **AA Screening Report** and **AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1** which have also been submitted as part of this consent application.

The legislation and guidance documents previously described or listed in the AA Screening Report (**Section 2**), and the description of the project (**Section 3**) are unchanged, and so are not repeated in this document. The zone of influence for the KADP has not changed, and those sites previously identified as relevant to the assessment, their status, and related information such as conservation objectives, have not changed, nor have any new relevant Natura 2000 sites been proposed or designated.

Consistent with the AA Screening Report for the KADP, submitted as part of Consent Application no. 1, this addendum has been produced to cover all staged consent applications, for both the Kinsale Head gas fields and Seven Heads gas field. Alongside the AA Screening Report and the AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1, this Addendum contains the information required by the consenting authority, the Minister, to undertake screening to determine if a full Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the KADP is required.

The addendum AA screening information is presented in this report as follows:

- AA Screening for likely significant effects (**Section 2**)
- AA Screening Statement (**Section 3**)

Addendum information to the AA Screening Report has also been provided which is relevant to the consideration of the potential effects on species listed under Annex IV of the Directive (termed Annex IV species). Annex IV species screening addendum information is presented in this report as follows:

- Screening for effects on Annex IV Species (**Section 4**)

- Article 12 Screening Conclusions (**Section 5**)

The screening assessments will consider the potential for significant effects to be caused by activities associated with the KADP in relation to both relevant Natura 2000 sites and Annex IV species, but only in the context of the updated environmental information referred to above.



Kinsale Area Decommissioning Project

Section 2

AA Screening for Likely Significant Effects

2 AA Screening for likely significant effects

2.1 Identification of relevant Natura 2000 Sites

As noted in **Section 1**, no new Natura 2000 sites have been proposed or designated within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) previously described in **Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the AA Screening Report, and Section 2.3 and Appendix A of the AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1**. Additionally, the KADP project description has not altered since Consent Application no. 1.

2.2 Identification of Potential Sources of Effects

No additional sources of likely significant effect for the KADP alone were identified.

This section assesses the likelihood for significant negative direct, indirect and in-combination effects to the qualifying interests of relevant Natura 2000 sites based on those methods previously presented in relation to potential in-combination effects (**Section 2.3**). Those main sources of potential effect relevant to the Natura 2000 sites and their qualifying interests remain the same:

- the physical presence of vessels in field and in transit;
- underwater noise from vessels, cutting, rock placement and post-decommissioning survey (note that no explosive cutting is proposed);
- physical disturbance from rig placement, rig and vessel anchoring, and infrastructure removal and rock placement;
- discharges to sea;
- accidental events;
- waste recycling, reuse and disposal;
- atmospheric emissions;
- noise associated with the demolition of Inch terminal; and
- dust emissions associated with the terminal demolition works.

2.3 Consideration of Potential In-Combination Effects

A number of projects have been proposed since the publication of the AA Screening Report and AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1 which are of relevance to Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 3 and Seven Heads Consent Application no. 2. However, none are considered to be a source of potential likely significant in-combination effects either for the decommissioning of the offshore facilities or the Inch Terminal.

Two Foreshore Licences have been applied for in relation to offshore wind farm site investigation work in the territorial waters off Cork (see Figure 2.1). The application most of relevance to the KADP is for the Emerald project, though there is some overlap with the Inis Ealga project area in close proximity to shore. While the applicant for the

Emerald project has indicated their intention to complete site investigation works in offshore waters which would cover the Kinsale Area, no application has yet been made. The proposed schedules for the inshore surveys associated with Emerald and Inis Ealga both indicate a five year window from the date of consent to completion. The indicative schedule in their respective applications suggest activities starting in 2021, or likely taking place 2022-2023. As neither application has been approved, there is the potential for the timescale within which works take place to be later than proposed. There is the potential for interaction between the timings of these surveys and work associated with the decommissioning of the export pipeline, but in view of the approach to decommissioning in this area (rock placement on export pipeline freespan), the duration and scale of the works (up to 16 days for all KADP pipelines, see AA Screening Report Section 3.4.4.1) are such that there is considerable scope to avoid interactions.

The Minister has not made a decision in relation to either application as to whether the proposed activities would result in a likely significant effect on a Natura 2000 site alone or in-combination with any other project. The applicant for the Emerald site investigation identifies a likely significant effect for vibration and underwater noise only for the Twaite shad (Blackwater River SAC), but no adverse effects were concluded. That for Inis Ealga identifies likely significant effects from vessel disturbance for features of Mid-Waterford Coast SPA and Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA, with a conclusion that adverse effects would not result, subject to mitigation. When considered in the context of the sources of effect from the KADP in relation to the above sites, as set out in Appendix A to the AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1, likely significant in-combination effects with either set of site investigation works have not been identified.

The wind farm proposals associated with the above site investigations are at a conceptual stage; no consent application for either development has been made, and no approvals have been granted. In the absence of project information, including indicative design parameters and schedule, a meaningful assessment of the development stages of these wind farms cannot be undertaken.

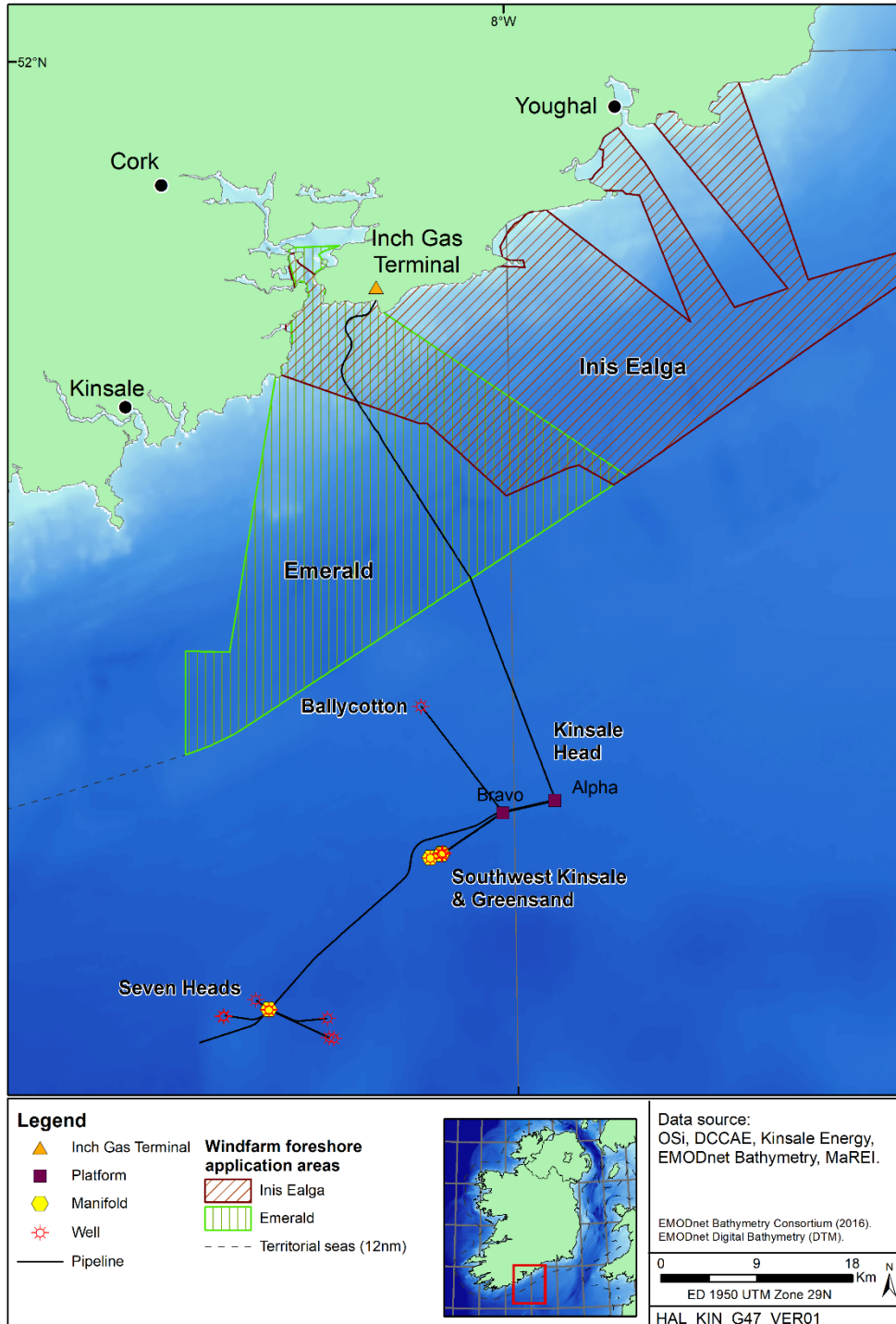
The Barryroe oil discovery and the potential for further exploration and development was assessed in the in-combination effects section of the AA Screening Report. Since that time, an application was made to conduct a site survey within the Barryroe licence area (EL 1/11), which was completed in September 2019. Subsequently, a further survey application was made in August 2019 for an area covering a proposed appraisal well ('K'), which overlaps parts of the Seven Heads field. The proposed survey schedule (to be complete by November 2021), is such that interactions are not considered possible, as KADP activities associated with sources of effect relevant to Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 3 and Seven Heads Consent Application no. 2 are scheduled for late 2022.

As noted in the AA Screening Report, while there are a number of exploration licence areas in the vicinity of the Kinsale Area, project plans for additional exploration are not known or are uncertain¹, and therefore no in-combination effects are predicted at this time.

¹ Noting the position set out in the Policy Statement for Petroleum Exploration and Production Activities as part of Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Economy, that future licensing rounds will not cover oil exploration, but would be allowed for gas only as a transition fuel.

It is concluded that no further sources of likely significant in-combination effect have been identified. Consequently, the conclusion of the AA Screening Report remains unchanged.

Figure 2.1: Foreshore Licence applications relevant to offshore wind site investigations





Kinsale Area Decommissioning Project

Section 3

AA Screening Statement and Conclusion

3 AA Screening Statement and Conclusion

In keeping with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, as the KADP is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 site, an assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the KADP could result in likely significant effects for any relevant site, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. It has been concluded that the activities associated with the proposed KADP (see **Section 3 of the AA Screening Report**) will not result in likely significant effects (alone or in-combination) on the Conservation Objectives of any relevant Natura 2000 site within the Zones of Influence considered (as defined in **AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1**). This is in view of:

- the assessment presented in the AA Screening Report,
- that information and additional assessment presented in **Section 2 of the AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1**, which reflects relevant updates provided as part of Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 2,
- additional information including in relation to in-combination effects with other plans and programmes, which were not found to be a source of likely significant effect.

Consistent with the AA Screening Report, the additional assessment made in this addendum has not taken into account any mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce the harm of the project on any site.

The conclusion of the AA Screening Report, updated to reflect the information presented in this addendum, and the AA Screening Report Addendum no 1, is that the activities associated with the proposed KADP are not considered to result in likely significant effects (alone or in-combination) on the Conservation Objectives of any relevant Natura 2000 site. The competent authority will make the final determination in this regard.



Kinsale Area Decommissioning Project

Section 4

Annex IV Species Screening for Likely Effects

4 Annex IV Species Screening for likely effects

4.1 Introduction

A limited amount of updated environmental information is available for some relevant Annex IV Species, which is presented below.

4.1.1 Cetaceans

Since the publication AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1, data is available for two further annual Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Surveys (CSHAS) covering 2019 and 2020 (O'Donnell *et al.* 2019, 2020). In the 2019 and 2020 CSHAS, 107 and 126 hours of visual survey effort, respectively, by dedicated marine mammal observers recorded a similar diversity and relative abundance of marine mammals to that in previous years. Common dolphins were observed throughout coastal and offshore waters, and were by far the most frequently sighted and most numerous species (141 sightings, including a total of 1,672 individuals in 2019 and 240 sightings, including a total of 2,174 individuals in 2020). Fin whales were the second most numerous (3 sightings of 3 individuals, and 11 sightings, including a total of 12 individuals, respectively). Sightings were also made of harbour porpoise, bottlenose dolphin, humpback and minke whale. Figures from these most recent surveys have been incorporated into 4.1 below, which summarises CSHAS data for the last 13 years.

The 2019 and 2020 CSHAS sightings data are consistent with that presented in the AA Screening and AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1, and as no additional sources of likely significant effect for these, or any other Annex IV species, have been identified, the conclusions of these former assessments are considered to remain the same.

Table 4.1: Cetacean sightings recorded during the annual Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Surveys

Species	Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Surveys (CSHAS) 2008-2020	
	Number of years observed (of a maximum of 13)	Total number of sightings (individuals)
Toothed cetaceans		
Common dolphin	12	1,230 (15,877)
Harbour porpoise	11	48 (263)*
Bottlenose dolphin	6	8 (40)
Risso's dolphin	4	6 (14)
Killer whale	1	1 (3)
Pilot whale	0	0 (0)
<i>Unidentified dolphin</i>	<i>na</i>	81 (674)
Baleen whales		
Fin whale	13	139 (237)
Minke whale	12	83 (94)
Humpback whale	7	19 (26)
<i>Unidentified whale</i>	11	75 (95)

Species	Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Surveys (CSHAS) 2008-2020	
	Number of years observed (of a maximum of 13)	Total number of sightings (individuals)
Total	na	1,690 (17,323)

*Notes: See main text for a description of the two data sources. * Total harbour porpoise sightings in the CSHASs were heavily influenced by data from the 2016 cruise report where 22 sightings, representing 191 individuals, were reported in the Celtic Deep (>100km southeast of Kinsale); excluding 2016 data yields a total of 19 harbour porpoise sightings totalling 57 individuals.*

Source: Nolan et al. (2014), O'Donnell et al. (2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020) Saunders et al. (2009, 2010)

4.2 Consideration of Potential In-Combination Effects with Other Plans and Projects in the Area

A number of projects have been proposed since the publication of the AA Screening Report or AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1 which are of relevance to Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 3 and Seven Heads Consent Application no. 2.

Two Foreshore Licences have been applied for in relation to offshore wind farm site investigation work in the territorial waters off Cork (see Figure 2.1). The application most of relevance to the KADP is for the Emerald project, though there is some overlap with the Inis Ealga project area in close proximity to shore. While the applicant for the Emerald project has indicated their intention to complete site investigation works in offshore waters which would cover the Kinsale Area, no application has yet been made. The proposed schedules for the inshore surveys associated with Emerald and Inis Ealga both indicate a five year window from the date of consent to completion. The indicative schedule in their respective applications suggest activities starting in 2021, or likely taking place 2022-2023. As neither application has been approved, there is the potential for the timescale within which works take place to be later than proposed. There is the potential for interaction between the timings of these surveys and work associated with the decommissioning of the export pipeline, but in view of the approach to decommissioning in this area (rock placement on freespan), the duration and scale of the works (16 days for all Kinsale pipelines based on selected option, see AA Screening Report Section 3.4.4.1) are such that there is considerable scope to avoid interactions.

The wind farm proposals associated with the site investigations are at a conceptual stage; no consent application for either development has been made, and no approvals have been granted. In the absence of project information, including indicative design parameters and schedule, a meaningful assessment of the development stages of these wind farms cannot be undertaken.

The Barryroe oil discovery and the potential for further exploration and development was assessed in the in-combination effects section of the Article 12 screening contained in the AA Screening Report. Since that time, an application was made to conduct a site survey within the Barryroe licence area (EL 1/11), which was completed in September 2019. Subsequently, a further survey application was made in August 2019 for an area covering a proposed appraisal well ('K'), which overlaps parts of the Seven Heads field. The proposed survey schedule (to be complete by November 2021), is such that interactions are not considered possible, as KADP activities associated with sources of effect relevant

to Kinsale Head Consent Application no. 3 and Seven Heads Consent Application no. 2 are scheduled for late 2022.

As noted in the AA Screening Report, while there are a number of exploration licence areas in the vicinity of the Kinsale Area, project plans for additional exploration are not known or are uncertain², and therefore no in-combination effects are predicted at this time.

It is concluded that no further sources of likely significant in-combination effect have been identified in relation to Annex IV species. Consequently, the conclusion of the IV Species Screening remains unchanged.

² Noting the position set out in the Policy Statement for Petroleum Exploration and Production Activities as part of Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Economy, that future licensing rounds will not cover oil exploration, but would be allowed for gas only as a transition fuel.

Section 5

Annex IV Species Screening Conclusions

5 Annex IV Species Screening Conclusions

Whilst Annex IV species may be present in the vicinity of the proposed KADP, the localised scale and duration of the works will not result in the deliberate disturbance or destruction of any of the species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive which may be present in the study area.

In light of the findings of the Annex IV assessment in the AA Screening Report, the update provided in AA Screening Report Addendum no. 1, and in the context of the information presented here (see **Section 4**), it can be concluded that it is not considered necessary to undertake any further Annex IV Species (European Protected Species) Impact Assessment. The competent authority will make the final determination in this regard.

Section 6

References

6 References

- Nolan C, O'Donnell C, Lynch D, Lyons K, Keogh N, McAvoy S, Cronin C & Hunt W (2014). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2014. FSS Survey Series 2014/04,51pp.
- O'Donnell C, Lynch D, Lyons K, Keogh N & O'Donovan M (2015). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2015. FSS Survey Series 2015/04,53pp.
- O'Donnell C, Lynch D, Lyons K, Ni Riogain P & Volkenandt M (2011). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2011. FSS Survey Series 2011/03,48pp.
- O'Donnell C, Mullins E, Lynch D, Lyons K, Connaughton P & Perez Tadeo M (2020). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2020. FSS Survey Series 2020/04, 54pp.
- O'Donnell C, Mullins E, Lynch D, Lyons K, Connaughton P & Power J (2019). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2019. FSS Survey Series 2019/04, 49pp.
- O'Donnell C, Mullins E, Lynch D, Lyons K, Keogh N & O'Callaghan S (2018). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2018. FSS Survey Series 2018/04, 44pp.
- O'Donnell C, Nolan C, Mullins E, Lyons K, Volkenandt M, Keogh N, McAvoy S & Williams D (2013). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2013. FSS Survey Series 2013/04,51pp.
- O'Donnell C, Nolan C, Sullivan M, Lyons K, McKeogh E, McAvoy S, Ingham S & O'Sullivan E (2012). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2012. FSS Survey Series 2012/05,43pp.
- O'Donnell C, O'Malley M, Lynch D, Lyons K, Keogh N & O'Driscoll D (2017). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey (CSHAS) cruise report 2017. FSS Survey Series 2017/04, 38pp
- O'Donnell C, Saunders R, Lynch D, Lyons K & Wall D (2008). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2008. FSS Survey Series 2008/03,57pp.
- O'Donnell C, Sullivan M, Lyons K, Keogh N & Quinn M (2016). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey (CSHAS) cruise report 2016. FSS Survey Series 2016/04, 44pp.
- Saunders R, O'Donnell C, Campbell A, Lynch D, Egan A, Lyons K & Wall D (2010). Celtic Sea Herring
- Saunders R, O'Donnell C, Campbell A, Lynch D, Lyons K & Wall D (2009). Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey cruise report 2009. FSS Survey Series 2009/03, 63pp.
-