



## Irish Sea Zone project update

**Centrica and Danish energy company DONG Energy have formed a joint venture – called Celtic Array Limited - to develop offshore wind farms in the Irish Sea Zone.**

The announcement in March 2012 was one of four steps taken in the last few months. The others are the publication of the Zonal Appraisal and Planning (ZAP) report, the naming of the first project – Rhiannon Wind Farm - and the submission of the wind farm's offshore scoping report to the Planning Inspectorate on 6 July.

The 50-50 joint venture strengthens the links between two of the leading offshore wind farm developers in the UK, which have between them around 1GW of offshore wind capacity installed or under construction in Britain.

Centrica, owner of British Gas, supplies gas and electricity to millions of consumers across Britain. DONG Energy is one of the leading energy groups in Northern Europe, specialising in generating, distributing and trading energy.



A two-year period of zonal appraisal culminated in the publication of a ZAP report in April 2012, identifying three Potential Development Areas within which Celtic Array considers offshore wind farm development may be feasible. These areas are identified in the map overleaf.

The first project for Celtic Array has been identified in the South East Potential Development Area and named Rhiannon Wind Farm because of its proximity to Wales. Rhiannon is a prominent figure in Welsh Celtic mythology.

The North East Potential Development Area will be the second project to be progressed and will follow a later consenting timeline.

The ZAP report was circulated to stakeholders and deposited in libraries in North Wales and the Isle of Man at the beginning of April. It is available on [www.celticarray.com](http://www.celticarray.com)

The boundary of the Rhiannon Wind Farm is about 19km north east of Anglesey and 34km south east of the Isle of Man. It is expected that the wind farm will connect to the high voltage electricity transmission network on Anglesey and have a capacity of up to 2.2GW, enough to meet the typical electricity needs of about 1.7 million homes.

## The consenting process

The consenting process required for Rhiannon Wind Farm is outlined below. It will include further environmental assessment, stakeholder consultation and technical consideration before any application for consent is submitted.

We aim to publish a Statement of Community Consultation in the autumn which will explain how we will consult with members of the public on Rhiannon Wind Farm.

The proposal for Rhiannon Wind Farm includes:

- Offshore turbines and the cables between turbines and offshore substations
- Cables taking electricity from the offshore substations to shore
- Onshore works including onshore cables from landfall points to an onshore substation to connect the electricity to the high voltage electricity transmission network.

These applications will be:

**1.** An application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate for offshore works within the red line boundary identified in the map.

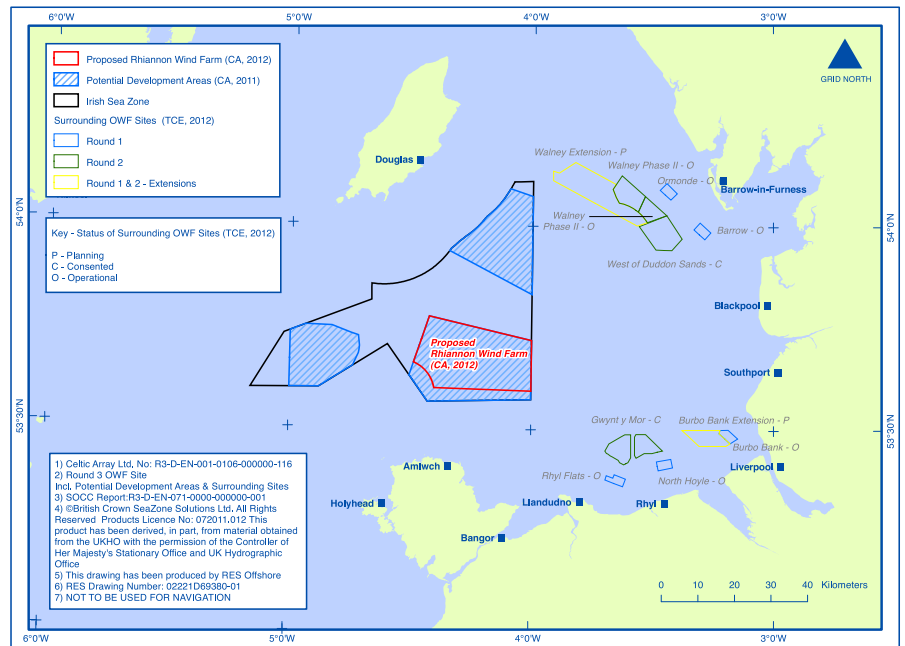
Once submitted, the Planning Inspectorate will follow a set process for receiving and reviewing responses and examining the application. It will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change as to whether to grant development consent.

More on this process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website:  
[www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate/](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate/)

Offshore wind farms also require a Marine Licence. For development within the Irish Sea Zone and English territorial waters, the Marine Licence is obtained from the Marine Management Organisation, and this will be included in the DCO.

**2.** Rhiannon Wind Farm will have infrastructure within Welsh territorial seas, so an application for a Marine Licence from the Welsh Government Marine Consents Unit is also required.

**3.** An application for planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 from Isle of Anglesey County Council for the new onshore substation and underground connection in Anglesey.



### The three Potential Development Areas, and the proposed Rhiannon Wind Farm, in the Irish Sea Zone

We plan to submit all three applications around the same time – anticipated to be in late 2013. However, before then, we will:

- carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment to identify and assess any likely significant environmental effects that might be caused by the proposal
- consult with statutory and technical consultees, relevant local authorities, land owners and members of the public
- carry out further technical survey work.

The submission of Rhiannon Wind Farm's offshore scoping report to the Planning Inspectorate in July to obtain its opinion on the potential effects that should be tackled in the Environmental Impact Assessment marks the first step in the consenting process. The document is available at [www.celticarray.com](http://www.celticarray.com)

### Consultation - how you can have your say

**Application 1:** We plan to consult formally on Application 1 (application for a DCO) in two distinct stages.

Stage 1 consultation is due to start in late autumn this year and will be supported by a Community Consultation Document, and public exhibitions will take place in several locations including Anglesey, North Wales and the Isle of Man. We will be publishing dates and venues nearer the time, locally and on our website.

We welcome your feedback and comments. We will consider all responses received as we progress through the pre-application stage and will provide feedback. We will take into account your comments as we refine our proposals.

We will carry out a second stage of consultation in 2013, when we will present our final plans and again we will welcome your comments, which will be taken into account before any submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

**Application 2:** We will provide information on infrastructure in the Welsh territorial seas at the same time as we consult on Application 1, and we will invite and welcome comments on these aspects of the work at that time.

**Application 3:** Our onshore pre-application programme runs slightly behind that of our offshore programme (although application submission will be at a similar time). We will provide more information on the onshore works needed on Anglesey and the work being carried out to identify preferred locations during our Stage 1 consultation. Local people will then be consulted on preferred locations for onshore works associated with the offshore wind farm, and the final proposals for the onshore connection will be presented at Stage 2 consultation. The Rhiannon Wind Farm onshore scoping report will be submitted to Isle of Anglesey Council for a scoping opinion at the end of this year or early next year.

### Ongoing engagement

In addition to the formal consultation stages outlined above, we will continue to engage informally with members of the public and other stakeholders on our proposals. Our website will be a key source of information and update. It is very important to us that issues and concerns are identified early and considered and taken on board before any application is submitted. We therefore encourage participation in the pre-application consultation periods – that is the time to make your concerns known.