



ALAB

An Bord Achomhairc Um
Cheadúnais Dobharshaothraithe
Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board

Screening for Appropriate Assessment of Wexford Harbour Aquaculture License Site T03/085A

ALAB Appeal Ref No. AP44/2019

Appeal description:

Appeal against the decision by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to grant (with variations) Aquaculture Licences to Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd. for the bottom cultivation of mussels at T03/085A, on the foreshore at Wexford Harbour, Co. Wexford.

Step 1 - Description of project/proposal and local site characteristics /purpose of this document

Brief description of the project

Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd. applied for an Aquaculture Licence for a 23.853-hectare site in Wexford Harbour for the bottom cultivation of mussels, in May 2010.

The Minister decided to grant a variation licence for an 18.3585-hectare site to Loch Garman Mussels. in September 2019 (Aquaculture Licence reference number T03/085A).

The licence application is for the bottom cultivation of mussels only; mussel seed is collected and relayed from coastal sites in the Irish Sea, then left in situ for a period of between 12 to 24 months, until it reaches market size. During this period sampling occurs to track stock quality (sampling increases in frequency nearing and during the harvesting period). Harvesting takes place using a mussel dredger and whilst harvesting can occur at any time of the year it most commonly occurs during the period from September through to April.

Brief description of the site characteristic

Wexford Harbour is located at the mouth of the River Slaney in County Wexford, on the southeast coast of Ireland. It is a large shallow bay, with areas of reclaimed land to the north and south created by dykes and drainage systems first built in the 19th century. These areas of land, known as the Slobs, are used for agriculture and are important for several bird species. The Slaney is the main freshwater input to the Harbour and its catchment area is notable for the high level of agricultural activity, including mainly dairy and tillage farming.

The underlying geology of the upper and central Slaney catchment consists of granite. The bedrock geology of the middle and lower reaches of the River Slaney comprises slate, schist and greywacke. The soils of the Slaney catchment are mainly Grey Brown Podzolics and Brown Podzols which are regarded as very fertile soil types.

Purpose of this document

Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd. appealed the minister's decision on the 16th of October 2019 (ALAB reference number AP44/2019).

An Appropriate Assessment was carried out by DAFM prior to its decision to grant the licence. In this appeal, Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd. in its response, dated 1 May 2024, to ALAB's Section 46 information request, dated 31 January 2024, submitted that a thorough screening exercise is required to determine that an Appropriate Assessment is actually required.

This document is to assist the Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the Aquaculture Licence Site T03/085A only and is based on the 2010 application area of 23.853 hectares (Appendix 1 Aquaculture Licence map).

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment report considers all potential cumulative impact existing, proposed and or permitted plans and projects, i.e. those plans and projects which could cause T03/85A in-combination effects.

Aquaculture licenced activities in Wexford Harbour were screened for Appropriate Assessment in 2016; the Marine Institute (MI), on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine produced a bay wide Appropriate Assessment Summary Report of Aquaculture in the Slaney River Valley SAC, the Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC, the Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA and the Raven SPA, in August 2016.

A literature review of published papers relating to the effects of mussel culture on water column nutrient levels was carried out as part of the Technical Advisors Final Report (Section 8.0 of the February 2025 Technical Advisors Final Report).

Following on from the findings of the literature review and having had regard to the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in the case of *Eco Advocacy v An Bord Pleanála* (Case C-721/21), referred to in the submissions made by Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd., it is my opinion that any potential reduction in water column nutrient levels in Wexford Harbour associated with the bottom cultivation of mussels cannot be considered grounds to negate the obligations to carry out an Appropriate Assessment as required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.

Even if mussel denitrification could be considered to be a standard feature inherent in the project which can be considered at screening stage within the meaning of the *Eco Advocacy* judgment, Appropriate Assessment is still required because the potential impacts of the project are not primarily related to water quality issues.

Step 2 - Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor Model and compilation of information on qualifying interests and conservation objectives.

The Qualifying Interests (QI's) highlighted in **bold text** are screened in for Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. Distances are measured as straight-line distances in open water, or along-shore coastal distances, depending on the site and QI's being considered.

Table 1: List of protect sites and their qualifying interests.

European Site Code	Distance from the Proposed Project (km) ¹	List of Qualifying Interests	Connections (Source-pathway-receptor link)	Qualifying Interests considered further in Screening Y/N	European Site Screening in for stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Slaney River Valley SAC (site code 000781)	0	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	No	No	

¹ At time of writing the T03-085A application area site boundary layer was not available to view on the Departments AQUAMIS (Aquaculture Management Information System) map viewer ([Licensed Aquaculture Sites](#)) and as such all distances to Natura 2000 sites have been calculated conservatively by reference to the boundary in the licence application and the adjacent boundaries on the AQUAMIS viewer.

		<p>Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p>Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] Alosa fallax fallax (Twaité Shad) [1103] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]</p>	<p>Yes – mussel seed relay and dredging of mussels to take place within 1130 Estuaries and 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>Yes - Mussel seed relay and dredging of mussels to take place within SAC boundary</p>	<p>Yes – possible physical disturbance and habitat loss</p> <p>Yes – possible increased suspended sediment concentrations</p>	Yes
Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC (site code 000710)	4.2	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima) [1330] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Dunes with Salix repens ssp. argentea (Salicion arenariae) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190]</p>	No	No	No
Long Bank SAC (site code 002161)	7.9	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater all the time [1110]	No	No	No
Blackwater Bank SAC (site code 002953)	10.8	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater all the time [1110]	No	No	No

		Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]			
Carnsore Point SAC (site code 002269)	9.8	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Reefs [1170] Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	No	No	No
Wexford Harbour and Slob SPA (site code 004076)	0	Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis) [A004] Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus) [A005] Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017] Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea) [A028] Bewick's Swan (Cygnus columbianus bewickii) [A037] Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus) [A038] Light-bellied Brent Goose (Branta bernicla hrota) [A046] Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048] Wigeon (Anas penelope) [A050] Teal (Anas crecca) [A052] Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) [A053] Pintail (Anas acuta) [A054] Scaup (Aythya marila) [A062] Goldeneye (Bucephala clangula) [A067] Red-breasted Merganser (Mergus serrator) [A069] Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus) [A082] Coot (Fulica atra) [A125] Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus) [A130] Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140] Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) [A141] Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place in SPA boundary	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance	Yes

		Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
Seas off Wexford SPA (site code 004237)	2.2	Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) [A013] Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>) [A016] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Mediterranean Gull (<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>) [A176] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place well within species foraging ranges	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance	Yes

		Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]			
Raven SPA (site Code 004019)	2.3	Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place well within species foraging ranges No	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance No	Yes
Lady's Island Lake SPA (site code 004009)	11.2	Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>) [A051] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place well within species foraging ranges No	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance No	Yes
Tacumshin Lake SPA (site code 004092)	12.3	Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>) [A004] Bewick's Swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>) [A037] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>) [A051] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]	No	No	No

		Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
Ballyteigue Burrow SPA (site code 004020)	18.3	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	No
Saltee Islands SPA (site code 004002)	21.2	Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>) [A016] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place well within species foraging ranges	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance	Yes
Bannow Bay SPA (site code 004033)	23	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]			

		Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	No
Keeragh Islands SPA (site code 0041180)	24.2	Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place well within species foraging ranges	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance	Yes
Cahore Marshes SPA (site code 004143)	26.9	Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	No	No	No
Tramore Back Strand SPA (site code 004027)	46.5	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]	No	No	No

		Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
Mid-Waterford Coast SPA (site code 004193)	53.8	Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]	Yes - vessel activity (mussel seed relaying, surveying and dredging) to take place well within species foraging ranges No	Yes - possible visual & above water noise disturbance No	Yes

Step 3 Assessment of likely significant effects

Table 2: List of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project.

Impacts	Possible Significance of Impacts (duration, magnitude etc.)
Physical disturbance and habitat loss	Possible impacts on Estuaries and Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
Increased suspended sediment concentrations	Possible temporal impacts on migratory fish species from increased suspended sediment concentrations
Visual impacts and above water noise disturbance	Possible impacts on bird species identified in table 1

In-Combination Effects

Following a search of relevant databases undertaken on the 2nd January 2025 and having regard to the European Commission's *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites*² Guidance document, the below project(s) have been identified as potential in-combination projects.

Table 3: List of potential in-combination projects

Application reference	Project description	Approximate distance aquaculture licence site (m)	Project status
AP46/2019 T03-077A	Riverbank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	0	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP38/2019 T03-030C	T.L. Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	0.049	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
AP43/2019 T03/083A ³	New site Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd	0.391	Proposed – new variation licence decision date

² European Commission: Directorate-General for Environment, Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC – Novembre 2001, Publications Office, 2002

³ At time of writing this application area site boundary layer was not available to view on the Departments AQUAMIS (Aquaculture Management Information System) map viewer ([Licensed Aquaculture Sites](#)) and as such the distance to T03-85A has been calculated conservatively by reference to the boundary in the licence application and the adjacent boundaries on the AQUAMIS viewer.

			04/09/2019, currently under ALAB appeal
T03-079	Paddy Cullen, Licensed Pacific Oyster Aquaculture Site	0.504	Permitted - licence granted
AP45/2019 T03-049C	River Bank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	0.516	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP45/2019 T03-049C1	River Bank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	0.516	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP41/2019 T03-046C	Fjord Fresh Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.059	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP38/2019 T03-030A2	T.L. Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.445	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
AP35/2019 T03-035B2	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.450	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP40/2019 T03/99A ³	New site - T. L. Mussels Ltd	1.482	Proposed – new variation licence decision date 04/09/2019, currently under ALAB appeal
AP35/2019 T03-035F&G2	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.525	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
T03-092	Patrick Cullen, Licensed Pacific Oyster Aquaculture Site	1.668	Permitted - licence granted 2024
AP35/2019 T03-035F&G3	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.699	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP39/2019 T03-030D	T.L. Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.779	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
T03-080A	Billy & Daniel Gaynor, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	1.956	Permitted - licence granted 2024

AP42/2019 T03-047C	Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.044	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP36/2019 T03-048A	Noel & Sheila Scallan, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.156	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
T03-035B1 AP35/2019	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.214	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP42/2019 T03-047A	Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.306	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
AP38/2019 T03-030E	T.L. Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.329	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
T03-090A	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.391	Permitted - licence granted 2024
AP45/2019 T03-049A	River Bank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.445	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, original licence granted 2002
AP35/2019 T03-035F&G1	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.451	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
T03-055F&C	Crescent Seafoods Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.596	Permitted - licence granted 2024
AP35/2019 T03-035A	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	2.662	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
FS006085	Wexford County Council, Foreshore lease application for the removal and replacing of existing slipway at Ferrybank	3.058	Foreshore lease determined December 2022
T03-071A	River Bank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.245	Permitted - licence granted 2024
T03-030F	T.L. Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.259	Permitted - licence granted

FS006960	Wexford County Council Trinity Wharf Foreshore Licence	3.284	Foreshore lease determined December 2022
AP37/2019 T03/91A ³	New site Noel & Sheila Scallan	3.353	Proposed – new variation licence decision date 04/09/2019, currently under ALAB appeal
AP47/2019 T03-052B	WD Shellfish Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.416	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP45/2019 T03-049B	River Bank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.684	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP42/2019 T03-047B	Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.690	Permitted – existing renewal licence currently under ALAB appeal
T03-072B	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.701	Permitted - licence granted 2024
T03-052A AP47/2019	WD Shellfish Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.825	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, original licence granted 2002
AP41/2019 T03-046A	Fjord Fresh Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	3.914	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP35/2019 T03-035C	Wexford Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	4.509	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, and licence granted
AP48/2019 T03-055E	Crescent Seafoods Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	5.193	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, original licence granted 2002
AP45/2019 T03-049D	River Bank Mussels Ltd, Licensed Blue Mussel Aquaculture Site	5.500	Permitted - ALAB appeal withdrawn, original licence granted 2002
S0016-02	Iarnród Éireann, EPA Dumping at Sea Permit	7.595	Existing – licence granted October 2023

FS007219	Iarnród Éireann, Rosslare Europort Maintenance Dredging, Foreshore	8.486	Existing – licence granted July 2023
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The following plans, related to the development of the maritime environment were also identified:

- The Climate Action Plan 2023
- River Basin Management Plans (RBMP)
- South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan
- Wexford County Development plan 2022 – 2028

Likely significant in-combination effects between this project and the above listed projects and plans, on the conservation objectives of the Slaney River Valley SAC, Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA, Seas off Wexford SPA, Raven SPA, Lady’s Island Lake SPA, Saltee Islands SPA, Keeragh Islands SPA and Mid-Waterford Coast SPA cannot be excluded at this stage; particularly in relation to those projects which could potentially cause increased physical disturbance and habitat loss, increased suspended sediment concentrations and or increased visual impacts and above water noise disturbance. Such projects could include construction works below the high-water mark, mussel seed relaying, surveying & dredging and dumping at sea.

Were mitigation measures considered during the screening process? No

Step 4 Screening Determination Statement


The assessment of significant effects:

On the basis of the information on file, and having regard to:

- The nature and scale of the proposed development
- The distance to the nearest European sites
- The potential for in-combination effects with other plans and projects
- Physical disturbance and habitat loss
- Increased suspended solids concentrations
- Visual impacts and above water noise disturbance

Having considered the legal framework applicable to Appropriate Assessment, **it was concluded that the proposed Aquaculture Licence to Loch Garman Harbour Mussels Ltd. for the bottom cultivation of mussels at T03/085A Wexford Harbour will require Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment as it cannot be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening that the proposed project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European Site.**

Conclusion

	Tick as appropriate	Recommendation
(i) It is clear that there is no likelihood of significant/possible effects on a European site		
(ii) It is uncertain whether the proposal will have a significant/possible effect on a European site	✓	Proceed to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
(iii) Significant effects are likely		
Senior Technical Advisor Signature and Date	 <hr/> Mary Hegarty, 14/02/2025	

