

Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs
Marine & Fisheries Division

**LICENCE ISSUED UNDER THE MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009, PART
4, MARINE LICENSING**

MARINE CONSTRUCTION LICENCE

QUB Marine Labs Renewable Energy Test Sites

Licence Number: MLVAR2026051

This licence varies MLVAR2026042. The Licensee name has been updated. Please refer to note (1).

PART 1 – PARTICULARS

1. Licensee(s) Name & Address:

School of Natural and Built Environment
Queen's University Belfast
Stranmillis Road,
BT7 1NN

**2. Names, and operators, of the vessels to be employed to undertake or support the deposit,
relocation or removal operations:**

To be provided under **Condition 6**.

3. Description of works and nature and quantity of all deposits below Mean High Water Springs:

The Marine Licence (ML) is to facilitate the testing of marine renewable energy technologies (and their sub-systems) in relevant field conditions.

4. Location of works:

QML Tidal Test Site; Ballyhenry Bay, Strangford Narrow
Latitude: 54.380783
Longitude: -5.555867

QML Scaled Wave Site; Marfield Bay, Strangford Lough

Latitude: 54.404217

Longitude: -5.579333

See **Appendix A** for location map of works

5. Valid:

From: 21/07/2026

Until: 14/05/2029

6. Licence Documentation

Marine Licence Application Form (dated 04/06/2025)

Application Cover Letter (dated 04/06/2025)

Habitats Regulation Assessment (dated 04/06/2025)

Method Statement (dated 04/06/2025)

Health and Safety Plan and Risk Assessment (dated 04/06/2025)

Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol (dated 04/06/2025)

MMDS – Efficacy Report (dated 04/06/2025)

Bio-security Protocol (dated 04/06/2025)

Navigation Risk Assessment (dated 07/05/2026)

Variation Application Form (dated 02/06/2026)

PART 2 - CONDITIONS

Licence Condition(s):

NOTE: FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE LICENCE CONDITIONS BELOW MAY RESULT IN ENFORCEMENT ACTION BEING TAKEN

1. The Licensee(s) must commence works with 12 months of the date of this licence.
2. All conditions of this licence bind any persons whom, for the time being, owns, occupies or enjoys any use of the works for which this licence has been granted, in relation to those licensed activities authorised under section 66 of the 2009 Act, whether or not the licence has been transferred to that person.
3. The Licensee(s) must receive written authorisation from the licensing authority to assign or transfer the consent. The licensing authority must confirm in writing to both the original Licensee(s) and any proposed new Licensee(s) that the licence has been transferred/assigned before any works may commence under the new Licensee(s).
4. The Licensee(s) shall not carry out any licensable activity other than that detailed in the Marine Licence application documents received by the licensing authority and deemed complete on 14th July 2025. The Licensee(s) shall contact the Department if it is proposed to vary the materials or methods to be used from those described in the documentation supplied in connection with the Marine Licence application.

5. The licensee (s) must commence works in line with condition 1 and complete works within the valid dates of this licence. After that date, the licence will expire in accordance with section 71 (4) of the Act.
6. The Licensee(s) must ensure that the Department is informed of any contractor appointed to carry out part or all of the works by email to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk **no less than 7 working days** before the commencement of the licensed activity. The licence holder must ensure that a copy of this licence and any subsequent revisions or amendments has been provided to, read and understood by any agents, contractors or sub-contractors that will carry on any licensed activity authorised by this licence on behalf of the licence holder.

Prior to the commencement of the Licensed Activity

7. The Licensee(s) must issue local notification to marine users, including fisherman's organisations, neighboring port authorities, HM Coastguard, UKHO, Kingfisher Information Service of Seafish, and other local stakeholders, a minimum of 14 days prior to commencement of work. MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk must be copied in on the notification.

Reason: To make local marine users aware.

8. The Licensee(s) must ensure that HM Coastguard, in this case offshoreenergy.notifications@mcga.gov.uk, is made aware of the all activities to be undertaken prior to commencement of work. Notification must be made to zone34@hmcg.gov.uk and copied to the Licensing Authority MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk

Reason: To adhere to Maritime Safety Legislation and to protect human health and marine users.

9. The Licensee(s) must notify The Source Data Receipt team, UK Hydrographic Office, Taunton. Somerset, TA1 2DN (Email: sdr@ukho.gov.uk; Tel: 01823 337900) at least **10 days** before commencement of the works, to allow for any necessary amendments to nautical charts. The UK Hydrographic Office must also be notified upon completion of the works. MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk must be copied into all notifications.

Reason: To adhere to Maritime Safety Legislation and to protect human health and marine users.

10. A Third-Party Verification of the mooring arrangements for all floating devices must be undertaken 4 weeks prior to construction and submitted to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk for approval.

Reason: To ensure the mooring design is suitable for the location.

11. No part of the authorised project may commence until DAERA, in consultation with the MCA, has confirmed in writing that the licensee(s) has taken into account and, so far as is applicable to that stage of the project, adequately addressed all Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) recommendations as appropriate to the authorised project contained within

MGN654 "Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response Issues" and its annexes. Please send authorisation request to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk.

Reason: To adhere to Maritime Safety Legislation and to protect human health and marine users.

12. The Licence Holder must submit a device-specific Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA) for written approval to the Licensing Authority at MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk at least **3 months** prior to deployment. No deployment of devices may be undertaken prior to written approval from the Licensing Authority.

Reason: To identify and mitigate hazards to ensure safe navigation of vessels to protect human health and marine users

During the Licensing Activity

13. In the event of a discovery of an archaeological object and/or remains during the works the licensee(s) must: (1) record the position and details of the site; (2) cease work and (3) report your discovery to and contact MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk immediately so further advice may be sought.

Reason: To ensure that historic monuments and archaeological objects are protected.

14. In the event of a discovery of wreck material during the works, the Licensee must report it to the 'Receiver of Wreck', Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) **within 28 days**. The licensee(s) must: (1) record the position and details of the site; (2) cease work and (3) report your discovery to and contact MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk immediately so further advice may be sought.

Reason: To ensure that recovered wreck material is declared and dealt with appropriately.

15. Marine Mammal Observer records to be submitted to the Marine Conservation & Reporting Branch, Marine Wildlife team (Marine.Wildlife@daera-ni.gov.uk) and MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk

Reason: To ensure that marine mammals are protected

16. In case of damage to, or destruction or decay of, the authorised project seaward of MHWS or any part thereof, excluding the exposure of cables, the licensee(s) shall, as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 24 hours following the becoming aware of any such damage, destruction or decay, notify MCA, Irish Lights, the Kingfisher Information Service of Seafish and the UKHO. Copy MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk into any correspondence.

17. The Licensee(s) must submit an updated site-wide NRA for written approval by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) every two years. If an NRA has not been updated within two years a new update must be completed prior to any deployment of devices. Copy MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk into any correspondence.

Reason: To identify and mitigate hazards to ensure safe navigation of vessels to protect human health and marine users

Upon Completion of the Licensed Activity

18. The Licensee(s) must, within eight weeks after the completion of the licensed works, make a written report to the licensing authority stating the quantity and description of all articles and substances deposited under the authority of this licence. This report is to be submitted to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk. This report will be held by the Licensing Authority and details considered 'Commercial in confidence' should be marked on the report by the Licensee(s).
19. The Licensee(s) must inform the licensing authority at MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk of the finishing date of the licensed work within **28 days** of completion.
20. The Licensee(s) must notify The Source Data Receipt team, UK Hydrographic Office, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2DN (Email: sdr@ukho.gov.uk; Tel: 01823 337900) of completion of the works within 14 days. MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk must be copied in on the notification.

Reason: To adhere to Maritime Safety Legislation and to protect human health and marine users

Signed on behalf of the Department:



Dated: 21/07/2026

NOTE:

- (1) The licensee name has been updated to the School of Natural and Built Environment.
- (2) The licensing authority would advise that this licence does not negate the licensees' responsibility to gain any other environmental or access permissions that may be required to progress the works.
- (3) Under Part 4, Chapter 1, paragraph 72 of the **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009**, the licensing authority may revoke, vary or suspend this licence if it appears to the authority that the holder is in breach of a condition included in it, or if it appears to the authority that the licence ought to be varied, suspended or revoked because of a change of circumstances relating to the marine environment or human health, including a change in scientific knowledge. A revocation, variation or suspension may also be enforced in the interests of safety of navigation.

(4) A person who deposits material in contravention of the terms of a licence is guilty of an offence under Section 85 of the Act. It is a defence under paragraph 86 (1) for a person charged with such an offence to prove 'force majeure'. However they are also required to prove that they took steps within a reasonable time to inform the licensing authority of all details pertaining to the incident contained in paragraph 86 (2). The licensing authority shall be obliged to report force majeure cases immediately to the OSPAR Commission.

(5) Attention is drawn to the necessity of complying where appropriate with the **Radioactive Substances Act 1960**, the **Prevention of Oil Pollution Act 1971** and to the **Merchant Shipping (Dangerous Goods) (Amendment) Rules 1968**.

(6) If within 28 days of the issue of a licence the person to whom it was issued requests the licensing authority to give him notice in writing of the reasons for the inclusion of any provision in it, the Authority shall comply with his request within 28 days of receiving it.

(7) Anyone who fails to comply with a condition on a Marine Licence commits an offence under Section 85 of the **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009**, and may be subject to enforcement action. Possible enforcement actions are compliance notices, remediation notices, fixed monetary penalties and variable monetary penalties. In the worst cases, a person found guilty of an offence on summary conviction may be subject to a fine not exceeding £50,000. In addition, a person found guilty of an offence on conviction on indictment, to a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to both. Further details can be found at our guidance note

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/marine-licensing-guidance-enforcement-under-part-4-marine-and-coastal-access-act%2C-2009-may-2016.pdf>

INFORMATIVES:

Maritime & Coastguard Agency advice on Navigational Safety

- No radio beacon or radar beacon operating in the Marine frequency bands shall be installed or used on the works without prior written approval by OFCOM.
- Any jack up barges / vessels utilised during the works/laying of the cable, when jacked up, should exhibit signals in accordance with the UK Standard Marking Schedule for Offshore Installations.
- If in the opinion of the Secretary of State the assistance of a Government Department, including the broadcast of navigational warnings, is required in connection with the works or to deal with any emergency arising from the failure to mark and light the works as required by the consent or to maintain the works in good order or from the drifting or wreck of the works, the owner of the works shall be liable for any expense incurred in securing such assistance.
- Any consented cable/pipeline protection works must ensure existing and future safe navigation is not compromised. The MCA would accept a maximum of 5% reduction in surrounding depth referenced to Chart Datum but under no circumstances should depth reductions compromise safe navigation.

DAERA advice on preventing water pollution

- The applicant strictly referring and adhering to DAERA's Standing Advice on Pollution Prevention Guidance and Discharges to the Water Environment, which are available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/standing-advice-development-may-have-effect-water-environment-including-groundwater-and-fisheries>

- All work must comply with the Control Of Pollution (Oil Storage) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. A key requirement of the Oil Storage Regulations is that oil storage containers (including temporary storage) must have a secondary containment system (a bund, which is an outer wall or enclosure designed to contain the contents of an inner tank, or a drip tray) to ensure that any leaking oil is contained and does not enter the aquatic environment.
- Water Management Unit would emphasise the importance of ensuring all equipment / vessels are in good working order to minimise the risk of pollution from hydrocarbons
- and / or hydraulic fluids.

DAERA advice on protection of archaeological objects

- The Licensee(s) attention is drawn to Article 42 of the **Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995** that requires finders of archaeological objects to report within 14 days to a relevant authority.

DAERA advice on recovery of wreck material

- The Licensee(s) must report any recovered wreck material to the Receiver of Wreck (Maritime and Coastguard Agency) in accordance with the **Merchant Shipping Act 1995**.

DAERA advice on marine litter

- Any marine litter collected during the proposed works must be appropriately disposed of, to prevent litter entering the marine environment and adversely impacting Marine Protected Areas.

Marine Conservation informative

- All associated equipment, machinery and vessels should undergo regular Check Clean Dry procedures as outlined here. [Check Clean Dry](#)
- Equipment should be left to dry between use whenever possible.
- Fouling animals and plants should be routinely removed and disposed of in waste facilities away from the marine environment.
- The biofouling material and water used for cleaning should not re-enter the marine environment.
- Staff should be provided with INNS identification guides as an aid and any suspect INNS should be photographed and reported to CEDaR and DAERA.
- A contingency plan should be produced so that staff are aware of the appropriate procedures if they do find a potential INNS.
- Adhere to applicant's bio-security protocol (following [Northern Ireland Biosecurity guidelines](#) and [DAERA Marine Invasive Non-Native Species Guidance](#)), including [Check Clean Dry](#) procedures. Staff must report any INNS to DAERA MFD or CEDaR.
- All solid waste and litter encountered or generated during the proposed project must be collected and appropriately disposed of at the end of each working day to prevent it from entering the marine environment and becoming marine litter, following [DAERA Marine Litter Standing Advice](#).
- [DAERA Marine Wildlife Disturbance Guidance](#) must be adhered to. To prevent marine mammal disturbance as required under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), The Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.
- No fuel/oil should be stored close to the water. Any fuelling required will only occur at a non-hydrologically linked location using a buffer of at least 10m.

The Commissioners of Irish Lights

- Before any aid to navigation (AtoN) can be established, altered or disestablished approval in the form of Statutory Consent under the Merchant Shipping Act must be obtained from the Commissioners of Irish Lights through the Local Lighthouse Authority who in this case is Ards & North Down Borough Council.
- The Habitats Regulations Assessment (or Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening/Test for Likely Significant Effects) conducted as part of the licensing process should consider the potential impact of aids to navigation on pontoons
- and associated moorings which may be required as part of the project.

Marine Licensing informative

- Any person authorised by the licensing authority will be permitted to inspect the licensed activity at any reasonable time.
- The Licensee(s) must ensure that copies of the licence are available for inspection by any authorised Enforcement Officer at:
 - a. The premises of the Licensee(s)
 - b. The premises of the operating facility
 - c. The site of the works (including on board vessels)
- The Licensee(s) must ensure all works are completed in accordance with methodology provided on (09/06/2025).

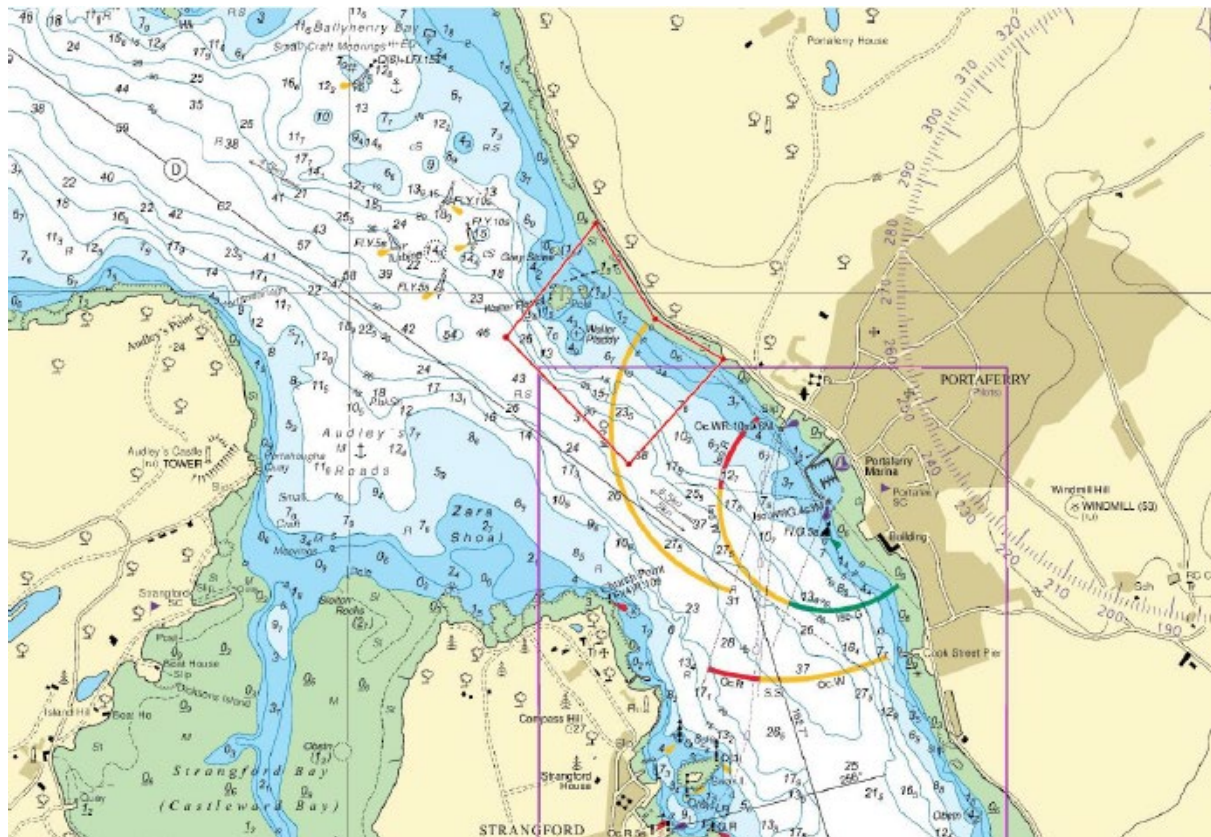
DAERA Standing Advice

The applicant's attention is drawn to the following links which provide standing advice to be considered:

- [Planning in the Coastal Area](#)
- [DAERA Standing Advice – WTR – Pollution Prevention Guidance – Sept 2022 Final.pdf \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)
- [DAERA Standing Advice – Marine Litter.pdf \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/marine-invasive-non-native-species-guidance>
- [Marine Wildlife Disturbance](#)
- [Marine Map Viewer](#)
- [Decisions by marine policy – authorisation decision](#)

Appendix A – Location map of works

QML Tidal Test Site; Ballyhenry Bay, Strangford Narrow



QML Scaled Wave Site; Marfield Bay, Strangford Lough

