

**File name:** offshore\_wind\_\_niamh\_kenny\_\_\_invest\_ni (1080p).mp4

**Moderator questions in Bold**, Respondents in Regular text.

**KEY: Unable to decipher** = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

Niamh Kenny: Good morning everybody, fantastic to see so many people here in person and actually some people that I've met quite a few times on Zoom and then I walk past you because everyone looks different in 3D, don't they? It's kind of, a-, it's kind of a strange environment. So it's really great to be here. This event actually was the brain child of Sam (mw 00.30) from Simply Blue and myself. A few months ago we were thinking about, 'Okay, we're probably going to be competitors in one sense in that we're both going to be hoping to develop projects here in Northern Ireland,' but since we've been great friends for many years we were hoping that we could find a way to collaborate as well. And so we came up with the idea of trying to do an industry event which would encourage, I suppose, the supply chain to start building up and also to encourage all of the stakeholders, particularly at government level, to realise that there is great momentum here about an offshore industry for Northern Ireland. So, so it's great to see it in fruition and thanks so much to Invest NI really for jumping behind it so wholeheartedly and actually taking over all of the organisation. So it's been-, it's been a real pleasure to deal with everybody and thanks to-, thanks to everybody for, for helping. So my name is Niamh Kenny, I'm the project developer for North Channel Wind which is a couple of projects which are being developed by SPM Offshore. SPM is-, my little thing's not working, is it? There you go, that's the North Channel Wind. So SPM Offshore is a tier one oil and gas company. The-, I suppose the main business of the-, of the company is to provide floating solutions to the offshore energy industry and up to now that's by and large been oil and gas.

The company builds and delivers and operates what are called FPSOs, they're floating platforms for the supply of oil and moorings and (mw 02.07) and so on. I suppose the, the beauty in a way of the, the oil and has companies entering these renewable markets is that they have huge expertise and knowledge in terms of industrialisation, in terms of actually delivering (mw 02.24) operations and in terms of the-, yes, the deliverability I would say is so important and I think quite a few people have alluded to this already today that there's-, you know, it's going to be challenging, it's going to be extremely challenging to deliver the amount of capacity throughout the UK and Ireland that we've heard about this morning. You know, there's bottlenecks everywhere you look in terms of port facilities, in terms of infrastructure, in terms of suppliers, manufacturers, even raw materials and, and actually staff, a huge shortage of skilled people as well in the industry. So it's so important to activate the, the supply chain early and I think this is why today's event is so very important. SPM have developed their own floating platform which is called a Tension Leg Platform (ph 03.11) and ultimately this may not, by the way, be the technology that we decide to use in Northern Ireland. It most likely will be but it's not-, SPM is looking at this from a project development perspective, not just from the opportunity to deploy their own technology and they see the opportunity in Northern Ireland for low cost projects. However, I think that the, the TLP is actually ideally suited to the Northern Irish market. The platform is particularly small, I suppose, in terms of footprint.

Obviously these are giant structures but it's, it's relatively small, let's say, so it has a reduced seabed footprint which will, I suppose, suit Northern Ireland. We've got a constrained seabed and it will-, it will be less obtrusive, I suppose, in, in the-, in the context of the, the, the seascape that we have here. It has a low motion counter pitch, sort of, system, turbine friendly concept, so the turbine sits and the interface between the turbine and the platform is, I'm led to believe from the engineering, particularly efficient system. And we think that this particular type of platform here in Northern Ireland is going to result in a particularly low cost of energy which is obviously the ultimate goal for, for Northern Ireland. I suppose the beauty of trying to develop a project like this in Northern Ireland is that unlike almost every other place that I've been involved with we actually have all of the infrastructure here on our doorstep and I'm delighted to see Steven here from, from Harland & Wolff and, and Colin from Belfast Harbour. Like we have beautiful facilities here that are just ideally suited for the-, for the fabrication and for the assembly of these floating platforms and I know that there's a lot of other engineering firms here in the room today that will also be able to participate in the-, in the development of these but if you look at the, the type of assembly hub and yard fabrication that this type of project requires, you know, if you, kind of, wrote it down and then threw it out into the world people would pick Belfast as the ideal location. So it could not be a better location for the, the development of a floating, floating (mw 05.30) projects. Did I go the wrong way? I think I missed a slide. Actually it's fine. I'm not an expert on the TLP so probably better not to speak about it too much.

So we've, we've been here for about a year looking at Northern Ireland and trying to figure out is there going to be an opportunity here and is there going to be a way of doing business here? So we've spent a lot of time doing site characterisation and that means basically you have to look at all of the different constraints that exist in the-, in and around the, the, the coastline to try and find the optimum site. So there's quite a lot of designations here in Northern Ireland, there's a lot of protected areas, there's a lot of cables, there's a lot of shipping, there's obviously a lot of sensitivities in relation to ornithology and marine mammals and so on so we've come up with a couple of sites which you can see there. These are not definitive. Obviously the Crown of State (ph 06.30) have not yet announced a leasing round although I'm delighted to see that they're here and, and so we're, we're taking a little bit of a gamble in a sense because the normal process as we outlined is that you would wait for the leasing round. You would bid for, for seabed rights and then you would do your consenting and so we've taken a bit of a chance and a bit of a gamble and said, 'Look, we're going to spend, you know, a good bit of money here. We're going to try and think that we've picked the right location. We hope that it will be the right location for the leasing round and we're going to try and consent these, these sites in advance of the leasing round.' So there's about 400 megawatts in total, potentially that could be increased, so we are looking at optimising the sites at the moment. I mean, potentially we could-, we could get up to 800 megawatts if we-, if we can lay it out properly and if the seabed conditions are right and if, if, if, if, if.

So we are looking at optimising and trying to increase the capacity within the sites that we've identified and there is obviously, I mean, we'll probably hear a little bit more about it from, from Simply Blue in a minute, there are other locations, this is not the only location in Northern Ireland but these are the ones

that we're focusing on. So you can see there the indication of cable routes, that basically is the area that we're going to scope from an environmental perspective which brings us until two potential grid locations being Ballylumford and (mw 07.54). So again there's no secret in any of this. This is, you know, anybody who would start looking at projects in Northern Ireland would be all looking at the same locations but the actual delivery of the grid is a key issue because the system here in Northern Ireland is such that you can't actually apply for the grid connection until you have some, sort of, a licence or planning permission or a lease. And that causes problems with these, sort of, larger scale infrastructure projects because ideally they should be developed in tandem, the onshore and the offshore scoping should be done in tandem. And it, it, kind of, goes back to what Steven was saying in relation to the joined up approach to, to planning and, and to scoping and so on, that ideally we should be able to scope all of those areas, both onshore and offshore now and we should be able to carry out an EIA for an area of search. And then once the-, once the leasing round is complete and we know exactly where we are we will have already done full environmental impact assessment for those areas and then our planning can be specific to the areas that we're-, that we secure. That's an ideal world and unfortunately it just doesn't quite exist in Northern Ireland yet, the opportunity to, to do it that way.

So we'll have to do the offshore scoping and, yes, yes, I think first and then probably come along afterwards and do the onshore-, the onshore work. Okay, so we've seen three timelines so far today and mine is different again. So we believe, and optimistically, that we can actually be operational here well before 2030 so the, the caveats are that we are going to, as I said, press ahead with the environmental works and with the marine life (mw 09.47) and again extreme thanks to (mw 09.50) for taking a chance on this and, sort of, saying, 'Yes, look, go for it. We'll help you.' And they are really supporting the marine licencing exercise that we've-, that we've-, that we've started, and OPS have been contracted to do the, the scoping and the environmental works. So we're going to do all of our-, all of our environmental work, our licensing work and as much of the pre-development work that we can in advance of the leasing round and we're hoping, Will, that once Celtic Sea is complete by 2023 that actually we will have a leasing round here in 2024. If that happens then we can accelerate our own programme and we can actually have all of-, hopefully all of the, the permits and grid connection in place by 2026 and then be FID 2027 and then be operational and in construction over two years probably at an eighteen month and be in the water by 2029. So it's not impossible, it's very challenging and, I mean, there's so many things that, that yet have to be put in place to enable that to happen. The grid is challenging, the, the onshore planning is challenging, obviously the leasing round is challenging but it's-, you know, I suppose it-, we believe that if we-, if we-, if we're proactive and if we take the, the, the chance that, that it's possible. And, you know, I, I live in the world of if it's possible then, you know, let's, let's go for it.

So I'm not going to go into this because Russell has, has covered it really well but the, the total investment for us is, is going to be in the region of about £1 billion and if the full, I suppose, opportunity of, of one gigawatt is realised then that's going to result in an, an investment of somewhere in the region of about £3 billion. That's hugely significant for, for Northern Ireland and, you know, I think it's, it's the opportunity that we all need to, sort of, seize here today. The jobs number, again Steven said we haven't quite finished our, our study yet but by the 6th September these figures will probably be clearer but based on our jurisdictions, you know, there's, there's a, a huge number of, of direct jobs and even more

significant number of indirect jobs created by these types of large infrastructure projects. And I think Northern Ireland as I said is, is the ideal hub and the ideal location for that because the manufacturing base is already here and the history and the tradition of, of ship building is exactly what's needed for this type of floating technology. So I think that, you know, the, the security supply issue has already been, been covered. Our project will power potentially up to half a million homes based on the, the regulator's figures so again this, you know, in the current environment that's really something to, to press ahead with and, and to try to-, to try to action, I suppose. So that's it. This-, everybody apart from Julien is here from the team today. Andy is, is there and Anwar came all the way from Monaco to say hello to everybody. So we're really delighted to be here and we're really delighted to be working in Northern Ireland and please, if you see me or Andy or Anwar around later then come and meet with us and we're hoping to get out and meet everybody.

The communities, fishing communities and obviously all the stakeholders over the coming year or two. So, yes, look out for us. Captions by [www.takenote.co](http://www.takenote.co)