

**File name:** offshore\_wind\_\_colin\_mcclements\_\_\_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).

Colin McClements: Hi. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Colin McClements, the commercial manager of Belfast Harbour. Before I start, I'd just like to thank Invest NI for bringing us together again. It's brilliant to move away from the, the world of the screen and the camera. It's also great to be here in the-, in Queen's Island, which was really the beating heart of industrial Belfast, as we look forward to the next chapter in the green energy revolution. The timing's more relevant than ever with everything that's going on in the world, be that climate change. We've had our legislation published locally, energy strategy in place, the conflict in Europe, sanctions and rising costs of energy. The opportunity for us as an island nation to own more of our energy should be met with excitement and a renewed degree of urgency. So, with that in mind, I congratulate Invest NI for bringing together all the stakeholders, policymakers, developers, interested businesses, to discuss the opportunity to pursue the sector here in Northern Ireland, with people like us who are already invested in the sector, and we want to do business close to home. So, I'm going to keep it short this morning-, this afternoon, sorry. You've already heard from everyone earlier about the scale of the opportunity and the desire to do this. Secondly, I'm holding back a rabid crowd of great local companies who are going to tell you all about their experience in the sector and how successful they've been at exporting their goods and services across the world.

So, a little bit about the port. The first legislation was passed pertaining to the port in 1613. It was formalised from different trader-owned statuses in 1847, with the passing of the Belfast Harbour Act and the creation of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. We're a trust port, and a trusted partner with no shareholders, we're entirely self-funded. We reinvest all our profits back into the business every year, and investments in our sector are large and they're specialist by their very nature. So, being an entity that self-funds means that profitability is crucial. We're a world-leading regional port. We handled over 25 million tonnes of cargo over our wharves and quays in 2021. Those 25 million tonnes arrived and left in around 5,000 shipping movements, each of those carrying anything from a few hundred tonnes up to 65,000 tonnes. Our 25 million tonnes is 70% of Northern Ireland's trade. It's the second port on the island and the tenth largest in the UK. The harbour estate where we are today is a place to do business. It's around 2,000 acres of land and 1,000 acres of water. Our land is all reclaimed, and would still be tidal mudflats if it wasn't for the interventions of our forefathers. The estate's home to many world-renowned and household names, Harland & Wolff, Belfast City Airport, Spirit Aerospace [sic], formerly Bombardier, are amongst our largest land users. Titanic Quarter, The Odyssey Trust and Catalyst Inc. are all based here in Queen's Island, and drive forward the evolution as the port moves into digital innovation and tourism and leisure land uses. Global companies such as Baker McKenzie and Allen & Overy now call Belfast Harbour an integral location in their businesses. As you can see from the air, a fundamental part of the city, about 20% of the land in the city of Belfast.

Our so-called traditional port business is made up of several key sectors. In the unit load, that's ferries and containers, we would have up to ten daily connections with the GB ports of Loch Ryan, Heysham and Liverpool, and on those sailings there would be 600,000 freight vehicles every year and 1.3 million passengers. The remainder of our passengers arrive on up to 150 cruise ships per annum, making us the second busiest cruise port in the UK, and, on regular container services, we've connections with all the major European hub ports. We ship over 130,000 boxes in and out per annum. On the bulk side, where we handle larger shipments, we see deliveries of essential goods, liquid and solid fuels, grain and animal feeds, construction and manufacturing inputs, such as timber and steel. And, as an exporter, we ship out scrap metals and other recyclables. We supply aggregates to the construction and road building sectors in Great Britain and further afield. As a port, our role is not to physically import, export, or trade in goods, but we invest in infrastructure. We build infrastructure that enables our customers to be competitive.

I'll take you few a-, through a few examples. Warehousing and bulk storage enables large ships to be discharged quickly and return to sea. The goods are then drip-fed from transit storage to customers. We've over 1 million square feet of warehousing in the port dedicated to housing raw material such as grain and animal feeds, as you can see in the picture, right through to timber, paper, steel and finished goods. We have a couple of retail distribution centres for our logistics firms. Specially designed ramps and berths enable the quick and efficient discharge, docking and unloading of certain vessels. The twin-tier ramp shown in the picture there was a £16 million investment in efficiency for Stena Line in 2019, cutting the turnaround time of their new vessels in half, effectively, ensuring they spend more time at sea and less time in port. Efficient and modern cranes and handling equipment result in lower emissions and new ways of working. The Belfast Container Terminal underwent a £40 million refurbishment and retooling over the last three years, and there's eight of the gantry cranes that you can see in the picture controlled by two of the so-called PlayStation-generation crane drivers back in the office with joysticks and screens. Intelligent technology allows those cranes to work fully autonomously overnight when the terminal is unmanned.

But we also need to diversify. As a business which has traditionally managed a significant throughput of imported fossil fuels, the transition to electrification and renewable energy will undoubtedly reduce the scale of that business. So, we diversify our investments in line with key strategic objectives, decarbonisation, smarter initiatives, and the creation of an economic hub, as well as our core port objectives. So, in the past twenty years, we've seen changes such as this. SeaCat ferries docked in Donegall Quay right up to 2005. Today, 1,500 workers are based there in modern, sustainable Grade A office accommodation with a new hotel and multi-storey car park to complement the spaces. We've expanded outside of the harbour estate and into Giant's Park, creating Belfast Harbour Studios. These have been home to productions by industry heavyweights such as Warner Brothers and Netflix. And, with our partnership with Titanic Quarter Limited, we've realised opportunities to improve our tourism offer, accentuating our maritime heritage and contributing to the city council objective of increasing the number of people who live in the city centre.

That's just some of the many stories of Belfast Harbour, and we'll now focus on our offshore wind story. In 2011, we created a vision alongside the world's largest offshore developer. We wanted to create a home port to service Ørsted's Crown Estate Round 3 pipeline in their future potential activities in the Irish Sea, and also other opportunities that we knew would arise nearer home. So, with the experience of Ørsted and studying other ports across Europe, we refined the design of our D1 facility. And, in 2012, it became the largest construction project ever undertaken by Belfast Harbour. It was constructed by local contractors Farrans at a cost of £53 million in record-quick time and all local content. It became for us the embodiment of infrastructure that enabled our customers to be competitive. It's allowed our customers to receive deliveries of components from multiple suppliers, multiple locations, preassemble, pre-commission and re-export with minimal vessel downtime, a really key part of an efficient offshore construction programme. In fact, in the next five years, two-thirds of the UK's offshore wind capacity will be built from here. So, what did we build? We built the only facility of its type in the Irish Sea, and we still hold that title. We've a dedicated berth of 480 metres long, 60 metres wide, with direct access onto the Victoria Channel, which offers non-tidally restricted access up to 9.3 metres of water depth. We've 50 acres of heavy-duty load storage area, and a quay area strong enough to accommodate the largest cranes and turbine components in the world. The site offers flexibility of use depending on our clients' needs, including the ability for clients to accommodate both foundation and turbine contracts at once. All, all areas of the berth are suitable for jack-up vessels thanks to the stone reinforcement in the seabed, and we've even mixed wind turbines and cruise passengers.

Finally, we do have capacity to grow further. We hold valid planning and marine licensing for the D3 development just downriver from D1. It will offer further port capacity, and opens up access for further hinterland storage. While the demands of the port business are unlikely to permit it to be a wind-only berth, it will be a critical piece in the port jigsaw and can offer supplementary capacity when required. We also have further opportunities to develop spaces and schemes for our related supply chain solutions. As a trust port of proven capability, we look forward to playing our part in the next energy revolution. And, just to close, I'd like to thank you again for being here today. Thank you for your interest in the offshore wind sector in Northern Ireland. I was listening to Richard earlier on when he was rather apologetic about his timeline, saying it wasn't ambitious enough, but, in the last six to eight months we've gone from if to when, and that's a key for me. So, to move on to the supply chain case studies, you'll begin to appreciate some of what's been achieved to date by our local companies, and we look forward to seeing what will be achievable when we do have our own offshore wind sector. Thank you.