

## MORLAIS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Who is Menter Môn and what is Morlais?

Established in 1996, Menter Môn is a not for profit social enterprise which manages projects across north west Wales with the aim of adding value to local resources for the benefit of the community. Over the last 22 years, Menter Môn has developed relationships with communities, funders and partners which have resulted in the delivery of projects across a range of sectors with a combined value of £70 million from sources including European funding and Welsh Government. Further information on Menter Môn can be found [here](#).

Morlais is Menter Môn's tidal stream energy project. It aims to develop the Crown Estate's designated 'West Anglesey Demonstration Zone' off the west coast of Holy Island. Morlais has the potential to ensure that Anglesey is at the forefront of low carbon, renewable electricity generation.

### What is the West Anglesey Demonstration Zone?

Menter Môn secured a 45-year lease from the Crown Estate for the "West Anglesey Demonstration Zone" in 2014. Morlais was set up by Menter Môn to manage this lease and to secure the maximum local benefit to Anglesey from the development of the island as a hub for the marine energy industry.

The West Anglesey Demonstration Zone is one of several around the United Kingdom which have been leased out by The Crown Estate in a bid to encourage and accelerate the development of technology in this sector. Each of the zones were identified because they offer appropriate wave and tidal energy potential and access to necessary infrastructure, including ports and electricity grid. The Anglesey Zone was selected for its strong tidal resource. Menter Môn will manage and sub-let areas within the Zone to developers of tidal stream energy converters to deploy their devices on a commercial scale.

### What is the proposal?

The proposal is to develop the necessary infrastructure to enable tidal stream technology to be deployed in the zone to generate electricity. The infrastructure includes cable connections, a landfall substation, underground cable route onshore and a substation to connect to the grid.

Morlais will provide a consented tidal technology demonstration zone specifically designed for the installation, testing and commercial deployment of tidal energy devices. As well as the necessary infrastructure it will also provide developers with a route to the grid connection



Morlais would own and manage the infrastructure including cables, grid connection and landfall substation whilst developers will become tenants of Morlais, and pay for the right to use its site and equipment.

Morlais has the potential to scale-up over time to up to generating capacity of 240MW of electricity.

### **What is tidal stream energy?**

Tidal streams (or flows) are created by the constantly changing gravitational pull of the moon and sun on the world's oceans. By placing tidal energy devices in the sea, we are able to capture the energy of the currents to generate electricity.

Due to the predictability of the tides, generating energy in this way provides a reliable and dependable low carbon, renewable energy source.

Wales, and Anglesey in particular has some of the best tidal current resources in Europe.

Tidal stream energy is an evolving sector and has not reached the maturity of wind energy sector. Developers are keen to be able to deploy their devices on a commercial scale in zone such as Morlais.

Elsewhere Tidal stream devices are being tested and demonstrated individually e.g. in Orkney at the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC). There are also other sites in Wales where tidal stream energy is being developed e.g. Pembrokeshire and off the Llŷn peninsula coast. What makes Morlais unique is that it is run by a third sector social enterprise for local benefit.

### **What type of devices will be used as part of Morlais?**

The project is about deploying different devices within the demonstration zone. This includes devices anchored to the seabed, in mid-water as well as floating on the surface. As marine energy technology develops so will the type of tidal stream energy device that are implemented as part of Morlais.

We are working with developers of different types of technologies. For a full list of the partners we are currently working with please visit our website [www.morlaisenergy.com](http://www.morlaisenergy.com).

### **Is Morlais linked to the Minesto development?**

Morlais is a separate project to Minesto, although both projects are located off the west coast of Holy Island. Minesto will have a maximum generating capacity of 80MW– subject to consent Morlais will have a maximum generating capacity of 240



MW. Minesto is Swedish owned and run, Morlais is a Menter Môn project.

### **What are the likely community benefits?**

Menter Môn is committed to ensuring that the community will benefit from the Morlais project and believes that it represents a sustainable source of revenue that it can reinvest in local initiatives. Other community and wider benefits include:

- Developing local supply chains to enable local businesses to capitalise on the economic opportunities and to support jobs locally
- Attracting new investment to Anglesey
- Establishing a world leading cluster for marine energy technologies in north Wales
- Securing a renewable and reliable energy source of electricity for the area
- Contributing to Welsh Government's ambition for a zero carbon Wales

### **How can I get involved?**

Engaging early and on an ongoing basis with the community is central to the way that Menter Môn approaches all projects. This has been particularly important for Morlais and an extensive programme of community consultation has been implemented.

Menter Môn has worked for years with experts and regulators, and with input from the community to develop the best solution for realising the potential of the site. The project has been informed by a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment which uses best available evidence and is informed by advice of regulators and experts.

Engagement has been undertaken through raising awareness, engaging in dialogue and sharing information about the project. It has also been about providing opportunities for the public, stakeholders and interest groups to comment on proposals and to get involved.

To date four public information days have been held locally giving people an opportunity to comment on proposals, share their views and speak to the team about concerns. An additional drop-in event is planned for Trearddur Bay for the 30<sup>th</sup> of July between 16:00 and 19:00. Morlais will also have a presence at the Anglesey Show and has attended events and conferences both locally and on a national level to engage with stakeholder on Morlais.

It is still possible to complete the Morlais questionnaire available on-line at [www.morlaisenergy.com](http://www.morlaisenergy.com).



## **What will the visual impact be?**

Menter Môn is very aware of the importance of the landscape and seascape of Holy Island and the Isle of Anglesey to local communities and visitors. It has been fully recognised from the beginning that local seascape and landscape is sensitive and highly valued.

A detailed Seascape and Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) has been undertaken to fully understand the effects of the project. This has involved extensive consultation with Natural Resources Wales and the Isle of Anglesey County Council to inform the approach to the assessment and the design of the project.

Proposals for Morlais have evolved as a result of consultation with the statutory consultees such as Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government, as well as the local community and other interest groups.

Menter Môn proposes several measures to help reduce impacts, including as it relates to seascape, landscape and visual effects of the project. These include limiting the majority of potentially visible parts to the southern portion of the Morlais Demonstration Zone, it is also proposed to avoid placing visible floating tidal devices within 1km of the coastline.

## **At what stage is the project?**

In order to get consent to develop and operate the Morlais demonstration zone Menter Môn will apply to Welsh Government under the Transport and Works Act. An application will also be made to Natural Resources Wales Marine Licensing Team for a marine license under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Both processes will run in parallel with each other.

The consent application will be submitted before this autumn with a decision expected from Welsh ministers by late 2020/ early 2021.

Since Menter Môn secured the Crown Estates lease, the team has been working with experts and in consultation with Natural Resources Wales, the community and other interest groups in order to strike a balance between realising the site as a tidal energy zone and addressing any concerns early on.

As part of the process an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared, based on a scope of work agreed with Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government and informed by statutory consultees. Independent experts have also been commissioned to conduct detailed studies to understand the potential impacts of the project during all stages.

**What studies had been included as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment?**

- Marine sediment and water quality
- Natural heritage, benthic ecology, marine mammals, fish and shellfish, ornithology, terrestrial and coastal ecology
- Seascape and landscape
- Shipping and navigation
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Tourism and recreation

Subject to receiving consent the focus will then be on what is needed to implement the development – this includes looking at what needs to be done before the work starts, for example getting approval for construction methods and environmental management and monitoring.