

## 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 24 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' located off the west coast of Holy Island. Morlais has the potential to ensure that Anglesey is at the forefront of low carbon marine energy.

Morlais has the potential to make Anglesey a world leader in terms of clean, renewable electricity generation, it's also an opportunity to ensure Anglesey can play a part in meeting future energy needs and tackle climate change.

### **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 for Anglesey.

The 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. 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 technology.

### **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. It will provide a consented tidal technology demonstration zone specifically designed for the installation, testing and commercial demonstration of tidal energy devices as well as providing a route to the distribution network. Morlais has the potential to scale-up over time to a generating capacity of 240MW of electricity – this is estimated to be enough for around 180,000 typical Welsh households.



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 the site and equipment.

### **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, it is possible 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 zones 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 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 will likely make use of the Morlais grid connection to connect their electrical output to the National Grid.

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 low carbon Wales

### **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.

Proposals for Morlais have evolved as a result of consultation with statutory consultees such as Natural Resources Wales and Isle of Anglesey County Council. Our Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) identifies some potential impacts across certain parts of the development. However, we think that the tidal energy devices would not become a defining feature of seascape or landscape and would only affect a small aspect of open views of the Irish Sea.

We acknowledge that the visual impact of the project is likely to be a focus for discussion moving forwards, including the decision of limiting the majority of potentially visible parts to the southern portion of the Morlais Demonstration Zone.

### **What consents are required to develop the project?**

In order to get consent to develop and operate the Morlais demonstration zone, Menter Môn has applied to Welsh Government under the Transport and Works Act. An application has also been made to Natural Resources Wales Marine Licensing Team for a marine licence under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The consent application was submitted in September 2019. Both processes will run in parallel with each other.

### **What is the project timeline?**

Having submitted the consent application during the autumn of 2019, a pre-inquiry meeting was held by the Planning Inspectorate on the 22 of November at Trearddur



Bay. The event was to help them prepare for an inquiry by discussing procedural and other arrangements.

It is likely that if a public inquiry does take place that this will start during the summer of 2020, with a decision expected from Welsh ministers by late 2020/ early 2021.

### **Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been prepared?**

Since securing 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.

- 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 shift to what's 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.

### **How will any potential environmental risks be monitored?**

Morlais will adopt a phased approach to the deployment of tidal devices which will allow potential environmental risks to be monitored and managed. This type of approach means installing a small number of turbines initially – so that they can be closely monitored for any impacts on marine wildlife and the environment. If monitoring confirms as our assessments have shown that the impact is minimal, only then will further turbines be installed. However, if monitoring shows that this is not the case and that turbines are having a negative effect then no further devices will be installed until that was no longer the case.



By adopting an approach like this Morlais can monitor the impacts in a live environment and manage the development accordingly, providing an effective mitigation.

An Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan has also been submitted with our application which outlines the processes and safeguards that will be put in place to ensure the phased process can be managed by Natural Resources Wales.

In our assessments we have used extremely precautionary methods of assessments as per the SNH guidance (2016).

### **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 the Morlais project. An extensive programme of community consultation was implemented, the details of which were provided as part of the consent application. Through raising awareness, engaging in dialogue and sharing information about the project, there were opportunities for the public, stakeholders and interest groups to comment on proposals and to get involved.

Currently, as the consenting process is underway, the opportunities to formally comment are limited. However, if you have any questions, the Morlais team will be more than happy to respond.