



Expectations and experiences of consultation processes

Carly McLachlan

Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research
The University of Manchester

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c.mclachlan@manchester.ac.uk

My perspective on renewable energy siting controversy

- Knowledge claims (impacts)
- Symbolic interpretations (place and technology)
- Process of consultation

Consultation

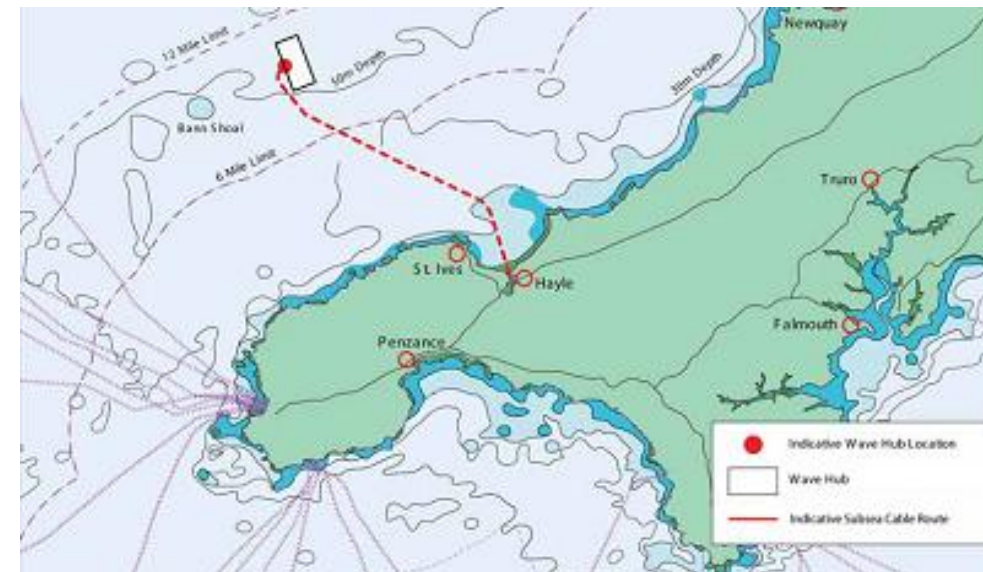
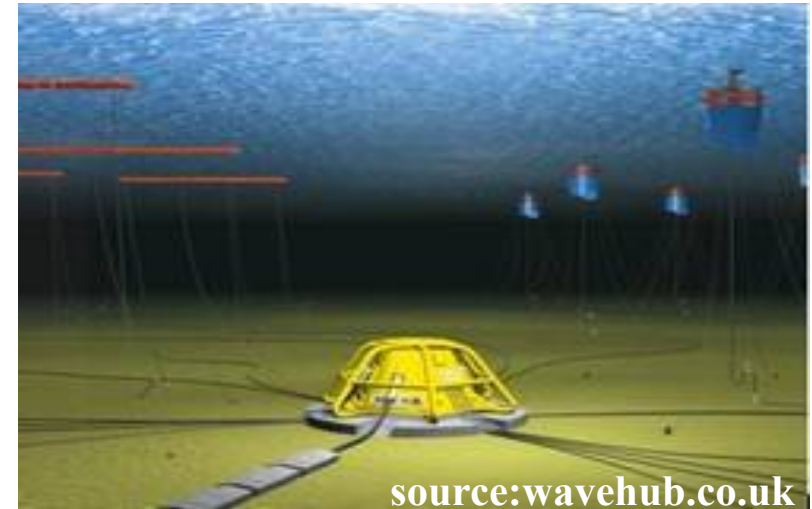
- Consultation often presented as a way to convince stakeholders (including publics) to support (or at least not oppose) a project
- Calls for more or better consultation common – but what does it mean?
- What is consultation for and who decides?

Purpose/ethos of consultation

- Increase support or reduce opposition
- Gathering knowledge to improve development
- Right
- Compliance

Wave Hub – Hayle, Cornwall, UK

- ‘Underwater socket’
- Up to four arrays can be ‘plugged’ in

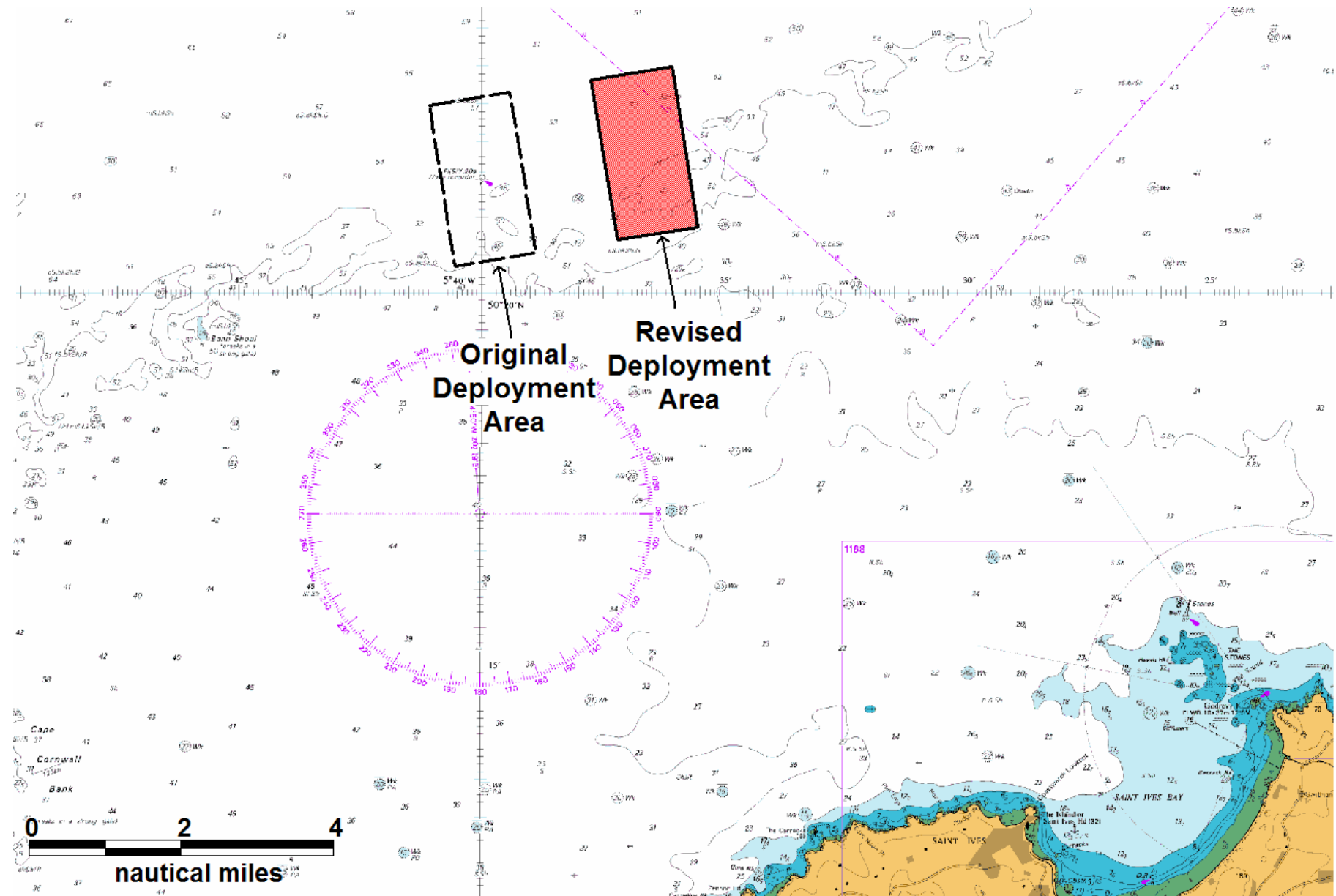


Controversy over Wave Hub

- Surfing
- Tourism
- Navigation
 - Joint stakeholder statement produced



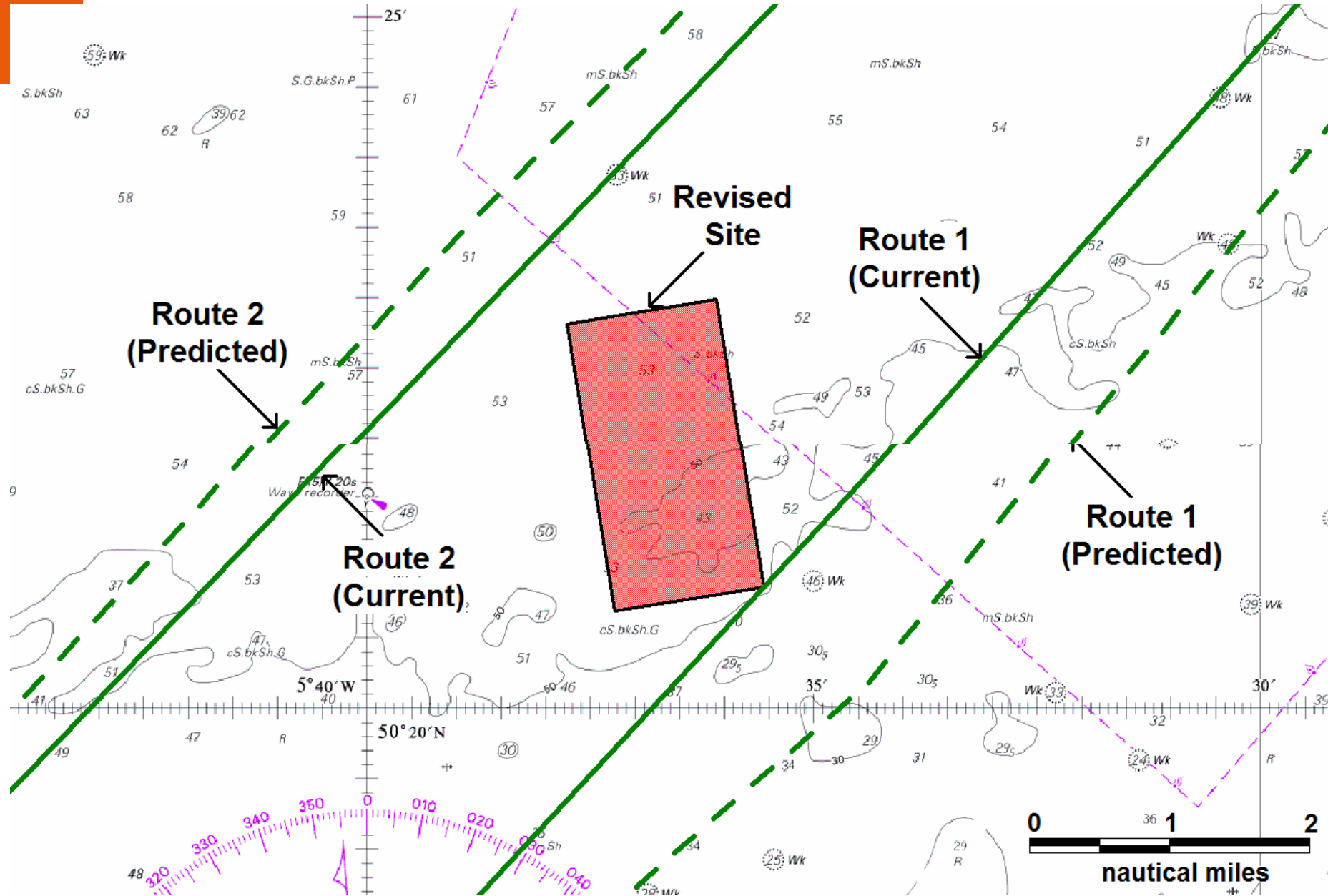
Movement of site



Developer assessment of process

“...we had been through the feasibility stage and then, you know, oh heck! The detailed data collection showed that it would really be a lot safer if we moved it slightly over that way. So that change was made and that caused a lot of extra cost and delay because we were busy collecting seabed biological samples in this area and then you haven't got any for that area! So that all had to be done again.” (SWRDA interview, p7)

“The site was moved about a mile to the North East of where it had been before and that actually makes it into a bit of traffic island between two shipping lanes”. (SWRDA interview, p7)



- Responsive/flexible
- Thorough
- Expensive
- Taken navigational issues into account
- Safer and safe

Navigational objector concerns

- Two shipping lanes instead of one
- *“The Chamber [of Shipping] provided several viable alternatives to developers yet received no substantial counter-argument other than cost benefit impacts on the project. It should be highlighted that one of the Chamber’s alternative sites actually lies closer to the port of Hayle, would require less cable to connect to the gird and therefore actually be more cost-beneficial.” (Joint maritime stakeholders statement, 2007:2)*

Navigational objectors view of consultation

- *“I've got people coming to me now, looking at Round 3 and beyond and saying, “What do you think of this area? What do you think of that area?” Never happened with Wave Hub. Then, you know, the site selection process was all in-house, they decided on a site, and then came to us and said, “That’s where it's going. Deal with it.” Which is, you know, which is, that’s not stakeholder engagement, that’s stakeholder, you know, telling or lecturing.” (Chamber of Shipping Interview, p3)*
- *“...let’s sit round the table and talk about all the points, you know, get the old whiteboard out and really go to town on it.” (Chamber of Shipping Interview, p19)*
- Dangerous consultation precedent

Objectors view of the process

- Their concerns and experience not listened to
- Developer was inflexible
- The development will be dangerous (possibly more so)
- Developer only concerned about cost
- Expectation of collaborative siting

A few final thoughts...

- Expectations and experiences of the process very different
- Same incident used to demonstrate vastly different interpretations
- Process became the source of objection
- Can't divorce consultation from the development itself
- How stakeholder information on impacts and acceptability have been and should be used may be part of any 'controversy'
- Communication of the consultation process
 - What are the goals?
 - What is non negotiable?
 - What can be discussed?
 - How will information be used
 - What changes have been made?
 - Are experiences of the process diverging?

As discussed in the last webinar – are marine developments likely to be held to a higher level of account?

- Kerr, S.A., Watts, L., Colton, J., Conway, F., Hull, A., Johnson, K. Jude, S., Kannen, A., MacDougall, S., McLachlan, C., Potts, T., and Vergunst, J. (2014), Establishing an Agenda for Social Studies Research in Marine Renewable Energy, *Energy Policy*, 67, 694-704
- McLachlan, C. and Mander, S. (2012), 'What have facts got to do with it anyway?: knowledge claims in low carbon energy controversy' in *Low Carbon Energy Controversy*, Roberts et al, Routledge.
- Mander, S. and McLachlan, C. (2012), 'It is nice to be asked: What is the impact of engagement in low carbon energy controversy?' in *Low Carbon Energy Controversy*, Roberts et al, Routledge
- McLachlan, C., (2009) 'You don't do a chemistry experiment in your best China: stakeholder responses to a wave energy case, *Energy Policy* 37(12), 5342-5350.

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