

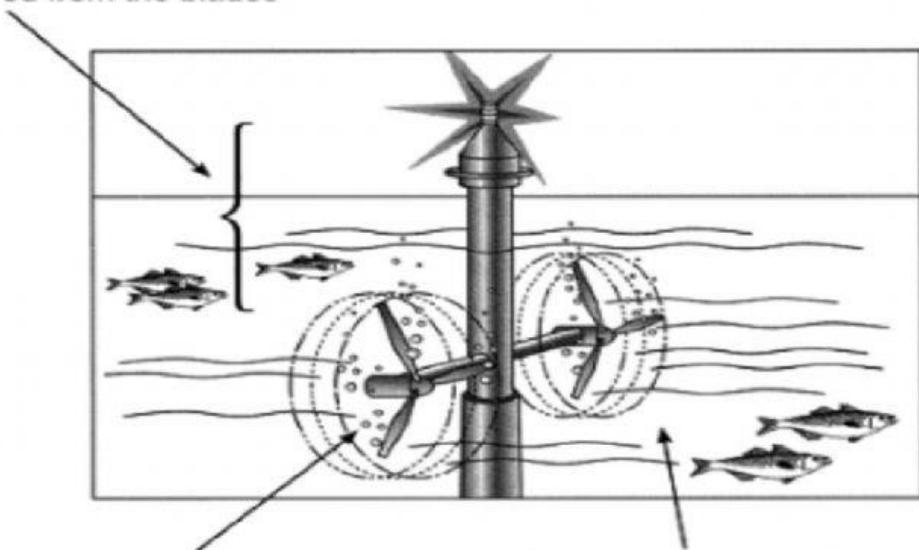
- D** A marine turbine blade needs to be only one third of the size of a wind generator to produce three times as much power. The blades will be about 20 metres in diameter, so around 30 metres of water is required. Unlike wind power, there are unlikely to be environmental objections. Fish and other creatures are thought unlikely to be at risk from the relatively slow-turning blades. Each turbine will be mounted on a tower which will connect to the national power supply grid via underwater cables. The towers will stick out of the water and be lit, to warn shipping, and also be designed to be lifted out of the water for maintenance and to clean seaweed from the blades.
- E** Dr Bahaj has done most work on the Alderney site, where there are powerful currents. The single undersea turbine farm would produce far more power than needed for the Channel Islands and most would be fed into the French Grid and be re-imported into Britain via the cable under the Channel.
- F** One technical difficulty is cavitation, where low pressure behind a turning blade causes air bubbles. These can cause vibration and damage the blades of the turbines. Dr Bahaj said: 'We have to test a number of blade types to avoid this happening or at least make sure it does not damage the turbines or reduce performance. Another slight concern is submerged debris floating into the blades. So far we do not know how much of a problem it might be. We will have to make the turbines robust because the sea is a hostile environment, but all the signs that we can do it are good.'

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 23–26 on your answer sheet.

## An Undersea Turbine

Whole tower can be raised  
for 23 ..... and the extraction  
of seaweed from the blades



Air bubbles result from  
the 25 ..... behind blades.  
This is known as 26 .....

Sea life not in danger due to the  
fact that blades are comparatively  
24 .....