



MLA/2025/00263: MMO North Shields Coastal Response

Coastal consultation questions

1. Do you consider there is enough information provided in the application and supporting documents to enable you to understand the scope of the works, the method and equipment that will be used, and the timings, should you be required to undertake an inspection of the licenced activities?

Yes. The Applicants have provided sufficient information in their application for the MMO to be able to understand the scope of the works, the methodology, equipment and proposed timings of the works.

- 1a. If no, what further information do you consider is required to allow you to understand the proposal, respond to the consultation and or undertake an effective enforcement inspection?

No.

User impacts

2. Please outline any fishing and or other activities carried on by legitimate users of the sea in the area(s) the activities are proposed to be undertaken.

The closest sites to the proposed work sites that house a fleet of vessels are Hartlepool (7.6km away) and to a lesser extent in terms of volume, Redcar (6.7km).

These works are strictly related to the disposal of dredged material associated with a maintenance dredge licence in the Port of Tees and Hartlepool. As such, it has been made clear that the site of these works is an established offshore disposal site called Tees Bay. Given the existing status of the disposal site, it is

not anticipated that any fishing activities will be compromised by these works taking place/continuing.

The MMO notes that the Applicants have completed the Marine Plan Policy Assessment and have concluded that no impacts to sustainable fisheries will occur due to these works, the MMO agrees with this assertion.

3. Are the proposed activities likely to interfere with fishing operations or activities carried on by other legitimate users of the sea (static gear/traditional fishing grounds, navigation measures, recreational use etc.)? Please support your view with rationale.

As above, the MMO is confident that no fishing operations will be compromised by these works taking place due to the pre-existing nature of the works.

Furthermore, the MMO is aware that the Port of Tees is a busy port in terms of vessel traffic. However, given the pre-existing nature of the disposal works and the fact that navigational dredging will ultimately be valuable to other users of the sea in the immediate vicinity of the works site, the MMO has not identified any potential issues arising as a consequence of these works continuing.

4. Are the proposed activities likely to have an impact on fish/shellfish stocks i.e. smothering fish beds etc? Please support your view with rationale.

The MMO has conducted a SPIRIT check on this matter which has only found that the works are set to take place in a Cod recovery zone. Given the pre-existing nature of the works and the somewhat, isolated area in which they are set to occur, the MMO considers it unlikely that the Cod stocks in the North Sea will be impacted by these works occurring.

5. Are there any periods when the proposed activity would be unacceptable for any reason?

The MMO does not consider that any periods would be unacceptable for these activities to take place within.

Stakeholder engagement/awareness

6. Are local stakeholders aware of the proposed activity and are there any strong opinions about it?

The MMO notes that the works are set to be publicised at the works site and in the local newspaper and are currently available for review on the Public Register. We are not aware of any strong opposition to these works being undertaken as no communication of this nature has been received by the North Shields Office.

Conservation

7. Is there any additional local knowledge about the condition of local conservation areas which the licensing team should be aware of?

It should be noted that the Crustacean Mortality incidents of 2021/2022 in Teesside are still of interest to the fishing fleets located in Redcar and Hartlepool. The MMO notes that the Applicants have summarised this incident and the subsequent findings of incidents into it in Section 6.3.2.2 of 'Tees MDP Baseline Document May 25' with a conclusion that it was unlikely that maintenance dredging in the Tees resulted in the incidents. The MMO and the wider DEFRA organisation agree with this conclusion and as such, we do not object to the works taking place, however, we would expect the licence Applicants to remain vigilant against potential crustacean mortality incidents throughout the duration of any new dredging campaign and would request immediate contact should any such incidents occur. The MMO has requested the inclusion of a condition in Point 9 of this response to ensure this is the case for this project.

Other projects

8. Are there any other projects planned or in progress in the area which the licensing team should consider as part of any assessment of in-combination effects?

The MMO has conducted a SPIRIT check with a 2km buffer that has found that there are several active Marine Licences in the area. The majority of these licences are associated with dredging activities in the River Tees. Given that this is the case, the MMO has no concerns regarding the overlapping effect of Marine Licences on themselves or other users of the sea.

Additionally, given the nature of the works, any In-Combination impacts are considered unlikely, however, we would expect the MMO case team to include all necessary licences in any HRA undertaken for this application.

Conditions

9. Are there any conditions which you recommend are included in the licence, should one be granted

Yes, following on from our position outlined in Point 7, the MMO would ask that a Fisheries Liaison Officer be appointed for these works and that a Fisheries Liaison and Co-Existence Plan be submitted to the MMO for its approval prior to the works taking place. The MMO suggests the following wording for such a condition:

A Fisheries Liaison and Coexistence Plan must be submitted to the MMO at least six weeks prior to the commencement of licensed activities. The plan must include details of the Fishery Liaison Officer (FLO) and Commercial Fisheries Working Group (CFWG). No activities can commence until these plans have been authorised by the MMO.

Reason: To ensure impacts on fishing communities are minimised.

General

10. Which MMO office should be identified as the 'local office' in section 2 of the licence, should one be granted?

North Shields.

**Marine Management Organisation
Pakefield Road
Lowestoft
NR33 0HT
Tel: 0208 0260654**

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11) Please record the amount of time spent (nearest 15 minutes) on this response:

Name of staff member	Staff Grade	Time spent providing advice	Time attending meetings	Time spent at site visit	Total time
Jack Coe	EO	03:30	0	0	03:30

(Exclude any travel time)

Local Risk Assessment

MLA/2025/00263

Marine Officer: Jack Coe

Threat	Score 0-3
Fisheries	1
Marine environment	0
Other users of the sea/public interest	0
Total	1