



Marine
Management
Organisation

Habitats Regulations Assessment

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Table 1: Proposed plan or project details

Title of project	Able Seaton Port Capital and Maintenance Dredging and Disposal
Case reference	MLA/2026/00019
Applicant name	Mr Craig Causer, Able UK Limited
Type of licensable activity/ies	Section 66 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009: 1. To deposit any substance or object within the UK marine licensing area, either in the sea or on or under the sea bed, from— (a) any vehicle, vessel, aircraft or marine structure, (b) any container floating in the sea, or (c) any structure on land constructed or adapted wholly or mainly for the purpose of depositing solids in the sea. 9. To carry out any form of dredging within the UK marine licensing area (whether or not involving the removal of any material from the sea or sea bed). http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/section/66
Location of works	See Annex 1, Figure 1.1. The proposed dredge will take place at Able Seaton Port, Tees Road, Hartlepool and disposal at Tees Bay C and Tees Bay A disposal sites.
Description of proposed project	The proposed works consist of capital and maintenance dredging at Able Seaton Port over a period of 10 years to deepen and subsequently maintain berth levels, as needed. The works are an extension of a previous 10-year licence (L/2017/00012/12) that expired on 1 March 2026. The capital dredging element relates to unfulfilled dredging volumes and depths previously consented under that licence, where not all authorised dredging was completed. The current application therefore seeks to complete these remaining capital works, alongside ongoing maintenance dredging required to maintain the achieved berth depths. Capital dredging will take place across Quays 7-11 to achieve the depths consented under the current dredge licence. To provide detail: - Quays 7, 8 and 9 are to be dredged to a depth of -9.5m chart datum (CD) removing a total volume of 85,000 cubic metres (m³); and - Quays 10 and 11 are to be dredged to a depth of -15m CD removing a total volume of 165,000m³.

	Subsequent maintenance dredging will be undertaken to maintain the depths achieved under the current dredge licence and proposed under this application. Specific quantities are as follows: • Maintenance dredging of Seaton Channel, Holding Basin and Quays 10 and 11 up to a total volume of 400,000m³ across the 10 year period; • Maintenance dredging of the Terrc Basin to a depth of -6.65m CD, removing up to a total volume of 160,000m³ across the 10 year period; • Maintenance dredging of the Grounding Bed up to a total volume of 40,000m³ across the 10 year period; and • Maintenance dredging of Quays 7, 8 and 9 up to a total volume of 40,000m³ across the 10 year period. The method of dredging will align with the previous licence and will be carried out using a Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger (TSHD). To address minor shoaling and to level material, a plough may be employed. The works will be carried out by a variety of dredging plant. The choice of plant will be governed by the location and depth of material to be removed year on year. The choice of plant will also be affected by ongoing port operations in the basin, as some plant may not prove to be suitable at certain times due to local operational limitations and restrictions. Within each work area, the dredging will initially be carried out to dredge level +0.5m. After the whole of the work area has been dredged to dredge level +0.5m, the final 0.5m thickness of material may be removed. Due to the historical use and nature of operations, it is possible that unnatural materials and debris will be encountered. A screen or grill over each hopper in the dredger to permit the separation of debris/scrap from the dredged materials will be used. Any scrap or debris will be removed ashore. Unnatural materials, including scrap metal, will be landed in a workman like manner and transported to a skip located within the development area for offsite disposal. Dredged material shall be stored on the dredger for direct transportation offshore for disposal. The material removed from Able Seaton Port under this licence will be disposed of across two licenced disposal sites, Tees Bay C and Tees Bay A.
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Table 2: Need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Is the proposal directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a National Site Network (NSN) site for the purpose of conserving the habitats or species for which the site is designated?	No
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Table 3a: Details of NSN site identified

Name of NSN site: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protected Area (SPA) - UK9006061 Distance and Direction: Dredging activities are located within the SPA (see Annex 1, Figure 1.2)
Licensable activity/ies from the project that have the potential to interact with the NSN site: Dredging and disposal
Conservation Advice package used: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ConservationAdvice.aspx?SiteCode=UK9006061&SiteName=teesmouth&SiteNameDisplay=Teesmouth%20and%20Cleveland%20Coast%20SPA&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=&HasCA=1&NumMarineSeasonality=7&SiteNameDisplay=Teesmouth%20and%20Cleveland%20Coast%20SPA Qualifying features: • Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>), Breeding • Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>), Breeding • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>), Non-breeding • Little tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>), Breeding • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>), Non-breeding • Ruff (<i>Calidris pugnax</i>), Non-breeding • Sandwich tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>), Non-breeding • Waterbird assemblage, Non-breeding Conservation objectives: The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: • the extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • the supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely

- the populations of each of the qualifying features - the distribution of qualifying features within the site
Date conservation advice was last accessed: 26/02/2026

Table 3b: Details of NSN site identified

Name of NSN site: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Ramsar - UK11068 Distance and Direction: Dredging activities are located within the Ramsar (see Annex 1, Figure 1.3)
Licensable activity/ies from the project that have the potential to interact with the NSN site: Dredging and disposal
Conservation Advice package used: This Ramsar site overlaps with the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA NSN site. Conservation Advice packages for overlapping NSN Site designations are, in most cases, sufficient to support the management of the Ramsar interests. As such, the Conservation Advice package for Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA NSN site has been used. Designated features: - Knot (<i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>) - Wintering - Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) - Passage - Sandwich tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>) – Passage - Waterbird assemblage - Wintering
Date conservation advice was last accessed: 26/02/2026

Likely Significant Effect (LSE)

Test: Is it possible that this plan or project might undermine the conservation objectives?

In formulating the LSE alone and in-combination assessments, Natural England's Conservation Advice Package, as outlined in Table 3a, has been consulted and the following principles applied:

- Where available, the 'Advice on Operations' (AoO) matrix to determine pressures associated with the proposed activities that may potentially harm the qualifying habitat features and/ or species of the sites has been used.
- Features are assessed against the proximity to the works and relevant seasonality considerations. If no pathway is identified between the project (source) and feature (receptor) then no further consideration is given to those features in the HRA.
- Low risk pressures, unless there is evidence or site specific factors that increase the risk, or uncertainty on the level of pressure on a receptor, this pressure generally does not occur at a level of concern and should not require consideration as part of the assessment.
- Features deemed sensitive to pressures (medium and high risk) for both direct and indirect pathways are taken forward into the LSE assessment unless screened for proximity or seasonality.
- The individual pressure/ feature interactions categorised as 'Not Sensitive' at the benchmark are not taken forward into the LSE assessment unless a specific case related pressure is identified such that the impacts on these features will reach above the benchmarks specified for these pressure/ feature interactions.
- For pressure/ feature interactions categorised as 'Not Relevant' these are not taken forward into the LSE assessment. The MMO considers that there is no interaction of concern between the pressure and a feature or the activity has no way of interacting with the feature.
- Pressure/ feature interactions categorised as either 'Insufficient Evidence' or 'Not Assessed' are taken forward into the LSE assessment in accordance with the precautionary principle.

The Advice on Operations (AoO) category of marine activities used are:

Ports and Harbours (construction) – Capital dredging

Ports and Harbours (construction) – Capital dredging disposal

Ports and Harbours (maintenance) – Maintenance dredging

Ports and Harbours (maintenance) – Maintenance dredging disposal

Q1 - I can confirm that I have reviewed all of the relevant conservation advice packages and I understand the features/supporting habitats that I am assessing.

Yes

Q2 - I can confirm that I have reviewed all of the relevant pressures as per the advice on operations section of the conservation advice packages

Yes

Q3 - I can confirm that this LSE has not considered mitigation (either included within the application or through additional measures) when assessing the LSE.

Yes

Q4 - I can confirm that the project will not result in habitat loss within the identified designated sites.

Yes

Table 4: Feature or supporting habitat not taken forward to LSE assessment as there is no realistic pathway at the reported distance.

Teessmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA	
Feature or supporting habitat	Approximate Distance
Coastal lagoons	1.2 kilometres (km) from dredging activities (see Annex 2, Figure 2.1)
Intertidal rock	6.1km from disposal area (see Annex 2, Figure 2.2)
Intertidal biogenic reef: mussel beds	2km from dredging activities (see Annex 2, Figure 2.3)

Part 1 - LSE Alone

Q 5 - Upon reviewing the feature/pressure interactions I consider that the project as proposed will have an LSE alone because a pathway between the source and receptors have been identified such that an effect on the listed NSN sites may occur. The conclusions for feature/pressure interactions from LSE alone that are taken to AA are listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5: LSE table for Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar			
Feature or supporting habitat	Pressures to discuss	LSE?	Justification
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows Intertidal mixed sediments Intertidal mud Intertidal sand and muddy sand Water column	Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed Habitat structure changes - removal of substratum (extraction) Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion Physical change (to another sediment type)	Yes	A SPIRIT site check showed the proposed dredging activities overlap with/are adjacent to these features. Dredging has the ability to disturb substrate on the surface and give rise to suspended sediments and so increase smothering and siltation rates through a plume of sediment being released. Capital dredging will increase dredging depths and so could result in habitat structure changes or physical changes. The disturbance of sediment has the potential to release contaminants into the water column. The MMO considers these pressures have the capacity of causing a likely significant effect on this site from the project alone. These pressures will be taken through to an appropriate assessment alone and will not be considered at the LSE in-combination stage.

	Smothering and siltation rate changes (Heavy)		
	Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light)		
Avocet, Breeding Knot, Non-breeding Little tern, Breeding Redshank, Non-breeding Ruff, Non-breeding Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows Intertidal biogenic reef: mussel beds Water column	Barrier to species movement	No	The presence of the dredge vessel and the dredging activities could impact local bird species and the surrounding habitat. However, the dredging activities are within an industrial area with a history of dredging activities, with these proposed activities a continuation of activities permitted under a previous 10 year licence. Therefore, local species will be accustomed to high disturbance levels and so will have higher tolerance to disturbance. The MMO considers the pressure exerted from this activity will not cause a likely significant effect on the features detailed for this site from the project alone. This pressure will now be considered at the LSE in-combination stage.
Common tern, Breeding Little tern, Breeding	Changes in suspended solids (water clarity)	Yes	A MAGIC site check showed the proposed dredging activities overlap with/are adjacent to these features. Dredging has the ability to disturb substrate on the surface and give rise to suspended sediments and decrease water clarity through a plume of sediment being released.

Sandwich tern, Non-breeding Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows Intertidal mixed sediments Intertidal mud Intertidal sand and muddy sand Water column			The disturbance of sediment has the potential to release contaminants into the water column. The MMO considers these pressures have the capacity of causing a likely significant effect on this site from the project alone. These pressures will be taken through to an appropriate assessment alone and will not be considered at the LSE in-combination stage.
Common tern, Breeding Little tern, Breeding Sandwich tern, Non-breeding Intertidal mixed sediments Intertidal mud Intertidal sand and muddy sand Water column	Water flow (tidal current) changes, including sediment transport considerations	No	The proposed works are a continuation of a previous 10 year licence. The works are taking place in a highly industrial area, with high activity levels and a history of dredging activities. Local species and the surrounding environment are accustomed to higher levels of activity and many dredging activities are now considered baseline to the area. The continuation of these activities alone is not considered capable of altering water flow. The MMO considers the pressure exerted from this activity will not cause a likely significant effect on the features detailed for this site from the project alone. This pressure will now be considered at the LSE in-combination stage.

Avocet, Breeding Common tern, Breeding Knot, Non-breeding Little tern, Breeding Redshank, Non-breeding Ruff, Non-breeding Sandwich tern, Non-breeding Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows Intertidal mixed sediments Intertidal mud Intertidal sand and muddy sand Water column	Emergence regime changes, including tidal level change considerations	No	The proposed works are a continuation of a previous 10 year licence. The works are taking place in a highly industrial area, with high activity levels and a history of dredging activities. Local species and the surrounding environment are accustomed to higher levels of activity and many dredging activities are now considered baseline to the area. The continuation of these activities alone is not considered likely to alter tidal levels. The MMO considers the pressure exerted from this activity will not cause a likely significant effect on the features detailed for this site from the project alone. This pressure will now be considered at the LSE in-combination stage.
Atlantic salt meadows	Removal of non-target species	No	The proposed works are a continuation of a previous 10 year licence. The works are taking place in a highly industrial area, with high activity

Intertidal mixed sediments			levels and a history of dredging activities. No species are being targeted for removal as part of this proposal. Although this is a new application the dredging activities have been taking place for the previous 10 years and no new evidence has been identified that highlight concerns with the habitats. The continuation of these activities alone is not considered likely to increase the risk of the removal of non-target species more than over the previous 10 years.
Intertidal mud			
Intertidal sand and muddy sand			
Water column			The MMO considers the pressure exerted from this activity will not cause a likely significant effect on the features detailed for this site from the project alone. This pressure will now be considered at the LSE in-combination stage.

Part 2 – LSE in-combination.

Other Projects considered for in-combination assessment

MMO has conducted a GIS check of activities in the immediate area around the proposed project. A pathway zone of influence of 2km has been used. The MMO has also considered any known projects occurring within or around the boundaries of the NSN sites.

The following projects have been identified and listed in Table 6.

Table 6 – In-combination plan or projects

Name of plan or project and activity type	NSN site to which there is a pathway in-combination with licence application
MLA/2024/00390/1 H2 Teesside Ground Investigations (10/01/2025 - 09/01/2027) – approximately 1.6km south of dredging area MLA/2020/00079/1 Northern Gateway Container Terminal (28/02/2022 - 31/12/2029) – approximately 1.6km south of dredging area MLA/2021/00405 Decommissioning of works (22/04/2024 - 21/04/2031) – approximately 1.9km south of dredging area MLA/2025/00631 Exolum Revetment Repairs (Seal Sands) (submitted) – approximately 1.6km south of dredging area	Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar. These licences/applications are all over 1.5km from the proposed works and have already occurred during the lifetime of the previous 10 year licence. Any impacts will be minimised due to distance. As the activities have been taking place for the last 10 years the MMO considers the activities as part of the baseline levels within the area and the continuation of these activities are unlikely to cause in-combination effects. In addition to this no additional evidence to the contrary has been provided in relation to the ongoing activities impacting the SPA negatively. The MMO therefore considers there is no pathway for in-combination impacts from the proposed works, and these projects will not be considered further.
MLA/2015/00334/13 Able Seaton Port berths, Holding Basin and Channel (02/03/2017 – 01/03/2026) – same disposal areas MLA/2020/00507 South Bank Quay – Phase 2 (07/02/2022 - 06/02/2032) – same disposal area MLA/2022/00088 NSSB Quay 1 Extension – Dredging (13/03/2023 - 13/03/2026) – same disposal area	Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar. The majority of these licences are for dredging and disposal, with all spatial overlap occurring through the use of the same disposal sites. The disposal sites are two licenced disposal sites and the previous licence used the same disposal sites. Disposal licences have requirements to undertake sampling regularly to ensure the material is still suitable for disposal at sea. In addition to this the overall amounts of disposal are monitored and any new disposal activities taking place will be thoroughly assessed. Although this is a new application, the activities have been taking place for 10 years and the disposal sites have been identified for use of all of the material identified and it is unlikely to cause in-combination effects.

MLA/2024/00166/2 Middlesbrough Port Quays 1 and 2 Dredging and Disposal (26/06/2025 - 25/06/2035) – same disposal areas MLA/2025/00252 Port of Middlesbrough Berths 1-4 Capital Dredging (submitted) – same disposal area MLA/2025/00263 Tees and Hartlepool Maintenance Dredge Disposal (05/11/2025 - 31/12/2035) – same disposal area MLA/2026/00098 Tees Container Terminal 2 (TCT2) Quay Extension (submitted) – same disposal site MLA/2018/00555 Hartlepool approach channel (16/09/2019 - 15/09/2026) – same disposal site MLA/2020/00506/2 South Bank Quay - Phase 1 (26/08/2022 - 31/12/2030) – same disposal site	The MMO therefore considers there is no pathway for in-combination impacts from the proposed works, and these projects will not be considered further.
MLA/2025/00615 Bran Sands LSO Geotechnical surveys (submitted) – within disposal area MLA/2022/00396/1 South Tees Seagrass Project (20/03/2023 – 01/05/2028) – approximately 370m east of dredging area MLA/2023/00316 Quay 1 - Stone Load Spreading Pad (30/10/2023 - 29/10/2033) – approximately 190m south of the dredging area MLA/2025/00141 Greatham North East Flood Alleviation Scheme (submitted) – approximately 260m south of dredging area MLA/2024/00367 Proposed Additional Dolphin at Able Seaton Port Quay 1 (01/11/2024 -	Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar. MLA/2025/00615 overlaps with works in the disposal area. However, MLA/2025/00615 is for ground investigation activities which are small scale, temporary, and highly localised. Therefore, no in-combination impacts are expected. MLA/2022/00396/1 is a habitat restoration project taking place approximately 370 metres (m) from the dredging area. MLA/2022/00396/1 involves the use of only one extra vessel within an area with high density of shipping, therefore no additional impacts with the proposed works from this is expected. Any impacts from placing seagrass on the bed will be small scale and highly localised to the area. Therefore, no in-combination impacts are expected. MLA/2023/00316 is to deposit a 20x20m stone pad on the seabed and takes place approximately 190m from the dredging activities. The dredging activities are within an industrial area and near to a main route for vessels entering and leaving the Tees. The pressures therefore are unlikely to be above the baseline for the area and the activities are unlikely to be carried out at the same time. Therefore, no in-combination impacts are expected.

01/11/2027) – approximately 260 west of dredging area	MLA/2025/00141 is to repair an existing flood embankment. The works of MLA/2025/00141 are small scale and impacts are expected to be very localised (as noted the MMO's HRA for the MLA). The MMO therefore considers there is no pathway for in-combination impacts from the proposed works, and this project will not be considered further. MLA/2024/00367 is to construct a third mooring dolphin at Able Seaton Port. The works involve piling and so could generate a barrier to species movement in combination with the proposed works. However, due to the distance between the two works and the works taking place in a highly industrial area with high levels of activity, any impacts between these two projects are not expected to greatly restrict species movement, with local species accustomed to higher levels of disturbance. Therefore, no in-combination impacts are expected.
MLA/2025/00031 Hartlepool Nuclear Power Station - Routine Maintenance Activities (25/06/2025 - 25/06/2035) – within dredging area MLA/2023/00142/1 Deposit of inert material into Quay 10 Berthing Pocket (27/06/2023-26/06/2033) – within dredging area	MLA/2025/00031 is for regular repair and maintenance activities. The majority of the activities for MLA/2025/00031 will occur within the security fence of the power station and will not be discernible from outside the station boundary. As the activities will be carried out within a busy nuclear site, and are designed to be short-term and infrequent, the MMO do not consider that there is a pathway for in-combination impacts with this project. The MMO therefore considers there is no pathway for in-combination impacts from the proposed works, and this project will not be considered further. MLA/2023/00142/1 relates to the deposit of inert material within Quay 10 Berthing Pocket to infill depressions created by previous activities. There is spatial overlap between this licence and the proposed dredging area at Able Seaton Port. The activities are, however, materially different in nature with the current application relating to the removal of sediment through dredging to maintain navigational depths. As such, the activities are not expected to interact in a manner that would give rise to additional or overlapping impact pathways. Both activities are localised within an already operational port environment where dredging and berth maintenance activities have been ongoing for a number of years. The proposed dredging largely continues established practices and is not expected to introduce new or intensified effects beyond those previously assessed. The MMO therefore considers there is no pathway for in-combination impacts from the proposed works, and this project will not be considered further.

Impacts from projects considered for in-combination assessment

Q6 - Upon reviewing the feature/pressure interactions acting in-combination between the application project and projects listed in Table 6, I consider that the project as proposed will not have a likely significant effect on any NSN site mentioned above. My rationale is that:

- There is no pathway for in-combination effects and
- Although there is a pathway, in-combination impacts are such that there would not be a likely significant effect

Likely Significant Effect Conclusion

The MMO has decided to carry out an appropriate assessment because significant effects alone could not be screened out.

Details of the sites and feature/pressure interactions to be assessed in the Appropriate Assessment are detailed in Table 5.

Appropriate Assessment

Below is the MMO's assessment of those aspects of the project that it was not possible to rule out the likelihood of significant effects on the designated sites listed in Table 3a-b.

Part 1 – Alone

Table 7 – AA table for Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar

Name of designated site: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar				
Qualifying feature or species (include sub-features and supporting habitats)	Pressure	Adverse Effect on Integrity on qualifying feature of species?	Justification	After mitigation, can you conclude no adverse effect on site integrity?
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed	No	A SPIRIT site check showed the proposed dredging activities overlap with/are adjacent to these features. Dredging has the ability to disturb substrate on the surface and give rise to suspended sediments and so increase smothering and siltation rates through a plume of sediment being released. Capital dredging will increase dredging depths and so could result in habitat structure changes or physical changes. The disturbance of sediment has the potential to release contaminants into the water column. However, the dredging activities are within an industrial area with a history of dredging activities, with these proposed activities being a continuation of activities permitted under a previous 10 year licence. Substrates such as mud and	Not applicable - The MMO considers the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the site and so no mitigation measures are required.
Atlantic salt meadows	Habitat structure changes - removal of substratum (extraction)			
Intertidal mixed sediments	Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion			
Intertidal mud				
Intertidal sand and muddy sand				
Water column	Physical change (to another sediment type) Smothering and siltation rate changes (Heavy)			

	Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light)		sand also have a high recoverability rate. The continuation of these activities alone is not considered to have the potential to have an adverse effect on site integrity. Additionally, the method of dredging via trailer suction dredge hopper reduces sediment suspension compared to other dredging methods and it is anticipated that suspended sediment would dissipate quickly upon dredging works ceasing. Past sampling at the site indicates no contaminants above CEFAS Action Level 2. Previous dredging has not had a detrimental impact to the structure or function of supporting habitats within the SPA or Ramsar. Therefore, the MMO considers the impacts of these pressures to be small-scale and unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the NSN sites and their features.	
Common tern, Breeding Little tern, Breeding Sandwich tern, Non-breeding Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows	Changes in suspended solids (water clarity)	No	A SPIRIT site check showed the proposed dredging activities overlap with/are adjacent to these features. Dredging has the ability to disturb substrate on the surface and give rise to suspended sediments through a plume of sediment being released. The disturbance of sediment has the potential to release contaminants into the water column. However, the dredging activities are within an industrial area with a history of dredging activities, with these proposed activities a continuation of activities permitted under a previous 10 year licence. Local bird species are accustomed to higher levels of activity	Not applicable - The MMO considers the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the site and so no mitigation measures are required.

Intertidal mixed sediments			and many dredging activities are now considered baseline to the area. Substrates such as mud and sand also have a high recoverability rate. The continuation of these activities alone is not considered to have the potential to have an adverse effect on site integrity. There is no additional dredging proposed outside of the existing dredge pocket currently consented. The site may be utilised by foraging terns and there is scope for some species to be present in the adjacent mudflats to the south, however it is not considered that the dredging will result in any loss of habitat. Based on the area of works, there is not predicted to be any change to the current extent or distribution of habitats as a result of dredging. Additionally, the method of dredging via trailer suction dredge hopper reduces sediment suspension compared to other dredging methods and it is anticipated that suspended sediment would dissipate quickly upon dredging works ceasing. Past sampling at the site indicates no contaminants above CEFAS Action Level 2. Previous dredging has not had a detrimental impact to the structure or function of supporting habitats within the SPA or Ramsar. Therefore, the MMO considers the impacts of these pressures to be small-scale and unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the NSN sites and their features.	
Intertidal mud				
Intertidal sand and muddy sand				
Water column				

Part 2 – In-combination.

Table 8 – Projects where in combination impacts may occur

Teessmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar		
Project number	Name of identified plan or project to which there is a pathway to NSN site.	Compatible pressures with assessed project
1	MLA/2025/00615 Bran Sands LSO Geotechnical surveys (submitted) – within disposal area	This licence is for ground investigation activities which are small scale, temporary, and highly localised. Compatible pressures with the proposed works are: • Changes in suspended solids (water clarity) • Physical change (to another sediment type) • Abrasion / disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed • Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Heavy) • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light) The MMO considers that there is a pathway for in-combination impacts from this project, and this project will be considered further in Table 9.
2	MLA/2022/00396/1 South Tees Seagrass Project (20/03/2023 – 01/05/2028) – approximately 370m east of dredging area	This licence is for a habitat restoration project taking place approximately 370m from the dredging area. Compatible pressures with the proposed works are: • Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed • Changes in suspended solids (water clarity) • Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion • Physical change (to another sediment type) • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Heavy) • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light) The MMO considers that there is a pathway for in-combination impacts from this project, and this project will be considered further in Table 9.
3	MLA/2023/00316 Quay 1 - Stone Load Spreading Pad (30/10/2023 - 29/10/2033) –	This licence to deposit a 20x20m stone pad on the seabed and takes place approximately 190m from the dredging activities.

	approximately 190m south of the dredging area	Compatible pressures with the proposed works are: • Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed • Changes in suspended solids (water clarity) • Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light) The MMO considers that there is a pathway for in-combination impacts from this project, and this project will be considered further in Table 9.
4	MLA/2024/00367 Proposed Additional Dolphin at Able Seaton Port Quay 1 (01/11/2024 - 01/11/2027) – approximately 260 west of dredging area	This licence is to construct a third mooring dolphin at Able Seaton Port. Compatible pressures with the proposed works are: • Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed • Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion • Changes in suspended solids (water clarity) • Habitat structure changes - removal of substratum (extraction) • Physical change (to another sediment type) • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Heavy) • Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light) The MMO considers that there is a pathway for in-combination impacts from this project, and this project will be considered further in Table 9.

Table 9: AA in-combination

Name of designated site: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and Ramsar				
Qualifying feature or species (include sub-features and supporting habitats)	Pressure	Adverse Effect on Integrity on qualifying feature of species?	Justification	After mitigation, can you conclude no adverse effect on site integrity?
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed	No	A SPIRIT site check showed the proposed dredging activities overlap with/are adjacent to these features. Dredging has the ability to disturb substrate on the surface and give rise to suspended sediments and so increase smothering and siltation rates through a plume of sediment being released. Capital dredging will increase dredging depths and so could result in habitat structure changes or physical changes. The disturbance of sediment has the potential to release contaminants into the water column. However, the dredging activities are within an industrial area with a history dredging activities, with these proposed activities a continuation of activities permitted under a previous 10 year licence. Local species and the surrounding environment are accustomed to higher levels of activity and many dredging activities are now considered baseline to the area. Substrates such as mud and sand also have a high recoverability rate. The continuation of these activities alone are not considered to have the potential to have an adverse effect on integrity. Additionally, the method of dredging via trailer suction dredge hopper reduces	Not applicable - The MMO considers the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the site and so no mitigation measures are required.
Atlantic salt meadows	Habitat structure changes - removal of substratum (extraction)			
Intertidal mixed sediments	Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion			
Intertidal mud	Physical change (to another sediment type)			
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Smothering and siltation rate changes (Heavy)			
Water column	Smothering and siltation rate changes (Light)			

			sediment suspension compared to other dredging methods and it is anticipated that suspended sediment would dissipate quickly upon dredging works ceasing. Past sampling at the site indicates no contaminants above CEFAS Action Level 2. Previous dredging has not had a detrimental impact to the structure or function of supporting habitats within the SPA or Ramsar. MLA/2025/00615 overlaps with works in the disposal area and is for ground investigation activities. The works of MLA/2025/00615 are small scale, temporary, and highly localised. MLA/2022/00396/1 is a habitat restoration project taking place approximately 370m from the dredging area. Any impacts from placing seagrass on the bed will be small scale, temporary, and highly localised to the area. MLA/2023/00316 is to deposit a 20x20m stone pad on the seabed and takes place approximately 190m from the dredging activities. The dredging activities are within an industrial area and near to a main route for vessels entering and leaving the Tees. The pressures therefore are unlikely to be above the baseline for the area and the activities are unlikely to be carried out at the same time. MLA/2024/00367 is to construct a third mooring dolphin at Able Seaton Port. Due to the distance between the two works	
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			and the works taking place in a highly industrial area with high levels of activity, any impacts between these two projects are not expected to greatly restrict species movement, with local species accustomed to higher levels of disturbance. Therefore, the MMO considers the impacts of these pressures to be small-scale and unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the NSN sites and their features in combination with these projects.	
Common tern, Breeding Little tern, Breeding Sandwich tern, Non-breeding Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand Atlantic salt meadows Intertidal mixed sediments Intertidal mud	Changes in suspended solids (water clarity)	No	A SPIRIT site check showed the proposed dredging activities overlap with/are adjacent to these features. Dredging has the ability to disturb substrate on the surface and give rise to suspended sediments through a plume of sediment being released. The disturbance of sediment has the potential to release contaminants into the water column. However, the dredging activities are within an industrial area with a history dredging activities, with these proposed activities a continuation of activities permitted under a previous 10 year licence. Local bird species and the surrounding environment are accustomed to higher levels of activity and many dredging activities are now considered baseline to the area. Substrates such as mud and sand also have a high recoverability rate. The continuation of these activities alone are not considered to have the potential to have an adverse effect on integrity.	Not applicable - The MMO considers the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the site and so no mitigation measures are required.

Intertidal sand and muddy sand			There is no additional dredging proposed outside of the existing dredge pocket currently consented. The site may be utilised by foraging terns and there is scope for some species to be present in the adjacent mudflats to the south, however it is not considered that the dredging will result in any loss of habitat. Based on the area of works, there is not predicted to be any change to the current extent or distribution of habitats as a result of dredging. Additionally, the method of dredging via trailer suction dredge hopper reduces sediment suspension compared to other dredging methods and it is anticipated that suspended sediment would dissipate quickly upon dredging works ceasing. Past sampling at the site indicates no contaminants above CEFAS Action Level 2. Previous dredging has not had a detrimental impact to the structure or function of supporting habitats within the SPA or Ramsar. MLA/2025/00615 overlaps with works in the disposal area and is for ground investigation activities. The works of MLA/2025/00615 are small scale, temporary, and highly localised. MLA/2022/00396/1 is a habitat restoration project taking place approximately 370m from the dredging area. Any impacts from placing seagrass on the bed will be small scale, temporary, and highly localised to the area.	
Water column				

			MLA/2023/00316 is to deposit a 20x20m stone pad on the seabed and takes place approximately 190m from the dredging activities. The dredging activities are within an industrial area and near to a main route for vessels entering and leaving the Tees. The pressures therefore are unlikely to be above the baseline for the area and the activities are unlikely to be carried out at the same time. MLA/2024/00367 is to construct a third mooring dolphin at Able Seaton Port. Due to the distance between the two works and the works taking place in a highly industrial area with high levels of activity, any impacts between these two projects are not expected to greatly restrict species movement, with local species accustomed to higher levels of disturbance. Therefore, the MMO considers the impacts of these pressures to be small-scale and unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the NSN sites and their features in combination with these projects.	
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Appropriate Assessment Conclusion

This is a record of the appropriate assessment required by regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and undertaken by the Marine Management Organisation in respect of the proposed project outlined in Table 1.

The LSE alone assessment concluded that the proposed project would be likely to have a significant effect on the following European or European marine sites:

- Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA
- Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Ramsar

An alone and in-combination appropriate assessment has been undertaken of the implications of the proposal in consideration of the applicable conservation objectives.

The MMO has concluded that the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the following site(s), either alone or in-combination with other plans of projects:

- Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA
- Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Ramsar

This is due to the dredging activities taking place within an industrial area with a history dredging activities, and in-combination disposal licences have requirements to undertake sampling regularly to ensure the material is still suitable for disposal at sea. In addition to this the overall amounts of disposal are monitored and any new disposal activities taking place will be thoroughly assessed. Although this is a new application, the activities have been taking place for 10 years and the disposal sites have been identified for use of all of the material identified.

Natural England was consulted on the appropriate assessment [date(s)] and to which the MMO has had regard. The conclusions of this appropriate assessment [are/are not] in accordance with the advice and recommendations of Natural England. If the conclusions are not in accordance with Natural England advice or recommendations. Ensure that justification is provided.

Name of MMO officer: Charlotte Stadden

Job Title: Marine Licencing Case Manager

Date: 25 June 2026

Annex 1

Full location information (including site coordinates) is available on the MMO's Public Register. A map detailing the proposed project site(s) is below.

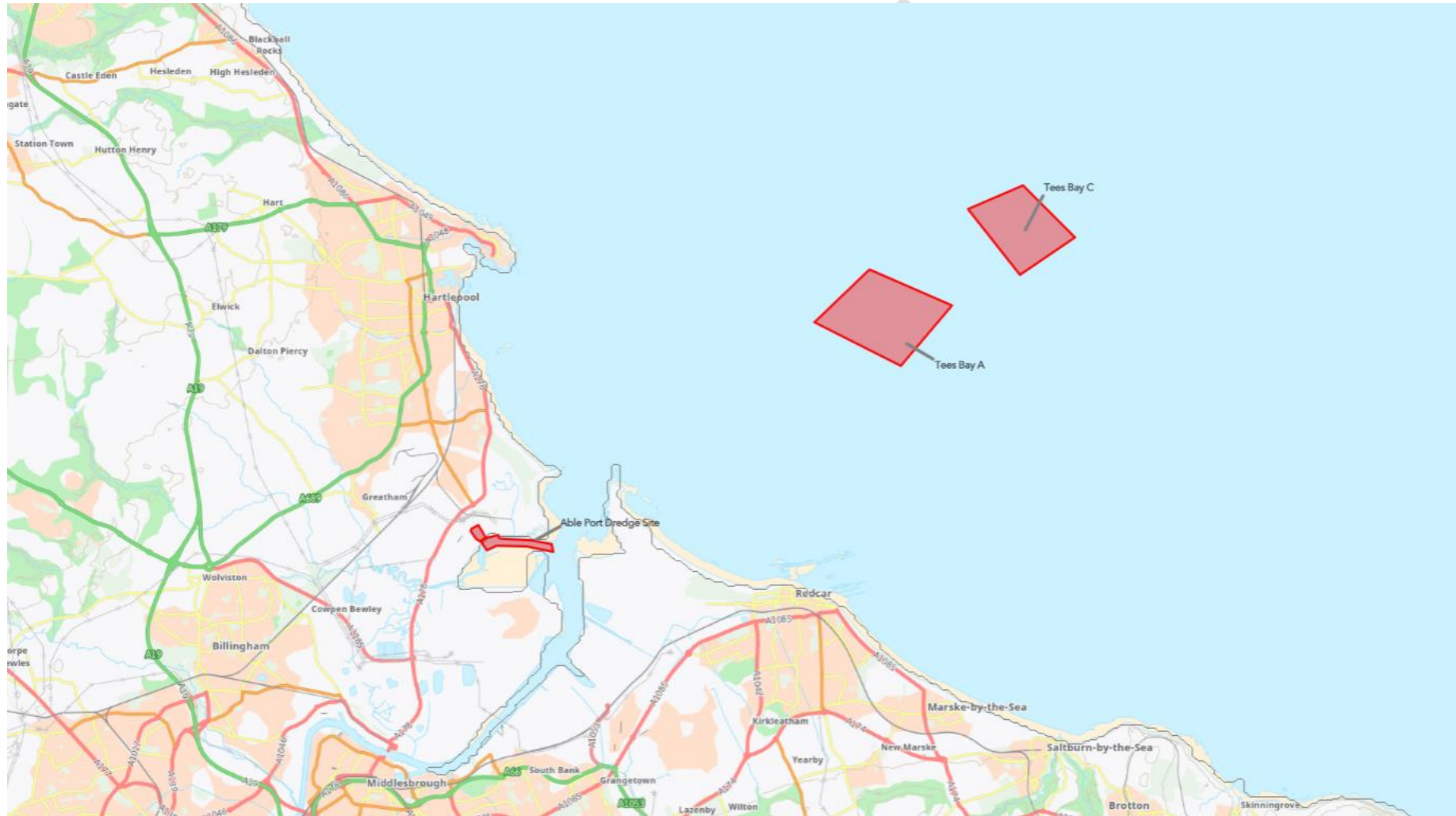
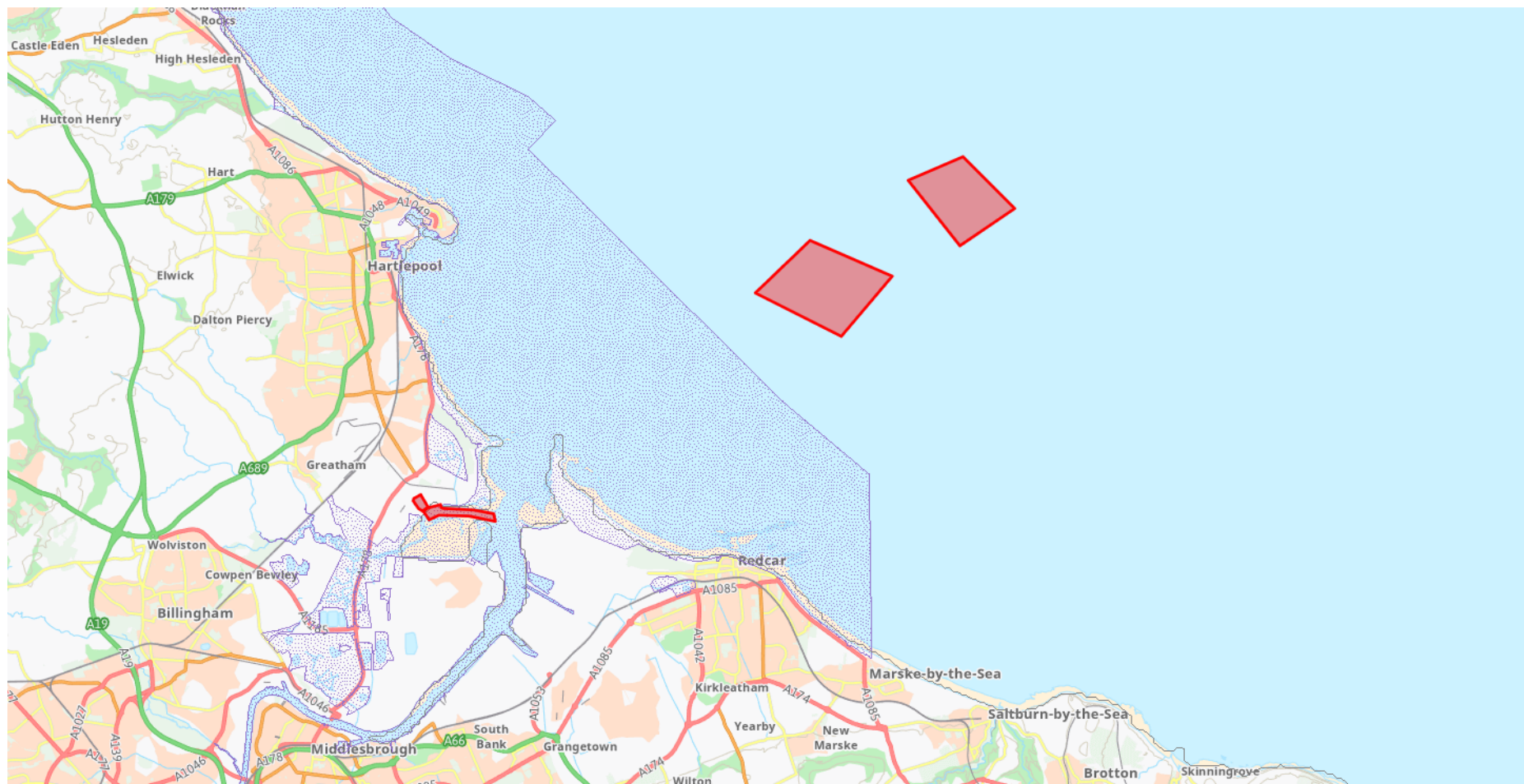


Figure 1.1: Location of the proposed works (in red). Able Port proposed dredge site, Tees Bay A disposal site and Tees Bay C disposal site labelled. Scale 1:75000.



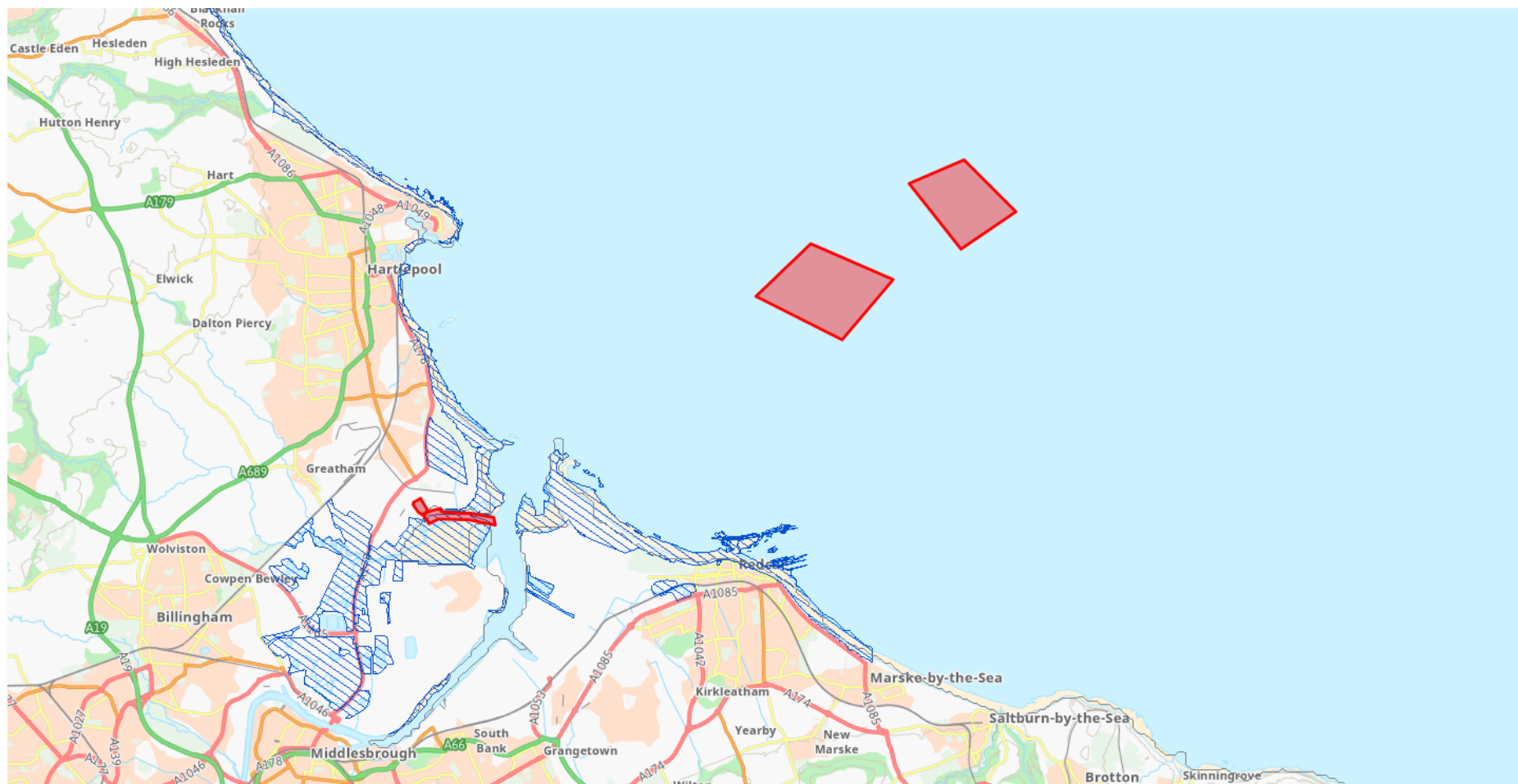


Figure 1.3: Location of the proposed works (red) in relation to Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Ramsar (lined area). Scale 1:100000.

Annex 2



Figure 2.1: Location of the proposed works (in black) in relation to coastal lagoon (in pink, south east from dredging area)



Figure 2.2: Location of the proposed works (in black) in relation to intertidal rock (in orange).



Figure 2.3: Location of the proposed works (in black) in relation to mussel beds (yellow areas)