

Waste Framework Directive Assessment

**Able Seaton Port Capital and
Maintenance Dredging**

January 2026

138424/503

CONTROL SHEET (A01/4)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Waste Framework Directive Assessment has been prepared by Fairhurst on behalf of Able UK Ltd, to support a Marine Licence application which includes capital and maintenance dredging and disposal at Able Seaton Port over a 10 year period to deepen the berth levels as required.
- 1.2 The capital dredging is proposed across Quays 7-11 in order to fulfil the intended capacities of the original licence from 2017 (L/2017/00012/12). The quantities and depths of the capital material removal are based on the quantity remaining on the previous license. Maintenance dredging is proposed across these quays, as well as the Seaton Channel, Holding Basin, Terrc Basin and the Ground Bed.
- 1.3 A maximum of 890,000m³ of material is to be dredged across the licence period, with 250,000m³ comprising capital dredging. The full breakdown is as follows:

Capital Dredging

- 1.4 Capital dredging is proposed 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 CD removing a total volume of 85,000m³ ; and
 - Quays 10 and 11 are to be dredged to a depth of -15m CD removing a total volume of 165,000m³.

Maintenance Dredging

- 1.5 Subsequent maintenance dredging is proposed to 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 up to a total volume of 160,000m³ across the 10 year period;
 - Maintenance dredging of the Ground 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.

Disposal

- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 Please refer to Drawing No: ASC-002-00004 showing the dredge sampling locations.

2.0 APPLYING THE WASTE HIERARCHY

2.1 A waste hierarchy is provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), which states that any waste generated by the proposed marine licence activity must be dealt with in an environmentally friendly way. The order of preference for how waste is dealt with, or the waste hierarchy, is as follows:

1. Prevention – this can include not carrying out an activity and/or the refusal of a marine licence;
2. Re-use – finding an alternative, beneficial use for waste material;
3. Recycling – this can include making high grade products from waste material;
4. Other recovery – including treatment to alter the physical nature of the waste material; and
5. Disposal – this is the last resort.

Prevention

2.2 The proposed dredging seeks to fulfil the unfulfilled capacities which remain from the previous licence, where consented depths and amounts were not reached, as such, the proposed new marine licence is essentially an extension of the 2017 licence. This deepened dredge capacity will enable Able Seaton Port as a strategic gateway location within the wider context of the River Tees and North East.

2.3 Prevention of the waste created through avoiding dredging would preclude Able Seaton Port from further developing its capacity, and would reduce would reduce the potential for economic growth and further investment and innovation. This is in addition to the other associated benefits as discussed throughout the accompanying Marine Planning Supporting Statement. In the case of this development, it is considered that the potential benefits from this development outweigh the considered impacts of waste disposal into the established disposal site at Tees Bay A (TY160) or Tees Bay C (TY150) using the approved methods, and as such prevention of waste creation is not a feasible option.

Re-Use

2.4 Re-use of the material recovered from the dredge campaigns would require significant treatment in order to be safe for other uses, given the established contamination in the Tees, as detailed in the accompanying Water Framework Directive Assessment (WFD). As such, terrestrial transportation to a treatment facility would be required, and given the large volume of material

which will be recovered from the dredges over the course of the licence period and in isolation, this does not constitute a financially or environmentally sustainable solution.

- 2.5 The cost and fossil fuel resource requirement for the transportation of the material, in addition to those involved in the treatment of such a large volume of material, are disproportionate in comparison to the limited risks and resources required for disposal at sea. As such, re-use of the material is not feasible.

Recycling or Other Recovery

- 2.6 The Port Clarence Auger hazardous waste disposal site, situated south-west of Able Seaton Port does accept dredge arising for treatment and reuse and/or landfill, and reuse/recycling of certain hazardous materials.
- 2.7 However, as mentioned above, in order to transport and treat the volume of dredge arising to the land-based facility adds notable additional cost and resource use as opposed the established appropriate disposal strategy for Tees channel dredge arising at Tees Bay A and C licenced disposal sites.
- 2.8 With account to above, overall the additional resource which would be required in order to transport and treat the volume of waste which will be generated through both the capital dredging and maintenance process at Able Seaton Port are disproportionate to those which would be required to undertake the dredging in line with the existing methodology. Therefore, recycling and reuse of the arisings is not appropriate for this project.

Other Recovery

- 2.9 In terms of other potential means of recovering the material dredged, the only option which would be possible is for the material to be transported and disposed of at a terrestrial landfill site. However, as the sediments in the Tees are contaminated, the material would not be suitable for landfill without prior treatment and stabilisation which, as discussed above, is not a resource-efficient or financially viable alternative to at-sea disposal.

Alternatives

- 2.10 As reiterated throughout the assessment of the Waste Hierarchy in Section 2 above, there are no efficient or feasible alternatives for the recovery of dredged sediments at Able Seaton Port being disposed at the designated at-sea disposal sites Tees Bay A (TY160) or Tees Bay C (TY150).
- 2.11 However, in order to minimise any potential adverse impacts of this method of disposal of the sediments, which are known to be contaminated to a degree it is proposed that sampling is to be undertaken every 3 years to ensure that the quality of the sediment is suitable for at sea disposal.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Fairhurst consider that this report constitutes a valid Waste Framework Directive assessment and takes into account all relevant information required in order to assess this proposal. As such, it is considered that this report supports a comprehensive and concise recommendation on the outcome of the Marine Licence application.

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