

Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs
Marine & Fisheries Division

**LICENCE ISSUED UNDER THE MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009, PART 4, MARINE
LICENSING**

MARINE DREDGING LICENCE

Licence for a dredge the berthing pocket as part of the construction of a new multipurpose facility at D3 for berthing cruise ships and for lay by and transient storage of project cargo, break bulk and dry bulk during cruise ship off season

Licence Number: ML2025054

PART 1 – PARTICULARS

1. Licensee(s) Name & Address:

Belfast Harbour Commissioners
Harbour Office
Corporation Street
Belfast
BT1 3AL

2. Names, and operators, of the vessels to be employed to undertake or support the deposit, relocation or removal operations:

To be confirmed as per Condition 7

3. Description of works and nature and quantity of all material dredged below Mean High Water Springs:

This licence is for the capital dredging of 372,000 m³ of seabed material to create a berthing pocket to - 9.8m CD, in relation to the construction of a new multipurpose facility at D3 for berthing cruise ships in addition to lay by and transient storage of project cargo, break bulk and dry bulk during cruise ship off season.

4. Location of works:

The centre point of the dredging works is:

Lat 337195
Long 378300

See:

Appendix A - Approved dredge pocket area

Appendix B - Location map of proposed dredging

Appendix C - Location map of D3 site within Belfast Harbour Estate

5. Valid:

From: 07 July 2026

Until: 31 August 2028

Notwithstanding the validity period of this licence, dredge or disposal activities must not continue past 5th January 2027 in the absence of up-to-date sampling.

Condition 17 states: No dredging shall take place during the hours of darkness between **1 April - 31 May; and 1 July – 31 August** inclusive in any calendar year.

Reason: To minimise the potential impact on the migration periods of juvenile (smolt) Atlantic Salmon (April-May) and the primary migration period (July-August) of adult Atlantic Salmon and sea trout.

Condition 18 states: No dredging shall take place after **5 January 2027** without valid at depth samples being taken and submitted to the department for written agreement 6 weeks prior to any further dredging activity.

Reason: To ensure dredged material meets national assessment criteria and to protect the water environment and ecological features.

6. Licence Documentation

1. Marine Dredge Licence Application Form (dated 17/10/2025)
2. Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (sHRA) (dated October 2025)
3. Site Location Map (dated February 2016)
4. Drawings dated February 2016
5. Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment (dated 17/10/2025)
6. Non- Technical Summary (dated October 2025)
7. Consolidated Environmental Statement (ES) (dated 2025), to include:
 - a. 20 nr Chapters
 - b. 33 nr Appendices
 - c. 13 nr Figures

PART 2 - CONDITIONS

The Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (referred to as the licensing authority)

authorises **Belfast Harbour Commissioners** to dredge in the area of sea specified in Part 1 of this licence.

This licence is subject to the under mentioned condition (s):

Licence Condition(s):

NOTE: FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE LICENCE CONDITIONS BELOW MAY RESULT IN ENFORCEMENT ACTION BEING TAKEN

General Conditions

1. The Licensee(s) must commence works with **12 months** of the date of this licence.
2. All conditions of this licence bind any persons whom, for the time being, owns, occupies or enjoys any use of the works for which this licence has been granted, in relation to those licensed activities authorised under section 66 of the 2009 Act, whether or not the licence has been transferred to that person.
3. The Licensee(s) must receive written authorisation from the licensing authority to assign or transfer the consent. The licensing authority must confirm in writing to both the original Licensee(s) and any proposed new Licensee(s) that the licence has been transferred/assigned before any works may commence under the new Licensee(s).
4. The Licensee(s) must not dredge any other material other than that detailed in the Marine Licence application documents received by the licensing authority on 17 October 2026 and deemed complete on 10 December 2025.
5. The Licensee(s) must contact the licensing authority if it is proposed to vary the materials or methods to be used from those described in the documentation supplied in connection with the Marine Licence application.
6. The Licensee(s) must commence works in line with Condition 1 and complete works within the valid dates of this licence. After that date, the licence will expire in accordance with section 71(4) of the Act.
7. The Licensee(s) must inform the Department of any contractor appointed to carry out part or all of the works. This information should be provided to the Department by email to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk no less than **4 weeks** before the commencement of the licensed activity. The licence holder must ensure that a copy of this licence and any subsequent revisions or amendments has been provided to, read and understood by any agents, contractors or sub-contractors that will carry on any licensed activity authorised by this licence on behalf of the licence holder.

Reason: To ensure the Department has an up to date record of all contractors working in the marine environment.

8. The Licensee(s) must ensure that copies of the licence are available for inspection by any authorised Enforcement Officer at:
 - a. The premises of the Licensee(s)
 - b. The premises of the operating facility
 - c. The site of the works (including on board vessels)

Reason - Conditions 8 & 9 To ensure the works have no adverse impacts on the marine environment, that appropriate equipment is used, that best practice is being followed, and mitigations are in place.

9. The dredging operators must have operational and active AIS vessel tracking during **all** operations. If AIS or vessel positioning systems are faulty, dredge and/or disposal activities must not continue until all systems are repaired/replaced and fully operational.

Reason: To ensure material is being dredged within the appropriate area in the interests of the protection of the marine environment.

Prior to the commencement of the Licensed Activity

10. The Licensee(s) must notify The Source Data Receipt team, UK Hydrographic Office, Taunton. Somerset, TA1 2DN (Email: sdr@ukho.gov.uk; Tel: 01823 337900) at least **4 weeks** before commencement of the dredging activities, to allow for any necessary amendments to nautical charts. The UK Hydrographic Office must also be notified upon completion of the works. MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk must be copied into all notifications.

Reason: To adhere to Maritime Safety Legislation and to protect human health and marine users

11. The Licensee(s) must ensure invasive species biosecurity measures are in place for all stages of the works and for all equipment used. A copy of the biosecurity plan must be submitted for written agreement by the Department at least **4 weeks** before dredging activities commence. MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk must be copied in on the correspondence.

Reason: To prevent the introduction and spread of invasive non-native species as required under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended)

12. The Licensee(s) must prepare a revised Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) or Programme of Works (PoW) to detail archaeological assessment, and mitigation works necessary for the capital dredge aspect of the project. Capital dredging must not commence until the DAERA Marine & Fisheries Division archaeologist has provided written approval of the WSI/PoW. This should be submitted to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk at least **4 weeks** prior to commencement of dredging activities for written agreement by the Department.

Reason: To ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

13. No capital dredging shall take place other than in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). To include the implementation of a Protocol for Archaeological Discoveries (PAD) and a discretionary watching brief. The Licensee(s) will contact these offices to confirm that the mitigation as outlined in the WSI is being implemented through the services of a Retained Archaeologist prior to commencement of works.
14. The Licensee(s) will notify this office of any unforeseen Archaeological Exclusion Zones (AEZs) within 24 hours of their discovery.

Reason – Conditions 13 & 14: To ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified and protected or appropriately recorded.

During the Licensed Activity

Environmental Management

15. The Licensee must appoint an independent and suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works for the period of this licence. The department must be informed of this appointment prior to any commencement of licenced dredging activity.

Reason: To ensure avoidance and mitigation measures have been planned and are followed for the protection of the environment.

16. The Licensee must submit an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) which includes dredge and disposal management to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk for written agreement by the Department, **4 weeks** prior to any dredging activities commencing. This will specifically detail further management of:

- Contaminated material, which is not suitable for sea disposal, and will be disposed of within the Musgrave Channel bund.
- Detailed control measures and procedures for dredge management to include monitoring of suspended solids and dissolved oxygen

Reason: To ensure effective avoidance and mitigation measures have been planned for the protection of the water environment and fisheries and aquaculture interests.

17. No dredging shall take place during the hours of darkness between **1 April - 31 May; and 1 July – 31 August** inclusive in any calendar year.

Reason: To minimise the potential impact on the migration periods of juvenile (smolt) Atlantic Salmon (April-May) and the primary migration period (July-August) of adult Atlantic Salmon and sea trout.

18. No dredging shall take place after **5 January 2027** without valid at depth samples being taken and submitted to the department for written agreement 6 weeks prior to any further dredging activity.

Reason: To ensure dredged material meets national assessment criteria to protect the water environment and ecological features.

19. The Licensee(s) must implement a monitoring programme to ensure suspended sediment levels are kept under control. This will consist of monitoring stations, the positions of which must be agreed by the Department prior to deployment. The proposed positions of the monitoring stations should be submitted to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk for agreement in writing at least **6 weeks** prior to deployment.

20. The monitoring station must be capable of both real time monitoring and reporting of threshold breaches. The thresholds are:

- Suspended solids shall not exceed 300mg/l for more than six hours and not exceed 600mg/l at any point. If these limits are breached, then dredging shall cease immediately until levels of suspended solids drop to less than 300mg/l;
- Dissolved oxygen levels shall not fall below 4mg/l. If this limit is breached, then dredging shall stop until dissolved oxygen rises above 5mg/l.

21. The Licensee(s) must provide notification to the licensing authority of any ceased operations due to control level breaches as soon as practicable.

22. The Licensee(s) must work under the precautionary principle within a Best Practical Environmental Option in the EMP. Under this approach the sediment identified as TBT contaminated above action level two, through the sampling programme shall not be disposed at sea. This material must be removed by an environmental bucket or closed clamshell bucket and transported to the Musgrave bund site for containment.

23. The Licensee(s) must ensure that the environmental bucket/clam is fully operational and closed when removing any contaminated dredged material from the contaminated area of seabed to avoid unnecessary release of contaminated material to the marine environment. Dredging operations must

cease if the environmental bucket or clam shells closing ability is compromised, until such time as the equipment is fully functional.

Reason – Conditions 19 to 23: To align with appropriate assessment monitoring identified within the HRA (dated October 2025) as required to ensure no impacts occur to designated sites or species.

24. In the event of a discovery of an archaeological object and/or remains during the works the licensee(s) must: (1) record the position and details of the site; (2) cease operations and do not disturb the site further and (3) report your discovery to and contact MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk immediately so further advice may be provided by the Department to the operator.

Reason: To ensure that historic monuments and archaeological objects are protected.

25. In the event of a discovery of wreck material during the works, the Licensee must report it to the 'Receiver of Wreck' (Maritime and Coastguard Agency) **within 28 days**.

Reason: To ensure that recovered wreck material is declared and dealt with appropriately.

Upon Completion of the Licensed Activity

26. The Licensee(s) must inform the licensing authority of the finishing date of the licensed work within **28 days** of completion.

Reason: To assist monitoring of the area in the interests of the protection of the marine environment.

27. The licensee(s) must, **within 8 weeks after the completion** of the licensed works, make a written report to the licensing authority stating the quantity and description of all dredging works carried out under the authority of this licence. The report must contain a map showing the areas dredged and bathymetry survey results. This report is to be submitted to MLComplianceandEnforcement@daera-ni.gov.uk. This report will be held by the licensing authority and details considered 'Commercial in Confidence' should be marked on the report by the Licensee(s).

Reason: To ensure this work had no adverse impact on the marine environment, that appropriate equipment was used, and the best practice was followed, and mitigations were in place.

28. A programme of post-excavation analysis, preparation of an archaeological report, dissemination of results and preparation of the excavation archive shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). These measures shall be implemented and a final archaeological report shall be submitted to the licensing authority **no more than 3 months after completion of works**.

Reason: To ensure that the results of archaeological works are appropriately analysed and disseminated and the excavation archive is prepared to a suitable standard for deposition.

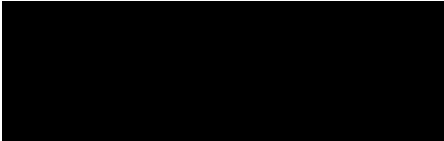
29. The Licensee(s) must ensure that certified returns of quantities of substances deposited under this licence are submitted to the licensing authority. Returns must be submitted for each six-month period within which dredging occurred for any given calendar year; **January – June and July – December**. Returns shall be submitted within four weeks of a six-month period having passed.

30. The Licensee(s) must provide the licensing authority with post dredge survey data indicating the new bathymetric depths of the dredged locations **no more than 3 months after completion of works**.

31. **Within six months** of the dredge completion, the Licensee(s) must provide the licensing authority with a post- dredge surface sample analysis from the location of contaminated sediment to confirm the dredging operations have not resulted in exposing or spreading contaminated sediments.

Reason for Conditions 29-31: To provide the Department with updated information in the interests of the protection of the marine environment longer term.

Signed on behalf of the Department:



Dated: 07 July 2026

NOTE:

- (1) The licensing authority would advise that this licence does not negate the licensees' responsibility to gain any other environmental or access permissions that may be required to progress the works.
- (2) Under Part 4, Chapter 1, paragraph 72 of the **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009**, the licensing authority may revoke, vary or suspend this licence if it appears to the authority that the holder is in breach of a condition included in it, or if it appears to the authority that the licence ought to be varied, suspended or revoked because of a change of circumstances relating to the marine environment or human health, including a change in scientific knowledge. A revocation, variation or suspension may also be enforced in the interests of safety of navigation.
- (3) A person who deposits material in contravention of the terms of a licence is guilty of an offence under Section 85 of the Act. It is a defence under paragraph 86 (1) for a person charged with such an offence to prove 'force majeure'. However they are also required to prove that they took steps within a reasonable time to inform the licensing authority of all details pertaining to the incident contained in paragraph 86 (2). The licensing authority shall be obliged to report force majeure cases immediately to the OSPAR Commission.
- (4) Attention is drawn to the necessity of complying where appropriate with the **Radioactive Substances Act 1960**, the **Prevention of Oil Pollution Act 1971** and to the **Merchant Shipping (Dangerous Goods) (Amendment) Rules 1968**.
- (5) If within 28 days of the issue of a licence the person to whom it was issued requests the licensing authority to give him notice in writing of the reasons for the inclusion of any provision in it, the Authority shall comply with his request within 28 days of receiving it.
- (6) Anyone who fails to comply with a condition on a Marine Licence commits an offence under Section 85 of the **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009**, and may be subject to enforcement action. Possible enforcement actions are compliance notices, remediation notices, fixed monetary penalties and variable monetary penalties. In the worst cases, a person found guilty of an offence on summary conviction may be subject to a fine not exceeding £50,000. In addition, a person found guilty of an offence on conviction on indictment, to a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to both. Further details can be found at our guidance note <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/marine-licensing-guidance-enforcement-under-part-4-marine-and-coastal-access-act%2C-2009-may-2016.pdf>
- (7) Any person authorised by the licensing authority will be permitted to inspect the licensed activity at any reasonable time and at regular periods throughout the licensable period, under Part 4, Chapter 2, Section 247 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

INFORMATIVES:

Maritime & Coastguard Agency advice on Navigational Safety

- The Licencee(s) should consider adopting the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC), which sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. The Code is not mandatory, however it is endorsed by the UK Government, devolved administrations and representatives from across the marine industry sector. It is applicable to both Statutory Harbour Authorities (SHA) and non-SHAs including marinas, terminals, marine berths and jetties. The Department for Transport also publishes the PMSC Guide to Good Practice which provides useful information and detailed guidance on the safe management of these facilities, and is intended to supplement the Code. This can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-good-practice-on-port-marine-operations>

DAERA advice on preventing water pollution

- Strict adherence to DAERA's Standing Advice on Pollution Prevention Guidance, Discharges to the Water Environment, and Abstractions and Impoundments, which are available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/standing-advice-development-may-have-effect-water-environment-including-groundwater-and-fisheries>
- The Licensee(s) shall ensure that measures are in place to prevent pollution of surface or ground water as a result of the activities on site, both during construction and thereafter. Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs) documents can be obtained at: <https://www.netregs.org.uk/environmental-topics/guidance-for-pollution-prevention-gpp-documents/>
- The contractor / person carrying out the works is responsible for ensuring that any and all required mitigation measures are in place and ultimately under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 is liable for any discharge or deposit, whether knowingly or otherwise, of any poisonous, noxious or polluting matter so that it enters a waterway or water in any underground strata.
- The Licensee(s) should be aware that it is an offence under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 to discharge or deposit, whether knowingly or otherwise, any poisonous, noxious or polluting matter so that it enters a waterway or water in any underground strata. Conviction of such an offence may incur a fine of up to £20,000 and / or three years imprisonment.
- Water Catchment Unit is content, subject to any contaminated material being transported by a licensed waste carrier, all relevant waste authorisations being obtained for the treatment and disposal of any contaminated material, and the applicant referring and adhering to DAERA Standing Advice on Pollution Prevention Guidance and Discharges to the Water Environment which are available at: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/standing-advice-development-may-have-effect-water-environment-including-groundwater-and-fisheries>
- Water Catchment Unit notes the operational processes involved are likely to cause the release of suspended solids and would advise the operational methods utilised should be completed at a pace whereby the level of suspended solids is minimised.
- Water Catchment Unit would also emphasise the importance of ensuring equipment / plant is in good working order to minimise the risk of pollution from hydrocarbons and / or hydraulic fluids.
- Any power washing of equipment between sites should occur away from any environmentally sensitive areas, taking care to first manually remove any spills or large accumulations of oil / sediment.

DAERA MFD – Conservation & Reporting – Marine Archaeology

- Belfast Harbour and the wider Belfast Lough are recognised as areas of archaeological and historic importance. Despite extensive dredging and heavy industrial development and use of Belfast Harbour there is still the potential for unknown archaeological remains to come to light. Although there are no designated sites (Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wrecks) or known archaeological remains within the proposed dredge area the possibility of remains being present (vessels, artefacts or submerged prehistory) cannot be conclusively discounted. The dredging aspect of the development in particular could potentially have significant environmental effect on previously unrecorded heritage assets, as well as paleoenvironmental deposits that may contain significant

evidence of past environments, climate change events and sea level fluctuations and should any impact occur it is likely to be of a long-term, local and irreversible nature.

- The Licensee(s) attention is drawn to Article 42 of **the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995** that requires finders of archaeological objects to report within 14 days to a relevant authority.
- The Licensee(s) must report any recovered wreck material to the Receiver of Wreck (Maritime and Coastguard Agency) in accordance with the **Merchant Shipping Act 1995**.

DAERA MFD – Marine Strategy – Bathing Waters & Shellfish Team

- We would make the applicant aware of the Shellfish Water Protected Area in Belfast Lough, located less than 1 mile north of the D3 site. The Department asks that any developments or subsequent work, in and around identified shellfish waters, should not cause any negative impacts on the water quality. The applicant must consider the risk of this proposal to impact Shellfish Water Protected Areas which are designated under The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017. These designated sites contain commercial shellfish harvesting areas which must meet stringent bacteriological and chemical standards as outlined in the Water Framework Directive (Classification, Priority Substances and Shellfish Waters) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- Shellfish Water Protected Areas are particularly vulnerable to pollution and therefore the applicant should ensure adherence to the DAERA Standing Advice for any work that may impact the water environment

DAERA MFD - Sea Fisheries Inspectorate

- The applicant should be made aware that Belfast Lough supports commercial fisheries and aquaculture interests. Pollution, resulting from construction operations, in the marine environment has the potential to cause adverse impact to these interests. The applicant must ensure adequate and appropriate pollution mitigation is in place prior to commencing operations and would recommend its inclusion into a Construction Environment Management Plan
- The applicant is reminded of Section 47 of the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966, which covers the applicant's responsibilities relating to penalties for pollution and the consequences of causing or permitting the release of any deleterious material into any waters.
- Sea Fisheries would direct the applicant toward DAERA standing advice and the Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs), particularly works and maintenance in or near water (GPP5) [DAERA Pollution Standing Advice](#)

DAERA MFD – Aquaculture

- Active bottom growing mussel sites in Belfast Lough are 2 km away from the proposed D3 site works. Consideration should be given to the possibility of high levels of suspended solids settling on these beds, as this will have an impact causing mortality in the stock. Also, the potential impact on water quality.

DAERA MFD – Inland Fisheries

- We would like to draw the applicant's attention to Section 47 of the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966, which covers the applicant's responsibilities relating to Penalties for Pollution and the consequences of causing or permitting the release of any Deleterious materials into any waters.
- The Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean (North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization – NASCO): This international treaty obliges signatory states, including the UK, to conserve, restore, and rationally manage Atlantic salmon populations and their habitats. Parties must implement programmes of work, provide scientific data, and apply precautionary measures where information is lacking. NASCO monitors compliance and facilitates international cooperation to protect salmon stocks throughout their migratory range.

- Belfast Lough and the River Lagan support significant fisheries interests and sustains populations of resident and migratory salmonids (salmon, trout/sea trout) and eels, with the potential presence of lamprey. Inland Fisheries, in cooperation with the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, has invested considerable time and resources in a programme to reintroduce a self-sustaining population of Atlantic salmon to the Lagan catchment, alongside long term monitoring of these populations at various life stages. Additional investment has been made in habitat enhancement initiatives within the catchment.
- As outlined in the Approved Environmental Statement (Chapter 6), Belfast Lough serves as a critical migratory corridor for several diadromous and catadromous fish species moving between marine and freshwater habitats with the channel at Victoria Dock (D3) being a 'pinch point' through which all such migrations must navigate. Populations of European eel and Atlantic salmon have experienced severe declines over the past two decades. Atlantic salmon are listed as an Annex II species under the Habitats Directive, while European eel is classified as *critically endangered* on the IUCN Red List.
- Salmon and sea trout populations within the Lagan catchment remain under significant pressure from multiple stressors, resulting in low numbers of fish successfully migrating to sea and returning to spawn. Protecting these migrations is essential to prevent the potential extirpation of these species from the catchment.
- Inland Fisheries' primary concerns relate to the potential impacts from activities within the Victoria Channel on the migrations of salmon, sea trout, eels, and lamprey.
- Although only some of the proposed construction activities overlap with the main migratory periods for salmon, there is potential for these timings to change. The primary migration period for adult salmon in this area is likely to occur during July and August, while juvenile salmon (smolt) typically migrate in April and May.
- Inland Fisheries also note the requirement for significant dredging activities within the main channel and the migratory route for salmon, seatrout, eels and lamprey to the Lagan. The release of sediments and associated anoxic plumes to the water column and the reduction of oxygen levels can create a barrier to salmon migration.
- As fish are mobile, they are likely to vacate the area during this process. Whilst these activities are expected to have minimal impact on individual fish health, they are likely to disrupt migratory patterns. Given the low salmon population within the catchment, any such disruption could have significant consequences.
- Although only some of the proposed construction activities overlap with the main migratory periods for salmon, there is potential for these timings to change. Any licence issued should again protect the migration periods of both adult and juvenile salmon

DAERA MFD – Marine Conservation & Reporting – Marine Wildlife

Invasives

- Biosecurity plans should be in place for all stages of the project and all vehicles and equipment used to prevent spread or intro of INNS following [Northern Ireland Biosecurity guidelines](#), and [DAERA Marine Non-Native Invasive Non-Native Species standing advice](#) guidance.
- Check Clean Dry Procedures should be applied before and after the sediment removal and deposition at a non-hydrologically linked location.
- We advise that a contingency plan should be put in place outlining procedures to be followed if an INNS is found on site or on any equipment. Furthermore, we advise that staff should be provided with the following marine [Invasive species identification guides](#). Staff must report any INNS to DAERA MFD/CEDaR. No INNS should be released back into the marine environment, instead, they should be disposed of in landfill or incinerated.

Reason: To prevent the introduction and spread of invasive non-native species as required under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended).

Marine Litter

- Any marine litter encountered or generated during the work carried out must be appropriately disposed of at the end of each day following [DAERA Marine Litter standing advice](#).

Reason: To prevent litter entering the marine environment and adversely impacting Marine Protected Areas, Habitats and Species, as required under The Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002, Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland 2018 and the UK Marine Policy Statement.

Marine Pollution

- Ensure [DAERA Pollution Standing Advice](#) and [DAERA Standing advice for development that may have an effect on the water environment \(including groundwater and fisheries\)](#) is adhered to.
- No fuel/oil should be stored close to the water to reduce the likelihood of accidental spills into the marine environment. Any fuelling required will only occur at a non-hydrologically linked location using a buffer of at least 10m.

Reason: To prevent adverse impacts to Marine Protected Areas, Habitats and Species, as required under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), The Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Sediments

- Sediment being removed should ideally be comparable in grain size to the area where it is being deposited and must not be contaminated with pollutants from the harbour.
- Adherence to previous license condition of ongoing sediment monitoring and analysis (before and after disposal) at existing sampling stations, including
 - Infaunal invertebrate samples collected through grab sampling
 - Drop-down video of epifaunal communities.
 - Sediment particle size analysis.
 - Chemical analysis of sediments.
- Assessment of the volume of material retained on the licenced disposal area should be calculated from the pre/post disposal bathymetric surveys. This assessment should include an analysis of the volume of material deposited under the licence, retained on the licenced area, and the volume dispersed to the wider environment.

Reason: To prevent adverse impacts to Marine Protected Areas, Habitats and Species, as required under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended), The Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002, The Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

European and National Marine Protected Areas

The proposal is hydrologically connected to Marine Protected Areas. Activities must not harm these sites. Any actions within designated areas but outside the red line boundary or consented scope require approval under [The Conservation \(Natural Habitats, etc.\) \(Amendment\) \(NI\) EU Exit Regulations 2019](#) and [Environment Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2002](#). Contact NIEA, Conservation, Designations and Protection Unit, Clare House, Belfast. Guidance for Assessments of Marine Protected Area in the NI inshore area, including Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) assessments can be found [here](#).

Marine National Protected Species – Seals

Under Article 10 of [The Wildlife \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1985](#), it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb, injure, or capture Harbour or Grey seals, or interfere with their shelters. Possession of these animals or their parts is also prohibited. A [licence](#) may be required if impacts cannot be avoided—consult [DAERA Marine Wildlife Team](#).

Invasive Species

Under Article 15 of [The Wildlife \(NI\) Order 1985](#), it is an offence to release or allow escape of non-native species or those listed in Schedule 9.

Marine Nationally Protected Species – Northern Ireland Priority Species

Section 3(3) of the [Wildlife and Natural Environment Act \(NI\) 2011](#) requires public bodies to take reasonable steps to conserve species and habitats listed as priorities for biodiversity.

Further Information

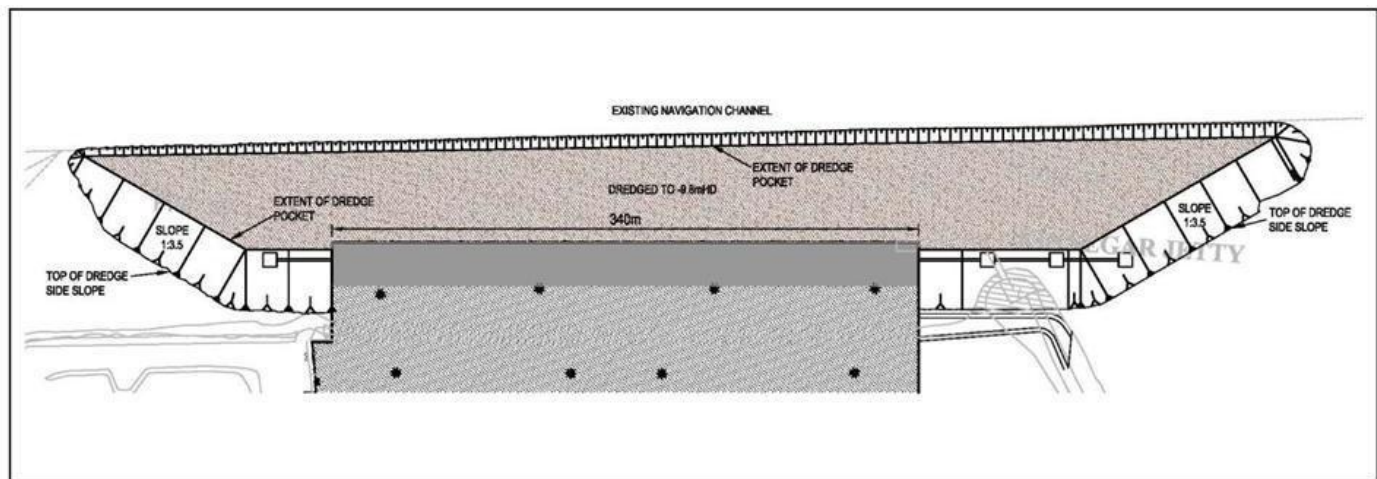
- Refer to [DAERA Marine Map Viewer](#) for details on protected areas, habitats, species, marine mammals, INNS and Regional Seascape Character Areas.
- Check the [DAERA Protected Areas site](#) for details on MPAs.
- Refer to [DAERA Protected Areas Monitoring Results](#) for details on MPA feature condition status.
- Check the [Marine Life Information Network](#) for habitat sensitivities.
- For guidance on how to upload and obtain data from the [JNCC Marine Noise Registry \(MNR\)](#) follow this [link](#).
- [The Wise Scheme](#)
- [Invasive species identification guides Northern Ireland](#)
- [Cetacean Sightings and Strandings around NI coastline](#)

Standing Advice and Guidance

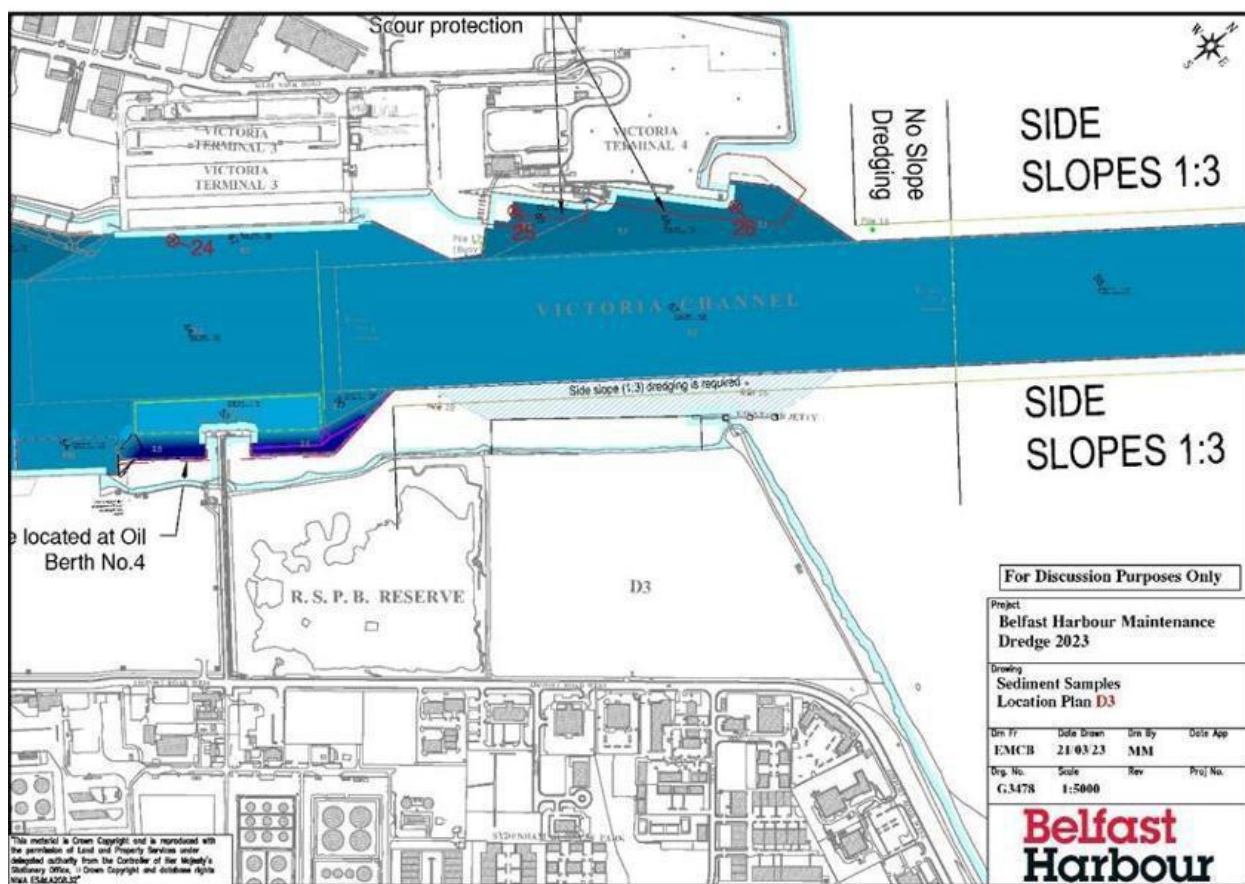
The applicant's attention is drawn to the following links which provide standing advice and guidance to be considered:

- [DAERA Pollution Standing Advice](#)
- [DAERA Marine Litter Standing Advice](#) _
- [DAERA Marine Invasive Non-native Species Guidance](#)
- [DAERA Marine Wildlife Disturbance Guidance](#)
- [Check Clean Dry](#)
- [Decisions affected by marine policy - authorisation decisions](#)
- [DAERA Standing advice for development that may have an effect on the water environment \(including groundwater and fisheries\)](#)

Appendix A – Approved Dredge pocket (Fig 1.8 of Non-Technical Summary, dated October 2025)



Appendix B – Location map of dredging works



Appendix C – Arial view of the D3 site within Belfast Harbour Estate

