

Water Framework Directive assessment: scoping template for activities in estuarine and coastal waters

Use this template to record the findings of the scoping stage of your Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment for an activity in an estuary or coastal water.

If your activity will:

- take place in or affect more than one water body, complete a template for each water body
- include several different activities or stages as part of a larger project, complete a template for each activity as part of your overall WFD assessment

The [WFD assessment guidance for estuarine and coastal waters](#) will help you complete the table.

Your activity	Description, notes or more information
Applicant name	Marina Developments Ltd
Application reference number (where applicable)	TBC by MMO
Name of activity	Mercury Yacht Harbour - Maintenance Dredging and Disposal
Brief description of activity	<i>Mercury Yacht Harbour maintenance dredging has occurred under licence L/2016/00323/1 which expires in October 2026, this application seeks to secure a new 10-year licence for the continuation of this activity without any major changes to methodology or programme. This application seeks a continuation of the existing activity which has been ongoing within the river for over 20 years.</i>
Location of activity (central point XY coordinates or national grid reference)	SU 48604 08174
Footprint of activity (ha)	5.30 ha
Timings of activity (including start and finish dates)	10-year licence for maintenance dredge activities which will occur between 16 th September and 1 st May each winter.
Extent of activity (for example size, scale frequency, expected volumes of output or discharge)	The maximum amount to be removed in any one licence year will be 10,000m ³ with an overall licence limit of 75,000m ³ . Dredge campaigns will be designed each year following a review of hydrographic survey data and so volume per campaign will be variable but always remain within the stated limit.
Use or release of chemicals (state which ones)	n/a

Water body ¹	Description, notes or more information
WFD water body name	<i>Southampton Water</i>
Water body ID	<i>GB520704202800</i>
River basin district name	<i>South East</i>
Water body type (estuarine or coastal)	<i>Transitional / Estuarine</i>
Water body total area (ha)	<i>3123.51ha</i>
Overall water body status (2019)	<i>Moderate</i>
Ecological status	<i>Moderate (2019) / Moderate (2022)</i>
Chemical status	<i>Fail (2019) / Does not require assessment (2022)</i>
Target water body status and deadline	<i>Ecological Moderate by 2015, Chemical Good by 2063</i>
Hydromorphology status of water body	<i>Supports Good</i>
Heavily modified water body and for what use	<i>Yes: Coastal protection; Flood protection; Navigation, ports & harbours</i>
Higher sensitivity habitats present	<i>Clam, cockle and oyster beds; Saltmarsh</i>
Lower sensitivity habitats present	<i>Cobbles, gravel and shingle; Intertidal soft sediment; Rocky shore; Subtidal soft sediment</i>
Phytoplankton status	<i>High</i>
History of harmful algae	<i>No</i>
WFD protected areas within 2km	<i>Coastal Sensitive Areas – Eutrophic: Hamble Estuary (UKENCA123)</i> <i>Shellfish Waters: Approaches to Southampton Water (36), Southampton Water (35)</i> <i>SPA: Solent & Southampton Water (UK9011061)</i> <i>SAC: Solent Maritime (UK0030059)</i>

¹ Water body information can be found in the Environment Agency's catchment data explorer and the water body summary table. Magic maps provide additional information on habitats and protected areas. Links to these information sources can be found in the WFD assessment guidance for estuarine and coastal waters.

Specific risk information

Consider the potential risks of your activity to each of these receptors: hydromorphology, biology (habitats and fish), water quality and protected areas. Also consider invasive non-native species (INNS).

Section 1: Hydromorphology

Consider if hydromorphology is at risk from your activity.

Use the water body summary table to find out the hydromorphology status of the water body, if it is classed as heavily modified and for what use.

Consider if your activity:	Yes	No	Hydromorphology risk issue(s)
Could impact on the hydromorphology (for example morphology or tidal patterns) of a water body at high status	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	
Could significantly impact the hydromorphology of any water body	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	
Is in a water body that is heavily modified for the same use as your activity	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Yes: Navigation, ports and harbours</i>

Record the findings for hydromorphology and go to section 2: biology.

Section 2: Biology

Habitats

Consider if habitats are at risk from your activity.

Use the water body summary table and Magic maps, or other sources of information if available, to find the location and size of these habitats.

Higher sensitivity habitats ²	Lower sensitivity habitats ³
chalk reef	cobbles, gravel and shingle
clam, cockle and oyster beds	intertidal soft sediments like sand and mud
intertidal seagrass	rocky shore
maerl	subtidal boulder fields
mussel beds, including blue and horse mussel	subtidal rocky reef
polychaete reef	subtidal soft sediments like sand and mud
saltmarsh	
subtidal kelp beds	
subtidal seagrass	

² Higher sensitivity habitats have a low resistance to, and recovery rate, from human pressures.

³ Lower sensitivity habitats have a medium to high resistance to, and recovery rate from, human pressures.

Consider if the footprint ⁴ of your activity is:	Yes	No	Biology habitats risk issue(s)
0.5km ² or larger	Yes to one or more – requires impact assessment	No to all – impact assessment not required	
1% or more of the water body's area			
Within 500m of any higher sensitivity habitat			Adjacent to Saltmarsh
1% or more of any lower sensitivity habitat			

⁴ Note that a footprint may also be a temperature or sediment plume. For dredging activity, a footprint is 1.5 times the dredge area.

Fish

Consider if fish are at risk from your activity, but only if your activity is in an estuary or could affect fish in or entering an estuary.

Consider if your activity:	Yes	No	Biology fish risk issue(s)
Is in an estuary and could affect fish in the estuary, outside the estuary but could delay or prevent fish entering it or could affect fish migrating through the estuary	Continue with questions	Go to next section	Is in an estuary and could affect fish in the estuary
Could impact on normal fish behaviour like movement, migration or spawning (for example creating a physical barrier, noise, chemical change or a change in depth or flow)	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Could impact on normal fish behaviour
Could cause entrainment or impingement of fish	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	

Record the findings for biology habitats and fish and go to section 3: water quality.

Section 3: Water quality

Consider if water quality is at risk from your activity.

Use the water body summary table to find information on phytoplankton status and harmful algae.

Consider if your activity:	Yes	No	Water quality risk issue(s)
Could affect water clarity, temperature, salinity, oxygen levels, nutrients or microbial patterns continuously for longer than a spring neap tidal cycle (about 14 days)	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Could affect water clarity, temperature, salinity, oxygen levels, nutrients or microbial patterns continuously for longer than a spring neap tidal cycle (about 14 days)
Is in a water body with a phytoplankton status of moderate, poor or bad	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	
Is in a water body with a history of harmful algae	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	

Consider if water quality is at risk from your activity through the use, release or disturbance of chemicals.

If your activity uses or releases chemicals (for example through sediment disturbance or building works) consider if:	Yes	No	Water quality risk issue(s)
The chemicals are on the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) list	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Could release chemicals that are on the EQSD list
It disturbs sediment with contaminants above Cefas Action Level 1	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Could disturb sediment with contaminants above Cefas Action Level 1

If your activity has a mixing zone (like a discharge pipeline or outfall) consider if:	Yes	No	Water quality risk issue(s)
The chemicals released are on the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) list	Requires impact assessment ⁵	Impact assessment not required	

⁵ Carry out your impact assessment using the Environment Agency's surface water pollution risk assessment guidance, part of Environmental Permitting Regulations guidance.

Record the findings for water quality go on to section 4: WFD protected areas.

Section 4: WFD protected areas

Consider if WFD protected areas are at risk from your activity. These include:

- special areas of conservation (SAC)
- special protection areas (SPA)
- shellfish waters
- bathing waters
- nutrient sensitive areas

Use Magic maps to find information on the location of protected areas in your water body (and adjacent water bodies) within 2km of your activity.

Consider if your activity is:	Yes	No	Protected areas risk issue(s)
Within 2km of any WFD protected area ⁶	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Within 2km of WFD protected areas: <i>Coastal Sensitive Areas – Eutrophic: Hamble Estuary (UKENCA123)</i> <i>Shellfish Waters: Approaches to Southampton Water (36), Southampton Water (35)</i> <i>SPA: Solent & Southampton Water (UK9011061)</i> <i>SAC: Solent Maritime (UK0030059)</i>

⁶ Note that a regulator can extend the 2km boundary if your activity has an especially high environmental risk.

Record the findings for WFD protected areas and go to section 5: invasive non-native species.

Section 5: Invasive non-native species (INNS)

Consider if there is a risk your activity could introduce or spread INNS.

Risks of introducing or spreading INNS include:

- materials or equipment that have come from, had use in or travelled through other water bodies
- activities that help spread existing INNS, either within the immediate water body or other water bodies

Consider if your activity could:	Yes	No	INNS risk issue(s)
Introduce or spread INNS	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Could introduce or spread INNS

Record the findings for INNS and go to the summary section.

Summary

Summarise the results of scoping here.

Receptor	Potential risk to receptor?	Note the risk issue(s) for impact assessment
Hydromorphology	Yes	Is in a water body that is heavily modified for the same use as your activity
Biology: habitats	Yes	Within 500m of any higher sensitivity habitat
Biology: fish	Yes	Is in an estuary and could affect fish in the estuary, outside the estuary but could delay or prevent fish entering it or could affect fish migrating through the estuary Could impact on normal fish behaviour like movement, migration or spawning (for example creating a physical barrier, noise, chemical change or a change in depth or flow)
Water quality	Yes	Could affect water clarity, temperature, salinity, oxygen levels, nutrients or microbial patterns continuously for longer than a spring neap tidal cycle (about 14 days) The chemicals are on the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) list It disturbs sediment with contaminants above Cefas Action Level 1
Protected areas	Yes	Within 2km of any WFD protected area
Invasive non-native species	Yes	Could introduce or spread INNS

If you haven't identified any receptors at risk during scoping, you don't need to continue to the impact assessment stage and your WFD assessment is complete.

If you've identified one or more receptors at risk during scoping, you should continue to the impact assessment stage.

Include your scoping results in the WFD assessment document you send to your activity's regulator as part of your application for permission to carry out the activity.