

HAMBLE POINT MARINA EVENTS PONTOON ACCESS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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PREPARED FOR: MARINA DEVELOPMENTS LTD

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1 Introduction

Hamble Point Marina, which is owned and operated by Marina Developments Ltd, has submitted a Marine Licence Application seeking consent to undertake replacement of the Events pontoon access bridge arrangement which links the Events pontoon to the shore and allows for pedestrian traffic from vessels using the pontoon. The access bridge is now at the end of its service life, with the works seeking to undertake a broadly like for like replacement within the 3d extents of the existing structure. Whilst the majority of these works could be completed under a self-service marine licence, the requirement to extract 6No piles and drive 2No new piles to support the new bridge results in a requirement to submit a full Marine Licence application and so all aspects of the work have been included to simplify licence arrangements. Works are scoped to be completed between January and April 2026 (inclusive).

To support this application, a Water Framework Directive (WFD) Scoping and Impact Assessment has been undertaken to help inform the WFD compliance.

The WFD Assessment is comprised of three separate stages;

- Screening – To determine if the activity is excluded from the assessment. Activities that are not screened out are taken forward into scoping.
- Scoping – To determine the receptors that are potentially at risk from the activity and need further assessment.
- Impact Assessment – A consideration of the potential for impacts of the activity on the identified receptors, along with methods or approaches to avoid or minimise impacts.

For the purposes of the proposed works, screening was not undertaken due to the nature of the licence application. This technical note, which should be read alongside the WFD Assessment Scoping Template, summarises the identified receptors and impacts that have an effect on them.

The WFD Scoping Activity has helped to identify that further assessment was required in all six categories. These quality triggers have been assessed against the context of the site, proposed activity,

scale, and supporting information to determine the level of pressures that the receptors may experience as a result of the activity being undertaken.

The Scoping and Assessment has been undertaken and completed using the most recently updated version of the 2019 River Basin Management Plan, published in August 2022 and accessible within the catchment data explorer.

2 WFD Scoping Triggers

The scoping template was used to identify the following criteria which needed further impact assessment to be undertaken. These receptors and the associated risk issue trigger is summarised in Table 2-1, which is taken directly from the scoping activity.

Table 2-1: Results of the scoping activity

Receptor	Potential risk to receptor?	Note the risk issue(s) for impact assessment
Hydromorphology	Yes	<i>Yes: within a water body that is heavily modified for the same use as your activity (Navigation, Ports & Harbours)</i>
Biology: habitats	Yes	<i>Yes: within 500m of a higher sensitivity habitat (saltmarsh)</i>
Biology: fish	Yes	<i>Yes: is in an estuary and could affect fish in the estuary Yes: could impact on normal fish behaviour like movement, migration or spawning (creating noise)</i>
Water quality	Yes	<i>Yes: minor sediment disturbance containing chemicals on the EQSD list Yes: minor sediment disturbance with contaminants above Cefas Action Level 1</i>
Protected areas	Yes	<i>Yes: is within 2km of the following WFD protected areas: Shellfish Waters: Southampton Water (35 and 36) SPA: Solent & Southampton Water (UK9011061) SAC: Solent Maritime (UK0030059) Coastal Sensitive Areas – Eutrophic (UKENCA123)</i>
Invasive non-native species	Yes	<i>Yes: Could introduce or spread INNS through the use of vessels</i>

This table forms the starting point for the impact assessment detailed in Section 3, where a consideration of the risks to each has been detailed below in the context of the proposed works and any other relevant historical information.

3 Impact Assessments

3.1 Hydromorphology

This receptor was scoped in on the basis that the waterbody is heavily modified under the ports and harbours category. On the basis that the works equate to a direct replacement of existing infrastructure that does not seek to modify the site layout or footprint it is assessed that there is no risk to this receptor as a result of the proposed works.

3.2 Biology: Habitats

The Biology: Habitats receptor has been scoped in as a result of saltmarsh features and native oyster beds within 500m of the works area. Within the MAGiC maps system the nearest saltmarsh polygon is approximately 325m straight line North West of the works area and the Native Oyster beds are approximately 1.9km due south of the works area.

With the exception of the potential for noise associated with impact piling, the works are fully self-contained within the footprint of the works area and does not interact with either habitat. As demonstrated within the water quality section of this assessment (Section 3.4) the works will not result in any suspended sediment that might mobilise and influence these features.

It is therefore assessed that there is no potential impact on either of these habitats as a result of the works.

3.3 Biology: Fish

The Biology: Fish receptor has been scoped in during the initial WFD assessment due to potential for the works to 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).

The replacement of the access brow and access bridge is not scoped to have any potential for impact on fish as the works will be completed from a vessel that already undertakes work within the River and is supported by hand tool operations and small workboats consistent with other activities within the site.

The proposed pile replacements are direct replacement of piles under maintenance of an existing facility and will use vibro-piling as the industry standard methodology which avoids impulsive noise. The duration of the construction phase works will also not prevent normal fish behaviour or create new limitation on movement, migration or spawning. As the project is scoped to occur during January-April (inclusive) all piling should be completed prior to any sensitive fish periods, which under the established River Hamble agreement for dredging is considered to be 2nd May to 15th September.

Use of percussive piling will only occur when piles cannot be driven to design depth via vibro-piling. If percussive techniques are deployed, 20-minute soft-start procedures will be implemented to allow for fish to move away from the works location. The soft-start procedure will be repeated after 10-minutes of percussive inactivity.

Piling works will only occur at the very edges of the River, either at or above the Low Water mark and will be completed over a period of 2 to 3 days.

3.4 Water Quality

Water quality has been scoped in on the basis that during the pile extraction process there could be a very small mobilisation of sediment from around each pile.

The sediment within the wider marina is tested in support of ongoing maintenance dredge activities, with analysis showing the sediment contains some determinants above CEFAS AL1. Similarly, the presence of these determinants also means they are on the EQSD schedule. There are no determinants present in concentrations approaching CEFAS AL2, with any exceedances above AL1 minor and the MMO have deemed the sediment from within the site as suitable for dredging and disposal at sea. Whilst the samples have not been collected in the specific location of this project it is considered that the samples should be representative of any fines material within the works area given the relative proximity. As such, scoping in this trigger is completed on a 'worst case' basis.

Either of these triggers are criteria for progressing to an impact assessment under this category and so taking both forward together is considered appropriate. Of relevance is that the waterbody is currently failing its chemical classification (2019 data), with the 2022 status as 'Does not require assessment' and so the activity must not cause deterioration of the waterbody class or cause the concentration of any currently passing chemical to exceed its Environmental Quality Standard Annual Average threshold.

The vertical extraction methodology is considered to be the least intrusive method of pile extraction with minimal potential for sediment mobilisation. In isolation, each pile of average dimension found on site has a contact perimeter of approx. 1.2m. This extremely small contact length at the bed surface is minimised across the length of the pile in that once the initial suction is released the pile is typically withdrawn with little resistance that would lead to sediment mobilisation. The in-combination effect of multiple pile replacements also remains extremely low in that the piles will be replaced in sequence with clear time separation between each instance as a result of the requirement for vessel relocation and preparations for extraction and piling. Similarly, as maintenance dredging is a recurrent activity within the site under separate Marine Licence it can be considered that the potential risk of sediment mobilisation under this pile replacement activity will be significantly less than during dredging. This assessment assumes that extraction would occur over high water periods when the piles are semi submerged so as to allow vessel access, however where the extraction can be completed at low water the piles would be extracted in the dry and no mobilisation into the waterbody would occur.

In the event that the piles cannot be extracted and are to be cut this activity will occur at periods of low water when the bed can be reached on foot. Using hand tools the intertidal area around the pile would be dug to allow the pile to be cut at or below the existing bed level, before any intertidal material is replaced.

Any low volume mobilisation sediment that may have small amounts of contaminants are assessed as trivially small and so would be insignificant in regard to WFD compliance for Water Quality. The volume of water within the Southampton Water waterbody provides a large margin of safety as any load being imposed would not be substantial enough to generate a long-term uplift. The opportunity for dilution is great and would prevent anywhere near a 3% uplift of a failing annual average baseline being reached, even on an in works temporary basis when measured at the site itself.

The activity is therefore assessed as being compliant with both CEFAS action levels and the EQSD requirements of the WFD legislation as delivery of the proposed activity will not result in anywhere near a 3% uplift in the failing chemical EQS AA baseline. That no long-term additional load or scale of works uplift is proposed ensures that the works are as small as possible to achieve the required outcomes and so will not lead to a WFD deterioration.

3.5 Protected Areas

The works are located within 2km of the following WFD Protected Areas;

- Solent Maritime SAC (UK0030059)

- Solent and Southampton Water SPA (UK9011061)
- Shellfish Waters – Southampton Water (35 and 36)
- Coastal Sensitive Areas – Eutrophic – Hamble Estuary (UKENCA123)

Protected areas has been scoped into impact assessment on the basis that the works area is within the Solent Maritime SAC (UK0030059), Southampton Water Shellfish Waters (36) and Hamble Estuary Coastal Sensitive Area – Eutrophic (UKENCA123). The project site is also 120m away from Solent and Southampton Water SPA (UK0030059).

Broadly speaking, the project seeks to secure a direct like for like replacement of an existing structure that provides shoreside access to an in-river pontoon. Given the established nature of the structure there is not assessed to be any change of use or type that might create any new impacts or pressures to these designations during the operational phase and so this impact assessment only considers the potential impacts during the construction phase.

The construction phase is assessed as a very short duration project, that is scoped to be in the order of 7 working days to complete. Much of the project can be complete from floating plant and involves predominantly hand tools to unbolt the existing brow and bridge and then rebolt into position the new brow and bridge.

Extraction of 6No piles and driving of 2No piles has the potential for short duration noise impacts, however through use of vibropiling techniques as the primary methodology and only using percussive piling with soft start procedures where vibropiling fails to achieve the design levels, combined with piling only taking place during daylight hours it is assessed that the works will not have any detrimental impact on any of the SPA or SAC features.

Similarly, there is assessed to be no impact on the Shellfish Waters or Eutrophic designation on the same basis as the Water Quality assessment detailed in section 3.4 of this assessment. The extraction and replacement of individual piles will not create any additional pressure on the ability of the waterbody to support the Shellfish Waters designation or the function within it. The piles themselves do not create any impact on water quality as only coatings and treatments compatible with use in the marine environment will be used.

3.6 Invasive Non-Native Species

The Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) trigger/ receptor has been scoped into the assessment on the basis that the works may utilise vessels which are locally sourced but that may arrive on site from outside of the scoped water body.

Ideally a local contractor and plant will be used where possible, or a contractor that is already working within proximity of the project site. However, this is not always possible and where a contractor who is not already working within the waterbody is deployed, they will be required to use the most relevant and up-to-date industry practices in relation to mitigation measures to reduce the risk of INNS through the works.

In the context of the piles themselves, new piles will arrive on site as painted and in a 'ready to drive' condition, which will help to minimise the potential for the introduction of INNS through the works. After extraction, old piles will be cleaned before being taken away from the site for recycling and disposal by the contractor.

4 Summary

The WFD scoping triggers have been impact assessed further in the context of the programme of works details and the subsequently proposed methodologies. This assessment confirms that the project proposal does not introduce a potential for significant or permanent impacts under the WFD legislation as a result of the works, with any potential impacts minimised or of very short nature before subsequently returning to baseline levels.

The works have therefore been assessed as being as compliant with the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment.