

**Marine Institute comments on Waterford City Council proposed dredging and disposal of spoil from maintenance dredging at the Waterford City Marinas along the South Quays in Waterford. (EPA Reg No. S0006-01)**

Waterford City Council proposes to carry out maintenance dredging at the marina berths along the South Quays, Waterford City. The berths are used by pleasure craft and will also be used by vessels visiting the area during the Tall Ships Race that includes a stopover at Waterford from 30<sup>th</sup> June - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2011.

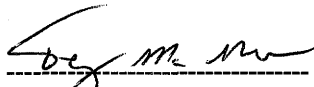
It is proposed to remove some 32,100 tonnes of material in total with 18,900 tonnes to be removed by plough dredging and the remaining 13,200 tonnes by back hoe or trailer dredging. The material to be removed by back hoe or trailer dredging will be loaded onto a barge and disposed of at the existing licenced Hook Head dump site outside the mouth of the estuary.

In considering the proposed activity the Marine Institute makes the following comments:

- The sediments to be removed have been chemically characterised and found not to have significant levels of contaminant and are thus considered suitable for unconfined disposal at sea.
- Resuspension of sediments during the dredging operation will not result in chemical contamination of the water column or a deterioration in water quality
- The area to be dredged is naturally turbid with high levels of suspended matter. Resuspension of sediments during the dredging operation will not significantly impact on water column turbidity /light penetration.
- The amount of material in suspension in the water column in the area to be dredged has a high natural variability with considerable variation over a single tidal cycle.
- The area to be dredged is small and confined to the south shore of the river. The area to be dredged is some 10Km upstream of the nearest licenced shellfish production area. Given the small volume of material to be removed by plough dredging, the low levels of chemical contaminants and distances involved it is considered that the plough dredging activity will not have an adverse impact on aquaculture production in the Waterford Estuary. Similarly it is considered that the plough dredging activity will not have an adverse impact on commercial fishing activity in the area.
- The proposed dredging activity is not likely to significantly impact on navigational safety in the area and it recommended that the applicant should consult and liaise with Waterford Port Company prior to the commencement of, and during, the dredging operations.
- The volume of material to be disposed of at the Hook Head dump is small and it is considered that disposal of the material at this existing licenced site is not likely to have a significant impact on the marine environment, other legitimate users of the area and the adjacent Hook Head SAC (Site Code 000764)

In view of the above the Marine Institute has no objections to a permit being issued and recommend that the following conditions be attached to any permit that may issue

1. *The Licensee shall consult and liaise with Waterford Port Company prior to commencement of, and during, the dredging and dumping operations s.*
2. *The Licensee shall furnish the names/registered number of all vessels involved in the operation to the Marine Survey Office in Dublin to ensure compliance with respect to Irish Load line and other relevant vessel certification*
3. *The Licensee shall comply with all the requirements of the Marine Survey Office.*
4. *The Licensee shall arrange the publication of a local marine notice giving general description of operations and approximate dates of commencement and completion.*
5. *The master and owner of the vessel shall, if so requested, permit an authorised officer to be on board the vessel during dredging operations*



Dr Terry McMahon  
25 March 2011

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