

Government response: Kent aggregate dredging application

A public consultation on additional information to support an application by Dover Harbour Board (DHB) for aggregate dredging activity off the Kent coast closed on 28 September 2017.

The MMO recognises there is a high level of public interest in this application, particularly relating to proposed extraction of aggregate from the Goodwin Sands.

The MMO is currently in the process of gathering and considering the representations received as part of the consultation process.

The MMO will also work with DHB to consider issues raised before making a determination.

Stakeholders who responded directly to the MMO about the consultation will be sent an acknowledgement. These people will also be notified directly once the MMO has considered the representations received and reached a decision.

Although the MMO aims to determine licence applications within 13 weeks, in some cases, such as where an application is for a complex activity and/or significant representations have been made, the process may take longer as it is important to take into account all relevant representations.

The MMO is required to base its decisions on the best available scientific evidence. We are committed to being a transparent regulator and will publish documents and evidence relating to the case via the [public register](#) on our website, case reference MLA/2016/00227. This does not include details of any other permissions developers may also need to carry out work in the marine area, such as agreements with the owner of the seabed.

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News story: Improving collaboration to protect public health – MHRA and Care Quality Commission sign MoU

MHRA and Care Quality Commission (CQC) set out key principles to support their collaboration on improving public health.

Today we have set out how we will work more effectively with CQC in a new [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) (PDF, 200KB, 7 pages) .

CQC is the independent regulator of health and social care services in England. They also monitor the use of the Mental Health Act 1983 and protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under the Act.

We have worked closely with CQC on alert systems, medicines issues and online healthcare services. Our working relationship helps maintain an effective regulatory system for health and adult social care in England, while promoting patient safety and high quality care.

The new MoU sets out the framework to support our joint working relationship. We agree on how to share information, to carry out regulatory functions and to benefit the public. These principles underpin the MoU:

- addressing overlaps and gaps in the regulatory framework and responsibilities
- cooperating openly and transparently
- respecting each other's independent status
- using resources and intelligence effectively and efficiently

Notes to Editor

1. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Mr David Behan, Chief Executive, CQC and Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive, MHRA.
2. MHRA is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgments to ensure that the benefits justify any risks. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). The Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Health. www.mhra.gov.uk

Press release: Ofsted: a force for improvement

Ofsted has today (29 September) published a new 5 year [strategy](#).

The strategy, developed in conjunction with serving heads, teachers, and social workers from around the country, sets out how Ofsted will deliver its mission of improving the lives of children and young people.

The strategy centres on a fundamental guiding principle that the organisation will be:

“A force for improvement through intelligent, responsible and focused inspection and regulation”.

The strategy describes how Ofsted will conduct inspection and regulation that is:

- intelligent: our work will be evidence-led and our evaluation tools and frameworks will be valid and reliable.
- responsible: our frameworks will be fair. We will seek to reduce inspection burdens and make our expectations and findings clear
- focused: we will target our time and resources where they can lead directly to improvement

The principle will be underpinned by 3 core values:

- children, young people and learners first
- independence
- accountability and transparency

The strategy commits to an ambitious programme of work, which will inform the 2019 inspection framework development. Ofsted is currently undertaking a series of parent focus groups to understand how our reports can provide more information and enable choice. Ofsted will undertake research and learn from others to ensure that Ofsted is reliably measuring the right things, and that these measures add up to a meaningful overall judgement. For example an international seminar on the validity of lesson observation in November which will inform future practice, and research is being undertaken on the impact of the current grading structure.

Amanda Spielman, Chief Inspector of Ofsted, said:

I am pleased to announce our new corporate strategy, which will set Ofsted's direction during my tenure as Chief Inspector. I am determined that Ofsted will be a force for improvement.

By really drilling down on how, where and why we inspect and report, we can ensure that inspection and regulation are more than the sum of their parts. One of our greatest strengths is our bird's eye view of the education, training and care systems. Over my time in office, we will do more to aggregate the insights from individual inspections, so that we can better encourage and support improvement across all the areas we inspect and regulate.

This high-reaching strategy commits us to inspection that is intelligent, responsible and focused. It will allow us to tackle emerging challenges and take advantage of new opportunities, ensuring that we can have maximum impact in improving young people's lives.

Julius Weinberg, Chair of Ofsted, said:

With our new Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman well established in post, and Ofsted celebrating its 25th anniversary this is the ideal time to set out our new 5 year strategy. We have taken this opportunity to ensure that our strategy is evidence based and takes account of the wider environment; educational, political and economic.

The strategy is the product of significant engagement with both our inspection workforce and those we inspect. Through that engagement we have been able to build a clear picture of where Ofsted adds most value and what more we need to do to fulfil our mission of being a force for improvement.

The strategy also recognises the vital importance of Ofsted's independence and commits it to being transparent and accountable in all its work, just as others are held others to account by Ofsted.

[News story: Environment Secretary meets Northern Irish industry leaders on the future of UK agriculture](#)

Environment Secretary Michael Gove met representatives from Northern Ireland's food and farming sectors today to discuss the future of their industries outside the EU.

Following a meeting with industry leaders including the Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association, Northern Ireland Environment Link and Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association amongst others in Stormont, the Environment Secretary visited a local farm hosted by members of the Ulster Farmers Union.

The visit was an opportunity to discuss the key opportunities and challenges facing the sector ahead of EU exit, and for regional industry leaders to share their ambitions and expectations for future farming policy as we prepare to leave the European Union.

Speaking after the meetings, Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Food and drink is the leading sector in the Northern Ireland economy, employing tens-of-thousands people and generating around £5 billion from food sales alone.

As we prepare to leave the EU, we have the chance to design a new approach to food and farming that works for the whole of the UK, not least for Northern Ireland.

Today's meeting with agricultural leaders was a chance to hear first-hand from them as we move towards life outside the EU. We will continue to work closely with industry to ensure we grasp the opportunities that leaving the EU presents.

The roundtables held today are part of a series of ongoing engagements across all parts of the UK ahead of EU exit.

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