

Transparency data: South West Disposal Site Characterisation Project – Evaluation Report

Due to increased regulatory burden surrounding the Rame Head South disposal site and in light of the continued requirement for dredging and disposal operations, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has been working with the main users of the site in leading a disposal site characterisation study to identify an optimal, sustainable alternative site for long-term dredged material disposal operations within the River Tamar and Plymouth Sound area.

The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) has submitted evidence in support of the proposed site in the form of a Site Characterisation Report. A draft version was consulted on by the MMO as part of a targeted consultation exercise with key stakeholders and advisors. The MMO also made the Site Characterisation Report available on the selected cases page of its website and a period of public consultation took place between 29th November and 23rd December 2016. An Addendum to the Site Characterisation Report has been produced to respond to representations received by the MMO which required a technical response.

The MMO has produced an Evaluation Report which details the conclusions drawn from a review of the evidence submitted, as well as evidence submitted during the consultation period. The MMO has reviewed multiple factors within the Evaluation Report, including environmental, economic and social aspects. Factors included, but are not limited to, the cost to dredging operators with regards to transit times to new sites, the impact on marine ecology, and marine protected areas.

The MMO has considered all available information and concluded that the proposed new disposal has been properly assessed for dredged material. Plymouth Deep (PL035) is now open for marine licence applications for the disposal of dredged material.