

18th February 2016



Mr. D Levy
Mr. S Eades

Director Marinet Ltd.
Cedar Lodge
Allington
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN14 6LW

Natural England
Suite D, Unex
House,
Bourges Boulevard,
Peterborough,
PE1 1NG

Dear Mr Levy,

Thank you for your letters dated 31st January and 2nd February, which also enclosed the letter you sent to George Eustice MP.

Thank you also for bringing your paper 'marine aggregate extraction, the need to dredge: fact or fiction' and associated literature to our attention again. I have read this material with interest. As noted in previous correspondence, Natural England is the government's adviser for the natural environment in England and we continue to work closely with Defra, MMO, and the aggregate industry to ensure the sustainable use of aggregates.

We acknowledge your comments regarding the Kayasand/Kemco process of manufactured sand and recommend that you approach the industry to discuss the logistical, technical, and economic viability in using this method. It is not within Natural England's remit to address these issues.

With respect to the Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and marine aggregate dredging applications you mention within these sites, let me reassure you that we have provided advice on these applications with respect to their potential impacts on the environment including nature conservation designations, such as MCZs and recommended MCZs.

As requested, I have enclosed our response to the licence application for area 453 488, where we have documented Natural England's view on the application. In this response, we have recommended that an MCZ assessment is carried out by the MMO and we will provide our advice on this MCZ assessment when it is complete.

With respect to the extraction application in Goodwin Sands rMCZ, we have provided a response on the scoping report for the application in which we comment that, "*Whilst not currently designated as an MCZ, it is worth noting that the features identified as part of the MCZ are listed as habitats and species of importance under OSPAR convention and section 41 of the NERC act and should be given due regard by the MMO when discharging their duties*". For completeness, I have also enclosed our full response to the scoping report.



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With respect to the discharge licence application in the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries MCZ, I have spoken with the local area team staff. We have not yet been formally consulted on this application for the new discharge permit for Bradwell. We expect to be consulted on this in the coming weeks and can provide our advice to you once it has been submitted to the Environment Agency.

Natural England are champions of the marine environment and we will continue to provide advice to competent authorities, such as the MMO, on potential impacts to designated sites through human activities including aggregate dredging, which the MMO license.

If you feel you would like to discuss this further, please contact me by return email or the details above

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Johnson

Senior Environmental Specialist

Attached

- 1) Formal response to aggregate application 488/453
- 2) Scoping response to Goodwin Sands application