

# Department for Communities and Local Government

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## AREAS 202 & 436

Thank you for your letter of 7 August, which I previously acknowledged on 11 August before going on a period of leave. I am now in a position to reply and apologise for the delay in doing so.


There is no requirement upon the Secretary of State, or this Department, to formally "accept the surrender of Area 436." Licences are issued by the Crown Estate Commissioners for a fixed time period and the one for Area 436 has lapsed and has not been replaced. In the absence of a Licence, no marine mineral dredging can take place in that Area.

The question of seabed lowering was, of course, addressed in the detailed letter of 7 April 2006 from H R Wallingford to Hanson Aggregates Marine Limited (HAML). That letter was included in the Appendices to the EMU 'Summary of Consultation Report' (May 2006), which is already in your possession. Both Area 202 and 436 have been subject to a monitoring regime and the letter of 30 June 2006 to HAML, which I have previously copied to you, explains the rationale for the time extension to Area 202.

With regard to Marine Minerals Guidance note 1, that is a statement of the Government's policies on the extraction of marine sand and gravel and other minerals from the English seabed. That was published in July 2002, after the favourable Government View was issued on Areas 202 and 436 in September 1999. In any event, it is the conditions attached to a favourable Government View and Crown Estate licence that will be relevant to the dredging operations being carried out in an appropriate manner, with monitoring and mitigation measures.

Monitoring for the new 5 year licence on Area 202 will be undertaken in accordance with the penultimate paragraph of letter of 30 June to HAML. The Schedule of Conditions

referred to in that paragraph can be found at Appendix 5 of the Marine Ecological Surveys 'Summary of Consultation' Report (May 2006), also referred to above. If you refer to that, you will see that one of the conditions requires the operator to "ensure that a minimum depth of 0.5 metres of aggregate resource remains in those parts of the area from which material has been dredged."

*Yours sincerely*  


**Nigel Bayliss**