



MARINE ECOLOGICAL SURVEYS LIMITED

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Mr S.D.Eades,
MARINET
Allington House,
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CHIPPENHAM
Wiltshire
SN14 6LN.

27th April 2006.

Dear Mr Eades:

Areas 202 & 436: ES Update and Licence Extension Application.

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 20th April 2006 in which you request further clarification of issues raised in your original letter of objection dated 26th February 2006. We have the following responses:-

We have gone to considerable lengths to address the issues raised in your letter dated 26th February 2006. As we pointed out to you in our letter of 19th April 2006 (Our Ref: H202/EX/7), the ES update contains a detailed consideration of all of the issues related to potential impacts on coastal processes. This has been prepared by HR Wallingford and is included in full as Appendix 6 to the ES Update.

Our letter included a Supplementary Statement by HR Wallingford clarifying the generic issues that were raised both in your letter and in others received from MARINET. Also enclosed with our letter was a review prepared by Hanson Aggregates Marine Limited entitled '*Why Dredging Does Not Cause Coastal Erosion*'. This latter document also addresses the issues raised by yourself and others in relation to potential impacts of dredging on coastal processes.

We clarify the response to each point raised by MARINET individually as follows:-

1. **GV Procedure and Area 202** – MARINET pointed out that the application had not been advertised. Marine Ecological Surveys Ltd (MESL) stated in their letter of the 19th April that the application was not advertised on this occasion based on advice given to us by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).
2. **Area 436** – Relinquishment of licence area 436 occurred on the 31st December 2005. The original Government View (GV), under which the licence was granted, requires extensive post-dredge surveys. These surveys are timetabled to occur in May as this represents the earliest opportunity to conduct the surveys within this survey season. A report on these post-dredge surveys will be submitted to all relevant regulatory authorities as soon as it

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CERTIFICATION: Marine Ecological Surveys Limited is a Group 1 Assessor Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and the Environmental Law Foundation. We participate in the National Marine Biological Analytical Quality Control Scheme (NMBAQCS). Dr.R.C.Newell is a Registered Environmental Auditor and is registered as an Expert Witness.



becomes available. Furthermore, we have suggested to the ODPM within our consultation report and draft schedule of conditions that the monitoring surveys should remain the same. Therefore benthic recovery within area 436 will be monitored for at least the next 5 years if the application for area 202 is granted.

3. **Loss of seabed** – “Natural morphological processes” are the forces exerted on seabed sediments by natural processes, specifically in this case, tides and waves. I am sure that you will note from the Environmental Statement (ES) update, the 5 year review and the HR Wallingford (HRW) response that these natural morphological processes primarily act on mobile seabed material (sand) the majority of which is locked into the major sandbanks in the region.
4. **Offshore Sandbanks** – This is answered fully within HRW’s response dated 7th April under the section titles “Lowering of the crests of sandbanks.” Please also note the final sentence of this section of the response and that the toe is therefore not being eroded but is moving seaward through natural processes.
5. **Nature of sediment on seabed** – Material released during the dredging process (mainly sand) will be incorporated into the natural sediment flux for the region and eventually end up in the natural sediment sink - in this case the sandbanks. The original application commissioned a comprehensive coastal impact study and plume dispersion study.
6. **Impact on the benthic community** – This issue was addressed at great length by MESL in our reply to you dated 19th April.
7. **The Ecosystem Approach to Management** – This issue was addressed by MESL in our reply to you dated 19th April.

I trust that this information sufficiently addresses your concerns raised in you letter dated 28th February 2006. It is not our intention to supply a further response from HR Wallingford. Your letters and the concerns and comments you raise have however been recorded in full in the Summary of Consultation Report to the ODPM.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr L J Seiderer