

Mr S D Eades
Marinet
Allington House
Allington
Chippenham
Wiltshire SN14 6LN

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date: 4 December 2007

Dear Mr Eades,

MARINE MINERALS DREDGING IN AREAS 202/436 AND SURROUNDING AREAS OFF THE NORFOLK COAST

I refer to your letters of 28 August and 30 October in respect of the above and am very sorry to have not been able to reply to you sooner.

In amplification of some of the points already conveyed to you by my colleague, Nigel Bayliss, I would respond to your continued queries as follows:

1. Detailed bathymetric monitoring has established that localised small scale reductions in seabed height have occurred in Areas 202 and 436. Such localised changes are, however, commensurate with that which would be expected with marine aggregate dredging but, nevertheless, through scrutiny of on-going bathymetric and other monitoring required by the conditions of favourable Government Views (GVs) off the Norfolk coast, the Secretary of State's scientific advisers on the marine environment, the Centre for Environment, Aquaculture and Fisheries Science (Cefas), has assured us that such changes pose no environmental risk.

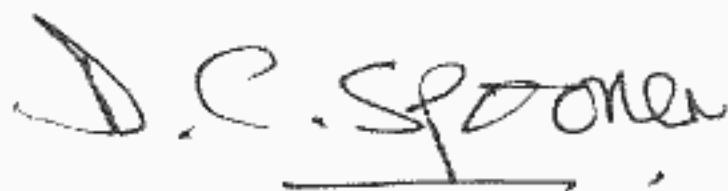
I would also point out that most of the licensed dredging areas off the Norfolk coast are subject to conditions on their favourable GV's requiring the submission of annual bathymetric surveys which enable us to monitor changes in the seabed and identify any general trend in seabed loss should there be one. As I think you know, the favourable GV for Area 202 requires the submission of annual bathymetric surveys which will also cover Area 436.

2. There is no requirement for an assessment to be made of the depth of seabed in Area 436. Nevertheless, as explained above, annual bathymetric surveys will continue to be made of this area, as required by the GV conditions on Area 202.
3. All dredging has now ceased in Area 436 and all of the conditions on its GV have been complied with. Nevertheless, as explained above, annual bathymetric surveys will continue to be made of this area, as required by the GV conditions on Area 202.

As you are aware, all GV applications have been subject to a Coastal Impact Study and, since 1989 subject to Environmental Impact Assessment which has included scrutiny by Cefas as well as by the Government's statutory advisers on the environment which include the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Natural England, the Environment Agency, English Heritage and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

I trust this clears up the matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D.C. Spooner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

D C SPOONER

**REGULATORY ADVISOR
MARINE MINERALS TEAM**