

Maritime Usage Licensing and Planning Advisory Directorate

Response to Supplementary Material on a Minded to Determination

To:	John Evans, Director	From:	Dr. Ciar O'Toole, Senior Marine Advisor
Date:	22/07/2026	Maritime Usage Licence Application No:	MUL230026
MUL Applicant Name:	Wicklow County Council		
MUL Applicant Registered Address:	County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96.		
Licence application received:	10/05/2024	Supplementary material received:	02/07/2026
Type of maritime usage in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Maritime Area Planning Act, 2021 (as amended):		<i>1. Dredging (including dredging involving the use of a device to remove any material, whether or not suspended in water, from one part of the seabed to another part of the seabed) other than—</i> <i>(a) dredging carried out to create a new harbour, berth or waterway, or to deepen existing facilities in order to allow access for larger ships, or</i> <i>(b) dredging ancillary to development authorised under the Act of 2000, whether or not it involves the removal of any material from the sea or seabed.</i> <i>3. Marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation or in support of an application under Part XXI of the Act of 2000.</i> <i>6. The deposit of any substance or object, either in the sea or on or under the seabed, from –</i> <i>(a) a vehicle, vessel (including a craft capable of travelling on, in or under water, whether or not self-propelled), boat, aircraft or marine structure (other than a pipeline),</i> <i>(b) a container floating in the sea, or</i> <i>(c) a structure on land constructed or adapted wholly or mainly for the purpose of depositing solids in the sea.</i>	
Location of proposed Maritime Usage:		Maintenance dredging in Wicklow Harbour and deposit of dredged material at an offshore deposit site 9.5 km northeast of Wicklow Harbour.	

Introduction:

The Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) issued a Minded to Determine Notice and a proposed Maritime Usage Licence (MUL) to Wicklow County Council (the applicant) on 11/06/2026 The MUL application is for:

- 1. Dredging (including dredging involving the use of a device to remove any material, whether or not suspended in water, from one part of the seabed to another part of the seabed) other than—*
 - (a) dredging carried out to create a new harbour, berth or waterway, or to deepen existing facilities in order to allow access for larger ships, or*
 - (b) dredging ancillary to development authorised under the Act of 2000, whether or not it involves the removal of any material from the sea or seabed.*
- 3. Marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation or in support of an application under Part XXI of the Act of 2000.*
- 6. The deposit of any substance or object, either in the sea or on or under the seabed, from –*
 - (a) a vehicle, vessel (including a craft capable of travelling on, in or under water, whether or not self-propelled), boat, aircraft or marine structure (other than a pipeline),*
 - (b) a container floating in the sea, or*
 - (c) a structure on land constructed or adapted wholly or mainly for the purpose of depositing solids in the sea.*

of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, as amended (the MAP Act). The applicant was advised in the Notice that MARA was minded to grant the MUL, subject to conditions.

The applicant submitted a response with supplementary information setting out their reasons for requested amendments to six of the conditions in the proposed MUL. This report addresses the supplementary material submitted based on a review of the application documentation as well as MARA's assessment reports.

1. Licence Type/Particulars Schedule

The applicant requested that consideration be given to removing the Licence type relating to Schedule 7(3) of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (MAP Act), that is, Marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation or in support of an application under Part XXI of the Act of 2000.

Applicant's comments:

The applicant requests this part of the licence be removed as they do not think the licence application relates to either marine environmental surveys for the purpose of site investigations or in support of an application under Part XXI of the Act of 2000.

MARA's Response:

I agree that the proposed maritime usage activity does not appear to fall in the category of Schedule 7(3) as quoted above. It should be noted the applicant did not request a Licence under Schedule 7(3) of the MAP Act 2021 and that bathymetry surveys carried out prior to dredging have been assessed as part of the MUL application. The applicant applied for a licence in relation to maintenance dredging, which by its nature also requires the licensing of the deposit of dredged material, and therefore MARA are limited to assessing and issuing licences under these licence types as defined in Schedule 7 of the MAP Act 2021.

Recommendation:

Reference to Licence Type Schedule 7(3) of the MAP Act 2001, "Marine environmental surveys for the purposes of site investigation or in support of an application under Part XXI of the Act of 2000." be removed from the Licence

2. Specific Condition 19:

The Holder shall, a minimum 14 days prior to the commencement of the Permitted Maritime Usage, arrange for the publication of a Marine Notice with the Marine Safety Policy Division, Department of Transport. This Marine Notice shall include details of the Licence Holder and the Licence Number as granted by MARA.

Reason: To ensure safe navigation

Applicant comments: The applicant states that it is more suitable for the local harbour master to issue a Local Notice to Mariners in this case, given the location and scale of the project.

MARA response: The reason for this condition is to ensure safe navigation. Given the reasons outlined by the applicant and the location of the activity, it seems reasonable that a Local Notice to Mariners in place of a Marine Notice will ensure safe navigation in this case.

Recommendation:

Amend Specific Condition 19 to better ensure safe navigation, as follows:

"The Holder shall, a minimum of 14 days prior to the commencement of Permitted Maritime Usage, arrange for the publication of a Local Notice to Mariners by the relevant Harbour Master. This local Notice to Mariners shall include details of the Licence Holder and the Licence Number as granted by MARA."

3. Specific Condition 26:

The Holder shall ensure that there is an oil pollution emergency plan on board any survey vessels. This plan should specify:

- (i) Information on the location and detail of spill response resources on board;
- (ii) Information on crew training in relation to oil pollution response;
- (iii) How crew will interface with other site investigation operators, where applicable.

Reason: To provide appropriate controls on the Permitted Maritime Usage to ensure protection of the marine environment.

Applicant comments: The applicant states that the condition is unnecessary given the size of the vessels in use and the relevant MARPOL regulations that cover vessels of this size. However, they do not provide details of all vessels in use or alternatives that may be used in cases of mechanical issues etc.

MARA response: Having reviewed the information provided by the applicant relating to vessel size, and with concerns regarding the possibility of other vessels being used, I recommend this condition not be Amended, given that it can be considered a protection in addition to MARPOL requirements.

<u>Recommendation:</u>

No change to Specific Condition 26.
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4. Specific Condition 27 (iii):

The Holder shall ensure that material dredged by trailing suction hopper dredger or other mechanical dredging is passed through grid screens no larger than 30cm to minimise the amount of man-made materials disposed of at sea. Any solid waste must be separated from the dredged material and disposed or recovered ashore.

Reason: To ensure protection of the marine environment.

Applicant comments: The applicant has suggested an amendment to this condition as they state “Mechanical dredging equipment (buckets/grabs) generally does not have grid screens to segregate man-made debris.”

Suggested by the Applicant; “The Holder shall ensure that material dredged by trailing suction hopper dredger is passed through grid screens no larger than 30cm, unless otherwise agreed by the Grantor, to minimise the amount of man-made materials disposed of at sea. Any solid waste must be separated from the dredged material and disposed or recovered ashore.

MARA response: I agree with the applicant’s reasoning, however, I have not accepted the amendment in full, as I do not see a need to add an additional allowance to discuss changes with the Grantor in this case.

Recommendation:

Amend Specific Condition 27 (iii) to read “The Holder shall ensure that material dredged by trailing suction hopper dredger is passed through grid screens no larger than 30cm to minimise the amount of man-made materials disposed of at sea. Any solid waste must be separated from the dredged material and disposed or recovered ashore.”

5. Specific Condition 32:

Quantities of dredge spoil associated with the Permitted Maritime Usage

- (i) The maximum quantities associated with the Permitted Maritime Usage shall not exceed the following:

Location	Associated activity	Maximum Total Quantity (tonnes, wet weight)
Licensed Area A	Dredging	810,000
Licensed Area B	Deposit	562,500

Location	Associated activity	Maximum Annual Quantity (tonnes, wet weight)
Licensed Area A	Dredging	221,250
Licensed Area B	Deposit	157,500

Reason: To ensure protection of the marine environment.

Applicant comments: The applicant requests an amendment to the total quantities to be dredged and deposited. They also state the tables provided are unclear regarding their purpose.

MARA response: The tables clearly state annual and total maximums for dredging and deposit in each area. The MUL report provided with the draft licence explains the limits proposed.

Recommendation:

No change to Specific Condition 32.

6. Specific Condition 34:

Overflow of material from dredging vessels shall not be permitted at any time.

Reason: To ensure protection of the marine environment.

Applicant comments: The applicant requests that the requirement preventing overflow of dredge material from vessels is removed, based on their modelling outputs for one type of dredging activity.

MARA response: MARA has included this condition to ensure that the established water quality parameters are not breached at this location and therefore this condition is deemed a requirement.

Recommendation:

No change to Specific Condition 34.



Dr Ciar O'Toole

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Maritime Usage Licensing and Planning Advisory Directorate