

Observations on Marine Usage Licence MUL230029 for Dredging at Haulbowline Naval Base

FEAS – Marine Institute – Version 1 – 21/10/2025

Summary

The Seafood Climate Unit of DAFM requested MI observations on possible impacts that Marine Usage Licence ref: [MUL230029](#) might have on the seafood sector. The MUL relates to works by the Department of Defence to dredge a site at Haulbowline Naval Base, Cork and an associated disposal site south of Power Head.

Based on the information in the application documents, particularly the modelling of sediment plumes from the dredging and disposal sites, likely impacts on fish stocks and the associated fisheries are expected to be minimal. According to the sediment plume analysis by the applicant, sediment load should be no more than background levels before reaching the nearest licenced aquaculture site at Rostellan (see figure 1). Similarly for the disposal site, sediment is not expected to reach any sensitive spawning habitats (of herring for example) nor does the disposal site overlap with any of the ecologically sensitive areas identified by the MPA Advisory Group in the Celtic Sea Ecological Sensitivity Analysis. Resuspension of contaminated sediment could be a concern, particularly for aquaculture, and the assertion in the [RPS Sediment Plume Dispersion Assessment](#) document should be followed:

“It should be noted that 32,000m³ will be dumped at the licenced site with the remaining 15,630m³ of dredged material which is contaminated being taken ashore for treatment (subject to a finalised methodology).”

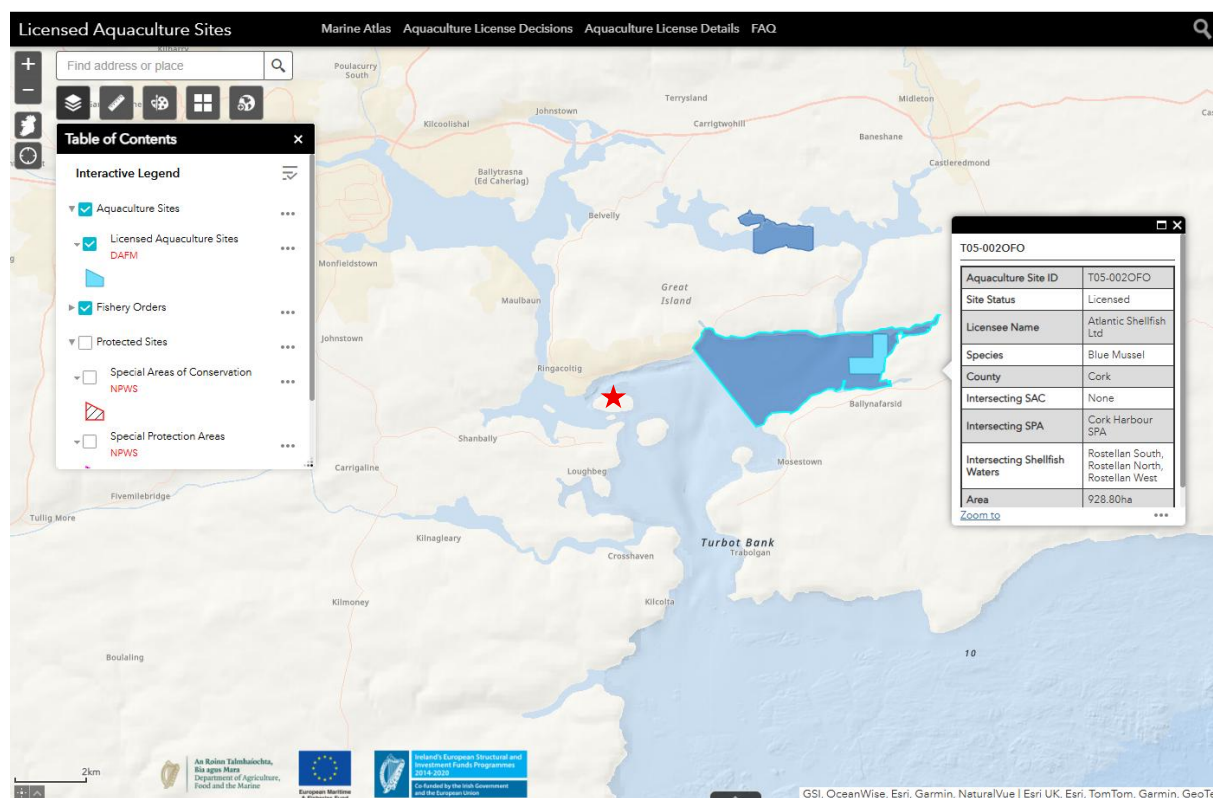


Figure 1. Dredging site (red star) in relation to nearby shellfish production areas. <https://dafm-maps.marine.ie/aquaculture-viewer/>