

MUL260023 - Donegal County Council

Proposed activity:

DCC propose to undertake maintenance dredging for the purpose of retaining navigable depth in the navigation channel and the RNLI berth at Buncrana Harbour, Co Donegal.

BIM Comments

11.05.26

BIM would like to highlight that there is multiple aquaculture site located within Lough Swilly <https://dafm-maps.marine.ie/aquaculture-viewer/>

BIM acknowledge that the Screening and NIS reports indicated that of the total four pre dredging analytical samples tested by the Marine Institute that none of the samples “exceeded guidance levels for trace metals, Organochlorines and PCBs, Total Extractable Hydrocarbons, Tributyltin (TBT) and Dibutyltin (DBT), or Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons”.

Also, regarding the dumping site locations and the potential for discharged dredge material to travel from the proposed pumping ground was found to be low.

“The impact on the sea bed of all 4 Scenarios were limited to within the immediate vicinity of the dredge area. The material discharged during dredging operations remains within the designated Dumping at Sea area. The impact on suspended sediment transport during dredging operation was shown to be of a low order of magnitude.... It was found that plough dredging of 8,000 tonnes over 13 days and 4,000 tonnes over 6 days had the least impact in terms of cumulative sedimentation....”

However, Shellfish do bioaccumulate through filter feeding and the concern is that there is potential risk for the dispersal of dredged sediments to contain elevated bacterial loads. Therefore, timely notification of proposed timing of dredging activity should be report to aquaculture producers in the area to allow them to make informed shellfish harvesting decisions around the dredging and dumping periods.