



Office of Climate Change, Licensing & Resource Use,  
Environmental Protection Agency,  
PO Box 3000,  
Johnstown Castle Est.,  
Wexford, Ireland.

For the attention of: Licensing Team

13<sup>th</sup> March 2026  
Our Ref: 737/cms/20260313

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **Buncrana Harbour - Dumping at Sea Permit Application 2026**

I write to you on behalf of Donegal County Council (DCC), the owners and managers of Buncrana Harbour.

The primary function of Buncrana Harbour is to facilitate the RNLI Lifeboat Station has had a presence in the harbour since 1988. The RNLI has a Shannon class all-weather lifeboat and an inshore B class lifeboat stationed in Buncrana Harbour. These serve a critical safety function to a large portion of the north west coastline.

The RNLI rescue vessel berth is located approximately 175m from the outer extent of the pier. Access at all states of tide is required to ensure the vessel can be used as and when required, without delay. This is critical given the time sensitive nature of the RNLI deployments. As sedimentation occurs, when the loss of depth along the length of the pier access for the vessel can become restricted at low tides as the draft of the vessel is 1m and under keel clearance is also needed. When this restriction becomes too great the vessel is moored offshore and the crew are transferred by an inflatable craft. However, this dramatically increases the risk to the crew and results in a delay in deployment. Maintaining the channel to a suitable standard ensures a prompt response to emergency events.

On this basis, DCC is applying to the Environmental Protection Agency for a Dumping at Sea permit to undertake the required periodic maintenance dredging to maintain the RNLI berth and its approaches. The Council is seeking an 8-year duration Dumping at Sea Permit to run from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2027 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2034 inclusively. The methodology proposed is limited to ploughing only. The material to be locally relocated is primarily sandy material and a volume of 10,750m<sup>3</sup> per year is sought. The applications consists of all required testing and assessments.

DCC has held three Dumping at Sea permits for this activity, with the current permit expiring on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2026.

We recognise that a draft permit cannot be shared for comment prior to its issuance. However, DCC would request that if you deem further information is necessary to determine the suitability of any new condition, that the information/input be requested of the Council. This will allow the Council to determine the potential consequential impact on the ongoing dredging activities of the new condition and ensure the contents of the application are being interpreted as intended. It is hoped the formal communication process can be used to enable an informed, responsible and pragmatic outcome to be achieved.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colm Sheehan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

**Colm Sheehan**  
Anthony D Bates Partnership LLP

Enc: Dumping at Sea Application Form & Supporting Documentation

Cc: Cathal Sweeney, Senior Executive Engineer, Donegal County Council  
Eugene Allen, Executive Engineer, Donegal County Council  
Darragh O'Brien, Senior Project Engineer, Ayesa