Crisp Malt

Portgordon Short Sea Outfall Repairs

NMP and SSSI Compliance Statement

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1.0 Introduction

Understood to be constructed in the early 1980s to serve the original maltings facility at Portgordon, Moray, an effluent pipeline originating from the facility's effluent treatment plant terminates at the MLWS within the nearby Tannachy Sands in the form of a short sea outfall, approximately 200m west of the village of Portgordon. This outfall is currently licensed by SEPA under licence CAR-L-1002409-VAR01. Reference should be made to drawing GC23615-XX-XX-D2-CS-0001 showing the location of the short sea outfall.

It has become apparent that the outfall is in need of repair, with an application for a Marine Licence being sought to facilitate intrusive inspections and subsequent repair works.

This document has been prepared in support of the Marine Licence application, with the intention of demonstrating compliance with Scotland's National Marine Plan and addressing its location within a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Geological Conservation Review Site (Spey Bay).

2.0 Description of Outfall Construction

The existing short sea outfall construction is understood to be a 150mm diameter cast iron pipe encased in reinforced concrete. The reinforced concrete varies in geometry, from 1100mm in width near MHWS level to 600mm at the outfall, near MLWS level.. The concrete encasure projects above ground level in the area of foreshore during low tide. A 2.0m high brick manhole structure, 1.2m x 1.8m on plan, exists near MHWS level. Varying extents of rip-rap stone exists. Reference should be made to the following drawings and geometry, to submitted in support of the Marine Licence application, for a more detailed description of the existing construction:

- GC23615-BLY-XX-XX-D2-CS-0002 Photograph Locations of Existing
- GC23615-BLY-XX-XX-D2-CS-0003 Pipe Outfall GA
- GC23615-BLY-XX-XX-D2-CS-0004 Existing Elevations

3.0 Initial Survey Findings

Non-intrusive walkover surveys of the manhole and outfall were carried out in October 2025 and February 2026 and established that effluent can escape from the outfall between MHWS and MLWS levels in at least two locations.. Although access has been made to the manhole through removal of the cover, CCTV works to inspect the internal condition of the pipe cannot currently be carried out without intrusive works due to a concrete infill obstructing the base of the manhole.

The manhole has become locally detached from its foundation, with the junction between the pipe and the manhole being one of the two locations where integrity of the pipe has been compromised.

A localised section of the concrete encasure, approximately 11m from the manhole, has suffered from tidal scour, with limited to no rip-rap evident at this location. This is the second location where effluent can escape.

4.0 Proposed Works

It is proposed that the existing manhole is demolished and rebuilt to facilitate access to the pipe to carry out an internal CCTV inspection of the pipe, and to replace the manhole foundation, manhole and repair the pipe connection.

It is anticipated that sections of the larger cross section of concrete encasement will need to be broken out and reinstated, in particular in the location 11m from the manhole. A combination of new foundations and/or underpinning of the concrete encasure will be required. Replacement rip-rap will be provided to prevent future damage to encasure and its foundation from tidal scour.

5.0 COMPLIANCE OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL MARINE PLAN

The following sections aim to provide evidence or confirmation of how the proposed inspection and repair activities associated with the existing short seal outfall will comply with Scotland's National Marine Plan considering General Planning Principles and Sector Policies..

5.1 GENERAL PLANNING PRINCIPLES

5.1.1 GEN 1 – General planning principle

The existing short sea outfall is an essential existing component of the ongoing operation of the maltings facility at Portgordon. Continued operation of the maltings, making use of the existing outfall as part of the malting process, will ensure an uninterrupted supply of quality malted barley is maintained to nearby distilleries in Moray and the surrounding areas. Repair of the existing short sea outfall, rather than full replacement or relocation, endeavours to minimise the use of materials and disruption to the local area..

5.1.2 GEN 2 – Economic benefit

In addition to ensuring continued operation of the maltings and uninterrupted supply of malted barley in support of local supply chains and distilleries, and the obvious economic benefit this provides to Moray and Scotland as a whole, works to investigate and repair the outfall will endeavour to involve local contractors where possible. Any contractors from outwith the local area will be reliant upon local accommodation and amenities during the period of any inspections and repairs, bringing further short term local economic benefit.

5.1.3 GEN 3 – Social benefit

Repair of the existing short sea outfall will ensure existing industrial assets are maintained, supporting the social fabric of the local community through sustained job security and indirect support for local supply chains.

5.1.4 GEN 4 – Co-existence

The timing of the works will be coordinated to minimise interference with sea users, marine wildlife and walkers and visitors to the nearby area and Core Path network. As the outfall is a piece of existing infrastructure, having been in place for approximately 45 years, it is understood that it is an inherently accepted presence within the marine environment.

5.1.5 GEN 5 – Climate change

The proposed repairs aim to protect the existing outfall from further deterioration, whether this is a result of climate change or other shifts in tidal behaviour, for the wider benefit and safety of the community and natural environment.

5.1.6 GEN 6 – Historic environment

A review of various map layers in relation to the historic environment on Scotland's Environment interactive Map, accessed via NatureScot's website suggest the area is not associated with any man-made features of historic significance.

5.1.7 GEN 7 – Landscape/seascape

As it is the intention for the repairs to be "like for like" with what is understood to be the original construction, dating from the early 1980s, there will be no permanent detrimental change to the visual landscape and seascape.

5.1.8 GEN 8 – Coastal process and flooding

The anticipated repairs will be "like for like" with existing construction, ensuring that there is no adverse impact on local coastal morphology, sediment transport or flood risk, with any improvements aimed at ensuring coastal processes, such as tidal scour, do not result in erosion and further damage to the outfall.

5.1.9 GEN 9 – Natural heritage

The site resides in a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Geological Conservation Review Site (Spey Bay) area. Although initial engagement with Marine Scotland suggests an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required in support of the proposed works, any guidance and recommendations from consultees such as NatureScot shall be adhered to following the outcome of the application process for a Marine Licence.s

5.1.10 GEN 10 – Invasive and non-native species

All equipment and plant used during the repair will adhere to best practice biosecurity protocols to prevent the introduction or spread of invasive non-native species.

5.1.11 GEN 11 – Marine litter

All debris from the repair process will be recovered and disposed of off-site at an approved wate disposal facility.

5.1.12 GEN 12 – Water quality and resource

The repair aims to restore the integrity of the outfall, preventing leaks and ensuring that discharges continue to meet the standards set by SEPA.

5.1.13 GEN 13 – Noise

Noise generating activities will be kept to a minimum and restricted to daylight hours where possible to mitigate disturbance to marine mammals, local bird populations and nearby residents and outdoor space users. Consultation with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee has confirmed that concrete breakers, expected to be used in some aspects of the repair activities, are exempt from the Marine Noise Registry.

5.1.14 GEN 14 – Air quality

The repair process will utilise modern, well-maintained plant and equipment to minimise atmospheric emissions. Given the temporary nature of the works and the remote coastal location, there will be no significant impact on local air quality.

5.1.15 GEN 15 & 16 – Planning alignment

The repair is designed to restore the outfall to its original functional capacity, ensuring the long-term integrity of the infrastructure. By restricting repairs to the existing outfall and erosion protection geometry and footprint, and matching materials to those originally adopted, the proposals will not deviate from what is understood to be the original design intent.

5.1.16 GEN 17 – Fairness

The applicant has, since the compromised condition of the outfall initially became apparent, endeavoured to follow due process to ensure that action to remedy the situation complies with all necessary regulations. Going forward, it is intended that any activities will be carried out in a transparent manner.

5.1.17 GEN 18 – Engagement

The applicant and agent have engaged with SEPA, Marine Scotland, JNCC, Moray Council and Crown Estate Scotland through the pre-application process to determine ownership, noise and regulatory constraints., in particular in relation to the potential requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment..

It is the intention to positively engage with any subsequent consultees who will engage with the approvals process, and adhere to any guidance and recommendations resulting from this..

5.1.18 GEN 19 – Sound evidence

The anticipated repair strategy will be based on current non-intrusive findings, supplemented by intrusive investigations. Repair proposals adopted will align with proven repair methods and approaches adopted on similar concrete encased short sea outfalls along the Moray coastline.

5.1.19 GEN 20 – Adaptive management

As works will be required to be carried out during limited windows of low tide, it is intended for the contractor to adapt working hours to suit the ever changing tidal environment. It is expected this will be a main consideration in the contractor's Method Statement. In agreement with Marine Scotland, the approach to the application, in light of limited information on the full condition of the outfall, ensures a robust approach is taken to ensure the resulting Marine Licence enables a wide range of repairs, materials, costs and timescales to be adopted in order to satisfactorily implement the necessary investigations and repairs without the requirement of additional licences..

5.1.20 GEN 21 – Cumulative impacts

As the outfall is an existing industrial asset, it is expected that the net long-term impact on the marine environment remains neutral.

5.2 SECTOR POLICIES

The following sector policies have been considered in relation to the location and proposed works associated with the inspection and repair of the existing Crisp Malt short sea outfall at Portgordon.

5.2.1 Sea Fisheries

Angling is the only remaining legal fishing within the Spey Bay SSSI, typically restricted to the River Spey and therefore remote from the outfall site.

5.2.2 Aquaculture

A review of aquaculture maps does not indicate any Active or Inactive Aquaculture Sites, Aquaculture Sealice, CAR Permitted Fish Farms, Shellfish Water Protected Areas or Active Crown Estate Scotland Lease Areas in the vicinity of the outfall.

5.2.3 Wild Salmon and Diadromous Fish

It is not expected that the low tide works will affect migratory routes of salmon.

5.2.4 Oil and Gas

The nearest offshore gas pipeline (FLAGS and Vesterled) terminal is at St Fergus, and the nearest offshore oil pipeline (Forties) terminal is at Cruden Bay.

5.2.5 Carbon Capture and Storage

It is not expected that these works will affect current proposed carbon capture and storage infrastructure, with the nearest development being the Acorn project at St Fergus, currently being designed.

5.2.6 Offshore Wind and Marine Renewable Energy

A review of openinframap.org shows the Beatrice Wind Farm Export Connection (220 kV) and Caithness-Moray Link (320 kV DC) located to the west of the site of the short sea outfall.

5.2.7 Recreation and Tourism

The area south of the short sea outfall manhole is frequented by walkers, typically associated with the Speyside Way Core Path (CP-SW01). Visiting camper vans have been observed parking overnight adjacent to the foreshore. Measures will be required to be put in place to ensure access and safety to construction workers and the public are implemented and maintained during construction works.

5.2.8 Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries

The location of the short sea outfall is outwith known shipping lanes, ports, harbours and ferry routes.

5.2.9 Submarine Cables

A review of openinframap.org shows the Beatrice Wind Farm Export Connection (220 kV) and Caithness-Moray Link (320 kV DC) located to the west of the site of the short sea outfall. The nearest subsea telecommunication cable is at Inverboyndie.

5.2.10 Defence

A review of the Military exercise areas and danger areas (PEXAs) does not highlight any areas in the vicinity of the short sea outfall, with the nearest being Kingston (BINN HILL), approximately 7km west of the site. Second World War defences (pill boxes) are not evident at this location.

5.2.11 Aggregates

Aggregate extraction has historically taken place at Kingston, with sand previously quarried near Lossie Forest, both areas being remote from the site of the existing short sea outfall.

6.0 SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CONSIDERATIONS

The existing short sea outfall sits within the Spey Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest. (NatureScot Site Code 1461). This area is a site of the highest importance for coastal geomorphology and is considered one of the most important physiographic sites in Britain.

It is understood that the coast is erosional in the region of the short sea outfall, with this area likely to continue to recede as its sediment supply is diminished. A build-up of raised marine deposits and shingle to the east of the southern section of the outfall, with tidal scour evident on the west, likely to be contributing to the damage to the outfall at this location.

6.1 STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

Within the "Operations Requiring Consent from Scottish Natural Heritage" guidance document relating to this SSSI area, the following operations related to the proposed repair and maintenance of the existing short sea outfall may be considered applicable. It is understood that notification and engagement with NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage) as a Consultee through the Marine Licence application process will be by Marine Scotland.

Standard Ref. No.	Type of Operation
21.	Construction of roads, tracks, fences, hardstands, or other earthworks, or the laying or removal of pipelines and cables.
23.	Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.

6.2 THE PROPOSED WORKS

The project comprises concrete repair work to an existing sea outfall including cutting back areas of damaged or eroded concrete, repairs to pipework, shuttering and pouring concrete, installing rip-rap rock armour, and the reconstruction of an existing manhole. The works will not alter the assets as originally designed or affect access to the shore.

The working area at the outfall will be restricted to the immediate area surrounding the pipe ensuring enough access and working area for construction workers and plant. All works are to be carried out at low tide, with exclusion of the sea to be avoided.

6.3 BIOLOGICAL FEATURES OF THE SSSI

It is possible that out of the list of biological features noted within the SSSI Citation, the most likely is the habitat associated with coastal shingle vegetation outside of the reach of waves..

6.4 GEOLOGICAL FEATURES OF THE SSSI

What appears to be a shingle ridge exists to the east of the outfall, which may be evidence of short and medium-term coastal processes, particularly where the raised marine deposits and shingle have accumulated along the eastern edge of the outfall.

6.5 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Potential impacts from the repair and maintenance works could result in the loss and/or degradation of geological and biological features. In particular the construction of any access ramps, tracking of vehicles along the foreshore and excavation of the raised marine deposits in support of concrete foundation, concrete pipe encasure, manhole and rip-rap construction.

6.6 MITIGATION MEASURES

Any ramp construction shall be carefully planned, constructed and removed to ensure minimal disturbance to the shingle ridges takes place. Vehicle movements shall be kept to a minimum where feasible, and vehicle sizes are to be limited to the maximum required to complete the works. Where possible, vehicles shall be fitted with rubber tracks. Any excavated natural material (raised marine deposits and shingle) will be carefully set aside and reinstated to their original location where possible.

Additionally, any comments or recommendation put forward by NatureScot as a result of the stakeholder engagement through the process to determine the Marine Licence application will be adhered to.