

**Mr S Patterson  
Peterhead Port Authority  
Harbour Office  
West Pier  
Peterhead  
AB42 1DW**

Date: 18 July 2024

Dear Mr Patterson,

**SCREENING OPINION UNDER THE MARINE WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017**

Thank you for your screening opinion request dated 30 April 2024 in regards to the proposed extension to the Smith Quay, including construction of a quay extension, land reclamation, piling, berthing/mooring dolphin, dredging and sea deposit at Peterhead Harbour, Aberdeenshire (“the Proposed Works”).

The Scottish Ministers consider the Proposed Works to fall under paragraph 1(e) of schedule 2 of The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (“the 2017 MW Regulations”), with the Proposed Works meeting the corresponding threshold described in column 2 of schedule 2. Consequently, the Scottish Ministers are obliged to adopt a screening opinion as to whether the Proposed Works are an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) project under the 2017 MW Regulations.

Under regulation 10(5) of the 2017 MW Regulations, the Scottish Ministers have consulted with NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage), the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (“SEPA”), Aberdeenshire Council and Historic Environment Scotland (“HES”) as to their view on whether the Proposed Works are an EIA project. Copies of the consultation responses received are attached for your review (at Appendix I).

When making a determination as to whether schedule 2 works are an EIA project, the Scottish Ministers must provide their reasons in a written statement, taking into account the selection criteria set out in schedule 3 of the 2017 MW Regulations, as are relevant to the Proposed Works. This is set out below.

**Characteristics of the works**

The Proposed Works seek to extend the existing Smith Quay at Peterhead Harbour to provide additional berthing capacity. Land reclamation, piling, dredging with sea deposit and possibly blasting are included in the Proposed Works.

The proposed dredging is to be undertaken by a large backhoe dredger. Further investigation is required to determine if drilling and blasting are required as part of the dredging seabed preparation, however it has been considered as worst case scenario. If blasting is required the blast depths would range from 2.0 meters (“m”) to 3.5 m depth to accomplish the required depth profile for the Proposed Works. Drilling and blasting will be carried out 24 hours per day, with blasting being scheduled for daytime working only.

The Proposed Works include an 80 m extension to the existing Smith Quay. The proposal is for an open piled structure pier which requires piling. Percussive piling techniques will be used to drive the tubular piles into the bedrock. The Proposed Works also include sheet piling to be installed by both vibratory and percussive hammers.

The Proposed Works include refurbishing and extending the rock armour revetment. Once piling has been completed the rock armour will be positioned by long reach vehicles from the land. An infill of material will be placed then covered in a geotextile membrane. Larger armouring rocks will then be placed on top of the membrane to complete the rock armour revetment.

The proposed land reclamation will utilise approximately 1750 square metres of imported aggregate. There is the possibility of utilising some of the dredging arisings for land reclamation but the suitability of the material for this has not yet been determined.

The proposed bankseat construction will comprise the construction of temporary shuttering into which concrete will be poured in accordance with the works design. The deck construction element of the Proposed Works will comprise using pre-fabricated steel girder beams and precast prestressed beams as a base on which formwork will be constructed to pour the concrete deck top.

Construction of the mooring dolphin, including the walkway will comprise piling from a jack-up barge and floating plant.

The Applicant proposes to implement a Construction Environmental Management Plan in support of the Proposed Works following all best practices for the construction activities to be carried out and the prevention of pollution incidents.

### **Location of the works**

The Proposed Works are located at the western edge of the existing outer harbour quays at Peterhead Harbour. The Proposed Works are not located within any designated sites, however, are adjacent to the Southern Trench Marine Protected Area (“MPA”) and in proximity to Buchan Ness to Collieston Coast Special Protection Area (“SPA”), Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA, Loch of Strathbeg SPA, Moray Firth SAC and Whinnyfold Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest.

NatureScot advised that there is connectivity between the Proposed Works and several designated sites and a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (“HRA”) will be required. NatureScot also advised that a European Protected Species licence may be required in relation to minke whale feature of the Southern Trench MPA and bottlenose dolphins. The Scottish Ministers are content that any impacts on designated sites can be managed through the HRA and marine licensing process.

HES advised that, on its understanding that the Proposed Works are an extension to Smith Quay, Peterhead Harbour, then it is content that the Proposed Works will not result in a significant impact on its interests.

## Characteristics of the potential impact

Aberdeenshire Council advised that based on its assessment, an EIA is not required for the Proposed Works.

SEPA have not provided site specific advice but refer the Applicant to its standing advice.

## Conclusion

In view of the findings above, the Scottish Ministers are of the opinion that the Proposed Works **are not** an EIA project under the 2017 MW Regulations and, therefore, an EIA **is not** required to be carried out in respect of the Proposed Works.

If you increase, alter or extend the Proposed Works, you are advised to contact Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team again to confirm if the screening opinion is still valid.

A copy of the screening opinion has been forwarded to Aberdeenshire Council planning department. The screening opinion has also been made publicly available through the [Marine Scotland Information](#) website.

If you require any further assistance or advice on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**Kirsten Watson**

Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team

