

Nasir Uddin
Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd
Municipal Building
Fore Street
Port Glasgow
PA14 5EQ

Date: 28 August 2025

Dear Mr Uddin,

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

Thank you for your screening opinion request dated 08 July 2025 in regards to the proposed Kilchoan harbour improvement works, including construction of aligning structure, revetment wall, capital dredging and potentially sea deposit of dredged material at Kilchoan Harbour, Lochaber ("the Proposed Works").

The Scottish Ministers consider the Proposed Works to fall under paragraph 10(m) 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"), The Highland 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

Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd ("CMAL") are proposing to carry out construction and dredging activities at Kilchoan Harbour to facilitate a new ferry that will be operating from the Harbour. The works will include the construction of an approximately 40 metre long aligning structure to assist with vessel berthing. The structure will likely consist of monopiles for the outer fenders and those closer to shore supported on concrete blocks or steel frames. A 1 metre wide platform will be placed on top of the structure to allow for access. To the north of the slipway, a new retaining wall will be constructed to expand the existing marshalling area. This will comprise of granular fill that is protected by an outer armour layer. Capital dredging is also required to facilitate the new vessel at the bottom of the existing slipway. It is estimated that the dredge volume will be 110 cubic metres with the material either being reused onsite or if necessary deposited at an authorised sea deposit site.

Location of the works

NatureScot advised that the Proposed Works are located within the Inner Hebrides and the Minches Special Area of Conservation which is designated for the protection of harbour porpoise. It noted that the Proposed Works have the potential to impact the site through underwater noise from the piling and dredging works. NatureScot noted that there may be other potential impacts from the Proposed Works that have not been identified in its advice and which should also be investigated and may require assessment. NatureScot advised that thorough assessment of the potential impacts of the Proposed Works on the Protected Area is required. These assessments should be used to inform the project design and layout and any mitigation required. NatureScot concluded that due to the potential for significant effects to a protected area, in respect of its interests, it considers the Proposed Works an EIA project.

HES advised that the Proposed Works are within one kilometre of the Mingary Historic Marine Protected Area ("HMPA"), designated for the protection of a ship wreck. HES noted that the Screening Report does not identify the Mingary HMPA as an environmental constraint and it does not include any information that would allow HES to understand the potential impacts of the Proposed Works on this asset. HES further advised that due to the lack of information it is unable to determine whether the Proposed Works will cause a significant adverse effect on the HMPA. HES therefore, cannot confirm if the Proposed Works are an EIA project or not. HES expects significant effects on the historic environment to be considered.

Characteristics of the potential impact

Highland Council advised that there are no known significant contaminated land issues that might impact the Proposed Works. The issues raised by Highland Council can be addressed through the normal marine licensing process.

SEPA referred to its standing advice and indicated that it had no site specific comments to make in respect of the Proposed Works.

Conclusion

In view of the findings above, the Scottish Ministers are of the opinion that the Proposed Works are an EIA project under the 2017 MW Regulations and, therefore, an EIA is 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 The Highland 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,

Thomas Inglis
Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team