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Sent by e mail

09 October 2023

Dear Chloë James,

## **SCREENING OPINION UNDER THE MARINE WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2007 (as amended)**

### **RHYMNEY GREAT WHARF POLDERS**

I am writing further to your request for a screening opinion, dated 29 September 2023, made in accordance with The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 (as amended) ("The Regulations").

The purpose of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening procedure is to determine whether the proposed works require an Environmental Impact Assessment and submission of an Environmental Statement (ES).

In reaching our Screening Opinion we have considered the proposed works against Schedule A1 and A2 of the above regulations.

### **Screening Opinion**

It is our opinion that the works fall within the categories of project listed within Schedule A2 Infrastructure Projects, paragraph 69 of the above regulations, and therefore must be considered in terms of its size, nature and location having regard to the relevant criteria listed in Schedule 1 of the above regulations.

*69. Coastal work to combat erosion and maritime works capable of altering the coast through the construction of, for example, dykes, moles, jetties and other sea defence works, excluding the maintenance and reconstruction of such works.*

We have carefully considered the criteria as set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations, and have determined, based on the information provided; that the project does not require a statutory Environmental Impact Assessment.

We have come to this conclusion on the basis of the likely significant impacts of the project.

The Rhymney Great Wharf Polders Project is located within the Severn Estuary European Marine Site (Severn Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar site); however, consideration of the size and nature of the activity and proposed mitigation measures indicates that the project is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment in EIA terms.

The proposed development will expand and restore the polder system in the Rhymney Great Wharf area which will overall have a positive outcome for the European Marine Site promoting sedimentation and the consecutive expansion of saltmarsh, a priority habitat and feature of the site. At the same time, the sedimentation will also contribute to support the intertidal sand and mud feature of the European Marine Site. Nevertheless, the works will result in a temporary disturbance to the intertidal mudflats; however, the feature is considered resilient to disturbance.

Other possible impacts will be avoided or minimised through working at low tide to avoid bird disturbance and sediment suspension; minimising waste production, and following best practices to reduce pollution risk. An Environmental Action Plan will also be prepared detailing all measures to avoid and reduce any environmental effects identified during design development.

Moreover, communications with Cadw and GGAT have been provided and no significant archaeological impacts of the proposal are expected.

### **The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017**

As part of the screening exercise, we have also considered whether the proposed project, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on any site designated as a European site of conservation importance under the above Regulations.

The proposal falls within and can impact the following site: Severn Estuary European Marine Site (Severn Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar site)

We would encourage you to contact Natural Resources Wales and Natural England to receive further pre-application advice on this project.

This Screening Opinion will be publicised on our website and on our Public Register.

Following the UK's departure from the EU on 31 January 2020 and the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020, the legal obligations relating to compliance with environmental permits and legislation will continue to apply. NRW will continue to issue and regulate all permits and licenses in line with our current practice. If you have any questions about your permits or licenses and/or site management, please contact our Customer Care Centre on 03000 653 000.

Yours sincerely



**Maria Alvarez**

Marine Licensing Team  
Natural Resources Wales

Approved by:



**Permitting Service Manager**

Natural Resources Wales

