

## Rhodri Thomas

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**From:** navigation safety <navigationsafety@mcga.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 08 November 2023 11:40  
**To:** Rhodri Thomas  
**Subject:** Confirmation prior to Marine Licence submission - Response

Dear Rhodri,

Thank you for the information regarding the proposed ground investigation as part of a fish passage improvement scheme in the River Afan at Port Talbot. We note that the various samples taken will be undertaken on foot at low tide and that the works fall within the jurisdiction of a Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA), Associated British Ports (ABP) and therefore they are responsible for the safety of navigation within their waters.

Therefore, on the understanding that the following takes place, the MCA would have no significant concerns to raise with regards to the safety of navigation and would be satisfied that the risk is relatively low on this occasion:

1. All maritime safety legislation is complied with;
2. The site is within port limits and the applicant should gain the approval/agreement of the responsible local navigation authority or the Harbour Authority/Commissioners/Council. They may wish to issue local warnings to alert those navigating in the vicinity to the presence of the works, as deemed necessary.

Please can you confirm that you accept the above risk mitigations?

Kind regards,

**Jo Cooke**

Policy Advisor

Marine Licensing and Consenting

**UK Technical Services Navigation** [NavigationSafety@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:NavigationSafety@mcga.gov.uk)

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**From:** Rhodri Thomas <Rhodri.Thomas@arup.com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 7, 2023 2:22 PM

**To:** navigation safety <navigationsafety@mcga.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Confirmation prior to Marine Licence submission

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Hello,

Following the guidance on NRW's website, it suggests that I contact you prior to submission of a Marine Licence application.

Arup are designing a fish passage improvement scheme for Natural Resources Wales on the tidal section of the River Afan in Port Talbot. The project is looking to improve passage over a weir structure, located at NGR SS 75522 89195 that is impassable to fish at mid-low tide (photo attached).

As part of the design of the project, we need to undertake some ground investigation. The investigation includes:

- 2no. cable percussive boreholes located on the riverbanks to confirm the stratigraphy. These are located outside of the river channel and MHWS and therefore do not trigger the licencing process.
- 2no. window samples located along the proposed fish pass alignment to confirm the stratigraphy. These are located in the channel (below MHWS) and are the assumed trigger for marine licencing. From reviewing the guidance they align most closet with the low risk removal activities. The samples will be taken using a small window-sampling rig that will be pushed by hand to the sampling points at low-tide.
- 4no. hand-dug trial pits; 2no upstream of the weir and 2no. downstream of the weir, to obtain soil samples for geo-environmental testing and check for the presence of obstructions.
- 1no. seismic refraction survey (non-intrusive) across the river profile upstream of the weir, to confirm the stratigraphical profile across the river.
- 4no. surface water samples; 1no. upstream of the proposed works, 1no. downstream of the proposed works, 1no. at the western outfall and 1no. at the eastern outfall for geo-environmental testing.

I have attached a plan showing the proposed locations of the sampling locations above. The in-channel sampling locations are within ABP's Port Talbot jurisdiction. We are in discussions with ABP regarding the works.

The works are anticipated to take less than a day and will be conducted at low-tide and accessed on foot. Navigation along the section of channel in question would not be possible at low-tide so there are no envisaged impacts to the safety of navigation.

Please let me know if there is any other information that would help confirm that the activity would not pose a risk.

Thanks,

**Rhodri Thomas**

Senior Scientist | Climate and Sustainability Services  
MESci, PhD

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