

Water Framework Directive assessment: scoping template for activities in estuarine and coastal waters

Use this template to record the findings of the scoping stage of your Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment for an activity in an estuary or coastal water.

If your activity will:

- take place in or affect more than one water body, complete a template for each water body
- include several different activities or stages as part of a larger project, complete a template for each activity as part of your overall WFD assessment

The [WFD assessment guidance for estuarine and coastal waters](#) will help you complete the table.

Your activity	Description, notes or more information
Applicant name	Amalgamated Construction Ltd.
Application reference number (where applicable)	MWC0183N
Name of activity	Replacement of timber whaling to Barmouth Viaduct.
Brief description of activity	Replace 1 broken timber element to the railway viaduct. Access to underside of viaduct using vehicles on beach at low tide.
Location of activity (central point XY coordinates or national grid reference)	OSGR: SH 62440 14870
Footprint of activity (ha)	0.3ha
Timings of activity (including start and finish dates)	Start once licence granted. Works to take two daytime shifts at low tides.
Extent of activity (for example size, scale frequency, expected volumes of output or discharge)	Work to be carried out at one span out of the 113 span railway viaduct. Work to replace one timber element from the span; a single repair.

Use or release of chemicals (state which ones)	No chemicals to be released.
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Water body ¹	Description, notes or more information
WFD water body name	<i>Mawddach</i>
Water body ID	<i>GB511006407100</i>
River basin district name	<i>Western Wales</i>
Water body type (estuarine or coastal)	<i>Estuarine</i>
Water body total area (ha)	<i>9.51</i>
Overall water body status (2015)	<i>Moderate</i>
Ecological status	<i>Good</i>
Chemical status	<i>Fail</i>
Target water body status and deadline	<i>Good by 2027</i>
Hydromorphology status of water body	<i>Not designated A/HMWB</i>
Heavily modified water body and for what use	<i>N/A</i>
Higher sensitivity habitats present	<i>No</i>
Lower sensitivity habitats present	<i>Intertidal sand and mudflats</i>
Phytoplankton status	<i>Good</i>
History of harmful algae	<i>None</i>
WFD protected areas within 2km	<i>Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau (SAC) and Aber Mawddach (SSSI)</i>

¹ Water body information can be found in the Environment Agency's catchment data explorer and the water body summary table. Magic maps provide additional information on habitats and protected areas. Links to these information sources can be found in the WFD assessment guidance for estuarine and coastal waters.

Specific risk information

Consider the potential risks of your activity to each of these receptors: hydromorphology, biology (habitats and fish), water quality and protected areas. Also consider invasive non-native species (INNS).

Section 1: Hydromorphology

Consider if hydromorphology is at risk from your activity.

Use the water body summary table to find out the hydromorphology status of the water body, if it is classed as heavily modified and for what use.

Consider if your activity:	Yes	No	Hydromorphology risk issue(s)
Could impact on the hydromorphology (for example morphology or tidal patterns) of a water body at high status	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>No. Work activity not anticipated to affect or downgrade current status or prevent attainment of target status in wider water body.</i>
Could significantly impact the hydromorphology of any water body	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Work activity may pose an impact on habitat but with environmental mitigation measures in place impact is not anticipated to be significant.</i>
Is in a water body that is heavily modified for the same use as your activity	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Not heavily modified waterbody and not for the same activity.</i>

Record the findings for hydromorphology and go to section 2: biology.

Section 2: Biology

Habitats

Consider if habitats are at risk from your activity.

Use the water body summary table and Magic maps, or other sources of information if available, to find the location and size of these habitats.

Higher sensitivity habitats ²	Lower sensitivity habitats ³
chalk reef	cobbles, gravel and shingle
clam, cockle and oyster beds	intertidal soft sediments like sand and mud
intertidal seagrass	rocky shore
maerl	subtidal boulder fields
mussel beds, including blue and horse mussel	subtidal rocky reef
polychaete reef	subtidal soft sediments like sand and mud
saltmarsh	
subtidal kelp beds	
subtidal seagrass	

² Higher sensitivity habitats have a low resistance to, and recovery rate, from human pressures.

³ Lower sensitivity habitats have a medium to high resistance to, and recovery rate from, human pressures.

Consider if the footprint ⁴ of your activity is:	Yes	No	Biology habitats risk issue(s)
0.5km ² or larger	Yes to one or more – requires impact assessment	No to all – impact assessment not required	No: Work area and access less than 0.5km ²
1% or more of the water body's area			No: Work area and access less than 1% of water body area
Within 500m of any higher sensitivity habitat			No: Work area not within 500m of higher sensitivity habitat
1% or more of any lower sensitivity habitat			No: Work area and access less than 1% of lower sensitivity habitat

⁴ Note that a footprint may also be a temperature or sediment plume. For dredging activity, a footprint is 1.5 times the dredge area.

Fish

Consider if fish are at risk from your activity, but only if your activity is in an estuary or could affect fish in or entering an estuary.

Consider if your activity:	Yes	No	Biology fish risk issue(s)
Is in an estuary and could affect fish in the estuary, outside the estuary but could delay or prevent fish entering it or could affect fish migrating through the estuary	Continue with questions	Go to next section	<i>Work to be carried out at low tide when no water is in estuary at works location and no water disturbance anticipated. The Viaduct is an inert object that has been in place for considerable amount of time. Works will not alter structure so would not affect fish passage.</i> <i>No impact on fish foreseen.</i>
Could impact on normal fish behaviour like movement, migration or spawning (for example creating a physical barrier, noise, chemical change or a change in depth or flow)	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Work to be carried out at low tide when no water is in estuary at works location. The Viaduct is an inert object that has been in place for considerable amount of time. Works will not alter structure so would not affect fish passage.</i> <i>No impact on fish foreseen.</i>
Could cause entrainment or impingement of fish	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Work to be carried out at low tide when no water is in estuary at works location. No impact on fish foreseen.</i>

Record the findings for biology habitats and fish and go to section 3: water quality.

Section 3: Water quality

Consider if water quality is at risk from your activity.

Use the water body summary table to find information on phytoplankton status and harmful algae.

Consider if your activity:	Yes	No	Water quality risk issue(s)
Could affect water clarity, temperature, salinity, oxygen levels, nutrients or microbial patterns continuously for longer than a spring neap tidal cycle (about 14 days)	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Use of vehicles on beach, underneath viaduct at low tide – biodegradable oils will be used in vehicles and secondary containment in use for all small plant at work location. Work to be carried out at low tide when no water is in estuary at works location. No impact on water quality foreseen. Pollution prevention measures will be in place.</i>
Is in a water body with a phytoplankton status of moderate, poor or bad	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Good status.</i>
Is in a water body with a history of harmful algae	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>No history of harmful algae.</i>

Consider if water quality is at risk from your activity through the use, release or disturbance of chemicals.

If your activity uses or releases chemicals (for example through sediment disturbance or building works) consider if:	Yes	No	Water quality risk issue(s)
The chemicals are on the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) list	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>No chemicals in use or to release.</i>
It disturbs sediment with contaminants above Cefas Action Level 1	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>No disturbance of sediments in first instance.</i>

If your activity has a mixing zone (like a discharge pipeline or outfall) consider if:	Yes	No	Water quality risk issue(s)
The chemicals released are on the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) list	Requires impact assessment ⁵	Impact assessment not required	<i>No mixing zone and no chemicals in use or to release.</i>

⁵ Carry out your impact assessment using the Environment Agency's surface water pollution risk assessment guidance, part of Environmental Permitting Regulations guidance.

Record the findings for water quality go on to section 4: WFD protected areas.

Section 4: WFD protected areas

Consider if WFD protected areas are at risk from your activity. These include:

- special areas of conservation (SAC)
- special protection areas (SPA)
- shellfish waters
- bathing waters
- nutrient sensitive areas

Use Magic maps to find information on the location of protected areas in your water body (and adjacent water bodies) within 2km of your activity.

Consider if your activity is:	Yes	No	Protected areas risk issue(s)
Within 2km of any WFD protected area ⁶	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	<i>Pen Llyn a`r Sarnau (SAC)</i> <i>Aber Mawddach (SSSI)</i>

⁶ Note that a regulator can extend the 2km boundary if your activity has an especially high environmental risk.

Record the findings for WFD protected areas and go to section 5: invasive non-native species.

Section 5: Invasive non-native species (INNS)

Consider if there is a risk your activity could introduce or spread INNS.

Risks of introducing or spreading INNS include:

- materials or equipment that have come from, had use in or travelled through other water bodies
- activities that help spread existing INNS, either within the immediate water body or other water bodies

Consider if your activity could:	Yes	No	INNS risk issue(s)
Introduce or spread INNS	Requires impact assessment	Impact assessment not required	Biosecurity measures will be implemented for plant and personnel – CHECK-CLEAN-DRY

Record the findings for INNS and go to the summary section.

Summary

Summarise the results of scoping here.

Receptor	Potential risk to receptor?	Note the risk issue(s) for impact assessment
Hydromorphology	No	
Biology: habitats	No	
Biology: fish	No	
Water quality	No	
Protected areas	Yes	<i>Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau (SAC) and Aber Mawddach (SSSI). Annex 1 habitats that are primary reason for selection of site are the bar-built estuary of the Mawddach.</i>

		<i>The work location at the viaduct and access to work location will be via mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. These are a widespread habitat across coastal UK. They are a qualifying feature of protected site but not a primary reason for site selection. Work activities will be short duration and no significant impact is anticipated on the qualifying features of these designated sites.</i>
Invasive non-native species	No	

If you haven't identified any receptors at risk during scoping, you don't need to continue to the impact assessment stage and your WFD assessment is complete.

If you've identified one or more receptors at risk during scoping, you should continue to the impact assessment stage.

Include your scoping results in the WFD assessment document you send to your activity's regulator as part of your application for permission to carry out the activity.