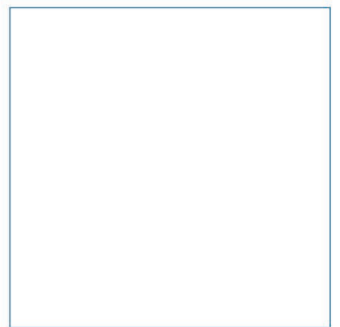
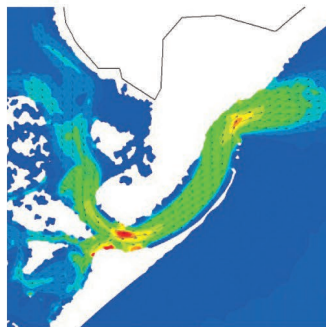
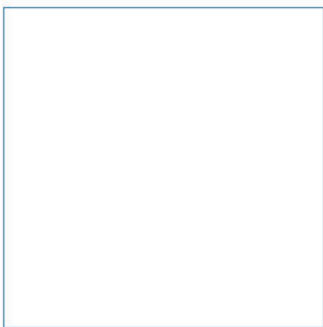
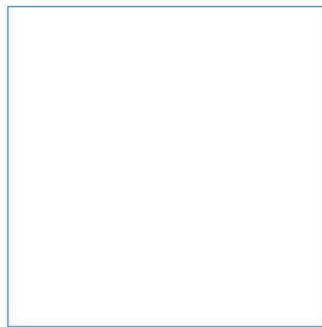


Solent Forum

Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent (BUDS)

A summary of the work undertaken and the lessons to take forward

November 2024



Innovative Thinking - Sustainable Solutions

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Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the work that was undertaken on the Solent Forum's Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent (BUDS). This project ran from 2017 to 2024. Its aim was to find a useful purpose for some of the large volumes of sediment that are dredged and deposited offshore in the Solent every year. Many parties, including Solent Forum partners, have over many years highlighted the incongruity of the long-established situation in which the Solent's saltmarshes are being eroded and 'drowned' by rising seas while sediment that could be used to build these habitats up is being taken away from inshore environments.

This is a situation that exists not just in the Solent but well beyond. It is one that plays out across countless ports, harbours and coastlines across the globe. It exists because there are substantial challenges and costs associated with practically using dredge arisings beneficially. There are also the regulatory processes and existing ways of thinking that need to be navigated to deliver beneficial projects. The Solent BUDS project sought to address these challenges and to start changing long established ways of doing things. It was recognised at the outset that this would not be simple.

The approach taken for this project was to carry out a phased and strategic process (including regular stakeholder consultations) to identify options and address known challenges. It was started with a regional review (Phase 1) of beneficial use opportunities. It then continued with a more detailed look at the options for, and benefits of, habitat enhancement in the West Solent (Phase 2). Finally, it involved applying for a Marine Licence (from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)) to allow sediment to be placed from any Solent harbour at two locations at the entrance to Lymington harbour (Phase 3).

Throughout this process substantial evidence was collected about dredging activities and the ways in which dredged arisings could be used, as well as the costs and benefits of doing so. As this was a novel and ambitious project, it was also used to advocate for change in the sector through presentations at national conferences, and within national and international reports and guidance documents. As one final outcome of the process, unfortunately, the MMO were unable to proceed with the Marine Licence Application to use sediment at Lymington. The concern was not with the activity itself but the practicalities of overseeing the multiple conditions and monitoring commitments which would have accompanied such a consent. The Solent Forum was not in a position to lead such ongoing commitment and on this basis withdrew the application. Withdrawing the application, rather than allowing it to be refused allows the possibility for it to be resurrected by another party in the future.

The Solent Forum and ABPmer fully recognise why the MMO was unable to proceed but are disappointed to see a seven-year process end in this manner and not achieve the goal of delivering a restoration project. However, the BUDS project was progressed as a proof-of-concept project; it was designed to learn new lessons and explore what is possible. Lessons have been learned and the fact that a new initiative cannot be consented shines a helpful spotlight on the challenges and issues.

Also, a lot of change has occurred over the last seven years. Change that has been influenced by the BUDS project. There is an ever-growing desire to see sediments beneficially used to help meet the challenges of a changing climate and biodiversity decline. There is now a new national Beneficial Use Working Group (BUWG) meeting regularly to support projects, there is also a new handbook and new data platform to help practitioners. Many organisations are continuing to advocate for change and seeking to deliver new projects (including at several sites in the Solent). It is greatly hoped that the lessons learned, and the substantial resources assembled, during this project can be a springboard for this continuing change and can support future projects, whether at Lymington or elsewhere in the Solent and across the UK. The BUDS data and reporting will therefore be available on the Solent Forum's website to help other parties pursue these habitat restoration projects should they wish to do so.

Contents

| | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|----|
| 1 | Project Background..... | 1 |
| 1.1 | BUDS aims and phased approach | 1 |
| 1.2 | The BUDS Phase 3 proposal | 2 |
| 1.3 | Other projects and initiatives | 5 |
| 2 | Outcome and Next Steps | 8 |
| 2.1 | Licence application outcome..... | 8 |
| 2.2 | Summary and next steps..... | 9 |
| 3 | References | 10 |
| 4 | Abbreviations/Acronyms | 11 |

Appendices

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| A | MMO Response to Licence Application | 13 |
|---|---|----|

Tables

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| Table 1. | Overview of Solent BUDS project phases..... | 1 |
|----------|---|---|

Images

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| Image 1. | Intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes east of Lymington Estuary | 4 |
| Image 2. | Mudflats, saltmarshes and nature reserve area west of Lymington Estuary | 4 |
| Image 3. | Dredging and disposal activities in the Solent (output from BUDS Phase 1) | 5 |
| Image 4. | Different techniques used for recharge projects at Lymington | 6 |
| Image 5. | Illustration of Saltmarsh Restoration Drag Box (SRDB) technique | 7 |

Figures

| | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| Figure 1. | Location of existing and proposed placement sites with bed elevation contours | 3 |
|-----------|---|---|

1 Project Background

1.1 BUDS aims and phased approach

The Solent Forum's Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent (BUDS) project began in 2017. Its main aim was to find ways of beneficially using some of the large amounts of sediment that are dredged from harbours, marinas and navigation channels in the Solent each year. It was understood that achieving this goal required some major changes to established practices and, particularly, the use of more collaborative and strategic ways of thinking and operating.

With these challenges in mind, the BUDS project was pursued over three key phases from 2017 to 2014. These phases are summarised below and are set out, with reference to the main reports produced, in Table 1.

- **Phase 1** involved a high-level review of the Solent region to identify sites that would gain most from a beneficial use campaign. This concluded that a 'stand out' candidate site for recharge work was along the Hurst Spit, Keyhaven, and Lymington frontages.
- **Phase 2** took forward the recommendations from Phase 1. It considered in more detail how beneficial use might be carried out on the Hurst to Lymington frontage. This included considering the costs and benefits of different approaches.
- **Phase 3** was then undertaken to agree a specific proposal, or set of proposals, and submit the necessary Marine Licence Application(s) to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Throughout the BUDS project, regular consultations and meetings were held with a wide range of partners, stakeholders and dredging specialists. These consultations, and the support of all partners, were vital to this, or any, beneficial use project.

Table 1. Overview of Solent BUDS project phases

| Phase of work | Key objectives | Timescale | Main BUDS Reports for Solent Forum and MMO |
|--|---|--------------|--|
| Phase 1 - Identifying potential beneficial use sites across the Solent | To undertake a high-level review of the whole Solent region, and to identify sites that would gain most from a beneficial use campaign. | 2017 to 2018 | ABPmer (2018). Phase 1 Project Scoping and Partnership Building, |
| Phase 2 - Reviewing options across the Hurst to Lymington frontage | To take forward the Phase 1 recommendations and consider options for the Hurst to Lymington frontage in greater detail. | 2019 to 2020 | ABPmer (2020). Phase 2, Feasibility Review for Sediment Recharge Project(s) on the West Solent Saltmarshes, |
| Phase 3 - Licensing new beneficial use disposal sites at Lymington | To agree a specific proposal for bottom placement of sediment to protect and enhance the declining saltmarshes between Hurst Spit and Lymington; and to secure the necessary Marine Licence(s) for the agreed proposal. | 2022 to 2024 | ABPmer, (2024). Phase 3, Disposal site characterisation assessment for two new beneficial use sites in the Lymington saltmarshes,. |

1.2 The BUDS Phase 3 proposal

As a key outcome for Phase 3 of the BUDS project, a Marine Licence Application was submitted to the MMO on 7 June 2024 (Marine Licence Application Ref: MLA/2024/00300). This sought permission for the beneficial disposal of dredge sediment through bottom placement¹ at two sites fronting the Lymington saltmarshes in the West Solent (named 'Pylewell' and 'Cockleshell'). The locations of these two sites are shown in Figure 1.

The intention was for these two sites to become officially licensed disposal locations that could be used as and when suitable dredge materials become available from a range of appropriate local sources. This could include sediment from the harbours of Lymington, Yarmouth, Beaulieu, Cowes or, occasionally, even the Hamble. It was envisaged that these beneficial use sites would operate in the same way as licensed offshore disposal sites. Each harbour would then be responsible for ensuring that the dredge sediments are suitable for disposal at sea (under existing consenting regimes) and hence also placement at Pylewell or Cockleshell.

Placement of dredge sediment at these two locations would have helped to slow or stall the ongoing decline of intertidal habitats in the outer Lymington Estuary (see Image 1 and Image 2). It would also have ensured that a greater proportion of the dredge resource in the Solent was retained within the nearshore sedimentary system and not lost through placement at existing offshore disposal sites.

The saltmarshes at Lymington provide wave protection to surrounding intertidal mudflats and to Lymington Harbour, its marinas and mooring sites. They contribute to enhanced biodiversity and improve water quality. The areas of remaining marsh that have the highest elevations are some of the last remaining intertidal roosting and nesting grounds for waterbirds in the west Solent. These marshes are, however, rapidly eroding and these functions are being lost. Placing sediment at the proposed sites would have helped to maintain them, or at least extend their life, and their functional benefits.

An Environmental Appraisal was prepared to support the Marine Licence Application (Marine Licence Application Ref: MLA/2024/00300) which provided a 'disposal site characterisation assessment' of the two proposed beneficial use disposal sites and an environment assessment of the proposed sediment placements (ABPmer, 2024). This report described the physical and ecological conditions at these sites and evaluated their impacts and benefits. It also included other stand-alone supporting assessments, including a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) and a Water Framework Directive (WFD) compliance assessment.

What was especially distinctive for these two sites, and the Phase 3 proposal, was that they were to be used by more than one supplier of suitable dredged sediment. Having multiple parties beneficially using intertidal sediment placement site(s) would set a new precedent. It would introduce a new way of thinking about, and regulating, the beneficial use of dredge sediment. This is a change that is urgently needed in the Solent to tackle the ongoing decline and loss of intertidal habitats. The intention being that this approach could then be implemented at other appropriate UK locations.

¹ The term bottom placement refers to the direct disposal of sediment from beneath the hull of spilt hopper transport barges. This placement method has been carried out over the last nine years in front of the Boiler Marsh site at Lymington which means there is confidence in this technique, its effects, and its effectiveness.

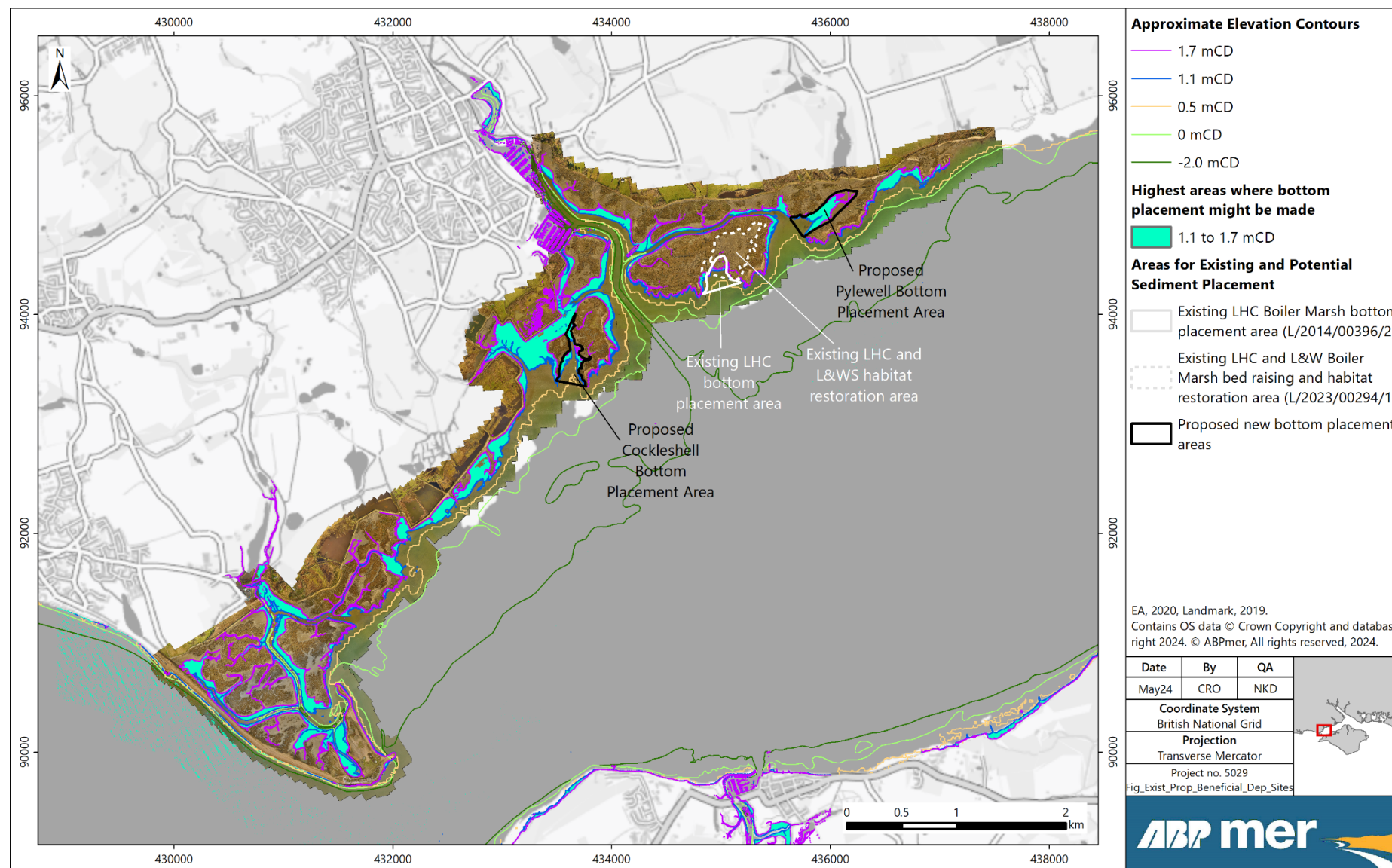


Figure 1. Location of existing and proposed placement sites with bed elevation contours



Source: Landwatch, 2019 for Solent Forum (BUDS Phase 2)

Image 1. Intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes east of Lymington Estuary

It is now a long-established practice for offshore disposal sites to be used by more than one supplier (see Image 3 illustrating the situation in the Solent). That approach is not adopted when placing sediment inshore to benefit coastal habitats. Such beneficial use projects are, instead, always required to be overseen by a single licence holder (e.g. harbour authority, dredging operator, or other promoting organisation).

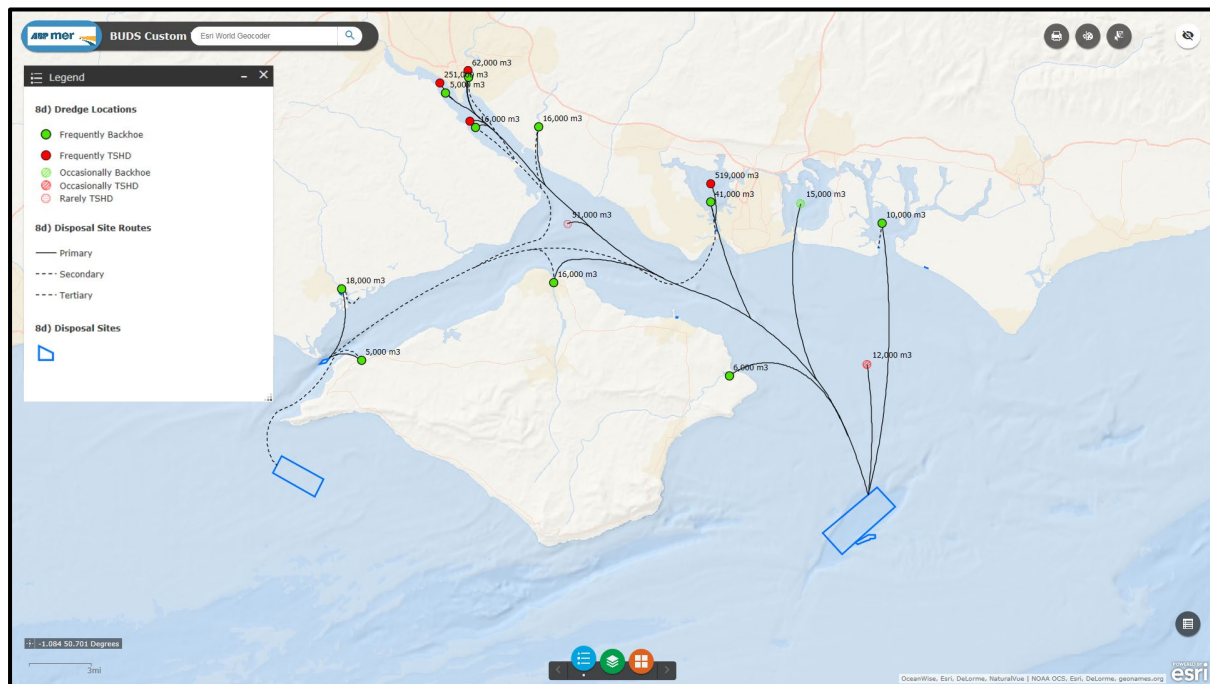


Source: Landwatch, 2019 for Solent Forum (BUDS Phase 2)

Image 2. Mudflats, saltmarshes and nature reserve area west of Lymington Estuary

Having multiple possible sediment sources would not only be novel for this type of inshore beneficial use location, it would also mean that it would not be possible to know with certainty how much sediment would be placed at these locations, or how regularly. That is dependent upon the requirements of each harbour and their relevant consenting arrangements. It is influenced by their dredge volumes, sediment type, sediment quality, dredging methods and the vessels they use to transport sediment.

Due to these uncertainties, and to provide regulators and all interested parties with confidence in the approach taken, it was suggested that the implementation of the proposed beneficial use disposal sites would be carried out in a phased and adaptive manner. It would have begun with trials and be followed by scaling up across the deposit sites over time, if possible and where agreed.



Source: BUDS Webapp; Cefas and ABPmer data-layers

Image 3. Dredging and disposal activities in the Solent (output from BUDS Phase 1)

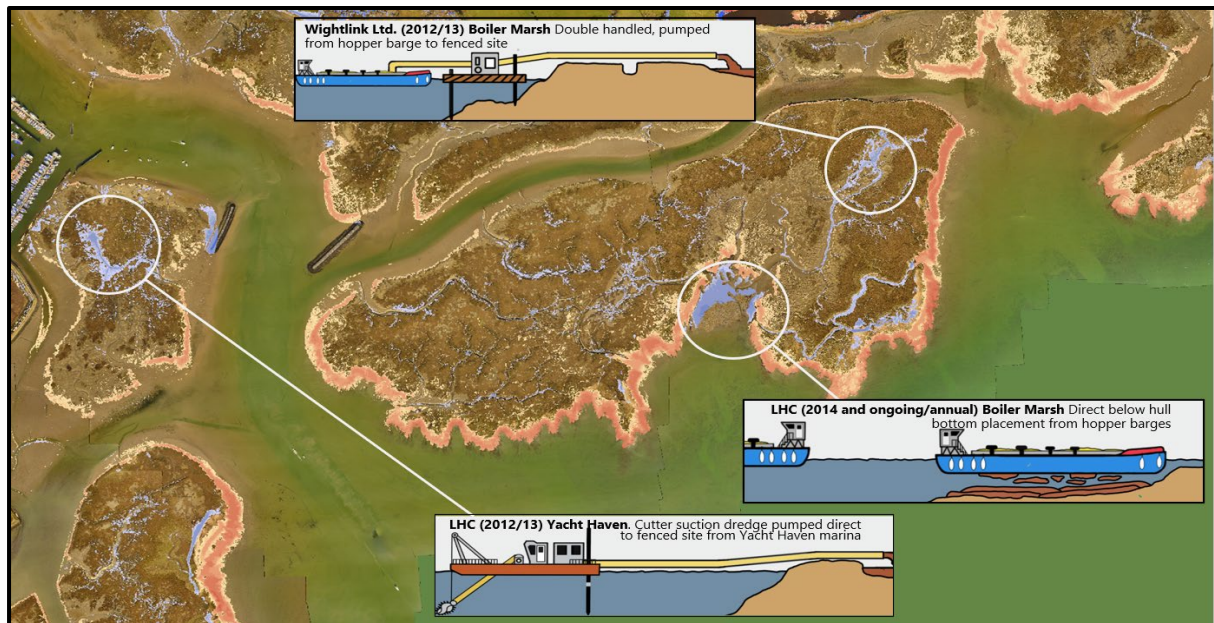
Sediment would initially be placed towards the upper reaches of mudflat habitats (as high as existing bathymetry and vessel access allows) at spring tide high water. Over time, and subject to monitoring and management advice, the sediment could increasingly be placed at lower elevations within the defined zones. At later stages these sediment resources could also perhaps be used to raise the local saltmarshes as is currently being undertaken at Boiler Marsh (Section 1.3). Any such measures to move the sediment out of the deposit zones would require separate consent(s).

For the purposes of the Marine Licence Application, it was assumed that up to 29,000 wet tonnes (approximately 20,000 m³) could be placed annually across the two proposed beneficial use disposal sites. It was recognised that these volumes may well not be realised because access to, and use of, the sites would be constrained by tidal state and sediment availability. It was seen as more likely that these sites would be used at smaller scales and only intermittently (especially in the first few years).

1.3 Other projects and initiatives

This Phase 3 consent submission was underpinned by the work undertaken during Phase 1 and 2 (see Section 1.1 for summary). It was also informed by other projects and initiatives involving the beneficial use of dredge sediment. It built upon the many past valuable lessons that have been learned, and guidance shared, about how to use dredge sediment beneficially. This included the practical lessons from recent beneficial use projects at Lymington as well as at other locations in the Solent and the UK. It also included new initiatives that have been pursued to share lessons and enhance the delivery of such projects. It was important that the BUDS project both contribute to and learn from these other ongoing initiatives.

So far, at Lymington alone, several different 'alternative use' projects have been undertaken using sediment dredged from Lymington Harbour (see Image 4). In 2012 and 2013, the Lymington Harbour Commissioners (LHC) carried out a sediment recharge on the Yacht Haven saltmarsh (Marine Licence Ref: L/2011/00306/2). Over the same period, Wightlink Ltd placed/pumped sediment in a deteriorating section of Boiler Marsh (Marine Licence Ref: L/2011/00308/2).



Source: ABPmer with Environment Agency LiDAR data

Image 4. Different techniques used for recharge projects at Lymington

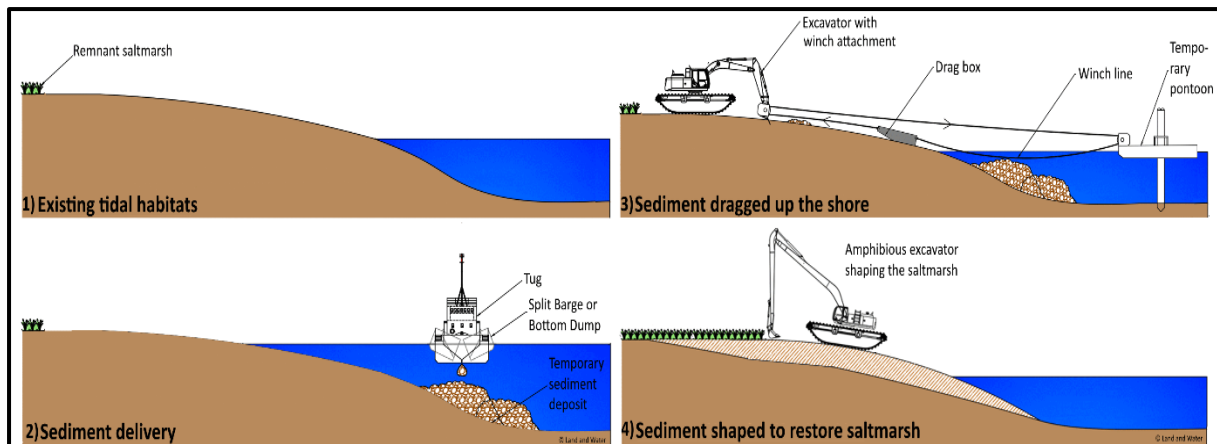
On an annual basis since 2014, the LHC has also been beneficially placing sediment into a licensed disposal ground around part of Boiler Marsh (Marine Licence Ref: L/2014/00396/2). Under this consent, up to 10,000 wet tonnes of dredged sediment (approximately 8,000 m³) can be deposited each year. This is done by bottom placement from a hopper barge. Encouragingly, the deposited sediment is showing a high degree of persistence and there has been a gradual build-up of sediment in the deposit ground².

Building on this success, the LHC, Land and Water Services Ltd (L&WS) and the Environment Agency have now started to relocate this already deposited sediment at Boiler Marsh onto the higher marsh to further enhance the ecological value and increase the resilience of the saltmarsh (under Marine Licence Ref: L/2023/00294/1). The first trial of this sediment movement technique was undertaken in Summer 2024 using a new Saltmarsh Restoration Drag Box (SRDB) technique (see Image 5).

A preceding trial of the SRDB technique was also undertaken at West Itchenor Chichester Harbour in February and March 2023 (Marine Licence Ref: L/2023/00042/1) as part of the Solent Seascape project³. This provided valuable lessons about the effectiveness of this approach. It confirmed that this could be a potentially useful new way of beneficially using dredged sediment that has already been bottom placed through separate dredging operations. The trial being undertaken at Boiler Marsh (Marine Licence Ref: L/2023/00294/1) will provide further valuable new lessons about this approach.

² Further details about this restoration project, are on ABPmer's OMReg website at <https://www.omreg.net/query-database/0018-boiler-marsh-bottom-placement/>. The OMReg website www.omreg.net also includes details about the other Lymington and Boiler Marsh projects.

³ Further details about this restoration project, are on ABPmer's OMReg website at <https://www.omreg.net/query-database/0033-west-itchenor/>. A video on the trial, as produced by the Blue Marine Foundation under the Solent Seascape Project can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIPMepSmdc0>



Source: Land and Water Ltd

Image 5. Illustration of Saltmarsh Restoration Drag Box (SRDB) technique

While the Lymington to Keyhaven shoreline has been a recent focus for the BUDS project, the selection of this frontage as a priority candidate area with the most demonstrable 'needs case' did not mean that other locations in the Solent are being ignored. Instead, it was the intention that the BUDS project would lead to new technical lessons and collaborations that facilitate more of these types of projects in the region.

It is encouraging, therefore, that new beneficial use projects have been implemented or are under review in other parts of the Solent as well as at Lymington. There have been new investigations in the Medina Estuary and Langstone Harbour. Also, as summarised above, the trial at West Itchenor in Chichester Harbour was recently implemented by L&WS as part of the Solent Seascape project.

2 Outcome and Next Steps

2.1 Licence application outcome

Following a review of the Marine Licence Application (Marine Licence Application Ref: MLA/2024/00300) and supporting documents for the proposed beneficial use disposal sites at Pylewell and Cockleshell, the MMO issued a letter of response on 25 July 2024 (Appendix A). In this letter, the MMO recognised the efforts that the Solent Forum (and ABPmer) have made to regularly engage with the MMO during the preparation of the application. Whilst acknowledging these efforts, the MMO concluded that they are *“unable to proceed”* with the application for the following reasons:

- **Sediment sources and supply:** The dredge source material from local harbours that will be disposed of at each proposed disposal site has not been characterised in accordance with the relevant MMO sample plan;
- **Lack of specific information:** There is a lack of detail regarding the dredge material source site, the dredge and disposal volumes, deposit locations, and deposit amounts for each campaign; and
- **Responsibility for compliance and monitoring:** The licence holder needs to be responsible for ensuring that all disposal activities are compliant with the marine licence, including monitoring requirements. The MMO will not take responsibility for the monitoring and management of the proposed beneficial use disposal sites.

In terms of the first two points, the aim of the BUDS project was to designate disposal sites that provide potential future suppliers of dredge sediment with the opportunity to beneficially use the material arising, but not for the Solent Forum to lead that work on their behalf. It was not possible therefore to provide all the specific details requested by the MMO at this stage although a lot of historic data on dredging in the Solent was included in Section 2.4 of the Environmental Appraisal (ABPmer, 2024). Although the MMO appreciates the desire for this flexibility and the use of an adaptive approach, they advised that this must fit within their licensing framework and include specific information which could be used to assess potential impacts.

It is recognised that quality testing of dredge sediment already happens as part of the standard marine licensing process but it is not possible for the Solent Forum to now carry this out. It is also not possible for the Solent Forum to be responsible for this licence. It is this issue (the last of the three points raised by the MMO) that is the crucial consideration here. The other two issues can be overcome if one organisation could take responsibility for the licence and for all the costs, risks and tasks associated with it. Ideally this would then involve also implementing the licence in an adaptive manner with a supporting advisory panel of stakeholders and regulators who can inform the licensed disposal activities and address any issues of uncertainty arising. This licence oversight would however be a substantial task and is not one that the Solent Forum can cover.

There is a notable contrast to be made here with offshore disposal or even inshore dredging activities. It is now long-established practice for offshore disposal sites to be adaptively overseen by the MMO and Cefas, and used by more than one supplier. It is also established practice to adaptively manage maintenance dredging activities. Ideally, the intention here was for the proposed beneficial use disposal sites to adopt a similar flexible and/or multi-user approach to achieve benefits for the marine environment, as highlighted above, and also to meet marine plan policy goals. The MMO has clarified however that such an approach is not currently possible. On this basis, therefore, the application was withdrawn on behalf of the Solent Forum on 18 September 2024. Withdrawing the application, rather than allowing it to be refused allows the possibility of the application being resurrected from the MMO's Marine Case Management System (MCMS) by another party in the future.

2.2 Summary and next steps

In summary therefore one of the ultimate goals of the BUDS project, following the phased approach adopted, was to obtain permission for carrying out beneficial use placements at Pylewell and Cockleshell as and when the opportunities arose to do so. These activities (if and when implemented) would have provided benefits for the marshes and mudflats of the outer Lymington Estuary. They would also have advanced understanding about these benefits, as well as about the technical approaches and best ways of achieving project delivery through collaboration across different stakeholder groups.

In the end through, it was not possible to secure the necessary consents for this at this time for the reasons described above. Although it is disappointing not to deliver these permissions, it was always understood that the BUDS project was progressed as a proof-of-concept. It therefore had broader goals which were to learn new lessons and explore what is possible. That the restoration sites cannot be consented, in the form proposed, highlights the requirements of the marine licensing regime, while also providing lessons for future initiatives.

It is understood why the MMO is unable to proceed with this Marine Licence Application (Marine Licence Application Ref: MLA/2024/00300). It is also recognised that MMO's response letter to the Application clarifies a desire to support such habitat restoration projects. There is a growing and wider desire to see sediments beneficially used to help meet challenges of a changing climate and biodiversity decline. There is now a new national BUWG that meets regularly to support projects, as well as a new handbook (Manning *et al.*, 2021) and data platform⁴ to help guide practitioners. Also, many organisations, are continuing to advocate change and seeking to deliver multiple new projects (including at several sites in the Solent).

This change has been influenced by the BUDS project and it is greatly hoped that this growing impetus will be informed by the detailed work carried out for this Solent Forum review. It is hoped, especially, that the lessons and resources from the BUDS project can be a springboard for change and can support future projects, whether at Lymington or elsewhere in the Solent and the UK. These future projects will need to be considered regionally by individual organisations and partnerships, as well as nationally by the BUWG. These organisations and ABPmer will continue to work with the MMO and other regulators to advise on, and advocate for, changes to the ways in which the regulatory regime is applied.

All the data and reporting that has been prepared in support of the BUDS project will be made available on the Solent Forum's website to help other parties pursue these habitat restoration projects should they wish to do so. This information will help support any future applicants wishing to submit their own a marine licence application to beneficially use dredge sediment at these proposed disposal sites.

⁴ This new Sediment Resource Data (SRD) platform was produced by ABPmer for the BUWG. It is an interrogatable online data viewer available at <https://vision.abpmer.net/DredgeResourceViewer>. It provides a central location where information can be collated and viewed to help answer the following questions:

- Where and how does dredging and dredge sediment disposal takes place in the UK?;
- Where could this sediment be beneficially used?; and
- What issues need to be considered for beneficial use projects at any given location?.

This resource greatly improves current understanding about the spatial linkages between the supply of dredged material and locations where it could be beneficially used. It can now be used to underpin new habitat restoration projects. It can also be used to share resources and links to information to help project implementers.

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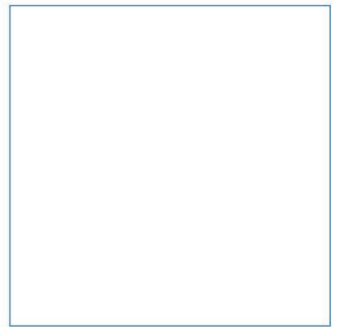
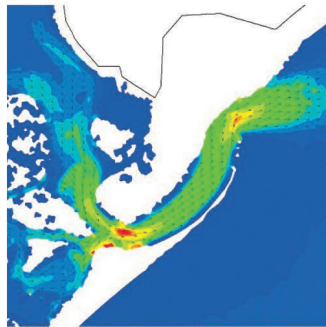
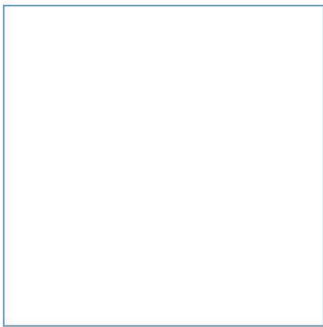
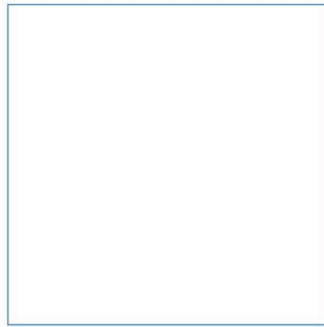
4 Abbreviations/Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| ABP | Associated British Ports |
| BUDS | Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent |
| BUWG | Beneficial Use Working Group |
| HRA | Habitat Regulation Assessment |
| L&WS | Land and Water Services Ltd |
| LHC | Lymington Harbour Commissioners |
| LiDAR | Light Detection and Ranging |
| mCD | Meters above Chart Datum |
| MCMS | Marine Case Management System (MCMS) |
| MLA | Marine Licence Application |
| MMO | Marine Management Organisation |
| OMReg | Online Marine Registry (ABPmer's coastal habitat creation website) |
| SRD | Sediment Resource Database |
| SRDB | Saltmarsh Restoration Drag Box |
| WEM | Water and Environment Management |
| WFD | Water Framework Directive |

Cardinal points/directions are used unless otherwise stated.

SI units are used unless otherwise stated.

Appendix



Innovative Thinking - Sustainable Solutions

A MMO Response to Licence Application



Marine Management Organisation

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Solent Forum
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SO23 8UD
solentforum@hants.gov.uk

Our reference: MLA/2024/00300

By e-mail only

25 July 2024

Dear Karen McHugh,

MLA/2024/00300 Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent (BUDS) Phase 3

Thank you for your application to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) on 7 June 2024 for a marine licence application (MLA) to designate two beneficial use disposal sites in the outer Lymington Estuary and undertake disposal activities at these two sites.

The activities are licensable under Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, Section 66(1):

2. *To deposit any substance or object anywhere in the sea or on or under the sea bed from—*
 - (a) *a British vessel, British aircraft or British marine structure, or*
 - (b) *a container floating in the sea, if the deposit is controlled from a British vessel, British aircraft or British marine structure.*

The MMO have reviewed your application and is unable to proceed. The MMO has detailed the reasons for this decision below.

We acknowledge that you have previously undertaken pre-application engagement with the MMO. Please note that these comments may not have previously been raised to you, these are a result of an in-depth review of your application and associated documentation.

MMO Comments

1. Sediment Sources and Supply

MMO licenses disposing of dredged materials at sea and uses guidelines produced by OSPAR to regulate this activity. A marine licence to dispose of dredged materials to



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Organisation

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seas and coasts



sea requires the sediments to be characterised to allow the potential adverse environmental effects of disposing of the material to be considered.

This application is for the disposal of dredged material; however, a full sample plan has not been requested and undertaken for the material which is due to be disposed from each source site. The sampling plan results provided with the application detail samples undertaken at both Pylewell and Cockleshell, but not from the local harbours which would be providing the sediment. Therefore this is not in line with information requested through the MMO response for either SAM/2021/00081 or SAM/2019/00043.

2. Responsibility for Compliance and Monitoring

Within your application document you've stated that *"Given the strategic multi-user nature of the disposal sites, it will not be possible or appropriate for the Solent Forum to take on the lead role and this may be something that the MMO leads (as noted above). This aspect will need to be discussed with the MMO during the application process."*

During the post-consent stage of the marine application process, the licence holder is responsible for ensuring that all activities are compliant with the marine licence, this includes all monitoring requirements. The licence holder has responsibilities for post-consent compliance, responsibility would therefore fall to Solent Forum to be responsible for the monitoring and compliance of all disposal activities, as the licensee, during the operation of the licence. In this instance Solent Forum have also not suggested an alternative licence holder in the event of a positive determination. The MMO could not transfer responsibility for this from the licensee without varying the licence, as per the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2011, S72 (7 & 8):

7. On an application made by a licensee, the licensing authority which granted the licence—

(a) may transfer the licence from the licensee to another person, and

(b) if it does so, must vary the licence accordingly.

8. A licence may not be transferred except in accordance with subsection (7).

At no point would the MMO take responsibility for the monitoring and management of a licenced activity/activities.

3. Lack of specific information

In order to licence a project, the MMO requires specific information to inform an application, to enable us to determine whether a project will have an adverse impact on the marine environment, human health, or other legitimate uses of the sea. There is a lack of specific information within the marine licence application for MLA/2024/00300, especially regarding source site, volumes, deposit locations, and deposit amounts for each campaign. The MMO understand the desire for an adaptive management approach, however this must fit within our licensing framework and still include specific information which can be used to assess the potential impacts.



Conclusion

The MMO have concluded, for the above reasons, that they will be unable to proceed with the licensing process on your application. The MMO request you therefore withdraw your application; this will allow you to access this documentation in the future, if you wish to, make an application in the future once the above issues have been addressed.

The MMO look forward to working with yourselves at Solent Forum and ABPmer in the future. If you would like to discuss future projects for the beneficial re-use of dredged materials, we encourage you to request a pre-application enquiry, via the Marine Case Management System (MCMS), as this will allow us to work together on what sounds like an interesting and environmentally beneficial project, which the MMO encourages.

Your feedback

We are committed to providing excellent customer service and continually improving our standards and we would be delighted to know what you thought of the service you have received from us. Please help us by taking a few minutes to complete the following short survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MMOMLcustomer>).

Yours sincerely,



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