



Habitats Regulations Assessment

Prepared by	Gregg Smith	Job Title	Marine Licencing Case Officer	Date	19 June 2025
Quality Checked by	Ciara Graham	Job Title	Marine Licensing Case Manager	Date	25 June 2025
Amended by	Gregg Smith	Job Title	Marine Licencing Case Officer	Date	26 June 2025
Quality Checked by	William Notley	Job Title	Marine Licensing Case Manager	Date	03 October 2025

Table 1: Proposed plan or project details

Title of project	Tees and Hartlepool Maintenance Dredge Disposal
Case reference	MLA/2025/00263
Applicant name	Andrew Ridley, PD Teesport Ltd.
Type of licensable activity/ies	Section 66 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 To deposit any substance or object within the UK marine licensing area, either in the sea or on or under the sea bed, from; (a) any vehicle, vessel, aircraft or marine structure, (b) any container floating in the sea, or (c) any structure on land constructed or adapted wholly or mainly for the purpose of depositing solids in the sea.
Location of works	Tees Bay A (TY160) Tees Bay, North East England (See Figure 1 for location)

Description of proposed project	<p>PD Teesport Limited have the powers to dredge under the Teesport Harbour Revision Order 2008. PD Teesport employs two trailing suction hopper dredgers (TSHD) of 2,000 cubic metres (m³) and 1,500m³ hopper volume to maintain depths within the navigable channel and berths within the Tees estuary and Hartlepool (Figure 2). Both are traditional suction dredgers with active bottom door dumping systems, the only variation being the vessel hopper capacity. The suction dredgers operate on a nominal production time 12.5 hours per day for six days per week. This can, for a limited period, be increased to 24 hours and seven days per week where sudden increases in deposition rate occur, primarily following storm conditions.</p>				
	<p>The Application is for the disposal of this material to Tees Bay A disposal site with the maximum applied for quantities as:</p>				
	Material	Specific gravity	Amount to be deposited (dry tonnes)	Amount to be deposited (wet tonnes)	Source Site
	Sand (62.5um-2mm)	1.6	10,554,390	15,077,700	Tees
	Silt (31.25-62.5um)	1.6	6,514,550	9,306,500	Tees
	Sand (62.5um-2mm)	1.5	2,263,200	3,228,000	Hartlepool
Silt (31.25-62.5um)	1.4	899,360	1,284,800	Hartlepool	

Table 2: Need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

<p>Is the proposal directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a National Site Network (NSN) site for the purpose of conserving the habitats or species for which the site is designated?</p>	<p>No</p>
--	-----------

Table 3: Details of NSN site identified

<p>Name of NSN site: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) - UK9006061</p> <p>Distance and Direction: Approximately 1.6km South West of Tees Bay A (See Figure 3).</p>
<p>Licensable activity/ies from the project that have the potential to interact with the NSN site: Disposal of dredged material from Maintenance dredging of the Tees and Hartlepool, as described in table 1.</p>
<p>Conservation Advice package used: Natural England Conservation Advice for Protected Sites Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA. Available at : https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ConservationAdvice.aspx?SiteCode=UK9006061&SiteName=Tees&SiteNameDisplay=Teesmouth%20and%20Cleveland%20Coast%20SPA&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAAarea=&HasCA=1&NumMarineSeasonality=7&SiteNameDisplay=Teemouth%20and%20Cleveland%20Coast%20SPA</p> <p>The site is designated for the following qualifying species:</p> <p>Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>), Breeding</p> <p>Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>), Breeding</p> <p>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>), Non-breeding</p> <p>Little tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>), Breeding</p> <p>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>), Non-breeding</p> <p>Ruff (<i>Calidris pugnax</i>), Non-breeding</p> <p>Sandwich tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>), Non-breeding</p> <p>Waterbird assemblage, Non-breeding</p>
<p>Date conservation advice was last accessed: 03 October 2025</p>

Likely Significant Effect (LSE)

Test: Is it possible that this plan or project might undermine the conservation objectives?

In formulating the LSE alone and in-combination assessments, Natural England's Conservation Advice Packages, as outlined in Table 3, have been consulted and the following principles applied:

- Where available, the 'Advice on Operations' (AoO) matrix to determine pressures associated with the proposed activity that may potentially harm the qualifying habitat features and/ or species of the site has been used.
- Features are assessed against the proximity to the works and relevant seasonality considerations. If no pathway is identified between the project (source) and feature (receptor) than no further consideration is given to those features in the HRA.
- Low risk pressures, unless there is evidence or site specific factors that increase the risk, or uncertainty on the level of pressure on a receptor, this pressure generally does not occur at a level of concern and should not require consideration as part of the assessment.
- Features deemed sensitive to pressures (medium and high risk) for both direct and indirect pathways are taken forward into the LSE assessment unless screened for proximity or seasonality.
- The individual pressure/ feature interactions categorised as 'Not Sensitive' at the benchmark are not taken forward into the LSE assessment unless a specific case related pressure is identified such that the impacts on these features will reach above the benchmarks specified for these pressure/ feature interactions.
- For pressure/ feature interactions categorised as 'Not Relevant' these are not taken forward into the LSE assessment. The MMO considers that there is no interaction of concern between the pressure and a feature or the activity has no way of interacting with the feature.
- Pressure/ feature interactions categorised as either 'Insufficient Evidence' or 'Not Assessed' are taken forward into the LSE assessment in accordance with the precautionary principle.

The Advice on Operations (AoO) category of marine activity used is Ports and Harbours – Maintenance Dredge Disposal.

Q1 - I can confirm that I have reviewed all of the relevant conservation advice packages and I understand the features/supporting habitats that I am assessing.
Yes

Q2 - I can confirm that I have reviewed all of the relevant pressures as per the advice on operations section of the conservation advice packages
Yes

Q3 - I can confirm that this LSE has not considered mitigation (either included within the application or through additional measures) when assessing the LSE.
Yes

Q4 - I can confirm that the project will not result in habitat loss within the identified designated sites.
Yes

Additional Comments: Licence is considering the deposit activity only.

Part 1 - LSE Alone

Q 5 - Upon reviewing the feature/pressure interactions I consider that the project as proposed will not have a likely significant effect on any NSN site mentioned above. My rationale is that although there is a pathway, impacts are such that there would not be a likely significant effect.

As outlined in the Maintenance Dredge Protocol baseline document the material disposed of to Tees Bay A is carried in a South Easterly direction with the peak depositions occurring outside of the SPA boundary. Therefore, the MMO does not consider there to be an impact to supporting habitat nor a significant impact on water clarity which is a medium pressure impact for Common, Sandwich and Little Tern only.

With regards to above water noise and visual disturbance, **figure 4** shows the density data for vessels within the Tees Bay area over a 6 year period (2015 – 2021) this shows that the area is a high density area due to the number of port facilities within the Tees area and the anchorage within the bay as well as the existing vessels within the offshore wind farm. Therefore, any species within the SPA will have some resilience to vessel movements including lights.

The Marine Licence application will commence on the cessation of the existing marine licence application (L/2015/00427/7) which itself replaced a previous licence (L/2012/00366). Disposal of the maintenance dredge material has therefore been ongoing for a number of years. As there is no increase in the quantity to be deposited there will be no increase above the existing baseline for material currently being deposited nor would there be an increase on the existing pressures on the SPA features.

The MMO is therefore satisfied that while there is a pathway for impacts due to this being within the existing baseline it will not result in a Likely Significant Effect.

Part 2 – LSE in-combination.

Other Projects considered for in-combination assessment

MMO has conducted a GIS check of activities in the immediate area around the proposed project. A pathway zone of influence of 2km has been used. The MMO has also considered any known projects occurring within or around the boundaries of the NSN sites.

Table 5 – In-combination plan or projects

Name of plan or project and activity type	NSN site to which there is a pathway in-combination with licence application
MLA/2015/00334/13 - Able Seaton Port berths, Holding Basin and Channel	Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area
MLA/2018/00555 - Hartlepool Approach Channel	
MLA/2019/00469/1 - Teesport Gas Port	
MLA/2020/00079/1 - Northern Gateway	
MLA/2020/00506/2 & MLA/2020/00507 - South Bank Quay	
MLA/2022/00088 - NSSB Quay 1 Extension - Dredging	

Impacts from projects considered for in-combination assessment

Q6 - Upon reviewing the feature/pressure interactions acting in-combination between the application project and projects listed in Table 5, I consider that the project as proposed will not have a likely significant effect on any NSN site mentioned above. My rationale is that although there is a pathway, in-combination impacts are such that there would not be a likely significant effect. Although these licences are also active and using Tees Bay A disposal site, the application will allow the *continued* disposal of material from the PD Ports dredging. Therefore, there is no increase in vessels, quantities or frequency of dredges as a result of this application by nature of their replacing the existing activities. There is no increase on the baseline pressures currently at the site. The applications identified all date to after the original disposal licence has been applied for (or in the case of Able Seaton, have had variations with HRA updates), therefore any impacts in combination would have been assessed and appropriately mitigated for during their application process.

Likely Significant Effect Conclusion

The MMO:

Concludes there is no likely significant effect alone from the proposed project, or in-combination with other plans or projects. This is due to the project not resulting in an increase above the existing baseline for impacts.

Name of MMO officer: Gregg Smith

Job Title: Marine Licencing Case Officer

Date: 19 June 2025

References

Royal Haskoning DHV (2025) *Tees Maintenance Dredge Protocol (MDP) Baseline Document*. Available as part of the application supporting documentation. (Accessed 19 June 2025)

Annex 1

Full location information (including site coordinates) is available on the MMO's Public Register. A map detailing the proposed project site(s) is below.

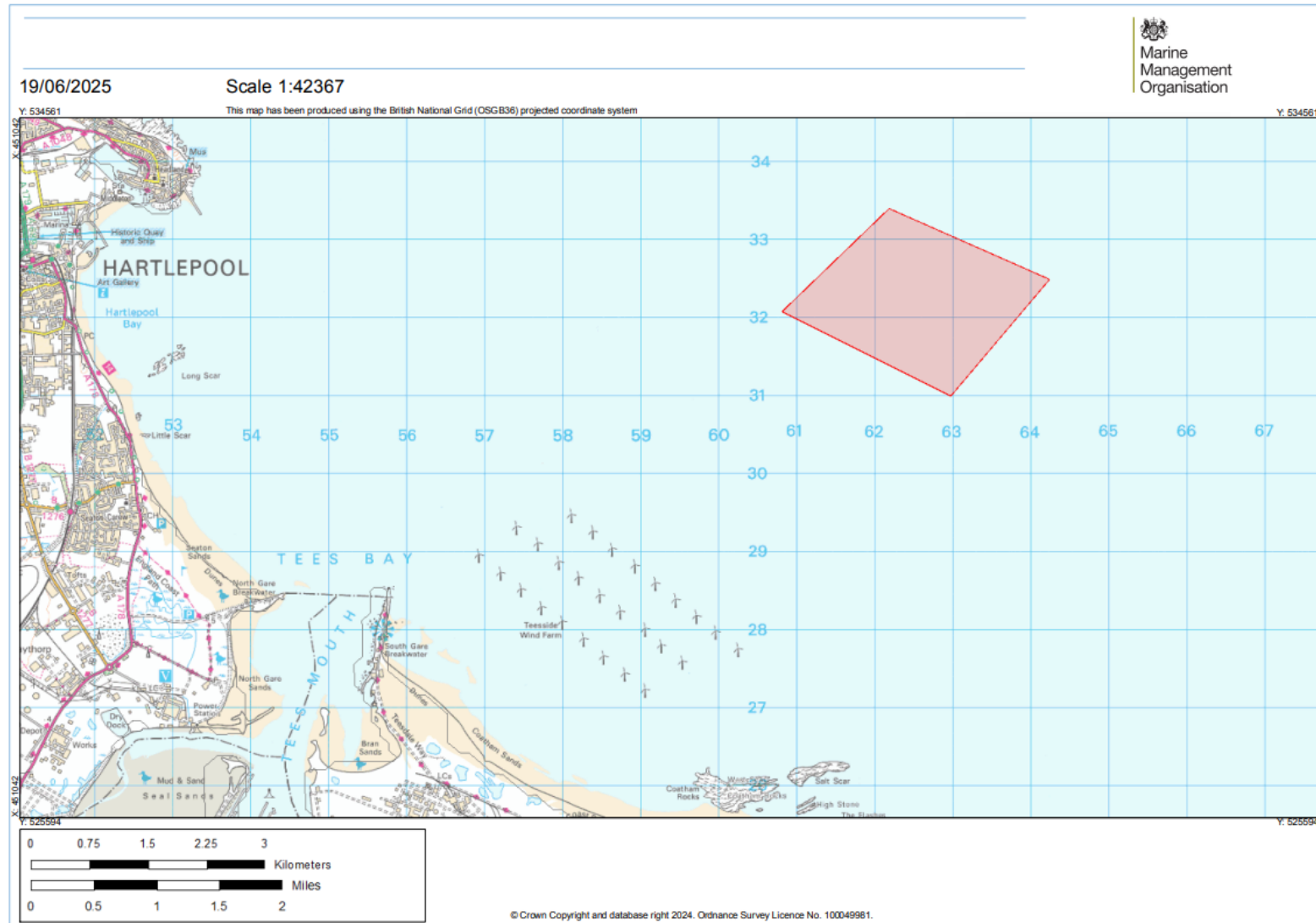


Figure 1: Location of Tees Bay C (Red) in relation to the wider Tees Bay (Source: Spirit GIS)

Annex 2

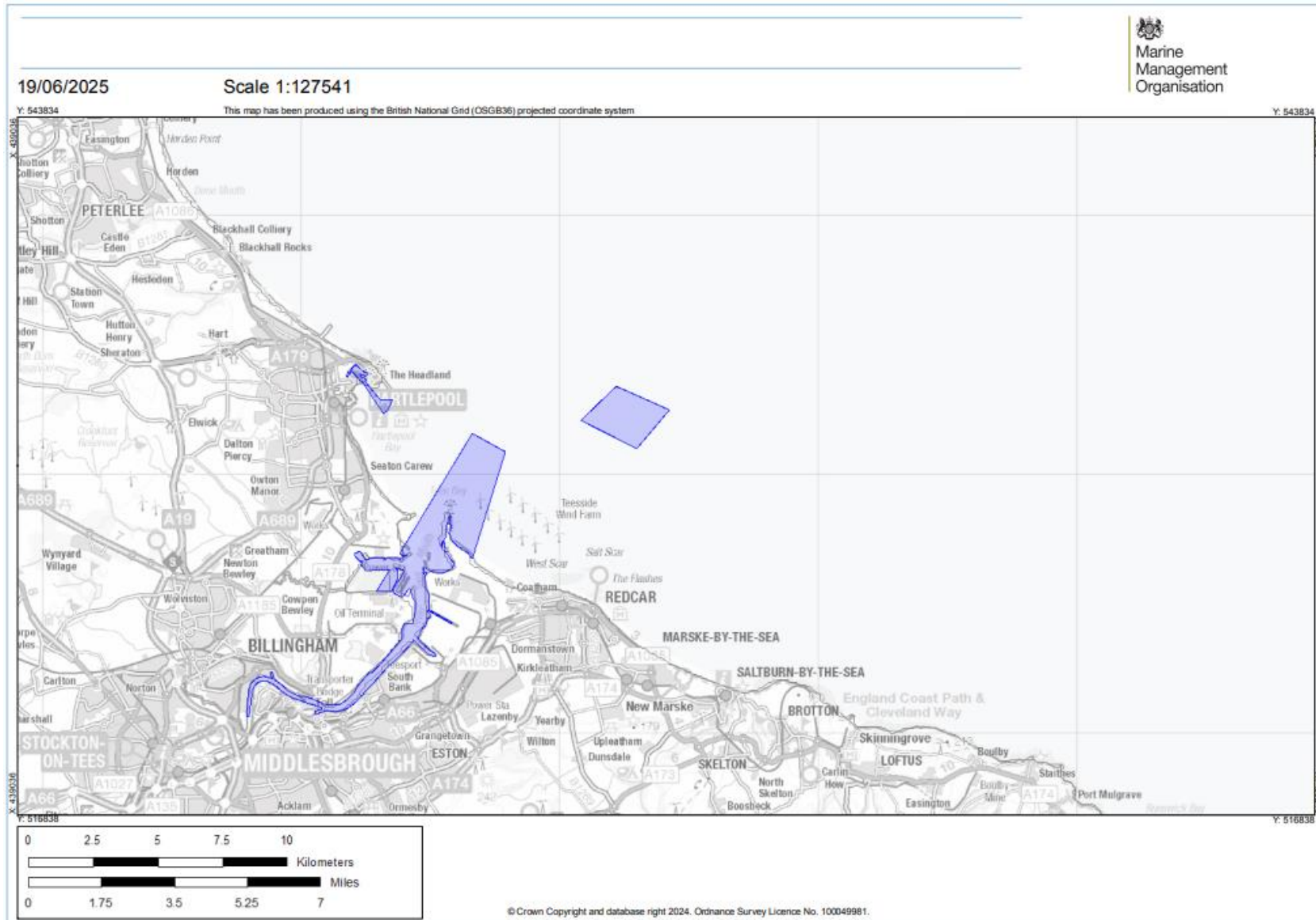


Figure 2: Dredge Area and Tees Bay C disposal site (Source: Spirit GIS)

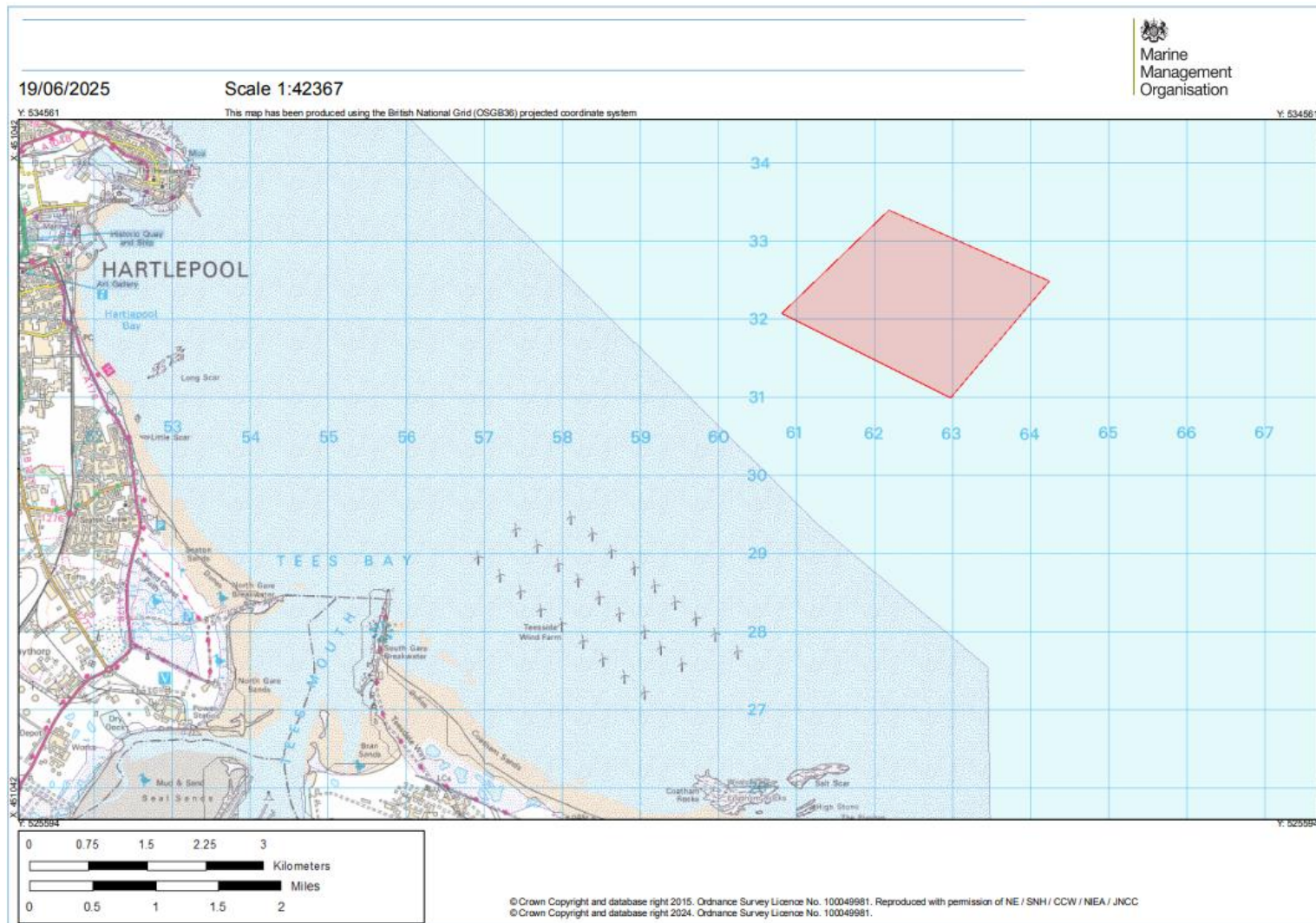
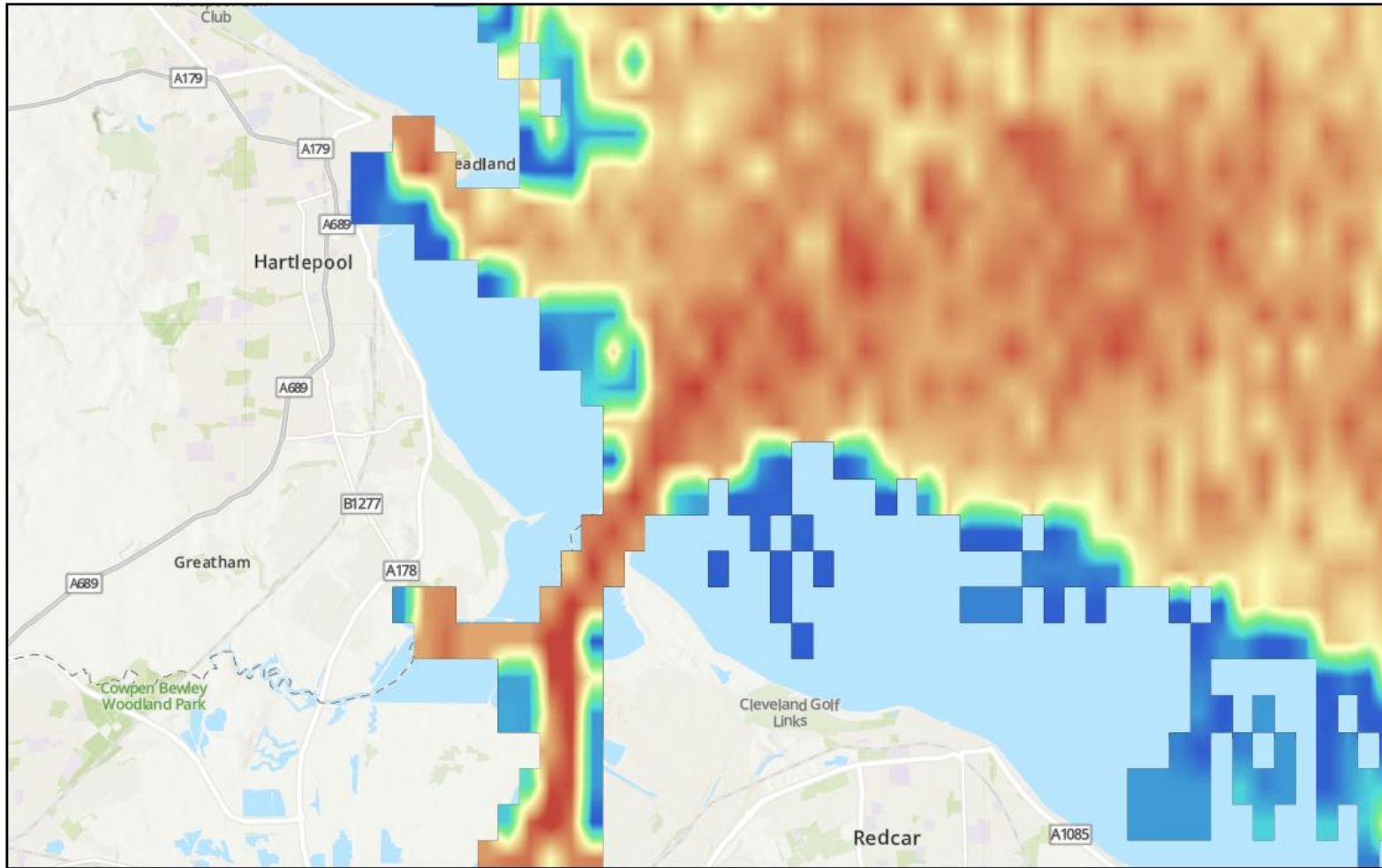


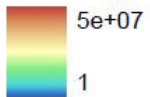
Figure 3: Location of Tees Bay C (Red) in relation to the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA (Dotted area) (Source: Spirit GIS)

Tees Bay density (January 2015-February 2021)

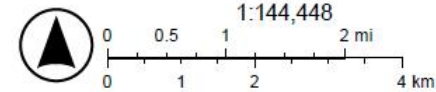


19/06/2025

Global Ship Density - All Vessels



World_Hillshade



Esri, Intermap, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Figure 4: Shipping density within the Tees Bay (Source: ArcGIS)