



Malachy Walsh and Partners
Engineering and Environmental Consultants



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

**Howth FHC Harbour Dredging and Reclamation Project
(Howth, Co. Dublin)
Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)**

**Project No. 19934
July 2021**



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Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), the harbour authority for Howth Harbour Fishery Centre, are proposing to dredge seabed material from within the harbour to provide better water access to the fishing, marine commercial, leisure, and RNLI craft using the harbour. It is proposed to reuse the dredge material to create a reclaimed area on the west side of the West Pier.

The volume of material to be removed from the seabed is approximately 240,000m³, and the reclaimed area to be created is approximately 4.8ha.

The reclaimed area will be used for public realm, water access for leisure users, car parking and hard standing areas that will be used for storage areas for existing harbour leisure users and the harbour authority. In the future, some of the area created may be converted to light industrial/ commercial use to support harbour operations. Such future use is not part of the proposed development being considered at present.

The harbour was upgraded in the 1980s when the syncrolift, the berthage face along the West Pier, the present Middle Pier, the internal breakwater, and the marina area were constructed.

Enhancement of water depths within the harbour area is now required to maintain safe access to the harbour during any tide state. This is necessary because of increased fishing vessel sizes, siltation, and a desire to improve the usable water area. Lack of sufficient water depths due to siltation in the vicinity of the public and RNLI slipways is resulting in restricted access to the water for the public and RNLI rescue craft at low tide.

DAFM will submit a planning application to Fingal County Council for the proposed dredging of the Howth Fishery Harbour Centre (Howth FHC) and the reuse of dredge material for land reclamation purposes.

Malachy Walsh and Partners (MWP) have been engaged by DAFM to produce an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the proposed dredging, land reclamation and associated works at Howth Fishery Harbour Centre in support of the planning application to Fingal County Council.

This Non-Technical Summary is the first volume of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the proposed dredging, land reclamation and associated works for the Howth FHC dredge project. The other volumes which comprise the EIAR are:

- Volume 2: Main Environmental Impact Assessment Report
- Volume 3: Appendices to the Main Environmental Impact Assessment Report
- Volume 4: Photomontages

The purpose of this Non-Technical Summary is to provide a concise overview, in non-technical terms, of the project, environmental impacts and mitigation measures highlighted by the Environmental Impact Assessment and presented in detail in the main EIAR, Volume 2.

2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

Howth Harbour is situated on the north side of Howth Peninsula, to the north of Dublin Bay (See **Figure 1**). It is situated 15km east of central Dublin City and approximately 2.4km east of Sutton and 1km south of Ireland's eye.



Figure 1 Site Location

2.2 The Applicant and Application Area

The applicant is the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). DAFM is the government agency responsible for the management, operation and maintenance of the harbour. The proposed development area is under the control of DAFM.

The planning application area spans the interior of Howth harbour and the 4.8ha sea area west of the West Pier (See **Figure 2**). To the east of the harbour are Howth Head and the Irish Sea; to the west a large sandy intertidal area towards Baldoyle/Portmarnock. Ireland's Eye, an uninhabited island, lies approximately 1km north of the harbour within the Irish Sea. Howth village lies adjacent to the harbour on its south side.

The proposed site is situated in proximity to several Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), the closest of which are Howth Head SAC, Baldoyle SAC, Ireland's Eye SPA and Howth Head Coast SPA. Howth Harbour and the proposed reclamation area do not lie within the boundary of any designated site.

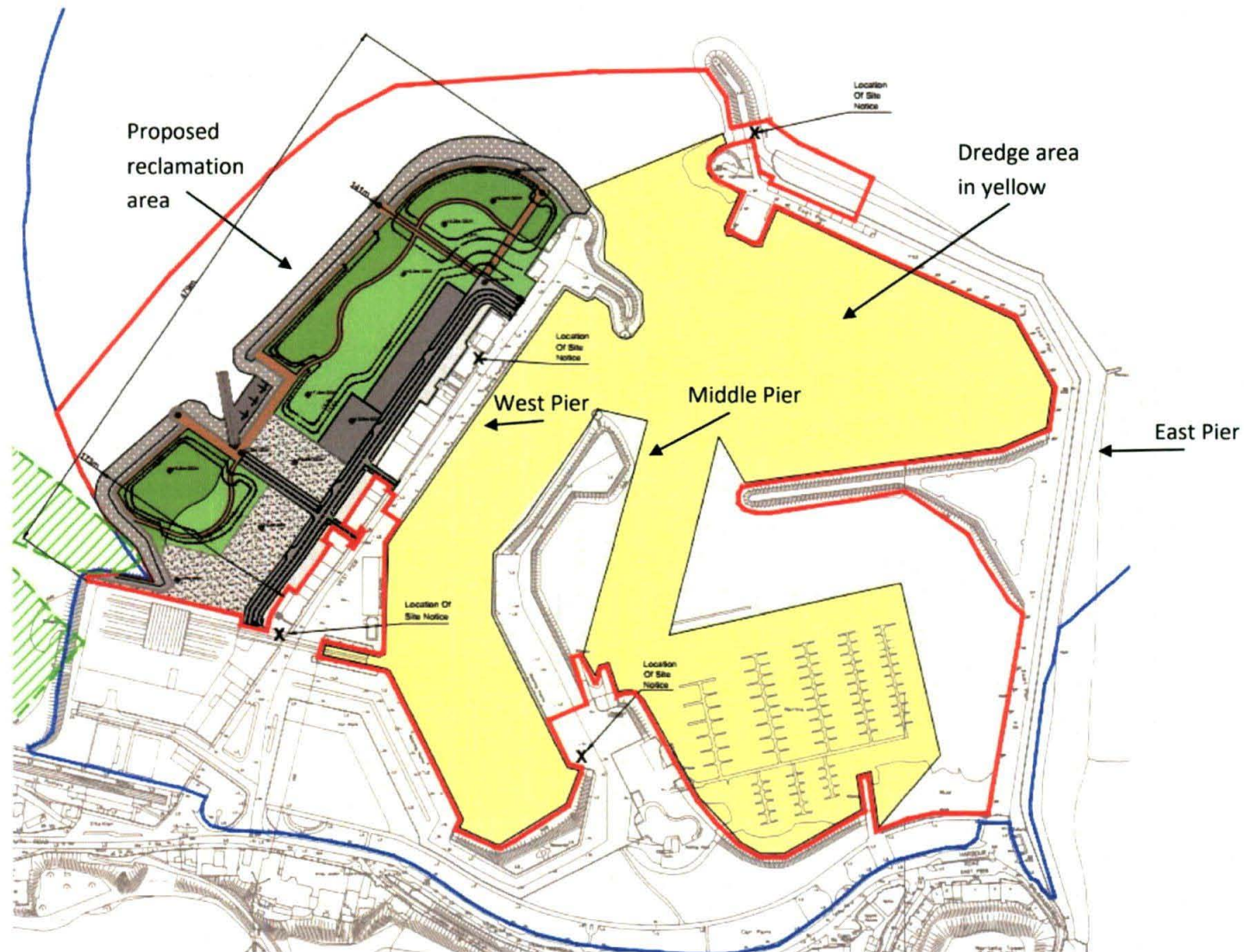


Figure 2. Red line boundary of proposed construction works including site layout (excerpt from planning drawing no. 19934 -5002 Site Layout Plan).

2.3 Description of the Existing Site

Howth Harbour itself comprises of three main areas; a trawler basin to the west a boat mooring area to the northeast and the yacht club marina to the south east.

The current harbour layout was developed in the early 1980s with the construction of the Middle Pier and East Pier breakwater. These works provided segregated areas for fisheries and leisure users, i.e. western trawler basin, boat mooring area and marina area.

For the purposes of the dredging project the harbour is considered to comprise of five areas (See **Figure 3** below):

1. Trawler Basin;
2. Harbour Approach Channel;
3. Mooring area;
4. Marina Approach Channel;
5. Marina Area.

Howth Harbour operates as a Fishery Harbour Centre under the DAFM. The core fishing fleet is in the order of 50 vessels, and there is significant marine leisure activity including the Howth Yacht Club and the Howth Sailing and Boating Club. There are also a number of restaurants and shops along the West Pier. Fish processing and boat repair works are also undertaken on the harbour.

Existing activities at the harbour include:

Fisheries

BIM statistics from 2015 (BIM "The Business of Food", 2015) valued the landings of fish at Howth at €12 million/annum. Howth FHC was joint 6th in terms of fishery landings at Fishery Harbour Centres in 2015. The harbour has 650m of berthing quay face available and an ice plant.

Shipyard

There is a functioning shipyard, with electric power supply and fresh water, for use to all types of vessels. Engine repairs can be undertaken locally. Electronic and radio repairs are carried out by agents for all gear. The Harbour offers a service to lift and transfer of vessels out of the harbour to the shipyard.

Commerce

Howth Harbour is active commercially, with a range of retail and leisure outlets, including multiple restaurants. Commerce is concentrated on the West Pier.

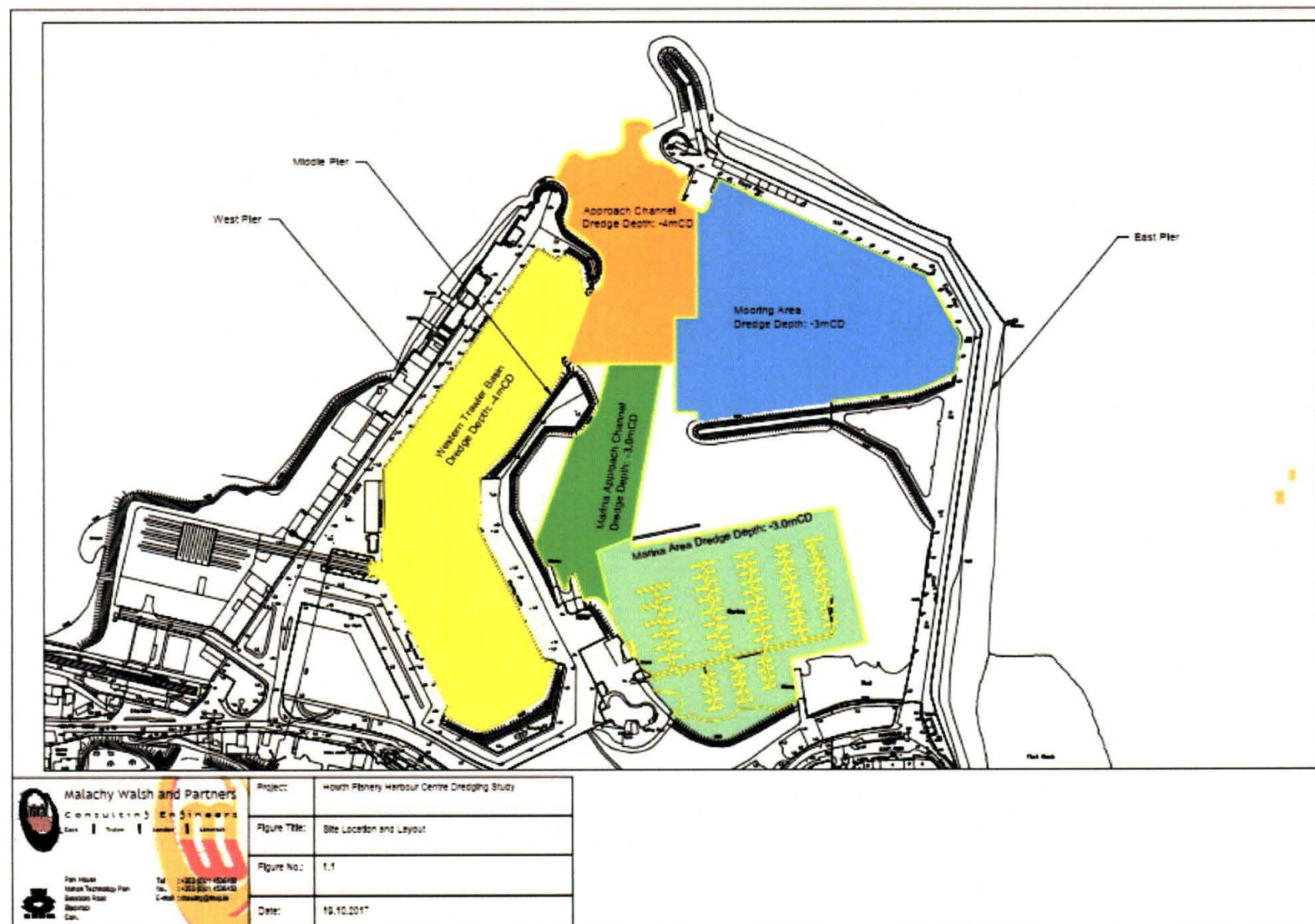


Figure 3 Harbour areas and dredging outline areas

Tourism

Howth is a popular tourist destination with easy access via the DART. Tourists come to Howth to sight see at the harbour, to walk on the piers, Howth hill and also to take boat trips from the harbour. A passenger ferry pontoon is located on the West Pier. Howth Yacht Club marina is a private members sailing club with a 250 berth marina. There are also swing moorings available within the harbour for leisure users.

RNLI

The RNLI operate an inshore lifeboat from a station situated within the Marina Area, just west of the Yacht Club Marina.

2.4 Overview of the Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of the following main elements (See **Figure 2 Layout** above):

- Dredging the harbour (as per above **Figure 3**);
- Treatment of the dredged marine material;
- Reclaiming land (4.8 Ha) on the west side of the west pier using treated dredge material;
- Construction of an embankment and rock armour revetment around the perimeter of the reclaimed area;
- Landscaping of the reclaimed area and provision of pavements, including footways, roadways and parking areas;
- Construction of a slipway access to the water;
- Provision of storage areas for harbour activities; and
- Provision of services, including surface water drainage, mains water supply, lighting, and associated underground ducting.

The project construction is aiming to start in the summer of 2022. The construction phase of the project will take place over an estimated 24 month period. Dredging and processing activities will be carried out from 7am to 9pm (Monday to Friday) and 7am to 5pm (Saturday) with no work on Sundays. All other activities such as construction of the perimeter embankment, rock armour protection, landscaping and drainage will be undertaken during normal working hours i.e. 7am to 7pm (Monday to Friday) and 7am to 5pm (Saturday) with no work on Sundays.

The proposed works will be divided into 4 overlapping elements as follows:

- Element 1: Construction of a perimeter embankment and rock armour protection to the seawards edge of the reclaimed land area (6 month duration);
- Element 2: Dredging and treatment of Howth Harbour sediments (12-15 month duration);
- Element 3: Reclamation of land up to ground level (12-15 month duration);
- Element 4: Finishings (6 month duration)

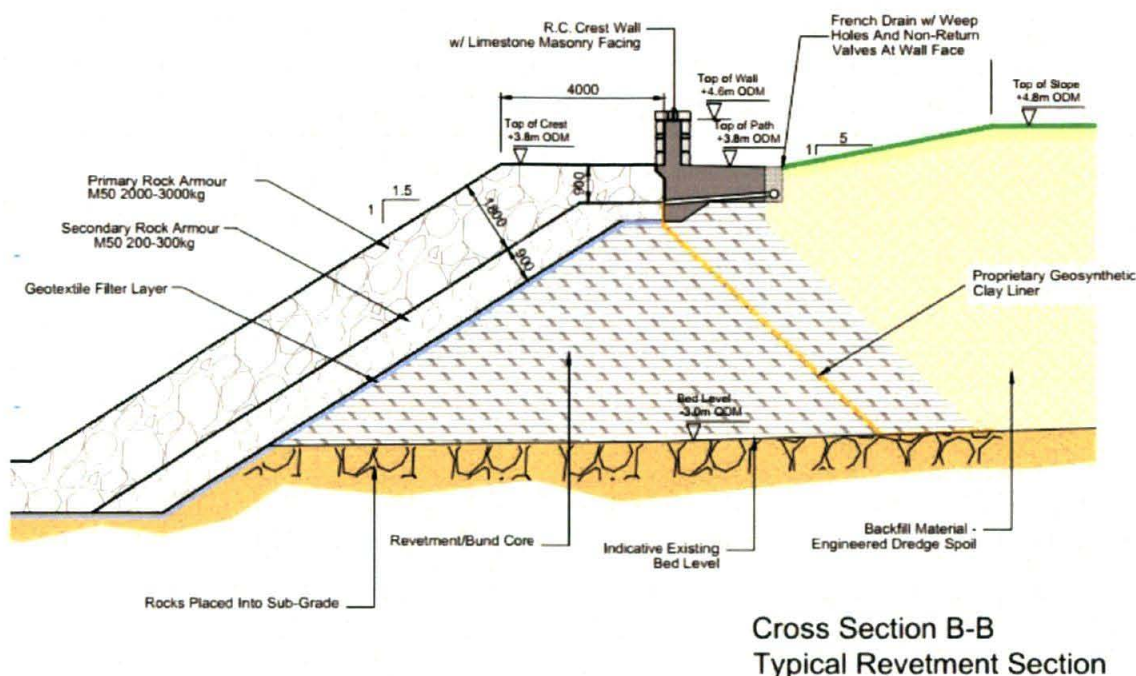


Figure 4 Perimeter embankment and rock armour protection.

Element 1 : Construction of a perimeter embankment and rock armour protection

The perimeter embankment will be constructed with imported stone and dredged rock. Refer to **Figure 4** above for embankment details. The perimeter embankment will surround the reclaimed land area on the seaward side and contain the treated sediments that will form the reclaimed land. The perimeter embankment is likely to be built in phases with temporary cross bunds constructed within the reclamation area to allow the phased infill of the full reclamation area. This phased infilling can happen in conjunction with the building of the perimeter embankment so that reclamation of the land can happen at the same time as the perimeter embankment is being built and extending into the sea.

Element 2: Dredging and treatment of Howth Harbour sediments

It is proposed to dredge approximately 240,000m³ of material from the seabed within Howth FHC, treat and re-use this material to the west of the West Pier. It is estimated up to 10% of the overall dredge volume will consist of rock.

The sediments within the harbour contain contaminants that have built up over the years. The main contaminant of concern comes from the anti fouling paint used in the past to stop marine growth on the hulls of boats. This stabilisation and solidification treatment hardens the dredged material and entraps the contaminants within it. It also improves the physical properties and strength of the material making it suitable for use in reclamation.