

13 NAVIGATION

This section describes the impacts on commercial navigation from the proposed placement operations.

13.1 Existing Environment

The North Edinburgh Channel was, until recently, one of the main approach channels to the Port of London for ships travelling to and from the south. In 2000 the development of a bar across the entrance to the Channel shallowed sufficiently to prevent further navigation. The bar has continued to accumulate and presently has depths of approximately -3mCD. At the same time as the shallowing of the North Edinburgh Channel, the entrance to the Fisherman's Gat deepened. The PLA took a decision to close the North Edinburgh and move shipping to Fisherman's Gat, thus avoiding the need for maintenance dredging (which would have been uneconomic and unsustainable in such a dynamic environment). The buoys marking the North Edinburgh Channel have now been removed and commercial shipping no longer uses the channel.

13.2 Interference with Commercial Navigation

The proposals to place material in the deep section of the North Edinburgh Channel are required to facilitate the development of the southern approach channel in light of the findings of a navigational risk assessment. It is therefore ultimately beneficial for commercial shipping for the North Edinburgh placement site to be available. The Channel is no longer used by commercial traffic and therefore there is **no predicted impact** on commercial navigation from the use of the placement site. The dredger will travel to and from the disposal site using recognised shipping channels under the control of the PLA Harbour Master. Information will be provided to ships by way of Notices To Mariners, as considered necessary by the PLA Harbour Master.