



Transboundary screening undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) on behalf of the Secretary of State (SoS) for the purposes of regulation 32 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (The 2017 EIA Regulations)	
Project name:	Solent Gateway 2
Address/Location:	The proposed development is located on the northern part of Associated British Port's (ABP) landholding that is known as the Port of Southampton's Strategic Land Reserve (SLR), located on the western side of the tidal River Test to the south of the existing port facility at Marchwood, which is located within New Forest District.
Planning Inspectorate Ref:	TR0310002
Date(s) screening undertaken:	First screening – January 2026 following the applicant's request for a scoping opinion.

FIRST TRANSBOUNDARY SCREENING	
Document(s) used for transboundary Screening:	Solent Gateway 2 Scoping Report – Request for a Scoping Opinion ('the Scoping Report') dated November 2025.
Screening Criteria:	The Inspectorate's Comments:
Characteristics of the Development	<p>The Scoping Report states that the proposed development would increase the berth and operational capacity of the Port of Southampton and is expected to handle the embarkation or disembarkation of at least 250,000 roll-on/ roll-off (Ro-Ro) automotive units.</p> <p>Construction</p> <p>The Scoping Report does not provide an estimated commencement date or duration of the construction works. The Scoping Report notes that the exact methodology for the construction phase for both the marine and landside works is still being developed.</p> <p>The Scoping Report anticipates that the marine works could involve percussive or driven piling techniques. It is anticipated that the jetty structure would be constructed using precast concrete units tied together with an in situ concrete topping, and that a precast yard may be required on the site to manufacture the units.</p>

	<p>The Scoping Report states that capital dredging would be required for the new berthing area; the material types and volumes to be dredged have not yet been determined and therefore the dredging methodology is not confirmed. The Scoping Report anticipates that a combination of trailing hopper suction dredgers and mechanical dredgers will be used. The Scoping Report states that it is likely that Nab Tower disposal site is used for the disposal of dredged material.</p> <p>As part of the landside works, the Scoping Report proposes that existing marine offloading facilities at the site would be used, requiring a temporary construction haul road. A new terminal will be required, comprising open and/ or covered multi-deck storage areas for vehicles, warehouses, open and covered vehicle processing services (VPC), administration buildings and parking. The multi-decks, warehouses and covered VPC are likely to be constructed using a steel portal frame with profiled sheeting. The Scoping Report states that a country park will be created adjacent to the landside terminal and the coast.</p> <p>The Scoping Report states that an access road would be constructed which would need to cross the freight-only Fawley branch line; the method for crossing this line is not determined at this stage.</p> <p>The Scoping Report states that the maximum height of the multi-deck vehicle storage buildings would be 25m above a finished floor level of 6m above ordnance datum (AOD).</p> <p>Operation</p> <p>The structures associated with the marine works comprise an approach jetty from the shore providing two berths, a linkspan (link bridge) and a floating pontoon. The Scoping Report states that the stern ramps of the ships would use the floating pontoon and linkspan.</p> <p>The Scoping Report states that maintenance dredging would be required to maintain the berth pockets. The volume and frequency of maintenance dredging is not yet determined. As with construction, Nab Tower disposal site is proposed as the most likely disposal site for dredged material during the operational phase.</p> <p>The landside area of the proposed development would be used to process and store import and export vehicles. A truck park, welfare facilities, security gatehouse, fencing, parking and administration buildings are proposed (the Scoping Report does not provide further details on the number, size or configuration of landside elements at this stage). The country park would be accessible to the public for recreational use.</p>
<p>Location of Development (including</p>	<p>The proposed development is located within land owned by the Port of Southampton between Marchwood Military Port (currently owned by ABP under concession) and Hythe Marina Village, on</p>

<p>existing use) and Geographical area</p>	<p>the western shore of the River Test. The proposed development boundary extends into the River Test, fully within the UK and UK waters. Its terrestrial areas lie within the administrative boundary of Hampshire County Council and the marine elements lie on the bed of the River Test.</p> <p>The list of schemes to be considered in the cumulative impacts assessment is not yet determined.</p> <p>No information is provided in the Scoping Report about any areas which could be affected which are under the jurisdiction of a specific EEA State, however, it does refer to the Port of Southampton's trade. The nearest EEA state is France, with a distance of approximately 130km between the proposed development and the North Cotentin Peninsula.</p> <p>The Scoping Report states that the Port of Southampton is of national strategic importance to the UK for international trade and is one of three deep-sea container terminals in the UK. The Scoping Report also states that the Port is one of the largest automotive ports in the UK, with 150 automotive sailings per month to 41 countries.</p>
<p>Environmental Importance</p>	<p>Designated sites/ ecology</p> <p>The Scoping Report states that the proposed development's boundary overlaps with Solent and Dorset Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site and SPA, all of which fall within the UK Boundary. The sites are designated for the following features:</p> <p><i>Solent and Dorset Coast SPA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • international important populations of breeding sandwich tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>), common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) and little tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>) <p><i>Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetlands that represent rare, or unique examples of natural or near natural wetlands • Waterfowl assemblages of international importance <p><i>Solent and Southampton Water SPA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internationally important populations of breeding and non-breeding bird species, including migratory species associated with EEA states • internationally important waterfowl assemblages in any season

The Solent Marine Sites is a collective term for Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA, Portsmouth Harbour SPA, Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and the Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

Other designated sites in the vicinity of the proposed development are:

- The Solent Marine Sites (as above)
 - Solent Maritime SAC, located approximately 0.7km from the proposed development
 - Portsmouth Harbour, located approximately 16km from the proposed development
 - Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA, located approximately 25km from the proposed development
- River Itchen SAC, located approximately 5km from the proposed development
- Mottisfont Bats SAC, located approximately 18km from the proposed development
- South Wight Maritime SAC, located approximately 5km from the proposed disposal site for dredged material.
- New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar site

The Scoping Report identifies the presence of a number of legally protected species in the Solent region including the tentacled lagoon worm (*Alkmaria romijni*), the lagoon sand shrimp (*Gammarus insensibilis*), spiny (long-snouted) seahorse (*H. guttulatus*), short-snouted seahorse (*H. hippocampus*), sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), river lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*), European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), marine mammals and birds.

Marine mammal species regularly found in the Solent region include harbour/ common seal (*Phoca vitulina*), grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*), and bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*).

The Solent also provides a migration route for a range of diadromous species including Atlantic salmon, sea trout (*Salmo trutta*) and European eel.

With respect to nationally designated sites, the landside terminal is within a part of the Dibden Bay SSSI and the proposed dredge footprint and marine facilities overlap with the Hythe to Calshot Marshes SSSI along the foreshore. There are a number of other SSSIs in the wider Southampton Water area that support marine features.

The Offshore Overfalls Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is located approximately 0.8km away from the Nab Tower disposal site and the Utopia MCZ is located approximately 6km away, both designated for a range of sedimentary habitat features.

	<p>Commercial fisheries</p> <p>The Scoping Report states that the Solent region supports a wide range of commercially important fish species including sea bass (<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>), herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>), sole (<i>Solea solea</i>) and plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>). The Solent region also provides a nursery ground for plaice, sole and bass, as well as a spawning ground for several fish species including cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>), sandeel (<i>Ammodytes</i> spp.) and sole. Commercial fishing activity takes place in Southampton Water and the Solent region, as well as in and around the Nab Tower disposal site, however, it does not take place in the Southampton Water main navigation channel and the area around the location of the proposed Project.</p> <p>Commercial and recreational navigation</p> <p>The Scoping Report notes that both commercial and recreational navigation occurs in Southampton Water, including cruise ship movements (500 in 2024). The Scoping Report states that the Port of Southampton handled approximately 33.3 million tonnes of cargo in 2024, making it the third largest port in the UK by tonnage. The Port also includes other independent wharf operators, including a freight and passenger service to the Isle of Wight.</p> <p>The marine access channels used by deep draughted vessels is marked by buoyage and extends for 25 nautical miles (nm) from the Nab Channel to the south-east of the Isle of Wight to the northernmost berth of the Container Terminal in the River Test. Smaller commercial and recreational vessels can navigate outside of this access channel dependent on the water depth.</p> <p>The Solent is popular for powered and unpowered recreational marine activities, with a number of marinas, yacht, sailing and watersports clubs based in and around Southampton Water. Recreational activity takes places all year with increased activity. Activity increases from March to October, with a peak season in June to September.</p>
<p>Potential impacts and Carrier</p>	<p>Designated sites/ ecology</p> <p>The Scoping Report identifies potential impacts on ecological receptors from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality changes leading to degradation of qualifying habitats or habitats supporting qualifying features because of vehicle movements during construction and operation • Habitat loss/ gain, fragmentation or modification, and mortality/ injury of species because of site clearance for temporary and permanent works areas during construction, and because of increased vehicle movements during operation • Species disturbance (from changes to airborne noise, vibration, visual and light stimuli) because of construction within habitats, dredging, piling, dredge disposal, vessel

movement, recreational pressure during operation, and marine and landside operations

- Hydrological changes to surface and groundwater (resulting in mortality/ injury of species, and/ or habitat loss/ modification, and/ or impacts to prey species and/ or loss of notable flora) because of construction within hydrologically connected habitats, and because of increased surface water run-off and accidental pollution during operation
- Introduction and spread of invasive non-native species (INNS) because of movement of construction machinery to/ from the site, construction of marine infrastructure, dredging, dredge disposal and from vessel movements during operation
- Degradation of habitat and increased mortality/ injury of species because of increased recreational pressure during operation
- Loss of intertidal and terrestrial coastal waterbird habitat because of the jetty structure and dredging
- Changes to the prey resources of diving and seabirds caused by potential impacts to seabed habitats from dredging and dredge disposal
- Impacts to diving and seabirds, and benthic habitats and species from changes in marine water quality from dredging and dredge disposal
- Changes to intertidal foraging and roosting habitat because of the marine infrastructure
- Disruption of flight paths and potential collision of coastal waterbirds with landside and marine infrastructure
- Loss of intertidal and subtidal habitats and species because of dredging, piling, and dredge disposal

Commercial fisheries

The Scoping Report identifies potential impacts on commercial fishing:

- Indirect effects on fish as a result of dredging and dredge disposal because of potential changes in prey resources and the quality of foraging, nursery and spawning habitats, and because of an increase in suspended sediment concentration and the release of toxic contaminants bound in sediments
- Noise and vibration disturbance to fish because of marine construction activities such as piling, vessel movement, dredging and dredge disposal
- Indirect and direct effects on fish because of impacts to intertidal and subtidal benthic habitats and species during construction including loss of habitat due to sediment deposition and changes in water quality and sediment quality

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect effects on fisheries from potential impacts on fish stocks of target finfish and shellfish species <p>Commercial and recreational navigation</p> <p>The Scoping Report identifies the following potential impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction between commercial and recreational vessels and the marine works during construction • Incidents involving dredgers, barges transiting to or from the proposed development or involving transportation of construction materials by sea • Displacement of recreational vessels • Changes in the number of commercial vessels transiting to or from the proposed development during operation • Changes to the current flows in the area during operation <p>Climate</p> <p>The Scoping Report identifies potential climate impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from supply and manufacture of materials, transportation, construction activities and operational activities • Loss of sequestered carbon because of direct habitat loss • Loss of blue carbon as a result of marine works including dredging
<p>Extent</p>	<p>The Scoping Report states that the potential for significant transboundary effects is likely to be related to possible effects on certain species of seabirds, migratory fish and marine mammals which can have very extensive foraging ranges and which may have some dependency on habitats outside of the territory of another EEA State. It states that it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could have any significant direct effect on the environment within another EEA State, but that the potential for any direct and indirect significant effects will be assessed within the EIA process.</p> <p>The Scoping Report does not identify any impacts that are likely to lead to significant effects on ecological receptors (for example, designated protected areas or protected species) in any specific EEA States at this stage.</p> <p>In respect of GHG emissions, the Scoping Report suggests that GHG emissions affect the global atmosphere, as opposed to directly affecting any specific local receptor. Therefore, it is not possible to apportion or identify any impact of an increase (or any particular level of increase) in GHG emissions in terms of environmental effects on any particular country or state. The Scoping Report proposes that the effect of GHG emissions will be considered at a global level rather than with reference to a specific EEA state.</p>

	<p>Concerning impacts to commercial fisheries, the Scoping Report does not specify whether any fishing fleets from EEA states operate in the Solent region and concludes that there is no potential for significant loss or restricted access to fishing grounds or interference with fishing activities.</p> <p>The Scoping Report does not identify any potential risks to navigational safety within the waters of an EEA state or specify any EEA states from which commercial or recreational vessels may originate which are likely to be significantly affected by the construction or operation of the proposed development.</p>
Magnitude	<p>The Scoping Report does not include information on these points; further assessments are being undertaken as part of the environmental impact assessment and the information will be provided in the ES.</p>
Probability	
Duration	
Frequency	
Reversibility	
Cumulative impacts	<p>The applicant's cumulative impact assessment has not been undertaken at this stage and the applicant has not identified any likely significant cumulative effects at this stage.</p>

Transboundary screening undertaken by the Inspectorate on behalf of the SoS

Under Regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 2017 EIA Regulations) and on the basis of the current information available from the applicant, the Inspectorate is of the view that the proposed development is **not likely** to have a significant effect on the environment in an EEA State.

In reaching this view the Inspectorate has applied the precautionary approach (as explained in its Advice Page Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process), and taken into account the information currently supplied by the applicant.

Action:

No further action required at this stage.

Date: 10 April 2026

Note: The SoS' duty under Regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process.

Note:

The Inspectorate's screening of transboundary issues is based on the relevant considerations specified in the annex to its Advice Page, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process, available at:

['Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process'](#).