



KEEPING
BRITAIN TRADING



Associated British Ports

Immingham Eastern Ro-Ro Terminal

Initial Information report for PINS

August 2021

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Associated British Ports (ABP) is the owner and operator of the Port of Immingham (“the Port”), located on the south bank of the Humber Estuary.
- 1.2 ABP wishes to construct a new roll-on/roll-off facility within the Port.
- 1.3 The new facility will comprise on the marine side a new jetty with up to four berths and on the land side, improved hardstanding, Terminal buildings and an internal site bridge which will cross over existing port infrastructure, including an ABP controlled railway track.
- 1.4 It is anticipated that the completed project, with four berths, will be capable of handling in the region of 800,000 units per year, thereby exceeding the threshold of 250,000 units per year as prescribed by section 24(2) and 24(3)(b) of the Planning Act 2008.
- 1.5 ABP may have to incorporate powers of compulsory acquisition within the submitted draft DCO although it is hoped that any issues arising in this respect will be capable of resolution prior to submission of the application.
- 1.6 The currently anticipated DCO application submission date is early summer 2022.

2. ABP and the Port of Immingham

- 2.1 ABP was established in 1981 following the privatisation of the British Transport Docks Board. It is the largest ports group in the United Kingdom, owning and operating 21 ports and other transport-related businesses across England, Wales and Scotland.
- 2.2 On the Humber, ABP owns and operates four ports, namely the Ports of Immingham, Hull, Grimsby and Goole, which together constitute the largest ports complex in the UK. Of these, the Port of Immingham (“the Port”), located on the southern bank of the Estuary is the largest and busiest of ABP’s four Humber ports.
- 2.3 The Port lies immediately adjacent to the main deep-water shipping channel which serves the Estuary, thereby enabling access to the Port by some of the largest vessels afloat today.
- 2.4 In addition to its excellent marine access, the Port is also well located for onward/inward transport of goods by road throughout the UK. It enjoys easy and quick access for road haulage to the M180 Motorway - and from there to the M1 or the A1, via the M18. In addition, the Port has the added benefit of its own rail terminal. Some 25% of all rail freight in the UK originates from the Port of Immingham.
- 2.5 ABP’s statutory port undertaking at Immingham, the ‘statutory port estate’ covers some 480 hectares (1186 acres). The majority of the statutory port estate falls within the administrative boundary of North East Lincolnshire Council, although the western part of the Port falls within the administrative boundary of North Lincolnshire Council.
- 2.6 The proposed development site itself, however, falls entirely within the administrative boundary of North East Lincolnshire although clearly North Lincolnshire Council and other nearby local authorities will be included in the eventual SoCC and consequent consultation process. That part of the construction which extends seaward and falls beyond the local authority’s boundary will be constructed on the bed of the Humber which is owned by the Crown Estate and over which, ABP in its capacity as the Humber Conservancy Commissioner, has the benefit of a long lease.
- 2.7 The Port handles a wide variety of cargoes, ranging from bulk liquids and solid fuels to unitised cargoes in the form of containers (“lo-lo”) and trailers (“ro-ro”). Since the 1960s, however, the Port’s marine capability has increasingly been serviced from jetties located in the river, thereby eliminating the need for vessels to pass through the lock gates into the Port’s enclosed dock. An aerial photograph of the Port is included with this Briefing although the photograph does little to convey the size of one of the largest and busiest ports in the UK. As well as the internal dock, the Port has twenty ‘in-river’ berths which handle shipments of bulk liquid products (including petroleum products and liquified petroleum gas), biomass, iron ore, petroleum coke and power station coal.
- 2.8 The Port comprises a number of discrete operational areas, with bulk commodities such as liquid fuels, solid fuels and ores, as well as ro-ro freight, being handled from in-river jetties. These include the Eastern and Western Jetties, the Immingham Oil Terminal, the Immingham Gas Terminal, Immingham Outer Harbour and the Humber International Terminal (“HIT”), all of which are separately identified on the attached plan (Figure 2).

- 2.9 Other traffic and commodities including lo-lo freight, animal feed and grain are handled mainly at berths within the Port's internal dock and are then discharged to an array of storage compounds for onward distribution.
- 2.10 The infrastructure at the Port is the product of incremental expansion. This has enabled ABP, as the port operator, to increase the quantity of cargo imported/exported and to expand the range and type of cargoes accommodated. The volumes processed through the Port of Immingham have risen from 26 million tonnes to around 50 million tonnes during the period 1981 - 2020. In this context, ro-ro freight has become a key growth area for the Port with around 170 acres of the port estate now employed in the embarkation or disembarkation of this category of freight.
- 2.11 A location plan of the Port of Immingham is provided as Figure 1 together with a plan of the Port as Figure 2 and an aerial photograph below:



3. Project description

- 3.1 The Immingham Eastern Ro-Ro Terminal will, when completed in its totality, comprise a new four-berth ro-ro harbour facility designed to service the embarkation and disembarkation of principally commercial and automotive traffic, possibly with provision for a small element of passenger use during quiet periods.
- 3.2 ABP is still considering the issues that may arise in connection with the construction of a four berth harbour facility in the context of environmental impact – issues which will, of course, be addressed and resolved during the pre-application process.
- 3.3 The site for the new Terminal, both on the marine side and the landside, falls within the eastern part of the Port, as illustrated in Figure 3. This Figure, which at this stage is purely illustrative,

shows the location of the marine works – jetty and berths, as well as the landside waiting/storage area, all of which is shaded grey and all of which fall within the statutory port estate and within the freehold ownership of ABP.

- 3.4 **Marine infrastructure works** – it is anticipated that these will comprise a number of distinct components – an illustrative plan of which is provided as Figure 4 (two berth) and Figure 5 (four berth). In brief, these marine components will comprise :
- a) An approach jetty from the shore;
 - b) A linkspan with bankseat;
 - c) Two floating pontoons with guide piles or articulated restraint arms; and
 - d) Two separate finger piers with two berths each, one either side with the stern ramps of the ships resting upon two floating pontoons.
 - e) A capital dredge of the new berth pocket will be required depending on the final position of the marine infrastructure.
- 3.5 **Landside infrastructure works** – will consist of the following:
- a) Paving works on the adjacent landside by means of an upgrade to existing cargo storage areas. These areas will be required to accommodate the throughput of the ro-ro cargo as it is either waiting to be embarked or awaiting pick-up after being disembarked.
 - b) A number of terminal buildings will be constructed to provide appropriate facilities for lorry drivers and passengers. A small office, workshop and gatehouse may also be required;
 - c) An internal bridge will need to be constructed within the port estate to cross over an adjacent access road and rail track.
- 3.6 As noted below, the facility is being designed to service the growing North Sea ro-ro freight market including a mixture of accompanied and unaccompanied freight. Unaccompanied freight comprises mainly ro-ro trailers which are left at the port and moved onto and off the ship using tractor units specifically designed for this purpose. Accompanied freight involves lorry drivers accompanying their load, who will be responsible for manoeuvring their vehicle onto and off the ship and will remain on board during the passage.
- 3.7 During less busy periods, for example at weekends, a ro-ro freight line may offer space and cabins for passengers. Facilities for passenger transit flows may, therefore, need to be included.
- 3.8 **Compulsory purchase** – Although consideration of this issue is still at an early stage, it may be that the draft DCO submitted as part of the application will seek powers of compulsory acquisition in respect of a small number of ABP's tenants who currently occupy land within the proposed development site, together with the rights of third parties that burden the proposed development site
- 3.9 ABP's intention is to reach an amicable solution with the tenants prior to submission of the application, in some cases possibly enabling relocation within the wider port estate. If that does not prove possible, however, ABP may have no choice but to seek powers of compulsory purchase – which would, however, only be used as a last resort.

3.10 At this early stage, it is not anticipated that there will be any Category 3 interests although this element will obviously be kept under close review.

4. Planning Act 2008 – legislative requirements

4.1 **Project Capability** - The Project will comprise the construction of two finger piers serviced by up to four berths. A roll-on/roll-off vessel, typically with maximum dimensions of 240 metres in length, 34 metres beam and 7.2 metres draft has a theoretical capacity when fully laden of around 300 trailer units.

4.2 North Sea ferry operators normally have two ships on a given route making their crossings at night-time in opposite directions. They pass each other in the night with each one reaching its respective destination first thing in the morning, almost always on a fixed schedule.

4.3 This would represent an ability to load/unload one vessel every day throughout the year on each berth.

4.4 Assuming 300 units are disembarked and 300 units embarked per vessel, seven days a week, this would equate to a theoretical capacity of a single berth of just under 220,000 units per year per berth.

4.5 On that basis, with just two berths, the new facility will be capable of handling in excess of 400,000 units per year and with three/four berths, that throughput capacity will increase commensurately. In this context it should be noted, however, that what the berths are capable of handling and what they will actually handle will be influenced by a number of factors. These factors include available parking/storage hinterland – the application site on the landside is likely to encompass some 80 acres - and the consistently fluctuating international market itself. Ports are a significant contributor to the UK economy in terms of both the import and export of goods and cargo – but that market will always be subservient to external factors ranging not just from the weather but to political imbalance across the world which can often lead to commercial uncertainties in the world-wide market.

4.6 In light of the above, in terms of the Planning Act's legislative requirements, ABP is of the view that the proposed "*harbour facility*" constitutes a nationally significant infrastructure project as identified by section 14(1)(j) and section 24(2) of the PA 2008, in that it comprises:

- a) "the *alteration of harbour facilities*" - section 24 (2);
- b) "*wholly ... in England*" - section 24 (2) (a); and
- c) "*the effect of the alteration is expected to be to increase by at least the relevant quantity per year the quantity of material the embarkation or disembarkation of which the facilities are capable of handling*" - section 24(2)(b); where
- d) "*the relevant quantity is... in the case of ro-ro ships, 250,000 units* – section 24(3)(b).

5. Project Need

5.1 The North Sea ro-ro freight market is a significant and long-established trade route between continental Europe and the UK and the Humber has a very strong presence in this market sector.

5.2 In order for a port to function effectively it must possess three principal attributes:

- ✓ Effective road and rail links to inland distribution points or urban centres
- ✓ Effective infrastructure to service the needs of shipping lines and safely and comfortably berth ships at all states of the tide
- ✓ Proximity to overseas distribution networks. The Humber is an important route in the short-sea RORO freight market given the overnight connectivity to major hub ports in mainland Europe.

5.3 The Ports of Immingham, Hull and C.Ro Port, Killingholme (which is located to the west of the Port of Immingham and is not owned by ABP) already have a significant presence in this sector with household-name shipping lines. It is anticipated that the market is likely to grow strongly for the following reasons:

- a) The UK's exit from the EU has prompted increased concerns over the reliance on the short straits (Dover/Calais crossing) and the vulnerability of UK supply chains. Developing additional North Sea ro-ro connectivity reduces this vulnerability. Whilst a North Sea crossing is an overnight commitment, the road journey for vehicles to divert via France and Kent can add more than a day for cargoes that would otherwise benefit from a more northerly European entry point to the UK.
- b) One of the lessons of the pandemic is that supply chain resilience is as important as the costs of transportation. Companies selling to consumers are aligning production with distribution to reduce the supply chain distances. Whilst this may not result in the wholesale 'onshoring' of manufacturing capacity in the UK, good connectivity and a choice of logistical solutions between the UK and EU is becoming much more important.
- c) The Humber's Freeport status will open up new and exciting opportunities for port-centric manufacturing which will need to be underpinned by speedy and efficient unit load services to and from continental Europe.
- d) Ultimately better and more efficient logistical connectivity between the UK and Europe will drive costs down and benefit UK and European consumers.

6. Indicative Timeframe

6.1 It is acknowledged that the draft programme, as summarised below, is tight. This is because the project is being driven by operator/commercial need. In this context, therefore, it is probably of assistance to note that:

- a) All of the terrestrial works will all take place within ABP's freehold land ownership; and within the operational statutory port estate;
- b) The marine works will take place along the river frontage of the Port which is already heavily populated with existing operational jetties and port related infrastructure; and

- c) The environmental issues that are likely to arise in connection with this Project are such as have already been encountered by ABP in connection with other similar developments within the Humber Estuary.

6.2 With that in mind, the anticipated programme, which is very much in draft and subject to discussion with PINS, is currently envisaged to follow the following timeline:

- a) Submission of Request for a Scoping Opinion – September 2021;
- b) Publication of Preliminary Environmental Information Report and commencement of statutory consultation – January 2022;
- c) Submission of DCO application – early Summer 2022.

Figures

Figure 1 – Port of Immingham, Location Plan

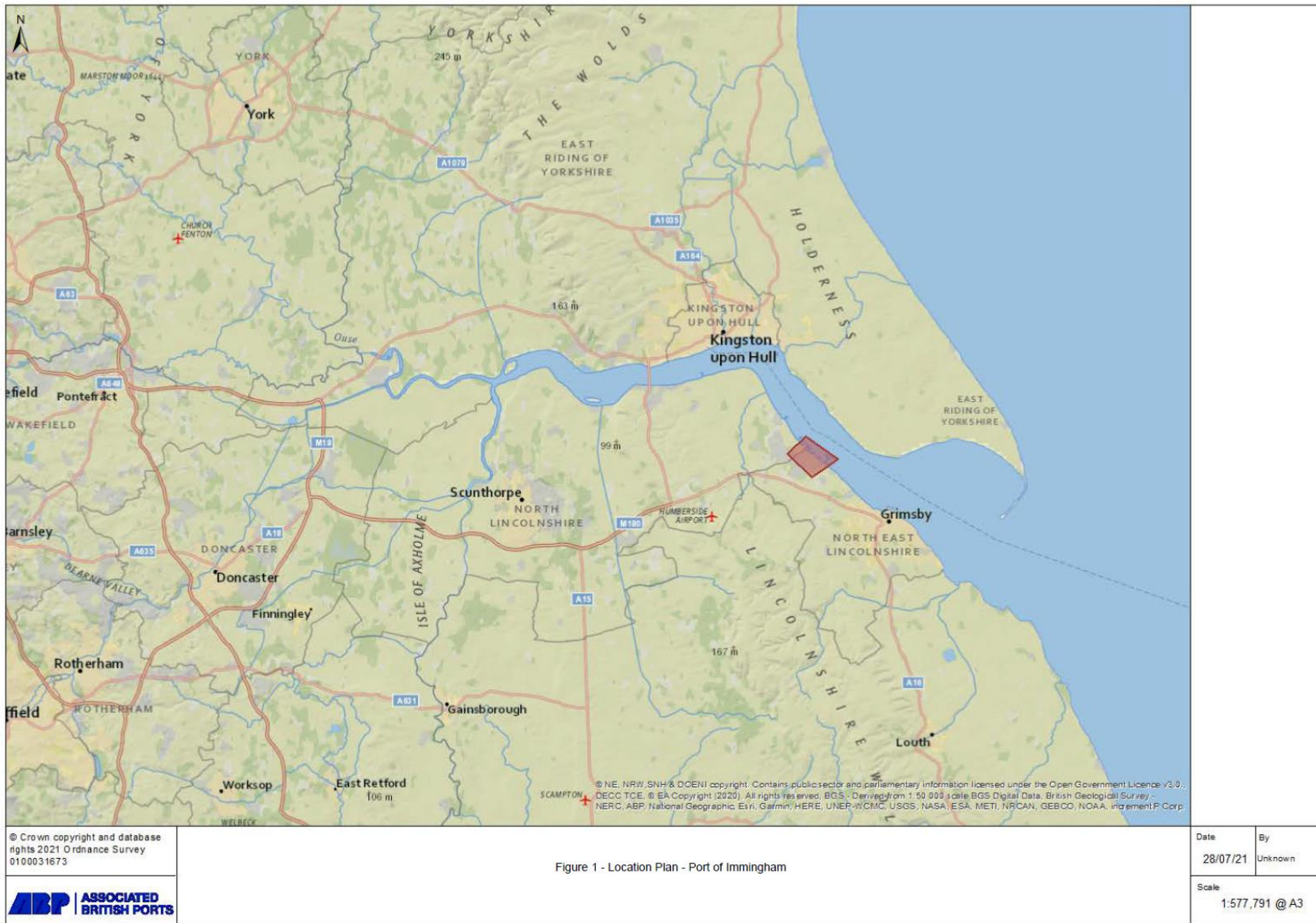


Figure 2 – Port of Immingham Plan

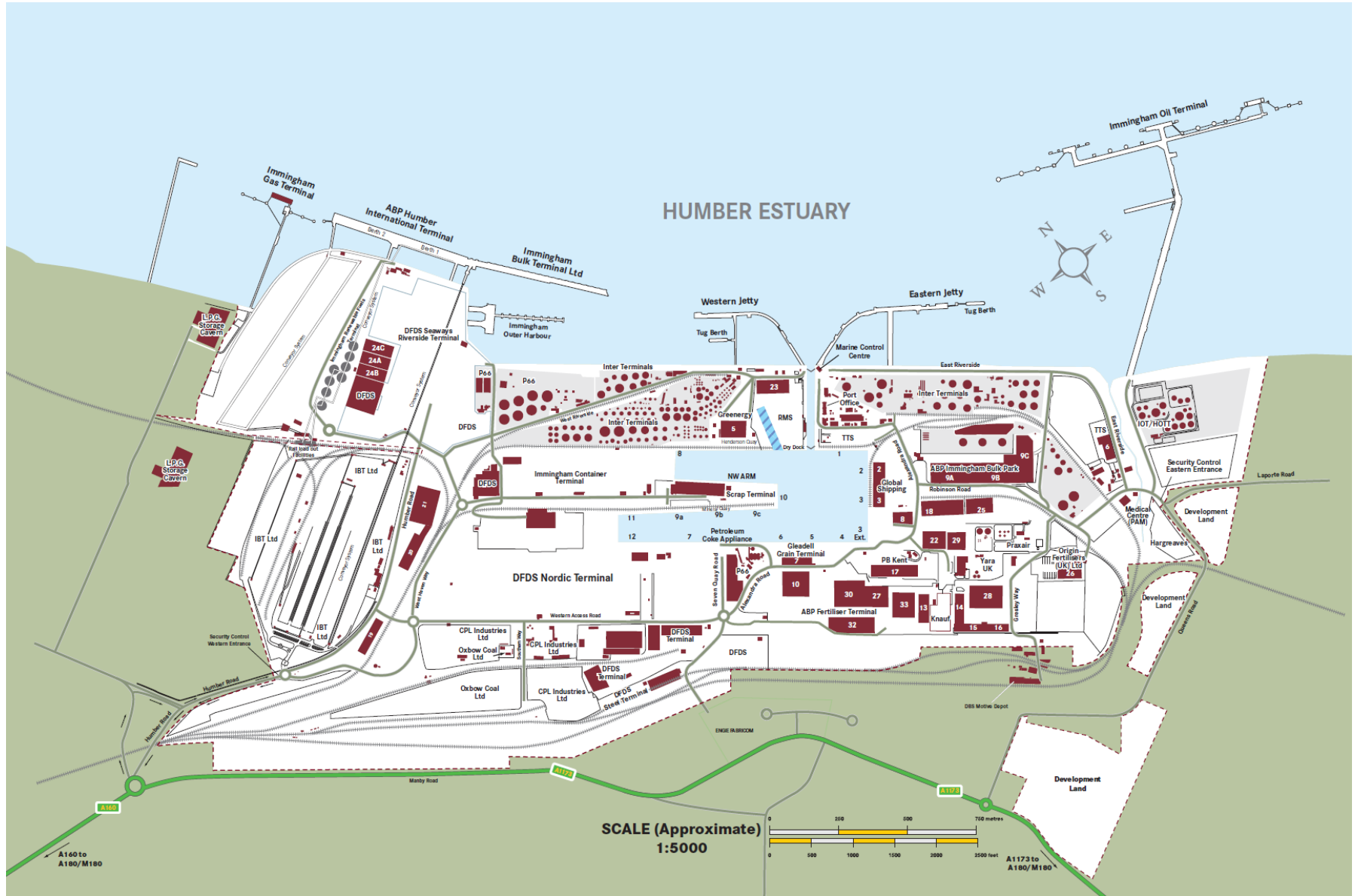


Figure 3 – Draft Indicative masterplan



Figure 4 – Draft Marine works for two berths

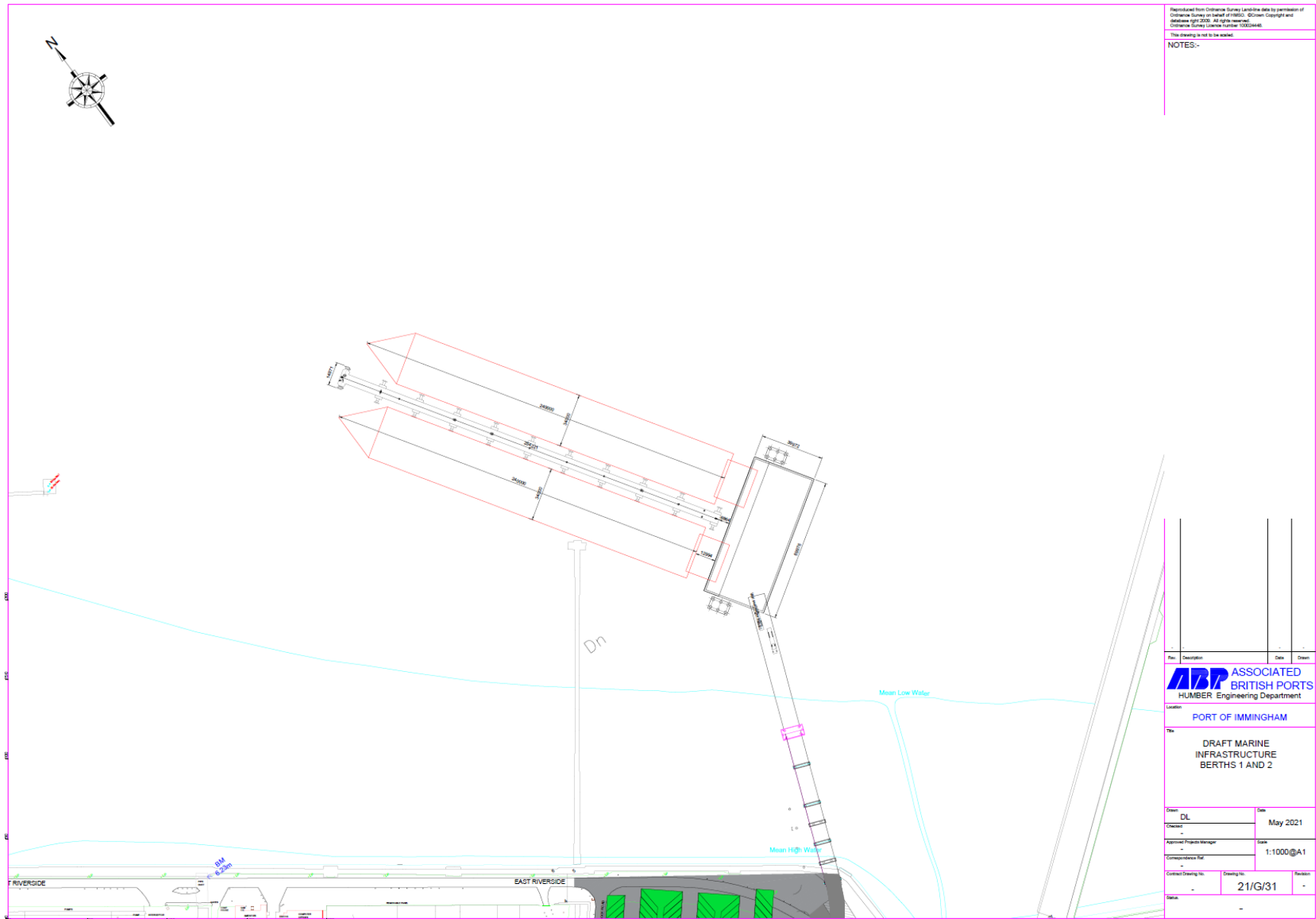


Figure 5 – Draft Marine works for four berths

