



Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 3, Annex 2.1: Surface water abstraction
licences, discharge consents and pollution
incidents

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WSP	Morven Offshore Wind Limited

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
Abstraction licence	Issued by the Environment Agency in England, abstraction licences are a legal permit that allows more than 20m ³ of water per day to be abstracted from a natural source, such as a river, stream, canal, or underground aquifer.
AC connection cables	Alternating Current (AC) cables that will connect the proposed onshore land substation to the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation.
Development Consent Order	An order made under the Planning Act 2008, as amended, granting development consent.
Discharge Consent	Issued by the Environment Agency in England, this consent allows the controlled discharge of substances (such as treated wastewater or trade effluent) into the environment— typically to surface waters or groundwater — subject to specified conditions.
High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC)	A HVAC electric power transmission system uses alternating current for electric power transmission that periodically reverses direction at regular intervals.
High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC)	A HVDC electric power transmission system uses direct current for electric power transmission, in contrast to the more common alternating current systems. Most HVDC links use voltages between 100 kilovolts (kV) and 800kV.
Landfall	The area in which the offshore export cables make landfall (come onshore) and the transitional area between the offshore cabling and the onshore cabling. This term applies to the entire landfall area between the trenchless technique exit pits and the transition joint bay inclusive of all construction works.
Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT)	The part of the Scottish Government's Marine Directorate responsible for assessing and administering applications for marine licences and Section 36 consent (offshore) in Scotland.
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	The MMO, as a UK government body, is responsible for licensing, regulating and overseeing activities in the marine environment for English waters. For a DCO and deemed marine licence, the MMO acts as a statutory consultee, advising on marine planning, environmental impacts, habitats and compliance with marine licensing regulations.
Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)	The most inshore level location reached by the sea at high tide during mean high water spring tide. This is defined as the average throughout the year, of two successive high waters, during a 24-hour period in each month when the range of the tide is at its greatest.

Term	Meaning
Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS)	The average height of the low water levels of each pair of successive low waters during the periods of about 24 hours when the tidal range is at its greatest.
MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore	Spatial extent used to define the environmental assessment within the PEIR. The area within which all onshore components of the MHPGC Project will be located landward of MHWS, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (e.g. construction compounds).
MHPGC Project Scoping Opinions	Separate scoping opinions received from PINS (on behalf of the Secretary of State) and MD-LOT (on behalf of the Scottish Ministers) in response to the MHPGC Project Scoping Report. The MHPGC Project Scoping Opinions contain the range of issues that PINS, and MD-LOT in consultation with statutory stakeholders, have identified should be considered within the EIA process.
MHPGC Project Scoping Report	A Scoping Report for the MHPGC Project, scoping the likely significant effects of the project on the environment, was submitted and accepted by Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and submitted to the Scottish Ministers, via the Marine Directorate – Licencing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in February 2025.
MHPGC Project Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)	A report that provides preliminary environmental information in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This is information that enables consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of a project and which helps to inform consultation responses.
Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project	The MHPGC Project is comprised of the offshore export cables in Scottish and English waters from the Morven North or the Morven South offshore substation platform(s) (OSP), landfall, onshore export cables, the onshore land substation (LSS) and AC connection cables. Also referred to in this report as the MHPGC Project, for ease of reading.
Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)	Large scale development which requires development consent under the Planning Act 2008.
Offshore substation platform(s) (OSP)	OSP(s) comprise the support structure, topside and electrical components used for collecting the electricity generated by the wind turbine generators, in Scottish waters, for the passage or transmission to landfall. These OSP(s) can be divided into two types:

Term	Meaning
	- HVAC collector substations; - HVDC converter substations.
Onshore export cables	HVDC cables which bring electricity from the TJB to the onshore land substation.
Onshore land substation (LSS)	A purpose-built site comprising a compound containing the electrical components for converting the HVDC to HVAC power. The LSS site associated with the MHPGC Project adjusts the power quality and power factor to meet the requirements of power supply being fed to the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation.
Source Protection Zone (SPZ)	Environment Agency defined zone to protect groundwater abstraction sources (wells, boreholes and springs) from potentially polluting activities and accidental releases of pollutants. SPZs are primarily a policy tool used to control activities close to public water supplies.
Source Protection Zone 1: Inner	The 50-day travel time of pollutant to source and has a 50m default minimum radius. This zone is usually located adjacent to the abstraction, although in karst terrain it can extend some distance away due to rapid transport pathways. The EA's Approach to Groundwater Protection (2018) sets the tightest control of activities in this zone.
Source Protection Zone 2: Outer	The 400-day travel time of pollutant to source with a 250 or 500m minimum radius around the source depending on the amount of water abstracted.
Source Protection Zone 3: Total catchment	The area around a supply source within which all the groundwater ends up at the abstraction point. This is the area from where the recharge water is being taken and can extend some distance from the abstraction.
Planning Inspectorate (PINS)	The PINS is an executive agency of the UK Government responsible for administering and examining DCO applications for NSIPs in England. PINS manages the application process, oversees consultation and examination, and makes a recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State on whether consent should be granted.
Survey Area	The area within which field surveys for the environmental topic are undertaken. This would include all areas for which impacts from the MHPGC Project may occur on relevant receptors.
Water Resources Study Area	The Water Resources Study Area incorporates water resource receptors located within 1km of the MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore. The buffer has been selected to identify any existing receptors, assets or infrastructure that have the potential to be affected by activities arising from the construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project.

Term	Meaning
	The buffer is considered appropriate for data collection, taking into account the likely Zone of Influence by water resource receptors.
Zone of influence (Zol)	The area within which impacts arising from the MHPGC Project could occur upon receptors.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
DCC	Durham County Council
Defra	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate – Licencing Operations Team
MHPGC	Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
PWS	Private Water Supply
SoS	Secretary of State
SPZs	Source Protection Zones
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Units

Unit	Meaning
m ³	Cubic Metres
km	Kilometre

Executive Summary

This report presents an assessment of Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents, Pollution Incidents and Private Water Supplies (PWS) for the Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project (hereafter 'MHPGC Project'). It forms **Volume 3, Annex 2.1: Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents of the Preliminary Environment Impact Report (PEIR)** and supports **Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR** and **Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR**. The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive baseline understanding of water resource use, effluent discharge, and pollution events within the Water Resources Study Area to inform the environmental assessment of the MHPGC Project.

The report details:

- Water Abstraction Licences: No surface water abstractions were identified within the Water Resources Study Area. Four Groundwater abstractions are present and are licenced under the Water Resources Act 1991 (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 1991, Part III, Chapter III);
- Private Water Supplies: One PWS was identified within the Water Resources Study Area and is regulated under Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016;
- Discharge Consents: Five discharge consents to controlled waters were identified within the Water Resources Study Area, with associated management measures to ensure compliance with environmental regulations;
- Pollution Incidents: Two significant pollution incident were recorded in the Water Resources Study Area, with one minor event classified in accordance with the Environment Agency's Common Incident Classification Scheme.

The report draws upon data provided by Durham County Council (DCC) and the Environment Agency.

Relevant legislation, planning policy, and local guidance, including the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (European Parliament and Council, 2000, Articles 4 and 7), the Environmental Permitting Regulations (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), 2016, Regulations 12–14), and the Durham County Plan (DCC, 2020, Policies 35 and 36), have been considered to support sustainable water management.

The findings of this report provide a robust evidence base for assessing potential impacts on water resources and inform appropriate mitigation and management strategies to minimise adverse effects on surface and groundwater systems throughout the MHPGC Project lifecycle.

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1.1 This report presents the Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents for the Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project (referred to hereafter as 'the MHPGC Project'). It forms **Volume 3, Annex 2.1: Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)** prepared for the MHPGC Project and supports **Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR**.
- 1.1.1.2 This report provides information on the following:
- Water abstraction licences which provide an indication of how water bodies are utilised;
 - Discharge consents which may affect the baseline quality of the receiving surface water;
 - Pollution incidents where the quality of watercourses may have been affected by pollution.
- 1.1.1.3 The report presented informs the following technical chapters:
- **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR.**
- 1.1.1.4 The report also draws on information contained within the following annexes:
- **Volume 3, Annex 2.2: Flood Risk Assessment, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Annex 2.3: Onshore Water Framework Directive Assessment, of the PEIR.**

1.2 Legislative and policy context

- 1.2.1.1 The full relevant legislation and policy context for the MHPGC Project has been detailed in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: Policy and Legislation, of the PEIR**. This section sets out the legislation and planning policy that is relevant to the Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents for the MHPGC Project.

1.2.2 Legislation

Water Resources Act 1991

- 1.2.2.1 This Act regulates the abstraction of water and the discharge of effluents into controlled waters. It establishes requirements for obtaining abstraction licences for significant water withdrawals and discharge consents for effluent entering surface waters, ensuring sustainable water use and protection of aquatic environments (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), 1991, Part II, Chapter II and Part III, Chapter III).

Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017

- 1.2.2.2 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) (Council Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of water policy) was adopted in 2000. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulation 2017 transposed the WFD into national law in the UK. The Directive aims to protect and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater bodies. It requires that water abstractions, discharges, and potential pollution risks are carefully managed to maintain or achieve good ecological and chemical status (European Parliament and Council, 2000, Articles 4 and 7).

Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016

- 1.2.2.3 These regulations govern environmental permits for discharges to water, groundwater activities, and other regulated operations. They ensure that such activities do not adversely affect water quality or cause pollution (Defra, 2016, Regulation 12–14).

Water Abstraction and Impounding (Exemptions) Regulations 2017

- 1.2.2.4 This legislation sets out specific exemptions for minor abstractions and small-scale dewatering, clarifying when a licence is not required and facilitating compliance with water management requirements (Defra, 2017, Part 2, Section 5).

Environmental Protection Act 1990

- 1.2.2.5 This Act provides a legal framework for the prevention of pollution, management of waste, and protection of the environment, including safeguarding watercourses from contamination (Defra, 1990, Part I & II).

Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016

- 1.2.2.6 The Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016 establishes the legal framework for protecting drinking water from private water supplies (PWS) such as boreholes, springs and wells that are not supplied by a water company and utilise yields of less than 20,000 litres a day. The regulations implement drinking water quality standards to ensure the safety of water intended for human consumption. Details of PWS are held by Local Planning Authorities (LPA).

1.2.3 Planning and policy guidance

National Policy Statement

- 1.2.3.1 National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy framework for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under which the MHPGC Project will be considered. This framework includes guidelines, requirements and criteria that the MHPGC Project must meet to obtain DCO consent and proceed with development. Table 1.1 provides details of NPS for energy (EN-1) (DESNZ, 2025a) relevant to water abstraction licenses and discharge consents and how and where they are covered in the PEIR. No additional policy from NPS for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3) (DESNZ, 2025b) or NPS for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5) (DESNZ, 2025c) is applicable to this Annex.

Table 1.1: Summary of NPS requirements relevant to water resources

NPS section	How and where this is considered in the PEIR
5.16.7 The Environmental Statement should in particular describe: - The existing quality of waters affected by the proposed project and the impacts of the proposed project on water quality, noting any relevant existing discharges, proposed new discharges and proposed changes to discharges; - Existing water resources affected by the proposed project and the impacts of the proposed project on water resources, noting any relevant existing abstraction rates, proposed new abstraction rates and proposed changes to abstraction rates (including any impact on or use of mains supplies and reference to Abstraction Licensing Strategies) and also demonstrate how proposals minimise the use of water resources and water consumption in the first instance; - Existing physical characteristics of the water environment (including quantity and dynamics of flow) affected by the proposed	Baseline discharge and abstraction information is provided in Section 3 of this Annex. Assessment of impact to water resources is provided in Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR. Volume 3, Annex 2.1: Water Framework Directive Assessment of the PEIR has been undertaken in accordance with the Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 18. The assessment considers the potential impact of the MHPGC Project during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning. Phases. The WFD assessment and the proposed measures adopted as part of the MHPGC Project have taken into account the requirements of the Northumbria RBMP and WFD to ensure all potential impacts on the water environment are mitigated within SAC, SSSI and SPZ. Environment Agency and Natural England have been consulted during the preparation of the WFD assessment. The impact on hydromorphological supporting conditions to the biological elements of ecological status have been considered in the WFD

NPS section	How and where this is considered in the PEIR
project and any impact of physical modifications to these characteristics; - Any impacts of the proposed project on water bodies or protected areas (including shellfish protected areas) under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 and source protection zones (SPZs) around potable groundwater abstractions; - How climate change could impact any of the above in the future; and - Any cumulative effects.	assessment. The document has undertaken an assessment of the water bodies and associated protected areas. An FRA has been prepared and forms Volume 3, Annex 2.2: Flood Risk Assessment, of the PEIR. The FRA evaluates potential flood risks to the MHPGC Project, including those arising from climate change. A cumulative impact assessment of the water environment has been undertaken within Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.2.3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides guidance for planning decisions to avoid increased flood risk or adverse impacts on water quality. It promotes the sustainable management of water resources and the integration of flood risk assessments into development proposals (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2025, Section 14).
- 1.2.3.3 **Table 1.2** provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to water resources and flood risk and how and where they are covered in the PEIR or will be covered within the ES.
- 1.2.3.4 The NPPF was updated in August 2026 and will be fully considered in the MHPGC Environmental Statement.

Table 1.2: Summary of NPPF requirements relevant to water resources

NPPF section	How and where this is considered in the PEIR
W1: Planning for energy and water These paragraphs set out that early engagement between the applicant, utility providers, regulators and network operators should be undertaken to ensure water supply, drainage and wastewater capacity, and associated requirements for additional infrastructure provision.	Consultation has been undertaken, including with the Environment Agency, DCC, and NWL to discuss water use and discharge of wastewater. No groundwater abstractions are proposed as part of the MHPGC Project. Water will either be extracted from the mains supply or transported to the construction area via tanker. The total volume of water required is not known at this stage. If water is to be extracted from mains supply, extraction methodology and volumes will be discussed and agreed with relevant stakeholders to prevent impact on wider resource availability. An Outline Operational Drainage Management Plan (ODMP) (CoT22) for the onshore Land Substation (LSS) will be prepared and submitted with the application for development consent. The Outline ODMP will detail measures to ensure that existing land drainage is reinstated and/or maintained and ensure surface water runoff generated at the chosen onshore LSS option by new impermeable areas is attenuated with an allowance for climate change and discharged from the site to an appropriate location at a restricted discharge rate. A Detailed ODMP will be developed substantially in accordance with the Outline ODMP and in line with the latest relevant drainage guidance notes in consultation

NPPF section	How and where this is considered in the PEIR
	with the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Environment Agency: Apply for a water abstraction or impounding licence

- 1.2.3.5 Environment Agency guidance regarding different types of water resource licences and associated conditions required for obtaining a licence (Environment Agency, 2026a).

Environment Agency: Discharges to surface water and groundwater: environmental permits.

- 1.2.3.6 Environment Agency guidance regarding when an environmental permit is required to discharge liquid effluent and waste water to surface water and ground, exemptions and conditions (Environment Agency, 2026c).

Environment Agency: Temporary dewatering from excavations to surface water: RPS 261

- 1.2.3.7 Environment Agency guidance on its regulatory position on temporary discharges of uncontaminated water from excavations without a water discharge activity permit (Environment Agency, 2026e)

1.2.4 Local planning policy

Durham County Plan

- 1.2.4.1 Policy 35 – Water Management: Requires development to avoid increasing flood risk, integrate sustainable drainage, and comply with abstraction and discharge requirements (Durham County Council (DCC), 2020, Policy 35).
- 1.2.4.2 Policy 36 – Water and Infrastructure: Ensures infrastructure supports development without adverse impacts on water resources or flood risk (DCC, 2020, Policy 36).

1.3 Consultation and engagement

1.3.1 Scoping

- 1.3.1.1 A Scoping Report for the MHPGC Project was issued to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and the Marine Directorate – Licencing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in February 2025 (RPS, 2025). Following consultation with the appropriate statutory bodies, PINS (on behalf of the Secretary of State (SoS)) and MD-LOT provided a Scoping Opinion in March 2025 (PINS, 2025; MD-LOT, 2025, respectively).
- 1.3.1.2 **Section 2.3 of Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR** sets out the key comments raised during the scoping process specific to Water Resources and Flood Risk. **Table 1.3** outlines those comments relevant to this Annex and how they have been addressed within the report.

Table 1.3: Summary of scoping responses relevant to Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
Durham County Council	
The Environment Agency has advised that if it is intended to abstract more than 20 cubic metre (m ³) of water per day from a surface water source e.g. a stream or from underground strata (via borehole or well) for any particular purpose, then an abstraction licence would be required. There is no guarantee that a licence would be granted, as this is dependent	Existing water abstractions are detailed in Section 3 . No groundwater abstractions are proposed as part of the MHPGC Project. Water will either be extracted from the mains supply, or transported to the construction area via tanker. The total volume of water required is not known at this stage. If water is to be extracted from mains supply, extraction

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
on available water resources and existing protected rights. It is stated within Section 2.0 of the Dust Management Plan that there would be lagoons. It is not, however, stated where the water for these would come from. Details of water supply and discharge should be provided. The scoping report states that no dewatering is expected, however, discharge from temporary excavations can occur if the discharge can meet all of the conditions of the Regulator Position Statement "Temporary dewatering from excavations to surface water", if needed. If any discharge cannot meet all of the conditions, a Bespoke Environmental Permit would be required.	methodology and volumes will be discussed and agreed with relevant stakeholders to prevent impact on wider resource availability. Licensed public groundwater supplies and other abstractions would be protected via specific risk assessments, design and a mitigation strategy developed where appropriate, particularly where infrastructure is located within public water supply SPZs. The requirement for discharge permits will be reviewed and applied for as required during detailed design, prior to construction. The Volume 3, Annex 2.3: Onshore Water Framework Directive, of the PEIR includes embedded mitigation to avoid and reduce impacts on the water environment. Implementation of these measures will help ensure that the MHPGC Project does not give rise to detrimental impacts to the water environment. Potential impacts arising from dewatering activities are assessed within Volume 3 Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR.
Environment Agency	
Issue: The above Sections of the Scoping Report do not mention water quality discharge permits or abstraction licences. Impact Without water quality discharge permits contaminated waters could have a detrimental impact on the receiving environment. Without abstraction licences, there could be uncontrolled changes to groundwater levels and movement. Failure to assess the necessary permits early could mean any potential restrictions or obstacles are not known until late in the process which could affect project timescales. Solution Apply for relevant permit(s) at the earliest opportunity due to significant delays within the permitting system.	Existing water abstractions are detailed in Section 3. No groundwater abstractions are proposed as part of the MHPGC Project. Water will either be extracted from the mains supply or transported to the construction area via tanker. The total volume of water required is not known at this stage. If water is to be extracted from mains supply, extraction methodology and volumes will be discussed and agreed with relevant stakeholders to prevent impact on wider resource availability. The requirement for water quality discharge permits will be reviewed during detailed design prior to construction and applied for where necessary. The Volume 3, Annex 2.3: Onshore Water Framework Directive, of the PEIR includes embedded mitigation to avoid and minimise impacts on the water environment. Implementation of these measures will help ensure that the MHPGC Project does not give rise to detrimental impacts to the water environment.
If dewatering is required, it will require an abstraction licence if it doesn't meet the criteria for exemption in The Water Abstraction and Impounding (Exemptions) Regulations 2017 Section 5: Small scale dewatering in the course of building or engineering works. It may also require a discharge permit if it falls outside of our regulatory position statement for de-watering discharges. Consumptive	Potential impacts arising from dewatering activities are assessed within Volume 3 Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR. Any dewatering requirements proposed as part of the MHPGC Project will be detailed within the DCO application. Potential effects on water quality will be managed via the Outline CoCP (CoT18). The document will

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
abstraction from Groundwater may not be available, more details can be found in the Abstraction Licensing Strategy for the catchment. We recommend pre application advice be sought early on any proposed groundwater abstraction. If the dewatering activity can be demonstrated to be discharged to the same source of supply without intervening use (i.e. non-consumptive), this will increase the likelihood of a licence being granted. We recommend an outline plan for abstraction and discharge volumes and locations and subsequent licensing requirements be considered with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).	include outline management plans to minimise and manage the potential for pollution and/or contamination arising as a result of the MHPGC Project, including details to prevent pollution and contamination as a result of dewatering activities.

1.3.2 Further consultation and engagement

- 1.3.2.1 Further consultation and engagement with stakeholders have been undertaken via Hydrology and Flood Risk Expert Working Group (EWG) meetings and via email correspondence.
- 1.3.2.2 Additional consultation, specifically in relation to water abstractions, discharge consents and pollution incidents is summarised in **Table 1.4**.

Table 1.4: Summary of further consultation and engagement relevant to Volume 3, Annex 2.1: Water abstraction licences, discharge consents and pollution incidents

Date	Consultee and response type	Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
11 November 2025	Hydrology and Flood Risk EWG	Scoping comments and discussion on data to be included within the water resources study area baseline, including Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZ), abstractions and Private Water Supply (PWS) information.	Groundwater SPZs and water abstractions are detailed in Section 3.2 and are included within the environmental baseline and Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR and Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR impact assessments. There is one PWS present within the Water Resources Study Area and have been included within the environmental baseline and Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR and Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR impact assessments. Mitigation measures for each onshore component of the MHPGC Project are detailed in Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR.

June 2026	Email consultation to DCC	PWS data was requested from DCC to inform Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR and Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR .	In line with the Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016, DCC is understood to hold a register of PWS within the council area. DCC provided a consultation response in June 2026 stating they held no PWS, and that Northumbrian Water Limited should be consulted. Northumbrian Water Limited do not hold a register of PWS. A second response from DCC was received in September detailing PWS within the Water Resources Study Area and has been included within Section 1.3.2.2.
17 July 2026	Email consultation to EA	Confirmation sought regards the Water Resources and Flood Risk study area of 1km. The EA confirmed in principle the proposed adoption of a 1km Study Area on the proviso confirmation could be provided that the Volume 3 Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR will include consideration of Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTEs), licensed and unlicensed abstractions, wells and springs within the 1km search area. It was noted that ecologically designated sites had been mentioned, but the EA stated they would like to be certain that GWDTEs are specifically included.	Both licenced and unlicensed abstractions are considered within Volume 3 Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk of the PEIR. Licenced abstractions are detailed within Section 3.1 and 3.2. Unlicensed abstractions are detailed within Section 1.3.2.2. The value of groundwater supporting Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTEs) and an assessment of potential for impacts to GWDTEs from alterations to groundwater flow and quality are presented in Volume 3, Annex 2.3: Onshore Water Framework Directive, of the PEIR and Volume 3, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Terrestrial and Intertidal Ornithology, of the PEIR.
12 August 2026	Hydrology and Flood Risk EWG2	Lack of PWS consultation information was discussed, and expectation that the council is the holder of PWS records was highlighted. DCC confirmed that the Environmental Health team holds PWS records for council, and that a direct contact would be provided for consultation.	DCC provided further contact information to obtain PWS. Additional consultation with DCC has been sought in September 2026. A response was received in September 2026 detailing PWS within the Water Resources Study Area and has been included within Section 3.1.1.1.
3 September 2026	Email consultation to DCC	PWS data was requested from DCC Environmental Health to inform Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR and Volume 3, Chapter 2:	A response was received in September 2026 and PWS information has been included within Section 3.1.1.1. An assessment of PWS is included within Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR and Volume

		Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR.	3 Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk of the PEIR.
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2 Methodology

2.1 Overview

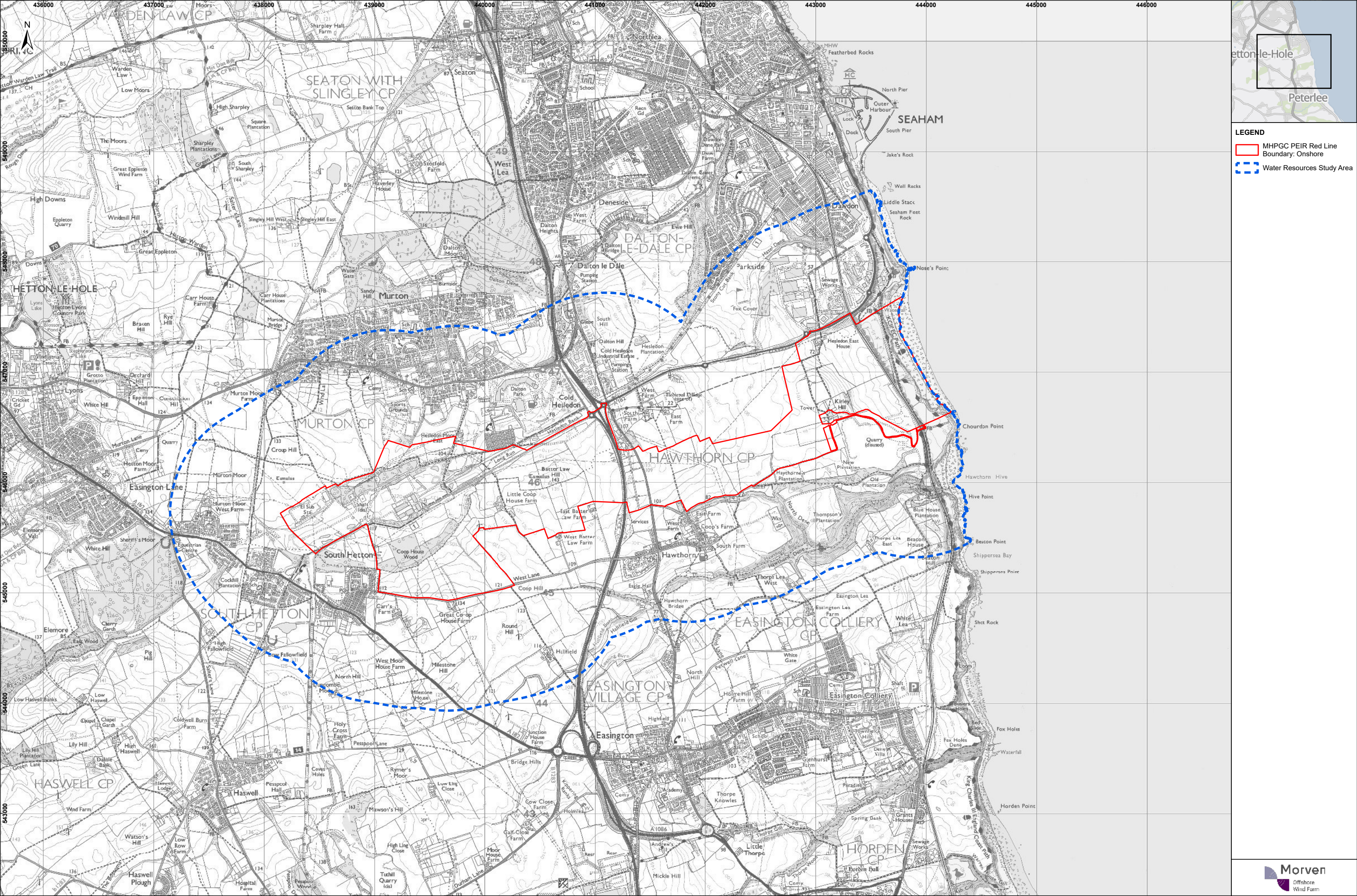
- 2.1.1.1 Details of abstraction licences, discharge consents and pollution incidents have been obtained from consultation with the Environment Agency received 14 November 2025. Details of PWS was obtained from consultation with DCC received 8 September 2026. Data provides baseline information to inform the environmental assessment of the MHPGC Project Water Resources Study Area (as defined in **Section 2.2**).

2.2 Study Area

- 2.2.1.1 The Water Resources Study Area incorporates water resource receptors located within 1km of the MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore. The buffer has been selected to identify any existing receptors, assets or infrastructure that have the potential to be affected by activities arising from the construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project. The buffer is considered appropriate for data collection, taking into account the likely Zone of Influence by water resource receptors. The Water Resources Study Area is shown on **Figure 2.1**.

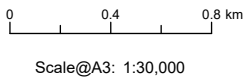
2.3 Data limitations

- 2.3.1.1 The assessment has relied on datasets provided via the Environment Agency in November 2025 and June 2026 and DCC in June 2026 and September 2026. It has been assumed that these datasets have been reported correctly at the time of receipt.



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Drawing Title:
FIGURE 2.1 WATER RESOURCES STUDY AREA



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Projection: British National Grid

Data Sources:
BP Ordnance Survey

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MHPGC-WSP-PEIR-035

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3 Baseline environment

3.1 Surface water abstraction licences

3.1.1.1 Surface water abstraction licences within the study area were provided via consultation request from the Environment Agency on 14 November 2025. There are no surface water abstractions within the Water Resources Study Area.

3.2 Groundwater abstraction licences

3.2.1.1 Groundwater abstraction licences within the study area were provided via consultation request from the Environment Agency on 14 November 2025. There are four groundwater abstraction licences located within the Water Resources Study Area, listed in **Table 3.1** below and presented within **Figure 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Groundwater abstractions

ID	Easting	Northing	Licence holder	Details	Status
GA01	443580	547810	The Coal Authority	Transfer between sources (Post Water Act 2003)	Active. start date: 09 February 2010 End date: 31 March 2026
GA02	443580	547810	The Coal Authority NE/025/0005/004	Dawdon Colliery Minewater Treatment Scheme Max daily volume: 12,960m ³ Annual volume: 4,730,400m ³	Active, start date: 16 September 2022 End date: 31 March 2038
GA03	441100	546910	Northumbrian Water Ltd 1/25/05/004	Potable Water Supply for Dalton Direct Borehole into Magnesian Limestone Max daily volume: 11,819m ³ Annual volume: 3,032,182m ³	Active, start date: 09 March 1966 No expiry date
GA04	441510	544830	Northumbrian Water Ltd	Potable Water Supply for Hawthorn Direct Borehole - Magnesian Limestone Max daily volume: 6,182m ³ Annual volume: 1,677,474m ³	Active, start date: 09 March 1966 No expiry date

3.2.1.2 Source Protection Zones (SPZs) are associated with abstraction licences GA03 and GA04 and are presented within **Figure 3.1**.

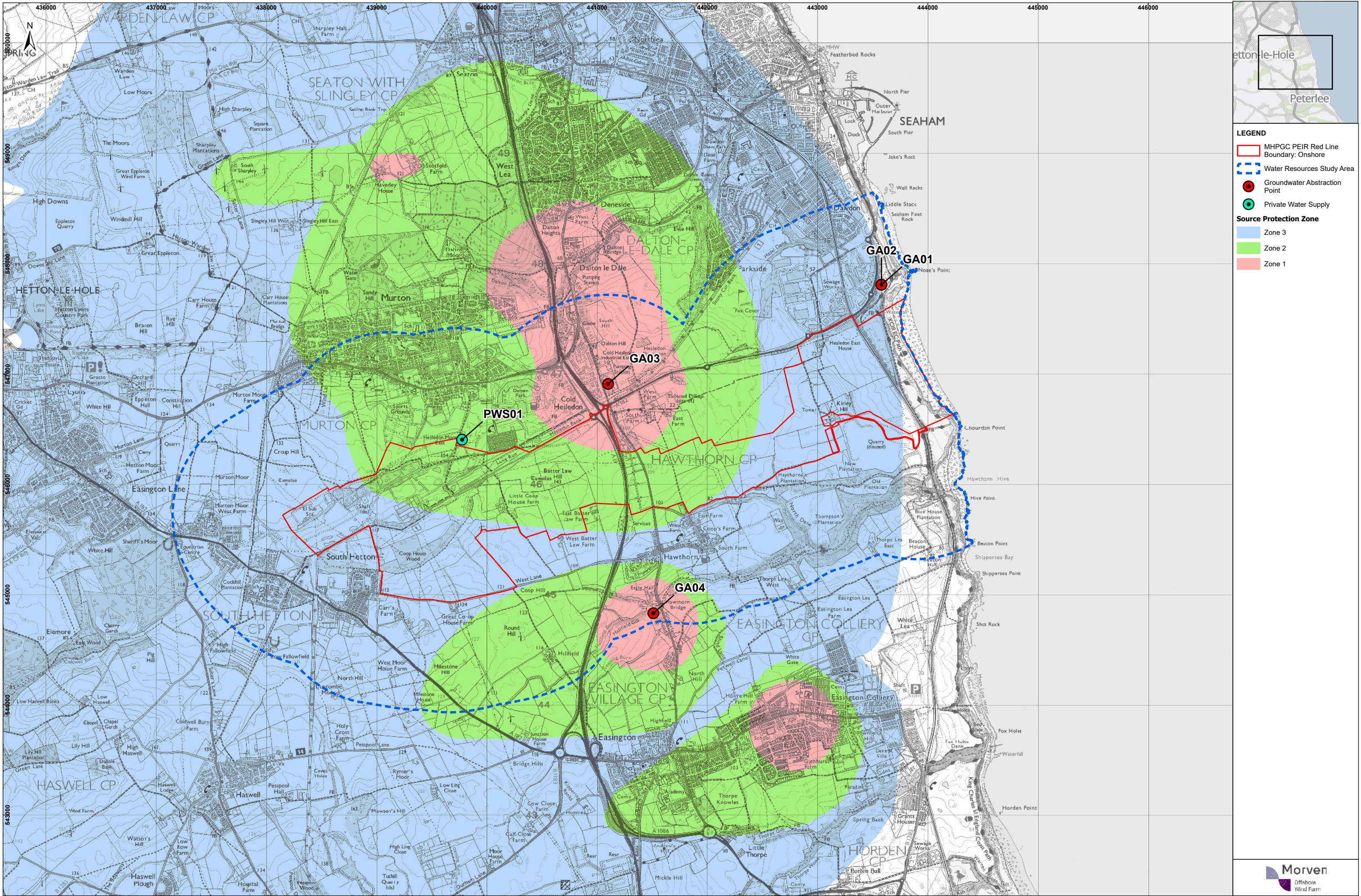
3.3 Private Water Supplies

3.3.1.1 PWS within the study area were provided via consultation request from the Durham County Council on 8 September 2026. There is one PWS located within the Water Resources Study Area, listed in **Table 3.2** below and presented within **Figure 3.1**.

Table 3.2: Private water supplies

ID	Easting	Northing	Details
PWS01	439774	546404	Borehole. GeoIndex Onshore Map service shows that the borehole was drilled in May 2011 to a depth of 102.15 m through gravel (31 m depth) and Magnesian Limestone. This borehole was screened from 70.43 m to depth and a rest water level of 69.55 m was recorded at the time of drilling.

3.3.1.2 DCC note that their records do not preclude the presence of other PWSs, springs or other water abstraction points within the area.



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FIGURE 3.1 GROUNDWATER ABSTRACTION LICENCES AND ASSOCIATED
SOURCE PROTECTION ZONES WITHIN THE WATER RESOURCES STUDY AREA

0 0.4 0.8 km
Scale@A3: 1:30,000

Geodetic Information:
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Data Sources:
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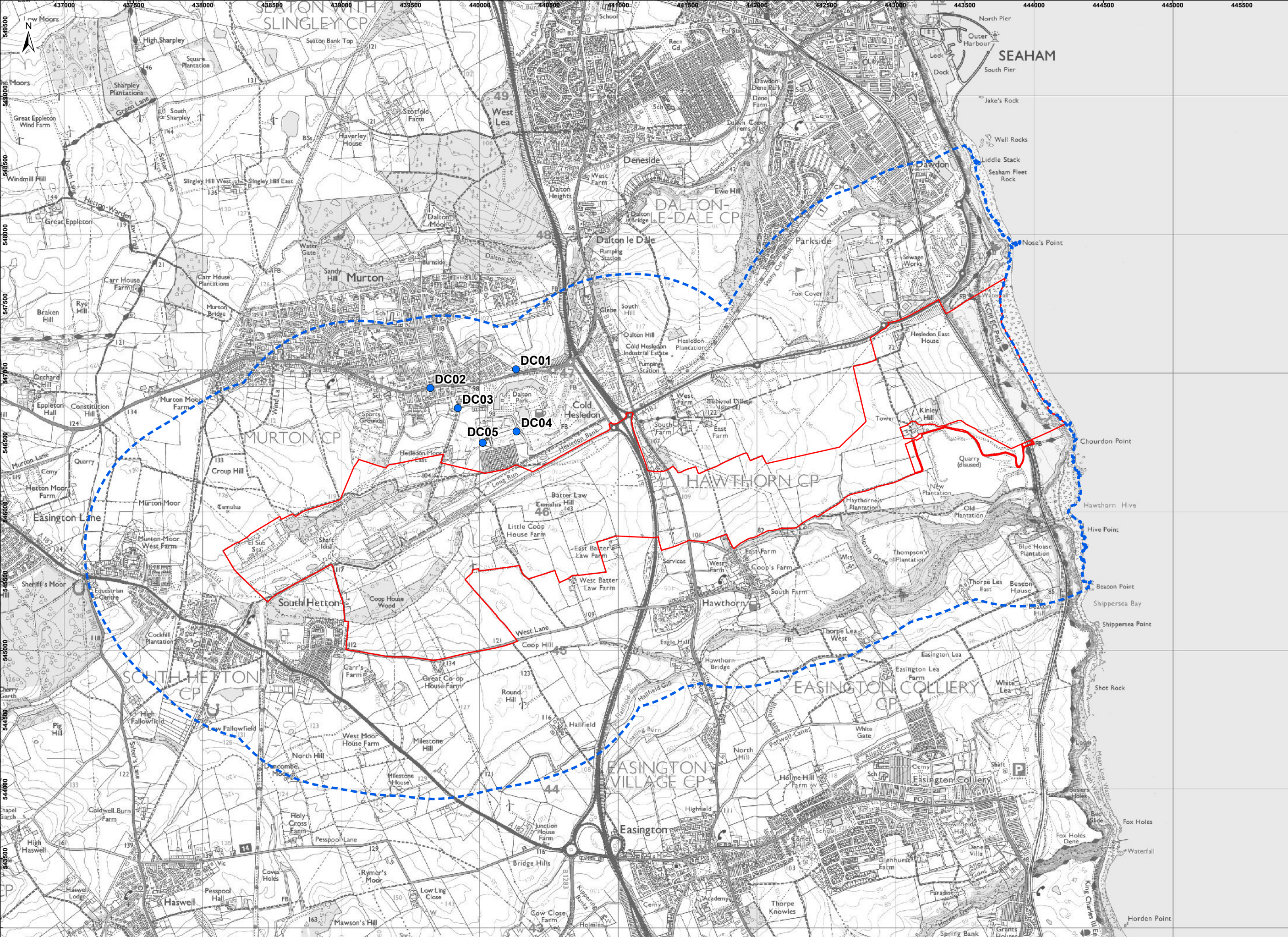
VER	DATE	DETAILS	BY	CHECK
00	09/09/2025	Initial Issue	RE	AL
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3.4 Discharge consents

- 3.4.1.1 Licensed discharge to controlled waters cover discharges of treated or untreated effluent to controlled waters under the Water Resources Act 1991 and are available via the Consented Discharges to Controlled Waters with Conditions online dataset (Environment Agency, 2026b) and confirmed via a consultation response from the Environment Agency on 14 November 2025.
- 3.4.1.2 There are five discharge consents to surface waters (freshwater river, estuary and sea) within the Water Resources Study Area. Consents are listed in **Table 3.3** and presented within **Figure 3.2**.

Table 3.3: Discharge consents

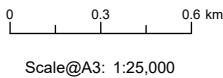
ID	Address	Issue date	Details	Receiving waterbody	Status
DC01	B1285 Storage Tank, East of Murton, County Durham	11 April 2000	Sewage - Water Company	Not Stated	Not Stated
DC02	Murton Combined Sewer Overflow, Church Street, Murton, Seaham	10 March 2015	Sewage - Water Company	Not Stated	Not Stated
DC03	Hawthorne Close Storage Tank, Murton, County Durham	11 April 2000	Sewage - Water Company	Not Stated	Not Stated
DC04	Dalton CSO, Dalton Retail Park, Murton, Seaham, County Durham	04 February 2015	Sewage - Water Company	Dalton Burn	New Issued Under EPR 2010
DC05	1 Barwick Street, Murton, Seaham	07 March 2019	Sewage - Water Company	Murton Dene	Varied Under EPR 2010



- LEGEND**
- MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore
 - Water Resources Study Area
 - Discharge Consents

Project Name:
MORVEN HAWTHORN PIT GRID CONNECTION PROJECT

Drawing Title:
FIGURE 3.2 DISCHARGE CONSENTS WITHIN THE WATER RESOURCES STUDY AREA



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3.5 Pollution incidents

3.5.1.1 Pollution incidents are classified by the Environment Agency into one of four categories using the Common Incident Classification Scheme. Data is available via the Environmental Pollution Incidents online dataset (Environment Agency, 2026d) and confirmed via a consultation response from the Environment Agency on 14 November 2025. Since 2006, this data has only included Category 1 (major) and Category 2 (significant) pollution incidents. The different categories of pollution incidents are defined in **Table 3.4**.

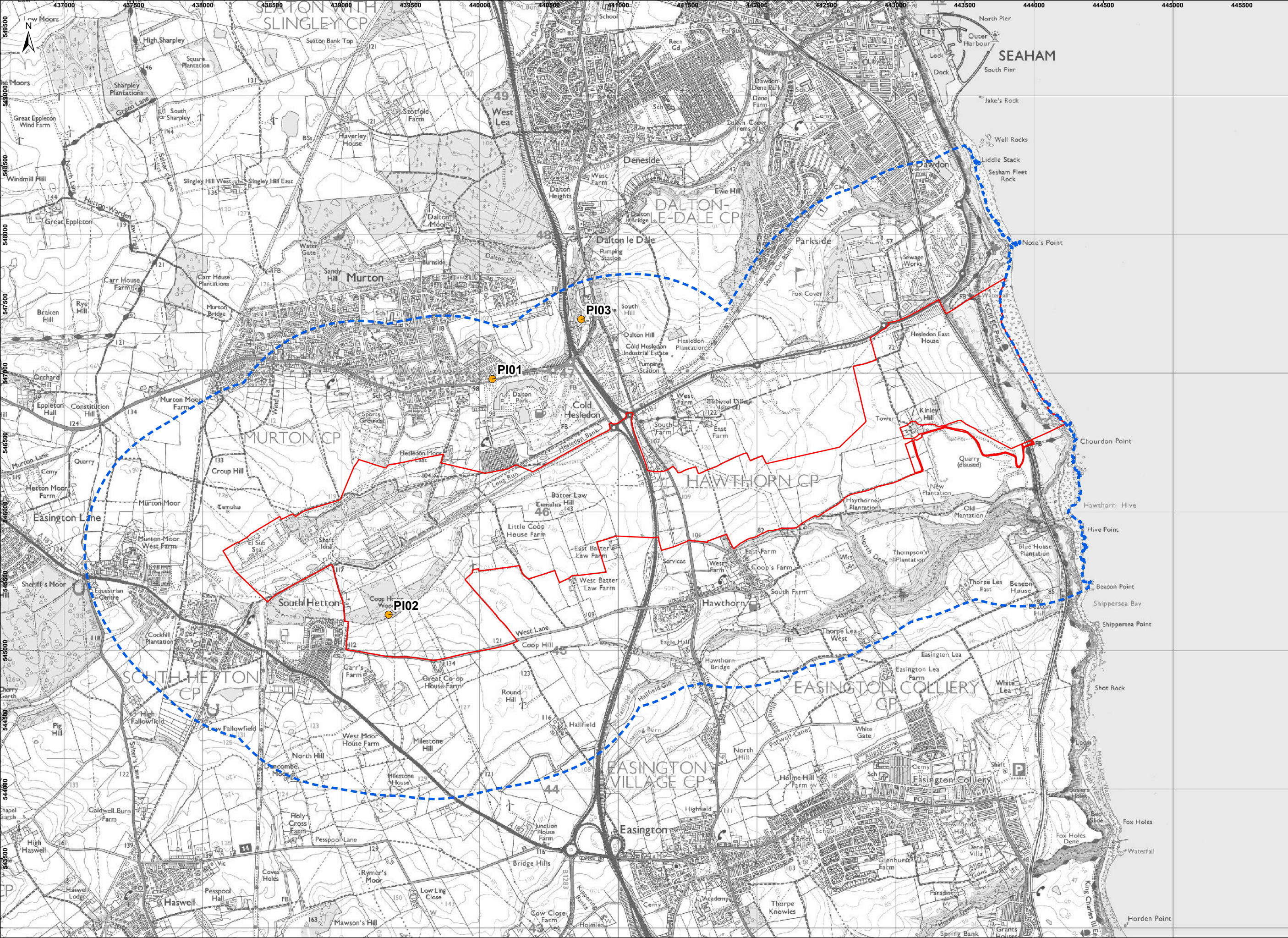
Table 3.4: Pollution incident categories

Pollution incident category	Description
Category 1	Major, serious, persistent or extensive impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property.
Category 2	Significant impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property.
Category 3	Minor or minimal impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property.
Category 4	Substantiated incident with no impact.

3.5.1.2 There are two significant pollution incidents in relation to water identified within the Water Resources Study Area, as detailed in **Table 3.5** and presented within **Figure 3.3**.

Table 3.5: Pollution incidents

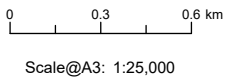
ID	Incident ID	Date	NGR coordinate	Pollution Category	Pollution type and description
PI01	140425	02 March 2003	NZ 4009 4696	Category 3 (land) Category 4 (water)	Smoke
PI02	484154	11 April 2007	NZ 39341 45260	Category 4 (land) Category 2 (water)	Sewage materials – final effluent into Coop House Wood Beck
PI03	551317	15 December 2007	NZ 40731 47391	Category 3 (land) Category 2 (water)	Sewage materials – final effluent into Dalton Beck



- LEGEND**
- MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore
 - Water Resources Study Area
 - Pollution Incidents

Project Name:
MORVEN HAWTHORN PIT GRID
CONNECTION PROJECT

Drawing Title:
FIGURE 3.3 POLLUTION INCIDENTS WITHIN THE WATER RESOURCES STUDY
AREA



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4 Summary

- 4.1.1.1 The assessment of Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents, and Pollution Incidents indicates that the Water Resources Study Area is subject to limited existing water resource use. No surface water abstraction licences were identified within the Water Resources Study Area, while four active groundwater abstraction licences are present, both associated with regulated water management activities. One PWS record was identified within the Water Resources Study Area.
- 4.1.1.2 Five discharge consents to controlled waters have been identified, primarily linked to historical industrial operations. These discharges are monitored and regulated to protect the quality of the receiving surface waters. Two significant pollution incidents have been recorded within the Water Resources Study Area, with the other reported incident classified as minor or having no lasting impact on the local water environment.
- 4.1.1.3 This annex provides detailed baseline information to support **Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk of the PEIR** and **Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR** by presenting data on existing abstractions, discharge consents, and pollution incidents, this report contributes to the identification and assessment of potential effects of the MHPGC Project on surface and groundwater resources. It provides an evidence base that informs the evaluation of potential environmental risks, the development of appropriate mitigation measures, and the overall understanding of the existing hydrological and water quality conditions within the Water Resources Study Area.

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