

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Beachy Head East

Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

June 2018

Consultation on Sites Proposed for Designation in the Third Tranche of Marine Conservation Zones

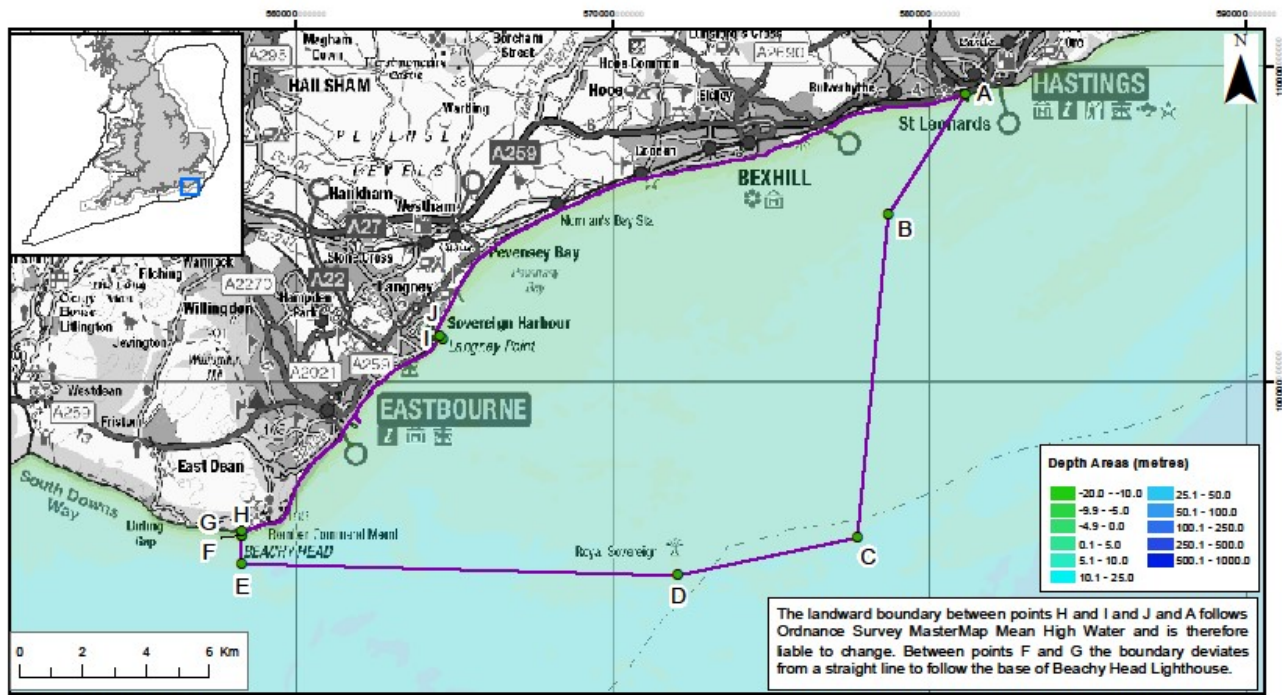


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Where is the site located?

Beachy Head East recommended Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) is an inshore site that covers an area of 195 km² and is located in the Eastern Channel region on the South East Coast.



Beachy Head East rMCZ Boundary

- Recommended MCZ
- Regional MCZ project area
- rMCZ boundary co-ordinates
- 6nM Limit
- 12nM Territorial Seas Limit
- Land

Point	Lat	Long	Point	Lat	Long
A	50° 51' 10.845" N	0° 34' 18.158" E	F	50° 44' 1.258" N	0° 14' 29.234" E
B	50° 49' 9.123" N	0° 32' 8.381" E	G	50° 44' 1.858" N	0° 14' 29.264" E
C	50° 43' 39.803" N	0° 30' 58.953" E	H	50° 44' 6.380" N	0° 14' 29.480" E
D	50° 43' 8.049" N	0° 28' 8.951" E	I	50° 47' 17.954" N	0° 20' 2.182" E
E	50° 43' 33.688" N	0° 14' 27.920" E	J	50° 47' 20.598" N	0° 19' 57.886" E

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Why is the site environmentally important?

Beachy Head East is characterised by a highly biodiverse sandstone/chalk reef system. Between Beachy Head point and Holywell, this chalk reef extends from the subtidal area up to the coast and white cliffs, forming sheltered rockpools at low tide that support rich littoral chalk communities. The soft chalk is pitted by holes created by rock-boring piddocks, a type of bivalve mollusc. Once empty, these holes can also house crabs, sponges, anemones and worms. Marine chalk is a globally rare habitat, a large proportion of which is contained in the UK. The largest underwater chalk seascapes are predominantly found in Kent and Sussex, including within the Beachy Head East site.

Short-snouted seahorses (*Hippocampus hippocampus*) and ross worm reefs (*Sabellaria spinulosa*) are also found within this site. Ross worms build tubes from sand and shell

fragments. Large colonies can form reefs, stabilising the seabed, providing shelter for other creatures and boosting local biodiversity.

The site is also considered an important nursery area for herring, plaice and Dover sole. Plaice and Dover sole survive by camouflaging themselves in subtidal sand allowing them to avoid predators.



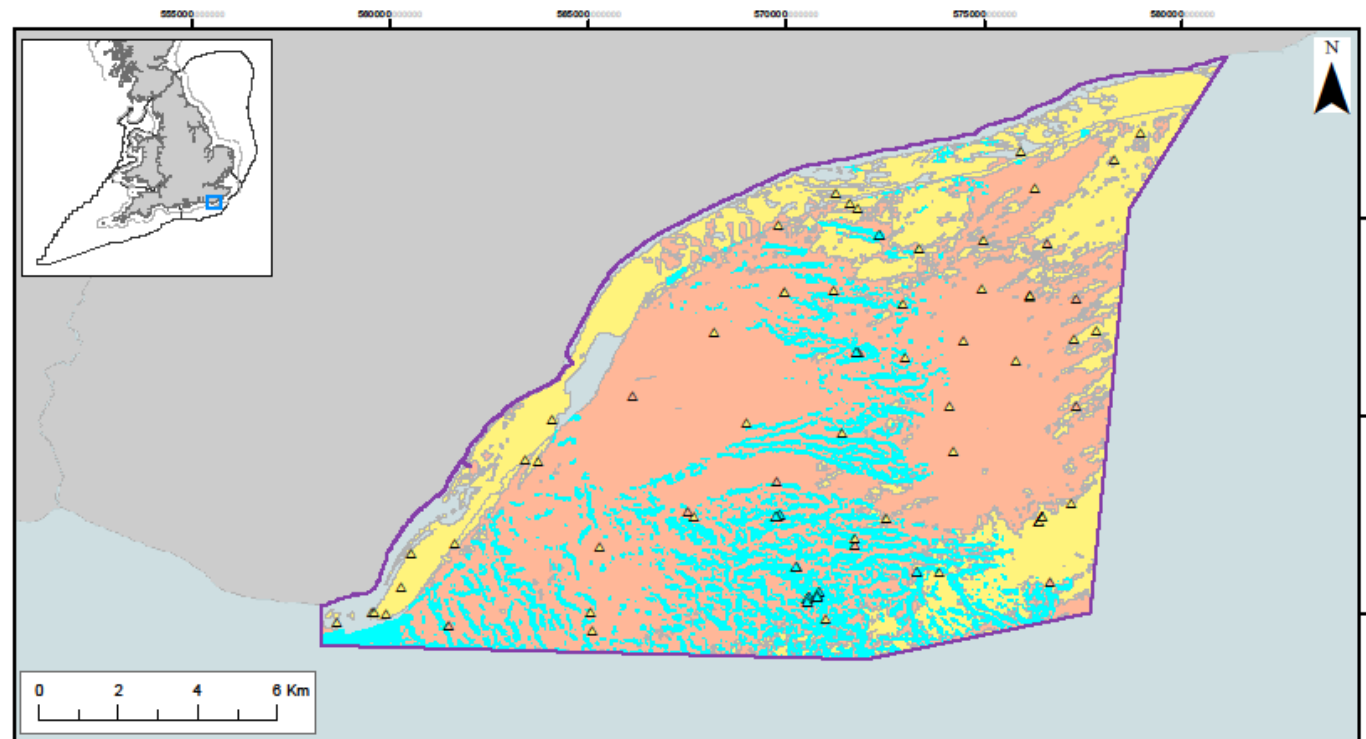
What would this site protect?

Designation would protect the following features. You can read more about the features this site protects and why they are important [here](#).

Feature	General management approach
Littoral chalk communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal sand	
Subtidal coarse sediment	
Short-snouted seahorse (<i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i>)	
Subtidal chalk	Recover to favourable condition
Peat and clay exposures	
Ross worm reefs (<i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i>)	
High/moderate energy circalittoral rock	

Where are the features located?

The following maps show the location of the features to be protected within the site. A range of different types of surveys have been used to create these maps. More detailed information on the techniques used can be found [here](#).



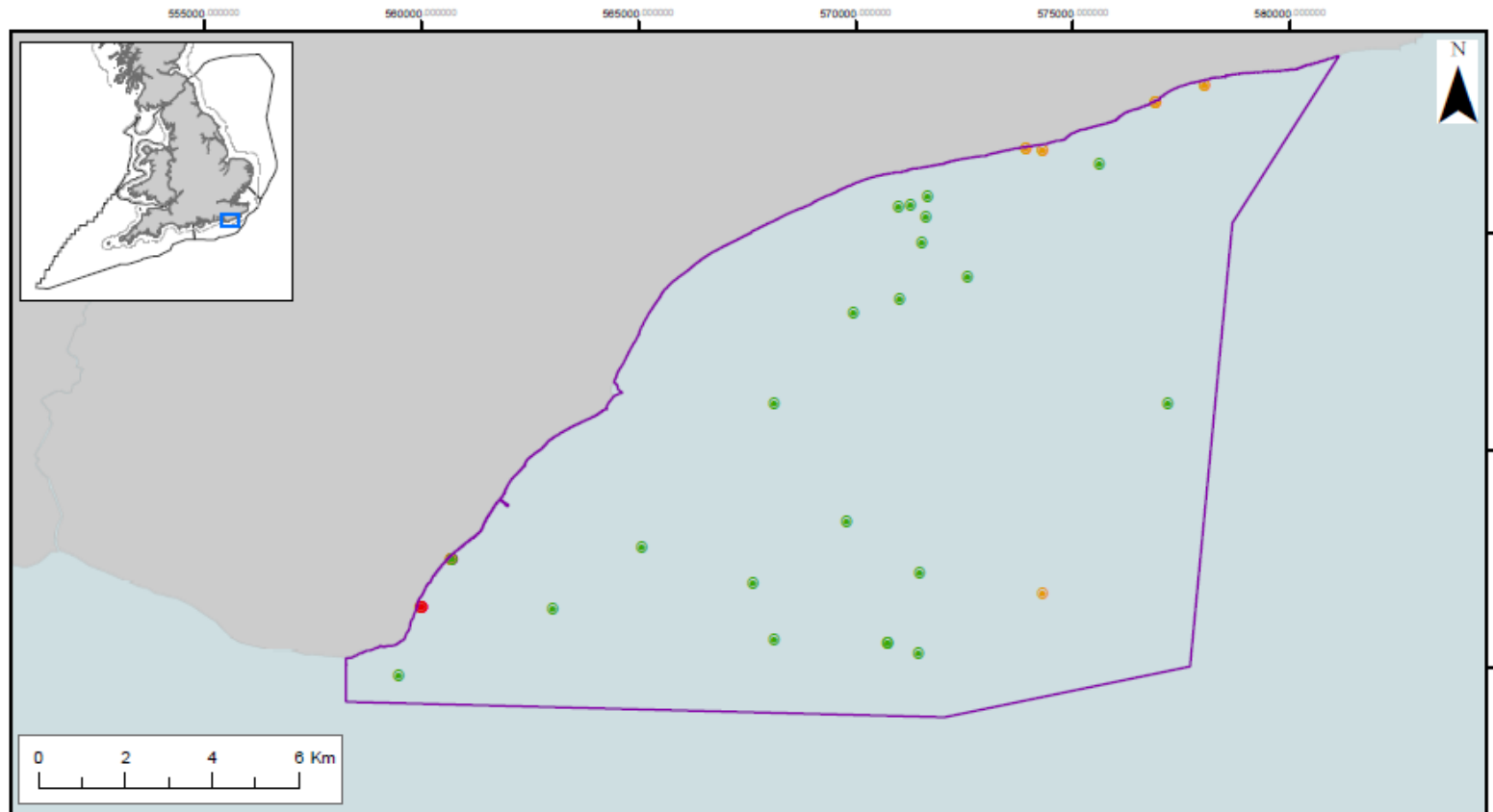
**Beachy Head East rMCZ
Broad Scale Habitats**

- Recommended MCZ
- Regional MCZ Project Area
- 12nM Territorial Seas Limit
- Sea
- Land

Features recommended for designation

- Circalittoral rock (A4)
- Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1)
- Subtidal sand (A5.2)
- Groundtruthing sampling points, such as diver survey, grab sampling, drop down video, walk over survey or core sampling
- Shaded areas represent habitats mapped according to data originating from surveys and mathematical models

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Reference: Theme ID: 1477566
Map Projection: British National Grid



**Beachy Head East rMCZ
Features of Conservation Importance**

- Recommended MCZ
- Regional MCZ Project Area
- 12nM Territorial Seas Limit
- Sea
- Land

Features recommended for designation

- Littoral chalk communities
- Peat and clay exposures
- Subtidal chalk

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Which activities are likely to be affected?

Management decisions are taken on a case by case basis by relevant regulators. If an activity is identified as requiring management this does not necessarily mean that it will need to be significantly restricted. Decisions will be based on the specifics of each case and any restrictions will depend on the sensitivity of the species, habitats or geological/geomorphological features to be protected to the activity taking place. More detail is available in the Impact Assessment.

Sectors and activities likely to be affected by designation		
Sector	Activity Affected	Best Cost Estimate (£) per year (rounded to nearest £100)
Commercial Fishing UK	Bottom trawling	£11,000
Ports and harbours	Environmental Impact Assessments for disposal and dredging activities	£5,000
Best estimate total cost		£ 16,000

Commercial Fishing UK

The following gears are known to be used within the site:

- Bottom trawls and mid-water trawls
- Nets, pots and traps

A local fishing fleet of under 10 metre vessels is active within this site using a variety of gear types. For these smaller boats we have less data on their fishing activities compared to over 10 m boats, which use the Vessel Monitoring System. We would welcome any new data available to help quantify activity.

The activities likely to be affected by designation are shown in the table above.

Ports and harbours

There are two disposal sites (Eastbourne and Wish Tower) within 1 km of the site and maintenance and navigational dredging also occurs within 1 km of the site. All future licence applications for these activities, and for any future harbour developments, will need to consider the possible effects on the features designated within the site. Environmental Impact Assessments for these activities will therefore incur additional costs.

What activities are not likely to be affected?

These activities are known to take place at this site but at their current levels of intensity the best available evidence indicates they are not likely to be damaging the features to be protected:

- Aggregate extraction
- Archaeological heritage
- Cables – power and telecommunication cables currently intersect the site
- Coastal development and flood and erosion risk management schemes
- Coastal infrastructure
- Commercial fisheries – mid-water trawls and static gear
- Commercial shipping
- Oil and gas exploration and/or production
- Renewable energy
- Recreation

Additional Information

To read the advice provided by Natural England, please visit

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6079955233931264>

To read the advice provided by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, please visit

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-7119>

For further information, please contact Defra on

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