

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Berwick to St. Mary's Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

June 2018

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

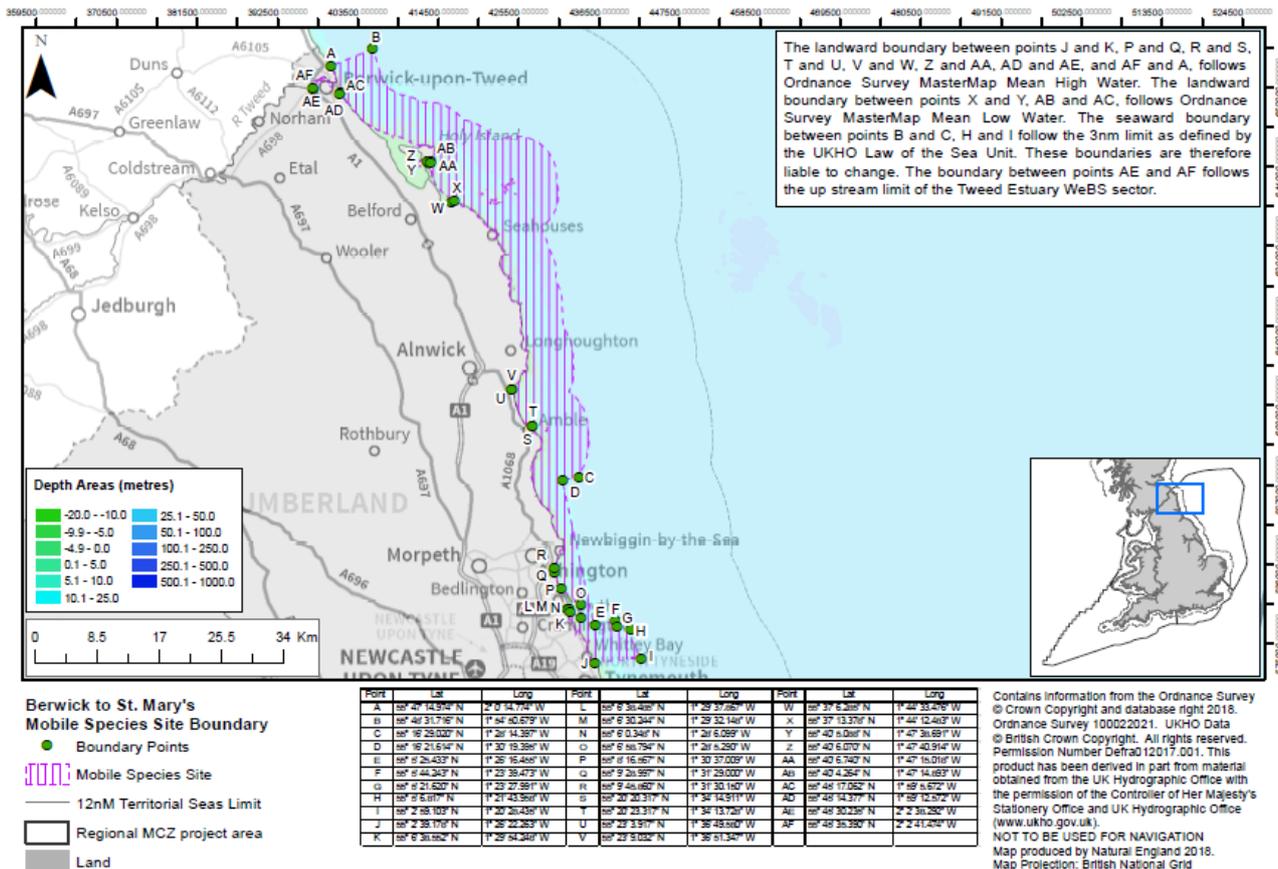


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Where is the site located?

The proposed Berwick to St. Mary's MCZ is an inshore site located along the Northumberland coast in north-east England. The proposed area extends from Berwick-upon-Tweed (Scottish border) in the north to St Mary's Island in the south, and covers an area of 634 km².



Why is the site environmentally important?

The existing Coquet to St Mary's MCZ holds nationally important numbers of breeding common eider (*Somateria mollissima*). The area also supports regionally and nationally (England) important numbers of common eider in the non-breeding season.

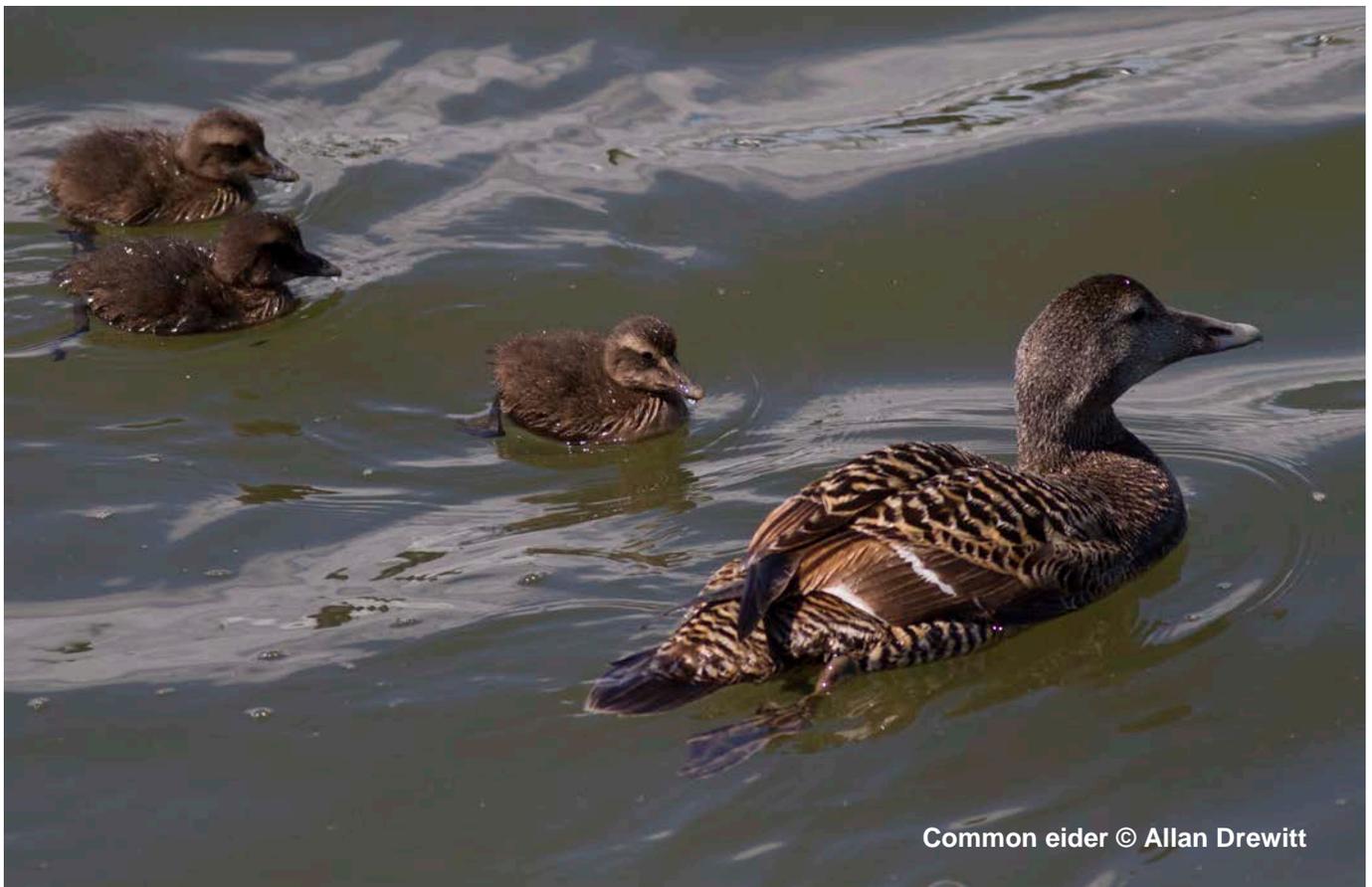
The area to the north (as far as Berwick-upon-Tweed) of the existing Coquet to St Mary's MCZ is equally important for common eider. This area encompasses the Farne Islands common eider breeding site, and these islands together with Coquet Island are the main breeding areas for common eiders on the east coast of England and form the southern limit of regular breeding of the species on the western side of the North Sea. This area also regularly supports regionally and nationally (England) important numbers of common eider in the non-breeding season. This area from Coquet to Berwick-upon-Tweed holds 26.2% of the English and 5.7% of the GB non-breeding population.

The conservation aim of the proposal for both breeding and non-breeding common eider would be to provide a critical seaward maintenance and foraging extension surrounding the breeding colony at Coquet Island and Farne Islands. The site would cover areas on which common eider are ecologically dependent, in this case for behaviours such as foraging, preening, bathing and displaying.

What would this site protect?

Designation would protect the following feature.

Feature	General management approach
Common eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>)	Recover to a favourable condition



Where are the features located?

Common eider are a highly mobile species and known to be present throughout the site.

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
Recreational activities	Powerboating, jet skis, sailing, angling and kayaking	Unquantified
Best estimate total cost		Unquantified

Recreational activities

Recreational activities such as powerboating, sailing and kayaking occur within the MCZ and pose a threat to eider adults and ducklings through visual disturbance, above water noise and collision. These activities are a concern around Amble Marina which is located within proximity to the main breeding site at Coquet Island. These activities are likely to increase in the summer months and would need to be managed around the sensitive breeding sites.

Additional evidence indicates there is a wide range of different recreational activities concentrated around tourist 'hotspots' e.g. Farne Islands and Lindisfarne. Unregulated jet ski activity is known to occur throughout the site. Management is required to ensure recreational activities are managed throughout the site.

Which 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
- Beach management
- Cables - power and telecommunication cables currently intersect the site

- Coastal development and flood and erosion risk management schemes
- Coastal infrastructure
- Commercial shipping
- Commercial fishing
- Oil and gas and renewable energy

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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