

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

## **East of Start Point**

### **Recommended Marine Conservation Zone**

**June 2018**

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



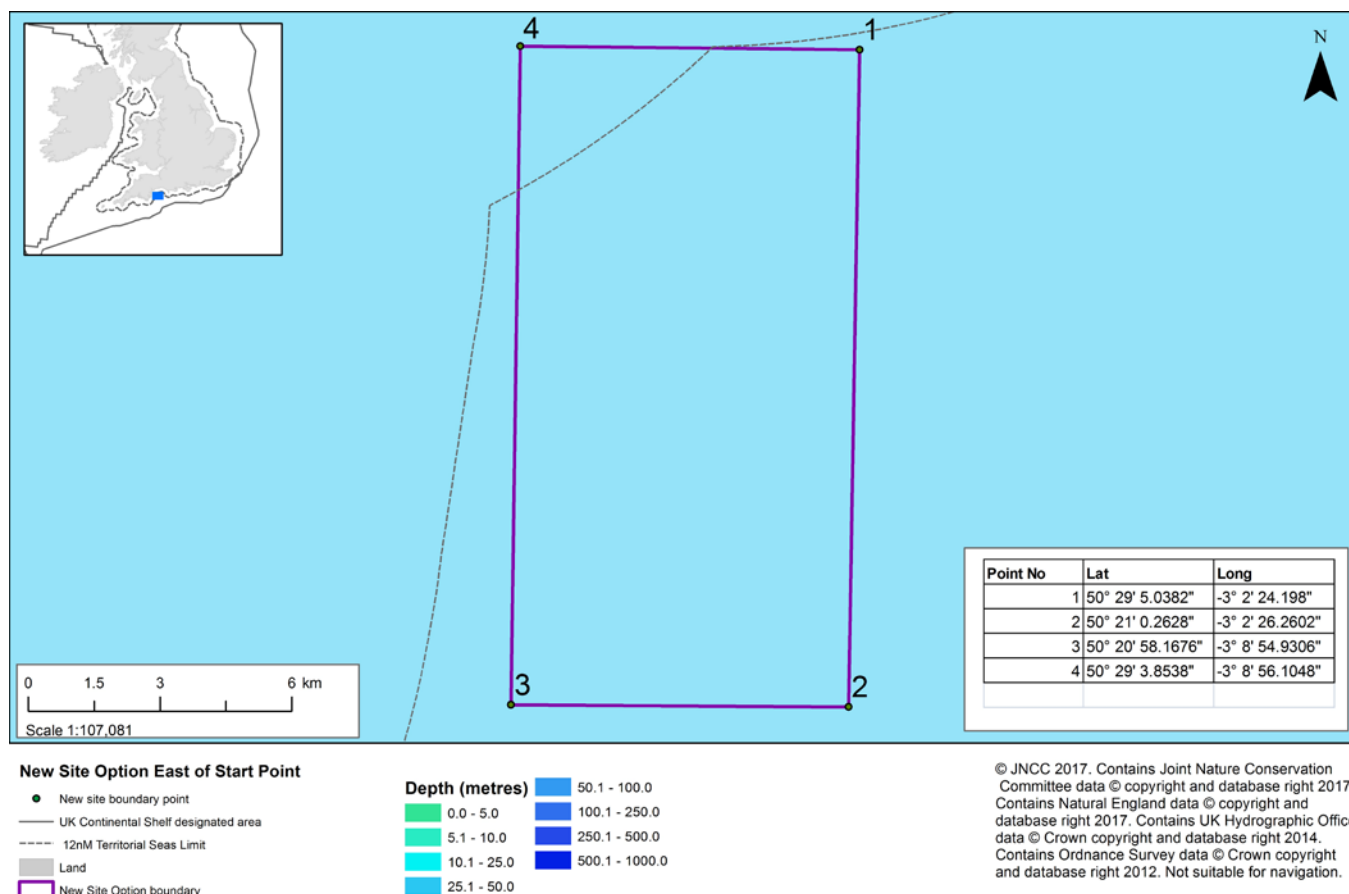
Sole on subtidal sand © Crown Copyright

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## Where is the site located?

The East of Start Point recommended Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) is an offshore site which covers an area of 116 km<sup>2</sup>. It is located in the Eastern Channel region, approximately 20 km off Torquay and 12 miles south of Lyme bay.



## Why is the site environmentally important?

The East of Start Point MCZ seabed is predominantly composed of subtidal sand. Most animals that live in this type of habitat are found on the surface of the sand or buried within it, such as worms, bivalves and flat fish. The site is also a spawning and nursery ground for a number of fish species such as lemon sole, sand eels, mackerel, thornback ray and spotted ray.

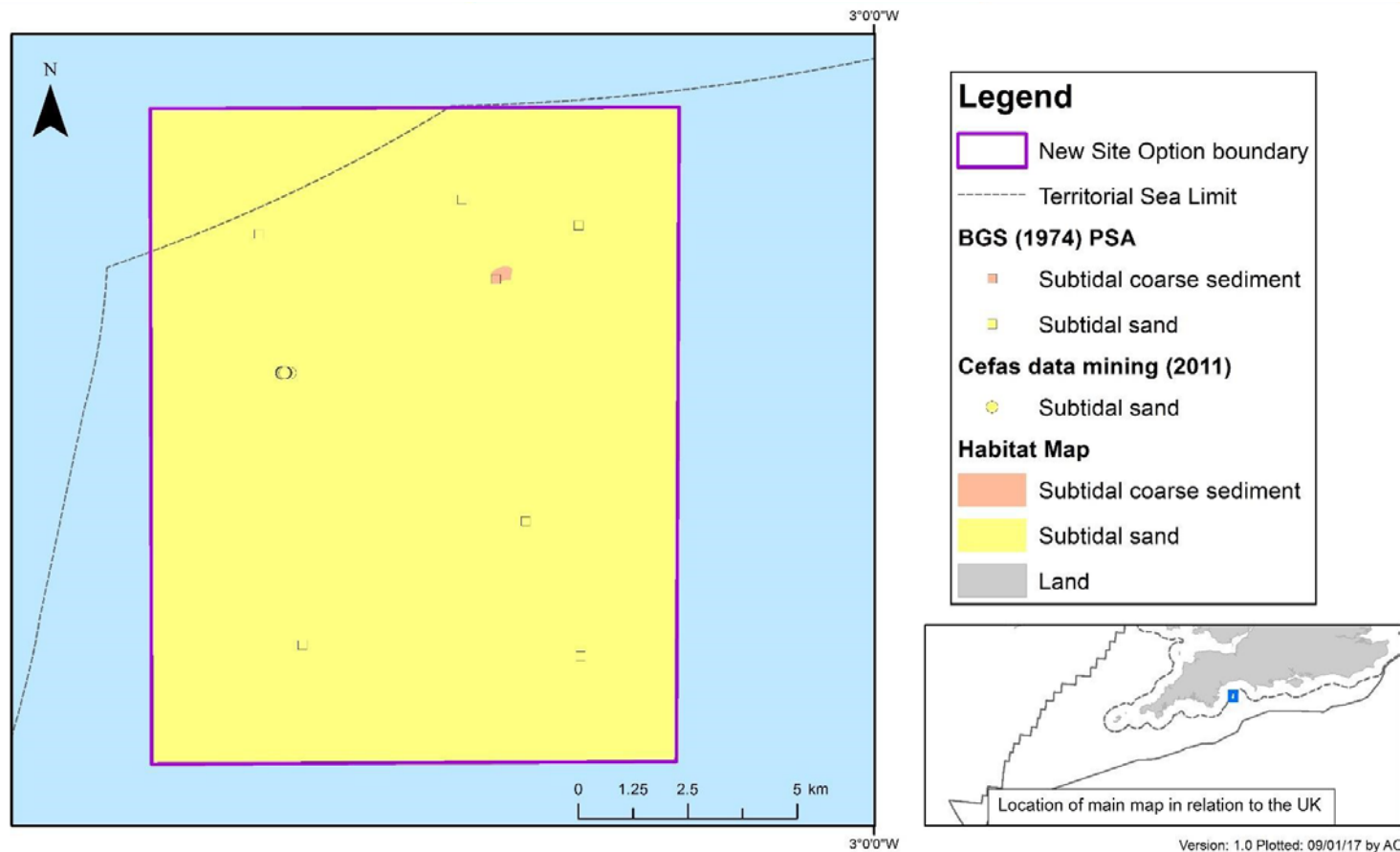
## What would this site protect?

Designation would protect the following feature. You can read more about this feature and why it is important [here](#).

Feature	General management approach
Subtidal sand	Recover to favourable condition

## Where are the features located?

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



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www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu), funded by the European Commission's Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE). Map Projection: WGS84, Inset: BNG.

## 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 and dredging	£14,000
Commercial Fishing non-UK	Bottom trawling and dredging	Unquantified
<b>Best estimate total cost</b>		<b>£14,000</b>

### Commercial Fishing UK

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

- Bottom trawls, dredges and mid-water trawls
- Nets, lines, pots and traps.

The site is used by a number of under 15 metre vessels which operate on a seasonal basis, mainly targeting lemon sole, cuttlefish and squid. Dredging activity occurs in the southern part of the site, which is either fished regularly or on a rotational basis by a scallop fleet. However, the main activity is undertaken outside the site boundary.

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

### Commercial Fishing non-UK

Vessels from France and Belgium operate at low levels within the site, commonly using beam trawls.

Although impacts outside the UK are not quantified as part of the impact assessment, the implications of designation on non-UK commercial fishing vessels are considered in deciding which sites to designate. The activities that are likely to be affected by designation are shown in the table above.

## 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:

- Archaeological heritage
- National Defence

## 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>

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