

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

## **Goodwin Sands**

### **Recommended Marine Conservation Zone**

**June 2018**

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

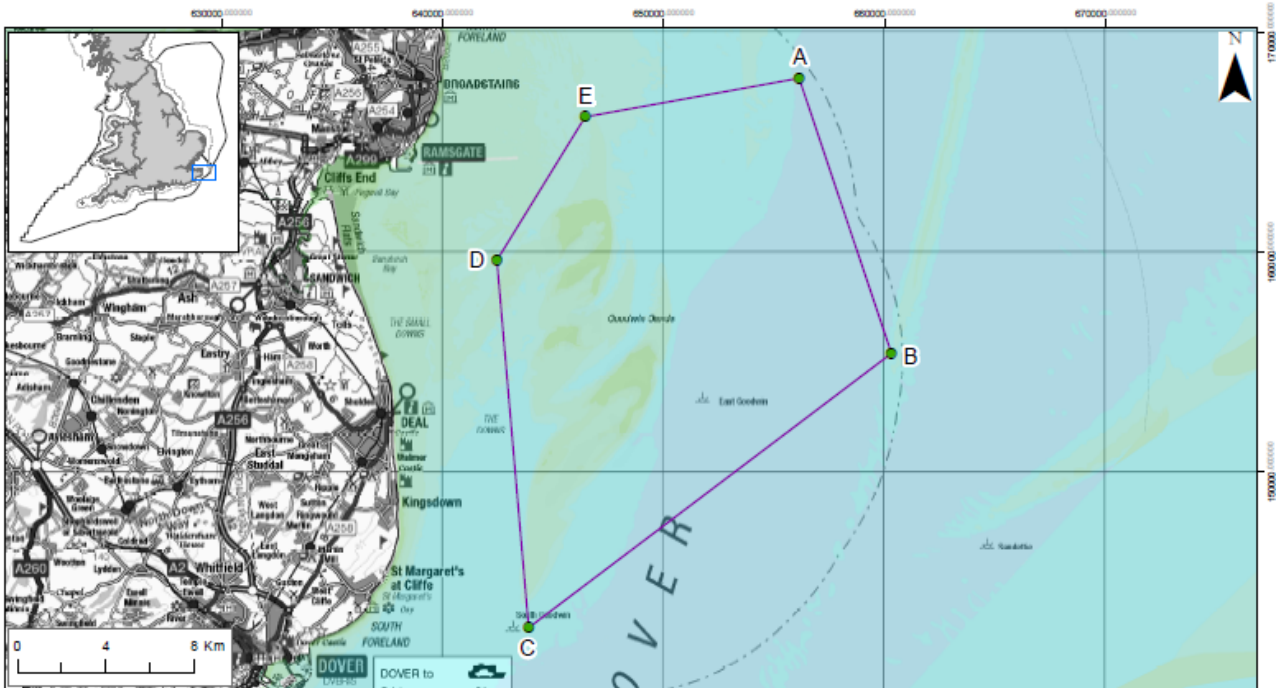


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# Where is the site located?

The Goodwin Sands recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is a large inshore site which covers an area of 277 km<sup>2</sup> and is located off Sandwich Bay on the Kent coast within the Southern North Sea region.



Goodwin Sands rMCZ Boundary

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

Point	Lat	Long
A	51° 21' 8.804" N	1° 40' 37.504" E
B	51° 14' 17.689" N	1° 43' 39.935" E
C	51° 8' 0.648" N	1° 29' 4.454" E
D	51° 17' 3.014" N	1° 28' 31.198" E
E	51° 20' 27.280" N	1° 32' 13.339" E

Depth Areas (metres)	
-20.0 - -10.0	25.1 - 50.0
-9.9 - -5.0	50.1 - 100.0
-4.9 - 0.0	100.1 - 250.0
0.1 - 5.0	250.1 - 500.0
5.1 - 10.0	500.1 - 1000.0
10.1 - 25.0	

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# Why is the site environmentally important?

Goodwin Sands is a large dynamic and constantly changing area of sand and coarse sediments off the coastline of Kent that is regularly exposed at low tide, providing an important haul out site for harbour seals and grey seals, and good foraging grounds for bird species. Around the Sands themselves, the site includes deeper areas of subtidal coarse sediment that are known to be of particularly high biodiversity.

The site also contains Ross worm reefs and blue mussel beds. Both are dependant on the underlying habitat, with Ross worms particularly occurring on coarser areas of sediment, including pebbles and boulders.

The site also includes moderate energy circalittoral rock, which is animal-dominated rock found on deeper or shaded vertical rock faces. This habitat supports a range of species, including fragile Ross bryozoan, pink sea fans, cup corals, anemones, dead man's fingers, sponges, sea squirts and red algae, as well as commercially important shellfish and fish.



Blue mussel bed © Natural England/Ross Bullimore

The site would also protect the English Channel outburst flood features which occur within the site forming a deep channel in the eastern side. This feature is evidence of a megaflood that occurred approximately 200,000 years ago leading to the separation of England from mainland Europe.

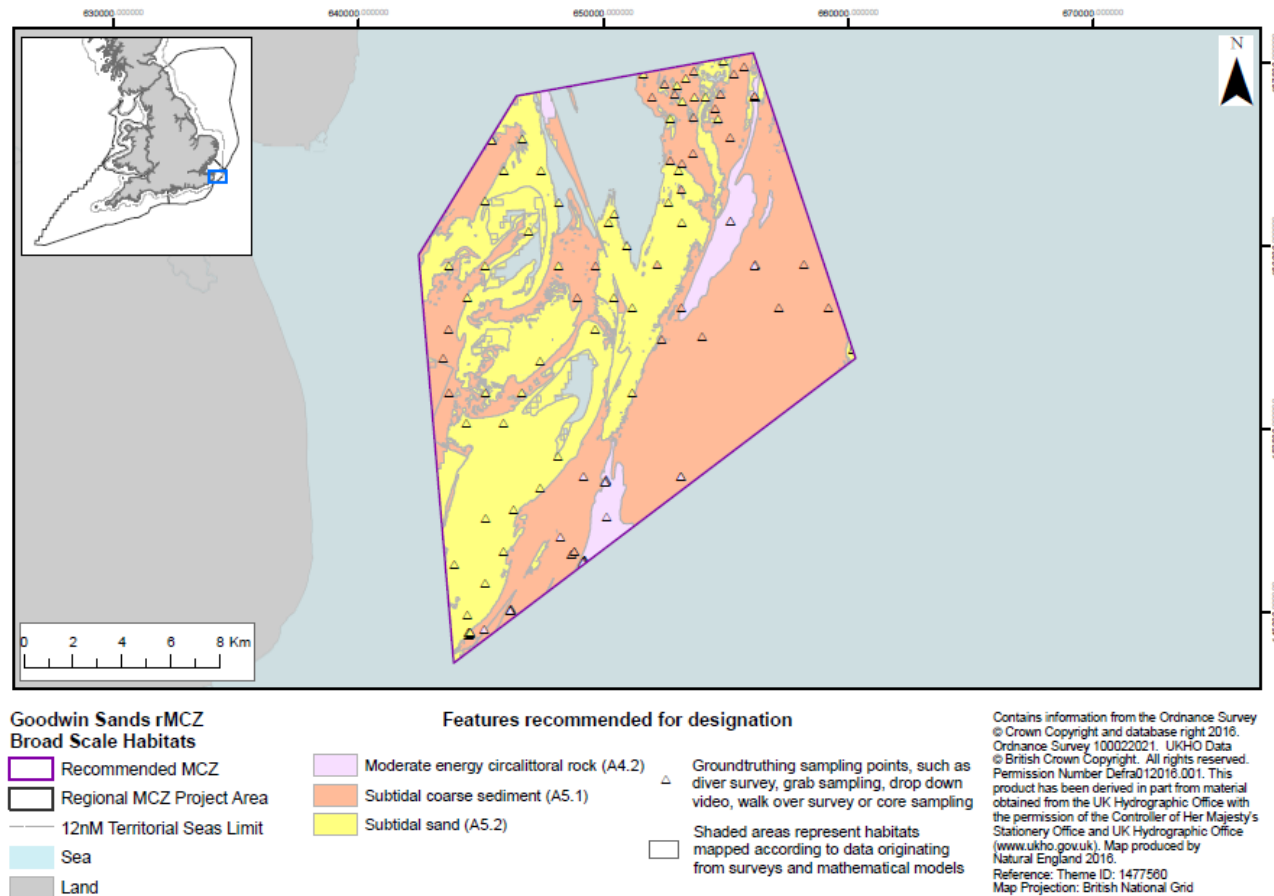
## What would this site protect?

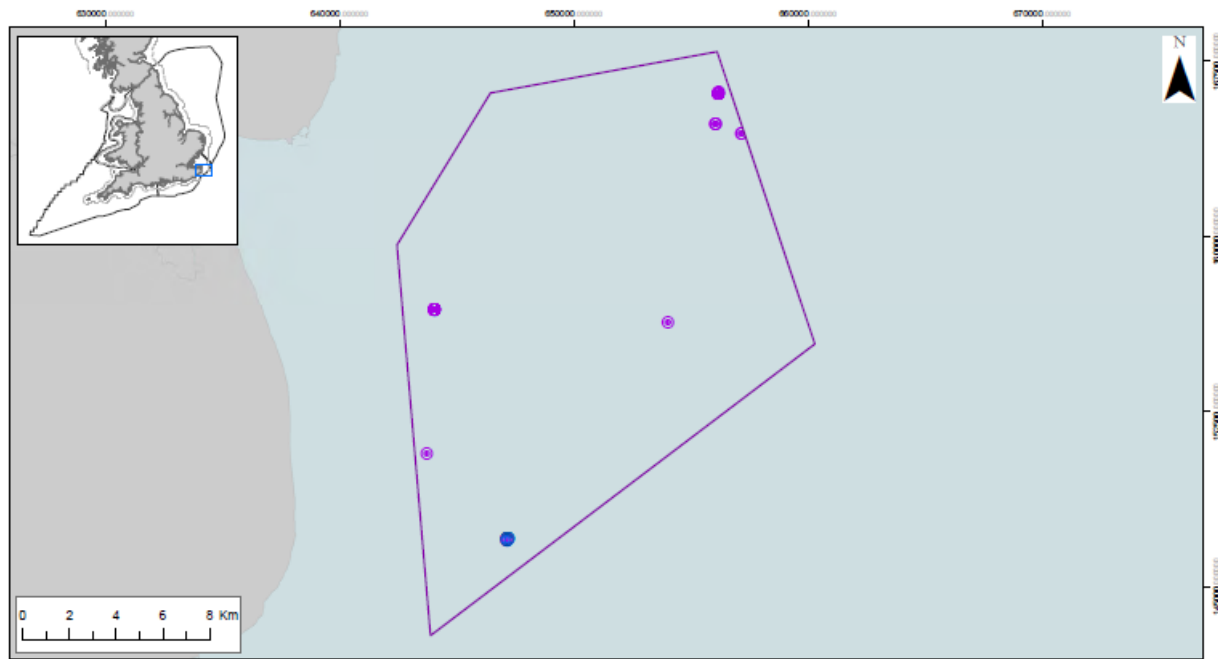
Designation would protect the following features. You can read more about the features this site protects and why they are important [here](#).

Feature	General management approach
Subtidal sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal coarse sediment	
Blue mussel beds	
English Channel outburst flood features	
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition
Ross worm reefs ( <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> )	

## 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](#).





**Goodwin Sands rMCZ  
Features of Conservation Importance**

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

**Features recommended for designation**

- Blue Mussel Beds
- Ross worm (*Sabellaria spinulosa*) reefs

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 Map Projection: British National Grid

## 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 trawls and dredges	£2,000
Commercial Fishing non-UK	Bottom trawls and dredges	Unquantified
Marine aggregates	Environmental Impact Assessments	£1,000
Ports and harbours	Environmental Impact Assessments	£4,000
<b>Best estimate total cost</b>		<b>£7,000</b>

## Commercial Fishing UK

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

- Bottom trawls and dredges
- Static gear

Bottom trawls and dredges are known to operate in this area although some fishing restrictions are already in place for these gear types. Local fishing fleets from Ramsgate and Deal use predominantly static gear and operate from smaller, under 10 metre, vessels. Species caught within the area include cockles, whelks, horse mackerel, cod and sole.

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

## Commercial Fishing non-UK

Vessels from Belgium, Denmark, France and The Netherlands fish within the site. The majority of landings are by Belgian vessels.

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

## Marine Aggregates

Minerals exploration and option agreements are held within this area and the area presents an opportunity for future mineral extraction. Future applications will need to consider the possible effects on the features designated and are likely to incur additional costs as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

## Ports and Harbours

The site lies within 5 km of three disposal sites, two of which are specifically used only for the disposal of material associated with the bed levelling and removal of sandbanks required for the Nemo interconnector cable route. Future applications will need to consider the possible effects on the features designated and are likely to incur additional costs as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

## 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
- Cables - power and telecommunication cables currently intersect this site
- Commercial fishing – static gear
- Commercial shipping
- National Defence
- Oil and gas exploration and/or production
- Recreation
- 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>

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