

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Kentish Knock East

Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

June 2018

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



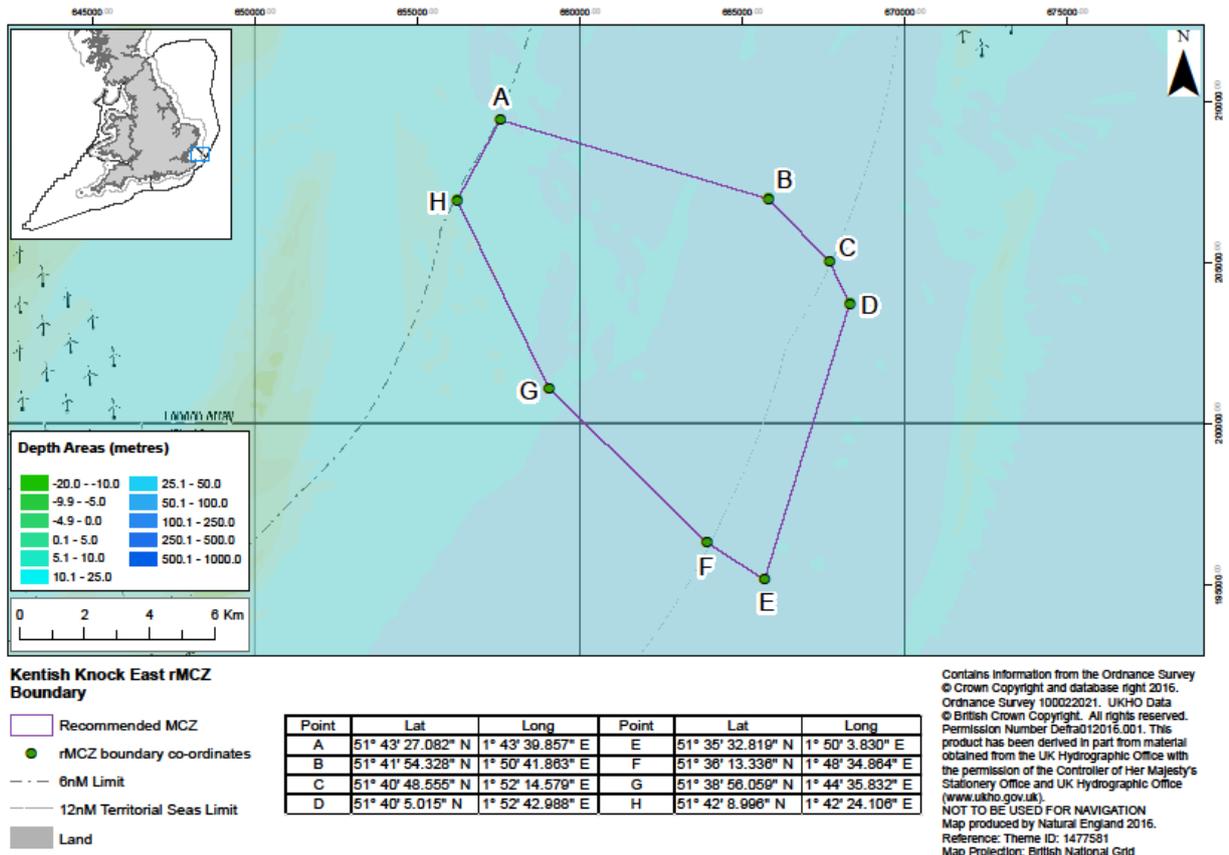
Sea urchin on subtidal coarse sediment © Crown Copyright

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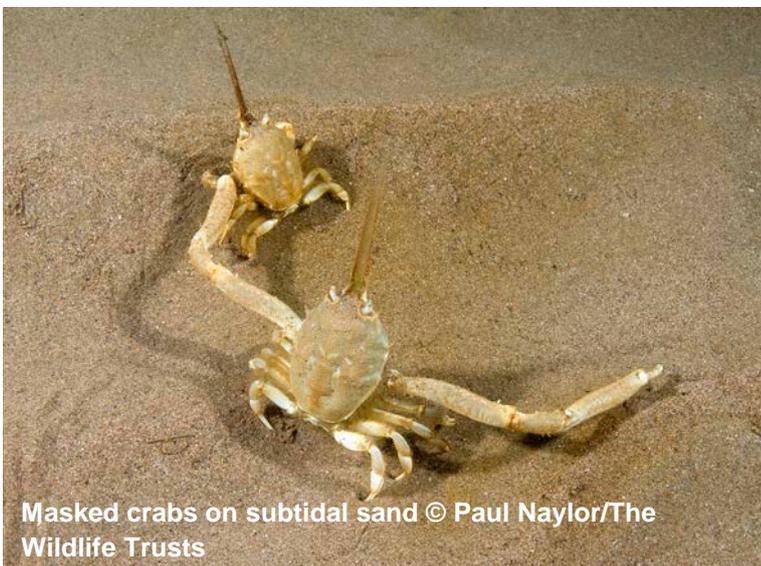
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Where is the site located?

Kentish Knock East recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is an inshore site with a small offshore section, which covers an area of approximately 96 km². The site lies in the Outer Thames Estuary on the east coast of the UK.



Why is the site environmentally important?



The Kentish Knock East MCZ contains a variety of sedimentary habitats ranging from fine sand through to coarse gravel and pebbles. This wide variety of substrates supports a multitude of species which live on and in the various sediments. Within the sandy areas, burrowing molluscs and benthic worms feed on the falling detritus, while small shrimp-like amphipods scavenge within the sand grains. This habitat is

also important for a range of fish species, including commercially important sand eels and flatfish.

Subtidal mixed sediments support a wide variety of species, from burrowing anemones to those dependant on finding a hard surface to attach to. Echinoderms such as sea stars and urchins can be found throughout these sediment types, with sea cucumbers burrowing in gravelly sediments.

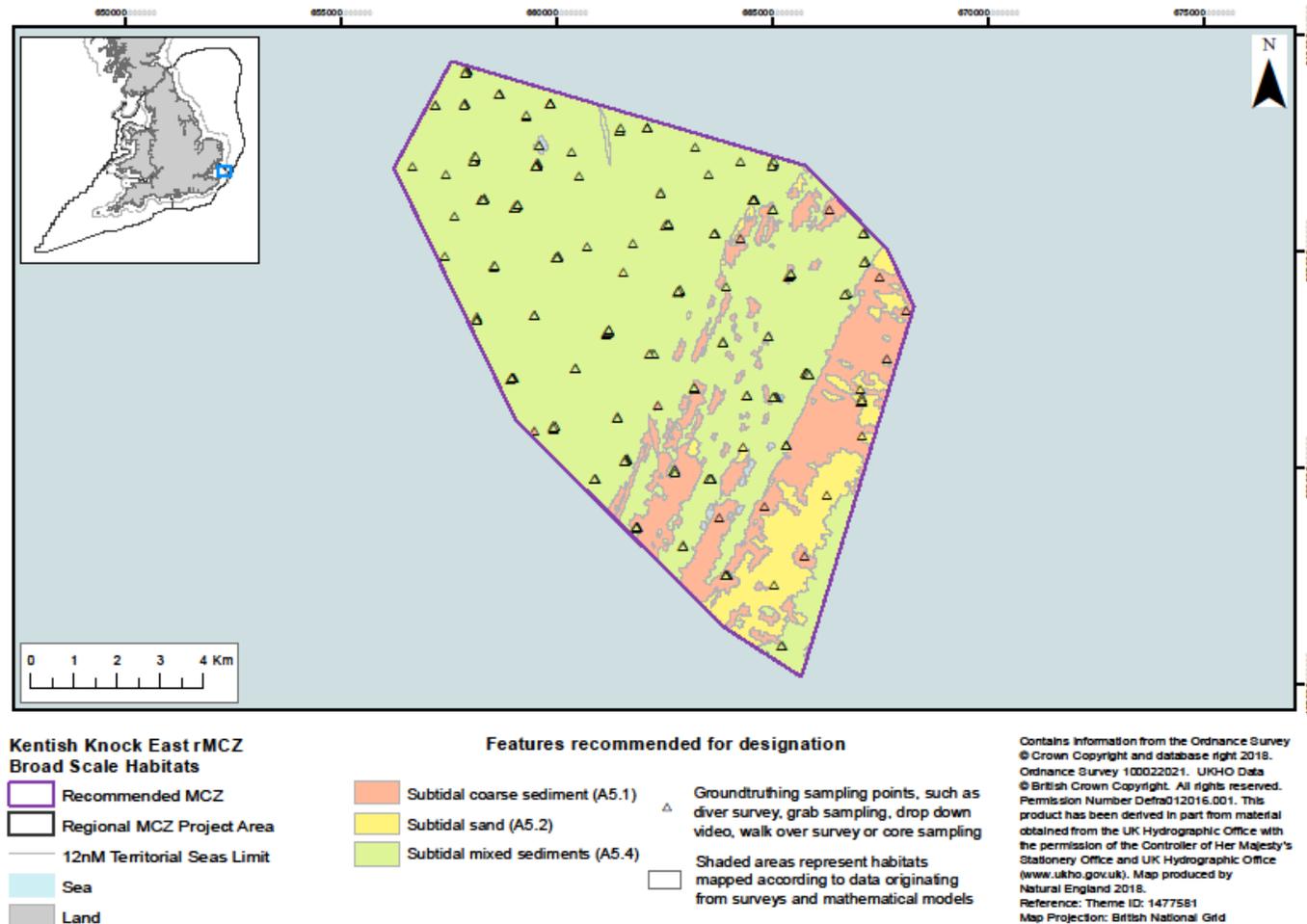
What would this site protect?

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	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal mixed sediments	

Where are the features located?

The following map shows the location of the features 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](#).



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	£900
Commercial Fishing non-UK	Bottom trawling and dredging	Unquantified
Best estimate total cost		£900

Commercial Fishing UK

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

- Bottom trawls, dredges & mid-water trawls
- Hooks and lines, nets, pots & traps

A number of UK vessels are active within this area, with mobile activities targeting species such as sole, bass, and cod, and static activities primarily targeting cockles and whelks. Several vessels deploy long lines in the area seasonally. A number of commercial fishing restrictions are already in place within the site. The activities that are likely to be affected by designation are shown in the table above.

Commercial Fishing non-UK

Belgian and French fishing fleets are active in the 6-12 nm limits and Dutch vessels fish the waters beyond the 12 nm boundary. A variety of gear types are used and targeted species include sole, mackerel, whiting and squid.

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:

- Aggregate extraction
- Cables – power and telecommunication cables currently intersect the site
- Commercial fisheries – mid-water trawling, hooks and lines, nets, pots & traps
- Commercial shipping
- Ports and harbours
- 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>

For further information, please contact Defra on

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