

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Markham's Triangle

Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

June 2018

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

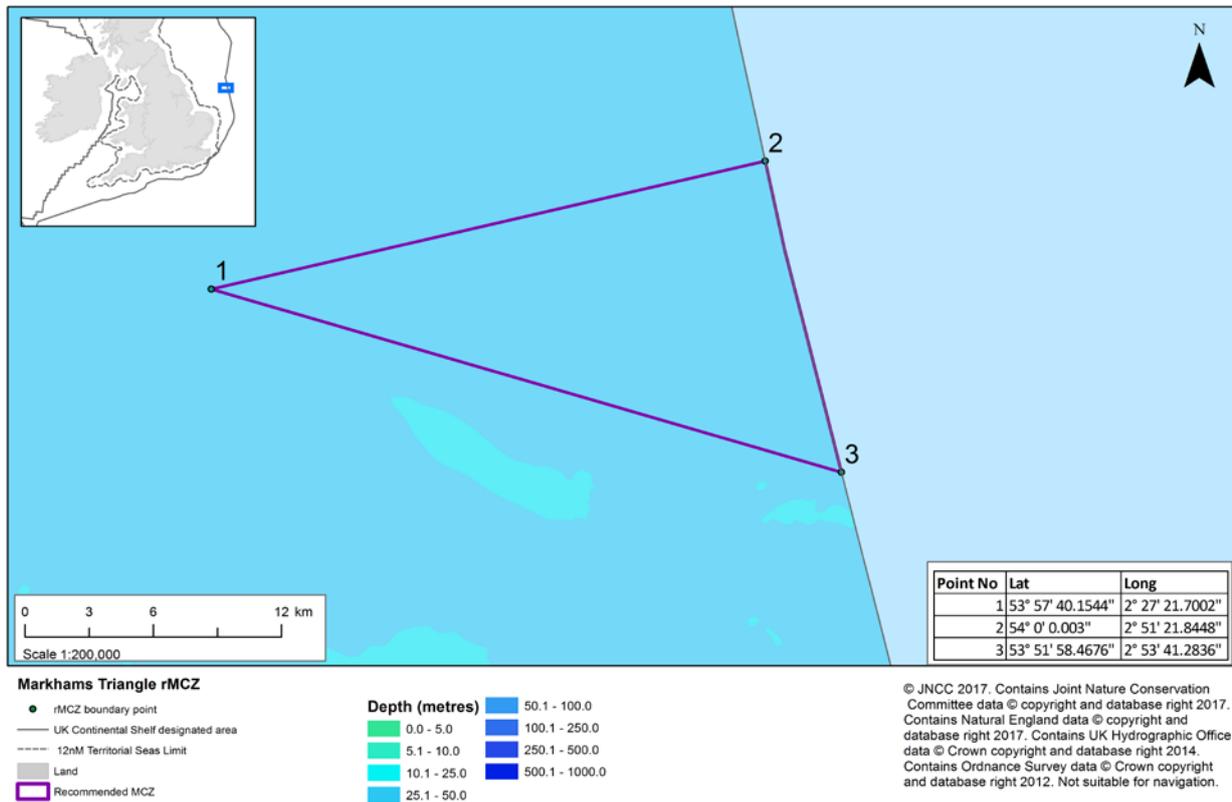


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Where is the site located?

Markham's Triangle recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is an offshore site covering an area of around 200 km². The site is located in the Southern North Sea approximately 137 km from the Humberside coastline in the East of England. The site is bordered by a Dutch Special Area of Conservation known as Cleaver Bank.



Why is the site environmentally important?

Markham's Triangle is composed of a mix of subtidal coarse sediment, subtidal sand, subtidal mud and subtidal mixed sediments. The varied nature of the seabed within this site means that it supports a wide range of animals such as polychaete worms, bivalves, starfish, and sea urchins. These species provide prey for crabs and flat fish on the surface of the sediment.



Subtidal coarse sediment © Crown copyright

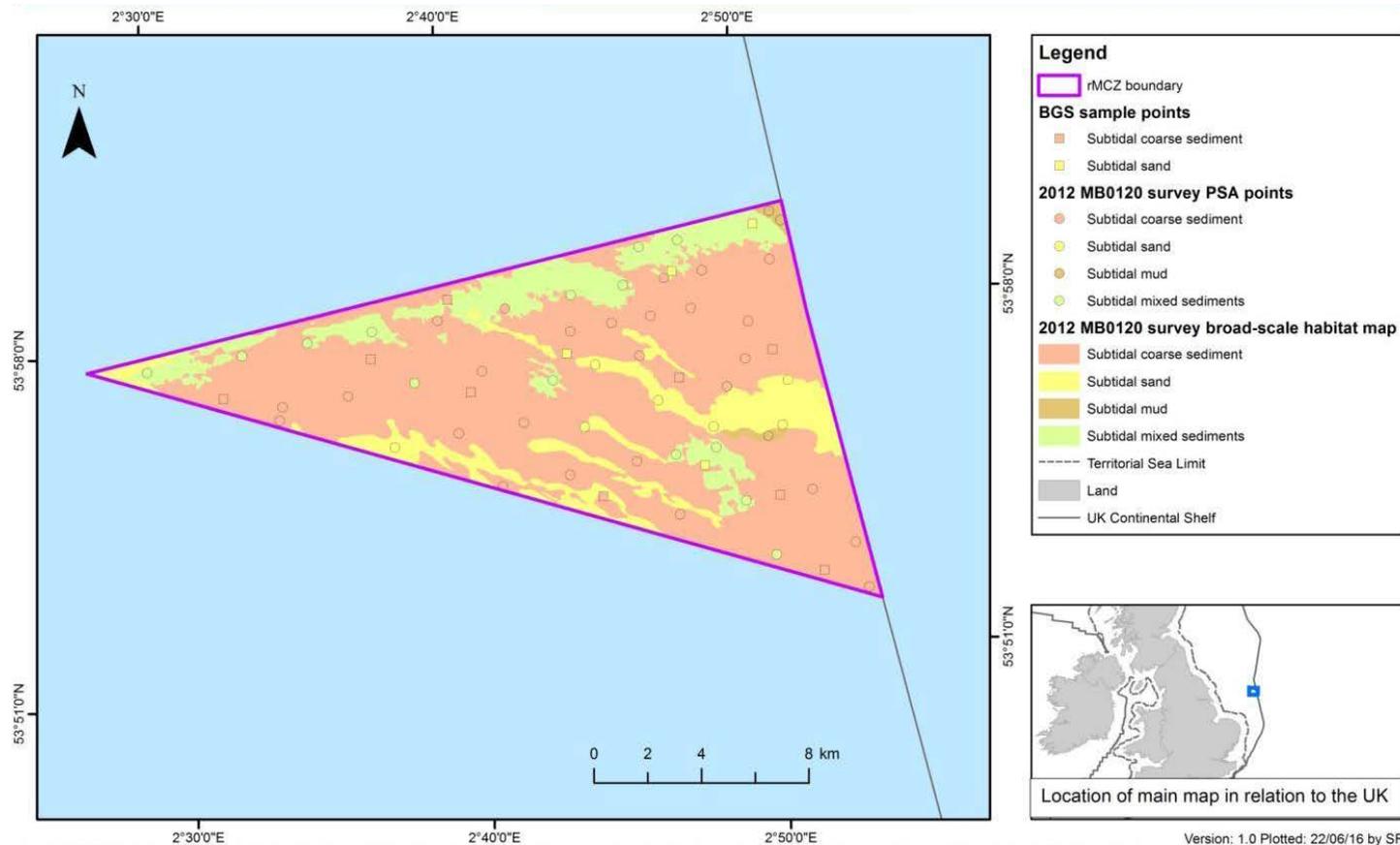
What would this site protect?

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

Subtidal coarse sediment	
Subtidal sand	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal mud	
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](#).



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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 and dredging	£600
Commercial fishing non-UK	Bottom trawling and dredging	Unquantified
Best estimate total cost		£600

Commercial Fishing UK

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

- Bottom trawls, dredges and mid-water trawls

A number of under 15 metre vessels operate within the site, primarily using bottom trawling gear. Target species include cod, haddock, lemon sole, plaice, prawn and whiting. The activities that are likely to be affected by designation are shown in the table above.

Commercial Fishing non-UK

Vessels from Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark and France are active in this site. Some fleets are only active seasonally. A range of gear types are used and target species include mullet, cod, whiting and sprat.

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:

- Commercial fisheries – mid-water trawls
- Cables – power and telecommunication cables currently intersect the site
- Commercial shipping
- National defence
- Oil & gas exploration and/or production
- 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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