

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Ribble Estuary

Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

June 2018

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

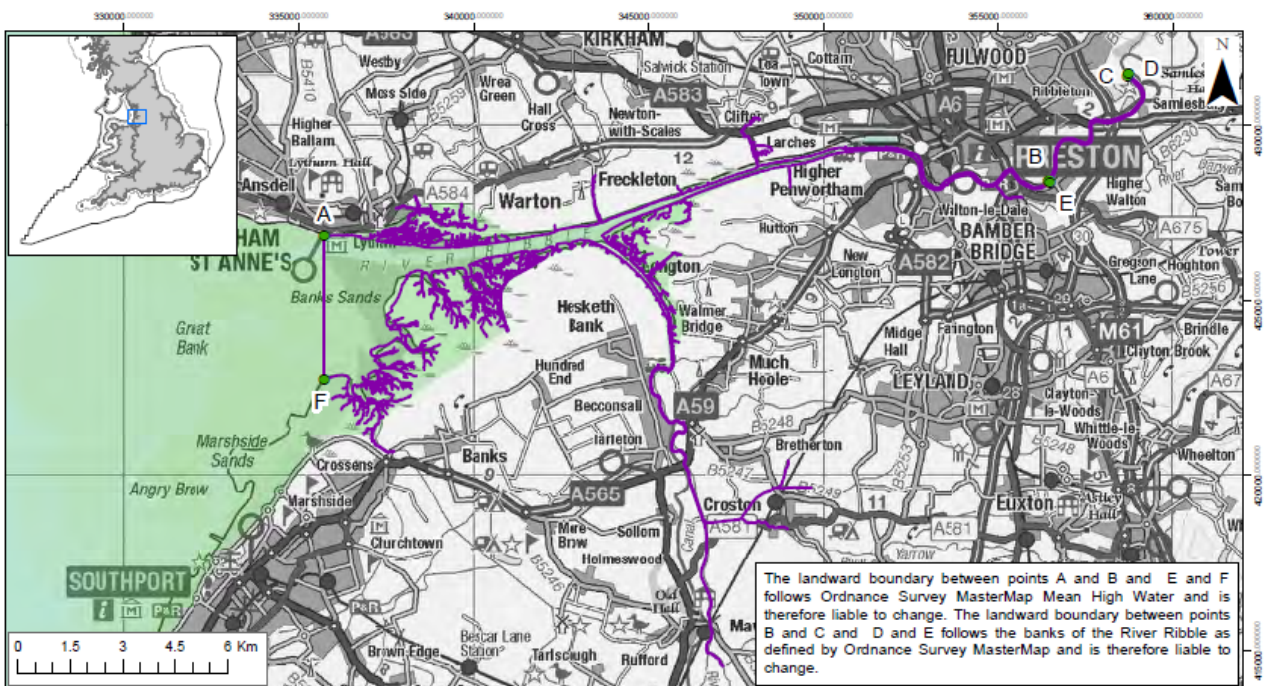


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Where is the site located?

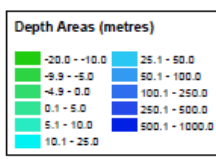
The Ribble Estuary recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is an inshore site that covers an area of approximately 15 km². It is located on the north-west coast of England, near Preston. The site boundary has been modified from that proposed by the Regional MCZ Project in order to better capture potential smelt spawning habitat. It now extends up to the tidal limit on the Ribble near Samlesbury, on the River Douglas near Rufford and on the River Yarrow near Croston.



Ribble Estuary rMCZ Boundary

- Recommended MCZ
- Regional MCZ project area
- rMCZ boundary co-ordinates
- 12nM Territorial Seas Limit
- Land

Point	Lat	Long
A	53° 44' 2.416" N	2° 58' 33.663" W
B	53° 45' 1.309" N	2° 39' 44.103" W
C	53° 46' 38.690" N	2° 37' 41.829" W
D	53° 46' 40.238" N	2° 37' 40.341" W
E	53° 45' 0.194" N	2° 39' 41.885" W
F	53° 41' 49.774" N	2° 58' 30.472" W



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Why is the site environmentally important?

Smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*) were once widespread in estuaries in the UK but have declined considerably over the past 200 years. They are known to congregate in large shoals in lower estuaries and migrate into freshwater where they spawn in spring. Estuaries such as the Ribble therefore provide critical habitats required to complete smelt lifecycles, including for feeding and post-larval development. Given this dependence on estuaries and the anthropogenic pressures smelt may encounter within estuaries during their migration, they are considered suitable candidates for protection within MCZs.

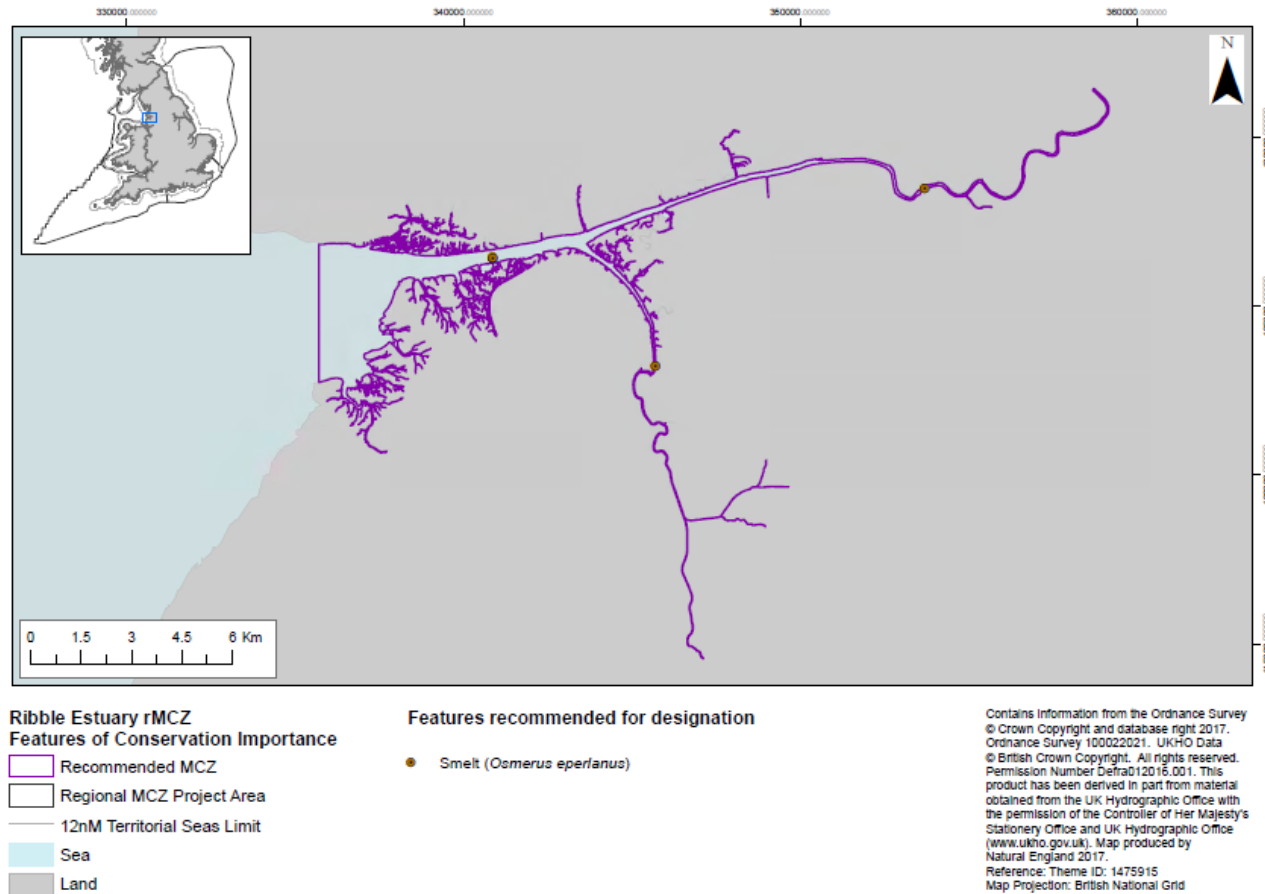
What would this site protect?

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

Feature	General Management Approach
Smelt (<i>Osmerus eperlanus</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

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.

For the Ribble Estuary MCZ, it is not expected that any of the activities currently taking place on the site are likely to be affected by designation.

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 feature to be protected:

- Archaeological heritage
- Commercial fishing
- Commercial shipping
- Flood and coastal erosion risk management activities
- Ports and harbours
- Recreation

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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