

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

## South of Celtic Deep

### Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

June 2018

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



Moderate energy circalittoral rock © JNCC

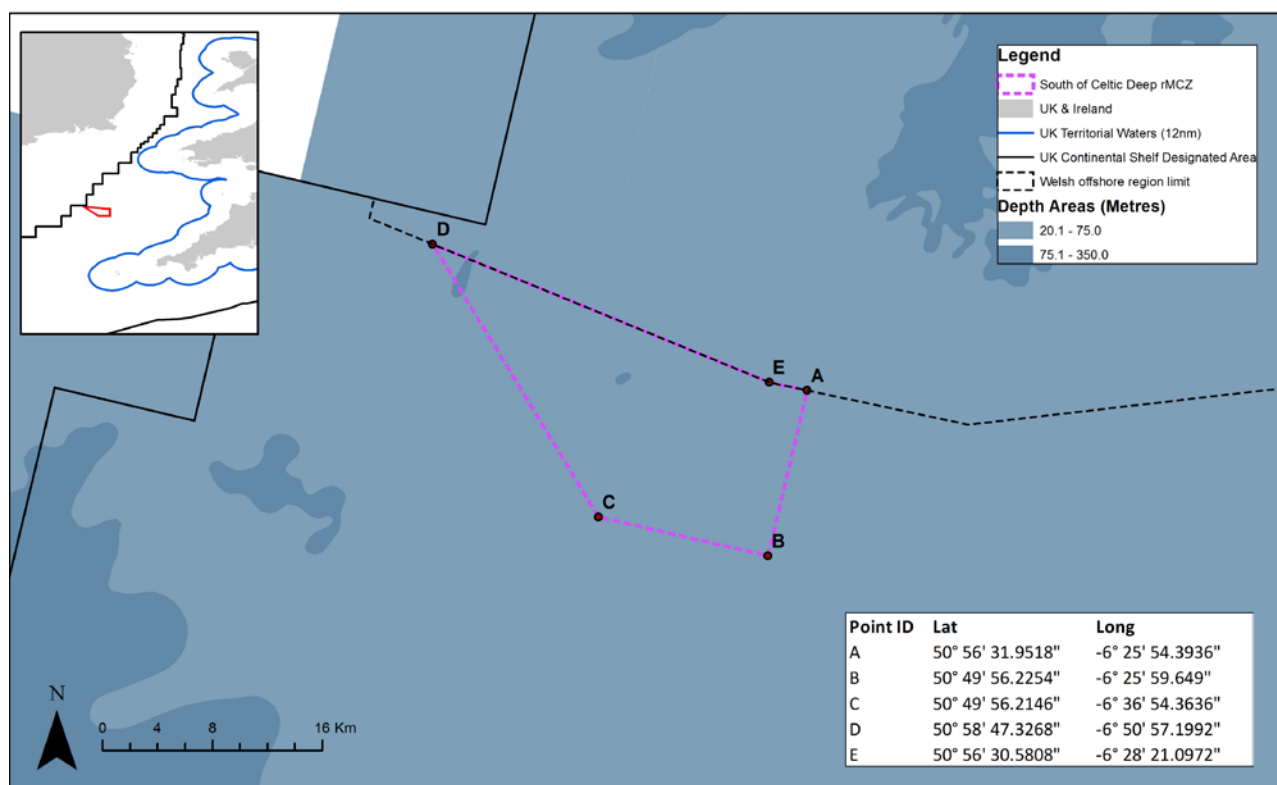
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## Where is the site located?

South of Celtic Deep recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is an offshore site located off the north coast of Cornwall, in the Western Channel and Celtic Sea. It covers an area of approximately 278 km<sup>2</sup>. The western site boundary is aligned with the limit of the English territorial waters. The south-eastern tip of the site is approximately 90 km to the north-west of the Land's End peninsula. The site varies in depth between 50 and 100 metres, with two small areas dipping below 100 metres.

The proposed boundary of the site is different to the original boundary recommended by the Regional MCZ Projects, which spanned the boundary between offshore English and Welsh territorial waters. Since this site was identified by the Regional MCZ Projects, the Silk Commission, an independent commission established in 2011 to review the devolution of powers to the Welsh Government, recommended that offshore waters adjacent to Wales should be the responsibility of the Welsh Government. Therefore the boundary proposed for designation relates to the area within English offshore waters only.

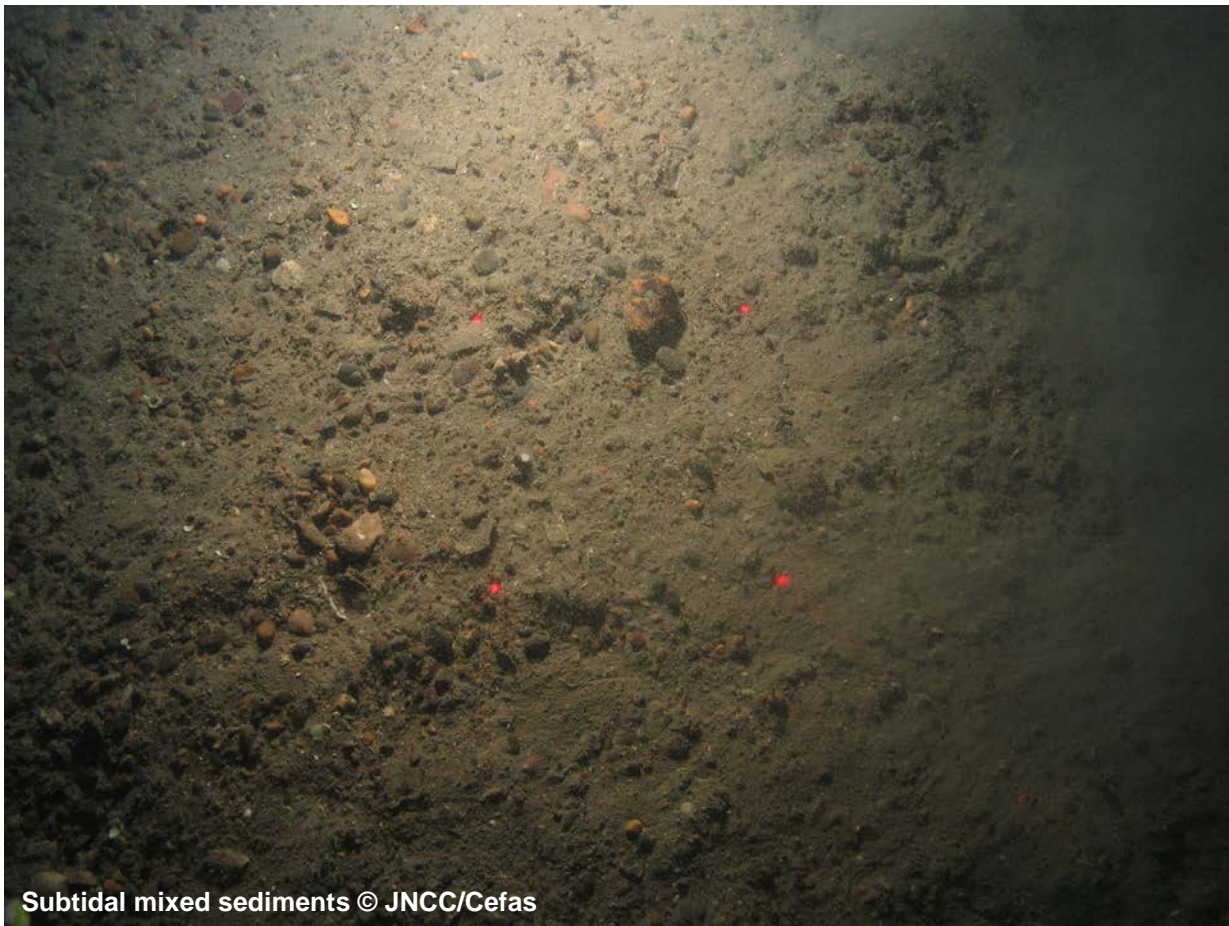


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## Why is the site environmentally important?

South of Celtic Deep supports a variety of habitats ranging from rocky to sandy habitats. The depth of water across the site means that the amount of light reaching the seabed can be restricted, resulting in limited amounts of plant life and a seabed dominated by animal

communities. The varied nature of the seabed means it could support a wide range of animals such as worms, bivalves, starfish, anemones, sea fans and sea urchins. This site makes an important contribution towards achieving the network targets for subtidal coarse sediment and subtidal sand. The site also increases the connectivity of sediment habitats protected within surrounding MPAs.



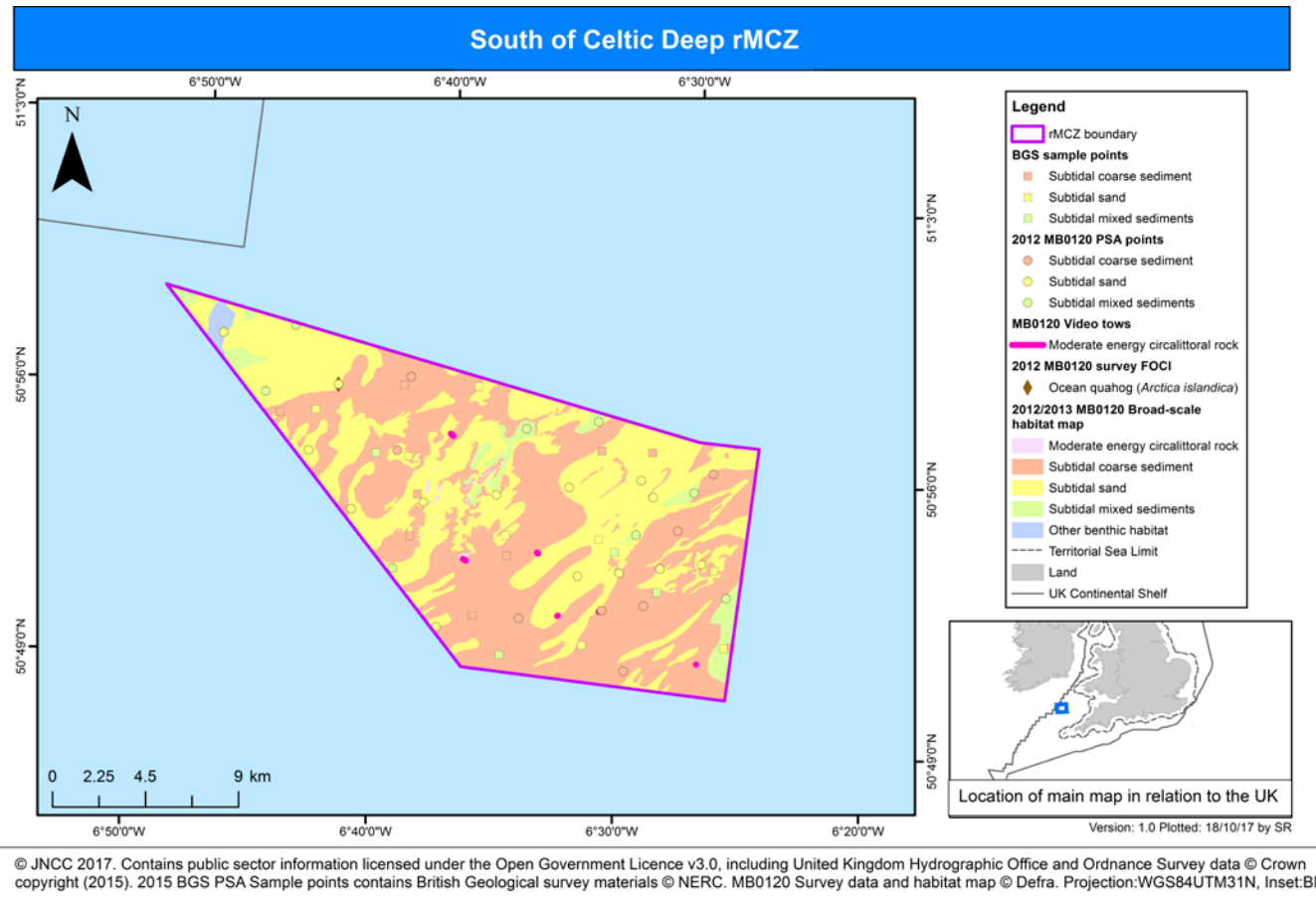
## What would this site protect?

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 coarse sediment	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal sand	
Subtidal mixed sediments	
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	

# 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	£200
Commercial Fishing non-UK	Bottom trawling and dredging	Unquantified
<b>Best estimate total cost</b>		<b>£200</b>

### Commercial Fishing UK

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

- Bottom trawls, dredges and mid-water trawls
- Static gear, including gill nets

UK fishing vessels operate within the site primarily using gill nets, but also using other static gear as well as bottom trawls and mid-water trawls. A number of species are caught within the area, including monkfish, sole, megrim, saithe, ling, hake and turbot.

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

### Commercial Fishing non-UK

Fishing vessels from France, Belgium, Denmark and the Republic of Ireland operate in this area using a range of static and mobile gear types.

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.

## 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 – existing interconnectors and telecommunication cables intersect the site
- Commercial fishing – mid-water trawling, gill netting and other static gear
- Oil and gas exploration and/or production

## 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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