

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

## Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds

### Recommended Marine Conservation Zone

January 2015

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



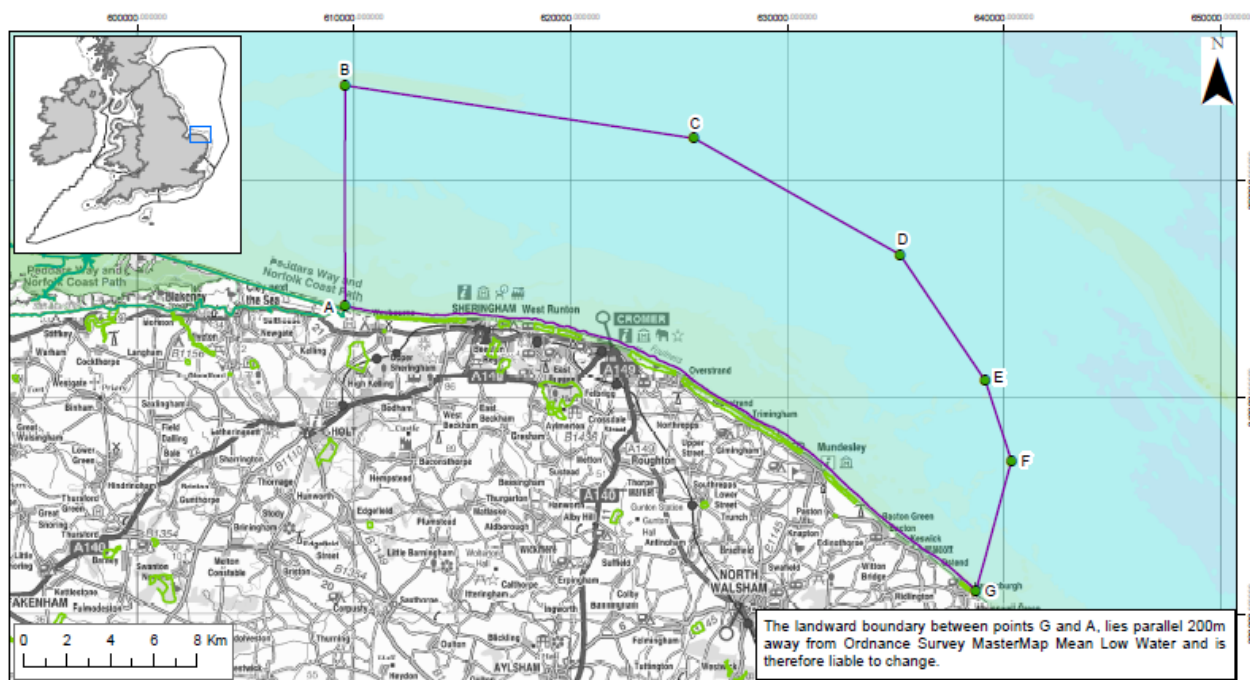
## Contents

Where the site is located.....	3
How to comment on the consultation .....	3
Why this site is environmentally important .....	4
What this site would protect .....	4
Where the features are located.....	5
Features that are not proposed for designation .....	7
Activities that are likely to be affected .....	7
Additional Information .....	8

## Where the site is located

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds recommended Marine Conservation Zone (rMCZ) is an inshore site located 200 metres from the shore of the North Norfolk Coast. It begins just west of Weybourne and ends at Happisborough, extending around 10 km out to sea and covering an area of 316 km<sup>2</sup>.

It has a maximum depth of about 20 metres and some of its unique features are visible in the shallows with a mask and snorkel in favourable conditions.



**Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds rMCZ Boundary**

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

Point	Lat	Long
A	52° 57' 15.971" N	1° 7' 7.478" E
B	53° 2' 44.496" N	1° 7' 31.180" E
C	53° 1' 2.336" N	1° 21' 48.399" E
D	52° 57' 53.979" N	1° 30' 3.035" E
E	52° 54' 39.322" N	1° 33' 18.068" E
F	52° 52' 37.802" N	1° 34' 13.039" E
G	52° 49' 27.582" N	1° 32' 29.918" E

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

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## How to comment on the consultation

You can comment on this proposal by responding to the [consultation](#) taking place between 30<sup>th</sup> January and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

## Why this site is environmentally important

The site fills gaps for infralittoral and circalittoral rock. Infralittoral rock, found in the shallower waters of the site, provides a home for a variety of small marine creatures which shelter and feed amongst seaweeds. Circalittoral rocks are found in deeper waters and the lack of sunlight prevents seaweeds from growing, so the marine environment is dominated by animal communities including cup coral, sea-fans, anemones and sponges. Mobile animals in this environment include starfish, brittlestars, and sea urchins.

Within a wider area that is predominantly sandy, the chalk beds, after which the site is named, provide stable surfaces for seaweeds and static animals to settle on and grow. The beds are nursery areas for juveniles of species as well as being important in the food chain for animals such as the fish, tompot blenny and the small-spotted catshark. The chalk beds are inhabited by lobsters and crabs which settle within the crevices and holes.

The area supports the small scale crab and lobster fishery vital to the character and economy of the area. Other common species include sea squirts, hermit crabs and pipefish, a relative of the seahorse.

## What this site would protect

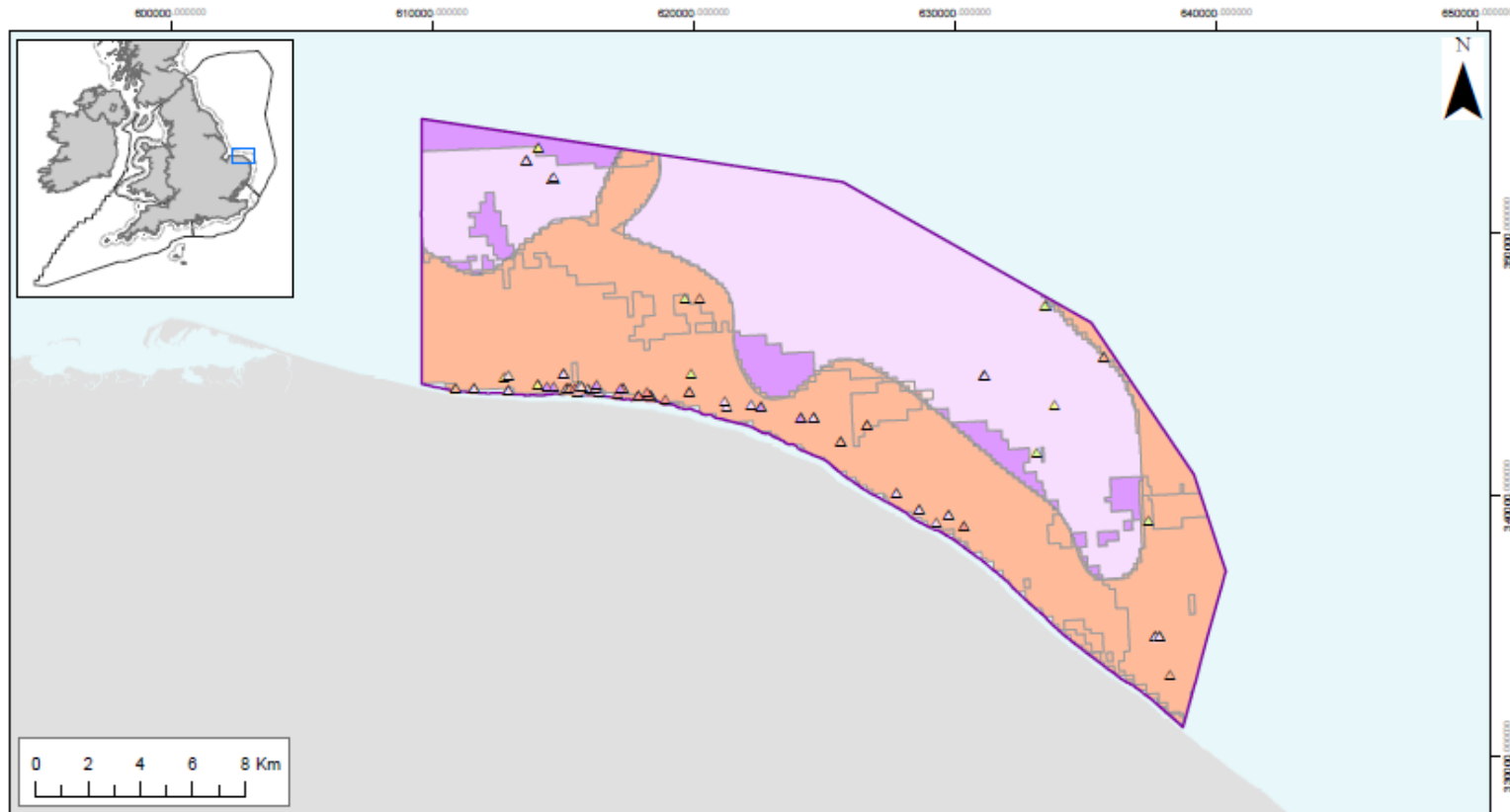
Designation would protect the following features. You can read more about the features this site protects and why they are important [here](#).

Feature	General management approach
High energy infralittoral rock	Maintain at favourable condition
Moderate energy infralittoral rock	
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	
High energy circalittoral rock	
North Norfolk Coast (subtidal) <sup>1</sup>	
Subtidal chalk	
Subtidal coarse sediment	
Subtidal sand	
Subtidal mixed sediments	
Peat and clay exposures	

<sup>1</sup> Geological feature

# Where the features are located

The following maps show the location of the features to be protected. A range of different types of surveys have been used to create these maps. More detailed information on the techniques used and the features themselves can be found [here](#).



### Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds recommended MCZ Broad Scale Habitats

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

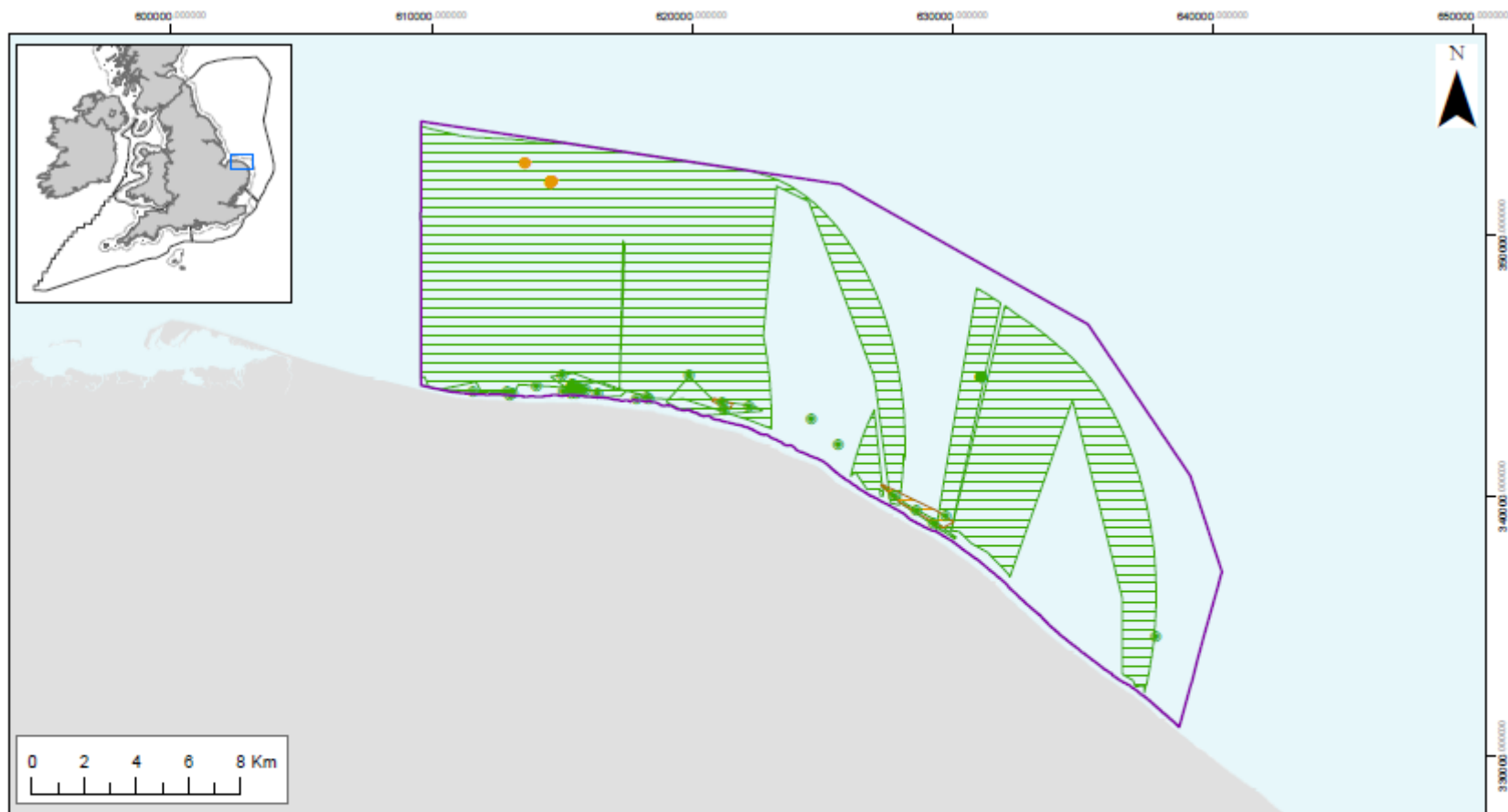
### Features proposed for 2015 designation

- High energy infralittoral rock (A3.1)
- Moderate energy infralittoral rock (A3.2)
- High energy circalittoral rock (A4.1)
- Moderate energy circalittoral rock (A4.2)
- Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1)
- Subtidal sand (A5.2)
- Subtidal mixed sediments (A5.4)

- Groundtruthing sampling points, such as diver survey, grab sampling, drop down video, walk over survey or core sampling
- Shaded areas represent habitats mapped according to data originating from surveys and mathematical models

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**Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds recommended MCZ  
Features of Conservation Importance**

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

**Features proposed for 2015 designation**

- Peat and clay exposures
- Subtidal chalk
- Peat and clay exposures
- Subtidal chalk

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Map Projection: British National Grid

## Features that are not proposed for designation

The following features are not proposed for designation as there is currently insufficient supporting evidence. Inclusion of these features may be considered if scientific evidence becomes available:

- subtidal biogenic reefs,
- blue mussel beds,
- ross worm (*Sabellaria spinulosa*) reefs,
- fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats,
- horse mussel (*Modiolus modiolus*) beds,
- smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*),
- undulate ray (*Raja undulata*).

## Activities that are likely to be affected

Management decisions are taken on a case by case basis by relevant regulators. Management will not automatically mean that economic and recreational activities will be restricted, decisions will be based on the specifics of each case. Restrictions on an activity will depend on the sensitivity of species, habitats and geological/geomorphological features (for which a site is designated) to the activities taking place in that area. More detail is available in the [Impact Assessment](#).

At present there are no activities taking place, which at their current levels of intensity, we expect to require management. As such there are no monetised costs as a result of designation in this site. However we are aware that there is a high level of potting which takes place within the site. There is no current indication that management will be required but this assumption will be tested at consultation, and further considered by regulators if the site is designated.

## Activities that are unlikely to be affected

These activities are known to take place at this site but are not likely to be damaging to the features proposed for designation at their current levels of intensity:

- commercial fisheries - all gear types,
- recreational activities,
- the following ports, harbours and commercial shipping activities -
  - development,
  - navigational dredging,
  - transit of ships,
- oil and gas exploration,
- two active export power cable and 19 chemical and gas pipelines intersects the site,
- renewables, with regards to Dudgeon and Sheringham shoal offshore wind farms.

## Additional Information

To read the full consultation document, or respond to the consultation, please visit

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/marine/tranche2mczs>

To read the advice provided by Natural England, please visit

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5803843768025088?category=6742552893980672>

For further information, please contact Defra on

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