

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Studland Bay

**Candidate Marine Conservation Zone not
proposed for designation in the second tranche**

January 2015

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

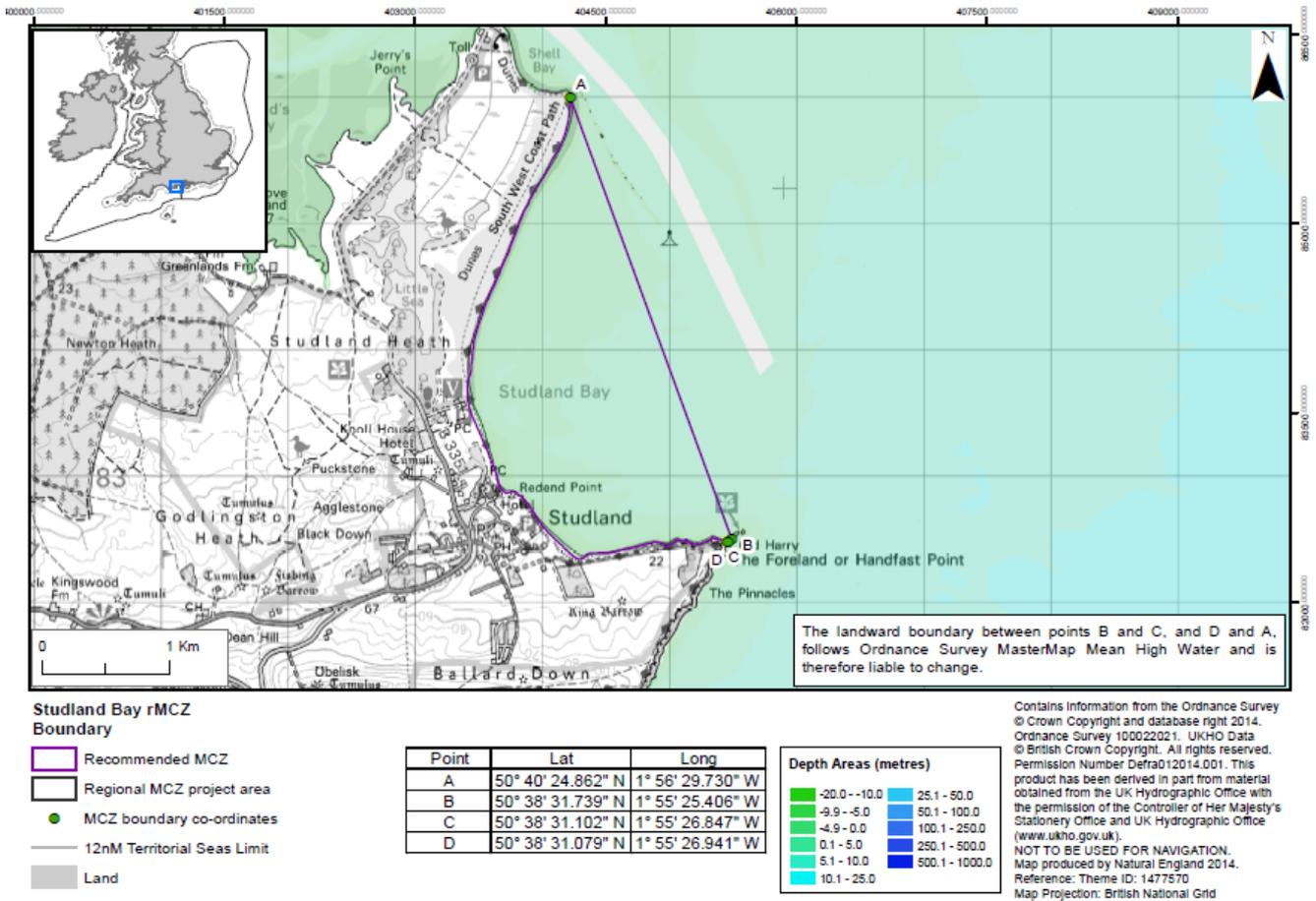
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Where this is located

Studland Bay candidate Marine Conservation Zone (cMCZ) is a small inshore site which covers 4 km² in the bay adjacent to Poole harbour. It was proposed to protect a range of habitats and species, in particular to protect seahorses which are known to breed in the site within seagrass habitats.

Studland Bay is sandy, shallow (only 5 metres in depth 2 km from the shore) and sheltered from the prevailing south-west winds, making it an ideal area for seagrass.



Why this site was identified as a candidate site for the second tranche

The site was recommended to protect a range of broad scale habitats and species which are not well protected within marine protected areas (MPAs) in the region. The site was identified as of particular importance to protect seahorses which are known to breed in the site and also their supporting seagrass habitats. Other species of importance within the site were also identified for protection including the native oyster and undulate ray.

Features considered for designation

The features considered for designation in this site were:

- intertidal sand and muddy sand,
- intertidal mud,
- moderate energy intertidal rock,
- intertidal coarse sediment,
- subtidal sand,
- subtidal mixed sediments,
- seagrass beds,
- subtidal macrophyte-dominated sediment,
- native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*),
- undulate ray (*Raja undulata*),
- long snouted seahorse (*Hippocampus guttulatus*),
- short snouted seahorse (*Hippocampus hippocampus*).

Effects of designation

If the cMCZ was to be designated in its current form, the following activities would be likely to be affected by management. This information would be updated if a revised site proposal is recommended for designation at a later date.

Sector	Best Cost Estimate (£) per year	Details
Ports, harbours and shipping	40,900	<p>The site is located near Poole and Swanage harbours. There are several disposal sites within 5 km of the site including at Poole Bay and Swanage Bay.</p> <p>There is a maintained dredged channel (the Swash Channel) maintained by Poole Harbour Commissioners within 1 km of the site.</p> <p>All future licence applications made in relation to port, harbour and commercial shipping activities would need to consider the possible effects of their activities on the features designated within the site. It is likely that there would be additional costs incurred when carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for future licence applications.</p>
Recreational activities	40,000	<p>The bay is popular with recreational boaters and is mainly used by short-stay day boats and overnight-stay cruising vessels with no charges for mooring or anchoring. The number of vessels visiting the bay and anchoring or mooring can be high, particularly in peak times during summer weekends.</p> <p>Management may be required over areas of sensitive features and a number of scenarios have been identified with potential costs and effects to the recreational boating sector. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voluntary anchoring code of practice • zoned closure of sensitive features to mooring and anchoring

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • closure of the cMCZ to anchoring and mooring • use of innovative techniques to reduce impact of mooring/anchoring to sensitive features <p>Site specific management would be developed on designation dependent on activities and sensitivities of features within the site, quantified costs are based on the fourth scenario to install 100 environmentally friendly moorings within the site.</p>
UK commercial fisheries	200	<p>A low level of commercial fishing occurs within the area by UK vessels. Bottom trawl gear is known to be used in the cMCZ. MMO sightings/landings data indicates a low level of mobile gear activity within the site.</p> <p>Potting is known to take place within the south-eastern corner of the cMCZ, and the site is locally important for mobile netting. Fishing with hooks and lines is also known to take place within the south-eastern corner.</p> <p>There may be costs to this sector if the site is closed to bottom abrading gear (bottom trawls and dredges), or all gear types.</p>
Archaeological heritage	Unquantified	<p>The wreck of a Dutch Craft from 1940 and historic shipwrecks designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 can be found in the site. There may be additional costs when carrying out EIAs for future licence applications.</p>
National defence	Unquantified at site level	<p>The Ministry of Defence is known to make use of the site for training activities.</p> <p>We expect this activity to be able to continue. Activity which is harmful to features can be avoided though additional planning during operations and training.</p>
Best estimate total cost	81,100	

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 identified at their current levels of intensity:

- oil and gas (existing activity),
- water pollution from activities on land (as this is managed under the Water Framework Directive),
- transit of ships.

Why this candidate site is not being proposed for designation in the second tranche

The designation of the site is expected to impact on commercial fishing, local port and harbour activity and recreational boating activities, with high costs associated with the port and harbour sector and recreational boating. Local stakeholders have also raised further concerns regarding the potential impact on local shore-based businesses if there are restrictions on recreational boating in the area; such potential impacts have not been quantified.

The site has a history of local stakeholder disagreement with a divergence of views regarding the protection of the site. It will be necessary for further detailed engagement with local interests to see if effective and successful measures can be developed, and provide further clarity on management options prior to designation.

We consider that further work is needed to explore the scope for developing local solutions on this site before it can be proposed for designation.

Further consideration

Defra will undertake further discussions with local interests and additional information will be gathered ahead of consideration for inclusion in the third tranche.

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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