

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

## Orford Inshore Marine Conservation Zone

*This document sets out why this site is important, the features protected and general management information.*

**31 May 2019**



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### Overview

This site became a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) in May 2019. This means that specific features within this area are protected and, where necessary, regulators will manage marine activities.

## Where is the site?

Orford Inshore Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is an inshore site that extends into offshore waters, and covers an area of approximately 72 km<sup>2</sup>. The site is located off the Suffolk coast in the Southern North Sea approximately 14 km offshore from the Alde Ore Estuary.

## Why is the site important?

MCZs, together with other types of marine protected areas, will form the UK contribution to an international network of protected sites in the north east Atlantic. The network will help to deliver the government's vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. MCZs protect typical, rare or declining habitats and species found in our seas.

Orford Inshore MCZ is dominated by habitats composed of subtidal mixed sediments. These sediments contain a mixture of different sized material from pebbles to finer silts and finer mud sediments that are important as nursery and spawning grounds for many fish species, including Dover sole, lemon sole and sand eels. Colourful species of burrowing anemones can be found within the sediment, alongside sea cucumbers, urchins and starfish.

Several nationally important shark species are found within the site, including the small-spotted catshark. The area is also important for foraging seabirds and harbour porpoise are often spotted passing through.

Designation of this site as a Marine Conservation Zone protects the following feature. You can find detailed information about this feature at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4527>.

Protected features	General management approach
Subtidal mixed sediments	Recover to a favourable condition

## Management of the site

Now that this site has been designated, some activities may need additional management. Activities and the management measures used to regulate them may need to change if new evidence becomes available.

Most marine activity is already regulated by the relevant regulatory bodies. There are existing byelaws and national laws that regulators use to manage fishing, coastal development, recreation and pollution. These also apply in MCZs.

Regulators will manage each site according to the features and activities in, or near, a specific area. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage

first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the designated features. Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

Management in MCZs can take several different forms, including introducing voluntary measures, use of the existing planning and licensing framework, specific byelaws and orders. There has to be public consultation on permanent byelaws and orders. For activities that already need a marine licence, regulators consider the MCZ in their decision as soon as the site is consulted on. Find out more about marine licensing in MCZs at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zones-mczs-and-marine-licensing>.

## Regulators

This table lists the authorities responsible for MCZs and the activities they manage.

Lead regulator	What it manages
<b>Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)</b> <a href="http://www.association-ifca.org.uk">http://www.association-ifca.org.uk</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries in the inshore area (0-6 nautical miles (nm)) including commercial fisheries and recreational sea angling.</li> </ul>
<b>Marine Management Organisation (MMO)</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries within British limits around the coast of England.</li> <li>• Licensable activities such as construction, alteration or improvement of works, dredging and disposal, other removals or deposits, incineration or the scuttling of vessels within England's marine area.</li> <li>• Section 36 (of the Electricity Act 1989) Consents and Safety Zones for offshore renewable energy installations producing up to 100MW.</li> <li>• Activities requiring a marine wildlife licence.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment Agency (EA)</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries for migratory and freshwater fish.</li> <li>• Coastal protection and flood management.</li> <li>• Water quality, including environmental permits for discharges from terrestrial sources.</li> </ul>
<b>Oil and Gas Authority</b> <a href="https://www.ogauthority.co.uk/">https://www.ogauthority.co.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensing for exploration and exploitation of oil and gas reserves.</li> </ul>
<b>Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil and gas related activities</li> <li>• Renewable energy related activities</li> </ul>

<b>Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) – Part of BEIS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental approvals and consents for offshore oil and gas related activities, Carbon Capture and Storage and Gas Unloading and Storage, and decommissioning activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Harbour Authorities and Local Planning Authorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harbour authorities have management responsibilities for ports and coastal waters within their limits.</li> <li>• Local planning authorities manage activities at the coast. These include coastal recreation, public rights of way (including the English Coastal Path), tourism, economic regeneration, flood protection, and planning and development on coasts and estuaries, including aquaculture in the intertidal zone.</li> </ul>
<b>Department for Transport (DfT)</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy on environmental impacts associated with ports and shipping, including pollution from ships.</li> <li>• Policy on maritime safety including navigation safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) - An Executive Agency of the Department for Transport</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vessel safety consents, including certification of seafarers and equipment.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural England (NE)</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment and management of the English Coastal path.</li> <li>• Activities requiring consents and ascents within or adjacent to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).</li> <li>• Activities requiring wildlife licences for terrestrial and intertidal species.</li> </ul>
<b>The Planning Inspectorate</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities requiring Development Consent Orders under the Planning Act 2008, regarded as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects</li> </ul>

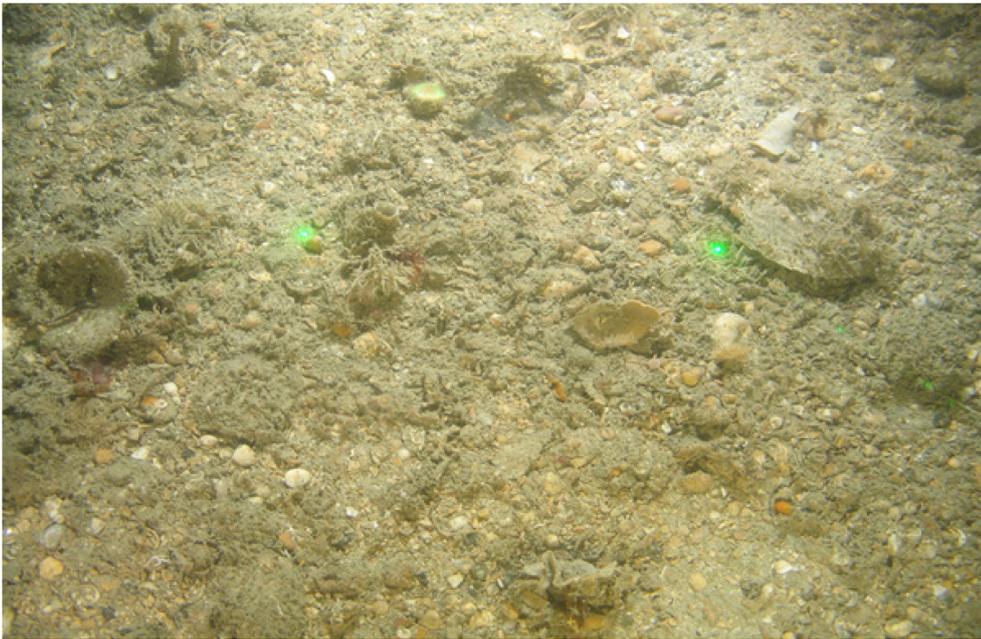
## Further information

Read about government policy on MCZs at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/marine-conservation-zone-designations-in-england>

Read the advice provided by Natural England on MCZs at:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5703660445368320>



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