

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

## Dover to Deal Marine Conservation Zone

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

**31 May 2019**



High energy circalittoral rock habitat © Natural England

### Overview

This site became a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) in January 2016. This means that specific features within this area are protected and, where necessary, regulators will manage marine activities. In May 2019 four additional features were added to the site: blue mussel beds, high energy circalittoral rock, moderate energy circalittoral rock and Ross worm reefs.

### Where is the site?

Dover to Deal MCZ is an inshore site located off the coast of Kent. This site covers an area of 10 km<sup>2</sup>.

## 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.

Dover to Deal MCZ protects a number of habitats and species. The site helps to protect intertidal underboulder communities, where large boulders provide shaded, cave-like conditions for unusual algae to thrive, and mobile animals such as long-clawed porcelain crabs, sea slugs and brittlestars shelter among sponges. Crabs, fish and young lobsters also scavenge for food and seek shelter amongst the boulders.

This site includes excellent examples of littoral chalk communities which are unique communities of seaweeds and the animals that associate with them. Areas of littoral chalk are small in range and such areas are limited within Britain. The area also includes the best example in the region of wave-cut platforms, flat areas at the base of a cliff formed by wave erosion. Below these platforms lie gullies and rock pools, which support several types of seaweed. The chalk foreshore at St Margaret's Bay has one of the richest communities of algae in the south east.

As well as Ross worm reefs subtidal off Kingsdown, there is a well-developed Ross worm reef between Dover and South Foreland, in the lower shore where sand fringes the edge of a chalk reef. The presence of Ross worm reefs on chalk reefs is extremely rare, and this reef is also thought to seed more vulnerable reefs offshore.

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

Protected features	General management approach
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in a favourable condition
Intertidal coarse sediment	
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	
Intertidal underboulder communities	
Littoral chalk communities	
Low energy intertidal rock	
Moderate energy infralittoral rock	
Moderate energy intertidal rock	
Native oyster ( <i>Ostrea edulis</i> )	
Subtidal chalk	
Subtidal mixed sediments	
Subtidal sand	

Blue mussel beds	Recover to a favourable condition
High energy circalittoral rock	
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	
Ross worm reefs	

## 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 is an existing legal framework that regulators use to manage fishing, coastal development, recreation and pollution. This also applies 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 making processes. 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</li> </ul>

	<p>Safety Zones for offshore renewable energy installations producing up to 100MW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities requiring a marine wildlife licence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment Agency (EA)</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency</a></p>	<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>
<p><b>Oil and Gas Authority</b>  <a href="https://www.ogauthority.co.uk/">https://www.ogauthority.co.uk/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensing for exploration and exploitation of oil and gas reserves.</li> </ul>
<p><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>  <b>Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) – Part of BEIS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil and gas related activities</li> <li>• Renewable energy related activities</li> <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>
<p><b>Harbour Authorities and Local Planning Authorities</b></p>	<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>
<p><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></p>	<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>
<p><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></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vessel safety consents, including certification of seafarers and equipment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Natural England (NE)</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england</a></p>	<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>

### The Planning Inspectorate

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate>

- Activities requiring Development Consent Orders under the Planning Act 2008, regarded as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

## Further information

Read about government policy on MCZs at:

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

See Natural England's advice on MCZs at:

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



Survey image from Dover to Deal MCZ, showing subtidal chalk, the soft coral dead man's fingers (*Alcyonium digitatum*) and sponges (*Porifera sp.*) © Crown Copyright

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