

## Hythe Flats rRA no 8

### Marine Conservation Zone: Selection Assessment Document

Version and Issue date	Amendments made
V1.0 07.09.11	Draft final recommendations refined by the RSG and Local Groups in July 2011 and finalised by the RSG 2/3 August 2011.

<b>1. Site name</b> Hythe Flats draft Reference Area no. 8	<b>3. Site surface area</b> 56 ha                      0.56 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>2. Site centre location</b> ETRS89 N51 1' 47.050" E1 5' 56.071" N51 1.784' E1 5.935' (N.B. WGS 84 UTM 31N coordinates are provided in the map vertices)	<b>4. Biogeographic region</b> Eastern English Channel

#### 5. Features identified for specific protection within the Hythe Flats rRA<sup>1</sup>

Feature type	Feature name	Area <sup>2</sup>
Habitat FOCI	Mud habitats in deep water	No data available
	Sea-pens & burrowing megafauna	No data available

#### 6. Other features occurring within the Hythe Flats rRA (to be protected)

Feature type	Feature name	Reason not specifically identified for reference area protection
Broad Scale Habitats	A5.3 Subtidal mud	Not viable for subtidal broad scale habitat RA

#### 7. Map of site (See below)

#### 8. Site summary

The site encompasses a small subtidal area near to the seaward boundary of rMCZ 26 Hythe Bay that captures an area of seapens and burrowing megafauna, mud habitats in deep water and subtidal mud, all three of which are supported by biotope data collated by the Environment Agency. This is one of only two locations in the region where sea-pens and burrowing megafauna habitat occurs. Since the site boundaries correspond to management units suggested for rMCZ 26 primarily by the fisheries sector, the survey data points for the sea-pens and for mud habitats in deep water do not fall within the rRA, but the RSG was confident that these records are indicative that these FOCI occur in the site, given their extensive presence throughout the rMCZ.

This rRA was suggested by the RSG as it is one of the sites within rMCZ 26 where the fishing sector has agreed to cease all trawling, netting and potting if the rMCZ goes ahead. This area already has reduced trawling due to the presence of wrecks.

#### 9. Detailed site description

For further details please see detailed site description for rMCZ 26.

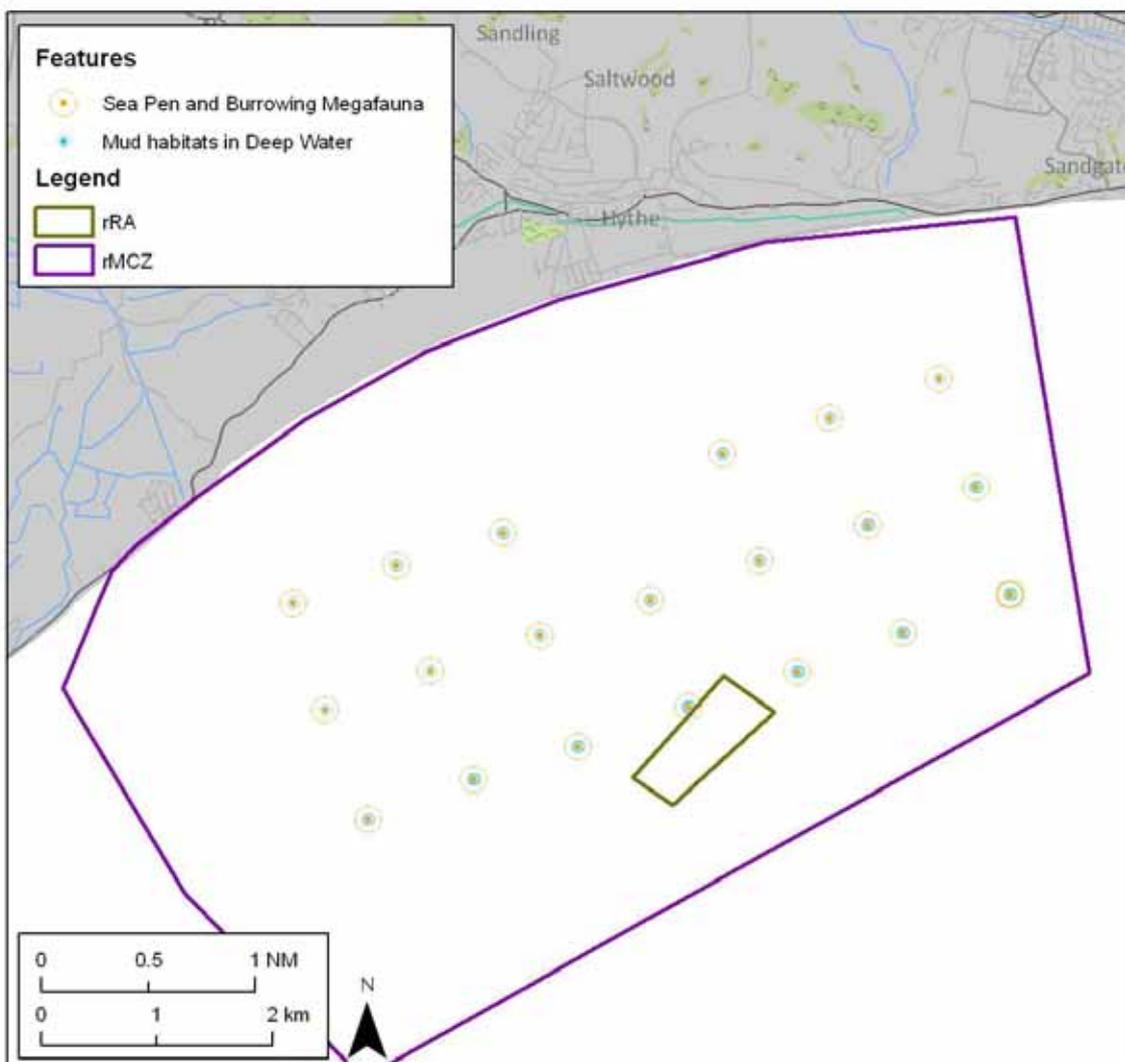
#### 10. Site boundary

The boundary coincides with one of the management units drawn as part of the management scheme devised for rMCZ 26 Hythe Bay during a joint meeting with the local fishing sector and Wildlife Trust representatives (see Site description for rMCZ 26 for further details).

<sup>1</sup> Sources of information relating to these features are listed in Section 13.

<sup>2</sup> Areas have been calculated according to spatial GIS data and are indicative only.

Hythe Flats  
Recommended Reference Area no 8



Features to be protected within reference area:

- A5.3 Subtidal Mud (biotope data)
- Mud habitats in deep water
- Seapens & burrowing megafauna



This map and list show the main features selected by the RSG for inclusion within this Draft Reference Area. However, **ALL** features (including any additional) falling within this area would be given Reference Area protection.

Map and coordinates displayed in WGS84, UTM Zone 31 North.  
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**NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.**

## Hythe Flats rRA no 8

### 11. Conservation objectives

Individual conservation objective forms for each feature can be found in Appendix 1. In selecting the reference areas, stakeholders have identified specific features that merit reference area protection. ALL features in a reference area will, by default, have a Conservation Objective of "RECOVER to Reference Condition.

### 12. Sites to which this site is related

This site falls within Hythe Bay rMCZ 26.

### 13. Supporting documentation (information relating to ENG features only)

Information	Type of information	Source	Name of survey	No of points	Dates
No data points fall directly in this site					

### References

Please refer to the references in the site description of r MCZ 26.

### 14. Stakeholder support for the site

Commercial fisheries and RSA sectors support the current site and strongly oppose any extensions. The Wildlife sector supports the current site and any extensions to achieve viability. The RSG as a group reached consensus that this site should be put forward in their final recommendations.

Individual sectors wishing to note their support or concerns about the site recorded the following at the final RSG meeting in August 2011; their comments have been transcribed verbatim from the form that they completed:

SECTOR	ORGANISATION	COMMENT for Hythe Flats rRA 8
Yachting	RYA	Support - no impact on recreational boating.
Sea Angling		Small area of foul bottom achievable.
Fisheries	Local Fisheries Representatives	No support for enlargement.
Fishing - FPO, beam trawling		Local support.
Birds	RSPB	Support.
Wildlife Trusts	Hampshire Wildlife Trust	I support this site but should be extended for subtidal mud.
Marine Ecology	Seasearch	Strongly support this RA for one of 2 examples in the region for burrowing megafauna communities.
Marine Wildlife	Marine Conservation Society	<u>Support</u> . Too small, not viable. Will show little recovery.
Heritage and Archaeology	English Heritage	Support.

### 15. Evolution of the site recommendations

The rRA boundaries were drawn as one of the six 'management areas' agreed by the local fishing representatives with Kent Wildlife Trust when developing the recommendation for rMCZ 26. Two of these are recommended as no-fishing areas, and this more seaward one was proposed as the RA as the trawling, potting and netting sectors do not use it.

The site was originally identified as being one of only two locations in the project region where the habitat seapens and burrowing megafauna have been recorded. Although the site is smaller than the minimum viable diameter for subtidal broad-scale habitats, the RSG suggested it as an option for subtidal mud when

attempts to find a viable site failed. Attempts were made to enlarge the size of the site but this suggestion was not acceptable to the local fishing fleets and after much discussion no further boundary change could be agreed upon although all sectors agreed to include Subtidal mud as a feature within it as long as the site stayed the same size.

For greater detail on discussions relating to the site and the network, please refer to both RSG and Local Group stakeholder meeting reports at [www.balancedseas.org](http://www.balancedseas.org).

### **16. Implications for Stakeholders**

The following issues are associated with this site:

- The fisheries sector were involved in the preliminary identification of this rRA and have categorically stated that no further negotiation is possible on the rMCZ and the proposed management areas within it. They consider that any further restrictions in this area will lead to large scale displacement which for many local vessels would not be possible.
- Commercial potters and set netters have not been consulted; further information on these sectors is needed
- Angling is an important activity in the Hythe rMCZ and the implications of a reference area here would need to be discussed with this sector.
- No impact assumed from MOD firing ranges

This list represents only the major issues associated with the site. To see all stakeholder discussions, please refer to the Balanced Seas RSG and Local Group meeting reports at [www.balancedseas.org](http://www.balancedseas.org).