

Church Norton Spit rRA no 11

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.

1. Site name Church Norton Spit recommended Reference Area no. 11	3. Site surface area 3 ha 0.03 km ²
2. Site centre location ETRS89 N50 45' 14.488" W0 45' 24.959" N50 45.241' W0 45.416' (N.B. WGS 84 UTM 31N coordinates are provided in the map vertices)	4. Biogeographic region Eastern English Channel

5. Features identified for specific protection within the Church Norton Spit rRA¹

Feature type	Feature name	No. of records ²
Broad scale habitat	A2.3 Intertidal mud	15.73m ²
Species FOCI low	Defolin's Lagoon Snail (<i>C. armoricum</i>)	1 record

6. Other features occurring within the Church Norton Spit rRA (to be protected)

None

7. Map of site (see below)

8. Site summary

The site is of very high importance for the rare Defolin's Lagoon Snail (*Caecum armoricum*) as one of only two locations where this species has been recorded within the Balanced Seas project area. Previously only known in the UK from a single record on The Fleet in Dorset, this species was found in 2007 in the upper shore shingle on the westernmost part of the spit, above MHW (Pain *et al.*, 2008). A more detailed examination of the site is needed in order to determine the vertical distribution of the species down the shore (Pain *et al.* 2008). The project data for this species, from the national contract data (DEFRA MB102 2B), indicated that there were several records but careful investigation revealed that a single data point had been inaccurately remapped, producing a misleading duplicate. Data points from other sources collected by the project team were subsequently found to relate to either survey areas or the management units of Pagham Nature Reserve. All erroneous records have now been stripped out of the dataset.

This rRA proposal is strongly opposed by local stakeholders but the RSG agreed to put the site forward for Final Recommendation since it is critical to meet the ENG criteria for the network but on condition that a survey is carried out to confirm the presence and distribution of Defolin's snail before further work is undertaken towards designation.

9. Detailed site description

For further details please see detailed site description for rMCZ 25.1.

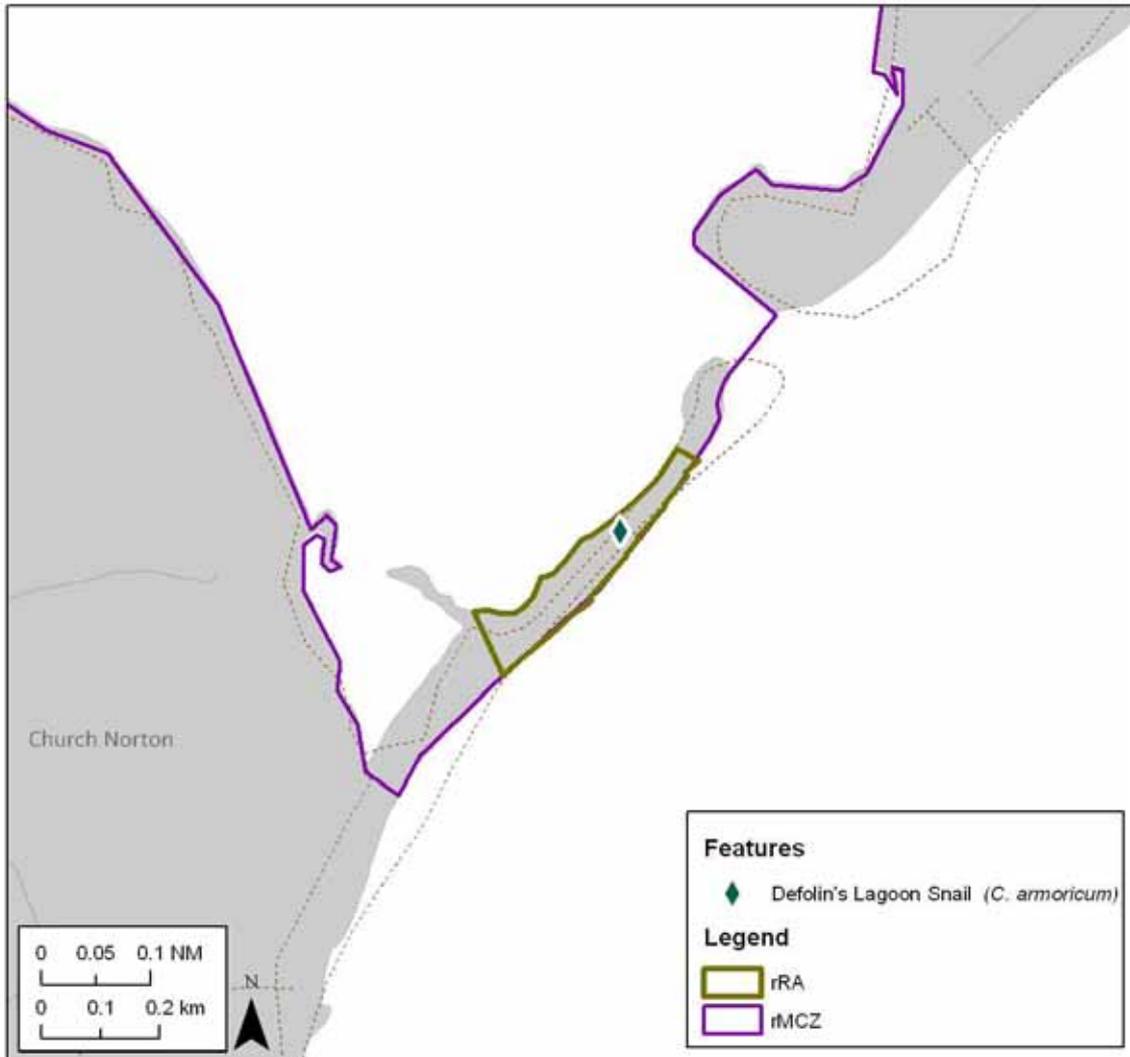
10. Site boundary

The boundary is drawn to encompass the recorded distribution of the feature on Church Norton shingle spit and to ensure that there is no impact on planned coastal defence activities. According to the ENG, this site does not fulfil the minimum viable patch size for Defolin's Lagoon Snail (1km). However, every effort was made to set the boundaries according to the feature location and the maximum available habitat. The boundary on the seawards side of the spit has been drawn along the MHW mark (nationally supplied Ordnance Survey 2010 dataset).

¹ Sources of information relating to these features are listed in Section 13.

² A "record" is a survey point where a single individual, population or habitat has been found.

Church Norton Spit
Recommended Reference Area no 11



Features to be protected within reference area:

Defolin's Lagoon Snail (*C. armoricum*)



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.

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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 lies within Pagham Harbour rMCZ 25.1, and overlaps with Pagham Harbour Local Nature Reserve, SSSI, SPA and Ramsar site.

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

Information	Type of information	Source	Name of survey	No of points	Dates
All broad scale habitats	Modelled data	UKSeaMap/MESH v7	Combined	n/a	2011
Defolin's lagoon snail (<i>Caecum armoricum</i>)	Survey	National contract data, DEFRA MB102 2B		1	28/10 /2007

References

Please refer to the references in the site description of rMCZ 25.1.

13. Stakeholder Support for the site

There is strong opposition from local residents and other local stakeholders to this site due to the issues documented in section 16. The RSG as a group nevertheless reached consensus that this site should be put forward in their final recommendations as it is critical to meet the ENG criteria but on the condition that a survey be undertaken to ascertain the occurrence and distribution of Defolin's Snail before designation.

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 Pagaham Harbour rRA 11
Yachting	RYA	Requires resurvey of Defolins Lagoon Snail to confirm location and establish site boundary before being carried forward. See also dMCZ25.1 [Support, subject to allaying local fears about any impact on coastal defence.]
	Local Fisheries Representatives	Resurvey will possibly encourage more support.
Fishing - FPO, beam trawling		Good support.
Birds	RSPB	Support site + revised boundary to cover.
Wildlife Trusts	Hampshire Wildlife Trust	I support this.
Marine Ecology	Seasearch	Strongly support this as the more certain of 2 locations for defolins lagoon snail in the region.
Heritage and Archaeology	English Heritage	Lots of research activity in Pagham Harbour. Scientific exemption needed if research needed in reference area.

15. Evolution of the site recommendations

Pagham Harbour was originally proposed as a much larger reference area for three species: the Starlet Sea Anemone (*Nematostella vectensis*) which is found in Pagham Lagoon on the east side of the Harbour and protected by the SSSI designation; the Lagoon Sand Shrimp (*Gammarus insensibilis*) in Ferry Pool, and Defolin's Lagoon Snail (*Caecum armoricum*) which is found on the shingle spit. This received strong opposition from local stakeholders, and the RSG subsequently identified alternative rRAs for the Starlet Sea Anemone (North Mistley) and the Lagoon Sand Shrimp (Newtown Harbour). The only alternative site for Defolin's Lagoon Snail was considered unsuitable due to its location in Lydd Firing Ranges, Dungeness. Information from Natural England indicated that managed realignment of the coastline at Lydd had changed the ecology of this area resulting in uncertainty about the continued presence of the species there.

The principle concern about the rRA proposal for Defolin's Snail relates to the potential impact this might have on coastal defence work at Pagham. The public authorities responsible for this met with Natural England and other stakeholders in July and developed a boundary around the known location of the species that will not impact on planned coastal defence work.

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.

16. Implications for Stakeholders

The following issues are associated with this site:

- Local residents have major concerns about additional protected status for the Pagham area and there are significant fears that this will restrict a range of activities; these concerns have resulted in extensive lobbying of the project team, the public authorities currently involved in the area, and Members of Parliament.
- Defolin's Lagoon Snail occurs on the shingle spit which contributes to the rapid coastal erosion to the north of the harbour and which is also used as a source of material to provide coastal protection. Residents are hoping that approval will be granted for the spit to be breached, in line with the one of the original harbour openings. Relevant agencies have reassured local stakeholders that the RA will not affect coastal defence works.
- The Pagham Harbour area has heavy recreational use. A number of permitted shore anglers use the spit, as well as walkers and bird watchers. There is concern about restrictions on these activities and the reference area would need to be developed in consultation with these groups; there are likely to be appropriate mitigation measures for all these activities, and in many cases existing codes of conduct are likely to be adequate.

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.