

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 Newtown Harbour recommended Reference Area no. 19	3. Site surface area 119 ha 1.19 km ²
2. Site centre location ETRS89 N50 43' 7.315" W1 24' 16.918" N50 43.122' W1 24.282' (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 Newtown Harbour rRA ¹

Feature type	Feature name	Area ²
Broad Scale Habitats	A2.3 Intertidal mud	0.82 km ²
Habitat FOCI	Estuarine rocky habitats	34.78 m ²
Species FOCI Low	Lagoon Sand Shrimp (<i>G. insensibilis</i>)	No data

6. Other features occurring within the Newtown Harbour rRA (to be protected)

Feature type	Feature name	Reason not specifically identified for reference area protection
Broad Scale Habitats	A5.4 Subtidal mixed sediments	Site not viable for subtidal Broad Scale Habitat RA

7. Map of site (see below)

8. Site summary

This rRA is within Newtown Harbour and lies within rMCZ 23, Yarmouth to Cowes on the north-western coast of the Isle of Wight.

While this site may not contain the very best examples of features in the region, it is nonetheless important because it contains a variety of different habitats, species and intertidal broad-scale habitats and is considered to be in very good ecological condition

Old salt workings at Newtown Quay form an important saline lagoon. The rare Lagoon Sand Shrimp and four other specialist lagoon species have been recorded here (Natural England, NNR), the Lagoon Sand Shrimp occurring in the Salt Pans. Newtown Harbour is considered to be the best example of an undisturbed natural harbour on the south coast (Natural England, Newtown NNR). The estuary contains intertidal and subtidal broad scale habitats and supports a number of rare species and habitats, including an important wintering ground for wildfowl and waders, with important numbers of Brent goose, black-tailed godwit, wigeon and teal.

At RSG and Local Group meetings, the initial intention was to protect the whole of Newtown Harbour as a reference area, as it contains a number of important features. However, many of these features overlapped with key activities in the Harbour. An independent meeting between the National Trust, Harbour Master and the angling sector resulted in a proposal for a boundary that excluded some features (Native Oysters, peat and clay exposures, subtidal chalk). The suggested changes were presented to the RSG at their final meeting (August 2011), at which they revised the

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

² Areas have been calculated according to spatial GIS data and are indicative only.

Newtown Harbour rRA no 19

boundaries to incorporate the Lagoon Sand Shrimp (which had been thought to have been excluded) and full extent of the estuarine rocky habitats feature and requested the project team to ask the National Trust and Newtown Harbour Master to review the changes. The changes were however not considered acceptable in relation to activities in the Harbour and so the boundaries proposed following the July LG meeting are being put forward, noting that further discussion will be necessary.

9. Detailed site description

Please see detailed site description for rMCZ 23.

10. Site boundary

The site consists of four separate components: north west component comprising an area of creeks and mudflats on the western side of the harbour mouth; south west component including Causeway Lake and Western Haven; north east component with the southern part of Clamerkin Lake, Spur Lake and the mud flats in the eastern harbour; and the south east creek. The main channel of Newtown River and Shalfleet Lake are excluded, as well as the area immediately in front of the harbour mouth where Newtown River and Clamerkin Lake meet. The branching top of the south east creek including Rodge Brook in the north and leading to Clamerkin Farm in the south has been excluded.

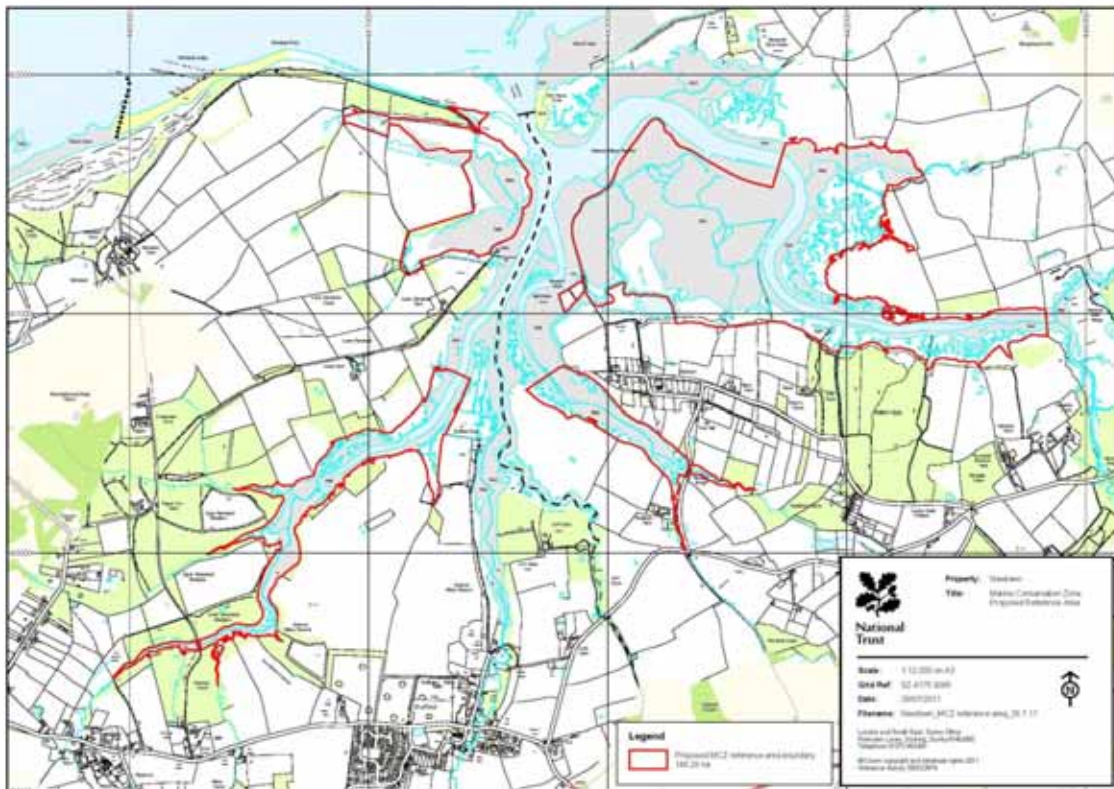
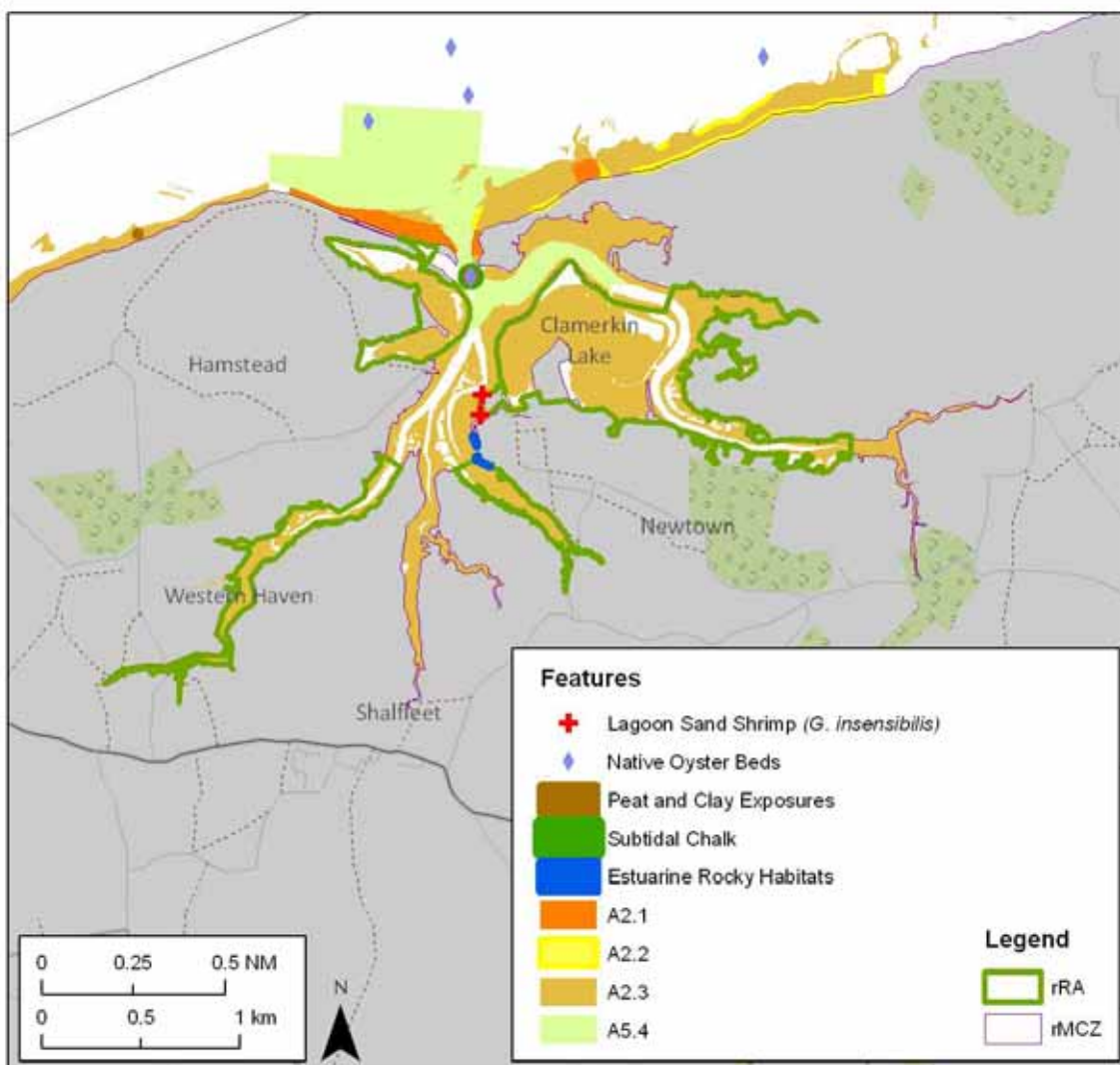


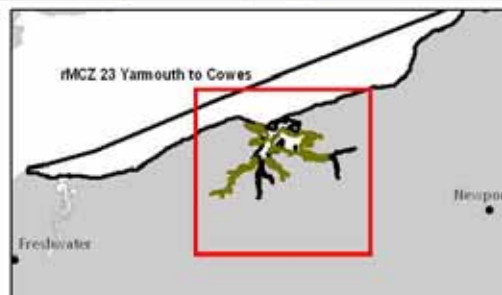
Figure 1. Boundaries proposed by Newtown Harbour and angling sector, presented to the RSG in the final meeting (RSG 11, August 2011)

Newtown Harbour
Recommended Reference Area no 19



Features to be protected within reference area:

- A2.1 Intertidal coarse sediment
- A2.2 Intertidal sand and muddy sand
- A2.3 Intertidal mud
- A5.4 Subtidal mixed sediments
- Native Oyster Beds
- Peat and Clay Exposures
- Estuarine rocky habitats
- Lagoon Sand Shrimp (*G. insensibilis*)



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.
©OpenStreetMap 2010. ©Ordnance Survey 2010.
©JNCC 2009. ©Crown Copyright 2009.
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.

Newtown Harbour rRA no 19

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 the Yarmouth to Cowes rMCZ no 23, the Solent Maritime SAC and Newtown Harbour SSSI.

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
Estuarine rocky habitats	Survey	National contract data, DEFRA MB102 2C		1	20/09/2005
Lagoon Sand Shrimp (<i>Gammarus insensibilis</i>)	Survey	National contract data, DEFRA MB102 2B	MPALAYERS000003	1	01/01/1987
Lagoon Sand Shrimp (<i>Gammarus insensibilis</i>)	Survey	Hampshire and IoW Wildlife Trust		1	

References

Please refer to the references in the site description of r MCZ 23.

14. Stakeholder Support for this site

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 Newtown Harbour rRA 19
Yachting	RYA	Support reference area boundary as proposed by National Trust.
Sea Angling		Very complicated site. Important to get local agreement to allow RSA.
	Local Fisheries Representatives	National Trust boundary alterations minor may be accepted but no more.
Fishing - FPO, beam trawling		Good support.
Birds	RSPB	Support site. Agree with proposal to go back to National Trust to discuss adding in features.
Wildlife Trusts	Hampshire Wildlife Trust	I think shrinking this will limit the ecological purpose, but if it gets support and designated I support it.
Marine Ecology	Seaseach	Strongly support RA for various features in this area. Need to ensure they are still properly covered following boundary compromises.

15. Evolution of the site recommendations

The site was originally identified in its entirety for its suite of different species and habitat FOCI occurring in a relatively undisturbed and well managed area resulting in the features being in good condition. The RSG felt that this was a good place for an RA that would not impact many activities since most were already restricted and mitigation in the form of moorings would allow most activities to continue. Subsequent discussions with the Local Group revealed that there was more activity than previously thought. The MOD requested exclusion of the very easternmost end of the creek. These discussions led to a revision of the boundaries (proposed by the National Trust, Newtown Harbour Master and sea angling representatives drawn up after the meeting and sent in to the project team) to exclude certain areas of military activity, recreational use and maintenance dredging areas. This resulted in peat and clay exposures, intertidal coarse sediment being excluded from the site (and according to the project data, the records of the Lagoon Sand Shrimp, although the National Trust has said that this species does occur within the proposed boundaries). The revised boundaries were presented to the RSG (RSG 11, August 2011) but it became apparent that estuarine rocky habitats for which the site had been primarily identified were only partially included. The RSG revised the boundaries to incorporate this feature and requested the project team to confirm the change in boundary with the National Trust and Newtown Harbour Master. The changes were rejected, and so the boundaries proposed following the July LG meeting are being put forward, noting that further discussion will be necessary.

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:

- The site is owned by the National Trust, has a firing range and MOD landings at the harbour mouth, which must be taken into consideration, but otherwise this is already well managed and protected.
- The Harbour is used extensively by the recreation sector but it is thought that appropriate mitigation measures could be introduced; permanent moorings have already been installed in some areas but there is opportunistic anchoring within the harbour.
- Occasional need for maintenance dredging of Shalfleet Creek and some other areas.
- Recreational sea angling in private boats and along the sea walls

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.