

Mixon Hole (north slope) rRA no 12

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 Mixon Hole (north slope) recommended Reference Area no. 12	3. Site surface area 9 ha 0.09 km ²
2. Site centre location ETRS89 N50 42' 16.480" W0 46' 15.247" N50 42.275' W0 46.254' (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 Mixon Hole rRA¹

Feature type	Feature name	Area ²
Habitat FOCI	Peat and clay exposures	2266 m ²

6. Other features occurring within the Mixon Hole rRA (to be protected)

Feature type	Feature name	Comments
Broad-scale habitats	A5.4 Subtidal mixed sediments	Area not viable for subtidal broad-scale habitat RA

7. Map of site (see below)

8. Site summary

Mixon Hole lies within rMCZ 25.2, Selsey Bill and the Hounds. The clay cliff forming the north face of the Hole is a significant size and is very unusual feature and is one of the best examples of the peat and clay exposures habitat FOCI in the region. The clay cliff extends 30m down and supports an array of flora and fauna including burrowing piddocks, the evidence of which can be seen from numerous holes. This topography is unique in the project and in the country. The area has been noted by Plantlife and Natural History Museum surveys to contain unusual plant assemblages and a rare combination of species which occur on top of the hole at Mixon Hole only.

9. Detailed site description

A detailed description of Mixon Hole is provided in the site description for rMCZ 25.2.

10. Site boundary

The site boundary lies around the north slope of the Mixon Hole which captures the extent of the feature but allows key activities that take place in this area to continue. It should be noted that the north cliff of the Hole is subject to continuous erosion and as this is the feature for protection, there would need to be regular review of the boundary (RSG 11, August 2011)

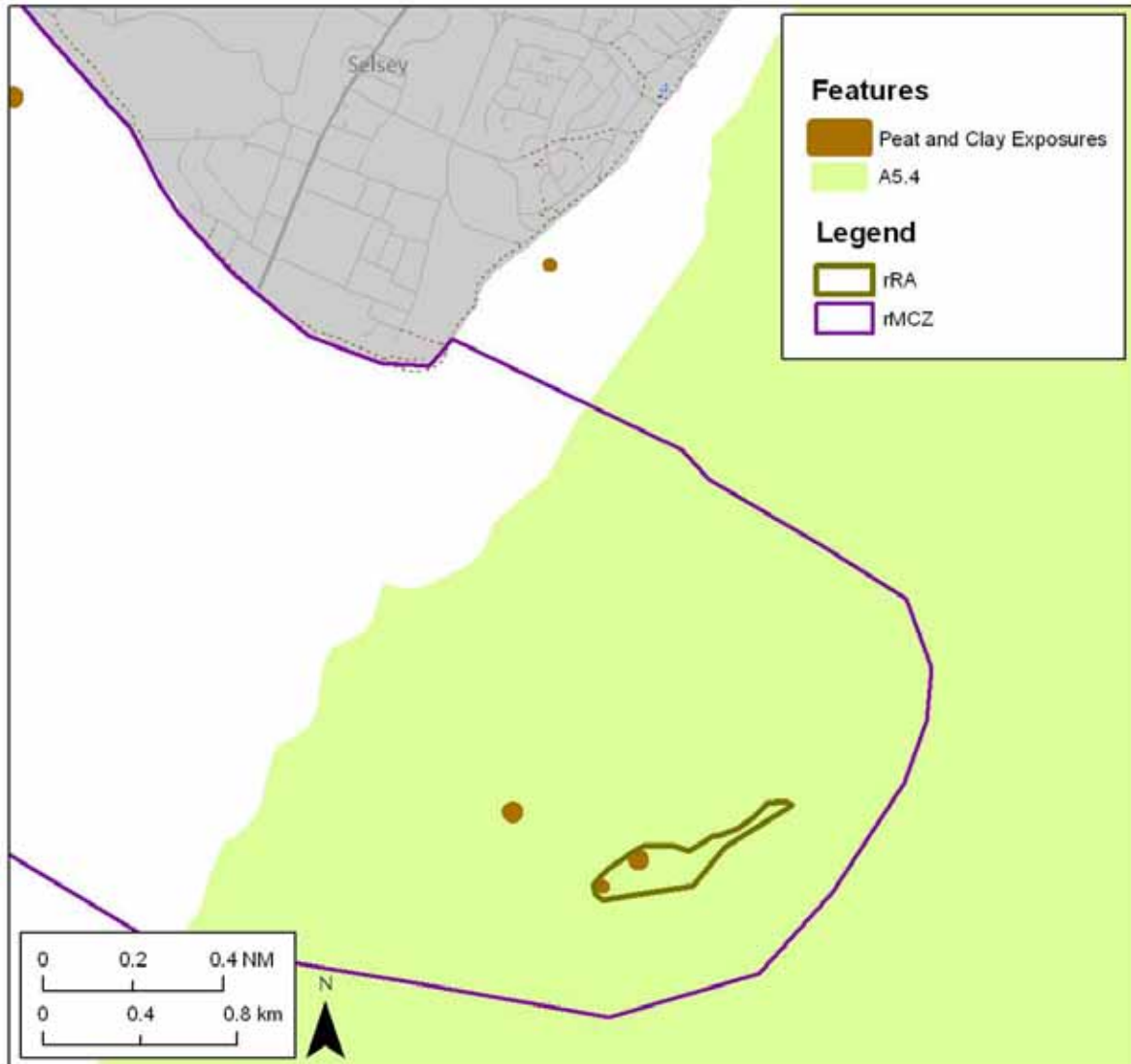
11. Conservation objectives

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."

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

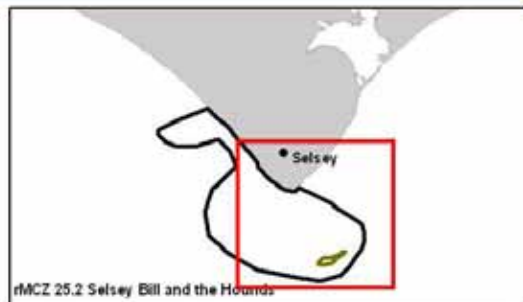
² Areas have been calculated according to spatial GIS data and are indicative only.

Mixon Hole (North Slope)
Recommended Reference Area no 12



Features to be protected within reference area:

A5.4 Subtidal mixed sediments
Peat and clay exposures



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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12. Sites to which this site is related

This site falls within the Selsey Bill & The Hounds rMCZ 25.2; the Mixon Hole is a marine Site of Nature Conservation Importance (mSNCI).

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 and survey data	UKSeaMap/MESH v7	Combined	n/a	2011
Peat and clay exposures	Survey	National contract data, DEFRA MB102 2C	JNCCMNCR60000714	2	17/09/1995
Peat and clay exposures	Survey	Kent Wildlife Trust		1	13/07/1997

References

Please refer to the references in the site description of rMCZ 25.2.

14. Stakeholder support for the site

There was broad acceptance from the Local Group provided ONLY the slope of Mixon Hole (i.e. the northern face) is included. The RSG agreed to put this site forward in the 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 Mixon Hole rRA 12
Yachting	RYA	Support area covering north face of Mixon Hole only.
Sea Angling		Will support if it is kept as small as possible.
Fisheries	Local Fisheries Representatives	Good support for north face.
Fishing - FPO, beam trawling		If RA is discrete to north wall (no buffer) then good support. With buffer - no support.
Wildlife Trusts	Hampshire Wildlife Trust	I support this but believe it should be bigger to incorporate the full foot and top of ledge.
Marine Ecology	Seasearch	Strongly support this as a very unusual clay feature. The site boundaries need to enclose the clay at the top of the north wall as well as the wall itself, which is eroding back.
Marine Wildlife	Marine Conservation Society	<u>Support site</u> . Recover CO all broadscale habitats.
Heritage and Archaeology	English Heritage	OK if scientific exemption for investigation granted as discussed.

15. Evolution of the site recommendations

The area surrounding the feature is heavily used by recreational sectors and commercial potters and therefore the boundaries were revised through discussion to encompass the clay cliff north face of the hole only. The unusual topography naturally bounds this feature but the clay cliff is eroding and shifting over time and the boundaries will therefore need to be reviewed over time.

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 diving sector will accept this site provided current levels of recreational diving can be maintained, the main activity at this site, but are willing to agree to appropriate Codes of Conduct.
- A buffer zone may be a problem for commercial potters as it is prime lobster ground
- Recreational sea angling and anchoring occurs around the hole but not in it
- RYA had no objections as long as any no anchoring zone was marked on charts
- The Wildlife sector felt that since the feature is eroding the boundary should incorporate the top and foot of the ledge.

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.