Skerries Bank and surrounds (rMCZ24) Evidence Review

Region	Finding Sanctuary	
Site Name/number	Skerries Bank and surrounds rMCZ FS24	
ENG Features present and proposed for inclusion within MCZ designation	BSH	• High energy intertidal rock • Moderate energy intertidal rock • Intertidal coarse sediment • Intertidal sand and muddy sand • Intertidal mud • Intertidal mixed sediments • High energy infralittoral rock • Moderate energy infralittoral rock • Moderate energy circalittoral rock • Subtidal coarse sediment • Subtidal sand • Subtidal mud
	Habitat FOCI	• Intertidal under boulder communities.
	Species FOCI	• *Hippocampus hippocampus* • *Eunicella verrucosa* • *Palinurus elephas.*
ENG Features present but not proposed for inclusion within MCZ designation	BSH	• High energy circalittoral rock.
	Habitat FOCI	• Subtidal sands and gravels.
	Species FOCI	• *Phymatolithon calcareum.*
Non-ENG Features (Geological/geomorphological)		-

Evidence Summary – data provided by Regional MCZ Projects

Feature	Evidence Summary	Key Sources
High energy intertidal rock	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/ MB0102, data points from MESH and parent feature data points from MESH. Point data from NE geo-referenced photographs for MCZ feature specific studies. Aerial photography from CCO	MESH and MB0102 CCO NE
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/MB0102 and data points from MESH. Point data from NE geo-referenced photographs for MCZ feature specific studies. Aerial photography from CCO	MESH and MB0102 CCO NE
Intertidal coarse sediment	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MB0102/ MESH. No data points available. Aerial photography from CCO	MESH CCO

Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled data from MESH and MB0102. No data points available. Point data from NE geo-referenced photographs for MCZ feature specific studies. Aerial photography from CCO	MESH and MB0102 CCO NE
Intertidal mud	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MB0102/ MESH. No data points available. Aerial photography from CCO	MESH, MB0102 CCO
Intertidal mixed sediments	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled data from MESH and MB0102. No data points available. Point data from NE geo-referenced photographs for MCZ feature specific studies. Aerial photography from CCO	MESH and MB0102 CCO NE
High energy infralittoral rock	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/UKSeaMap and data points from MESH.	MESH/UKSeaMap
Moderate energy infralittoral rock	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/UKSeaMap and data points from MESH.	MESH/UKSeaMap
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/UKSeaMap and data points from MESH.	MESH/UKSeaMap
Subtidal coarse sediment	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/UKSeaMap and data points from MESH.	MESH/UKSeaMap
Subtidal sand	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/UKSeaMap and a data point from MESH.	MESH/UKSeaMap;
Subtidal mud	Presence and extent based on predicted modelled polygon data from MESH/UKSeaMap. No data points available.	MESH/UKSeaMap
Intertidal under boulder communities	Presence and extent based on one data point from MB0102 and another from MESH	MESH/ MB0102
Hippocampus hippocampus	Presence and extent based on one data point from MB0102.	MB0102
Eunicella verrucosa	Presence and extent based on data points from MB0102.	MB0102,
Palinurus elephas	Presence and extent based on data points from MB0102,	MB0102,.

Description of New Evidence Identified by MB0116 project

Evidence Description	Source	Feature
(South_West_Devon_legend_Apr_16_2010_MCZ	SW_Habitat_Mapping	Intertidal coarse

and County_Devon_all_MCZ) data		sediment Intertidal underboulder communities. Intertidal mud
Data points	SeaSearch	*Eunicella verrucosa* *Palinurus elephas*
Data points	Marine Recorder - MBA	*Eunicella verrucosa* *Palinurus elephas*
South Devon reef video baseline surveys for the Prawle Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone cSAC and surrounding areas. May, 2011	UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH, 2011	High energy infralittoral rock Moderate energy circalittoral rock
Site Selection Report for the Inshore Marine SACs Project. Salcombe to Yealm & Eddystone Site Selection. Report No. 9SO282/SSR/Salcombe/01	ROYAL HASKONING, 2008	Subtidal sand

Evidence That Could Not Be Acquired by MB0116 project

Evidence Description	Source	Feature
Rock and thin sediment	British Geological Society	Broadscale habitats
Sightings of Hippocampus sp.	The Seahorse Trust database.	*Hippocampus* sp.
South Devon reef video baseline surveys for the Prawle Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone cSAC and surrounding areas. May, 2011	University of Plymouth/NE	High energy infralittoral rock Moderate energy circalittoral rock *Eunicella verrucosa*
NE Start Point to Plymouth Sound multibeam survey	NE	High energy infralittoral rock Moderate energy circalittoral rock
W Approaches to English Channel	NE	High energy infralittoral rock Moderate energy circalittoral rock

Confidence Assessment

Feature	Presence	Extent	Condition	Boundaries (site)
High energy intertidal rock	High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Moderate	Moderate	Low	
Intertidal coarse sediment	Low	Low	Low	
Intertidal sand and muddy	Moderate	Low	Low	

sand			
Intertidal mud	Low	Low	Low
Intertidal mixed sediments	Moderate	Low	Low
High energy infralittoral rock	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate energy infralittoral rock	Low	Low	Low
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Moderate	Low	Low
Subtidal coarse sediment	Low	Low	Low
Subtidal sand	Moderate	Low	Low
Subtidal mud	Low	Low	Low
Intertidal under boulder communities	Low	Low	Low
Hippocampus hippocampus	Low	Low	Low
Eunicella verrucosa	High	High	Moderate
Palinurus elephas	Moderate	Low	Moderate

Confidence assessment for 'High energy intertidal rock' resulted in a 'high' score for presence and moderate' score for extent since the polygon data was validated with three feature data points and 92% of parent feature data points agreeing with/overlapping the polygons and with aerial photographs providing visual evidence of the feature and overlapping over 50% of the feature polygon.

The confidence assessment of 'High energy infralittoral rock' was based on polygon data and 25% parent (A3) data points agreeing with parent feature overlapping polygon, however anecdotal evidence describes the presence of the feature . This resulted in a 'moderate' confidence for presence. The data points were distributed over less than 50% of the feature therefore the extent was assessed as being 'moderate' in confidence. However, the confidence score assigned to extent was reduced to 'low' to reflect the low confidence score assigned to the presence of this feature.

Confidence assessment for, 'Intertidal coarse sediment', 'Intertidal mud', 'Moderate energy infralittoral rock', 'Subtidal coarse sediment', and 'Subtidal mud' resulted in a 'low' score for presence and extent since the polygon data had low MESH scores (<58) and only had 1 or no feature data points overlapping polygons.

Confidence assessment for 'Moderate energy intertidal rock' was considered as 'moderate' for both presence and extent as although there were feature data points none overlapped the feature polygon however aerial photographs support the feature presence.

 'Intertidal sand and muddy sand', 'Intertidal mixed sediments' and 'Moderate energy circalittoral rock',' resulted in a 'moderate'' scores for presence and 'low' for extent because although the polygon data had low MESH scores (<58) and only had 1 or no feature data points overlapping polygons the anecdotal evidence supported the presence of the feature, but was not suitable to confirm the extent, or as in the case of 'Intertidal sand and muddy sand' the aerial photography did not cover more than 50% of the polygon.

The confidence assessment for 'Subtidal sand' was given as 'moderate' for both presence and extent through the use of habitat maps drawn using both the available data and including a new survey providing a mapped area which covered over 50% of the MESH feature polygons.

Only one data point available for 'Intertidal under boulder communities' which did not agree with the polygon and therefore given a 'low' score for presence of the HOCI and 'low' for extent.

A 'low' confidence was given for presence and extent of *Hippocampus hippocampus* since there was only one data point available to the project.

A 'high' confidence was given for presence and extent of *Eunicella verrucosa* since at 21 point records were obtained from MB0102; Seasearch and MarineRecorder and all of these were <6years old and collected by specialists.

A 'moderate' confidence for presence and 'low' score for extent was given for *Palinurus elephas* since 4 point records, one of which was < 6 years old (other 3 records >12 years old) were available.

The condition assessment for most of the features was based on a Vulnerability Assessment and could not be improved beyond a 'low' confidence score. Project MB0102 considered this species to be sensitive to a range of activities. Confidence in condition for *Eunicella verrucosa* and *Palinurus elephas* is assessed as 'moderate' as these species are considered by project MB0102 to be sensitive to the pressure 'removal of target species' which results from fishing activities that overlap with the whole of this rMCZ.

The confidence assessment in the boundary of the site was classified as low primarily because the overall confidence in the extent of the respective BSH and Habitat FOCI was determined as low.