



Department of

**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

**Environment, Marine & Fisheries Group
Marine & Fisheries Division**

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Date: 28 March 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**UPDATE OF THE REGISTER OF EUROPEAN SITES FOR NORTH CHANNEL
SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION**

In accordance with Regulation 11(1) of The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended), notice is hereby given that the Department has updated the Register of European Sites to reflect the fact that North Channel has been formally designated as a Special Area of Conservation. This is the last stage in the designation process.

I am writing to you because of your role as either: a Competent Authority; a Local Council; a Crown Estate lease-holder or a landowner within the site. As this site includes an Offshore component you may receive a similar notification from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

I have enclosed an updated copy of the relevant Register entry for your information, in accordance with Regulation 11(2).



The register is compiled and maintained under Regulation 10 of the same Regulations. A copy of the Register is available in this office for inspection by the public during normal working hours, free of charge.

As this site includes waters beyond the jurisdiction of the Department, the site was also entered into the the European Register held by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Further information about this site is available on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's website via the following link:

- North Channel SAC: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-7242>

If you require any further information please contact Marine Conservation and Reporting as detailed above.

Yours faithfully

Colin Armstrong
Head of Marine Conservation and Reporting



Register Entry UK0030399 under Regulation 10 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).

This is the register entry for the European site known as North Channel Special Area of Conservation. The site has been designated by the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 4(4) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora as a Special Area of Conservation.

The register reference number for this European site is UK0030399 and a folder, kept under this reference as part of the register, contains a map of the European site and a citation giving the reasons for the designation of the site as a Special Area of Conservation. The map and citation are identified by the register reference number and signed on the date of registration.

Other details of the European site are as follows:

Date submitted to the European Commission: 30 January 2017

Date approved by the European Commission as a Site of Community Importance:

12th December 2018

Date site designated as a Special Area of Conservation: 26th February 2019

Site centre location¹:

Longitude: 05 17 37 W

Latitude: 54 27 20 N

Area: 160,367 hectares (Projection: Europe Albers_Equal_Area_Conic²)

Priority status³: No

Date of Registration: 25 March 2019

1. This indicates the approximate centre of the site. Where the European site consists of several distinct areas, the co-ordinates of the most important sub-area are entered.

2. Modified projection suited for mapping the offshore continental shelf. Full details available from Joint Nature Conservation Committee OffshoreMPAs@jncc.gov.uk

3. Indicates if the site has been identified under Article 4.2 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora as hosting one or more priority natural habitat or priority species.

Register Entry UK0030399



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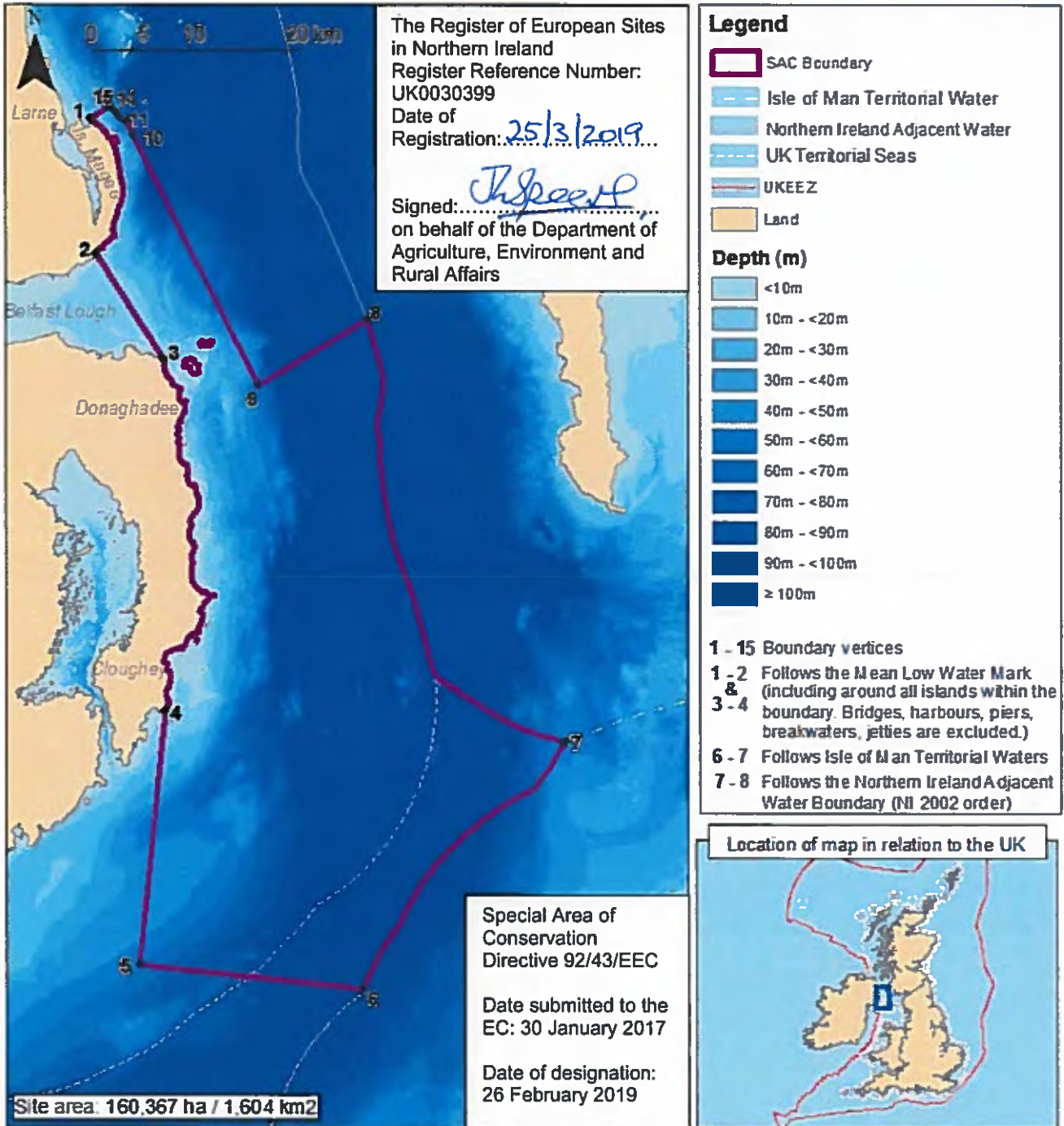
**The Official Seal of the
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
hereunto affixed is authenticated
by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Speers', written in a cursive style.

On behalf of the Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs



North Channel



Includes data provided by UKHO, Defra, OS and JNCC. © Crown Copyright © OS MasterMap. All rights reserved. Not to be used for navigation. © JNCC 02/2019. Coordinates displayed in WGS84 geographic coordinate system. Site area calculated using modified Europe_Albers_Equal_Area_Conic_UK projection.

ID	Latitude	Longitude	ID	Latitude	Longitude	ID	Latitude	Longitude
1	54° 51' 34.7" N	5° 45' 46.6" W	6	54° 11' 30.7" N	5° 5' 8.3" W	11	54° 51' 50.6" N	5° 42' 33.9" W
2	54° 44' 55.9" N	5° 42' 33.0" W	7	54° 25' 59.8" N	4° 52' 7.7" W	12	54° 52' 1.0" N	5° 43' 14.3" W
3	54° 40' 30.7" N	5° 34' 37.0" W	8	54° 44' 48.0" N	5° 17' 30.8" W	13	54° 52' 11.2" N	5° 43' 35.8" W
4	54° 23' 6.4" N	5° 27' 40.7" W	9	54° 40' 16.0" N	5° 25' 43.8" W	14	54° 52' 19.8" N	5° 43' 59.1" W
5	54° 10' 8.4" N	5° 25' 0.3" W	10	54° 51' 14.4" N	5° 41' 45.0" W	15	54° 52' 25.8" N	5° 44' 21.3" W



Reasons for designation as a Special Area of Conservation

Area Name: North Channel

Administrative Area: Antrim/Down/Offshore

Component ASSI: N/A

This area has been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because it contains habitat types and/or species which are rare or threatened within a European context. The habitats and/or species for which the area has been designated as an SAC are listed below.

Site Description:

The North Channel SAC is located in the Celtic and Irish Sea Management Unit⁴ and has been recognised as an area with predicted persistent high densities of harbour porpoise. The site stretches along part of the east coast of Northern Ireland from Island Magee in the north to south of Cloughey. It extends across the northern part of the Irish Sea, with its southern edge bordering Isle of Man waters and the eastern edge following the Northern Ireland Adjacent Waters Boundary. Harbour porpoise occur within the site year round but during the winter, persistently higher densities of harbour porpoise are present here compared to other parts of the Management Unit. The site comprises an area of 1,604km² and habitats include coarse or sandy sediments, with patches of rock and mud. Water depths within the site reach a maximum of 150m along the eastern boundary, but much of the site lies between 10m and 40m. The site covers important winter habitat for harbour porpoise.

Qualifying Interest(s) submitted to the European Commission:

1. **1351: Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*)**

- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

⁴ JNCC Report No: 547 Management Units for cetaceans in UK waters (January 2015)
http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/Report_547_webv2.pdf



References

- CODA. 2009. Cetacean Offshore Distribution and Abundance in the European Atlantic. Final Report. 43pp. http://biology.st-andrews.ac.uk/coda/documents/CODA_Final_Report_11-2-09.pdf
- Embling, C. B., Gillibrand, P. A., Gordon, J., Shrimpton, J., Stevick, P. T., and Hammond, P. S. 2010. Using habitat models to identify suitable sites for marine protected areas for harbour porpoises *Phocoena phocoena*. *Biological Conservation*, 143, 267–279.
- Hammond, P. S., Berggren, P., Benke, H., Borchers, D. L., Collet, A., Heide-Jorgensen, M. P., Heimlich, S., Hiby, A. R., Leopold, M. F. and Øien, N. 2002 Abundance of harbour porpoise and other cetaceans in the North Sea and adjacent waters. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 39, 361–376.
- Hammond, P.S., Macleod, K., Berggren, P., Borchers, D.L., Burt, L., Cañadas, A., Desportes, G., Donovan, G.P., Gilles, A., Gillespie, D., Gordon, J., Hiby, L., Kuklik, I., Leaper, R., Lehnert, K., Leopold, M., Lovell, P., Øien, N., Paxton, C.G.M., Ridoux, V., Rogan, E., Samarran, F., Scheidat, M., Sequeira, M., Siebert, U., SKov, H., Swift, R., Tasker, M.L., Teilmann, J., van Canneyt, O. and Vázquez, J.A. 2013. Cetacean abundance and distribution in European Atlantic shelf waters to inform conservation and management. *Biological Conservation*, 164, 107–122
- Heinänen, S and Skov, H. 2015. The identification of discrete and persistent areas of relatively high harbour porpoise density in the wider UK marine area, JNCC Report No. 544, JNCC, Peterborough.
- DAERA and JNCC (2017) SAC Selection Assessment: North Channel. January, 2017. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, UK. Available from: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-7242>