

PLEASE READ

The potential Marine Conservation Zones shown on the map below are tentative. They are merely a progress report for assessment by the independent Science Advisory Panel. The number, size, shapes and locations of potential Marine Conservation Zones are liable to change.

The potential zones have been identified by the Regional Stakeholder Group of the Irish Sea Conservation Zones project.

The current map shows the mid-stage work of the Regional Stakeholder Group (eight months into a 16-month process).

At the most recent workshop in October the group worked on the boundaries of the potential Marine Conservation Zones (pMCZ) located in offshore waters. For each potential location at least six boundary options were suggested. Towards the end of the workshop the group selected which of these options they preferred and should therefore be presented in this progress report. The results were very inconclusive, with several boundaries having equal or similar levels of support. For this reason we have put forward more than one boundary for pMCZs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

For four of the locations the results were so close that the top two boundaries are shown in this progress report. For some locations one boundary did come out slightly ahead of all the others and has been used for the purposes of this progress report. However, please note that during the next workshop the group will reconsider the boundaries for pMCZs located in offshore waters.

The members of the Regional Stakeholder Group have agreed that this progress report should be published so that other people can see the progress that has been made and provide more information and comments if they wish. However, whilst the group has agreed to the report being published, not all members of the group agree with everything it shows.

The group want people to know that what is shown on these maps:

- Is very tentative
- Will change in the light of new information and as a result of more in-depth consideration
- Is the group's first attempt to consider both offshore 'broadscale' habitats on the seabed (mud, sand, gravel and rock) and inshore habitats together
- Is subject to 'strong concerns' by some members of the group

Background note about the process

- The Regional Stakeholder Group is made up of 39 people, each of whom is drawn from a different sea use or interest that occurs in the Irish Sea project area.
- The group is tasked with making recommendations to the government on the location and conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones that fulfil certain [ecological criteria](#).
- The group is negotiating to identify Marine Conservation Zones that protect habitats, important marine life and natural features whilst, where possible,

avoiding unnecessary negative effects on sea uses (such as commercial fishing, marine industries and recreation).

- The Regional Stakeholder Group negotiation process started in March 2010 and will end in June 2011, when the group's recommendations will be passed on to the government's statutory nature conservation bodies (Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee).
- The group was supported in its work by independent facilitators, Dialogue Matters, and by the Irish Sea Conservation Zones project.
- The group developed the current potential Marine Conservation Zones during four workshops held in March, May, June and October 2010.
- The Science Advisory Panel is a group of independent experts whose main role is to evaluate the potential Marine Conservation Zones against ecological criteria.

Irish Sea Ecological Criteria

The Regional Stakeholder Group identified the locations of zones on the following broadscale habitats (habitats mainly grouped by mud, sand, rock and sediments):

| Broad-scale habitats | Total in project area (km ²) | Total already protected in existing MPAs (km ²) | Proportion to protect |
|---|--|---|-----------------------|
| Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds | 42 | 41 | NA |
| High energy circalittoral rock | 64 | 0 | 11-25% |
| High energy infralittoral rock | 4 | 0 | 15-31% |
| High energy littoral rock | 0.37 | 0 | 21-38% |
| Intertidal biogenic reefs | 14 | 7 | NA |
| Intertidal sediments dominated by aquatic angiosperms | 1 | 1 | NA |
| Littoral coarse sediment | 2 | 1 | 25-42% |
| Littoral mixed sediments | 6 | 5 | 25-42% |
| Littoral mud | 139 | 96 | 25-42% |
| Littoral sand and muddy sand | 304 | 263 | 25-42% |
| Low energy circalittoral rock | 31 | 0 | 16-32% |
| Low energy littoral rock | 2 | 2 | 22-39% |
| Moderate energy circalittoral rock | 267 | 0 | 13-28% |
| Moderate energy infralittoral rock | 12 | 1 | 17-32% |
| Moderate energy littoral rock | 8 | 4 | 21-38% |
| Sublittoral coarse sediment | 7138 | 0 | 17-32% |
| Sublittoral macrophyte-dominated sediment | 10 | 0 | NA |
| Sublittoral mixed sediments | 1237 | 0 | 16-32% |
| Sublittoral mud | 2775 | 0 | 15-30% |
| Sublittoral sand | 4822 | 170 | 15-30% |

The Regional Stakeholder Group also considered the following features of conservation importance (FOCI). These are both species and habitats which are in need of protection by marine conservation zones:

Ocean quahog (*Artica islandica*), Native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), Honeycomb worm beds (*Sabellaria alveolata*), Mud habitats in deep water, Horse mussel beds (*Modiolus modiolus*), Intertidal boulder communities, Blue mussel beds (*Mytilus edulis*), Sea pens and burrowing megafauna, Sheltered muddy gravels and Seagrass beds. This list of FOCI may not be final.

What are the next steps?

The Regional Stakeholder Group will meet for more workshops before June 2011. During these workshops the group will continue to share information and views and negotiate to find the optimum outcome. The potential Marine Conservation Zones are therefore liable to change.

The final recommendations for Marine Conservation Zones in the Irish Sea project area are due to go to the government in June 2011. A separate public consultation will follow in late 2011 and early 2012.

Comments

Please note that if you choose to comment on this progress report, you should use the comment form available from the Irish Sea Conservation Zones project. We apologise that we cannot accept comments in any other format.

You can download the comment form from the Progress Reports page of our website, www.irishseaconservation.org.uk, or request it by calling 01925 813 200 or emailing info@irishseaconservation.org.uk.

Given the wealth of information that the members of the RSG have to absorb and use, we strongly recommend that you keep any comments you wish to make succinct and focused so that they are easily read and understood.

Comments will be passed on to the appropriate members of the Regional Stakeholder Group so that they will be available as the group develops the next progress report.

Please return your comments to:

Email: info@irishseaconservation.org.uk

Mail: Matthew Sutcliffe, ISCZ, Envirolink North West, Spencer House, 91 Dewhurst Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PG.

The deadline to receive comments is Friday January 7th, 2011.

More information

For more information visit the Have Your Say section of the Irish Sea Conservation Zones website at www.irishseaconservation.org.uk, or call 01925 813 200.

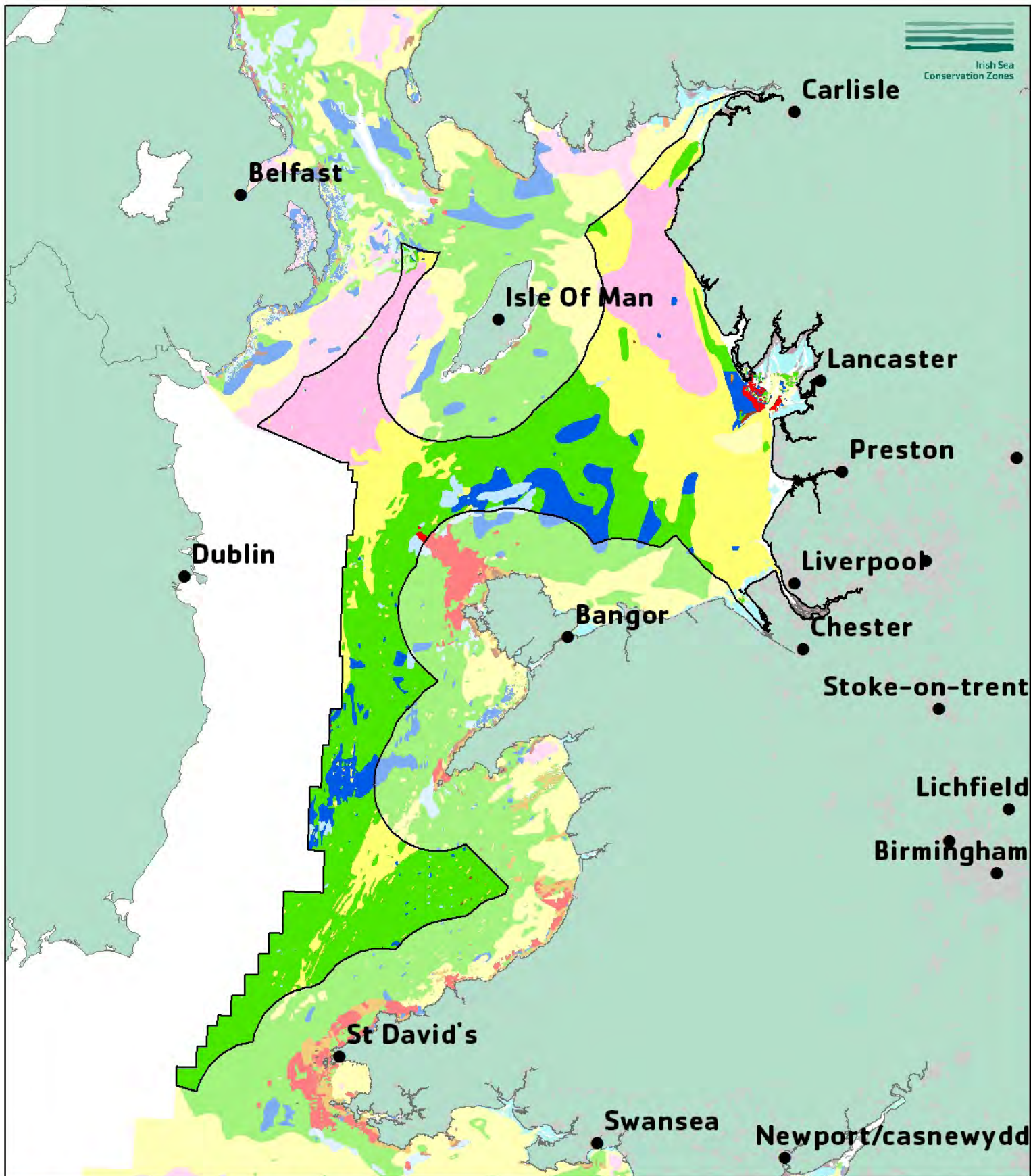


Project Area

The Irish Sea Conservation Zones project covers roughly 40% of the Irish Sea – around 18,000 km². This includes the inshore waters of England plus the offshore waters of Wales, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and England.

-  Project Area
-  Urban areas
-  UK





Broadscale Habitats

Broadscale habitats are areas of the sea defined by depth, seabed type and energy.

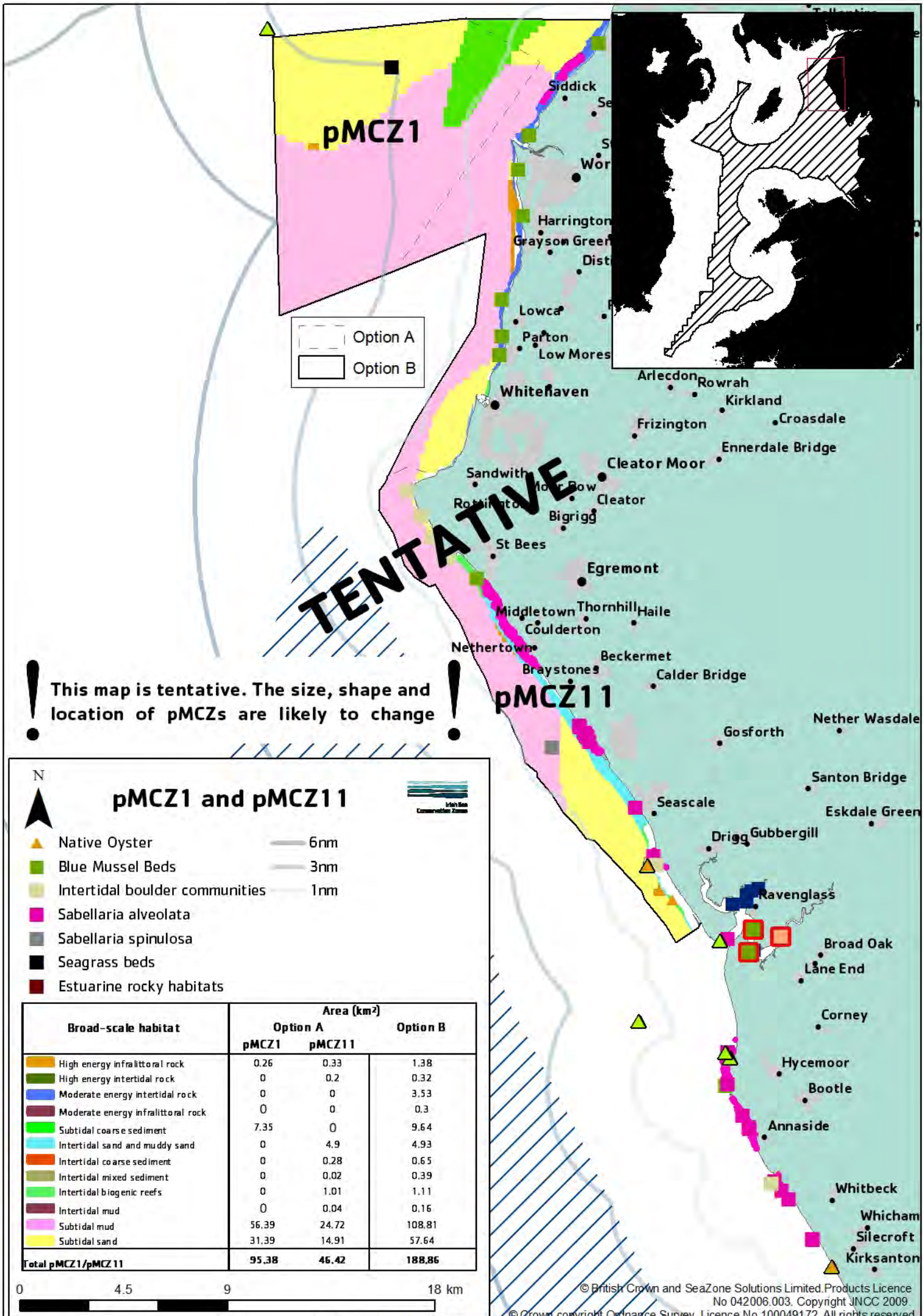
The Irish Sea stakeholder group considered broadscale habitats alongside features of conservation importance (FOCI, not pictured)

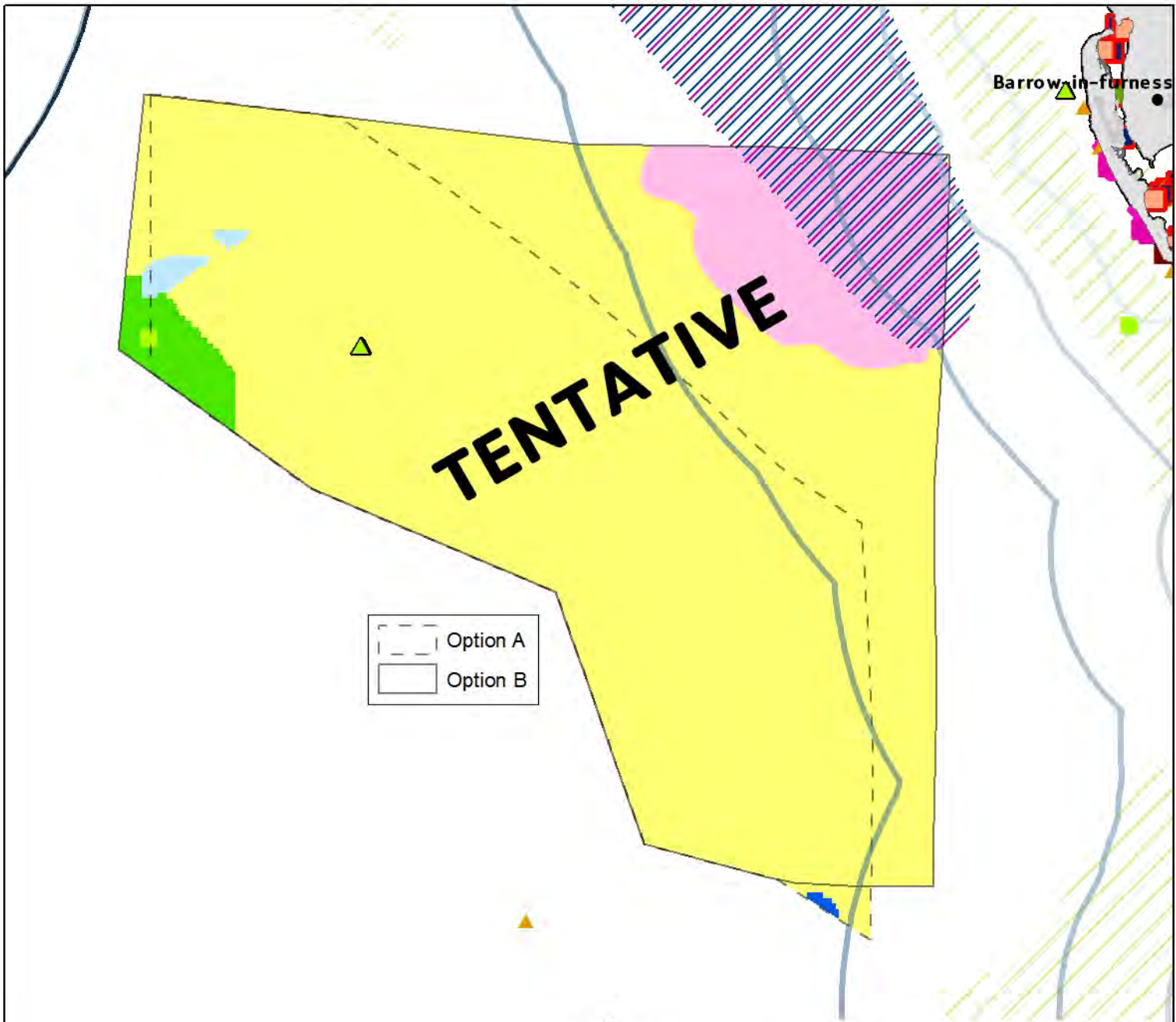
Ordnance survey crown copyright © 2010. Licence number 100049172. All rights reserved.
Habitats were provided by JNCC and differ slightly to the habitats shown here based on information provided by the Irish Seas Stakeholder group.
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
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

- High energy circalittoral rock
- High energy infralittoral rock
- Low energy circalittoral rock
- Moderate energy circalittoral rock
- Moderate energy infralittoral rock
- High energy intertidal rock
- Intertidal biogenic reefs
- Intertidal coarse sediment
- Intertidal mixed sediments
- Intertidal mud
- Intertidal sand and muddy sand
- Moderate energy intertidal rock
- Subtidal coarse sediment
- Subtidal mixed sediments
- Subtidal mud
- Subtidal sand











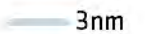




 Option A
 Option B






! This map is tentative. The size, shape and location of pMCZs are likely to change !

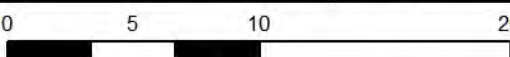
pMCZ2

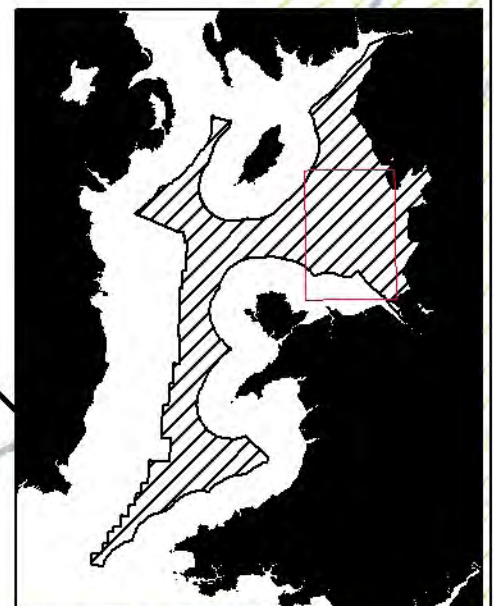
 N
 Ocean quahog
 Sea Pens and Burrowing Megafauna
 Mud Habitats in Deep Water

 12nm
 6nm
 3nm
 1nm

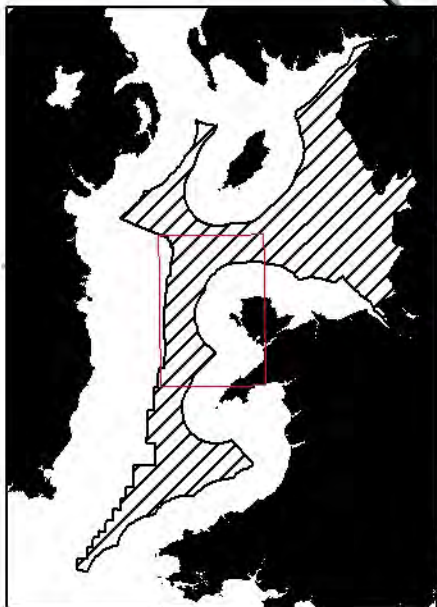
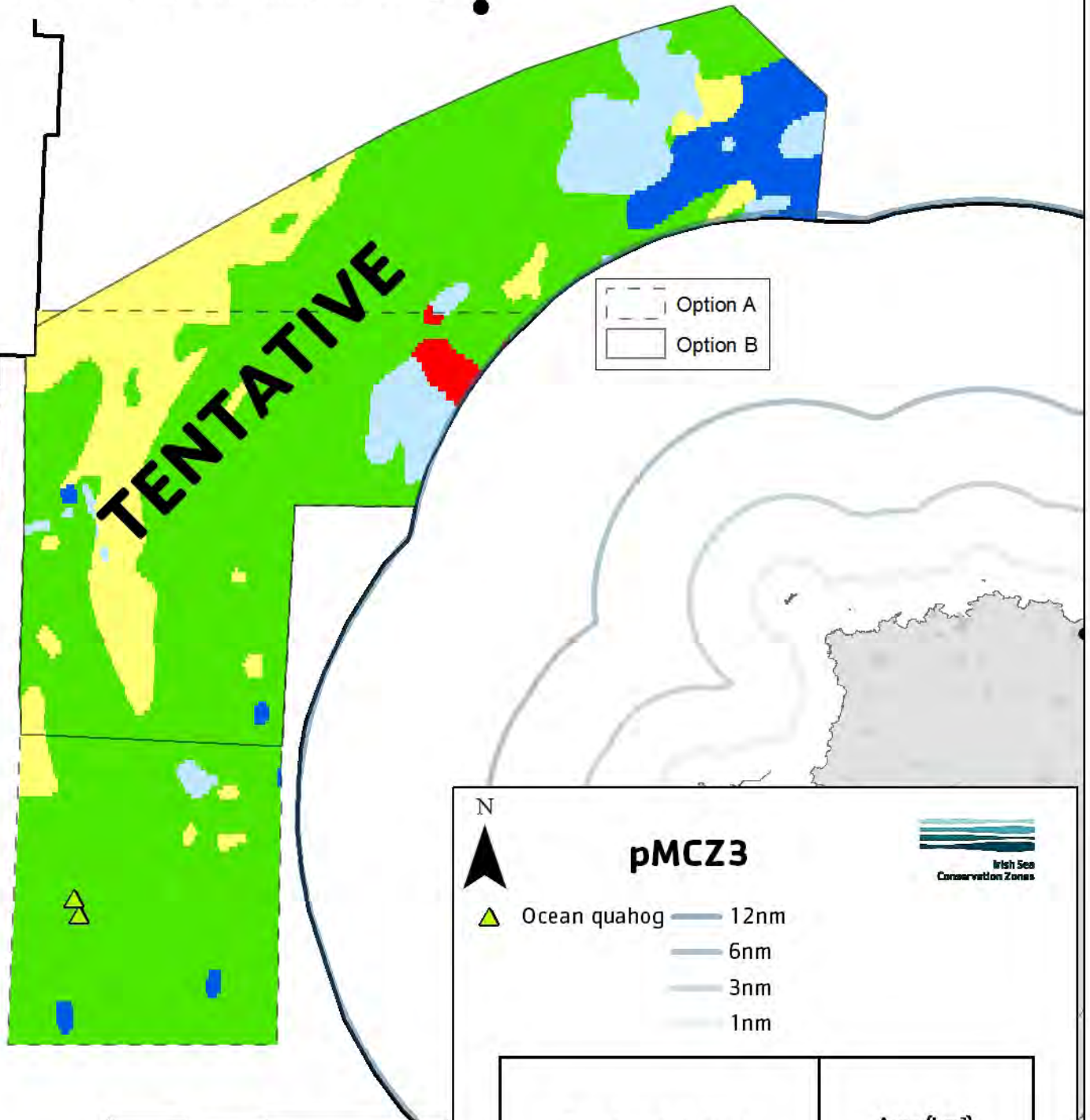
 Irish Sea Conservation Zones

| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| | Option A | Option B |
|  Moderate energy circalittoral rock | 5 | 6 |
|  Sublittoral mixed sediment | 1 | 0 |
|  Sublittoral coarse sediment | 17 | 22 |
|  Sublittoral sand | 693 | 940 |
|  Sublittoral mud | 0 | 133 |
| Total pMCZ2 | 716 | 1101 |

 0 5 10 20 km



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pMCZ3

Irish Sea Conservation Zones

▲ Ocean quahog

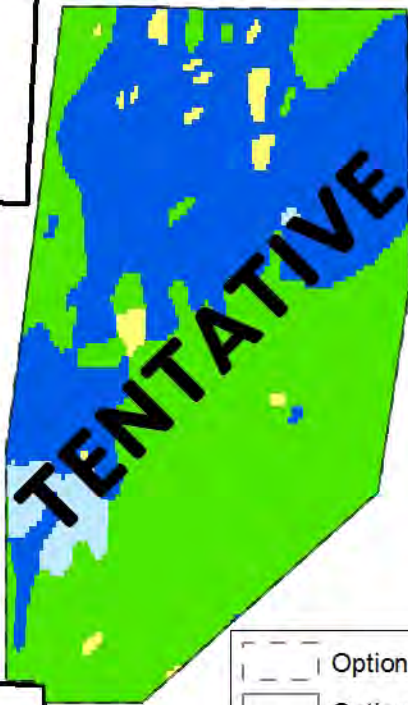
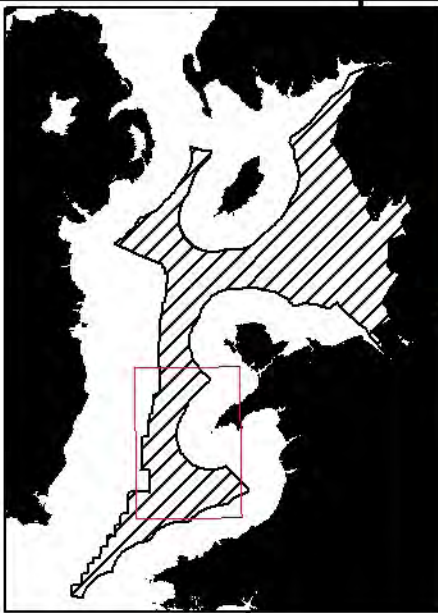
— 12nm
— 6nm
— 3nm
— 1nm

| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| | Option A | Option B |
| High energy circalittoral rock | 10 | 10 |
| Subtidal mixed sediments | 5 | 55 |
| Moderate energy circalittoral rock | 30 | 88 |
| Subtidal coarse sediment | 622 | 596 |
| Subtidal sand | 116 | 169 |
| Total pMCZ3 | 783 | 918 |

0 15 30 km

! This map is tentative. The size, shape and location of pMCZs are likely to change !

TENTATIVE



Option A
Option B

TENTATIVE

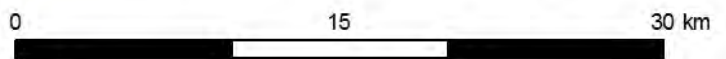


pMCZ4



- Modiolus modiolus beds
- 12nm
- 6nm
- 3nm
- 1nm

| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| | Option A | Option B |
| Moderate energy circalittoral rock | 17 | 17 |
| Subtidal coarse sediment | 314 | 255 |
| Subtidal sand | 31 | 13 |
| Subtidal mixed sediments | 209 | 209 |
| Total pMCZ4 | 571 | 496 |



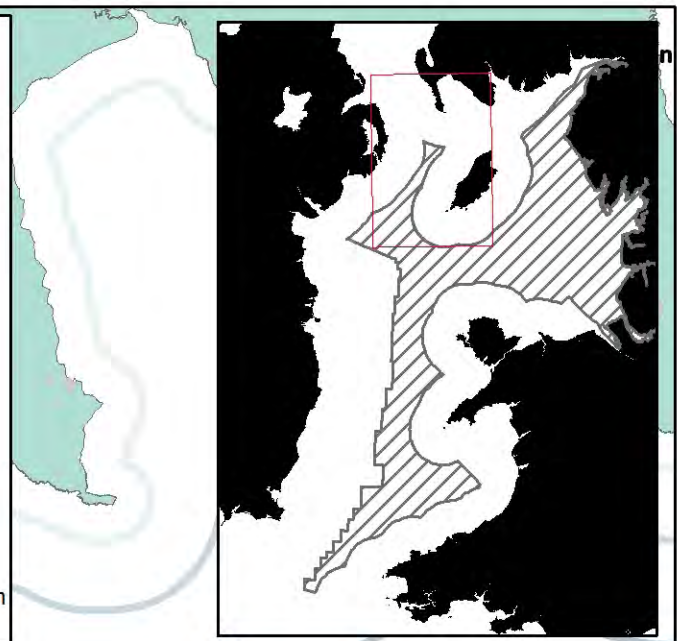
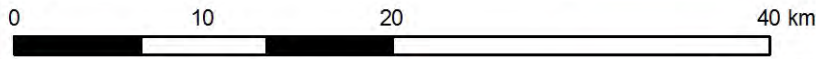


pMCZ6

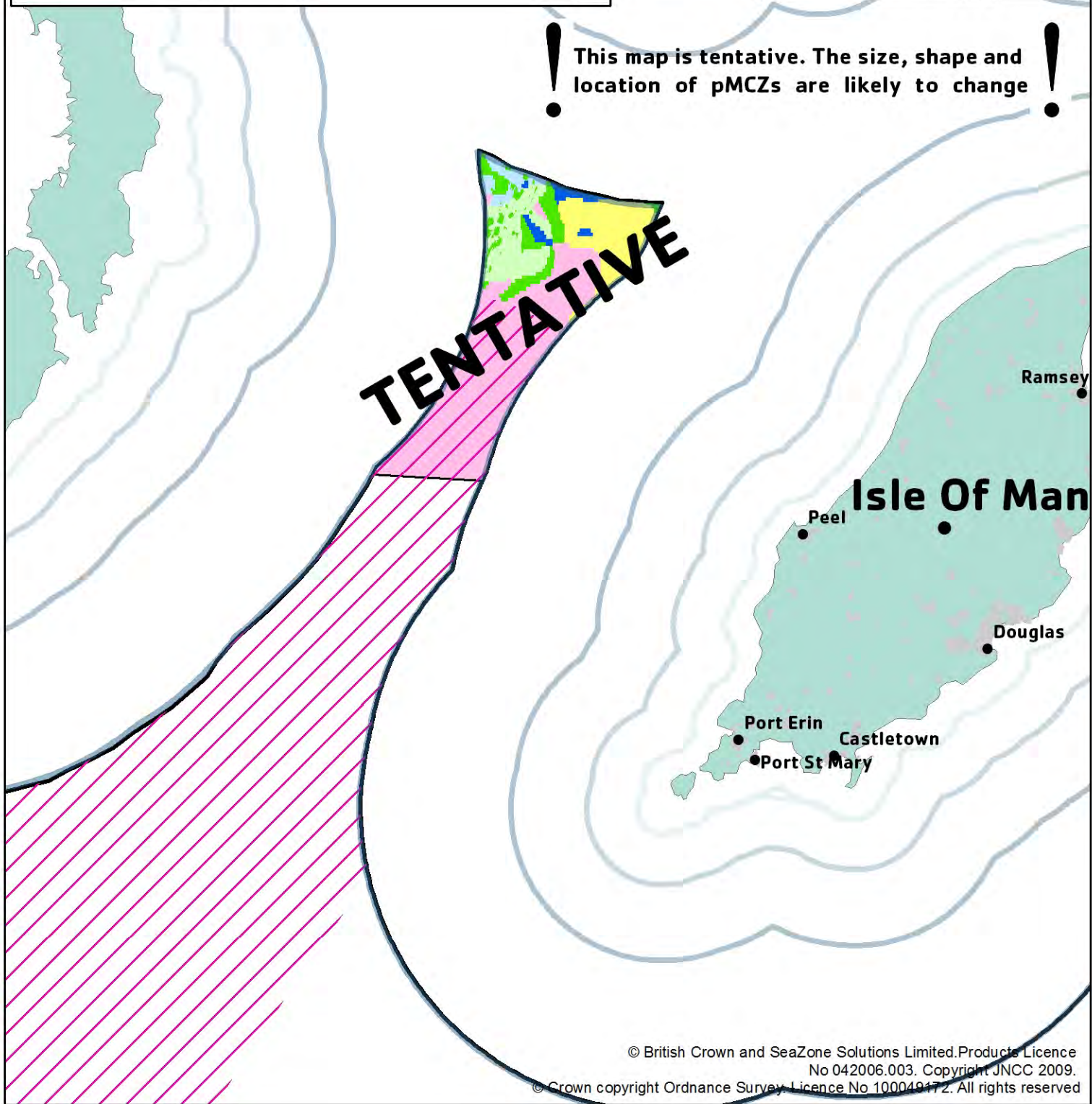


- Mud Habitats in Deep Water
- 12nm
- 6nm
- 3nm
- 1nm

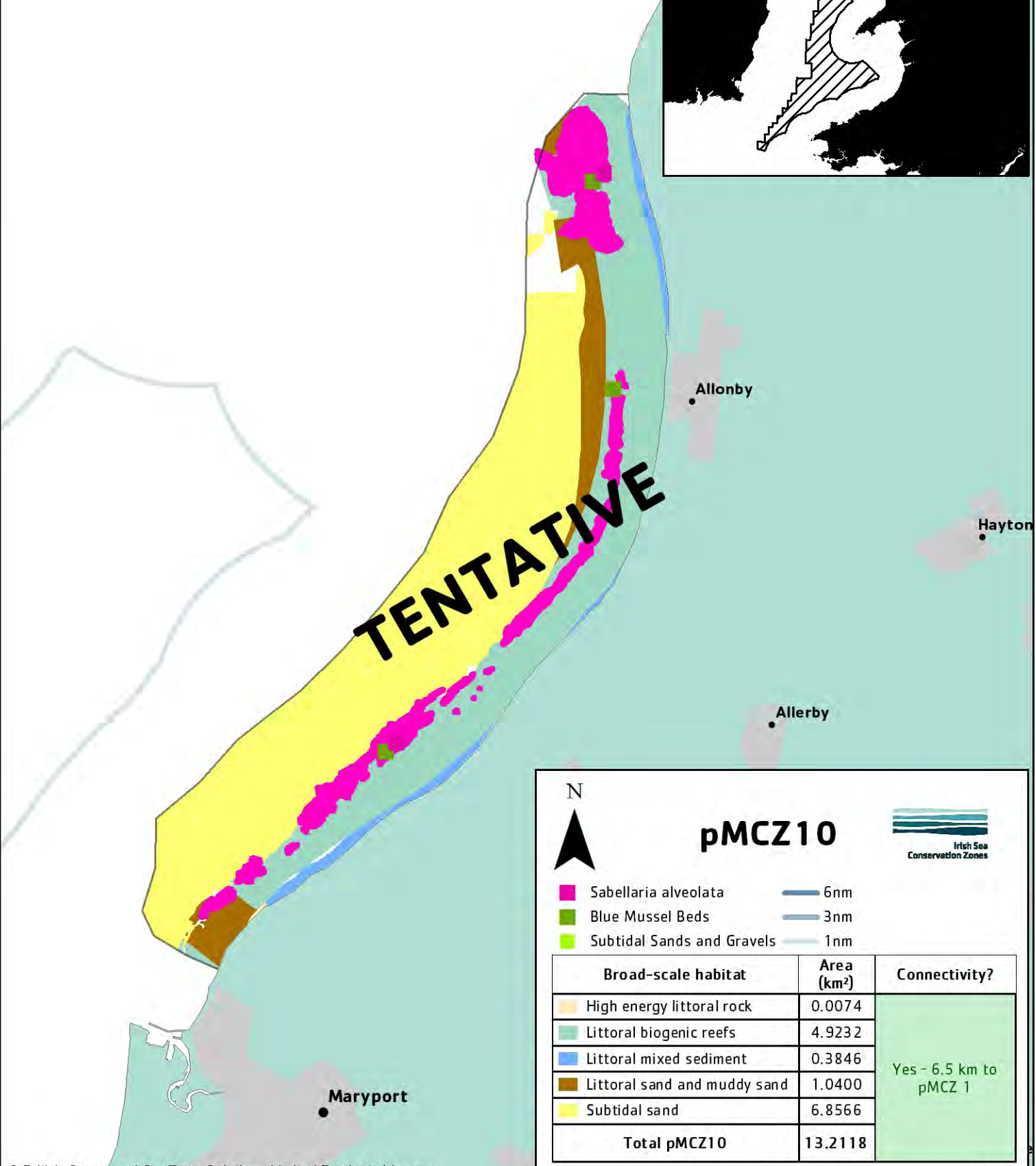
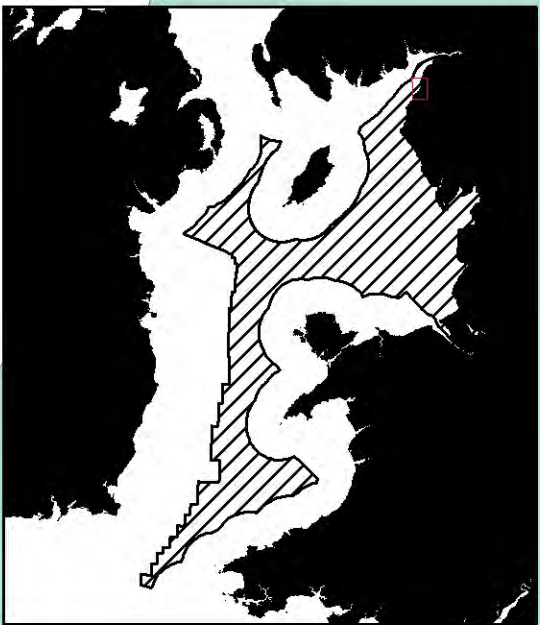
| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | Connectivity? |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Moderate energy circalittoral rock | 6 | Yes - 75 km to pMCZ 1 |
| Subtidal coarse sediment | 17 | |
| Subtidal sand | 30 | |
| Low energy circalittoral rock | 21 | |
| Subtidal mixed sediments | 6 | |
| Subtidal mud | 107 | |
| Total pMCZ6 | 187 | |



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pMCZ10

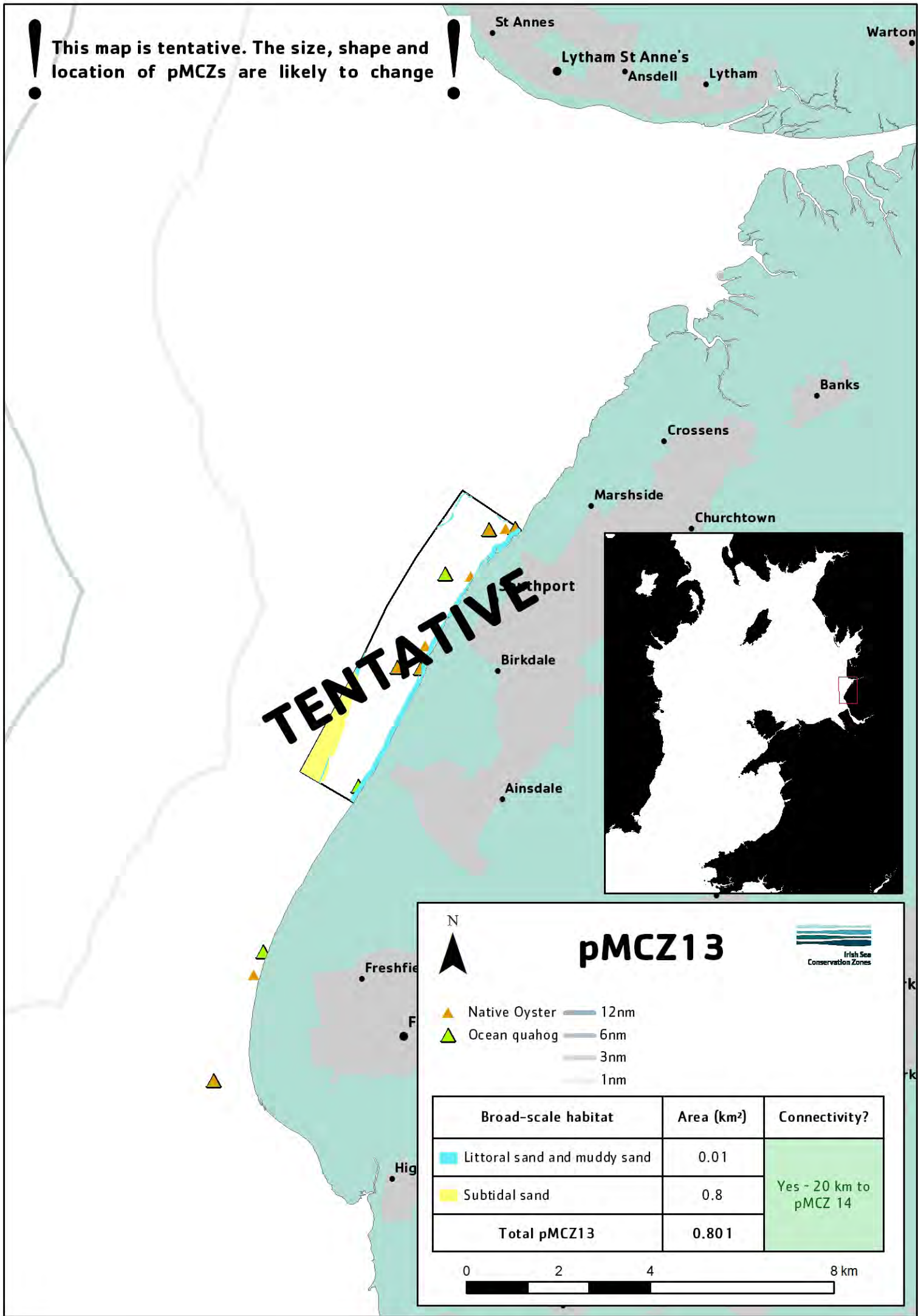
Irish Sea Conservation Zones

- Sabellaria alveolata
- Blue Mussel Beds
- Subtidal Sands and Gravels
- 6nm
- 3nm
- 1nm

| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | Connectivity? |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| High energy littoral rock | 0.0074 | Yes - 6.5 km to pMCZ 1 |
| Littoral biogenic reefs | 4.9232 | |
| Littoral mixed sediment | 0.3846 | |
| Littoral sand and muddy sand | 1.0400 | |
| Subtidal sand | 6.8566 | |
| Total pMCZ10 | 13.2118 | |

0 2 4 km

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pMCZ13

Irish Sea Conservation Zones

- ▲ Native Oyster
- ▲ Ocean quahog

— 12nm
— 6nm
— 3nm
— 1nm

| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | Connectivity? |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Littoral sand and muddy sand | 0.01 | Yes - 20 km to pMCZ 14 |
| Subtidal sand | 0.8 | |
| Total pMCZ13 | 0.801 | |

0 2 4 8 km

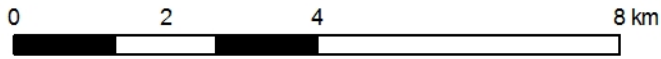
N

pMCZ14

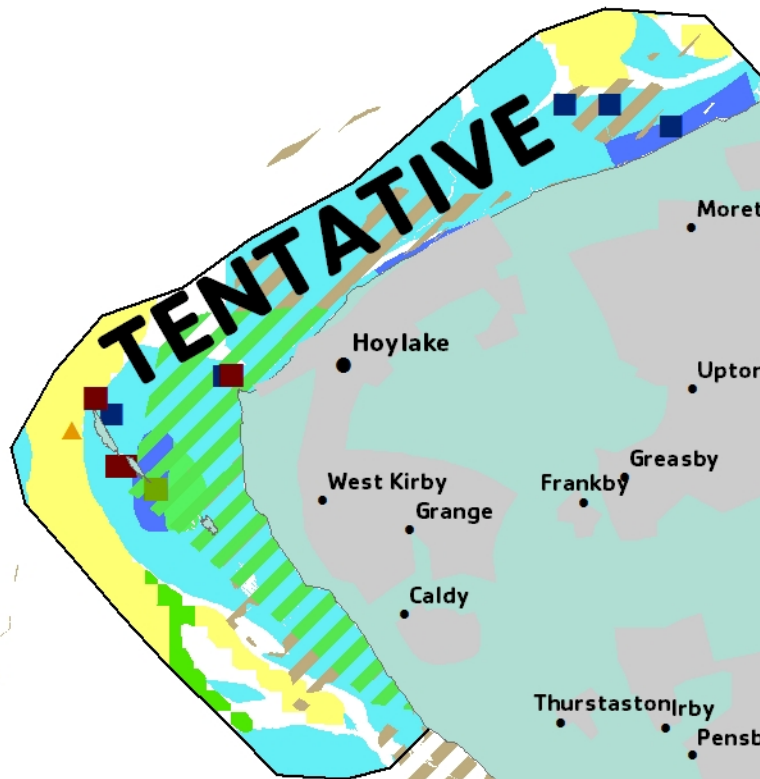


- Native Oyster
- Estuarine rocky habitats
- Intertidal mudflats
- Intertidal mudflats
- Peat and clay exposures
- Seagrass beds
- 12nm
- 6nm
- 3nm
- 1nm

| Broad-scale habitat | Area (km ²) | Connectivity? |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Intertidal biogenic reefs | 0.0001 | Yes - 20 km to pMCZ 13 |
| Intertidal sand & muddy sand | 0.0024 | |
| Moderate energy littoral rock | 0.0002 | |
| Subtidal coarse sediment | 0.0001 | |
| Subtidal sand | 0.0007 | |
| Total pMCZ14 | 0.0035 | |



! This map is tentative. The size, shape and location of pMCZs are likely to change !



TENTATIVE

Ffynnongroyw
Peh-y-ffordd

Great Altcar

Blundell

Little Crosby

Crosby

Great Crosby

Blundellsands

Waterloo

SeafORTH

New Brighton

Wallasey

Moreton

Seacombe

Hoylake

Upton

Birkenhead

West Kirby

Frankby

Greasby

Prenton

Grange

Caldy

Thurstaston

Irby

Pensby

Storeton

Heswall

Barnston

Brimstage