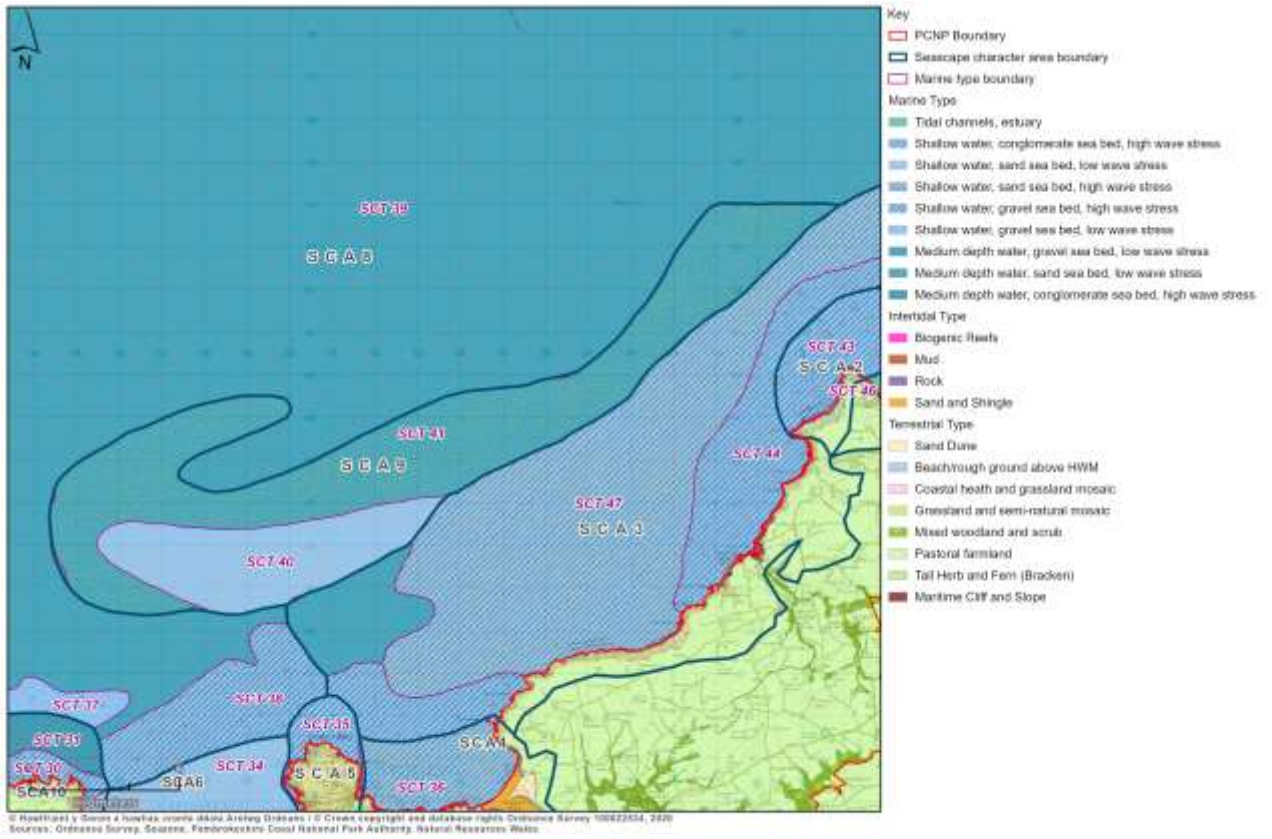


No: **9** Seascape Character Area Name: **Newport and Fishguard outer sand bar**



S.C.A.9: Newport and Fishguard outer sand bar



Area visible from Dinas Head



Area visible from Ceihwr Bay

Summary Description
<p>This sand bar is located in St George's Channel on the southern edge of Cardigan Bay running parallel to the coast. It is predominantly medium depth water with shallow water of less than 30m deep to the south west with a sand seabed and low wind.</p>
Key Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shallow to medium depth sand bar parallel to the coast 3-5km from the coast. • Sinuous sand banks and channels on the seabed to the south. • Generally low wave stress, low tide speed parallel to the coast and slack water inshore. • No wrecks. • Used for leisure sailing by larger boats and ferries and commercial craft may be visible to the north and south entering Fishguard Harbour. • Open sea with simple, open characteristics at a vast scale dominated by swell, waves and winds with a sense of remoteness. • The key coastal features are Cemaes Head and Dinas Head with a backcloth of coastal hills including Mynydd Carningli. • The lighthouse at Strumble Head would be apparent at night, as would the street lights of Fishguard and the ferry port from closer distances. The sea and much of the coast would be dark. • Tranquillity will be reduced by MOD use as a training area.
Physical Influences
<p>A shallow to medium depth (20-40m) offshore east-west sand bar composed of sand grading offshore into sandy gravel, sloping only gently (<1°) on- and offshore. Sinuous ridges lie on the seabed to the south west off Fishguard Bay. The seas are exposed to low wave stress, with slack water in the shallower, inshore part. The sea floor sediments overlie east-west striking Ordovician sandstones and mudstones. Tidal currents are set east and west along the coast.</p> <p>The north eastern part of the area is in the Cardigan Bay SAC.</p>
Cultural influences
<p>The historic routes/linkages associated with this area include both the coastal trade and the history of maritime relations along the western seaways. There are no wrecks located in the area.</p> <p>Fishing in the area comprises of set nets, prawn, lobster and crab potting with potential for light otter trawling. Sea angling and can be expected. The only recreational uses at this offshore site will be from transient cruising craft travelling up and down the Irish Sea. <u>The area has previously been granted a Round 24 licence for oil and gas in its north eastern waters and future applications may be made.</u> The area is part of the Aberporth firing range and military practice area.</p>
Aesthetic, perceptual and experiential qualities
<p>This area is 3-5km offshore so the coast will be a minor but apparent feature to boat users depending on visibility. The main features will be Cemaes Head and Dinas Head with a backcloth of coastal hills including Mynydd Carningli. The land will appear as a single dimensional line on the horizon with simple colours. From land the area is visible from the coast, including well used viewpoints such as the Coast Path, enhancing the sense of wildness and openness of this coastline in parts.</p> <p>The sea has a simple, consistent and unified character at a vast scale and a significant sense of openness, isolation and exposure which increases to the north. Its qualities are determined entirely by the natural forces of water, through swell and waves, and wind. The area is exposed to the south westerlies and northern winds and in poor weather conditions the sea is likely to feel threatening. There is a strong likelihood of tranquillity and sense of wildness and</p>

remoteness in this open sea. There is a general lack of light pollution.

The number of leisure craft will be limited but there may be regular views of ferries entering and leaving Fishguard Harbour at a distance to the south/west and occasional views of commercial vessels to the north. The use of the area for military exercises and training to the east will disrupt tranquillity at times.

Cultural benefits and services

The area contributes significantly towards leisure and recreational services in the form of marine recreation ie sailing and motor cruising, to natural heritage in respect of its role as part of the Cardigan Bay SAC, and to cultural and spiritual services in the form of the mainly unspoilt sea visible from the wild, sensitive western coasts of the National Park.

Forces for change								
Summary	Key forces for change							
<p>The sand bar may accrete through longshore drift.</p> <p><u>Granting of oil and gas licences may lead to pressure for development in the future.</u></p> <p>Use for MOD purposes.</p>	Special Qualities	Natural processes/ climate change	Visitor pressure	Marine use- commercial and fishing	Offshore energy or minerals	Development pressure	Land management changes	MOD use
	Coastal Splendour							
	Islands							
	Diversity of Landscape							
	Remoteness, Tranquillity and Wilderness							
	Diverse Geology							
	Richness of Habitats and Biodiversity							
	Rich Archaeology							
	Distinctive Settlement Character							
	Cultural Heritage							
	Accessing the Park							
	Space to Breathe							
	Key		Change occurring in the area affecting the selected special quality					
Key sensitivities								
Factors that contribute to sensitivity				Factors that detract from sensitivity				
<p>Simple, open, wild and remote character with clear views of National Park coast.</p> <p>Forms part of the open setting for Cardigan Bay overlooked by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park contributing to character.</p> <p>Nature conservation value of part of the area as an SAC.</p> <p>Pembrokeshire and Wales Coast Path as a sensitive receptor overlooking the area at a distance.</p>				<p>Presence of MOD use reducing tranquillity.</p>				

General lack of light pollution.	
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