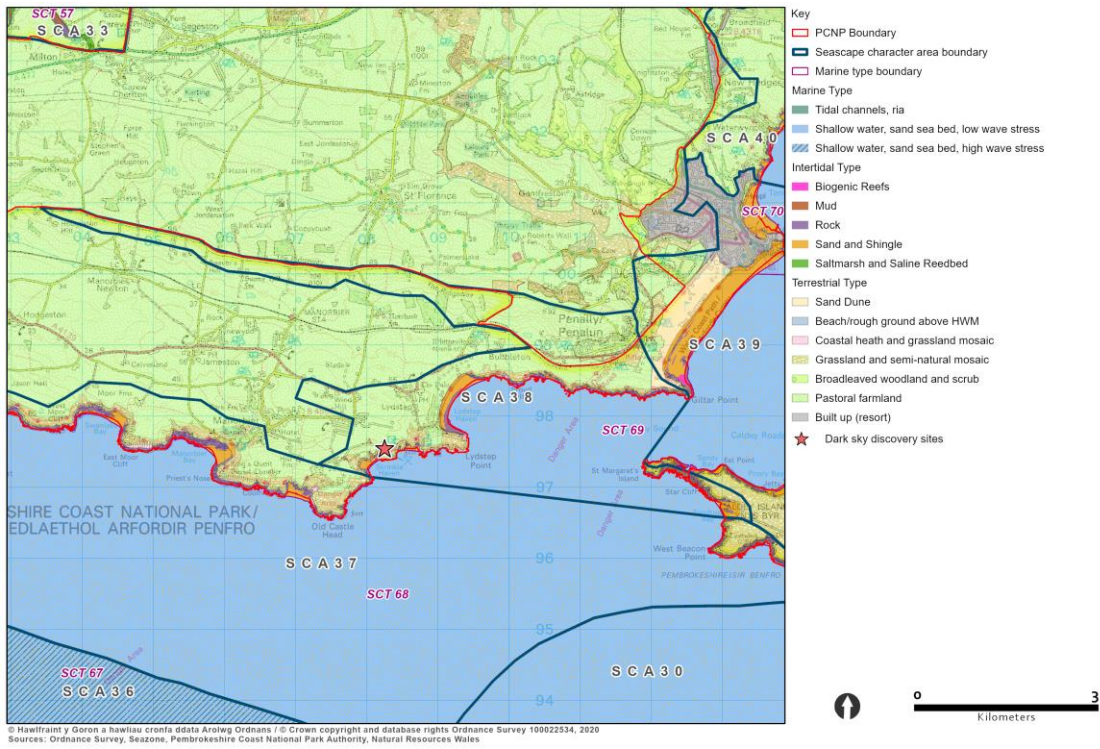


No: **38** Seascape Character Area Name: **Lydstep Haven coastal waters**



SCA38:Lydstep Haven coastal waters



Lydstep Bay from Lydstep Point



Looking east from Lydstep Point to Caldey Sound



Whitesheet Rock from Lydstep Point looking west

Summary Description

The area is located on the south facing coast west of Caldey Island running to Skrinkle Haven including Lydstep Point. It is a natural coast with limestone cliffs and rocky coast except at Lydstep Haven where there is a large static caravan park fronting an east facing sheltered beach and a contrasting remote beach at Sandtop Bay on Caldey. The sea feels relatively sheltered and there are small recreational craft emanating from Lydstep Haven and from Tenby, although Caldey Sound has tidal flows and is treated with caution.

Key Characteristics

- Sea enclosed by limestone mainland coast to the north and east and by Caldey Island to the east separated by Caldey Sound, with distinct east-west ridge to the north.
- Mainly rural south facing natural mainland coast with limestone cliffs with semi-natural grassland and pastoral coastal edge.
- Dramatic vertically bedded limestone cliffs, caves and arches and small east facing beaches to the west of Lydstep Point.
- Lydstep Point with cliffs, coastal quarries and limestone grassland.
- Sheltered east-facing sweep of the beach at Lydstep Haven with associated large organised caravan park and facilities.
- Remote, tranquil and isolated coast of Caldey Island with St Margarets Island and its deserted settlement.
- Dunes on Giltar Point and Penally military training to the east.
- Climbing is popular on the limestone cliffs around Lydstep Point
- Very well used commercially managed beach at Lydstep with small recreational boats emanating from here including jet skis and water skiers.
- Wide unspoilt views out to sea including to Lundy Island and the North Devon coast, and unspoilt along the coast [except to Lydstep] including to and from Caldey Island.
- Views from Pembrokeshire coastal path and to and from Caldey Island.

Physical Influences

North eastwards from Skrinkle Haven the east to south facing coast consists of east-west striking Carboniferous Limestone that makes up discontinuous cliffs between concave indented bays. The headland is 50-60m aod, with some steep to vertical cliffs <50m. There are highly distinctive vertical beds east of Lydstep Point with caves, arches and sheer cliffs including Whitesheet Rock. There are prominent headlands at Lydstep Point and Giltar Point and St Margaret's Island forms a rugged eastern outlier to Caldey Island. The bays of Skrinkle Haven and Lydstep Haven are east facing, whilst Sandtop Bay on Caldey faces west. Intertidal areas comprise narrow rocky shores (60%) and sandy bays (40%). The Limestone coast is subject to corrasion and solution, as well as hydraulic action. There are caves along the coast, e.g. Lydstep Point. Sediment transport occurs in bays through traction, suspension and saltation. This is a swash aligned coast with little net sediment drift.

The shallow (<30m) sea floor has sandy sediments overlying the Limestone, and slopes from

gently (<1°) outside bays to moderately (<10°) off the rocky coasts. The seas are fairly sheltered from wind and wave stress, particularly along the east facing coast. Tidal streams are set north east and south west. At Caldey Sound the tidal streams are upto 3 knots. A weather going stream causes a rip at the western end and steep seas can develop with the wind against the tide. The tidal range is 7.7m.

At Lydstep, peat deposits from a submerged forest are periodically exposed and various prehistoric artefacts such as arrow heads and evidence of footprints have been discovered. The inundated palaeolandscapes of the Bristol Channel may yield evidence for the change from hunter-gatherer societies to communities of settled farmers.

There is a gently undulating coastal plateau around 50mAOD with successive minor valleys and ridges orientated east west parallel to the northern part of the coast (land slopes *down* away from the coast at points) but reaching the coast on its eastern stretch at Giltar Point. The ridge to the north reaches over 100mAOD and forms part of the area as it has clear views of the sea and provides a backcloth to the coast.

There is semi-natural vegetation dominated by grassland on headlands and the narrow coastal cliff edge. There is calcareous vegetation between Skrinkle Haven and Lydstep Point including scrub. There are sand dunes which spread from the east at Tenby Burrows onto military installations/ranges on Giltar Point. Pastoral fields reach the coast at points, including on Caldey Island, and mixed arable/arable farming can be found on the ridge to the north. At Lydstep, deciduous woodland lies on the sheltered slopes.

The sea is within the Bristol Channel Approaches SAC. Caldey Sound and the western environs of Caldey are covered by the Carmarthen Bay Important Bird Area. Bird species include chough and peregrine falcon. The coast is all part of the Lydstep and Tenby Burrows SSSI around Lydstep Point and the cliffs are designated as SAC (as part of the Limestone Coast of South West Wales).

Cultural influences

Evidence of the prehistoric period is found in locations such as Lydstep above. There was at one time a local trade in limestone, reflected in surviving kilns, and quarries on the north face of Lydstep Point. Lydstep House belonged in the early 19th century to the Adams family of Holyland, Pembroke. It was remodelled and extended in 1894 with a new wing and Arts and Crafts interiors. The 'Palace' is a Medieval house traditionally known as the 'Place of Arms', probably the location of the manorial court of Manorbier and Penally. The Watch Tower may have been a beacon before it became a windmill; it is now ruined. At Penally there are the World War 1 practice trenches just set back from the coast. These form clearly apparent zigzag lines in the coastal grassland.

No wrecks are recorded in this area which is an indication possibly of its relatively benign waters.

Scheduled monuments include:

- PE311 (round barrow): community: Carew
- PE403 (Lydstep palace): community: Manorbier
- PE420 (market cross): community: Tenby
- PE470 (round barrow): community: Manorbier
- PE483 (practice trenches): community: Penally

The main settlements are at Lydstep and Penally with occasional caravan sites, both set back from the coast with the largest extent of built form at the extensive fixed caravan park at Lydstep Bay. A single track railway runs just back from the coast and the A4319 also skirts around the inland extent of the area.

The most intensive use emanates from the beach at Lydstep and the caravan park which controls the associated beach, access and a slipway. Dinghy sailing, cruiser sailing and power boats, including day boats, water skiers and jet skis [mainly from the beach at Lydstep], are present across the whole bay. Stand up paddle boarding is becoming increasingly popular. There is a larger anchorage and harbour at Tenby to the north and the area is used extensively both for general sailing and for sail racing. There is a heavily used cruising route from here around the coast west to Milford Haven and Fishguard, across the Bristol Channel and to points east across Carmarthen Bay. There are also numerous routes across to Ireland. Kayaking continues

around this coast. Sea angling from boats and the beach is present at Lydstep. Diving and snorkelling is popular just inside of Lydstep Point.

Other camp sites and caravan parks are present both close to the coast and in the hinterland. Climbing takes place on the limestone cliffs just to the west of Lydstep Point and to the west of Giltar Point which is also a popular spot for watching wildlife and views across the bay to Caldey Island. The Pembrokeshire Coast Path runs along the top of the cliff edge.

Fishing in the area comprises of hand gathered periwinkles, beach seining and beach nets, set nets, lobster and crab potting and there is potential for light otter trawling. The area is part of the Manorbier and Penally military practice areas.

Aesthetic, perceptual and experiential qualities

This coast has unity with consistently moderately high grey limestone cliffs at around 30m indented with one major sandy beach and small coves. The coast is a moderate to large scale with the headlands at Lydstep and Giltar Points. The limestone geology east of Skrinkle Haven is highly dramatic with sheer cliffs, arches such as the church door and caves. It feels moderately sheltered especially at Lydstep Haven. There is some diversity in the landcover with grassland, trees and scrub set against the cliffs and some sand dunes to the east. There are wide views from land out to an uninterrupted and unspoilt sea to the south and views to Caldey Island to the east, Lundy Island and the North Devon coast on clear days. Superb views are possible from Lydstep Point south and east and St Margaret's Island forms a dramatic profile and interest in the seascape in views from the mainland coast. From the water the most apparent features are Lydstep Point, Giltar Point, St Margarets Island and the caravan park at Lydstep. This is the only significant development in this coast appearing as an organised block and sweep of white static caravans climbing from the beach to the cliff tops albeit framed by surrounding woodland. Significant activity emanates from this resort development in season with the use of the bay of noisy power boats and jet skis.

The coast to the east is more tranquil due to footpath only access although trains and cars can probably be heard. The west coast of Caldey Island would be highly tranquil and feel remote. The small scale structures at Giltar Point and caravan parks inland are detractors but are not visible from the sea. There is a strong smell of the sea and the semi-natural grassland and rocky cliffs along the coast give a feeling of naturalness.

Cultural benefits and services

The area contributes significantly towards leisure and recreational services in the form of marine recreation and beach recreation, to natural heritage in the form of the unspoilt coast in parts and nature conservation interest, and to cultural and spiritual services in respect of historic features and connectedness with nature along this coast which is particularly spectacular around Lydstep Point and Caldey Island.

Forces for change								
Summary	Key forces for change							
<p>Slow coastal erosion of rocky cliffs. Sediment drift limited. The shoreline management plan generally states ‘do nothing’ but to ‘hold the line’ locally at Lydstep Haven.</p> <p>Caravan and camping developments.</p> <p>Intensive recreational use at Lydstep Haven including motor based marine recreation.</p> <p>Visitor pressure at Skrinkle Haven and Lydstep Point including wear at car park areas and the nearby accesses to the beach or cliffs and Coast Path.</p> <p>Use of the Coast Path including trampling of cliff top on limestone grassland.</p> <p>Apparent wear on cliffs through climbing (Lydstep Point).</p> <p>Change from pastoral to arable farming is leading to intensification with potential effects on character, pattern and nature conservation.</p> <p>Existing and future licences/leases for floating wave energy and offshore wind respectively in offshore areas could change the character of the area.</p>	Special Qualities	Natural processes/ climate change	Visitor pressure	Marine use- commercial and fishing	Offshore energy	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 factors to be taken into account when assessing sensitivity to change								
<p>Mainly rural south facing natural mainland coast with limestone cliffs with semi-natural grassland and pastoral coastal edge.</p> <p>Lydstep Point with dramatic vertically bedded cliffs and limestone grassland.</p> <p>Remote, tranquil and isolated coast of Caldey Island with St Margarets Island and its deserted settlement.</p> <p>Wide unspoilt views out to sea including to Lundy Island and North Devon Coast, and along the coast including to and from Caldey Island.</p> <p>Coast Path as a receptor.</p> <p>Biodiversity, historic and landscape designations.</p>								

Presence of Lydstep Beach Holiday Park with associated large organised caravan park and facilities.

Presence of jet skis and water skiers reducing tranquillity.

Presence of Penally military training to the east.

A4319 and railway reducing tranquillity.