



HM Government

South Inshore and South Offshore Marine Plan

July 2018



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Cover photo: Durdle Door, Dorset

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Foreword

The UK Government is committed to improving and protecting the natural environment for future generations and has an ambition to leave our environment in a better state than it found it. It has set out its plans for environmental prosperity in the 25 Year Environment Plan, including its ambition to be a global leader in environmental policy and pledge to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste by 2042. This is demonstrated through the actions being taken to tackle the impact of single-use plastics and litter on the marine environment and recent initiatives such as the ban on microbeads in rinse-off personal care products. It also builds on our success in taking 9 billion plastic bags out of circulation since the introduction of the 5p carrier bag charge.

Achieving our ambition will, in part, be delivered through the improved management of the marine environment and the adoption of the South Marine Plan is an important step forward in realising our ambition of securing clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans.

Home to a diverse range of habitats and species, our seas are an essential part of the UK's identity, providing a place for our children to learn and play and for our communities to thrive. They are also a substantial natural asset contributing over £38.5bn a year to the UK economy, bringing in nearly 500 million tonnes of freight through ports and providing goods and services that we all rely on.

The marine environment is also complex with much of it still undiscovered. Recent advances in science and technology have helped us gain a better understanding, but they also show the potentially damaging impact our use of the seas' resources can have.

The South Marine Plan is the second English marine plan to be adopted. It covers an area of around 20,000 square kilometres of inshore and offshore waters across 1,000 kilometres of coast line from Folkestone to the river Dart. It is one of the busiest shipping channels in the world, with significant numbers of freight and passenger transport as well as military activity with almost two thirds of Royal Navy ships stationed at Portsmouth. This intense activity and shipping takes place alongside 60 marine protected areas, including nine marine conservation zones and a UNESCO world heritage site. It is one of the most complex and used areas of the English coast line.

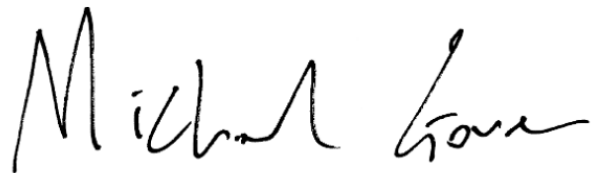
The South Marine Plan will help ensure that the right activities happen in the right place and in the right way within the marine environment. It provides a framework that will shape and inform decisions over how the areas' waters are developed, protected and improved over the next 20 years.

Through its vision for economic, environmental and social prosperity, the South Marine Plan will safeguard environments such as the UNESCO-recognised Jurassic coast, enable sustainable use of its shipping channels, encourage growth in local sectors such as tourism, and protect and enhance essential natural defences against climate change and flooding. This will be achieved through its 12 objectives, the use of natural

capital and supporting local policies, all of which have been developed in partnership with local and national organisations, representatives and users of the area.

The adoption of the South Marine Plan is a significant milestone. Marine planning provides an important way of implementing government's marine policies at a local level, making ambitions tangible, relevant and achievable, improving the wellbeing of coastal communities and supporting a stronger, more sustainable marine economy.

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

South Inshore and South Offshore Marine Plan

1 The South Marine Plan

1.1 Overall aims

1. The South Marine Plan introduces a strategic approach to planning within the inshore and offshore waters between Folkestone in Kent and the river Dart in Devon. It provides a clear, evidence-based approach to inform decision-making by marine users and regulators on where activities might take place within the marine plan area.
2. The plan applies national policies in a local context, ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the marine plan area are reflected. To achieve this, the marine plan has been developed in consultation with stakeholders and in conjunction with government.
3. The plan will enable activities to move more quickly from concept to consent by identifying areas suitable for investment, encouraging earlier and clearer communication between developers and regulatory decision-makers, and by early identification of proposals that are inappropriate or unfeasible.
4. Implementation of the plan's objectives, through more informed decision-making, will help to ensure that we optimise use of the marine area's natural capital, realising greater protection of vulnerable habitats and species, and natural defences against climate change and flooding, as well as improving the well-being of coastal communities and supporting a stronger marine economy.

1.2 Background and introduction

5. A marine plan is required for both the south inshore and the south offshore marine plan areas ([Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) Section 51). This marine plan has been prepared for the purposes of Section 51 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act and has been adopted with the agreement of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Due to the commonalities and dependencies between the two areas, a single document has been produced (the South Marine Plan). It is acknowledged that they remain two separate plans- the South Inshore Marine Plan and the South Offshore Marine Plan. The South Marine Plan document is supported by a Technical Annex, which includes further detail on policy implementation and must be read alongside the South Marine Plan to implement the plan policies¹.
6. The South Marine Plan will help to protect the marine environment and

¹ South Marine Plan Technical Annex

achieve sustainable economic growth, whilst respecting local communities. Policies are presented within an economic, social and environmental framework, helping to support the high level marine objectives set out in the [Marine Policy Statement](#)² as well as other relevant government aspirations such as those set out in the [25 Year Environment Plan](#) and [Clean Growth Strategy](#) and sustainable development³ of the marine area.

7. The plan is an enabling mechanism, providing greater certainty about where activities could best take place and assisting users in determining preferred locations. Specifically, the South Marine Plan:
 - enables efficient use of space, highlighting the need and opportunities for co-existence in areas with high concentrations of activity
 - clarifies where co-existence is not appropriate, and where activities should be avoided
 - enables communication and negotiation where co-existence is an option, so impacts can be mitigated or minimised. In some cases where impacts cannot be minimised but where proposals will bring other benefits, the plan enables these to be taken into account in the decision-making process
 - gives greater certainty around current activity by providing real time data through the [Marine Information System](#)
 - provides appropriate safeguarding for areas of future resource potential where evidence allows
 - allows flexibility where evidence is limited so developers and decision-makers are able to apply their knowledge and experience
 - supports the development of proposals by:
 - setting out requirements that apply irrespective of specific location, including how an activity or development is undertaken
 - identifying factors within plan objectives which will improve chances of success within the decision-making process, for example encouraging proposals to sustain local jobs, draw on the local skills base and support diversification
 - providing context for when ‘imperative reasons of overriding public interest’ are being considered⁴ such as the need for nationally significant infrastructure
 - increasing awareness of which other relevant legislation, policy, regulations, existing measures and available guidance should or must be taken into consideration
 - reiterating the importance of other relevant project-level regulation and assessment within the decision-making process

² HM Government, [Marine Policy Statement](#) (2011)

³ As defined in [United Kingdom Sustainable Development Strategy](#)

⁴ Further information on imperative reasons of overriding public interest can be found at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2012/08/07/habitats-directive-iropi/>

8. Section 1 of the plan provides essential background information, section 2 includes the vision, objectives and plan policies, section 3 provides guidance for those using and implementing the plan and section 4 includes a description of how monitoring, reporting and review will be carried out.

1.3 The south inshore and offshore marine plan areas

9. The south inshore marine plan area stretches from Folkestone in Kent to the river Dart in Devon. It includes:
 - the area from the mean high water spring tide to 12nm
 - any area submerged at mean high water spring tide
 - the waters of any estuary, river or channel, so far as the tide flows at mean high water spring tide
 - waters in any area which is closed (permanently or intermittently) by a lock or other artificial means against the regular action of the tide, but into and from which seawater is caused or permitted to flow (continuously or occasionally)
10. The south offshore marine plan area includes the area from 12nm to the maritime borders with France and the Channel Islands, totaling approximately 10,000sq km.
11. The south marine plan areas are home to a number of ports including Southampton and Portsmouth, contain one of the busiest shipping channels in the world, support significant fishing and aquaculture activity and have a strong association with the defence of Britain. Tourism and recreation are important, particularly boating activity, supported by a large number of marinas and blue flag beaches.
12. Within the plan areas there is one UNESCO world heritage site (Dorset and East Devon Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site), eight Heritage Coasts and two National Parks (New Forest National Park and South Downs National Park). The south marine plan areas contain rich and diverse coastlines with over 60 marine protected areas and iconic landscapes such as the chalk cliffs at Beachy Head, grey cliffs of Portland stone and the fossil rich cliffs of Dorset. Other prominent landmarks such as The Needles (Isle of Wight) and lighthouses at Anvil Point and Portland Bill have been used for generations as navigational marks for commercial and recreational vessels and contribute to a sense of place. For more information see the [South Plans Analytical Report](#).

South marine plan areas

Ports



Port of Southampton - **35.8 Mt of traffic** in 2013, UK's number one vehicle handling port - **820,000 vehicles each year** and UK's second largest container terminal handling more than **1.5 Mt each year**. Portsmouth International Port - Britain's most successful municipal port and second busiest Cross Channel ferry port.



Shipping

85% of the offshore plan area is transited by over **1000** vessels per year. The area is of strategic importance providing routes through Europe and beyond

Boating



Highest percentage of boating activity in England (**16%**) and **67** marinas



Fishing

Highest landings by value port in England (**Brixham**)

Aquaculture



32% of England's aquaculture production (tonnage)



Tidal

Diurnal and semi diurnal tides create **powerful tidal streams**. Offshore testing facilities for tidal stream devices - Perpetuus Tidal Energy Centre and Portland Bill.



Wind

Offshore wind zone: Rampion - lease capacity of up to **400MW** - enough energy to power **300,000** homes

Nuclear



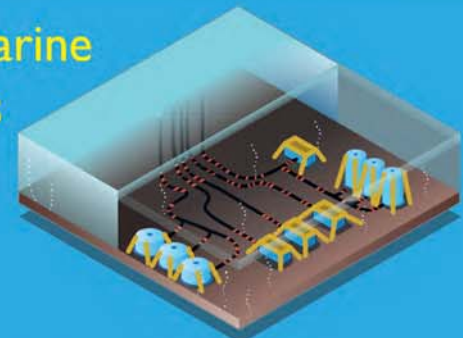
Dungeness B power station has the capacity to generate **1,110MW**

Aggregates



40% of production in England (7Mt in 2014)
50% of the permitted capacity in England (18.85Mt)

Submarine cables



31% submarine cables and **9%** of cable length in English waters. Proposals to link South to Channel Islands

South marine plan areas



UNESCO world heritage site

267



Coastal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Isle of Wight has almost all of its coastline under designation



22

Greatest number of Blue flag beaches in English marine plan areas



63

MOD danger and exercise areas and home to Royal Navy's surface fleet

9



Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)

11



Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

40



Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)



Fig 1: South Inshore and Offshore Plan Areas

September 2017

Plan area boundaries are described as defined following the Defra consultation on marine plan areas and are indicative with further refinement expected as the marine planning process is implemented.



13. Marine plans are prepared under the policy framework provided by the [Marine Policy Statement](#), and together they underpin the marine planning system for England. The Marine Policy Statement builds on the shared UK wide [high level marine objectives](#), and provides an overview of relevant national policy, including the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) and associated [National Policy Statements](#).
14. The South Marine Plan conforms with the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) and [Marine Policy Statement](#) requirements. Where relevant it also takes account of informal guidance in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' marine planning [description document](#) relating to matters including setting out a vision, plan objectives and plan policies.
15. The plan also takes account of the duty to co-operate with public authorities⁵ in the preparation of relevant plans (under the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 S33A](#), as amended by the [Localism Act 2011](#)) in the English inshore region, the English offshore region or any part of either of those regions. The duty to co-operate requires local authorities and other public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis⁶. That duty applies to the marine plans, their implementation and any subsequent revisions. These requirements, together with the options for communities to formulate their own neighbourhood plans, bring new opportunities for an integrated planning system for land and sea. There is also a duty placed on all relevant authorities to have regard to the purposes for which National Parks are designated (under the Environment Act 1995 S62).
16. The South Marine Plan has been prepared in accordance with, and gives consideration to, the EU [Maritime Spatial Planning Directive](#) (2014/89/EU) which supports the [Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union](#). The directive introduces a framework for maritime spatial planning and encourages sustainable development of marine areas and resources. It also sets out minimum requirements, which have been addressed in the South Marine Plan.
17. As a result of the above, the South Marine Plan:
 - provides a strategic approach to decision-making, considering future use and providing a clear approach to managing resources, activities and interactions within the south marine plan areas
 - reduces burden, providing developers with greater clarity on where to invest, encouraging public authorities and plan users to communicate earlier in the process
 - enables projects to move more quickly from concept to consent, reducing the number of inappropriate or unfeasible proposals, saving time and resources
 - applies and clarifies national policy and existing measures, taking account of the issues, opportunities, and characteristics of the busy south marine plan areas – marine plans do not establish new requirements

⁵ Prescribed [bodies are currently set out in Regulation 4 of the Town & Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(SI 2012/767\)](#)

⁶ [A Plain English Guide to the Localism Act](#)

- addresses potential cumulative effects or impacts⁷ from the many and increasing pressures
- takes an ecosystem approach and reflects the benefit of clean and healthy seas and natural capital to provide ecosystem goods and services
- complements current measures where appropriate
- takes all reasonable steps to make sure compatibility with any related relevant development plans⁸ (or their equivalent), and having regard to other plans⁹, is in line with the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, addressing the importance of land-sea interactions
- contributes to the [UK Marine Strategy](#) to meet the requirements of the EU [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) (2008/56/EC)¹⁰
- is based on sound evidence as far as possible, is informed by consultation with stakeholders and makes use of available data and existing management measures where appropriate
- where evidence is inconclusive, decision-makers should make reasonable efforts to fill evidence gaps but will also need to apply precaution within an overall risk-based approach, in accordance with the sustainable development policies of the UK Administrations

1.4 Overview of plan development and supporting documents

18. Involvement of stakeholders, government officials across all relevant departments including those relating to retained functions eg defence, local and other authorities and representatives of bordering nations has been central to the development of the plan. All stages of preparing the South Marine Plan have been supported by ongoing formal and informal public consultation and engagement. Details of the engagement approach and activities are set out in the [Statement of Public Participation](#). Reports produced during the different planning stages provide more detail and technical information¹¹.
19. Assessments undertaken as part of the South Marine Plan's preparation are the:
- [Sustainability Appraisal](#) (as required by [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) (Schedule 6 (10)), incorporating the requirements of the [Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)) – appraises the social, economic and environmental impacts of the South Marine Plan and makes sure sustainable development is at the heart of the plan making process
 - [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#) – fulfils the requirements of the Habitats Directive and associated UK regulations

⁷ South Marine Plan Technical Annex box 7

⁸ HM Government [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) (2009) Sc 6 3(2)

⁹ Technical annex appendix 2. Note, further to the requirement to ensure compatibility with any marine plan related to the plan area ([Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) (2009) Sc 6 3(1), there are no marine plans in place that border the South Marine Plan

¹⁰ The Technical Annex sets out the detail of MSFD requirements, the UK Marine Strategy and how the plan will contribute to delivery, including section 3.3, table 3, objective 11, and appendix 3 table 6.

¹¹ All the relevant documents associated with the stages can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/planning-development/marine-planning>

2 Vision, objectives and policies

2.1 Vision

By 2038, the south marine plan areas' iconic and unique qualities, characteristics and culture will be conserved, promoted and where needed enhanced, through good management of its marine space. The natural beauty of the coastline and busy coastal and offshore waters are qualities that make the south marine plan areas distinctive. By 2038, the south marine plan areas will have maintained this distinctive natural beauty and diversity while sustainable economic growth, protection of the natural and historic environment, as well as the well-being of those who live, work and visit the south coast, will have been enhanced through balanced and sustainable use of its resources.

20. The vision for the south marine plan areas in 2038 takes account of the approach to drafting plans, national policy, the evidence base and extensive consultation.

2.2 Objectives

21. The vision for the South Marine Plan will be achieved through its objectives (Table 1). The objectives take into account the [South Plan Analytical Report](#), consultation with government, local authorities and other stakeholders and local and national planning documents.
22. The objectives are cross cutting rather than specific to individual topics and sectors. The order of the objectives is not a reflection of priorities. Economic, social and environmental objectives must be considered alongside one another. Objectives should be applied in an integrated way, though not every objective will apply to every situation and in every location.
23. For detail on the objectives, including what each objective covers, why it is needed, who it may interest and how they contribute to the application of the high level marine objectives, please refer to the Technical Annex. The Technical Annex also includes 'signposting' to existing legislation, guidance and best practice which may aid implementation of plan objectives through informing decision-making and the development of proposals.

2.3 Policies

24. The South Marine Plan policies support application of the objectives, addressing issues and encouraging sustainable development within the plan areas. Where an objective cannot be achieved through existing legislation, new plan policies have been drafted. The policies also clarify existing requirements or make them relevant to the plan areas.
25. The policies cover a wide range of topics including activities and uses, economic, social and environmental considerations, and cross-cutting issues such as the join up between decision-making on land and at sea and opportunities for co-existence. Each of the 53 policies sits within the objective it most relates to and has a unique reference code, for example S-BIO-1. Policies which are closely related are presented alongside each

- other in the Technical Annex, with shared supporting text for example S-ACC-1 and S-ACC-2. Policy aims are provided to make clear how they guide decisions, and help achieve the relevant objectives. Most policies are relevant, even if indirectly, to a number of objectives; where that is the case, this is highlighted in the Technical Annex.
26. Some policies apply across the whole of the plan areas, others just to the inshore or offshore plan area, and some apply to defined areas. Plan policies and relevant supporting information have been expressed spatially where possible. See maps in the Technical Annex and on the [Marine Information System](#)¹² as well as associated text relating to the use of the latest data and information.
 27. The Technical Annex provides more detail on what each policy covers, why it is important and where and how the policy will be implemented. Both the Technical Annex and the Marine Information System should be used alongside this plan. An example of a public authority who are to apply the plan would be Local authorities with their respective local plans as the starting point for their decision-making.
 28. The plan should be read as a whole taking all the plan policies together rather than each in isolation. It is unlikely that a particular decision will involve a single policy or all policies. Instead it is likely that several plan policies will be pertinent to a decision. It will be for public authorities, working with proponents and others as necessary, to determine which plan policies (and associated maps) apply to a particular decision. Where possible, plan policy has been worded in a simple concise manner, with supporting information for decision-makers and applicants given in the Technical Annex and through the [Marine Information System](#).

¹² The use of the [Marine Information System](#) is explained later in chapter 3.

Table 1: Objectives and policies of the South Marine Plan.

The page number in the South Marine Plan Technical Annex where the policy is described in full is listed under 'Detail'

Policy	Policy aim	Detail	
Objective 1: To encourage effective use of space to support existing, and future sustainable economic activity through co-existence, mitigation of conflicts and minimisation of development footprints.			
<u>S-CO-1</u>	Proposals will minimise their use of space and consider opportunities for co-existence with other activities.	Space within the south marine plan areas is limited and required to realise social, environmental and economic benefits. S-CO-1 enables proposals to be spatially planned and make appropriate use of available space by minimising footprints. Those activities that can co-exist, should do so.	P 19
<u>S-DEF-1</u>	Proposals in or affecting Ministry of Defence Areas should only be authorised with agreement from the Ministry of Defence.	There are a high number of defence activities and estates in the south marine plan areas. Marine infrastructure can affect their continuity or future use. S-DEF-1 will avoid conflict between defence activities and new proposals within the plan areas. It will make sure that defence interests are not impeded.	P 20
<u>S-OG-1</u>	Proposals in areas where a licence for oil and gas has been granted or formally applied for should not be authorised unless it is demonstrated that the other development or activity is compatible with the oil and gas activity.	The potential to extract oil and gas from the south marine plan areas is important to the UK's energy supply as well as supporting economic recovery for this industry. S-OG-1 enables oil and gas licence blocks to be safeguarded and potential conflict for the same space to be managed. S-OG-1 encourages engagement, negotiation and co-location where possible.	P 23
<u>S-TIDE-1</u>	Proposals in areas under seabed agreement for tidal energy generation should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	Areas for tidal energy development are limited by the natural features needed to create tidal currents sufficient to power tidal stream devices. S-TIDE-1 provides protection to areas identified for tidal energy developments from other new activities that could affect the sites ability to generate energy. It enables the development of safe, profitable and efficient marine businesses.	P 26

Policy		Policy aim	Detail
S-PS-1	Proposals that may have a significant adverse impact upon current activity and future opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	Ports and harbours are essential to realise economic and social benefits for the south marine plan areas and the UK. S-PS-1 makes sure proposals do not restrict current port and harbour activity or future growth, enabling long-term strategic decisions, and supporting competitive and efficient port and shipping operations.	P 30
S-AGG-1	Proposals in areas where a licence for extraction of aggregates has been granted or formally applied for should not be authorised, unless it is demonstrated that the other development or activity is compatible with aggregate extraction.	The south marine plan areas produce 7Mt of aggregates annually; 42% of the marine aggregates extracted in English waters. S-AGG-1 safeguards aggregate licence areas from other activities, unless it is demonstrated that the other activities are compatible with aggregate extraction. This enables continuity of supply of construction aggregate and supports local and national economies.	P 33
S-AGG-2	Proposals within an area subject to an Exploration and Option Agreement with The Crown Estate should not be supported unless it is demonstrated that the other development or activity is compatible with aggregate extraction.	S-AGG-2 safeguards aggregate exploration and option agreement areas to enable the aggregate industry to identify commercially viable aggregate resource in the south marine plan areas. Proposals will only be supported if they are compatible with aggregate extraction.	P 33

Policy		Policy aim	Detail
S-AGG-3	Proposals in areas where high potential aggregate resource occurs should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on aggregate extraction, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	S-AGG-3 makes sure that proposals consider areas of high potential aggregate resource, as defined by the British Geological Survey. It makes sure that any influences impacts on access to commercially viable marine sand and gravel resources in the future are managed, enabling secure access to sufficient supply of aggregate resources.	P 33
S-DD-1	Proposals within or adjacent to licenced dredging and disposal areas should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on licenced dredging and disposal areas, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	There are a substantial number of existing maintenance dredging and disposal sites within the south marine plan areas. Dredging activities support the socio-economic benefits of port developments from direct and indirect job creation. S-DD-1 enables identification of dredging and disposal areas, clarifies requirements and encourages early consideration of the effects on maintenance dredging. This avoids issues or conflicts arising during the application process, supporting profitable and efficient marine business.	P 38
S-AQ-1	<p>Proposals for sustainable aquaculture in identified areas of potential sustainable aquaculture production will be supported.</p> <p>Proposals in existing or within potential sustainable aquaculture production areas must demonstrate consideration of and compatibility with sustainable aquaculture production. Where compatibility is not possible, proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on sustainable aquaculture, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.</p>	Aquaculture is an important industry in the south inshore marine plan area, with the potential to increase supply, contributing to food security in the UK. S-AQ-1 enables the continuation of existing production and sustainable expansion of aquaculture to maximise opportunities. S-AQ-1 highlights current and potential sites for future expansion, where other industries are required to demonstrate their compatibility with aquaculture.	P 41

Policy	Policy aim	Detail
Objective 2: To manage existing, and aid the provision of new, infrastructure supporting marine and terrestrial activity.		
<u>S-INF-1</u>	Appropriate land-based infrastructure which facilitates marine activity (and vice versa) should be supported.	Many marine activities in the south marine plan areas are reliant on land based infrastructure and vice versa. Supporting infrastructure development will provide economic and social benefits and support marine business. S-INF-1 supports integration between marine and land-use plans in providing adequate infrastructure, especially where that infrastructure will predominantly support activity in the other environment. S-INF-1 enables public authorities to consider how a proposal may influence land-based or marine activity and their associated infrastructure.
<u>S-PS-2</u>	Proposals that require static sea surface infrastructure or that significantly reduce under- keel clearance must not be authorised within International Maritime Organization routing systems unless there are exceptional circumstances.	Within the south marine plan areas there are International Maritime Organization routing systems which are essential for shipping activity, freedom of navigation and navigational safety. S-PS-2 confirms that proposals that compromise these important navigation routes should not be authorised. S-PS-2 enables and supports safe, profitable and efficient marine businesses.
<u>S-PS-3</u>	Proposals that require static sea surface infrastructure or that significantly reduce under- keel clearance which encroach upon high density navigation routes, or that pose a risk to the viability of passenger ferry services, must not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.	The south marine plan areas are very busy with respect to high density navigation routes and passenger services. S-PS-3 confirms that proposals that pose a risk to safe navigation or the viability of these routes and services should not be authorised S-PS-3 aims to protect these routes and services by enabling and promoting safe, profitable and efficient marine businesses.

Policy		Policy aim	Detail
S-CAB-1	Preference should be given to proposals for cable installation where the method of installation is burial. Where burial is not achievable, decisions should take account of protection measures for the cable that may be proposed by the applicant. Where burial or protection measures are not appropriate, proposals should state the case for proceeding without those measures.	Submarine cabling is important to the growth and sustainability of telecommunications, offshore wind farms and electricity transmission. S-CAB-1 supports and encourages cable burial where possible to meet the needs of the sector whilst enabling the maximum potential opportunity for other uses of the busy south marine plan areas. S-CAB-1 supports infrastructure that encourages marine businesses.	P 52
S-CAB-2	Proposals that have a significant adverse impact on new and existing landfall sites for subsea cables (telecoms, power and interconnectors) should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	UK subsea cables need protection to make sure the safety and security of the energy supply and telecoms networks. Landfall sites for subsea cables are not currently protected from other uses, which may prevent these sites being used as cable landfall locations. S-CAB-2 supports the need to avoid displacement of this economically and socially vital activity enabling business to be profitable and efficient.	P 52
S-AQ-2	Proposals that enable the provision of infrastructure for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and related industries will be supported.	Fisheries and aquaculture are important particularly to coastal communities in the south marine plan areas. S-AQ-2 makes sure support is given to proposals that provide supporting infrastructure either at sea or on land for fisheries and aquaculture to support safe, profitable and efficient marine businesses. This encourages supporting infrastructure for these industries, enabling their benefits to be realised.	P 58
Objective 3: To support diversification of activities which improve socio-economic conditions in coastal communities.			
S-REN-1	Proposals that support the development of supply chains associated with the deployment of renewable energy will be supported.	Supply chains play an important role in developing technology, reducing associated costs of infrastructure and realising the economic and social benefits of renewable energy to the UK economy. S-REN-1 recognises the importance of the supply chain within the lifecycle of renewable energy projects. S-REN-1 enables public authorities to support proposals that will reduce costs, ensuring that businesses are operating competitively and with a long term strategy.	P 62

Policy		Policy aim	Detail
S-AGG-4	Where proposals require marine aggregates as part of their construction, preference should be given to using marine aggregates sourced from the south marine plan areas. If this is not appropriate, proposals should state why.	S-AGG-4 encourages the use of locally sourced marine aggregate. This will enable social, economic and environmental benefits to the south marine plan areas and encourage sustainable use of marine aggregates.	P 63
S-FISH-1	Proposals that support the diversification of a sustainable fishing industry and or enhance fishing industry resilience to the effects of climate change should be supported.	Climate change can affect commercial fisheries by altering fish abundance, growth, distribution, or behaviour. S-FISH-1 supports long-term strategic proposals that enable the fishing industry to diversify or build in resilience to manage climate change risks and maximise opportunities for sustainable use of marine resources.	P 64
S-TR-1	Proposals supporting, promoting or facilitating tourism and recreation activities, particularly where this creates additional utilisation of related facilities beyond typical usage patterns, should be supported.	S-TR-1 supports tourism and recreation which are important and established sectors within the south marine plan areas. S-TR-1 enables diversification to provide a greater range of opportunities for employment, improve resilience to times of economic uncertainty and help reduce adverse impacts on natural and historic heritage and peoples' experience of them.	P 66
Objective 4: To support marine activities that increase or enhance employment opportunities at all skills levels among the workforce of coastal communities, particularly where they support existing or developing industries within the south marine plan areas.			
S-EMP-1	Proposals that develop skills related to marine activities, particularly in line with local skills strategies, will be supported.	Government seeks to bring supply and demand in the skills and labour market closer together. S-EMP-1 supports proposals that enhance or create marine related skills opportunities to enable maximum sustainable activity, prosperity and opportunities for all.	P 68
S-EMP-2	Proposals resulting in a net increase to marine related employment will be supported, particularly where they are in line with the skills available in and adjacent to the south marine plan areas.	The south marine plan areas have employment structures with significant variation within and between local authority areas. S-EMP-2 encourages public authorities to consider the employment benefits of a proposal and how the required skills equate to those of the plan area. It enables maximum sustainable activity, prosperity and opportunities for all, now and in the future.	P 70

Policy	Policy aim	Detail
Objective 5: To avoid, minimise, mitigate displacement of marine activities, particularly where of importance to adjacent coastal communities, and where this is not practical to make sure significant adverse impacts on social benefits are avoided.		
<u>S-SOC-1</u>	Proposals that enhance or promote social benefits will be supported. Proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts which result in the displacement of other existing or authorised (but yet to be implemented) activities that generate social benefits.	Large numbers of people gain social benefits from the south marine plan areas. Displacement of activities which produce social benefits, particularly ones that are important to coastal communities, is a concern, especially as the south marine plan areas are increasingly busy. S-SOC-1 requires proposals to manage negative impacts on activities with social benefits.
<u>S-TR-2</u>	Proposals that enhance or promote tourism and recreation activities will be supported. Proposals for development must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on tourism and recreation activities.	Tourism and recreation are growth industries in the south marine plan areas. S-TR-2 makes sure that any new development does not have an adverse impact on tourism and recreation activities. S-TR-2 enables the south marine plan areas to continue to benefit from the significant contributions to the economy, and health and well-being benefits to people that tourism and recreation bring.
<u>S-FISH-2</u>	Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on access to, or within, sustainable fishing or aquaculture sites must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts, d) if it is not possible to mitigate the significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	Sustainable fishing and aquaculture industries provide benefits to coastal communities and contribute to UK food security. These activities are restricted in where they can operate, making them vulnerable to loss of access caused by surrounding sea use. S-FISH-2 limits impacts of other marine activities on fishing and aquaculture access, enabling maximum marine resource use and generating prosperous resilient and cohesive coastal communities.
<u>S-FISH-3</u>	Proposals that enhance access to, or within sustainable fishing or aquaculture sites should be supported.	Through co-existence and co-location of facilities, S-FISH-3 enables support for sustainable fishing and aquaculture by supporting proposals that enhance access to sites.

Policy	Policy aim	Detail
Objective 6: To maintain and enhance inclusive public access to, and within, the south marine plan areas appropriate to its setting.		
<u>S-ACC-1</u>	Proposals, including in relation to tourism and recreation, should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on public access.	Provision for marine access is essential to enabling the economic and social benefits that will come from the growth of tourism and recreation in the south marine plan areas. S-ACC-1 requires proposals to manage impacts on public access to the marine area and contributes to the health and well-being of communities.
<u>S-ACC-2</u>	Proposals demonstrating enhanced public access to and within the marine area will be supported.	S-ACC-2 makes sure that support will be given to proposals which enhance public access to the marine area, such as physical, digital, and interpretative access and signage. Support will also be given to proposals which enhance access by removing unsuitable access arrangements.
Objective 7: To support the reduction of the environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change, through encouraging the implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid proposals' indirect contributions to greenhouse gas emissions • reduce vulnerability • improve resilience to climate and coastal change • consider habitats that provide related ecosystem services 		
<u>S-CC-1</u>	Proposals must consider their contribution to greenhouse gas emissions arising from unintended consequences on other activities. Where such consequences are likely to result in increased greenhouse gas emissions, proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate unintended consequences on other activities.	S-CC-1 addresses the indirect greenhouse gas emissions of a proposal. Indirect emissions are those that have occurred due to the impositions of a proposal on other activities.
		P 95

Policy	Policy aim	Detail	
<p>S-CC-2</p>	<p>Proposals should demonstrate for the lifetime of the proposal that: 1) they are resilient to the effects of climate change 2) they will not have a significant adverse impact upon climate change adaptation measures elsewhere. In respect of 2) proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate the significant adverse impacts upon these climate change adaptation measures.</p>	<p>S-CC-2 makes sure that proposals should not compromise existing adaptation measures, which will enable improvement of the resilience of coastal communities to coastal erosion and flood risk. S-CC-2 enables enhanced resilience of developments, activities and ecosystems within the south marine plan areas to the effects of climate change.</p>	<p>P 97</p>
<p>S-CC-3</p>	<p>Proposals in the south marine plan area and adjacent marine plan areas that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on coastal change should not be supported.</p>	<p>Large areas of the south marine plan coastline are subject to or vulnerable to change. S-CC-3 makes sure proposals do not exacerbate coastal change, enabling communities to be more resilient and able to adapt better to coastal erosion and flood risk where identified.</p>	<p>P 99</p>
<p>S-CC-4</p>	<p>Proposals that may have a significant adverse impact on habitats that provide a flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem service must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts</p>	<p>Habitats that provide flood defence and carbon sequestration provide natural resilience for coastal communities that are vulnerable to coastal erosion and change. S-CC-4 requires proposals to manage impacts, enabling these important habitats to continue to provide this valuable service.</p>	<p>P 101</p>
<p>Objective 8: To identify and conserve heritage assets that are significant to the historic environment of the south marine plan areas.</p>			
<p>S-HER-1</p>	<p>Proposals that may compromise or harm elements contributing to the significance of heritage assets should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate compromise or harm. If it is not possible to mitigate, the public benefits for proceeding with the proposal must outweigh the compromise or harm to the heritage asset.</p>	<p>The south marine plan areas have many significant cultural assets. Some have little protection despite their contribution to the character of the south marine plan areas and tourism economy. Whilst some of these are protected through existing statutory designations, others are not. S-HER-1 makes sure that proposals do not have an adverse impact on marine and coastal heritage assets, regardless of their designation status. This enables the diversity of the marine environment ensuring the cultural heritage is protected.</p>	<p>P 107</p>

		Policy aim	Detail
Objective 9: To consider the seascape and its constituent marine character and visual resource and the landscape of the south marine plan areas.			
S-SCP-1	Proposals that may have a significant adverse impact upon the seascape of an area should only be supported if they demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts upon the seascape of an area, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	Seascape is important due to the prevalence of protected landscapes, their beauty and association with tourism and recreation activities. S-SCP-1 makes sure that proposals should only be supported if they manage impacts on the seascape. S-SCP-1 adds clarity to existing national policy by identifying the visual resource and important characteristics of the south marine plan areas, enabling these policies to be better supported.	P 113
Objective 10: To support marine protected area objectives and a well-managed ecologically coherent network with enhanced resilience and capability to adapt to change.			
S-MPA-1	Proposals that support the objectives of marine protected areas and the ecological coherence of the marine protected area network will be supported. Proposals that may have adverse impacts on the objectives of marine protected areas and the ecological coherence of the marine protected area network must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate adverse impacts, with due regard given to statutory advice on an ecologically coherent network.	The UK government is committed to establishing a network of marine protected areas, creating a 'Blue Belt' of protected areas around the country. The south marine plan areas will make a significant contribution to this network, through the many existing and proposed marine protected area sites. S-MPA-1 makes sure proposals take account of adverse impacts on individual sites and the overall network, protecting important habitats, species and geological features, enabling the successful and continued management of these sites.	P 121

		Policy aim	Detail
S-MPA-2	Proposals that enhance a marine protected area's ability to adapt to climate change and so enhance the resilience of the marine protected area network will be supported. Proposals that may have adverse impacts on an individual marine protected area's ability to adapt to the effects of climate change and so reduce the resilience of the marine protected area network, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate adverse impacts.	The effects of climate change on habitats and species poses a challenge to designated marine protected area sites in the south marine plan areas. S-MPA-2 makes sure proposals account for adverse impacts on individual marine protected areas ability to adapt to climate change, improving resilience and working towards a well-managed marine protected area network.	P 126
S-MPA-3	Where statutory advice states that a marine protected area site condition is deteriorating, or that features are moving or changing due to climate change, a suitable boundary change to ensure continued protection of the site and coherence of the overall network should be considered.	Within the south marine plan areas, marine protected areas are generally small in size so are more susceptible to climate change. S-MPA-3 makes sure flexibility by supporting boundary changes to improve resilience of the marine protected area network. S-MPA-3 enables adaptive management to help mitigate the loss of features within sites, and support adaptation to climate change.	P 127
S-MPA-4	Until the ecological coherence of the marine protected area network is confirmed ¹³ , proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate adverse impacts on features ¹⁴ that may be required to complete the network, d) if it is not possible to mitigate adverse impacts, proposals should state the case for proceeding.	It is important to makes sure that possible locations for further marine protected areas, which may be needed to complete the network, remain in sufficient condition to merit designation. S-MPA-4 makes sure proposals do not prevent the future inclusion of features which may be required to enhance network coherence. The focus of S-MPA-4 is on Features of Conservation Importance, priority habitats and species, and Annex 1 habitats.	P 129

¹³ By government

¹⁴ The potential features to consider for S-MPA-4 are restricted to [Features of Conservation Importance \(FOCI\) identified by JNCC](#), annex I habitats identified by the [Habitats Directive](#), and the [S41 list](#) identified in the [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act](#)

Policy	Policy aim	Detail	
Objective 11: To complement and contribute to the achievement or maintenance of Good Ecological Status or Potential under the Water Framework Directive and Good Environmental Status under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, with respect to descriptors for marine litter, non-indigenous species and underwater noise.			
S-NIS-1	Proposals must put in place appropriate measures to avoid or minimise significant adverse impacts on the marine area that would arise through the introduction and transport of non-indigenous species, particularly when: 1) moving equipment, boats or livestock (for example fish and shellfish) from one water body to another 2) introducing structures suitable for settlement of non-indigenous species, or the spread of invasive non-indigenous species known to exist in the area.	As the south marine plan areas are so close to the continent and have one of the busiest shipping channels in the world, there is a high risk of introducing or spreading invasive non-native species. S-NIS-1 aims to avoid or minimise damage to the marine area from the introduction or transport of invasive non-native species, looking at two pathways of particular relevance for the south marine plan areas. This will enable support for viable populations of flora and fauna.	P 137
S-ML-1	Public authorities should ensure adequate provision for and removal of beach and marine litter on amenity beaches.	Litter at sea often originates on land. Increase in development, recreation and tourism in the south marine plan areas may result in increased litter, and an adverse impact on the environment on which these activities rely. Addressing marine litter along the coastline is an important step towards dealing with this problem. S-ML-1 aims to reduce litter at amenity beaches in the south inshore marine plan area.	P 139
S-ML-2	The introduction of litter as a result of proposals should be avoided or minimised where practicable and activities that help reduce marine litter will be supported.	The natural landscapes, wildlife and recreational opportunities on offer in the south marine plan areas attract visitors to the area. More visitors and increases in coastal development are likely to increase litter. S-ML-2 makes sure proposals avoid or minimise introducing litter to the marine area, and encourages voluntary action to protect the marine environment and the services it provides for people.	P 139

		Policy aim	Detail
<u>S-UWN-1</u>	Proposals generating impulsive sound, must contribute data to the UK Marine Noise Registry as per any currently agreed requirements. Public authorities must take account of any currently agreed targets under the UK Marine Strategy part one descriptor 11.	Impulsive sounds can have an adverse effect on marine life and human enjoyment of marine areas. S-UWN-1 supports the newly established noise registry to record, assess, and manage the distribution and timing of impulsive sounds sources. S-UWN-1 encourages data collection to determine current baselines and levels of impulsive sound in the marine environment enabling effective marine management and protection of biodiversity or viable populations of species.	P 141
<u>S-UWN-2</u>	Proposals that generate impulsive sound and/or ambient noise must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on highly mobile species, d) if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals must state the case for proceeding.	Underwater noise levels have increased with marine space use. Noise can affect highly mobile species, including causing chronic stress and death at higher intensities. S-UWN-2 supports management of underwater noise requiring proposals to take appropriate noise reduction actions. S-UWN-2 enables clear and proportionate regulation to make sure marine activity respects environmental limits and protects biodiversity.	P 141
<u>S-WQ-1</u>	Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts upon water environment, including upon habitats and species that can be of benefit to water quality must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impacts.	Much of the economic and cultural prosperity of the south marine plan areas is reliant on water quality. Activities can place stress on water bodies such that, in parts of the south marine plan areas water quality requires improvement. S-WQ-1 seeks to manage impacts on water quality, and the habitats and species which benefit water quality through the ecosystem service they provide.	P 146
<u>S-WQ-2</u>	Activities that can deliver an improvement to water environment, or enhance habitats and species which can be of benefit to water quality should be supported.	Habitats such as coastal saltmarsh, intertidal mudflats, seagrass, reed beds and natural blue mussel beds provide ecosystem services which maintain and can improve water quality. S-WQ-2 encourages activities improving water quality including habitat restoration, bioremediation and voluntary measures.	P 146

Policy	Policy aim	Detail
Objective 12: To safeguard space for, and improve the quality of, the natural marine environment, including to enable continued provision of ecosystem goods and services, particularly in relation to coastal and seabed habitats, fisheries and cumulative impacts on highly mobile species.		
S-BIO-1	Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on natural habitat and species adaptation, migration and connectivity must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise c) mitigate significant adverse impacts.	Competition for space, increased levels of development and predicted effects of climate change can affect the south marine plan areas' natural habitats and species connectivity, ability to adapt to change and migrate. S-BIO-1 requires proposals to manage negative effects which may not enable the functioning of healthy, resilient and adaptable marine ecosystems.
S-BIO-2	Proposals that incorporate features that enhance or facilitate natural habitat and species adaptation, migration and connectivity will be supported.	S-BIO-2 supports proposals that incorporate features that enhance or facilitate natural habitat and species adaptation, migration and connectivity, enabling the environment to respond to climate change and development. This may include novel designs, and collaboration between developers and public authorities.
S-BIO-3	Proposals that enhance coastal habitats where important in their own right and/or for ecosystem functioning and provision of goods and services will be supported. Proposals must take account of the space required for coastal habitats where important in their own right and/or for ecosystem functioning and provision of goods and services and demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate for net loss of coastal habitat.	In the south inshore marine plan area there is a lack of space for coastal habitats. This is due to coastal squeeze, a process where habitats have decreasing space between rigid coastal structures and rising sea level or coastal erosion. S-BIO-3 requires proposals to manage their impacts on these habitats to support the functioning of healthy, resilient and adaptable marine ecosystems.
S-BIO-4	Proposals that enhance the distribution and net extent of priority habitats should be supported. Proposals must demonstrate that they will avoid reducing the distribution and net extent of priority habitats.	Maintaining the extent and distribution of priority and coastal habitats is important as it reduces habitat fragmentation, species isolation and supports strong, biodiverse biological communities. S-BIO-4 maintains the distribution and net extent of priority habitats throughout the south marine plan areas by ensuring proposals do not adversely affect them.

Policy		Policy aim	Detail
<u>S-DIST-1</u>	Proposals, including in relation to tourism and recreational activities, within and adjacent to the south marine plan areas must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant cumulative adverse physical disturbance or displacement impacts on highly mobile species.	Cumulative disturbance and displacement from activities, including those that do not require authorisation such as tourism and recreation, has caused declines in some highly mobile species. S-DIST-1 reduces cumulative impacts by requiring proposals to manage impacts, highlighting good practice, and encouraging strategic management of unauthorised activities. S-DIST-1 enables people to appreciate the marine diversity and act responsibly to protect and recover populations of rare, vulnerable, and valued species.	P 165
<u>S-FISH-4</u>	Proposals that enhance essential fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds, and migratory routes should be supported. Proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate significant adverse impact on essential fish habitat, including, spawning, nursery, feeding grounds and migration routes.	Sustainable fish populations rely upon specific habitats throughout their life. S-FISH-4 recognises protection of habitats and the services they provide can enhance fish populations, supporting the long-term existence of the fisheries and contributing to Good Environmental Status. S-FISH-4 enables sustainable use of marine resources within environmental limits alongside productive fisheries by requiring proposals to manage impacts on these habitats.	P 168
<u>S-FISH-4-HER</u>	Proposals will consider herring spawning mitigation in the area highlighted on Figure 26 (in the technical annex) during the period 01 November to the last day of February annually.	The south marine plan areas include a number of important herring spawning zones; these are located within the Southern Bight and Downs areas. S-FISH-4-HER highlights these zones and makes sure proposals mitigate any potential impacts. Specific mitigation measures are provided. S-FISH-4-HER identifies areas where development is now able to take place if impacts are mitigated. This will enable sustainable development whilst protecting herring stock.	P 173
<u>S-DD-2</u>	Proposals must identify, where possible, alternative opportunities to minimise the use of dredged waste disposal sites by pursuing re-use opportunities through matching of spoil to suitable sites.	Re-use or recycling of dredge material supports the growth of industry and increases available space within development areas in the south marine plan areas. It can also reduce the pressure on existing marine habitats with some materials being able to support beneficial re-use and ecosystem services. S-DD-2 enables the re-use or recycling of dredge material reducing the need to dispose of excavated material at marine disposal sites.	P 176

3 Using and implementing the South Marine Plan

29. This section provides guidance on how to use and implement the South Marine Plan. Applicants, those developing a proposal, and third parties, such as advisors, as well as public authorities, should consider the South Marine Plan where relevant. It is the responsibility of the user to determine whether and to what extent the policies are relevant, and to apply them to a proposal in the context of their own processes and current practice.

3.1 Specific plan policy considerations

30. The marine plan policies affect different types of decision including not only ‘authorisations’, such as those similar to plan-based permitting, but also those which are not ‘authorisation’ decisions that are capable of affecting the marine area, eg making of bye laws in the management of marine protected areas. As such, the term “proposals” is used where appropriate in the plan policies to encompass the range of activities that could require a decision including those that have no formal “application” process as well as those that do. Plan policies can therefore apply to new developments, uses, management measures and other activities, and in the review of existing activities, authorisations or measures.
31. The South Marine Plan addresses overall and specific issues of the south marine plan areas. As the issues vary in impact and priority, the policy text has been written to reflect this. Public authorities and applicants should note whether a policy uses ‘must/will’ or ‘should’. ‘Must’ or ‘will’ provides strong direction and greater certainty. ‘Should’ is used where greater flexibility is required, for example in relation to proportionality. This is consistent with the language used in the Marine Policy Statement.
32. A number of South Marine Plan policies require proposals to demonstrate that they will a) avoid, b) minimise or c) mitigate impacts on other users or the environment. Policies with steps a) to c) indicate that proposals should not proceed unless criteria in a) to c) are met in order of preference. In other words proposals cannot proceed to b) unless they have first demonstrated why they cannot meet a) and likewise cannot proceed to c) unless they have first demonstrated why they cannot meet a) and b).
33. A fourth step d) is relevant for some policies. Generally, the policies with steps a) to c) will have more robust evidence or data supporting them combined with stronger levels of stakeholder support and direction. Policies with steps a) to d) have a greater degree of flexibility in their application. Proposals applying d) including this information will not receive approval by default. That will depend on all relevant considerations taken into account by the decision-maker which may include other policies in the South Marine Plan and other material considerations such as other plans.

3.2 General considerations for public authorities in applying the plan to decisions

34. The scope of decisions affected by marine plans means that they the South Marine Plan is potentially relevant to a wide range of public authorities¹⁵ - more than may usually be the case for land-based plans. All public authorities are responsible for applying the South Marine Plan through the decisions that they make using existing regulatory and decision-making processes. There are no new mechanisms. Better

¹⁵ For further information on public authorities see the [Marine and Coastal Access Act S322 \(1\)](#)

Regulation principles should be adhered to when implementing the South Marine Plan.

35. Marine plans apply in differing ways dependent on whether the matter under consideration is either, an authorisation or enforcement decision under Section 58(1) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act or, under Section 58(3), a decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area, but which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision. In broad terms, an authorisation or enforcement decision is the determination of any application for authorisation to do any act which affects or might affect the UK marine area¹⁶.
36. Public authorities must make decisions that fall under Section 58(1) “in accordance” with the South Marine Plan unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. For decisions that fall under the Section 58(3), public authorities “must have regard” to the South Marine Plan. It is for public authorities to establish all relevant considerations in relation to Section 58(1) as appropriate. Relevant material considerations would include local plans.
37. In respect of local authorities decision-making, development plan policies are a material consideration in the determination of an application for planning permission. Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (see section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 – these provisions also apply to appeals)¹⁷.
38. Whilst marine plans and the Marine Policy Statement are material considerations in decision-making, it is important to note that a marine plan is not to be construed as a development plan under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Local plans may be a more relevant consideration than the marine plan in certain decision-making activities, for example housing and should be taken into account as material considerations as appropriate.
39. How the plan informs the decision-making process is the responsibility of the relevant public authority. For example, the relevant public authority will determine if and how proposals meet the plan vision, objectives and all relevant policies, with applicants considering the plan policies in developing their application and its submission.
40. Decisions must be compliant with relevant legislation, regulations and existing policies and measures, such as [Environmental Impact Assessment](#) and [Guidance Notes on the Offshore Petroleum Production and Pipelines \(Assessment of Environmental Effects\) Regulations](#). The South Marine Plan policies complement rather than replace these requirements, which may have a stronger influence on decisions. For example, the designation and management of marine protected areas must be made in accordance with the relevant legislation and policy underpinning them. In such cases the policies help public authorities to understand the effect on or interaction with other interests. This may subsequently inform or alter the decision to be made.
41. Mechanisms also exist to support more integrated and efficient decision-making; one example of such an approach is the Coastal Concordat. The Coastal Concordat is an agreement between the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the

¹⁶ See Section 58(4) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act for details including exclusions

¹⁷ For further information on what constitutes a development plan, their role and application in local authority decision making see the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#) Section 38

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government , the Department for Transport, the Marine Management Organisation, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Local Government Association's Coastal Special Interest Group. It sets out how regulatory and advisory bodies propose to work with local authorities to enable sustainable growth in the coastal zone in support of efficient consenting and decision-making.

3.3 How to use the plan in the application and decision-making process

42. Whilst public authorities will apply the South Marine Plan to decisions they take, those bringing forward proposals that require the decision, sometimes in the form of an application for an authorisation, will need take relevant account of the plan. To maximise benefits, the South Marine Plan should be used throughout the development of proposals and in all stages of decision-making, in line with current best practice. In taking a proportionate approach to applying policies, consideration should be given to the scale, complexity and impact of a proposal. Policies may provide support for a specific sector, and can also help to identify potential challenges and offer direction as how to address them, for example through negotiation and consultation. The South Marine Plan can also help to ensure submissions are informed by a knowledge of other activities occurring or proposed in any given area of interest. Making use of marine plans at the early stages of an application, prior to submission, can help to ensure an efficient decision-making process.
43. Those bringing forward proposals or making applications can use the South Marine Plan and supporting tools (including the Marine Information System, described in section 3.4) in proposal development and design, including refining the preferred proposal location. Further guidance structured around each stage of the application and decision-making process that users of the plan go through is provided in sections 3.5 to 3.8. Minimum requirements for submissions and determinations are set out in section 3.7 with further material and guidance provided in section 3.8. including:
 - pre-application discussions and consultation
 - proposal development and design
 - formal submission and determination by the public authority

3.4 The Marine Information System

44. The [Marine Information System](#) provides an online, interactive resource for viewing marine planning policies, evidence and supporting information. It allows users to easily consider multiple sources of information, at a resolution relevant to their interest. Applicants and public authorities are encouraged to:
 - view other known activities, interests and marine licences that may complement or conflict with a proposal in order to avoid, minimise or mitigate adverse impacts where possible, prior to the submission of an application
 - identify appropriate parties to discuss the proposal with, for example land owners or the Ministry Of Defence
 - identify where the proposal contributes to economic, social and environmental considerations the South Marine Plan within any formal application
 - use the policy checking tool to see what plan policies may apply to the

proposal and view the policy considerations text¹⁸ to identify how to meet policy specific requirements

45. In Table 2 similar types of policy are grouped together to provide a suggested walk-through for the [Marine Information System](#) policy checking tool. Box 1 in the South Marine Plan Technical Annex provides more detailed information regarding map types. Data for the maps is updated daily on the system.

¹⁸ More information on how to apply each policy can be found in the South Marine Plan Technical Annex

Table 2: Policy walk through.

Walk through step	Relevant policy codes
<p>Check the policies which are relevant to all proposals and apply across the whole of the inshore and offshore plan areas.</p> <p>These are likely to apply to you and set out considerations or points to be aware of.</p>	<p>S-ACC-1, S-ACC-2 S-BIO-1, S-BIO-2, S-BIO-3, S-BIO-4 S-CO-1 S-CC-2, S-CC-3, S-CC-4, S-MPA-1, S-MPA-4 S-ML-1, S-ML-2 S-NIS-1 S-SOC-1 S-UWN-1, S-UWN-2 S-WQ-1, S-WQ-2</p>
<p>Check definitive policies which show a clear preference for certain activities in certain locations. These provide support for the relevant activities, and preclude other activities or require them to be compatible.</p>	<p>S-AGG-1, S-AGG-2 S-DEF-1 S-OG-1 S-PS-2, S-PS-3</p>
<p>Check the policies which support existing use of the marine area. While these policies do not preclude other activities, they require proposals to work through a number of steps to reduce impacts on existing activities to enable co-existence and manage conflicts.</p>	<p>S-CAB-2 S-DD-1 S-DIST-1 S-FISH-2, S-FISH-4, S-FISH-4-HER S-HER-1 S-MPA-2 S-PS-1 S-SCP-1 S-TR-2</p>
<p>Check the policies which safeguard areas for future development by certain sectors. These may support your sector, or require you to work through a number of steps to prevent affecting future activity if you wish to go there.</p>	<p>S-AGG-3 S-AQ-1 S-TIDE-1</p>
<p>Check for policies which directly support certain sectors, support diversification, skills enhancement or employment across all activities.</p>	<p>S-AGG-4 S-AQ-2 S-EMP-1, S-EMP-2 S-FISH-1, S-FISH-3 S-INF-1 S-REN-1 S-TR-1</p>

<p>Check for policies which support preferred methods and approaches, including best practice and support identification of the best way to successfully achieve a proposal.</p>	<p>S-CC-1 S-CAB-1 S-DD-2 S-MPA-3</p>
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3.5 Pre-application

46. Early engagement between applicants, agents, third parties and public authorities is encouraged. Pre-application engagement can help remove uncertainty, support efficient decision-making and reduce the resources required. Pre-application engagement is likely to be most beneficial in larger or more complex proposals.
47. Consideration of the South Marine Plan and its Technical Annex, alongside the [Marine Policy Statement](#) is recommended at the earliest stage. The South Marine Plan will help:
- assess the viability of a proposal, helping to identify the best locations and discount those that are unviable, saving time and money
 - identify other activities and developments that may influence or be influenced by a proposal
 - identify relevant parties for discussions or consultation such as potential partners in the case of co-locating/co-existing activities
 - clarify the appropriateness of information that needs to be provided, and inform the level of assessment to be undertaken
 - identify policies relevant to the proposal, how they apply and the potential to contribute to the achievement of the plan vision and objectives
48. During pre-application discussions public authorities should:
- encourage applicants to use the South Marine Plan and [Marine Policy Statement](#) to understand and demonstrate how the proposal contributes to the South Marine Plan vision and objectives
 - encourage use and submission of any evidence¹⁹ used to demonstrate how relevant policies have been met within the proposal, proportionate to the scale, complexity and potential impact of the proposal and including evidence of discussions/consultation with appropriate parties such as Marine Management Organisation, The Crown Estate, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and The Ministry Of Defence where relevant
 - encourage explanation as to why the proposal should proceed in the event of conflict with the South Marine Plan

3.6 Proposal development and design

49. The South Marine Plan assists in proposal development and design, including refining the preferred proposal location. Policies may provide support for a specific sector, and can also help to identify potential challenges and offer direction as how to address them, for example through negotiation and consultation.

3.7 Proposal submission and determination

50. The minimum requirements a proposal should include are:
- the proposal location
 - what is proposed
 - when and how it is to be undertaken (methodology, materials etc)
 - why the proposal is being undertaken

¹⁹ Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) Part 4 Section 67, paragraphs 4 and 5

- how this contributes to the achievement of the South Marine Plan vision, objectives and policies (and/or the [Marine Policy Statement](#) where appropriate)
- reference to any relevant assessments such as Habitats Regulations Assessments, Environmental Impact Assessments (as appropriate) to help demonstrate how the proposal addresses plan policies

51. Public authorities should:

- assess the proposal's contributions to the achievement of the South Marine Plan vision, objectives and policies
- evidence how the proposal and decision taken address the South Marine Plan in support of compliance with the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) (Section 58). For example, through data recording systems used as part of the public authorities own processes to illustrate relevant policies and case officer assessments
- request additional relevant information before proceeding with a decision, where it is judged that a proposal has not provided the required information to make an informed assessment

3.8 Further material and guidance

52. The following additional plan-related material may be useful in providing wider context to marine plans and marine planning:

- **marine planning evidence base** –a central part of marine plan development and can be used to view and appraise the evidence used for marine planning, including an online comment function
- **evidence reports** –[marine evidence and data](#) required for the work of the Marine Management Organisation, including marine planning, are systematically acquired and managed. The Marine Management Organisation makes sure that data and evidence are publicly available where possible and interpreted to a high standard for use in its decision-making
- **core development documents** –a [chronological list of documents](#) produced in developing the South Marine Plan including research project reports, reports on important stages of the planning process and the [South Plan Analytical Report](#)
- **assessments** of the adopted South Marine Plan including the [Sustainability Appraisal](#) and [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#)

4 Monitoring, review and reporting

53. The South Marine Plan Approach to Monitoring²⁰ describes how the South Marine Plan will be monitored. The Approach to Monitoring is supported by a separate Annex of Indicators that sets out detailed indicator descriptions, including quality assurance undertaken. The Annex of Indicators is available upon request by email to Planning@marinemanagement.org.uk.
54. The approach to monitoring adopted by the Marine Management Organisation is informed by the [Government's Magenta Book](#), and incorporates recommendations made in the [Sustainability Appraisal](#) and [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#).
55. The duties for monitoring and reporting in relation to marine plans and marine planning are set out in the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) Sections 61(1)(b) and (c).
56. Section 61(1) sets out a duty to prepare and publish, and lay before parliament, a copy of, a report on the following matters (set out in the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) 61(3)):
- the effects of policies in the marine plan
 - the effectiveness of those policies in securing the objectives for which the marine plan was prepared and adopted are met;
 - the progress being made towards securing those objectives;
 - if the [Marine Policy Statement](#) governs marine planning for the marine plan authority's region, the progress being made towards securing that the objectives for which the [Marine Policy Statement](#) was prepared and adopted are met in that region.
57. Reporting must occur at intervals of not more than 3 years from the date of a marine plan being adopted, successive reports must be published at intervals of no more than three years following the date of publication of the previous report. After a report is published, the marine plan authority must decide whether or not to amend or replace the marine plan. The requirement under Section 61(1)(b) is the main focus of the Approach to Monitoring.
58. Section 61(1)(c) sets out a duty to prepare, and lay before parliament, at intervals of not more than 6 years ending before 1st January 2030, a report on— (i) any marine plans that have been prepared and adopted, (ii) intentions for their amendment, and (iii) intentions for the preparation and adoption of any further marine plans.
59. Activities in relation to monitoring and reporting duties under [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) Section 61 must be carried out in such a way so as to also fulfil duties under Section 54 that specifies a duty to keep relevant matters under review.

²⁰ The South Marine Plan Approach to Monitoring