



## ENGLISH HERITAGE

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Southampton  
SO15 1EG

Our ref: MCA  
Your ref:  
Telephone: 07798 653897  
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22<sup>nd</sup> February 2011

Dear Ms Robertson,

### National Contingency Plan

We understand that the National Contingency Plan (dated August 2006) is now subject to review and we offer the following comments which we hope you find of use. If you would like to discuss any aspect of our responsibilities for the historic environment then please contact me directly.

English Heritage is the Government's advisor on all aspects of the historic environment in England. The National Heritage Act (2002) gave English Heritage responsibility for maritime archaeology in the English area of the UK Territorial Sea, modifying our functions to include securing the preservation of monuments in, on, or under the seabed, and promoting the public's enjoyment of, and advancing their knowledge of such monuments. However, the number of protected 'monuments', which can include historic shipwrecks is very small (ranging from possible prehistoric seafaring craft with associated cargos through to prototype submarines), represent only one aspect of English Heritage's interests in promoting the understanding, management and public enjoyment of the historic environment. It is therefore important for us to describe the marine historic environment as also comprising submerged and often buried prehistoric landscape areas and elements, together with archaeological sites and remains of coastal activities (e.g. fish traps) dating from all eras of history. We therefore consider it essential to ensure the management and use of the full range of the historic environment, is conducted in a manner that best serves the public understanding and enjoyment of the whole, and not just of the designated and protected sites.

To illustrate this principle we draw your attention to the High Level Marine Objectives (*Our seas – a shared resource*), published in 2009, by HM Government and Devolved Administrations which provide an essential starting point in the process of developing an integrated approach to

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marine planning. Consequently, we value the attention paid to marine cultural heritage within these objectives and that a long term view is taken to promote appropriate management of this resource as a component of a healthy, productive and biologically diverse marine environment.

English Heritage is sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and we report to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and our responsibility under section 1 of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, within the English area of the UK Territorial Sea, is to consider applications and recommendations for designation, re-designation and de-designation of shipwreck sites. On the basis of our advice the Secretary of State DCMS is responsible for designating restricted areas around sites which are, or may be, shipwrecks (and associated contents) of historic, archaeological or artistic importance. The Secretary of State is also responsible for the issuing of licences to authorise certain activities in restricted areas that otherwise constitute a criminal offence. At the end of the Committee's reporting year in March 2010 there were 46 sites designated within the English area of the UK Territorial Sea. Further information on the designated sites is available on the English Heritage web site: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/maritime](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/maritime). The majority of these sites are entirely sub-tidal, but a few are located within the inter-tidal zones, such as the *Amsterdam* located on the foreshore at Bulverhythe and the *Anne* located in Rye Bay (East Sussex), the *Seaton Carew* on the foreshore near Hartlepool (Teesside) and the *Grace Dieu* located in the tidal section of the River Hamble (Hampshire). To help support matters we have previously offered comment and spatial data for the Coastal and Marine Resources Atlas (CAMRA).

We noted reference to the Environment Group (Section 9 and Appendix K) and we offer our support, but we do not wish to duplicate the input provided by local authorities if you have already agreed that they will provide advice regarding historic and archaeological sites. We also suggest that you may wish to include our sponsoring department DCMS given the statutory responsibilities for sites designated under section 1 of the 1973 Act as described herein.

Please contact me directly if you would like to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,



**Christopher Pater**  
Marine Planning Unit



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