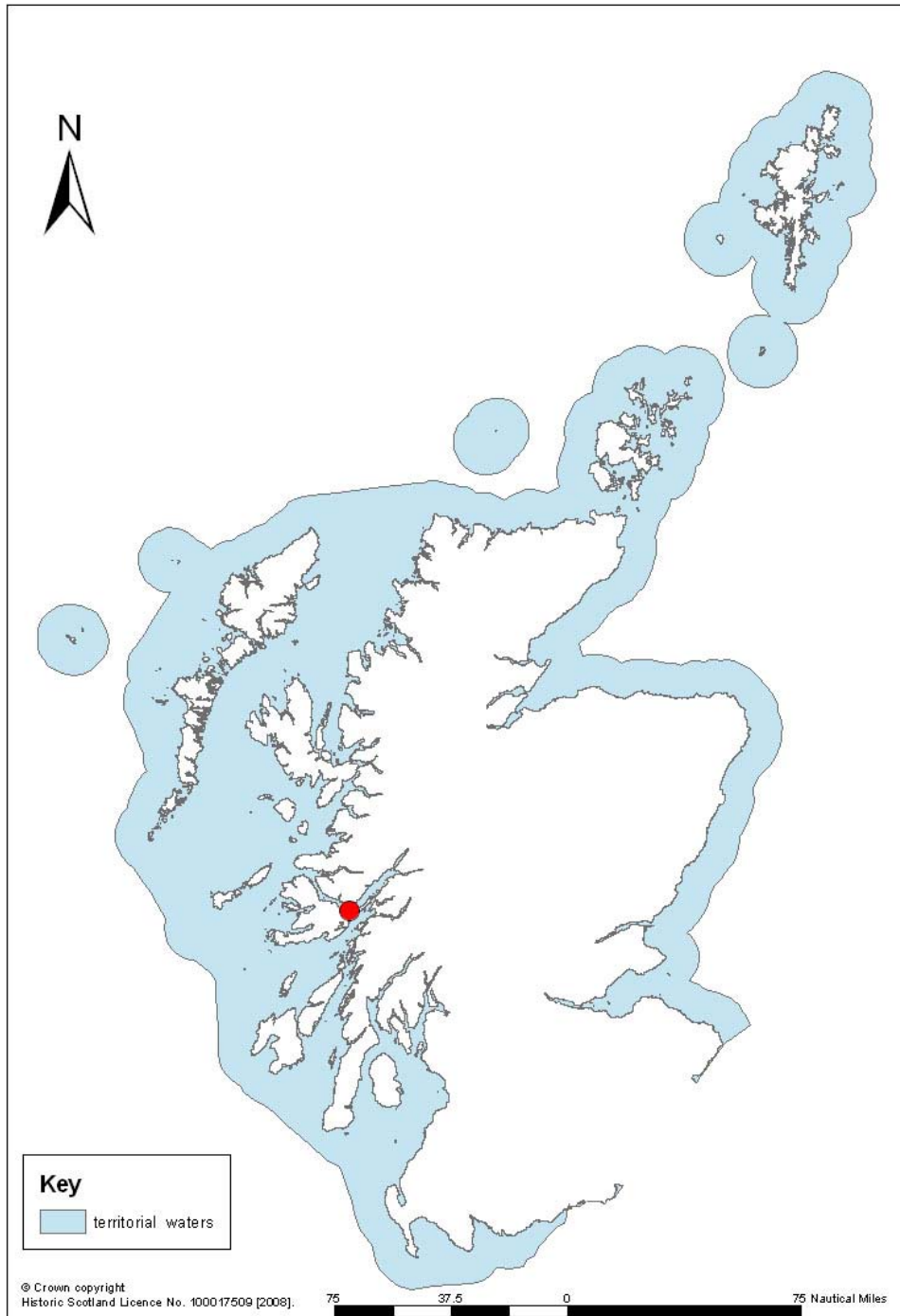


Scotland's designated wreck sites (Protection of Wrecks Act 1973)

Dartmouth, Eilean Rubha an Ridire, Sound of Mull, Highland



26 August 2008

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1. Introduction

1.1. This document provides information relating to an historic wreck that has been afforded statutory protection under Section 1 of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973.

1.2. This wreck has been designated under the 1973 Act on the basis that it is or may prove to be the site of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the sea bed; and (b) on account of the historical, archaeological or artistic importance of the vessel, or of any objects contained or formerly contained in it which may be lying on the sea bed in or near the wreck, the site ought to be protected from unauthorised interference.

1.3. The 'Statutory Instrument' in Annex A identifies the location of this designated wreck site and the extent of the restricted area used to protect the site (see also section 4).

1.4. The 1973 Act controls activities by a licensing regime, so that these important historic wrecks are not put at risk from undisciplined activities or investigation. It is a criminal offence to do any of the following in a designated area without a licence issued by Scottish Ministers:

- tamper with, damage or remove any part of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the seabed or any object formerly contained in such a vessel;
- carry out diving or salvage operations directed to the exploration of any wreck or to removing objects from it or from the seabed, or use of equipment constructed or adapted for any purpose of diving or salvage operations. This includes deployment of remotely operated vehicles;
- deposit anything including anchors and fishing gear which, if it were to fall on the site, would obliterate, obstruct access to, or damage any part of the site; and
- to cause or permit any of the above activities to be carried out by others, without a licence, in a restricted area.

1.5. Where a person is authorised by a licence, it is an offence for any other person to obstruct them, or cause or permit them to be obstructed, in doing anything which is authorised by the licence.

1.6. Bathing, angling and navigation are permitted within a restricted area provided there is no likelihood of, or intention to, damage the wreck or obstruct work on it. Anchoring on the site is only permitted for licensed activities or in cases of maritime distress.

2. Further guidance

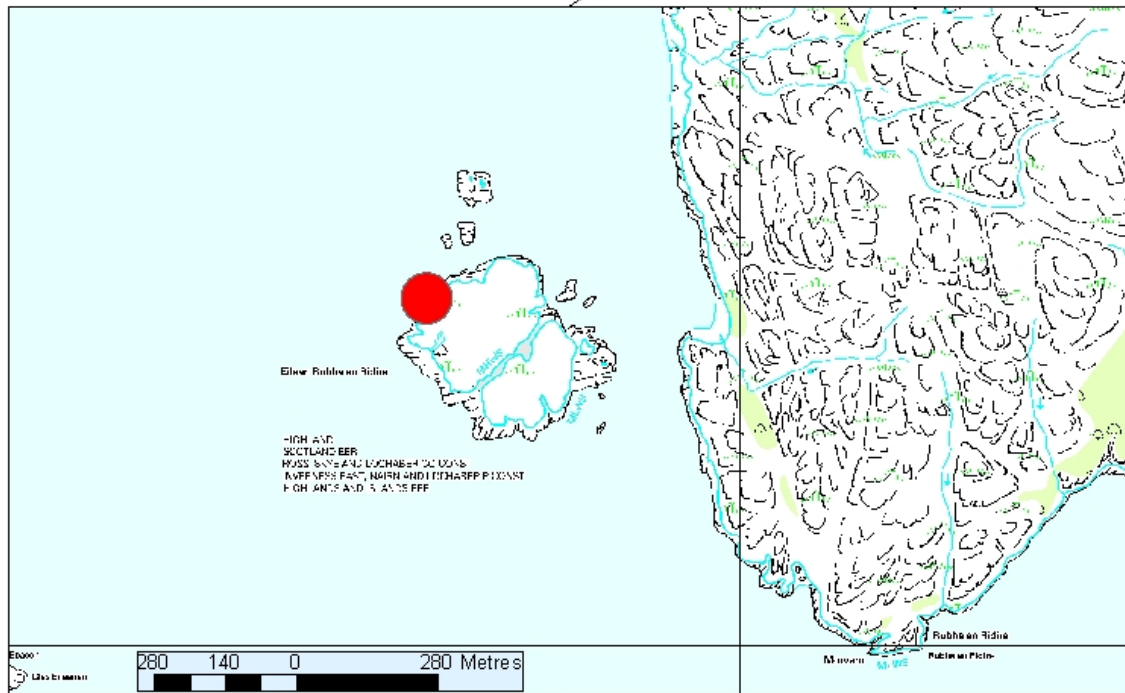
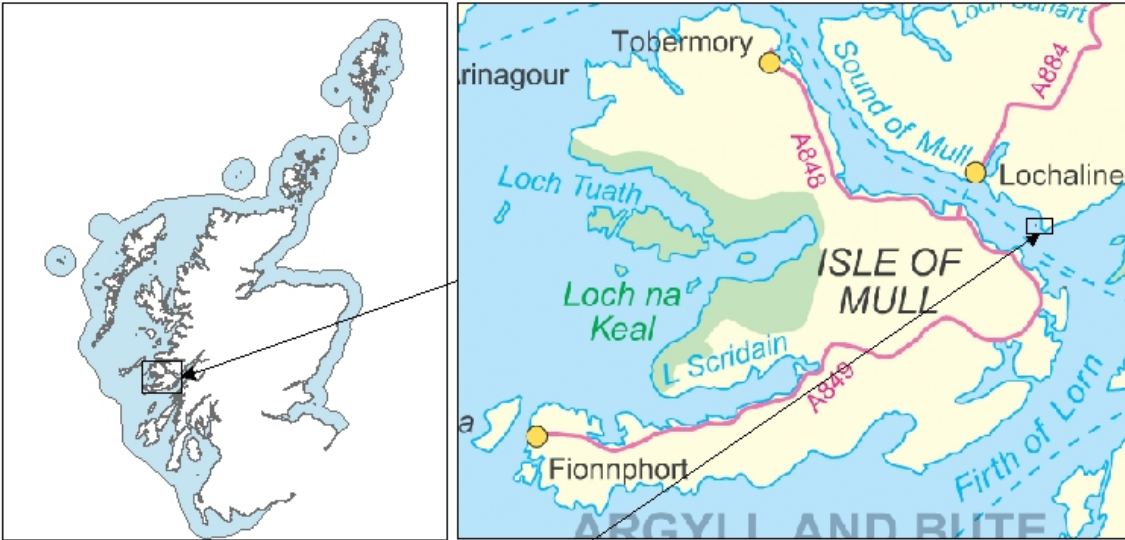
2.1. Licence application forms and guidance for divers and archaeologists in relation to the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 are available online at <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/wrecksites.htm>

3. Summary


Site name		<i>Dartmouth</i>	
RCAHMS Reference number		NM74SW 8002	
General information			
<i>Location</i>	<i>Year of discovery</i>	<i>Discovered by</i>	<i>Date of sinking</i>
Eilean Rubha an Ridire, Sound of Mull, Lochaber, Highland	1973	Bristol SAC	9 October 1690
Description of wreck site			
The wreck of a fifth-rate frigate built in 1655. Flagship of a mission to bring to heel recalcitrant Jacobite clans in the Western Isles (including the Macleans of Duart), and to secure the allegiance of William and Mary. The <i>Dartmouth</i> broke anchor in Scallastle Bay in a storm and was wrecked on the small island of Eilean Rubha an Ridire.			
Description of site environment			
The site lies at a depth of 2-10m in the lee of Eilean Rubha an Ridire, and is therefore generally well protected from north to south-east; it can be exposed to short, sharp swells from the north-west. Rapid re-colonisation of kelp has been observed in the shallows and the site is subject to a strong ebb tide current.			
Designation summary (see annex for Statutory Instrument)			
<i>Designation order</i>	<i>Latitude (OSGB 36 datum)</i>	<i>Longitude (OSGB 36 datum)</i>	
Protection of Wrecks (Designation No.2) Order 1992	56 30.19 N	05 41.95 W	
<i>Site marker(s)</i>	<i>Date designated</i>	<i>Exclusion zone radius (m)</i>	
Warning sign on Eilean Rubha an Ridire	11 April 1974; re-designated 25 June 1992	50	
Further information			
<i>Published references</i>			
Adnams, J R 1974, 'The Dartmouth, a British frigate wrecked off Mull', <i>International Journal of Nautical Archaeology</i> (IJNA) 3:2, 269-74.			
Holman, R G 1975, 'The Dartmouth, a British frigate wrecked off Mull, 1690. 2. Culinary and related items,' <i>IJNA</i> 4:2, 253-65.			
McBride, P 1976, 'The Dartmouth, a British frigate wrecked off Mull, 1690. 3. The guns,' <i>IJNA</i> 5:3, 189-200.			
Martin, P F de C 1977, 'The Dartmouth, a British frigate wrecked off Mull, 1690. 4. The clay pipes,' <i>IJNA</i> 6:3, 219-23.			
Martin, C J M 1978, 'The Dartmouth, a British frigate wrecked off Mull, 1690. 5. The ship,' <i>IJNA</i> 7:1, 29-58.			
Robertson, P 2008, <i>Sound of Mull Archaeological Project 1994-2005</i> , NAS Monograph Series No.1; 30-31. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports 453.			

4. Location and extent of protected area

HMS Dartmouth, Eilean Rubha an Ridire, Sound of Mull, Highland



Key

 Extent of protected area as defined in the Statutory Instrument



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5. Statement of significance

Period

Built in 1655, the unusually long service career of the *Dartmouth* spans a period of considerable importance in the development of the English Navy from Cromwell's Commonwealth, for whom she was built, to the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the period thereafter. Her loss on 9 October 1690 relates to General Hugh Mackay's campaign to secure allegiance to William and Mary amongst the Jacobite clans of the Western Isles.

Rarity

Royal Navy fifth-rate ships such as *Dartmouth* were generally called frigates. They tended to be used for intelligence gathering and dispatch carrying because of their greater speed and they were not considered sufficiently well-armed to be in the line of battle in fleet actions. The only other investigation of the wreck of a fifth-rate contemporary to *Dartmouth* was carried out by Parks Canada, on the wreck of the *Sapphire*, lost in 1696 at Bulls Bay, Newfoundland.

Documentation

The loss of *Dartmouth* in 1690 is recorded in local folklore and by contemporary documents. A contemporary sketch by Van de Velde (younger) of the *Dartmouth* portrays the sleek light hull characteristic of this type, while an itemised account of the work carried out in a major refit of the *Dartmouth* in 1678 and two succeeding surveys (of 27 October 1679 and 10 October 1680 respectively) form major documentary sources for ship construction of this period. The investigation of the wreck of the *Dartmouth* has also been well documented and published (see summary).

Group Value

Dartmouth was not lost in company with other vessels. However, the wreck of the *Dartmouth* is complemented by the designated wreck site at Duart Point (a small warship lost on a similar mission in 1653), and also that at Mingary Castle. This group of wrecks of 17th-century ships illustrate how the advent of seaborne artillery made coastal castles vulnerable to attack from the sea by naval ships. There is additional group value with a sister ship located and excavated in Newfoundland.

Survival/condition

Excavations have confirmed survival on the seabed of organic and non-organic materials in the form of hull structure, ship fittings and armaments, and personal artefacts. Most of the material already recovered from the site is in the care of the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh. However, substantial sections of hull structure, many of the guns and one anchor remain *in situ*.

Fragility/vulnerability

Despite some evidence for exposure of remaining hull structure, the site appears relatively stable. The remaining iron guns and anchor are of an apparently robust nature. The iron objects have been vulnerable to diver activity in the past and remain so today, although the existence of an on-site marker board promotes protected status, and a visitor scheme in operation from Lochaline Dive Centre helps to encourage divers to visit this site on a 'look but don't touch' basis.

Diversity

Dartmouth is the only known representative of her class of warship in UK waters, and her hull remains stem from the rapid evolution in the design of small British warships that took place around the 1640s, notably through the introduction of the revised hull form that was derived from the 'Dunkirk frigates' as exemplified in the construction of the *Constant Warwick*, built in Pett's yard at Ratcliffe in 1646. The site of the *Dartmouth* and the recovered assemblage display a wide variety of surviving features, from hull structure, to armaments and ships fittings. Moreover, the assemblage of artefacts also includes a wide range of domestic items, ceramic goods and navigational equipment that give an important insight into life on board a Royal Navy ship at the end of the 17th century.

Potential

Excavation has confirmed that the environmental conditions on this wreck site are conducive to the long-term survival of a wide range of artefact types. Although the site has been subject to thorough investigation, a substantial portion of the wreck remains in situ. Recent monitoring work (see summary) has confirmed that the undisturbed sediments around the site retain significant archaeological potential.

Summary and conclusions

The wreck of *Dartmouth* is worthy of protection under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 because it is of very significant historical and archaeological importance. The site retains the potential to add knowledge to our understanding of the design and operation of Royal Navy warships at the end of the 17th century, and to inform our understanding of naval activity in the Western Isles during this period. When considered in the context of Duart Castle, the wreck of the *Dartmouth* adds to our understanding of the coastal landscape of the Sound of Mull and the growing vulnerability of its castles to attack by seaborne artillery.

Annex – Statutory instrument

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1992 No. 1229 (S.123)

PROTECTION OF WRECKS

The Protection of Wrecks (Designation No. 2) Order 1992

<i>Made</i>	- - - -	21st May 1992
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>		4th June 1992
<i>Coming into force</i>		25th June 1992

The Secretary of State, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 1(1) and (2), as read with section 3(2), of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973(a) and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, being satisfied in accordance with section 1(1) of the said Act that the site identified in article 2 of this Order is, or may prove to be, the site of a vessel lying wrecked on or in the sea bed and that, on account of the historical and archaeological importance of the vessel, the site ought to be protected from unauthorised interference, having consulted with such persons as he considers appropriate in accordance with section 1(4) of the said Act, hereby makes the following Order:

1. This Order may be cited as the Protection of Wrecks (Designation No. 2) Order 1992 and shall come into force on 25th June 1992.

2.—(1) The area within a distance of 50 metres of the site identified in article 2(2) hereof, being the site where a vessel lies, or is supposed to lie, wrecked on or in the sea bed, is hereby designated as a restricted area.

(2) The site referred to in article 2(1) hereof is in position latitude 56° 30.19' north, longitude 05° 41.95' west.

St Andrew's House, Edinburgh
21st May 1992

Hector Monro
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Scottish Office

(a) 1973 c.33.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order designates as a restricted area for the purposes of the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 an area near Morvern, Argyll round the site of what is thought to be the wreck of a vessel which is of historical and archaeological importance and by so doing protects the site from unauthorised interference.

No part of the site is above the high water mark of ordinary spring tide.