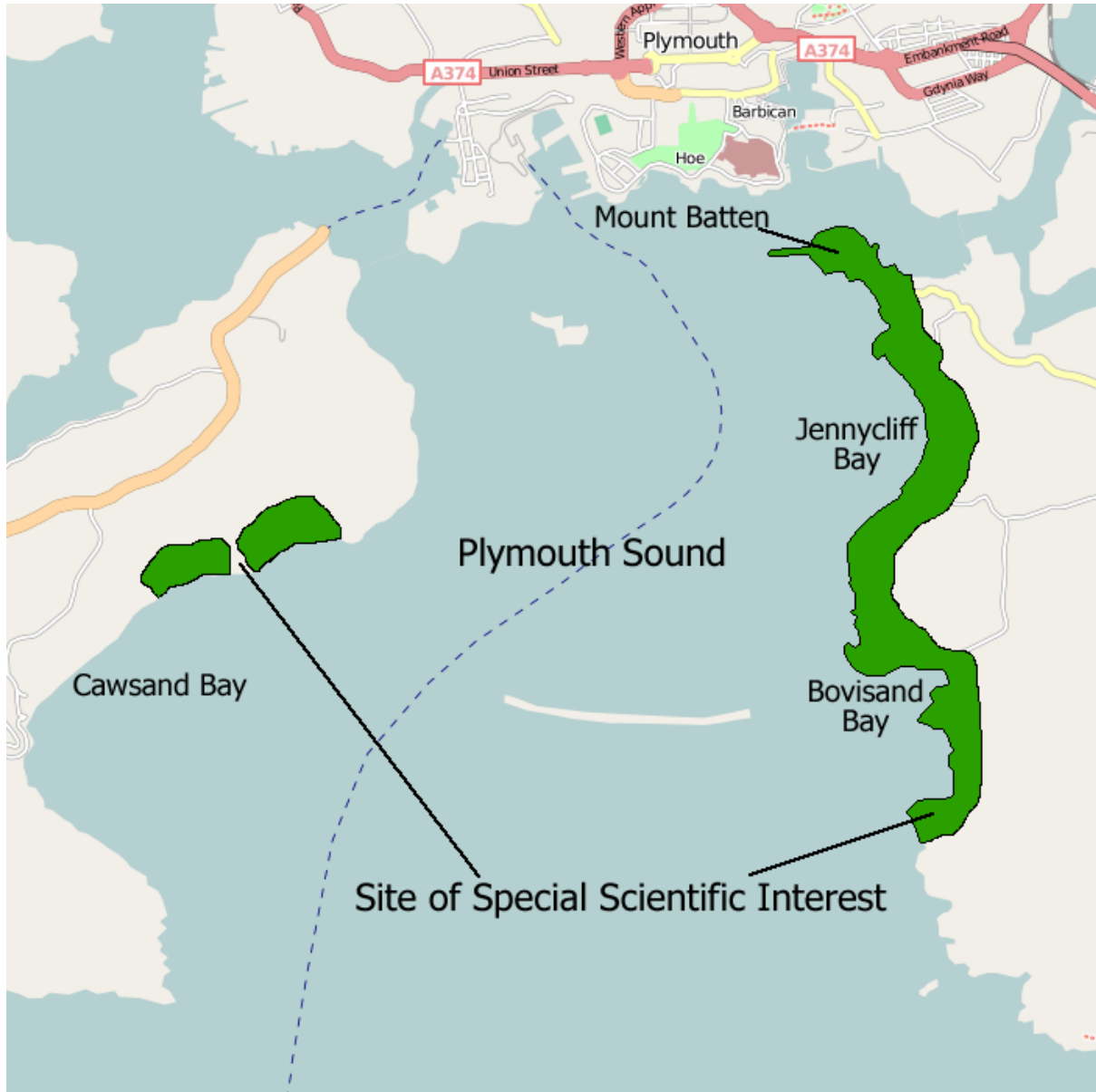


Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a formal conservation designation. Usually, it describes an area that's of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains - or even important geological or physiological features that may lie in its boundaries.

Plymouth Sound, shores and cliffs (Geological SSSI)



Plymouth Sound, shores and cliffs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) covers mainly the eastern side of Plymouth Sound from Mount Batten Point southwards to Andurn Point. Jennycliff Bay lies within Plymouth and the site extends into the South Hams including Bovisand Bay.

The site provides a classic section through the Lower Devonian to early Middle Devonian succession of south west Devon, including the Jennycliff Slates and part of the Plymouth Limestone. A variety of fossil groups have been found here, including corals, brachiopods, gastropods, rare orthoconic nautiloids, and trilobites. Jennycliff Bay features steep inclines, open recumbent folds and overturned strata in places.

You can only access the beaches at low tide, and hard hats should be worn near the cliffs because of the risks from falling boulders. Walking along the cliff tops can be hazardous, particularly during high winds. The [South West Coast Path](#) runs along the site.

The SSSI for the Bovisand Park Private Estate covers the whole coastline from Bovisand Bay to Andurn Point.



The SSSI for Bovisand and Crownhill Bay (In blue) are Geologica whereas the one covering Wembury Point (In green) is Biological.

For a complete map of SSSIs around the Sound: [Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://defra.gov.uk/magic-map-application)

For more detailed information on the reasons for designation and the management refer to [Sites of special scientific interest: public body responsibilities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/sites-of-special-scientific-interest-public-body-responsibilities)

Details about SSSIs

SSSIs are areas of special interest due to their fauna, flora, geological or physiographical features. The relevant statutory agencies and the DoENI designate areas as SSSIs under a special notification procedure. In brief, this means that an agency can only confirm an area as an SSSI if it has first notified the owner and occupier (as well as the local planning authority and Secretary of State) and given them a chance to make representations.

SSSIs were first notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The current statutes in force are:

- for England and Wales, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended (primarily by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000);
- for Scotland, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- for Northern Ireland, the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.

SSSIs form a national network of sites which also underpin sites designated to meet international obligations. All [national nature reserves](#) are also notified as SSSIs.

How are SSSIs protected?

In SSSIs, certain activities are prohibited and there are legal duties concerning how the areas should be managed and protected.

- It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, disturb or destroy land known to be an SSSI or intentionally or recklessly disturb the wildlife in an SSSI. It is also an offence to take down, damage or obstruct an SSSI notice or sign.
- If you are owner or occupier of an SSSI, it is an offence to carry out any activity that may likely damage the SSSI without consent from the relevant conservation agency. The law requires that you inform the conservation agency of any change in ownership or occupancy.
- Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act the owner or occupier may enter into a management agreement for the purposes of securing the SSSI special interest.
- Public bodies are not allowed to carry out damaging operations on an SSSI, except where they notify the relevant conservation agency. It is also an offence for a public body to fail to minimise damage done to an SSSI or - if damage occurs - to fail to restore an SSSI to its former state.
- Statutory bodies have a general duty to take reasonable steps to further the conservation and enhancement of the special feature of SSSIs.
- Where statutory bodies propose to undertake or permit activities that could affect a SSSI they must consult the relevant statutory nature conservation agency. If the activity cannot be avoided it must be undertaken in a way least damaging to the SSSI.

The offences carry various penalties, including a fine of up to £20,000 in the Magistrates court or an unlimited fine in the Crown Court for carrying out work without permission, or for causing damage to an SSSI.