

Site Improvement Plan

Manchester Mosses

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)

UK0030200 Manchester Mosses SAC

Site description

The Mersey floodplain was once covered by complex of large lowland raised bogs covering over 3500 ha. While most of this bog has been converted to agriculture or lost to development, several examples have survived as degraded raised bog; the largest and best preserved examples Risley Moss, Astley & Bedford Mosses and Holcroft Moss make up the component SSSI of the Manchester Mosses SAC.

All of the Manchester mosses with the exception of Holcroft Moss have been cut over and all were drained resulting in the dominance of purple moor grass *Molinia caerulea*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and birch *Betula spp.* However all of the mosses have now been re-wet and a more typical wet bog community of common cotton grass *Eriophorum angustifolia*, hare's tail cotton grass *Eriophorum vaginatum* and bog mosses *Sphagnum sp.* has now established over large areas of the mosses with sundew *Drosera rotundifolia*, cross leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, bog myrtle *Myrica gale*, cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus* and bog rosemary *Andromeda polifolia* all starting to spread.

Plan Summary

This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Hydrological changes	Pressure	H7120 Degraded raised bog	Combination of re-wetting within site and creation of wetland buffers	Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission, Lancs, Manchester and Nth Merseyside Wildlife Trust, Natural England, The Wildlife Trust for Lancs, Manchester and Nth Merseyside, Warrington Borough Council, Great Manchester Mossland Project
2 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Pressure	H7120 Degraded raised bog	Development and implementation of a Site Nitrogen Action Plan	Not yet determined

Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

1 Hydrological changes

The combination of historic peat cutting, fragmentation, drainage and peat wastage and some of the early restoration work has significantly modified the hydrological function of all the component mosses. Considerable work has been done and is ongoing within the sites to manage the hydrology and restore the conditions for bog development. Working with partners and stakeholder we have been able to establish hydrological buffer zones around parts of the moss. However there are still areas where agricultural and transport infrastructure requires deep drainage on adjacent land that still dry out or impact on parts of the mosses.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
1A	Re-wetting project at Risley Moss to create wet woodland and lagg to buffer the moss and to allow more natural hydrological function.	£21,000	2014-15	Existing Local Project	SITA funding	Warrington Borough Council	Great Manchester Mossland Project
1B	A small area of the bund at the south end of Holcroft Moss has a leak and needs small scale piling to fix the problem.	£3,000	2014-15	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme)	Great Manchester Mossland Project, New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS)	Cheshire Wildlife Trust	Great Manchester Mossland Project

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
1C	Consider notification of Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Forestry Commission land at Astley and Bedford Mosses as a hydrological buffer.	Not yet determined	2015-16	Designation strategy (SSSI)	Not yet determined	Natural England	Forestry Commission, The Wildlife Trust for Lancs, Manchester and Nth Merseyside
<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
1D	Create new areas of wetland to buffer the mosses and develop linkages between the three components of the SAC, to address ongoing offsite drainage impacts.	Not yet determined	2014-34	Habitat creation / restoration strategy: Creation of new habitat	Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS), Landfill Community Fund (LCF)	The Wildlife Trust for Lancs, Manchester and Nth Merseyside	Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Great Manchester Mossland Project

2 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
2A	Control, reduce and ameliorate atmospheric nitrogen impacts	Not yet determined	2014-20	Site Nitrogen Action Plan	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Not yet determined

Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Manchester Mosses SAC

H7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration

Site location and links

Manchester Mosses SAC

Area (ha) **172.81** Grid reference **SJ691973** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities Warrington; Wigan

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Manchester Mosses SAC](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan [n/a](#)

Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.

Manchester Mosses SAC

River basin

[North West RBMP](#)

WFD Management catchment

Mersey Estuary

WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)

GB112069061020

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Manchester Mosses SAC	Holcroft Moss SSSI Astley & Bedford Mosses SSSI Risley Moss SSSI
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Manchester Mosses SAC	n/a
Ramsar	
Manchester Mosses SAC	n/a
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Manchester Mosses SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	10/11/14	

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