NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type K

1.2 Site code UK0030131

1.3 Compilation date 200708

1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

U	K	9	0	1	3	0	1	1
U	K	9	0	2	0	2	8	7

1.6 Respondent(s) International Designations, JNCC, Peterborough

1.7 Site name **Dee Estuary/ Aber Dyfrdwy**

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	200708
date confirmed as SCI	200812
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200912

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	**latitude**
03 12 58 W	53 19 42 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 15805.89

2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
0	Marine	15.04%
UKL13	Conwy and Denbighshire	1.35%
UKL23	Flintshire and Wrexham	37.92%
UKD54	Wirral	36.24%
UKD22	Cheshire CC	9.45%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine	Atlantic	Boreal	Continental	Macaronesia	Mediterranean
	X				

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment
Estuaries	83.87	C	C	C	**C**
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	66.9	B	B	B	**B**
Coastal lagoons	0	D			
Annual vegetation of drift lines	0	C	C	B	**C**
Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts	0.02	C	C	B	**C**
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	0.68	B	B	B	**B**
Spartina swards (*Spartinion maritimae*)	0.22	D			
Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*)	12.94	B	B	B	**B**
Embryonic shifting dunes	0.03	C	C	B	**C**
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes")	0.13	C	C	B	**C**
Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")	0.54	C	C	B	**C**
Humid dune slacks	0.01	C	C	B	**C**
European dry heaths	0	D			

3.2 Annex II species

		Population			Site assessment			
	Resident	Migratory						
Species name		Breed	Winter	Stage	Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
Petromyzon marinus	Present	-	-	-	C	C	C	**C**
Lampetra fluviatilis	Present	-	-	-	C	C	C	**C**
Alosa fallax	Present	-	-	-	D			
Lutra lutra	Present	-	-	-	D			
Halichoerus grypus	400	-	-	-	D			
Petalophyllum ralfsii	Present	-	-	-	C	B	B	**C**

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	81.8
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	16.1
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	0.7
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	0.5
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	0.4
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	0.2
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	0.1
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	0.1
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	

Habitat classes	% cover
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	0.1
Total habitat cover	**100%**

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Clay, Mud, Sand, Sandstone/mudstone, Sedimentary, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:

Cliffs, Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal rock, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Islands, Lagoon, Shingle bar, Subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank)

4.2 Quality and importance

Estuaries
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Annual vegetation of drift lines
- which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 100 hectares.
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand
- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*)
- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Embryonic shifting dunes
- which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 1000 hectares.
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (“white dunes”)
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation (“grey dunes”)
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Humid dune slacks
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Petromyzon marinus
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Lampetra fluviatilis
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Petalophyllum ralfsii
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

4.3 Vulnerability

The majority of the site is in the ownership and sympathetic management of public bodies and voluntary conservation organisations. Unlike most western estuaries, sizeable areas of the Dee saltmarshes remain ungrazed and therefore plant species that are susceptible to grazing are widespread. This distinctive flora would therefore be sensitive to increase in grazing pressure. The intertidal and subtidal habitats of the estuary are broadly subject to natural successional change and the Dee Estuary continues to show annual net sediment accretion. Saltmarshes on the English side of the estuary continue to accrete overall whilst on the Welsh shoreline the main river channel has moved onshore leading to localised erosion of the saltmarshes
Threats to the estuary's conservation come from its industrialised shorelines on the Welsh side and the impact of adjacent historic industrial use including waste disposal from former manufacturing industry such as chemical and steel manufacture.
Contemporary issues relate to dock development and navigational dredging, coastal defence works and their impact on coastal process, regulation of fisheries, and the recreational use of intertidal, sand dunes and saltmarshes.
The statutory agencies are working with landowners and regulatory bodies towards the further remediation of historic threats and the reconciliation of conservation management with human and commercial pressures.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK00 (N/A)	12.4
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	87.6