

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 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	199407
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
00 57 36 E	51 48 57 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK54	Essex	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

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

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment				
		Resident	Breed	Winter	Stage	Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
A059	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		<15 P			B		C	
A046a	<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>			4907 I		B		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		<135 P			C		C	
A082	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>			<19 I		C		C	
A195	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>		>38 P			C		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			2077 I		C		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)	52.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	25.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	1.0
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	2.0
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	15.0
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	5.0
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Alluvium, Clay, Gravel, Mud, Neutral, Sand, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Islands, Lagoon, Lowland, Open coast (including bay), Shingle bar, Subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank), Valley

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

Sterna albifrons

(Eastern Atlantic - breeding)

at least 1.6% of the GB breeding population
5 year mean, 1992-1996

Over winter the area regularly supports:

<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	up to 2.5% of the GB population No count period specified.
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ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)	
During the breeding season the area regularly supports:	
<i>Aythya ferina</i> (North-western/North-eastern Europe)	up to 6% of the population in Great Britain 5 year mean, 1987-1991
<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering)	up to 1.6% of the population in Great Britain 5 year mean, 1987-1991
Over winter the area regularly supports:	
<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Western Siberia/Western Europe)	1.6% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	1.2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC): AN INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ASSEMBLAGE OF BIRDS	
Over winter the area regularly supports:	
38600 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 01/04/1998)	
Including:	
<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> , <i>Tringa totanus</i> .	

4.3 Vulnerability

The Colne Estuary encompasses a diversity of soft coastal habitats, dependent upon natural coastal processes. The vulnerability of these habitats is linked to changes in the physical environment: the intertidal zone is threatened by coastal squeeze and changes to the sediment budget, especially up drift of the site. Limited beach feeding is under way to alleviate the sediment problem. The site is vulnerable to recreational pressures which can lead to habitat damage (salt marsh and sand dunes) and to disturbance of feeding and roosting waterfowl. Pressures for increased use and development of recreational facilities are being addressed through the planning system and under the provisions of the Habitat Regulations. Jet- and water-skiing are largely contained by the Harbour Authorities. Most grazing marshes are managed under ESA/ Countryside Stewardship Agreements, but low water levels are of great concern, and low freshwater flows into the estuary, may be affecting bird numbers and/or distribution. This is being addressed through reviews of consents under the Habitats Regulations. Unregulated samphire harvesting is being addressed by notifying all pickers of the legal implications of uprooting plants without the consent of landowners. To secure protection of the site, an Estuarine Management Plan is in preparation, which will work alongside the Essex SMP and the emerging Marine Scheme of Management. The Environment Agency's Local Plan aims to reduce the nutrient enrichment arising from sewage and fertiliser run-off.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	25.8
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0