

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	199505
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
00 51 59 E	51 45 13 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>			15392 I		B		C	
A149	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>			33267 I		B		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		<135 P			C		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			347 I		B		C	
A082	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>			<19 I		B		C	
A156	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>			1280 I		A		C	
A141	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>			5090 I		B		C	
A195	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>		>21 P			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)	50.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	33.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	5.0
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	12.0
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
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:

Clay, Mud, Neutral, Nutrient-rich, Sedimentary, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:

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

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

<i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Eastern Atlantic - breeding)	at least 0.9% of the GB breeding population 5 year mean, 1992-1996
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Over winter the area regularly supports:

<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	up to 2.5% of the GB population 5 year mean, 1987/8-1991/2
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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
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<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering)	up to 1.6% of the population in Great Britain 5 year mean, 1987-1991
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Over winter the area regularly supports:

<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Western Siberia/Western Europe)	5.1% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
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<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> (Northern Siberia/Europe/Western Africa)	2.4% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
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<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering)	0.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
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<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Iceland - breeding)	2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
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<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	3% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
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ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC): AN INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ASSEMBLAGE OF BIRDS

Over winter the area regularly supports:

109964 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 01/04/1998)

Including:

Branta bernicla bernicla , *Charadrius hiaticula* , *Pluvialis squatarola* , *Calidris alpina alpina* , *Limosa limosa islandica* .

4.3 Vulnerability

Coastal erosion

The main threat to the site is erosion of intertidal habitats due to a combination of sea level rise and isostatic forces operating on the land mass of Great Britain. The situation is worsened with increasing winter storm events, whilst the hard sea walls along this coastline are preventing the saltmarsh and intertidal areas from migrating inland. This situation is starting to be addressed by alternative flood defence techniques. A shoreline management plan has been prepared for the Essex coast which seeks to provide a blueprint for managing the coastline sustainably.

Nutrient enrichment

Nutrient enrichment occurs from agricultural run-off and treated sewage effluent. This problem will be addressed through the Essex Estuaries candidate SAC scheme of management as well as review of discharge consents under the Habitats Regulations.

Water-based recreation

The control of motorised craft (with particular reference to jet-skis) is being addressed through the Blackwater Estuary Management Plan. Enforcement of speed limits should ensure that roosting birds are not subjected to disturbance and saltmarsh habitats are protected from damage by jet-skis.

Drought

The droughts over the last five years have resulted in lowered water tables in grazing marshes. Attempts are being made to restore this by pumping water from adjacent ditches and use of tertiary treated sewage effluent.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	14.8
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0