

**EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds
Special Protection Area**

Gibraltar Point, (Wash Phase 2)

Gibraltar Point is an actively accreting dune system which forms extensive sand dunes on the Lincolnshire coast. Dune ridges representing all stages of dune development have formed roughly parallel to the coast and between these are salt marshes. The older dunes are extensively colonised by scrub particularly sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides*. There are also freshwater pools, freshwater marshland and grassland, some of which is grazed. Gibraltar Point is the north-eastern most part of the Wash and is an integral part of that site.

The boundary of the Gibraltar Point (Wash Phase 2) proposed Special Protection Area follows the SSSI boundary in the south but excludes the Seacroft golf course, a small area of land to the south of the golf course and the foreshore area north of the National Nature Reserve boundary (seafront of Skegness). The seaward boundary follows the mean low water mark.

Gibraltar Point qualifies as a Special Protection Area under Article 4.1 of the EC Birds Directive by regularly supporting in summer, a nationally important breeding population of little terns *Sterna albifrons*. A total of at least 40 pairs were present during the summer of 1992 representing 1.7% of the British breeding population.

It also qualifies under Article 4.2 by regularly supporting internationally or nationally important wintering populations of the following three species of migratory waterfowl (average peak counts for the five year winter period 1987 to 1991): 8,800 bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica* (over 7% of the East Atlantic flyway population and over 14% of the British population) 1,140 wintering sanderling (over 4% East Atlantic Flyway population and over 8% of the British population) and 3,980 grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (over 2% East Atlantic Flyway population and over 10% of the British population).

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on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment