

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

Name: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA

Unitary Authority/County: Durham County Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

Consultation proposal: The existing Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA was classified on 15 August 1995; an extension to that area has been recommended to enlarge the area within the Tees Estuary and along part of the foreshore to the north because of the site's European ornithological interest.

The Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area is a wetland of European importance, comprising intertidal sand and mudflats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh and sand dunes. Large numbers of waterbirds feed and roost on the site in winter and during passage periods; in summer Little Terns breed on the sandy beaches within the site.

Boundary of SPA: The original SPA includes all or parts of Seal Sands SSSI; Seaton Dunes and Common SSSI; Cowpen Marsh SSSI; Redcar Rocks SSSI; and South Gare and Coatham Sands SSSI. The extended area is within or coincident with the above SSSI boundaries and will also include parts of Durham Coast SSSI and all of Tees and Hartlepool Foreshore and Wetlands SSSI. For boundary of extended SPA see map.

Size of SPA: The extension covers an area of 304.75 ha, giving a revised SPA area of 1247.31 ha.

European ornithological importance of SPA: The extended SPA is of European importance because:

- a) the site qualifies under **article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the GB populations of the following species listed on Annex I, in any season:

Annex I species	5 year peak mean	% of GB population
Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i>	40 pairs – breeding (1995 - 1998)	1.7%
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	1,900 individuals – passage (1988 - 1992)	6.8%

- b) the site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the biogeographical populations of the following regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed on Annex I), in any season:

Migratory species	5 year peak mean	% of population
Knot <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>	5,509 individuals - wintering (1991/92 - 1995/96)	1.6% NE Can/Grl/Iceland/UK
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>	1,648 individuals - passage (1987 - 1991)	1.1% Eastern Atlantic (wintering)

- c) the site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterfowl in any season:

Period	Season	Population
1991/92 - 1995/96	Wintering	21,312 individuals

- d) The wintering waterfowl assemblage qualifying under **article 4.2** includes the wintering species of European importance, as well as the following species in numbers of national importance:

Species	5 year peak mean	% GB population
Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	140 individuals – wintering (1993/94 - 1997/98)	1.1%
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	1,030 individuals - wintering (1993/94 - 1997/98)	1.4%
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	1,265 individuals - wintering (1987/88 - 1991/92)	1.3%
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	129 individuals - wintering (1991/92 - 1995/96)	1.3%
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	601 individuals - wintering (1993/94 - 1997/98)	2.6%

Non-qualifying species of interest: Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (Annex I species) occurs on passage in small numbers and once bred (1996).

Status of SPA:

- 1) Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast was classified as a Special Protection Area on 15 August 1995.
- 2) Consultations commenced on the proposal to extend the site on 29 September 1999.
- 3) The extended area of Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA was classified on 31 March 2000.