

EC Directive 79/049 on the Conservation of Wild Birds: Special Protection Area

THE LOWER DERWENT VALLEY

The Lower Derwent Valley covers an area of 1,089.4 hectares, draining a catchment of some 1,362 km² before entering the Humber system. It consists of extensive areas of traditionally managed species rich, alluvial flood-meadow, of a kind now highly restricted in the UK.

The boundaries of the proposed Special Protection Area are coincident with those of the existing Derwent Ings SSSI, Melbourne and Thornton Ings SSSI, River Derwent SSSI, Newton Mask SSSI and Brighton Meadows SSSI, apart from the exclusion of the sections of the River Derwent SSSI north of Newton Mask SSSI and south of Brighton Meadows SSSI.

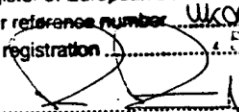
The site qualifies under Article 4.1. by regularly supporting nationally important winter numbers of the following Annex 1 species: 70 Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (1% of the UK wintering population), 4,120 Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* (2% of the UK wintering population) and 50 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (3.5% of the UK wintering population). The site also qualifies under Article 4.1. for holding a mean peak number of 100 Ruff during spring migration.

The site qualifies under Article 4.2. by regularly supporting a breeding population of 50 pairs of Shoveler *Anas chrypeata* (3.5% of the UK breeding population).

The site also qualifies under Article 4.2. as an area of international importance to waterfowl by regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl in winter. In the five-winter period of 1986/87-1990/91 the site held a mean peak of 27,580 waterfowl, comprising means of 17,415 wildfowl and 10,165 waders. Within this number, the site qualifies under Article 4.2. by holding internationally important numbers of Teal *Anas crecca* and Wigeon *Anas penelope* (4,040 Teal - 4% of UK, 1% of NW Europe, 7,790 Wigeon - 3% of UK, 1% of NW Europe). The site also supports nationally important numbers of the following migratory species: 110 Shoveler *Anas chrypeata* (>1% of UK wintering numbers), 740 Pochard *Aythya ferina* (>1% of the British wintering population), 100 Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* (2% of the UK passage numbers) and 100 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (7% of UK passage numbers).

As well as its importance for the individual species listed above, the site is also of strong scientific interest for its exceptionally diverse assemblage of wintering waterfowl.

SPA citation
ABL
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Signed 
on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment