

Site Improvement Plan

Lower Derwent Valley

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)

UK0012844 Lower Derwent Valley SAC

UK9006092 Lower Derwent Valley SPA

Site description

Situated in the Vale of York in Northern England, the Lower Derwent Valley comprises a series of neutral alluvial flood meadows, fen & swamp communities and other freshwater habitats. There is also an area of damp alder woodland.

The site supports a greater area of high quality flood plain hay meadows than any other UK site. The site is an important habitat for breeding wetland birds, both ducks and waders and in the winter supports internationally important numbers of waterfowl.

Plan Summary

This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Hydrological changes	Pressure	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(B) Ruff, A151(NB) Ruff, H6510 Lowland hay meadows, Waterbird assemblage	Investigations into impacts of hydrological changes and development of potential remedies	Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board(s) (IDB), Natural England, Landowner(s)
2 Drainage	Pressure	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(NB) Ruff, H6510 Lowland hay meadows, Waterbird assemblage	Maintenance and management of drainage structures and water level management	Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board(s) (IDB), Natural England
3 Public Access/Disturbance	Threat	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(B) Ruff, A151(NB) Ruff, Waterbird assemblage	Development of an access strategy	Local Authorities, Natural England
4 Invasive species	Threat	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(B) Ruff, A151(NB) Ruff, H6510 Lowland hay meadows, Waterbird assemblage	Control of marsh ragwort	Natural England
5 Undergrazing	Threat	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(B) Ruff, A151(NB) Ruff, H6510 Lowland hay meadows, Waterbird assemblage	Assistance in sourcing appropriate aftermath grazing across the site	Natural England
6 Inappropriate scrub control	Threat	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(B) Ruff, A151(NB) Ruff, Waterbird assemblage	Scrub removal	Environment Agency, Natural England

7	Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Threat	H6510 Lowland hay meadows	Develop and implement a Site Nitrogen Action Plan	Not yet determined
8	Invasive species	Threat	H91E0 Alder woodland on floodplains	Himalayan balsam control	Natural England
9	Invasive species	Threat	A050(NB) Wigeon, A052(NB) Eurasian teal, A140(NB) Golden Plover, A151(B) Ruff, A151(NB) Ruff, Waterbird assemblage	Invasive species plan	Natural England

Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

1 Hydrological changes

Prolonged spring and summer flooding threatens both botanical and bird features, through loss of, and changes to suitable habitat. The effects of climatic change may be exacerbated by river levels related to the operation of the Barmby Barrage.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
1A	Investigation and possible changes to Barmby Barrage operating protocol.	Not yet determined	2014 onwards	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	Natural England
1B	Further investigations into mitigating hydrological changes and impact upon Natura 2000 features.	£20,000	2014 onwards	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Natural England	Environment Agency, Landowner(s)
1C	Repeat 2001 NVC survey to assist the understanding of any changes in habitat and species distributions.	£20,000	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

2 Drainage

In order to allow flood water off the Ings it is essential that existing structures be maintained in working order. The Water Level Management Plan (WLMP) for the site requires further development .

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
2A	Annual inspection of existing structures such as clough doors, and the ditch network in order to identify necessary repairs and maintenance.	£1,000 per year	2014 onwards	Flood Risk Maintenance Programme: Flood Risk Management - Operational Work	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	n/a
2B	Undertake necessary repairs and maintenance identified by annual inspections (costs determined on annual basis and informed by inspections).	Not yet determined	2014 onwards	Flood Risk Maintenance Programme: Flood Risk Management - Operational Work	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	n/a
2C	Produce site-wide Water Level Management Plan.	£20,000	2015-16	Water Level Management Plan	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	Internal Drainage Board(s) (IDB), Natural England
2D	Implement agreed site-wide Water Level Management Plan.	Not yet determined	2016 onwards	Water Level Management Plan	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	Internal Drainage Board(s) (IDB), Natural England

3 Public Access/Disturbance

Public access along Public and non-Public Rights of Way (particularly floodbanks) is causing increasing disturbance to birds.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
3A	Production of an access strategy for the site, to inform public access management. Liaison with Public Rights of Way officers.	£5,000 per year	2014 onwards	Advice: Access Strategy	Staff time	Natural England	Local Authorities
3B	Wardening and public liaison in order to reduce unauthorised access.	£15,000	2014 onwards	Advice: Wardening	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

4 Invasive species

Marsh ragwort in lngs grassland threatens the management of the site by reducing the viability of the hay crop.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
4A	Annual commitment to the control of marsh ragwort.	£15,000 per year	2014 onwards	Invasive Control Plan: Invasive Species Control Programme	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

5 Undergrazing

The grassland has a history of aftermath grazing. Increasingly, land managers do not have their own stock, resulting in sporadic aftermath grazing. This can impact both on the botanical interest of hay meadows and habitat structure important for bird interests.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
5A	Assisting landowners in sourcing grazing for lngs meadows by acting as an intermediary between landowners and graziers (annual commitment)	Not yet determined	2014 onwards	Advice: Other	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

6 Inappropriate scrub control

Willow scrub is becoming established on floodbanks, reducing the open landscape preferred by wintering waterfowl. Resources to remove scrub are required.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
6A	Control scrub-willow on riverside floodbanks.	£10,000 per year	2015-20	Major Landowner Group land ownership activities : Undertake Specific Management Works	Not yet determined	Natural England	Environment Agency

7 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Nitrogen deposition exceeds site-relevant critical loads. No local impacts noted.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
7A	Control , reduce and ameliorate atmospheric nitrogen impacts.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Site Nitrogen Action Plan	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Not yet determined

8 Invasive species

Himalayan balsam is invading Thornton Ellers SAC woodland and requires control.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
8A	Produce and implement an Invasive Species Control Plan to remove Himalayan balsam.	£15,000 over 5 years	2015-20	Invasive Control Plan: Invasive Species Control Programme	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

9 Invasive species

Mink have been reported in increasing numbers in recent years. This may threaten waterfowl and wader numbers. An assessment of mink numbers and likely impacts on SPA features should therefore be undertaken.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
9A	Produce an Invasive Species Control Plan to establish the scale of predation problems by mink, and inform management decisions.	£5,000	2015	Invasive Control Plan: Invasive Species Control Programme	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Lower Derwent Valley SAC

H91E0# Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)

H6510 Lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*)

S1355 *Lutra lutra*: Otter

Lower Derwent Valley SPA

A052(NB) *Anas crecca*: Eurasian teal

Waterbird assemblage

A050(NB) *Anas penelope*: Eurasian wigeon

A056(B) *Anas clypeata*: Northern shoveler

A151(NB) *Philomachus pugnax*: Ruff

A140(NB) *Pluvialis apricaria* : European golden plover

Site location and links

Lower Derwent Valley SAC

Area (ha) **915.91** Grid reference **SE703441** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities East Riding of Yorkshire; North Yorkshire; York

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Lower Derwent Valley SAC](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan [n/a](#)

Lower Derwent Valley SPA

Area (ha) **915.45** Grid reference **SE706437** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities East Riding of Yorkshire; North Yorkshire

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Lower Derwent Valley SPA](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan [n/a](#)

Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.

Lower Derwent Valley SAC

River basin	Humber	Humber RBMP
WFD Management catchment	Derwent (Humber)	
WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)	GB104027063430, GB104027063440, GB104027063460, GB104027063630	

Lower Derwent Valley SPA

River basin	Humber	Humber RBMP
WFD Management catchment	Derwent (Humber)	
WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)	GB104027063420, GB104027063430, GB104027063440, GB104027063460, GB104027063630, GB104027068311, GB104027068312	

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Lower Derwent Valley SAC	River Derwent SSSI Newton Mask SSSI Melbourne & Thornton Ings SSSI Derwent Ings SSSI BRIGHTON MEADOWS SSSI
Lower Derwent Valley SPA	River Derwent SSSI Newton Mask SSSI Melbourne & Thornton Ings SSSI Derwent Ings SSSI BRIGHTON MEADOWS SSSI
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Lower Derwent Valley SAC	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
Lower Derwent Valley SPA	Lower Derwent Valley NNR
Ramsar	
Lower Derwent Valley SAC	Lower Derwent Valley
Lower Derwent Valley SPA	Lower Derwent Valley
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Lower Derwent Valley SAC	Lower Derwent Valley SPA
Lower Derwent Valley SPA	River Derwent SAC Lower Derwent Valley SAC

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	06/10/2014	

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