

Site Improvement Plan

Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay)

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)

UK0030086 Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC

Site description

Beast Cliff – Whitby is an east coast complex of hard and soft cliffs. The combination of geology, topography and plant communities found on the site are unique and it is one of the best examples of vegetated sea cliffs on the north-east coast of England. The underlying geology varies from base-rich to base-poor, and this variation is reflected in a characteristic and diverse flora across the site.

Vertical hard cliffs support maritime crevice and ledge vegetation, and the more gently sloping parts of Beast Cliff itself are covered by scrub and woodland. Sandstone boulders support a luxuriant growth of mosses and ferns and pools on the cliff shelf support wetland plants and scrub. Due to the frequent land slippage occurring on the site, the woodland is constantly changing and being rejuvenated with mainly young trees forming secondary woodland.

North of Beast Cliff to Ravenscar the vegetation is more open and reflects alternating strata of rich and poor base-status. Areas of calcareous clays support typical calcareous grassland and wet flush plant communities, whereas heathland species occur on more acidic sandstone outcrops. From Ravenscar north to Robin Hood's Bay the cliffs are composed either partly or entirely of soft boulder clay. This clay is continually being eroded by wave action and slippage, and supports pioneer plant communities typical of this changing habitat.

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 Natural changes to site conditions	Pressure	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs	Explore the possibility of changing the site boundary	Natural England
2 Inappropriate coastal management	Threat	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs	Continue engagement with authorities managing coastal defences	Environment Agency, Natural England, Scarborough Borough Council
3 Undergrazing	Threat	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs	Monitor grazing intensity	Natural England, North York Moors National Park Authority

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 Natural changes to site conditions

The cliffs are prone to erosion and over time this is causing the extent of the designated vegetation to decline. Over time it is likely that the feature of interest will migrate inland, as erosion acts on the seaward part of the cliff and pushes the cliff top back inland. This could result in a situation where part of the interest features fall outside the SAC boundary.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Explore the possibility of changing the site boundary of the underpinning SSSI to allow room for geomorphological processes to occur within the protected site area.	Staff time	2014-20	Designation strategy (SSSI)	Natural England	Natural England	n/a

2 Inappropriate coastal management

Prevention of natural erosion processes, through inappropriate location of coastal defences and changes to drainage of water into the site.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Continue engagement with local authority and Environment Agency, to influence future coastal management.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Implementation Of Appropriate Coastal Management	No funding required	Natural England	Environment Agency, Scarborough Borough Council

3 Undergrazing

Much of the cliff area is too steep to graze, however, it is important that the more accessible areas are continued to be grazed.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
3A	Monitor the cliff land to ensure grazing levels are appropriate.	Not yet determined	2018	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	No funding required	Natural England	North York Moors National Park Authority

<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>
3B	Negotiate any necessary changes to grazing levels, subject to the outcomes of monitoring.	Not yet determined	2018	Advice: Negotiation	No funding required	Natural England	North York Moors National Park Authority

Site details

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

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
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Site location and links

Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC

Area (ha) 260.2	Grid reference NZ962031	Map link
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Local Authorities	North Yorkshire
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Site Conservation Objectives	European Site Conservation Objectives for Beast Cliff - Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC
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European Marine Site conservation advice	n/a
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Regulation 33/35 Package	n/a
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Marine Management Organisation site plan	n/a
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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.

Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC

<i>River basin</i>	Humber	Humber RBMP
<i>WFD Management catchment</i>	Esk and Coast	
<i>WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)</i>	n/a	

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC	Robin Hoods Bay: Maw Wyke to Beast Cliff SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC	n/a

Ramsar	
Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC	n/a

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Beast Cliff-Whitby (Robin Hood's Bay) SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	07/10/2014	

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000

