

## Site Improvement Plan

# Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes & Gibraltar Point

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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk)

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

**UK0030270 Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes & Gibraltar Point SAC**

## Site description

Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC is notified for its dune system (white, grey and shifting); dune with *Hippophae rhamnoides* and humid dune slacks.

It is located on the Lincolnshire coast at two separate locations:

Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes lies between Saltfleet and Mablethorpe and includes coastal morphology and fresh water marsh, and supports the most north eastern breeding site in Britain for the natterjack toad. The site covers 972 ha, and includes large assemblages of vascular plants, invertebrates and birds.

Gibraltar Point is important for its geomorphology, which is represented through 587 ha of sand dune and coastal habitat and its associated fauna and flora. Gibraltar Point is located to the south of Skegness, up to the Steeping River.

## 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 Inappropriate coastal management                         | Pressure/Threat    | H2190 Humid dune slacks   | Survey of saltmarsh and dune slack topography, and formulation of a feasibility plan  | East Lindsey District Council, Environment Agency, Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Skegness Town Council, Seacroft Golf Club |
| 2 Change to site conditions                                | Pressure           | H2120 Shifting dunes with marram  | Investigation into sediment dynamics of sub-tidal sand banks and intertidal sand flats, and development of action plan if sea defences are found to be involved | Environment Agency, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England  |
| 3 Change in land management                                | Threat             | H2110 Shifting dunes, H2120 Shifting dunes with marram, H2130 Dune grassland, H2190 Humid dune slacks | Implement the Management Plan for the site  | Natural England   |
| 4 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition | Pressure           | H2110 Shifting dunes, H2120 Shifting dunes with marram, H2130 Dune grassland, H2190 Humid dune slacks | Develop and implement a Site Nitrogen Action Plan that will cover the SAC   | Not yet determined  |

## 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 Inappropriate coastal management

There is lack of hydrological continuity at Gibraltar Point, due to the presence of Bulldog Bank there is no sea to freshwater interface from saltmarsh to the dunes. The bank is part of the EA's adopted sea defences, and policy under the 2010 Shoreline Management Plan is to 'hold the line until 2025 (epoque 1)'.

| Action | Action description   | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism  | Funding option  | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s)  |
|--------|--|---------------|-----------|--|---|--------------------|--|
| 1A     | Investigation into the restoration of hydrological continuity between the marine and freshwater wetland habitats at Gibraltar Point (including a topographical survey of the saltmarsh around Fenland Lagoon and the southern end of the Freshwater Marsh) to inform extent of saltwater incursion if a breach were to be maintained/created in Bulldog Bank. Also modelling of potential breach conditions in Bulldog Bank to establish optimal breach location and form. | £10,000       | 2015-17   | Investigation / Research / Monitoring                                      | Flood risk management strategy  | Environment Agency | East Lindsey District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Natural England, Skegness Town Council, Seacroft Golf Club |
| 1B     | Develop a feasibility plan for reconnecting the saltwater-freshwater interface at Gibraltar Point.   | £5,000        | 2017      | Flood Risk Maintenance Programme: Flood Risk Management - Operational Work | Natural England (Shoreline Management & Geomorphological Advice Contract) | Natural England    | Environment Agency, Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Seacroft Golf Club                       |

| <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>  |
|---------------|--|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>1C</b>     | Implementation of a new Shoreline Management Plan. | Not yet determined   | 2017             | Partnership agreement | Not yet determined    | Environment Agency        | East Lindsey District Council, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Seacroft Golf Club |

## 2 Change to site conditions

There are changes to the foreshore that are affecting dune formation processes at Gibraltar Point. Current changes on the foreshore are thought to be associated with the changes to the offshore sandbank. It has been assumed that these are natural but the lack of bathymetry mapping and monitoring means that we do not have a full understanding of whether coastal defence work are playing a part and/or whether these are natural changes.

| <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>                   |
|---------------|---|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>2A</b>     | Bathymetry analysis and research review for Gibraltar Point: analysis of existing survey data and existing technical documents to establish whether the changes in sub-tidal sand banks off Skegness/Gibraltar Point are being influenced by coastal defence measures such as Lincshore, hard defences at Skegness. | £15,000              | 2015-16          | Investigation / Research / Monitoring | Flood risk management strategy | Environment Agency        | Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England |

| <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> |
|---------------|--|----------------------|------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>2B</b>     | Develop an action plan following the findings of the bathymetry investigation and publication of the forthcoming Shoreline Behaviour Report. Action plans should address any changes required to coastal defence strategies to ensure there is no significant effect on sediment transport processes at Gibraltar Point. | £5,000               | 2016-18          | Flood Risk Maintenance Programme: Flood Risk Management - Operational Work | Flood risk management strategy | Environment Agency        | n/a                        |

### 3 Change in land management

Scrub is part of feature of the SAC, but can dominate the terrestrial areas on to the detriment of other features. Currently, there is too much scrub on both sites that form the SAC and it needs to be addressed through the Management Plan.

| Action | Action description  | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism                                     | Funding option | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s) |
|--------|---|---------------|-----------|---|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 3A     | Review the National Nature Reserve (NNR) Management Plan to ensure that the scrub clearance and the grazing elements of the plan are sufficient to deliver favourable condition to all the site features. | Staff time    | 2015      | National Nature Reserve (NNR) management plan | Staff time     | Natural England    | n/a                 |

### 4 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. Vegetation changes associated with nitrogen enrichment are already apparent e.g. *Calamagrostis epigejos* invasion of dune slack wetlands. Assessment at both sites of the SAC needs to be undertaken and an implementation plan needs to be drafted to provide guidance for the future management.

| Action | Action description  | Cost estimate      | Timescale | Mechanism                 | Funding option     | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s) |
|--------|---|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 3A     | 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  |

## Site details

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

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes &amp; Gibraltar Point SAC</b> | H2110 Embryonic shifting dunes  |
|  | H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes") |
|  | H2130# Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")                            |
|  | H2160 Dunes with <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>  |
|  | H2190 Humid dune slacks   |

### Site location and links

#### **Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes & Gibraltar Point SAC**

|  |              |                |                 |   |
|--|--------------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| Area (ha)                                | <b>960.2</b> | Grid reference | <b>TF480906</b> | <a href="#">Map link</a>  |
| Local Authorities                        |              |                |                 | Lincolnshire  |
| Site Conservation Objectives             |              |                |                 | <a href="#">European Site Conservation Objectives for Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes &amp; Gibraltar Point SAC</a> |
| European Marine Site conservation advice |              |                |                 | <a href="#">n/a</a>   |
| Regulation 33/35 Package                 |              |                |                 | <a href="#">n/a</a>   |
| Marine Management Organisation site plan |              |                |                 | <a href="#">n/a</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.*

### **Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes & Gibraltar Point SAC**

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| <i>River basin</i>                      | <a href="#">Anglian RBMP</a> |
| <i>WFD Management catchment</i>         | Witham                       |
| <i>WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)</i> | n/a                          |

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

| Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)                          |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes &amp; Gibraltar Point SAC</b>       | Gibraltar Point SSSI                  |
|  | Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes SSSI  |
| National Nature Reserve (NNR)  |                                       |
| <b>Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes &amp; Gibraltar Point SAC</b>       | Gibraltar Point NNR                   |
|  | Saltfleetby - Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR |
| Ramsar   |                                       |
| <b>Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes &amp; Gibraltar Point SAC</b>       | Gibraltar Point                       |
|  | Humber Estuary                        |
| Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) |                                       |
| <b>Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes &amp; Gibraltar Point</b>           | Humber Estuary SPA                    |
|  | Gibraltar Point SPA                   |



| <i>Version</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.0            | 03/12/2014  |                |

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