

Habitats Regulations Assessment addendum

for

Suffolk Coastal District Council
Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan
Proposed Submission Document



March 2016

Quality control

Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum

for

Suffolk Coastal District Council Proposed Submission Felixstowe Area Action Plan

Checked by Project Manager:	Approved by:
Signature: 	Signature: 
Name: Nicholas Sibbett Title: Principal Ecologist	Name: Jo Parmenter Title: Director
Date: 23 rd March 2016	Date: 23 rd March 2016

The Landscape Partnership Ltd is a practice of Chartered Landscape Architects, Chartered Town Planners and Chartered Environmentalists, registered with the Landscape Institute and a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment & the Arboricultural Association.

The Landscape Partnership Limited
Registered Office:
Greenwood House
15a St Cuthberts Street
Bedford
MK40 3JG.

Registered in England No 2709001

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- 01 Amended policy FPP22

Non-technical summary

The Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document is one of a number of planning documents that together will implement strategic policies set out in the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document adopted July 2013 (hereinafter referred to as the Core Strategy). The Proposed Submission Document includes revisions, additions and clarifications following comments received during public consultation at the Preferred Options stage, in October and November 2015.

This document assesses a revised policy of March 2016 of Suffolk Coastal District Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document March 2016, in line with the Habitats Regulations 2010, to ascertain whether the policies within that Document and the guidance that it provides, are likely to have an adverse effect upon the integrity of any European sites.

The revision is a change to policy FPP22, which in the published Proposed Submission Document states that no additional car parking provision will be permitted within a 1km distance of the estuary. The revised policy, being assessed in this addendum, states that applications for new car parking provision (defined as car parking spaces whether publicly or privately owned which are available for wider public use) located within 1km of the boundary of an internationally designated nature conservation site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon a European site either on their own, or in combination with other uses. The part of the policy relating to slipways and jetties has been expanded from the published Proposed Submission document to add detail regarding the Habitats Regulations process.

This assessment determined that the amended policy FPP22 does not have effects on European sites either alone, or in combination with other policies in the Core Strategy, or in combination with any other land use plan/project.

1 Introduction

1.1 The policy being considered in this Addendum

1.1.1 This document sets out an amended Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, of Suffolk Coastal District Council's Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document; with respect to an amended policy FPP22.

1.1.2 Suffolk Coastal District Council's Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan– Proposed Submission Document underwent Habitats Regulation Assessment in February 2016 prior to being published in March 2016 as part of the Council's reporting requirements to its Scrutiny Committee (10/02/1016); Cabinet (15/03/2016) and Full Council on 24/03/2016. Subsequent to the Proposed Submission Document being considered by Cabinet, Policy FPP22 and its supporting text was amended. As a consequence the amended policy has been re-assessed under HRA ahead of consideration by Full Council.

1.1.3 Policy FPP22 in the published Proposed Submission Document states

Policy FPP22: Visitor Management – Special Protection Areas

The District Council has a duty to ensure that its development proposals will not result in a significant effect on sites identified as European and International significance for their nature conservation interest (Natura 2000 sites). Accordingly, as part of the mitigation package identified as necessary to implement the Core Strategy proposals, no additional car parking provision will be permitted within a 1km distance of the estuary, (measured from the mean high water mark). For the purposes of this policy car parking is defined as any car park, publicly or privately owned to which the general public have access. Examples of privately owned or operated car parks would include those associated with a sailing club, or local church.

Any proposed improvements to existing access points direct into the Estuary such as slipways or jetties will need to demonstrate that they will not result in any "significant effect" either on their own or in combination with other uses

1.1.4 The amended Policy FPP22 now states

Policy FPP22: Visitor Management – European sites

The District Council has a duty to ensure that development proposals will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon sites designated as being of international importance for their nature conservation interest (European site). Accordingly, as part of the visitor management mitigation measures identified as necessary to implement the policies in the Core Strategy, (particularly those related to new housing provision), applications for new car parking provision (defined as car parking spaces whether publicly or privately owned which are available for wider public use) located within 1km of the boundary of an internationally designated nature conservation site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon a European site either on their own, or in combination with other uses. Such proposals will therefore need to be subject to a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Similarly, any proposed improvements to existing access points or the provision of new access points direct into the estuary, such as slipways or jetties will need to demonstrate, by undertaking a HRA that they will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon a European site either on their own or in combination with other uses.

1.1.5 Supporting text to the policy has also been amended.

1.1.6 The amended policy is provided in Appendix 1.

2 Screening of amended policy FPP22

2.1 Screening of amended policy FPP22 acting alone

2.1.1 The amendments to policy FPP22 permit car parks within 1km of an estuary, where it can be demonstrated that activity arising from the use of that car park will not result in increase in activity likely to have a significant effect on a European site. The amendment therefore permits car parks in locations closer than 1km to a European site where a car park would not have been permitted under the previous policy FPP22, but only in situations where it would cause no significant effect. An example might be a car park proposal to support an existing facility near a European site but with no connection such as a path to the European site, so that there could be no increase in recreational activity.

2.1.2 The part of the policy relating to slipways and jetties has been expanded from the published Proposed Submission document to add detail regarding the Habitats Regulations process but retains a suitable level of protection for European sites.

2.1.3 The amended policy therefore remains as effective in safeguarding European sites, yet does not unnecessarily prevent acceptable development of car parks from being permitted. It is concluded that the amended policy FPP22 has no likely significant effect upon European sites.

2.2 Screening of amended policy FPP22 acting in combination with other policies in the Proposed Submission Document

2.2.1 There is no mechanism whereby this policy could act in combination with other policies to have a likely significant effect upon European sites.

2.3 Screening of amended policy FPP22 acting in combination with other plans or projects

2.3.1 There is no mechanism whereby this policy could act in combination with other plans or projects to have a likely significant effect upon European sites.

3 Consultations and iterations

3.1 Consultations with Natural England

- 3.1.1 Natural England is the statutory consultee for Habitats Regulations Assessments of Land-use Plans. Natural England was consulted about the amended policy and indicated that it would be satisfied with the amended policy and an assessment of no likely significant effect.

3.2 Consultations with others

- 3.2.1 No other consultees were invited to engage in discussions regarding amendment of the policy and its assessment of likely significant effect. All consultees are able to provide comments on this addendum together with comments on the Proposed Submission Draft addendum when invited to do so by Suffolk Coastal District Council.

Appendix 1

SUGGESTED POLICY AND SUPPORTING TEXT – FELIXSTOWE AAP

Access to European sites.

1. The Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment work undertaken in support of the Core Strategy concluded that there would be a need to mitigate the recreational impact on the Deben and Orwell Estuaries of additional people from new housing development. Both estuaries are of international importance for birds and designated as Special Protection Areas (European site). The main concern was an increase in disturbance to wildlife linked to people walking their dogs and the potential increased recreational use of the estuaries for example from sailing or jet-skiing.
2. Core Strategy policies SP20 and SP21 require specific mitigation measures in respect of strategic housing growth proposed in the East of Ipswich and Felixstowe areas respectively. This includes the provision of alternative public open space attractive for daily dog walking and visitor management measures. One way that planning policy can assist with managing visitor access is to ensure that new vehicle parking (parking provision whether publicly or privately owned (e.g. a church car park) which is available for wider public use) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it would not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon a European site either on its own or in combination with other uses. It is to be expected that new parking provision in areas which are already well used such as Felixstowe seafront, or Felixstowe Ferry for example, would have a more limited effect than the provision of a new car park in a more tranquil and less visited part of the estuaries. The evidence considered in the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment identified a 1km buffer from the boundary of the designated area as an appropriate distance to apply when determining impact. This is because studies have shown that people are reluctant to walk 1km to get to the start of their main walk. Beyond this distance they tend to drive. The following policy therefore adopts the same 1km buffer to remain consistent with strategic policies.
3. An estuary plan for the River Deben has been produced by the Deben Estuary Partnership together with the Environment Agency and the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Unit. Suffolk Coastal District Council, as the planning authority, has endorsed the Plan in the context of Local Plan Policy SP30 - The Coastal Zone. The Deben Estuary Plan is a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.
4. In addition to the following policy, other visitor management measures will be investigated as part of the Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for Babergh District Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council which is due for completion by March 2017. The Strategy will also review and monitor the effectiveness of this approach and any amendments deemed necessary will be made accordingly.'

New Policy FPP22 – Visitor Management – European Sites

The District Council has a duty to ensure that development proposals will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon sites designated as being of international importance for their nature conservation interest (European site). Accordingly, as part of the visitor management mitigation measures identified as necessary to implement the policies in the Core Strategy,(particularly those related to new housing provision), applications for new car parking provision (defined as car parking spaces whether publicly or privately owned which are available for wider public use) located within 1km of the boundary of an internationally designated nature conservation site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon a European site either on their own, or in combination with other uses. Such proposals will therefore need to be subject to a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Similarly, any proposed improvements to existing access points or the provision of new access points direct into the estuary, such as slipways or jetties will need to demonstrate, by undertaking a HRA that they will not result in an increase in activity likely to have a significant effect upon a European site either on their own or in combination with other uses.

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Non-technical summary

The Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document is one of a number of planning documents that together will implement strategic policies set out in the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document adopted July 2013 (hereinafter referred to as the Core Strategy). The Proposed Submission Document includes revisions, additions and clarifications following comments received during public consultation at the Preferred Options stage, in October and November 2015.

This document assesses Suffolk Coastal District Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document February 2016, in line with the Habitats Regulations 2010, to ascertain whether the policies within that Document and the guidance that it provides, are likely to have an adverse effect upon the integrity of any European sites.

This assessment determined that Policies proposed in this Plan do not have effects on European sites either alone, or in combination with each other, or in combination with any other land use plan/project.

The cumulative impacts of all allocations were assessed for Suffolk Coastal's Core Strategy and Development Management Policies. The Site Allocations Plan adds further detail to the Core Strategy but does not allocate sites for more development than was found in the Core Strategy. The mitigation for impacts on European sites described in the Core Strategy's HRA remains relevant and its implementation is beginning. No other significant effects, alone or in combination with other plans, are likely to occur..

1 Introduction

1.1 The plan being considered

- 1.1.1 This document sets out the Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, of Suffolk Coastal District Council's Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document; a Development Plan Document that forms part of the Local Plan for Suffolk Coastal District.
- 1.1.2 The 2013 Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC) Core Strategy sets out the proposals for the scale and distribution of new development for the Felixstowe Peninsula between 2010 and 2027. The purpose of the Area Action Plan is to provide the policies required to implement the strategic policies in the SCDC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2013). Therefore, the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Document will provide an area-specific policy framework through which local communities, businesses and economies can grow and develop in a sustainable and targeted manner over the plan period.
- 1.1.3 The policies and proposals in the Area Action Plan are centred on enabling Felixstowe to fulfil its role as a major centre whilst addressing the strategy that is set out in SCDC Core Strategy Policy SP21 – Felixstowe with Walton and the Trimley Villages. The Area Action Plan also includes those surrounding villages that have been identified as Key or Local Service Centres and have a significant role across the Felixstowe Peninsula. The six key topics that are addressed within the Area Action Plan are similar to those in the Core Strategy document and include: Housing, Employment, Retail, Tourism and Sea Front activities, Environment and Other Issues.
- 1.1.4 Between 15th December 2014 and 27th February 2015, SCDC held an Issues and Options Consultation whereby members of local communities and other stakeholders were invited to give their views on future housing, community facilities and employment sites across the District. The Issues and Options Consultation was the first formal stage in the development of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan. Comments received during this consultation were utilised by SCDC during their formulation of the policy framework for the Area Action Plan (AAP).
- 1.1.5 Following the Issues and Options, first stage of formal consultation, the second stage was the Preferred Options 6 week Consultation which was held during October and November 2015. At the Preferred Options Consultation stage, the Felixstowe Peninsula AAP contained draft policy wording and opportunities as well as details of which sites are the most suitable for development. The AAP Preferred Options Document was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and this Habitats Regulations Assessment document.
- 1.1.6 The current stage of the Plan is its formation with its associated documents into a 'final draft' ready for pre-submission publication. Only once this publication period has completed will the Felixstowe Peninsula AAP be ready to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.
- 1.1.7 An Appropriate Assessment of the SCDC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document was undertaken by The Landscape Partnership in 2011, who updated it to include 'modifications' in 2013. The Appropriate Assessment for the Core Strategy Document confirmed that subject to recommended mitigation measures being employed, the proposed policies would not have an adverse effect upon the integrity of any European sites within Suffolk Coastal District.

1.2 What are the Habitats Regulations?

- 1.2.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 are often abbreviated to the 'Habitats Regulations'. The Habitats Regulations interpret the European Birds Directive and Habitats Directive into English and Welsh law. For clarity, the following paragraphs consider the case in England only, with Natural England given as the appropriate nature conservation body. In Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales is the appropriate nature conservation body.
- 1.2.2 Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation are defined in the regulations as a 'European site'. The Regulations regulate the management of land within European sites, requiring land managers to have the consent of Natural England before carrying out management.

Byelaws may also be made to prevent damaging activities and if necessary land can be compulsorily purchased to achieve satisfactory management.

- 1.2.3 The Regulations define competent authorities as public bodies or statutory undertakers. Competent authorities are required to make an appropriate assessment of any plan or project they intend to permit or carry out, if the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect upon a European site. The permission may only be given if the plan or project is ascertained to have no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site. If the competent authority wishes to permit a plan or project despite a negative assessment, imperative reasons of over-riding public interest must be demonstrated, and there should be no alternatives to the scheme. The permissions process would involve the Secretary of State and the option of consulting the European Commission. In practice, there will be very few cases where a plan or project is permitted despite a negative assessment. This means that a planning application or indeed, a plan such as Leiston Neighbourhood Plan or this Area Action Plan, has to be assessed and the assessment must either decide that it is likely to have no significant effect on a European site or ascertain that there is no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site.

1.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment process

- 1.3.1 A Habitats Regulations Assessment is a step-by-step process which is undertaken in order to determine whether a project or plan will have a likely significant effect (LSE) upon a European site. Before a competent authority can authorise a proposal, they must carry out an Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project in line with procedure detailed in the Habitats Regulations. The whole procedure is called a Habitats Regulations Assessment, with the Appropriate Assessment being part of only one of four stages necessary to complete an HRA. The results of the HRA are intended to influence the decision of the competent authority when considering whether or not to authorise a proposal.
- 1.3.2 *Stage One of the HRA is 'Screening'*. Plans or projects will be investigated for their potential to have a likely significant effect upon a European site. Proposals that are found not likely to have a significant effect upon a European site will be 'screened out' at this stage and no further investigation will be required.
- 1.3.3 *Stage Two of the HRA is the 'Appropriate Assessment and the Integrity Test'*. The Competent Authority must undertake an Appropriate Assessment which seeks to provide an objective and scientific assessment of how the proposed project may affect the qualifying features and conservation strategies of a European site. The Competent Authority may undertake their own Appropriate Assessment using information provided by the project proposer. However, the Competent Authority must also consult the Statutory Nature Conservation Body in order to obtain their views on how the proposed activity may affect the integrity of the European sites' qualifying features and conservation objectives, and it is possible that they may adopt this Appropriate Assessment for their own purposes.
- 1.3.4 The UK Government accepts the definition for the 'integrity' of a site as *'the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which the site is (or will be) designated.'* Other factors may also be used to describe the 'integrity' of a site. The Competent Authority must conclude, using scientific evidence and a precautionary approach, that there will be no harm to the integrity of a European site, prior to authorising the proposed activity. Information provided in the Appropriate Assessment will be used when considering the Integrity test.
- 1.3.5 *Stage Three of the HRA is 'Alternative solutions'*. If the Competent Authority is unable to determine that the proposed activity would not have an adverse impact upon the integrity of a European site, it may refuse to authorise the proposed activity or consider 'alternative solutions' if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). If the proposed activity cannot ensure that the integrity of a site is maintained, it is likely that the proposal will be refused or withdrawn, but if changes to the proposal can be made which would rectify this a fresh application could be submitted.

- 1.3.6 *Stage Four of the HRA is 'Imperative reasons of overriding public interest and compensatory measures'*. If the Competent Authority determines that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest that outweigh the potential adverse impacts upon the integrity of the site, they may decide to consent the proposed activity. In this case, the Competent Authority must notify the Secretary of State (or equivalent if not in England) at least 21 days before authorisation so that the Government can notify them with their agreement to consent, or otherwise.

1.4 Why is Appropriate Assessment required?

- 1.4.1 The appropriate assessment process is required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Regulation 102 states that

(1) Where a land use plan -

(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,

the plan-making authority for that plan must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

(2) The plan-making authority shall for the purposes of the assessment consult the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to any representations made by that body within such reasonable time as the authority specify.

(3) They must also, if they consider it appropriate, take the opinion of the general public, and if they do so, they must take such steps for that purpose as they consider appropriate.

(4) In the light of the conclusions of the assessment, and subject to regulation 103 (considerations of overriding public interest), the plan-making authority or, in the case of a regional spatial strategy, the Secretary of State must give effect to the land use plan only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site or the European offshore marine site (as the case may be).

(5) A plan-making authority must provide such information as the appropriate authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the discharge of the obligations of the appropriate authority under this chapter.

(6) This regulation does not apply in relation to a site which is -

(a) a European site by reason of regulation 8(1)(c); or

(b) a European offshore marine site by reason of regulation 15(c) of the 2007 Regulations (site protected in accordance with Article 5(4) of the Habitats Directive

- 1.4.2 The plan-making authority, as defined under the Regulations, is Suffolk Coastal District Council and the appropriate nature conservation body is Natural England.

- 1.4.3 The Appropriate Assessment in this report is carried out on behalf of Suffolk Coastal District Council to allow them to decide whether to give effect to the plan under Regulation 102.

1.5 European sites

- 1.5.1 European sites (also known as Natura 2000/N2K sites) are sites that have been classified or designated by Defra/Welsh Ministers or Natural England/Natural Resources Wales, as Special Protection Areas (SPA) for those sites where birds are the special interest feature, and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) where the habitats or species (other than birds) are the reason for designation.

- 1.5.2 Wetlands of International Importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention, Ramsar sites, are not European sites. There may often be considerable overlap between the special interest features and physical boundaries of Ramsar sites, with European sites. However, for the purposes

of planning and development, Government policy, through the NPPF, states that Ramsar sites should be treated equally/in the same way as European sites. The same applies for sites under consideration for designation including potential Special Protection Area (pSPA), Site of Community Importance (SCI), Candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) and proposed Ramsar sites. In summary, although Appropriate Assessment only legally applies to European sites, National Planning Policy provides further obligations to ensure that all those sites previously mentioned are subject to assessment. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, the term 'European site(s)' refers to all sites under assessment.

1.5.3 As the interest features of the Ramsar sites are usually very similar to the interest features of the SPA and / or SAC designations, both geographically and ecologically, the assessment below, for clarity does not always repeat Ramsar site names. The assessment does however consider Ramsar sites fully, and if an assessment for a Ramsar site was found to differ from that for the respective SPA / SAC, this would be clearly identified.

1.5.4 European Marine Site (EMS) is a term that is often used for a SPA or SAC that includes marine components (i.e. land/habitats up to 12 nautical miles out to sea and below the Mean High Water Mark). A European Marine Site does not have a statutory designation of its own but is designated for the same reasons as the relevant SPA or SAC, and because of this they are not always listed as a site in their own right, to save duplication. For the purpose of this document, an EMS is referred to as an Inshore SPA (or SAC) with Marine Components and it will be made clear if an SPA/SAC has marine components.

1.6 Impacts in combination with other Land-use Plans or Projects

1.6.1 Felixstowe Peninsula lies within Suffolk Coastal District and as such other Land-use Plans or projects within this area may also have a potential impact upon the integrity of European sites. In addition, neighbouring districts and/or counties may have Land-use Plans that could potentially affect European sites. Also, existing developments and proposed developments, management carried out by land managers with the consent of Natural England, projects of statutory agencies and utility companies such as projects affecting the water environment, and third party effects such as recreation, may affect European sites. It is necessary to investigate which other plans, projects, management etc. occur within the area of Felixstowe Peninsula and the surrounding area. As when investigating potentially affected European sites, an 8km zone of influence has been used in which to consider other sources of potential impact.

1.6.2 It is important to consider other Land-use plans, projects, etc. in-combination with Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan, in order to assess potential cumulative impact upon the European sites that have been identified within the zone of influence. For example, it is possible that the Plan being assessed may not have any impact upon a European site when considered alone, but when considered in-combination with another source, impacts may become likely. Alternatively, as an example, the Plan being assessed may give rise to potential impact upon a European site when considered alone, and when considered in-combination with another source, the cumulative impact may be greater.

2 European sites potentially affected

2.1 Sites within the Local Plan area

2.1.1 All European sites within the Area Action Plan area are potentially affected. The sites listed below occur wholly or partially within the Felixstowe Peninsula area, and are shown in Figure 01.

2.1.2 Appendix 1 gives details for the European sites that fall within the Felixstowe Peninsula Area (downloaded from JNCC website on 1st October 2015) Natural England's Conservation Objectives for the European sites are available from Natural England's website. Condition assessments for each unit of the component SSSI for European sites are found at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>.

Deben Estuary SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA with Marine Components

2.1.3 The Deben Estuary is designated as SPA and as a Ramsar site. The SPA designation has marine components. The estuary supports a highly complex mosaic of habitat types including mudflats, lower and upper saltmarsh, swamp and scrub. The composition of the mosaic varies with substrate, frequency and duration of tidal inundation, exposure, location and management.

2.1.4 The SPA designation is based on large numbers of wintering Avocet and Dark-bellied Brent geese, whereas the Ramsar designation also includes a wider range of migrating and wintering birds, flora, and fauna including the rare snail *Vertigo angustior*.

2.1.5 Part of the Deben Estuary is also outside the plan area.

Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA with Marine Components

2.1.6 The Stour and Orwell Estuaries is a wetland of international importance, comprising extensive mudflats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. It provides habitats for an important assemblage of wetland birds in the non-breeding season and supports internationally important numbers of wintering and passage wildfowl and waders. In addition to the internationally important bird interest, the Ramsar site also supports several nationally scarce plant species and British Red Data Book invertebrates.

2.1.7 Part of the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA is also outside the plan area.

2.2 Sites outside the Local Plan area

2.2.1 European sites occurring in the area surrounding Felixstowe Peninsula might potentially be affected by development within this area. For this assessment, European sites within the Felixstowe Peninsula Area plus an 8km zone of influence around this have been investigated. An 8km zone of influence has been determined because 8km is a previously researched¹ median distance which people will travel by car to visit a European site for recreation. Appendix 2 gives details of the European sites within an 8km radius from the boundary of Felixstowe Peninsula (downloaded from Natural England's publications website on 1st October 2015) and Conservation Objectives for these sites, are available from Natural England's website. Condition assessments for each unit of the component SSSIs which make up European sites are found at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>.

2.2.2 European sites within the 8km radius are shown in Figure 01 and are;

Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC/Inshore SAC with Marine Components

2.2.3 This estuary, made up of three rivers, is the only bar-built estuary in the UK with a shingle bar. This bar has been extending rapidly along the coast since 1530, pushing the mouth of the estuary progressively south-westwards. It is relatively wide and shallow, with extensive intertidal mudflats on both sides of the channel in its upper reaches and saltmarsh accreting along its fringes. The Alde subsequently becomes the south-west flowing River Ore, which is narrower and

¹ Research from the South Sandlings Visitor Survey in 2010 by Footprint Ecology on behalf of a consortium led by Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Forestry Commission, and funded by the Haven Gateway Partnership. Reported on 10th February 2011 by Cruickshanks K, Liley D and Hoskin R.

deeper with stronger currents. The smaller Butley River, which has extensive areas of saltmarsh and a reedbed community bordering intertidal mudflats, flows into the Ore shortly after the latter divides around Havergate Island. There is a range of littoral sediment and rock biotopes (the latter on sea defences) that are of high diversity and species richness for estuaries in eastern England. Water quality is excellent throughout. The area is relatively natural, being largely undeveloped by man and with very limited industrial activity. The estuary contains large areas of shallow water over subtidal sediments, and extensive mudflats and saltmarshes exposed at low water. Its diverse and species-rich intertidal sand and mudflat biotopes grade naturally along many lengths of the shore into vegetated or dynamic shingle habitat, saltmarsh, grassland and reedbed.

Alde – Ore Estuary SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA with Marine Components

- 2.2.4 Alde-Ore Estuary SPA is an estuary with extensive areas of saltmarsh and shingle habitats, which support a large number of wintering and breeding bird species.
- 2.2.5 The Ramsar site, with the same boundaries as the SPA, comprises the estuary complex of the rivers Alde, Butley and Ore, including Havergate Island and Orfordness. There are a variety of habitats including, intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, vegetated shingle (including the second-largest and best-preserved area in Britain at Orfordness), saline lagoons and grazing marsh. The Orfordness/Shingle Street landform is unique within Britain in combining a shingle spit with a cusped foreland. The site supports nationally-scarce plants, British Red Data Book invertebrates, and notable assemblages of breeding and wintering wetland birds.

Hamford Water SCI

- 2.2.6 Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks, islands, intertidal mud, sand flats and saltmarshes. Above the saltmarsh there is unimproved and improved grassland (including grazing marsh), scrub, woodland, hedges, ditches, ponds and reedbeds. The SCI encompasses those areas where Fisher's Estuarine Moth's food plant hog's fennel (*Peucedanum officinale*) grows and where there is an abundance of the grasses required by the species for egg laying. Fisher's Estuarine Moth *Gortyna borellii lunata* has a localised population distribution in the UK, due to its specific habitat requirements and is only found in two areas, the north Essex coast and the north Kent Coast. Hamford Water supports the majority of the Essex population and is the most important site nationally for this species, supporting approximately 70% of the UK population. The SCI is small in size, in comparison to the SPA.

Hamford Water SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA with Marine Components

- 2.2.7 Hamford Water SPA and Ramsar is an estuary and saltmarsh system which supports rare plants and internationally important species/populations of migratory waterfowl.

Orford Ness – Shingle Street SAC/Inshore SAC with Marine Components

- 2.2.8 Orford Ness – Shingle Street SAC contains coastal lagoons, annual vegetation of drift lines and perennial vegetation of stony banks.
- 2.2.9 The lagoons at this site have developed in the shingle bank adjacent to the shore at the mouth of the Ore estuary. The salinity of the lagoons is maintained by percolation through the shingle, although at high tides sea water can overtop the shingle bank. The fauna of these lagoons includes typical lagoon species, such as the cockle *Cerastoderma glaucum*, the ostracod *Cyprideis torosa* and the gastropods *Littorina saxatilis tenebrosa* and *Hydrobia ventrosa*. The nationally rare starlet sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis* is also found at the site.
- 2.2.10 Orford Ness is an extensive shingle spit some 15 km in length and is one of two sites representing Annual vegetation of drift lines on the east coast of England. The drift-line community is widespread on the site and comprises sea beet *Beta vulgaris* ssp. *maritima* and orache *Atriplex* spp. in a strip 2-5 m wide.
- 2.2.11 The spit supports some of the largest and most natural sequences in the UK of shingle vegetation affected by salt spray. The southern end of the spit has a particularly fine series of undisturbed ridges, with zonation of communities determined by the ridge pattern. Pioneer communities with

sea pea *Lathyrus japonicus* and false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland occur. Locally these are nutrient-enriched by the presence of a gull colony; elsewhere they support rich lichen communities. The northern part of Orford Ness has suffered considerable damage from defence-related activities but a restoration programme for the shingle vegetation is underway.

Outer Thames Estuary Inshore SPA with Marine Components

- 2.2.12 This SPA is entirely marine and is designated because its habitats support 38% of the Great British population of over-wintering Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*, a qualifying species under Article 4.1 of the Birds Directive. The Outer Thames Estuary SPA covers vast areas of marine habitat off the east coast between Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk in the north, down to Margate, Kent in the south. The habitats covered by the SPA include marine areas and sea inlets where Red-throated Diver is particularly susceptible to noise and visual disturbance e.g. from wind farms and coastal recreation activities. Threats from effluent discharge, oil spillages and entanglement/drowning in fishing nets are significant.

Sandlings SPA

- 2.2.13 The Sandlings is a series of SSSI heathlands with habitats including acid grassland and heather-dominated plant communities. Lack of management in past years, along with the conversion to commercial conifer plantations and arable cultivation has resulted in remnants of heath that have been threatened with successional changes and bracken invasion. Recent initiatives are working towards restoration of the heathland habitats.
- 2.2.14 The Sandlings qualifies as an SPA under Article 4.1 of the Birds Directive due to the presence of Woodlark *Lullula arborea* and Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* during the breeding season; both are species of European importance and listed in Annex 1 of the Directive. The Sandlings supports at least 3.2% of the GB breeding population of Nightjar and at least 10.3% of the GB breeding population of Woodlark.

2.3 Other relevant plans or projects affecting these sites

- 2.3.1 In addition to potential impact from the policies within Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan, there may be other sources of potential impact upon European sites such as other Land-use plans, existing or proposed projects, management and third-party effects including recreation as well as unplanned events e.g. fires, storms, flooding. Felixstowe Peninsula is located within Suffolk Coastal District so other sources of potential impact from this District may affect European sites. Within 8km of the Felixstowe Peninsula area, other Local Authorities include Babergh District Council, Tendring District Council and Ipswich Borough Council. Suffolk County Council, Essex County Council and Essex Haven Gateway may also have Plans that cover the area.
- 2.3.2 The following plans or projects have been identified as most relevant for consideration of in-combination effects:
- Suffolk Coastal District Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies
 - Suffolk Coastal District Council Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies
 - Babergh District Council Core Strategy and Policies
 - Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council Development Management Plan
 - Ipswich Borough Council Proposed Submission Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan)
 - Ipswich Borough Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document Review
 - Tendring District Council Local Plan
 - Tendring District Core Strategy and Development Policies.
- 2.3.3 In addition within Suffolk Coastal District the following are of relevance

- Aastral Park planning application east of Ipswich (Suffolk Coastal reference (ref C/09/0555) relevant to the implementation of Core Strategy policy SP20 and identified strategic levels of housing and employment growth; and
- Neighbourhood plan of towns / parishes in Suffolk Coastal District. No neighbourhood plan areas are located within the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan area. However, Rendlesham Neighbourhood Plan is made in respect of village centre and provision of allotments, and Leiston Neighbourhood Plan is at pre-submission stage. Neighbourhood Plans of other towns / parishes are at various but early stages in their production. These are listed in Appendix 1 of the Site Allocations Document, being more relevant to this plan. The Suffolk Coastal District Council Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Document is at the same stage and being progressed in the same timescale as the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan document.

2.3.4 Other actions may also cause impact to European sites, such as management practices by landowners (with consent from Natural England), use by the general public (recreational pressure), existing developments, future (planned) developments and unplanned events, whether accidental, intentional or natural e.g. fires, storms, surges/flooding.

3 Likely significant effects

3.1 Connection with the management of European sites

3.1.1 It is considered that the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Document is not necessary for, or connected with, the nature conservation management of any European sites.

3.2 Criteria for screening of individual policies

3.2.1 The screening of individual policies is a process to determine which, if any, of the individual policies requires individual assessment. For example, some of the proposed policies might each have a direct or indirect effect upon an international site, whilst other individual policies may have no effect. Criteria are set to determine which individual policies may have an effect. Effects from a combination of policies are also considered.

3.2.2 The criteria for determining if an individual policy, or a combination of policies, would have a likely significant effect, and require assessment, are based on the characteristics of the relevant European site and the objectives set by Natural England. The main factors to consider are

- Development on or close to the European site destroying part or all of the site, or changing the ecological functioning of the site (e.g. disrupting water flows or migration routes, or providing damaging levels of air pollution)
- Development close to the European site causing localised increased public recreation, causing disturbance to birds, damage to vegetation, increased littering / flytipping, or leading to management compromises (e.g. grazing being restricted).
- Reduction in water levels or flow, from increased water demand in the District requiring greater water abstraction
- Reduction of water quality, from increased discharges of surface water drainage, or from pollution incidents, either during, or after, construction

3.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy and implication for assessment of policies in the Area Action Plan

Core Strategy assessment

3.3.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment was undertaken for the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy, which considered the cumulative effects of all development proposed in that Plan. It included an assessment of proposed development as set out in other Local Planning Authorities' Local plans. An Appropriate Assessment was produced by The Landscape Partnership in November 2011, and updated in June 2013 prior to Core Strategy adoption. The assessment is available on Suffolk Coastal District Council's website at

<http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/policy/local-plan/core-strategy/> .

3.3.2 The Appropriate Assessment identified various mitigations for strategic allocations within the Core Strategy east of Ipswich, on the Felixstowe Peninsula and for all housing allocations in Suffolk Coastal and Ipswich Borough in combination. Mitigations for strategic allocations east of Ipswich Borough and all other housing allocations are being taken forward separately to the Area Action Plan under consideration here. Mitigations for housing allocations in the Felixstowe Peninsula were

- 1km separation of strategic allocations from European sites thus preventing regular walks from home to the sites
- Improvements to convenient local greenspace for routine use thus reducing the demand for visits to European sites (with reference to strategic allocations)
- The provision of a new Country Park (or similar high quality provision) to provide an alternative attraction for recreational activity for residents of existing and proposed new dwellings. This new Country Park will be designed so as to be attractive to dog walkers

and others and include adequate provision for car parking, visitor facilities, dog bins, dogs off-leads areas etc

- Visitor management measures, guided by a visitor management plan, to manage and monitor recreational access and birds on designated sites. The designated sites include the Deben Estuary SPA/Ramsar and Sandlings SPA. These measures would be coordinated across the Coast & Heaths Area, and are likely to require a capital works programme, and on-site wardening.

3.3.3 To provide clarification on how the proposed mitigation will be taken forward, these three measures listed below implement the final two bullet points of the paragraph above.

- A new country park is a requirement of Policy CS10 of Ipswich Borough Council's Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies DPD Review and the Ipswich Garden Suburb supplementary planning guidance (Interim Guidance – September 2014) (see <https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/localplan>).
- A Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy is under consideration to address the visitor management measures relevant to smaller allocations. In conjunction with Ipswich Borough Council and Babergh District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council is producing a mitigation strategy which will set out in more detail how the mitigation measures required in association with the identified housing requirements for the local authorities will be carried out and how these will be delivered and funded. *Early indications from Natural England are that this monitoring and mitigation should be looked at against a background of proximity to key SPA rather than being specific to local authority boundaries*
- A country park type facility is also proposed as part of the Adastral Park planning application to minimise the effects of that proposal on Deben Estuary SPA.

Implications for assessment of Felixstowe Area Action Plan policies

3.3.4 The provision of those Core Strategy mitigations is satisfactory to demonstrate that the amount of housing allocated in the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy would have no adverse impact on the integrity of any European site. The in-combination effect of site allocations in the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan has therefore been considered within the Core Strategy and need not be repeated in this document. Assessment of policies in the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan is therefore restricted to assessing each policy alone rather than in combination with others, unless there are specific circumstances suggesting otherwise.

This screening of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan will test the first two bullet points of mitigation set out in this Section 3.3, which were necessary for the strategic allocations at Felixstowe to be assessed as having no adverse effect upon the integrity of any European site.

3.4 Screening of individual policies

3.4.1 The table in Appendix 3 lists each policy, provides a brief explanation of the policy, and gives an assessment of whether the policy is likely to have a significant effect on any European site. The assessment in Appendix 3 identifies that there are no policies within Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Document that would have a likely significant effect on a European site.

3.5 Screening of the whole Plan

3.5.1 The Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan has been developed to be consistent in approach with the Appropriate Assessment for the 2013 SCDC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document. The AA for the Core Strategy identifies that without mitigation there would be a significant impact upon European sites within the District from the proposed new development (including that detailed in the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan). The Core Strategy AA takes into account the whole of the proposed development for the District, including

the 807 dwelling proposed for Felixstowe Peninsula, and provides mitigation measures that would offset any adverse impacts that might result from new housing.

3.5.2 Policy FFP25 Access to the Countryside clearly provides areas of open space for recreational activities such as dog walking, to provide an alternative to visiting estuaries or other European sites for those activities. The larger allocations for housing also contain within them a requirement for those areas of open space. It is clear that there would be no additional recreational activities on European sites and so the plan as a whole has no additional impact upon European sites.

3.5.3 Screening has determined that Policies in this Plan do not have effects on European sites when considered in combination with each other.

3.6 Screening of the Plan for likely significant effects upon Outer Thames Estuary SPA

3.6.1 The Outer Thames Estuary SPA is not considered within the SCDC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document, therefore the impact of the policies within the Site Allocations Document upon this Special Protection Area need to be additionally assessed.

3.6.2 The Outer Thames Estuary is an SPA that is entirely marine and is designated for supporting over-wintering populations of Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*. After breeding this species migrates to sheltered coasts and tends to stay within 12 miles of the coast. This makes it susceptible to disturbance from activities such as recreational boating and from construction and running of inshore-wind farms and construction of coastal development, as well as pollution from oil spillages and entanglement in fishing nets. The Outer Thames Estuary SPA is divided into three main parts, one of which falls within the vicinity of Felixstowe Area Action Plan; the Deben Estuary and Orwell Estuary are included within the Outer Thames Estuary SPA. The Draft Conservation Objectives² document for the Outer Thames Estuary SPA summarises operations which may cause deterioration or disturbance to Red-throated Diver populations. Damaging operations are categorised as:

- *Physical loss of supporting habitats* e.g. offshore development, harvesting, disposal of dredging spoil
- *Physical damage to habitats* e.g. dredging, anchoring, boating, siltation through run-off
- *Non-physical disturbance* e.g. noise from boating activities, visual from recreation activities
- *Toxic contamination* e.g. pesticides, PCBs, heavy metals, radionuclides
- *Non-toxic contamination* e.g. nutrient loading from agricultural run-off and outfalls, organic loading from mariculture, thermal changes from power stations, changes in turbidity from dredging, changes in salinity from water abstraction
- *Biological disturbance* e.g. introduction of non-native species, translocations, selective extraction of species through fishing, non-selective extraction of species through entanglement or wind-turbine strike, introduction of microbial pathogens

3.6.3 The policies within the Area Action Plan do not include offshore development or agricultural/mariculture practices which would cause loss or damage or contamination of habitats used by Red-throated Diver. Although the development policies will facilitate an increase to the human population of Suffolk Coastal, and there may be a greater use of the coast adjacent to the Outer Thames Estuary SPA for recreational activities, it is not anticipated that these activities would disturb Red-throated Diver, which does not typically use waters close to the shore. In addition, the SPA boundary follows the edge of the coast including adjacent to towns elsewhere such as Aldeburgh which remain SPA quality.

² JNCC/Natural England *Outer Thames Estuary Special Protection Area: Draft advice under Regulation 35(3) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) and Regulation 18 of The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended)* Version 3.7 March 2013

3.6.4 In the vicinity of Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan the impact on the Outer Thames Estuary SPA is the same as that for Deben Estuary European sites and Stour and Orwell Estuary European sites. In conclusion it is considered that the policies within the Area Action Plan do not have likely significant effects upon this European site.

3.7 Screening of the Plan in combination with other plans

SCDC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies

3.7.1 See Section 3.3 above.

SCDC Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies

3.7.2 It is considered that there would be no in-combination effects of this plan because the in-combination effects of the totality of development within Suffolk Coastal were considered within the assessment of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy.

Other plans or projects including Local Plans of neighbouring Local Planning Authorities, Neighbourhood Plans within Suffolk Coastal and the Adastral Park application

No other plans or projects have been identified which would have a likely significant effect in combination with the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan.

Ipswich Local Plan

3.7.3 The mitigation set out in Section 3.3 is intended to mitigate the impacts of housing growth in Ipswich as well as in Suffolk Coastal District. Policy SPx, restricting car parks within 1km of Deben Estuary SPA, also mitigates the impact of housing growth in Ipswich as well as in Suffolk Coastal.

3.7.4 .

4 Consultations and iterations

4.1 Consultations with Natural England

4.1.1 Natural England is the statutory consultee for Habitats Regulations Assessments of Land-use Plans. The public consultation of the Felixstowe Peninsula Preferred Options Area Action Plan together with this document was Natural England's first opportunity to advise on the Habitats Regulations Assessment. Natural England provided comments which have been taken into account during the development of the Proposed Submission Area Action Plan and HRA. Comments received are reproduced in Appendix 4.

4.2 Consultations with others

4.2.1 During the public consultation of the Preferred Options Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan, a number of representations from members of the public were received. In addition key stakeholders (as well as Natural England) including Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the RSPB have provided comments. Comments received have been considered and have been taken into consideration in the development of the Proposed Submission stage Area Action Plan Document and this HRA. These comments have been reproduced in Appendix 4.

4.3 Iterations of this Habitats Regulations Assessment document

4.3.1 The first version of this document was published in October 2015 and was made available for consultation as described above.

4.3.2 Preferred Policy FFP10 'Land in the Strategic Employment Area for the Port of Felixstowe' said that the Port will be promoted and safeguarded for employment, activities and operations which support the retention, expansion and consolidation of the Port and jobs associated with it. This was recognised in the October 2015 Habitats Regulations Assessment as potentially having adverse effects upon the adjacent Stour and Orwell SPA. Policy FFP10 has been amended to recognise this, by adding extra text at Proposed Submission stage. The additional text is 'Applications for development of this site will need to be subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment screening. Any development which would result in significant adverse effects which could not be appropriately mitigated will not be permitted.'

4.3.3 With this additional policy text, this version of this document now recognises that the policy would result in development at the port being permitted if it would have no adverse impacts upon the SPA, and also that development proposals which could have an adverse impact would be recognised and subject to further HRA scrutiny.

4.3.4 A new policy, FFPXX has been added which restricts the development of car parks open to the public within 1km of Deben Estuary SPA. This is to prevent additional recreational impacts upon the SPA, as people might use a car park at up to 1km distance to walk to the estuary. This policy provides further protection to Deben Estuary SPA from recreational disturbance.

4.3.5 All other policies were re-screened, including those policies which were modified from the Preferred Options stage.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion of screening for likely significant effects of the Plan alone

5.1.1 This Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Felixstowe Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Document concludes that there would be no likely significant effect upon European sites.

5.2 Conclusion of screening for likely significant effects of the Document in-combination with other relevant plans

5.2.1 There are no other plans which would have a likely significant effect in combination with the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan.

5.2.2 There are no other plans which would have an effect on European sites in combination with the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan; mitigation for impacts on European sites deriving from Suffolk Coastal's Core Strategy in combination with housing growth in Ipswich Borough is also applicable to the Site Allocations Plan.

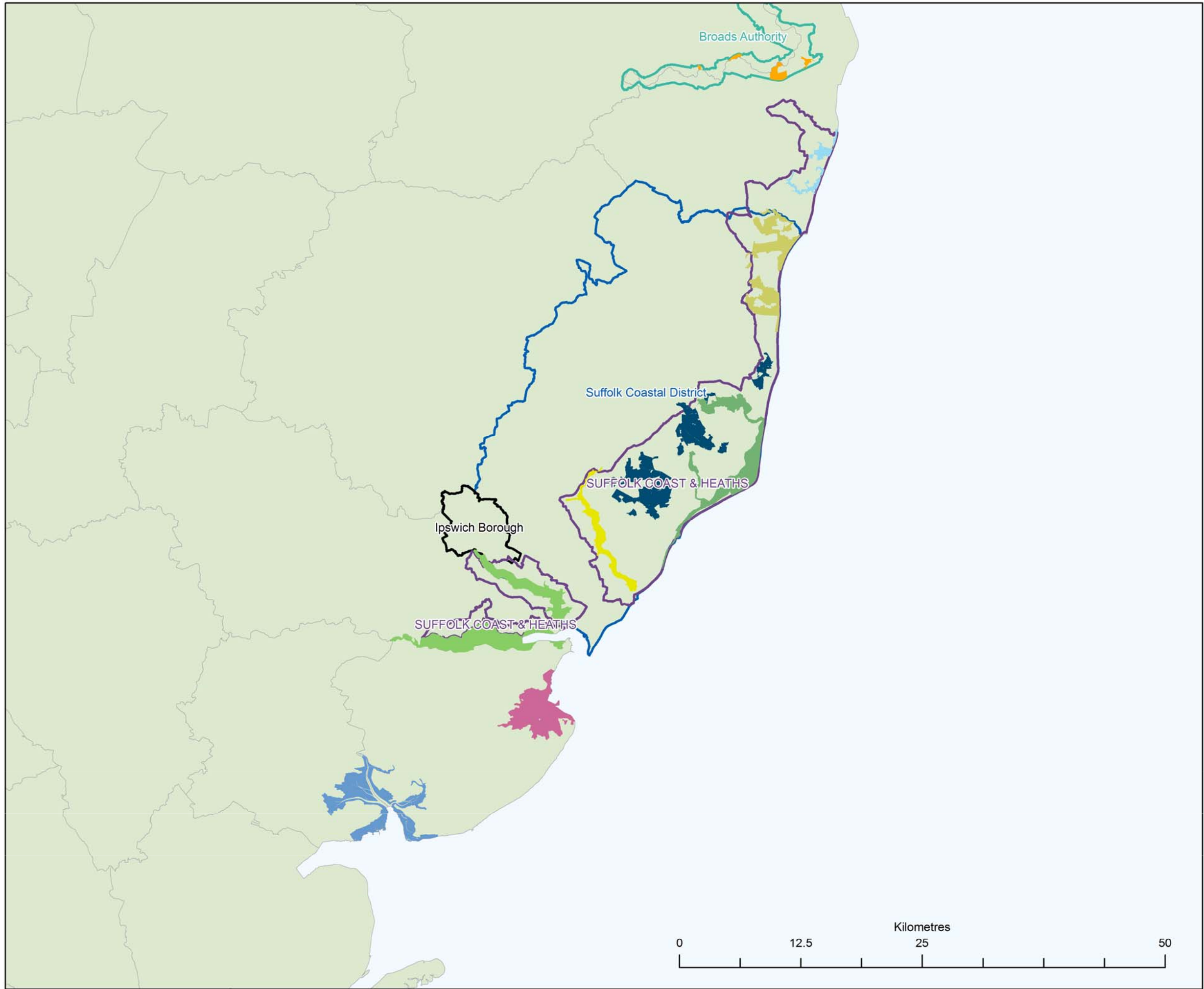
Figure 1



- Key**
- SAC name:**
- Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries
 - Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons
 - Dew's Ponds
 - Essex Estuaries
 - Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes
 - Orfordness-Shingle Street
 - Staverton Park and The Thicks Wantisden
 - The Broads
- 'Other' boundaries:**
- Ipswich Borough
 - Suffolk Coastal
 - Broads Authority
 - SCH AONB

Figure 1a
SAC in the study area





Key

- SPA name:**
- Alde-Ore Estuary
 - Benacre to Easton Bavents
 - Colne Estuary
 - Mid Essex Coast Phase 2
 - Deben Estuary
 - Minsmere/Walberswick
 - Hamford Water
 - Sandlings
 - Stour and Orwell Estuaries
 - Broadland

- 'Other' boundaries:**
- Ipswich Borough
 - Suffolk Coastal
 - Broads Authority
 - SCH AONB

Figure 1b
SPA in the study area





Key

- RAMSAR name:**
- Alde-Ore Estuary
 - Colne Estuary
 - Mid Essex Coast Phase 2
 - Deben Estuary
 - Minsmere/Walberswick
 - Hamford Water
 - Stour and Orwell Estuaries
 - Broadland

- 'Other' boundaries:**
- Ipswich Borough
 - Suffolk Coastal
 - Broads Authority
 - SCH AONB

Figure 1c
RAMSAR in the study area



Appendix 1

**EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds:
Special Protection Area**

The Deben Estuary (Suffolk)

The Deben Estuary Special Protection Area (SP A) extends for about 18km from the mouth of the estuary at Felixstowe, on the east coast of Suffolk to near the tidal limit above Wilford Bridge. It is a relatively narrow and sheltered estuary with a limited amount of freshwater input and intertidal areas constrained by sea walls. Saltmarsh and intertidal mud flats occupy the majority of the site but there are also areas of reedswamp, unimproved neutral grassland and scrub. The estuary is largely surrounded by agricultural land.


The boundary of the SPA is coincident with the Deben Estuary SSSI, notified in 1991, and overlaps with the Ferry Cliff, and Sutton and Ramsholt Cliff geological SSSIs. The site includes all land above mean low water mark up to an inland boundary that follows variable features such as the upper limit of wetland habitat or the sea wall.

The site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Birds Directive by regularly supporting nationally important numbers of avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, an Annex 1 species. The five year winter peak mean for the period 1988/89 to 1992/93 was 57 birds, representing 11.4% of the British population. Further Annex 1 species wintering on the site include golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* and short-eared owl *Asio flammeus*.

The site qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive by regularly supporting internationally important numbers of dark-bellied geese, *Branta bernicula bernicula*, a regularly occurring migratory species. The five year winter peak mean for the period 1988/89 to 1992/93 was 1,889 birds, representing 2.1% of the British and 1.1% of the north-west European population. In addition the site supports nationally important numbers of the following migratory waterfowl (figures are five year winter peak means for the period 1988/89 to 1992/93): 1,046 shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* (1.4% of the British population); 252 grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (1.2% of British); 143 black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* (2.9% of British); and 1,454 redshank *Tringa totanus* (1.9% of British).

The site also supports a notable assemblage of breeding and wintering wetland birds in addition to the species mentioned above. Breeding species include shelduck, gadwall *Anas strepera*, teal *A. crecca*, shoveler *A. clypeata*, redshank, oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula* and snipe *Gallinago gallinago*. Wintering species include cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, teal, pintail *Anas acuta*, wigeon *A. penelope*, goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*, coot *Fulica atra*, oystercatcher, ringed plover, dunlin *Calidris alpina*, snipe, curlew *Numenius arquata*, turnstone *Areneria interpres* and twite *Carduelis flavirostris*. The estuary is more important for many species of waterfowl in years when severe weather reduces food resources available on the continent.

SPA Citation
March 1996

This citation / map relates to a site entered in
the Register of European sites for Great Britain.
Register reference number UK9009261
Date of registration 25 AUG 1999
Signed 
on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	199603
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 20 44 E	52 02 31 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK403	Suffolk	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment			
		Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
Breed	Winter	Stage						
A046a	<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>		2516 I		B		C	
A132	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		95 I		B		B	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	80.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	18.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	1.0
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	1.0
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Mud, Sedimentary

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Lowland, Valley

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

Recurvirostra avosetta

(Western Europe/Western Mediterranean - breeding)

7.5% of the GB population

5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

Branta bernicla bernicla
(Western Siberia/Western Europe)

0.8% of the population
5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

4.3 Vulnerability

The saltmarsh and intertidal habitats are vulnerable to sea level rise and coastal squeeze. These issues are being addressed through the Environment Agency LEAP, the estuary Shoreline Management Plan and research into possible managed retreat in parts of the site.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Monkstone House

City Road

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire PE1 1JY

UK

Telephone/Fax: +44 (0)1733 – 562 626 / +44 (0)1733 – 555 948

Email: RIS@JNCC.gov.uk

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DD MM YY

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 11 March 1996

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Deben Estuary

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for: Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area:

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

7. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;
- ii) **an electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) *Yes*
- iii) **a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables** *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;

b) **Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:**

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The site boundary is the same as, or falls within, an existing protected area.

For precise boundary details, please refer to paper map provided at designation

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

52 02 31 N 01 20 44 E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Nearest town/city: Ipswich

Deben Estuary is located in East Anglia, on the east coast of Suffolk. It extends 18 km from the tidal limit above Wilford Bridge near Woodbridge, south to the mouth of the estuary at Felixstowe.

Administrative region: Suffolk

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **11. Area** (hectares): 978.93

Min.	-1
Max.	4
Mean	1

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

This estuary is relatively narrow and sheltered. It has limited amounts of freshwater input and the intertidal areas are constrained by sea-walls. The site supports nationally and internationally-important flora and fauna.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

2, 6

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Ramsar criterion 2

Supports a population of the mollusc *Vertigo angustior* (Habitats Directive Annex II (S1014); British Red Data Book Endangered). Martlesham Creek is one of only about fourteen sites in Britain where this species survives.

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species with peak counts in winter:

Dark-bellied brent goose, *Branta bernicla bernicla*, 1953 individuals, representing an average of 1.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Contemporary data and information on waterbird trends at this site and their regional (sub-national) and national contexts can be found in the Wetland Bird Survey report, which is updated annually. See www.bto.org/survey/webs/webs-alerts-index.htm.

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	mud, sedimentary
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, coastal, valley, intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), estuary
Nutrient status	eutrophic
pH	no information
Salinity	saline / euhaline
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Lowestoft, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/lowestoft.html) Max. daily temperature: 13.0° C Min. daily temperature: 7.0° C Days of air frost: 27.8 Rainfall: 576.3 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1535.5

General description of the Physical Features:

The Deben Estuary extends south-eastwards for over 12 km from the town of Woodbridge to the sea just north of Felixstowe. It is relatively narrow and sheltered, and has limited amounts of freshwater input. The estuary mouth is the narrowest section and is protected by the presence of shifting sandbanks. The intertidal areas are constrained by sea-walls. The saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats that occupy the majority of the site, however, display the

most complete range of saltmarsh community types in Suffolk. The estuary holds a range of swamp communities that fringe the estuary, and occasionally form larger stands. In general, these are dominated by common reed *Phragmites australis*.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

The Deben Estuary extends south-eastwards for over 12 km from the town of Woodbridge to the sea just north of Felixstowe. It is relatively narrow and sheltered, and has limited amounts of freshwater input. The estuary mouth is the narrowest section and is protected by the presence of shifting sandbanks. The intertidal areas are constrained by sea-walls. The saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats that occupy the majority of the site, however, display the most complete range of saltmarsh community types in Suffolk.

18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

No special values known

19. Wetland types:

Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
H	Salt marshes	46.8
G	Tidal flats	36.8
F	Estuarine waters	15.3
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	1
E	Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)	0.1

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

The estuary supports a highly complex mosaic of habitat types including:

mudflats, lower and upper saltmarsh, swamp and scrub. The composition of the mosaic varies with substrate, frequency and duration of tidal inundation, exposure, location and management.

Ecosystem services

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher Plants.

Althaea officinalis, *Bupleurum tenuissimum*, *Lepidium latifolium*, *Puccinellia fasciculata*, *Sarcocornia perennis*, *Suaeda vera*, *Zostera angustifolia* are nationally scarce plants associated with estuarine habitats.

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Birds**Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:****Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:**

Black-tailed godwit , <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> , Iceland/W Europe	307 individuals, representing an average of 1.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common greenshank , <i>Tringa nebularia</i> , Europe/W Africa	22 individuals, representing an average of 3.6% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Bean goose , <i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i> , NW Europe - wintering	5 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the GB population (Source period not collated)
Common shelduck , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> , NW Europe	832 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Pied avocet , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> , Europe/Northwest Africa	167 individuals, representing an average of 4.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Spotted redshank , <i>Tringa erythropus</i> , Europe/W Africa	3 individuals, representing an average of 2.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common redshank , <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i> ,	2124 individuals, representing an average of 1.8% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species Information**Nationally important species occurring on the site.****Invertebrates.**

Vertigo angustior (Nationally Scarce)

Vertigo pusilla (Nationally Scarce)

23. Social and cultural values:

Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

- Aesthetic
- Fisheries production
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Sport fishing
- Sport hunting
- Tourism
- Transportation/navigation

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning? No

If Yes, describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	+	+
National/Crown Estate	+	
Private	+	+

25. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	+
Tourism	+	+
Recreation	+	+
Cutting of vegetation (small-scale/subsistence)	+	
Fishing: commercial	+	
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	
Bait collection	+	
Arable agriculture (unspecified)		+
Grazing (unspecified)	+	+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	
Flood control		+
Irrigation (incl. agricultural water supply)		+
Urban development		+
Non-urbanised settlements		+

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site’s ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
Erosion	2	Coastal squeeze within the Deben Estuary	+		+

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors? Erosion - English Nature provides advice to the Environment Agency and coastal local authorities in relation to flood and coastal protection management. This will inform the development of the Suffolk Estuaries strategies and the second generation shoreline management plan.

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? YES

27. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Other	+	+
Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB)	+	
Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)	+	

b) Describe any other current management practices:

The management of Ramsar sites in the UK is determined by either a formal management plan or through other management planning processes, and is overseen by the relevant statutory conservation agency. Details of the precise management practises are given in these documents.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Fauna.

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

None reported

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities.

Boating and walking locally and bird watching centred on Martlesham Creek and Felixstowe Ferry. Fishing.

Facilities provided.

Moorings along the river at Woodbridge, Waldring Field, Ramsholt.

Seasonality.

Activities are predominantly undertaken during the summer especially fishing, as this is when thin-lipped grey mullet *Liza ramada* enter the estuary.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Head, Natura 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House, Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

Anon. (2002) *Suffolk Coast and Estuaries Coastal Habitat Management Plan: Executive summary*. English Nature, Peterborough (Living with the Sea LIFE Project) www.english-nature.org.uk/livingwiththesea/project_details/good_practice_guide/HabitatCRR/ENRestore/CHaMPs/SuffolkCoast/SuffolkCHaMP.pdf

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- Hill, TO, Emblow, CS & Northen, KO (1996) *Marine Nature Conservation Review Sector 6. Inlets in eastern England: area summaries*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough (Coasts and seas of the United Kingdom. MNCR series)
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- Suffolk Wildlife Trust (1993) *National Vegetation Classification of the saltmarsh of the Deben, Alde–Ore and Blyth estuaries, Suffolk*. Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Saxmundham

Please return to: **Ramsar Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • email: ramsar@ramsar.org

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

Name: Stour and Orwell Estuaries

Unitary Authority/County: Essex, Suffolk.

Site description: The Stour and Orwell estuaries straddle the eastern part of the Essex/Suffolk border in eastern England. The SPA is coincident with Cattawade Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Orwell Estuary SSSI and Stour Estuary SSSI. The estuaries include extensive mud-flats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The mud-flats hold *Enteromorpha*, *Zostera* and *Salicornia* spp. The site also includes areas of low-lying grazing marsh at Shotley Marshes on the south side of the Orwell and at Cattawade Marshes at the head of the Stour. Trimley Marshes on the north side of the Orwell includes several shallow freshwater pools, as well as areas of grazing marsh, and is managed as a nature reserve by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. In summer, the site supports important numbers of breeding avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, while in winter it holds major concentrations of waterbirds, especially geese, ducks and waders. The geese also feed, and some waders roost, in surrounding areas of agricultural land outside the SPA. The site has close ecological links with the Hamford Water and Mid-Essex Coast SPAs, lying to the south on the same coast.

Size of SPA: The SPA covers an area of 3,676.92 ha.

Qualifying species:

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

Annex 1 species	Count and season	Period	% of GB population
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	21 pairs - breeding	5 year peak mean 1996 – 2000	3.6%

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 in Annex I) in any season:

Migratory species	Count and season	Period	% of subspecies/population
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	2,588 individuals – autumn passage	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	2.0% <i>britannica</i>
Dark-bellied brent goose <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>	2,627 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.2% <i>bernicla</i> , Western Siberia (breeding)
Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	741 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.2% Northwestern Europe (non-breeding)
Grey plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	3,261 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.3% Eastern Atlantic (non- breeding)
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i> <i>islandica</i>	5,970 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.3% <i>islandica</i>
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>	19,114 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.4% <i>alpina</i> , Western Europe (non-breeding)
Black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>	2,559 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	7.3% <i>islandica</i>
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	3,687 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	2.8% <i>britannica</i>

Bird counts from: Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) database.

Assemblage qualification:

The site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds (waterbirds as defined by the Ramsar Convention) in any season:

In the non-breeding season, the area regularly supports 63,017 individual waterbirds (5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98), including great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, dark-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, wigeon *Anas penelope*, gadwall *Anas strepera*, pintail *Anas acuta*, goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*, ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, knot *Calidris canutus islandica*, dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina*, black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*, curlew *Numenius arquata*, redshank *Tringa totanus* and turnstone *Arenaria interpres*.

Non-qualifying species of interest: The SPA/Ramsar site as a whole, including the proposed extensions, is used by non-breeding marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, merlin *Falco columbarius*, peregrine *Falco peregrinus*, short-eared owl *Asio flammeus* and kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (all species listed in Annex I of the EC Birds Directive) in numbers of less than European importance (less than 1% GB population). It also supports breeding common tern *Sterna hirundo*, little tern *Sterna albifrons* and kingfisher (all listed in Annex I) in numbers of less than European importance.

Status of SPA:

- 1) Stour and Orwell Estuaries was classified as a Special Protection Area on 13 July 1994.
- 2) Extensions to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA were classified on 19 May 2005.

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	199407
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 09 38 E	51 57 16 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK54	Essex	28.60%
UK403	Suffolk	71.40%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment				
		Resident	Breed	Winter	Stage	Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
A054	<i>Anas acuta</i>			741 I		B		C	
A050	<i>Anas penelope</i>			3979 I		C		C	
A051	<i>Anas strepera</i>			97 I		C		C	
A169	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>			690 I		C		C	
A046a	<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>			2627 I		B		C	
A067	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>			213 I		C		C	
A149	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>			19114 I		B		C	
A143	<i>Calidris canutus</i>			5970 I		C		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				638 I	B		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			372 I		B		C	
A156	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>			2559 I		A		C	
A160	<i>Numenius arquata</i>			2153 I		C		C	
A017	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			232 I		C		C	
A141	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>			3261 I		B		C	
A005	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>			245 I		C		C	
A132	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		21 P			B		C	
A048	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>			2955 I		B		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			3687 I		B		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>				2588 I	B		C	
A142	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>			6242 I		C		C	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	88.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	5.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	0.5
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	0.8
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	5.5
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	0.2
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Alluvium, Clay, Mud, Neutral, Sand, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Lagoon, Lowland, Subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank)

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Western Europe/Western Mediterranean - breeding)	3.6% of the population in Great Britain 5-year peak mean 1996-2000
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ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

<i>Anas acuta</i> (North-western Europe)	1.2% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
---	--

<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Western Siberia/Western Europe)	1.2% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
---	--

<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> (Northern Siberia/Europe/Western Africa)	1.4% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
---	--

<i>Calidris canutus</i> (North-eastern Canada/Greenland/Iceland/North-western Europe)	1.3% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
--	--

<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Iceland - breeding)	7.3% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
--	--

<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	1.3% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
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<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	2.8% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
---	--

On passage the area regularly supports:

<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	2% of the population 5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000
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ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC): AN INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ASSEMBLAGE OF BIRDS

Over winter the area regularly supports:

63017 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 19/05/2005)

Including:

Podiceps cristatus , *Phalacrocorax carbo* , *Branta bernicla bernicla* , *Tadorna tadorna* , *Anas penelope* , *Anas strepera* , *Anas acuta* , *Bucephala clangula* , *Charadrius hiaticula* , *Pluvialis squatarola* , *Vanellus vanellus* , *Calidris canutus* , *Calidris alpina alpina* , *Limosa limosa islandica* , *Numenius arquata* , *Tringa totanus* , *Arenaria interpres* .

4.3 Vulnerability

There is pressure for increased port development and marine recreation in this area. Marine recreation is being addressed within the Estuary Management Plan. Port development is being considered by public inquiry. Maintenance dredging of the River Stour and River Orwell poses potential threats to the SPA but the activity is being addressed through the provisions of the Habitats Regulations. The saltmarsh is eroding, partly as a result of natural coastal processes; the beneficial use of dredgings is taking place to try to combat these processes.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Monkstone House

City Road

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire PE1 1JY

UK

Telephone/Fax: +44 (0)1733 – 562 626 / +44 (0)1733 – 555 948

Email: RIS@JNCC.gov.uk

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 13 July 1994

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Stour and Orwell Estuaries

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for: Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area:

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

7. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;
- ii) **an electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) *Yes*
- iii) **a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables** *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;

b) Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The site boundary is the same as, or falls within, an existing protected area.

For precise boundary details, please refer to paper map provided at designation

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

051 57 16 N 001 09 38 E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Nearest town/city: Felixstowe

The Stour Estuary forms the south-eastern part of Essex/Suffolk boundary.

The Orwell Estuary is a relatively long and narrow estuary with extensive mudflats and some saltmarsh, running from Ipswich in the north, southwards towards Felixstowe.

Administrative region: Essex; Suffolk

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **11. Area** (hectares): 3676.92

Min.	-1
Max.	3
Mean	0

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

The Stour and Orwell Estuaries is a wetland of international importance, comprising extensive mudflats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. It provides habitats for an important assemblage of wetland birds in the non-breeding season and supports internationally important numbers of wintering and passage wildfowl and waders. The site also holds several nationally scarce plants and British Red Data Book invertebrates.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

2, 5, 6

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Ramsar criterion 2

Contains seven nationally scarce plants: stiff saltmarsh-grass *Puccinellia rupestris*; small cord-grass *Spartina maritima*; perennial glasswort *Sarcocornia perennis*; lax-flowered sea lavender *Limonium humile*; and the eelgrasses *Zostera angustifolia*, *Z. marina* and *Z. noltei*.

Contains five British Red Data Book invertebrates: the muscid fly *Phaonia fusca*; the horsefly *Haematopota grandis*; two spiders, *Arctosa fulvolineata* and *Baryphema duffeyi*; and the Endangered swollen spire snail *Mercuria confusa*.

Ramsar criterion 5

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

63017 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Common redshank , *Tringa totanus totanus*, 2588 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Dark-bellied brent goose, *Branta bernicla bernicla*, 2627 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Northern pintail , *Anas acuta*, NW Europe 741 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Grey plover , *Pluvialis squatarola*, E Atlantic/W Africa -wintering 3261 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Red knot , *Calidris canutus islandica*, W & Southern Africa (wintering) 5970 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Dunlin , *Calidris alpina alpina*, W Siberia/W Europe 19114 individuals, representing an average of 1.4% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Black-tailed godwit , *Limosa limosa islandica*, Iceland/W Europe 2559 individuals, representing an average of 7.3% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Common redshank , *Tringa totanus totanus*, 3687 individuals, representing an average of 2.8% of the population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Contemporary data and information on waterbird trends at this site and their regional (sub-national) and national contexts can be found in the Wetland Bird Survey report, which is updated annually. See www.bto.org/survey/webs/webs-alerts-index.htm.

Details of bird species occurring at levels of National importance are given in Section 22

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	shingle, sand, mud
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, coastal, valley, subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank), intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), estuary
Nutrient status	
pH	
Salinity	brackish / mixosaline, fresh, saline / euhaline
Soil	no information
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Lowestoft, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/lowestoft.html) Max. daily temperature: 13.0° C Min. daily temperature: 7.0° C Days of air frost: 27.8 Rainfall: 576.3 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1535.5

General description of the Physical Features:

The Stour and Orwell estuaries include extensive mudflats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The site also includes an area of low-lying grazing marsh at Shotley Marshes on the south side of the Orwell.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

The Stour and Orwell estuaries include extensive mudflats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The site also includes an area of low-lying grazing marsh at Shotley Marshes on the south side of the Orwell.

18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

Sediment trapping

19. Wetland types:

Inland wetland, Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
G	Tidal flats	44.2

H	Salt marshes	35
F	Estuarine waters	19.8
4	Seasonally flooded agricultural land	0.7
E	Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)	0.3

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

Orwell is a relatively long and narrow estuary with extensive mudflats bordering the channel that support large patches of eelgrass *Zostera* sp. The saltmarsh tends to be sandy and fairly calcareous with a wide range of communities. There are small areas of vegetated shingle on the foreshore of the lower reaches. Grazing marshes adjoin the estuary at Shotley. The Stour estuary is a relatively simply structured estuary with a sandy outer area and a muddier inner section. The mud is rich in invertebrates and there are areas of higher saltmarsh. The shoreline vegetation varies from oak-dominated wooded cliffs, through scrub-covered banks to coarse grasses over seawalls, with reed-filled borrow dykes behind.

Ecosystem services

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher Plants.

Puccinellia rupestris (nationally scarce); *Spartina maritima* (nationally scarce); *Sarcocornia perennis* (nationally scarce); *Limonium humile* (nationally scarce); *Zostera angustifolia* (nationally scarce); *Zostera marina* (nationally scarce); *Zostera noltei* (nationally scarce).

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Birds

Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:

Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

Pied avocet , *Recurvirostra avosetta*, W Europe 21 pairs, representing an average of 2.8% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1996-2000)

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Ringed plover , *Charadrius hiaticula*, Europe/Northwest Africa 638 individuals, representing an average of 2.1% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Great crested grebe , *Podiceps cristatus cristatus*, NW Europe 245 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Great cormorant , *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*, NW Europe 232 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Common shelduck , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> , NW Europe	2955 individuals, representing an average of 3.8% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)
Eurasian curlew , <i>Numenius arquata arquata</i> , N. a. <i>arquata</i> Europe (breeding)	1824 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)
Ruddy turnstone , <i>Arenaria interpres interpres</i> , NE Canada, Greenland/W Europe & NW Africa	690 individuals, representing an average of 1.4% of the GB population (5-year peak mean 1995/96-1999/2000)

Species Information

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Invertebrates.

Phaonia fusca; *Haematopota grandis* (Meigen) (RDB3); *Arctosa fulvolineata* (RDB3); *Baryphyma duffeyi* (RDB3); *Mercuria (=Pseudamnicola) confusa* (RDB1).

23. Social and cultural values:

Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

- Aesthetic
- Archaeological/historical site
- Livestock grazing
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Sport hunting
- Tourism
- Transportation/navigation

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning? No

If Yes, describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	+	
Local authority, municipality etc.	+	

National/Crown Estate	+	
Private	+	+

25. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Tourism	+	+
Recreation	+	+
Cutting of vegetation (small-scale/subsistence)	+	
Bait collection	+	
Permanent arable agriculture		+
Grazing (unspecified)	+	
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	
Sewage treatment/disposal	+	
Harbour/port	+	
Flood control	+	
Transport route	+	+
Urban development		+
Non-urbanised settlements	+	+

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site’s ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
Erosion	2	Natural coastal processes exacerbated by fixed sea defences, port development and maintenance dredging.	+		+

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?
 Erosion - Erosion is being tackled through sediment replacement for additional erosion that can be attributed to port development and maintenance dredging. A realignment site has been created on-site to make up for the loss of habitat due to capital dredging. General background erosion has not been tackled although a Flood Management Strategy for the site is being produced.

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? YES

27. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation	+	
Management agreement	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB)	+	+

b) Describe any other current management practices:

The management of Ramsar sites in the UK is determined by either a formal management plan or through other management planning processes, and is overseen by the relevant statutory conservation agency. Details of the precise management practises are given in these documents.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Fauna.

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

High tide bird counts.

Environment, Flora and Fauna.

Vegetation, bird and invertebrate surveys/monitoring carried out on NGO reserves.

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

None reported

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities, Facilities provided and Seasonality.

A popular area for tourists as it is within an AONB. There are more visitors in the summer. However it is well used throughout the year by walkers, bird watches and for sailing.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Head, Natura 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House,
Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

- Anon. (2002) *Suffolk Coast and Estuaries Coastal Habitat Management Plan: Executive summary*. English Nature, Peterborough (Living with the Sea LIFE Project) www.english-nature.org.uk/livingwiththesea/project_details/good_practice_guide/HabitatCRR/ENRestore/CHaMPs/SuffolkCoast/SuffolkCHaMP.pdf
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- Beardall, CH, Gooch, SM & Pilcher, R (1990) The intertidal invertebrate fauna of the Orwell estuary. *Transactions of the Suffolk Naturalists' Society*, **26**, 33-45
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Please return to: **Ramsar Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • email: ramsar@ramsar.org

Appendix 2

EC Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Alde, Ore and Butley Estuaries

Unitary Authority/County: Suffolk

SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005

Grid reference: TM444509

SAC EU code: UK0030076

Area (ha): 1561.53

Component SSSI: Alde-Ore Estuary SSSI

Site description:

This estuary, made up of three rivers, is the only bar-built estuary in the UK with a shingle bar. This bar has been extending rapidly along the coast since 1530, pushing the mouth of the estuary progressively south-westwards. The eastwards-running Alde River originally entered the sea at Aldeburgh, but now turns south along the inner side of the Orfordness shingle spit. It is relatively wide and shallow, with extensive intertidal mudflats on both sides of the channel in its upper reaches and saltmarsh accreting along its fringes. The Alde subsequently becomes the south-west flowing River Ore, which is narrower and deeper with stronger currents.

The smaller Butley River has extensive areas of saltmarsh and a reedbed community bordering intertidal mudflats. It flows into the Ore shortly after the latter divides around Havergate Island. The mouth of the River Ore is still moving south as the Orfordness shingle spit continues to grow through longshore drift from the north. There is a range of littoral sediment and rock biotopes (the latter on sea defences) that are of high diversity and species richness for estuaries in eastern England. Water quality is excellent throughout. The area is relatively natural, being largely undeveloped by man and with very limited industrial activity. The estuary contains large areas of shallow water over subtidal sediments, and extensive mudflats and saltmarshes exposed at low water. Its diverse and species-rich intertidal sand and mudflat biotopes grade naturally along many lengths of the shore into vegetated or dynamic shingle habitat, saltmarsh, grassland and reedbed.

The adjacent shingle and lagoon habitats are designated separately as the Orfordness-Shingle Street SAC.

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under **article 4(4)** of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*)
- Estuaries
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. (Intertidal mudflats and sandflats)

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.

Register reference number: UK0030076

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	200101
date confirmed as SCI	200412
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200504

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 34 08 E	52 06 06 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK403	Suffolk	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time	2	D			

Estuaries	70	B	C	C	B
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	40	B	C	B	C
Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)	25	C	C	C	C

3.2 Annex II species

Species name	Population			Site assessment			
	Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
		Breed	Winter				

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	70.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	25.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	5.0
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

<p>Soil & geology: Mud, Sand, Shingle</p> <p>Geomorphology & landscape: Coastal, Enclosed coast (including embayment), Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Islands, Lagoon, Open coast (including bay), Subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank)</p>

4.2 Quality and importance

<p>Estuaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom. <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which the area is considered to support a significant presence. <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.
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4.3 Vulnerability

Past canalisation and erosion together with sea-level rise has resulted in the loss of much of the saltmarsh. There are plans for managed coastal retreat which in the long-term will result in the creation of saltmarsh.
--

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds:
Special Protection Areas

Alde-Ore Estuary (Suffolk)

The Alde-Ore Estuary proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) is situated on the east coast of Suffolk between Aldeburgh in the north and Bawdsey in the south. The site comprises the estuary complex of the rivers Alde, Butley and Ore, including Havergate Island and Orfordness. The variety of habitats important for breeding and wintering birds includes vegetated shingle, intertidal mudflats, semi-improved grazing marsh, saltmarsh and saline lagoons.

The site includes the entire Alde-Ore Estuary SSSI, notified in 1985 (revised in 1992 under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981). The Alde-Ore Estuary SSSI includes the Orfordness-Havergate NNR, the English Nature owned part of which has already been designated as Orfordness-Havergate SPA.

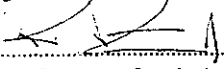
The site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Birds Directive by sustaining nationally important numbers of the following Annex 1 species, marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (breeding), avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* (wintering and breeding) ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (wintering), sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis* (breeding) and little tern *Sterna albifrons* (breeding). Further Annex 1 species winter on site, including, bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, and short-eared owl *Asio flammeus*. Mediterranean gull *Larus melanocephalus*, common tern *Sterna hirundo* and Arctic tern *Sterna paradisaea* breed on Havergate Island.

The site qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive by regularly supporting internationally important numbers of two migratory species. The Orfordness colony of breeding lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus graellsii*, represented in 1995, 12% of the British population and 8% of the world population of the *graellsii* race. The five year wintering peak mean 1989/90 to 1993/94 for redshank *Tringa totanus*, was 1,662 birds, representing 1.5 % of the British population and 1.1% of the east Atlantic flyway population.

The site supports over 1% of the British wintering population of the following (calculated from five year winter peak means 1989/90 to 1993/94), shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, wigeon *Anas penelope*, teal *Anas crecca*, black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*. In addition, the site supports over 1% of the British breeding population of, Gadwall *Anas strepera*, shoveler *Anas clypeata* and herring gull *Larus argentatus*.

The site also supports a notable assemblage of breeding and wintering wetland birds, in addition to the species mentioned above. Breeding species include, oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (also winter) black headed gull *Larus ridibundus* and barn owl *Tyto alba*. Wintering species include, cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, European white-fronted goose *Anser abifrons albifrons*, brent goose *Branta bernicla*, pintail *Anas acuta*, grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, dunlin *Calidris alpina* and curlew *Numenius arquata*.

This citation / map relates to a site entered in
the Register of European sites for Great Britain.
Register reference number UK9000112
Date of registration 25 AUG 1998

Signed 
on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment

SPA Citation
January 1996

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	199610
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 33 03 E	52 04 58 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK403	Suffolk	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment				
		Resident	Migratory			Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
Breed	Winter	Stage							
A081	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		>3 P			C		B	
A183	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		14070 P			A		C	
A151	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>			3 I		C		C	
A132	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>			766 I		A		B	
A132	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		104 P			A		B	
A195	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>		48 P			C		C	
A191	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>		170 P			C		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			1919 I		C		C	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	50.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	20.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	25.0
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	5.0
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Mud, Nutrient-rich, Sedimentary, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Lagoon, Lowland, Shingle bar

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

Circus aeruginosus

at least 1.9% of the GB breeding population
5 year mean, 1993-1997

<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Western Europe/Western Mediterranean - breeding)	23.1% of the GB breeding population 5 year mean, 1990-1994
<i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Eastern Atlantic - breeding)	2% of the GB breeding population 5 count mean, 1993-4,1996-8
<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> (Western Europe/Western Africa)	1.2% of the GB breeding population 5 year mean, 1992-1996
Over winter the area regularly supports:	
<i>Philomachus pugnax</i> (Western Africa - wintering)	0.4% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Western Europe/Western Mediterranean - breeding)	60.3% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)	
During the breeding season the area regularly supports:	
<i>Larus fuscus</i> (Western Europe/Mediterranean/Western Africa)	11.3% of the breeding population 5 year mean 1994-1998
Over winter the area regularly supports:	
<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	1.1% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

4.3 Vulnerability

The area is vulnerable to sea-level rise and coastal squeeze. These issues are being addressed through The Environment Agency Local Environment Action Plan, the estuary Management Plan and possibly managed retreat. Human disturbance from recreation is minimal as this is a reasonably robust system. Flood defence policy will need to take into account risks to the site from flooding and of flood control alleviation measures. Shooting is controlled through a management plan. A considerable part of the site is managed sympathetically by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and English Nature.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	4.5
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Monkstone House

City Road

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire PE1 1JY

UK

Telephone/Fax: +44 (0)1733 – 562 626 / +44 (0)1733 – 555 948

Email: RIS@JNCC.gov.uk

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 04 October 1996

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Alde–Ore Estuary

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for: Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area:

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

7. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;
- ii) **an electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) *Yes*
- iii) **a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables** *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;

b) **Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:**

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The site boundary is the same as, or falls within, an existing protected area.

For precise boundary details, please refer to paper map provided at designation

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

52 04 58 N 01 33 03 E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Nearest town/city: Woodbridge

Alde-Ore Estuary is located on the east coast of Suffolk, east of Woodbridge, stretching between Aldeburgh to the north and Bawdsey to the south.

Administrative region: Suffolk

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **11. Area** (hectares): 2546.99

Min.	-1
Max.	5
Mean	1

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

The site comprises the estuary complex of the rivers Alde, Butley and Ore, including Havergate Island and Orfordness. There are a variety of habitats including, intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, vegetated shingle (including the second-largest and best-preserved area in Britain at Orfordness), saline lagoons and grazing marsh. The Orfordness/Shingle Street landform is unique within Britain in combining a shingle spit with a cusped foreland. The site supports nationally-scarce plants, British Red Data Book invertebrates, and notable assemblages of breeding and wintering wetland birds.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

2, 3, 6

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Ramsar criterion 2

The site supports a number of nationally-scarce plant species and British Red Data Book invertebrates.

Ramsar criterion 3

The site supports a notable assemblage of breeding and wintering wetland birds.

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

Lesser black-backed gull , *Larus fuscus graellsii*, 5790 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 3.9% of the breeding population
W Europe/Mediterranean/W Africa (Seabird 2000 Census)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Pied avocet , *Recurvirostra avosetta*, 1187 individuals, representing an average of 1.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Europe/Northwest Africa

Common redshank , *Tringa totanus totanus*, 2368 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Contemporary data and information on waterbird trends at this site and their regional (sub-national) and national contexts can be found in the Wetland Bird Survey report, which is updated annually. See www.bto.org/survey/webs/webs-alerts-index.htm.

See Sections 21/22 for details of noteworthy species

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	shingle, mud, nutrient-rich, sedimentary
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, coastal, shingle bar, intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), estuary, lagoon
Nutrient status	mesotrophic
pH	no information
Salinity	saline / euhaline
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent

Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Lowestoft, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/lowestoft.html) Max. daily temperature: 13.0° C Min. daily temperature: 7.0° C Days of air frost: 27.8 Rainfall: 576.3 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1535.5
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General description of the Physical Features:

This estuary is the only bar-built estuary in the UK with a shingle bar. This bar has been extending rapidly along the coast since 1530, pushing the mouth of the estuary progressively south-westwards. The eastwards-running Alde River originally entered the sea at Aldeburgh, but now turns south along the inner side of the Orfordness shingle spit. It is relatively wide and shallow, with extensive intertidal mudflats on both sides of the channel in its upper reaches and saltmarsh accreting along its fringes. The Alde subsequently becomes the south-west flowing River Ore, which is narrower and deeper with stronger currents. The smaller Butley River, which has extensive areas of saltmarsh and a reedbed community bordering intertidal mudflats, flows into the Ore shortly after the latter divides around Havergate Island. The mouth of the River Ore is still moving south as the Orfordness shingle spit continues to grow through longshore drift from the north.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

The Alde-Ore Estuary comprises the estuarine complex of the rivers Alde, Butley and Ore, including Havergate Island and Orfordness.

This estuary is the only bar-built estuary in the UK with a shingle bar. This bar has been extending rapidly along the coast since 1530, pushing the mouth of the estuary progressively south-westwards. The eastwards-running Alde River originally entered the sea at Aldeburgh, but now turns south along the inner side of the Orfordness shingle spit. It is relatively wide and shallow, with extensive intertidal mudflats on both sides of the channel in its upper reaches and saltmarsh accreting along its fringes. The Alde subsequently becomes the south-west flowing River Ore, which is narrower and deeper with stronger currents. The smaller Butley River, which has extensive areas of saltmarsh and a reedbed community bordering intertidal mudflats, flows into the Ore shortly after the latter divides around Havergate Island. The mouth of the River Ore is still moving south as the Orfordness shingle spit continues to grow through longshore drift from the north.

18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

Shoreline stabilisation and dissipation of erosive forces

19. Wetland types:

Inland wetland, Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
E	Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)	33.3
H	Salt marshes	23.6
G	Tidal flats	17.7
M	Rivers / streams / creeks: permanent	9.8
Sp	Saline / brackish marshes: permanent	5.9

Tp	Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	3.9
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	3.8
J	Coastal brackish / saline lagoons	2

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

The main habitat types of the Alde-Ore Estuary are: intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, reedswamp, coastal freshwater, brackish lagoons, semi-improved grazing marsh, brackish ditches and vegetated shingle, the second-largest and best-preserved example in Britain.

A unique feature for East Anglian beaches is the abundance on the ground of normally epiphytic lichens.

There is a zonation of shingle vegetation from shifting to more stable areas of grassland and lichen communities.

Areas of saltmarsh succeed to higher saltmarsh and neutral grassland with ditches.

There is a series of brackish lagoons and ditches; and borrow pits.

Ecosystem services

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher Plants.

A range of nationally scarce plant species characteristic of freshwater, estuarine, and shingle habitats, and their transitions are present. These include: *Althaea officinalis*, *Frankenia laevis*, *Lathyrus japonicus*, *Lepidium latifolium*, *Medicago minima*, *Parapholis incurva*, *Puccinellia fasciculata*, *Ruppia cirrhosa*, *Sarcocornia perennis*, *Sonchus palustris*, *Trifolium suffocatum*, *Vicia lutea* and *Zostera angustifolia*.

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Birds

Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:

Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

Eurasian marsh harrier , <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> , Europe	3 pairs, representing an average of 1.9% of the GB population (5 year mean 1993-1997)
Mediterranean gull , <i>Larus melanocephalus</i> , Europe	6 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 5.5% of the GB population (Seabird 2000 Census)
Sandwich tern , <i>Sterna</i> <i>(Thalasseus) sandvicensis sandvicensis</i> , W Europe	169 pairs, representing an average of 1.6% of the GB population (5 year mean 1991-1995)

Little tern , <i>Sterna albifrons albifrons</i> , W Europe	88 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 4.5% of the GB population (Seabird 2000 Census)
Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:	
Black-tailed godwit , <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> , Iceland/W Europe	283 individuals, representing an average of 1.8% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Spotted redshank , <i>Tringa erythropus</i> , Europe/W Africa	44 individuals, representing an average of 32.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common greenshank , <i>Tringa nebularia</i> , Europe/W Africa	29 individuals, representing an average of 4.8% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Species with peak counts in winter:	
Greater white-fronted goose , <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i> , NW Europe	186 individuals, representing an average of 3.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean for 1996/7-2000/01)
Common shelduck , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> , NW Europe	1398 individuals, representing an average of 1.7% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Eurasian wigeon , <i>Anas penelope</i> , NW Europe	6851 individuals, representing an average of 1.6% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Eurasian teal , <i>Anas crecca</i> , NW Europe	2447 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Northern pintail , <i>Anas acuta</i> , NW Europe	556 individuals, representing an average of 1.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Northern shoveler , <i>Anas clypeata</i> , NW & C Europe	224 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species Information

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Invertebrates.

The highly specialised invertebrate fauna of the saline lagoons includes *Nematostella vectensis*, and *Gammarus insensibilis*, both species protected under Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Other notable invertebrates on the site include: *Malacosoma castrensis*, *Campsicnemus magius*, *Cheilosia velutina*, *Empis prodomus*, *Dixella attica*, *Hylaeus euryscapus*, *Pseudamnicola confusa*, *Euophrys browni*, *Baryphyma duffeyi*, *Haplodrassus minor*, *Trichoncus affinis*.

23. Social and cultural values:

Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

- Aesthetic
- Aquatic vegetation (e.g. reeds, willows, seaweed)
- Archaeological/historical site
- Environmental education/ interpretation
- Fisheries production
- Livestock grazing
- Non-consumptive recreation

Scientific research
 Sport fishing
 Sport hunting
 Tourism
 Transportation/navigation

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning? **No**

If Yes, describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	+	+
National/Crown Estate	+	
Private	+	+
Public/communal	+	

25. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	+
Tourism	+	+
Recreation	+	+
Current scientific research	+	
Collection of non-timber natural products: commercial	+	
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	
Marine/saltwater aquaculture	+	
Gathering of shellfish	+	
Permanent arable agriculture		+
Grazing (unspecified)	+	+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	
Harbour/port		+
Flood control		+
Irrigation (incl. agricultural water supply)		+
Non-urbanised settlements		+

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:

1. *Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.*
2. *Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.*

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
Erosion	2		+		+

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?
 Erosion - English Nature provides advice to the Environment Agency and coastal local authorities in relation to flood and coastal protection management. This will inform the development of the Suffolk Estuaries strategies and the second generation shoreline management plan.

A Management Scheme is required, taking into account the effects of erosion. A Coastal Habitat Management Plan will be produced for this site.

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? YES

27. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation	+	+
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Other	+	
Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB)	+	
Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)	+	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	+	
Management plan in preparation	+	

b) Describe any other current management practices:

The management of Ramsar sites in the UK is determined by either a formal management plan or through other management planning processes, and is overseen by the relevant statutory conservation agency. Details of the precise management practises are given in these documents.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Fauna.

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Environment.

Monitoring estuarine processes.

Saline lagoon survey.

Study on the effects of guano-fication on shingle flora.

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

None reported

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities.

The site is used informally for walking, boating and angling.

Facilities provided.

River moorings.

Seasonality.

Walking and boating activities are predominantly in spring and summer. Seasonal (winter) wildfowling occurs on the estuary.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Head, Natura 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,

European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House, Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

Anon. (1995) *Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report. Volume 2: Action plans*. HMSO, London

- Anon. (2002) *Suffolk Coast and Estuaries Coastal Habitat Management Plan: Executive summary*. English Nature, Peterborough (Living with the Sea LIFE Project) www.english-nature.org.uk/livingwiththesea/project_details/good_practice_guide/HabitatCRR/ENRestore/CHaMPs/SuffolkCoast/SuffolkCHaMP.pdf
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Please return to: **Ramsar Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • email: ramsar@ramsar.org

Reasons for recommendation as a candidate Special Area of Conservation

Area name: Hamford Water

Administrative area: Essex

Component SSSI: Hamford Water

This area has been recommended as a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) because it contains species which are rare or threatened within a European context. The SSSI citation describes the special interests for which the site was notified in the British context. The interests for which the site was selected as SSSI may differ from the interests selected in a European context.

The species for which the area has been recommended as a candidate SAC is listed below. The reasons for their selection are listed, together with a brief description of the habitats and species as they typically occur across the UK. This area contains the interests described although it may not contain all the typical features.

The area is considered to have a high diversity of habitats/species of European importance.

Interest(s) submitted to the European Commission

European priority interest(s):

1. Fisher's estuarine moth *Gortyna borelii lunata*

- **for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.**

Gortyna borelii lunata has a localised population distribution in the UK, due to its specific habitat requirements and is only found in two areas, the north Essex coast and the north Kent Coast.

Hamford Water supports the majority of the Essex population and is the most important UK site for this species, supporting approximately 70% of the population.

Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks, islands, intertidal mud, sand flats and saltmarshes. Above the saltmarsh there is unimproved and improved grassland (including grazing marsh), scrub, woodland, hedges, ditches, ponds and reedbeds. The site encompasses those areas where the moth's food plant hog's fennel (*Peucedanum officinale*) grows and where there is an abundance of the grasses required by the species for egg laying.

For agency use only:
Date issued: _____
Reference number or date of map: _____



NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),
Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),
Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and
for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SITE UK0030377
SITENAME Hamford Water

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type B	1.2 Site code UK0030377	Back to top
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1.3 Site name

Hamford Water

1.4 First Compilation date 2013-09	1.5 Update date -
--	-----------------------------

1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation:	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Address:	City Road, Peterborough, Cambs, UK, PE14JY
Email:	

Date site proposed as SCI:	2013-09
Date site confirmed as SCI:	No data
Date site designated as SAC:	No data
National legal reference of SAC designation:	1. Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) 2. Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended) 3. Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) 4. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 Please note that these regulations apply to different parts of the UK (See Legislation.gov.uk for further details).

2. SITE LOCATION

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2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

Longitude

1.2236

Latitude

51.9025

2.2 Area [ha]:

50.35

2.3 Marine area [%]

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code

Region Name

UKH3	Essex
------	-------

2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Atlantic (100.0
%)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

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3.2 Species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC and site evaluation for them

Species			Population in the site							Site assessment				
G	Code	Scientific Name	S	NP	T	Size		Unit	Cat.	D.qual.	A B C D		A B C	
						Min	Max				Pop.	Con.	Iso.	Glo.
I	4035	Gortyna borelii lunata			p	2000	4000	i			A	A	A	A

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, I = Invertebrates, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Type:** p = permanent, r = reproducing, c = concentration, w = wintering (for plant and non-migratory species use permanent)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the Standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting (see [reference portal](#))
- **Abundance categories (Cat.):** C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present - to fill if data are deficient (DD) or in addition to population size information
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation); VP = 'Very poor' (use this category only, if not even a rough estimation of the population size can be made, in this case the fields for population size can remain empty, but the field "Abundance categories" has to be filled in)

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 General site character

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Habitat class	% Cover
N26	8.0
N06	7.0
N25	85.0
Total Habitat Cover	100

Other Site Characteristics

Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks, islands, intertidal mud, sand flats and saltmarshes. Above the saltmarsh there is unimproved and improved grassland (including grazing marsh), scrub, woodland, hedges, ditches, ponds and reedbeds. The underlying geology consists of Tertiary, Palaeogene clays overlain by Neogene and early Pleistocene crag deposits and fluvial deposits of mud, sand and shingle.

4.2 Quality and importance

Fisher's Estuarine Moth - *Gortyna borellii lunata* - for which this is one of only two known outstanding localities in the United Kingdom.

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

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Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
UK04	100.0	UK01	33.2		

7. MAP OF THE SITES

[Back to top](#)

INSPIRE ID:

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).

EC Directive 79/409 on the conservation of wild birds: Special Protection Area

Hamford Water (Essex)

Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks and islands, intertidal mud and sand flats, and saltmarshes.

The flats are a small, locally sheltered area of medium to low level clay and silt flats. In places, particularly on the seaward side, the London Clay bedrock is exposed, and this area with soft recent muds provides contrasting substrates for inter-tidal algae and invertebrates. The saltmarsh fringe is of varying width outside the sea wall around most of Hamford Water, and the islands, notably Horsey, Skippers, Hedge-End and Garnham's, have substantial saltmarsh on their margins or, locally, within their breached sea walls.

The site qualifies under Article 4.1 by regularly supporting, in summer, a nationally important breeding population of little terns *Sterna albifrons*. An average of 35 pairs was present during the five-year period 1986-90, representing 1% of the British breeding population.

Hamford Water also qualifies under Article 4.1 by regularly supporting a nationally important wintering population of avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*. During the five-year period 1986/87 to 1990/91, an average peak count of 99 birds was recorded, representing 7% of the British wintering population.

The site qualifies under Article 4.2 by supporting internationally or nationally important wintering populations of the following six species of migratory waterfowl (average peak counts for the five-year winter period 1986/87 to 1990/91): 5,650 dark-bellied brent geese *Branta bernicla bernicla* (2% of the Western European and 4% of the British wintering population); 1,580 black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* (2% of East Atlantic Flyway population, 33% of British); 1,240 redshank *Tringa totanus* (1% of North West population, 2% of British); 620 ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula* (1% of EAF, 3% of British); 840 shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* (1% of British); 3,630 teal *Anas crecca* (2% of British); and 1,080 grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (2% of British).

During severe winter weather elsewhere, Hamford Water can assume even greater national and international importance as wildfowl and waders from many other areas arrive, attracted by the relatively mild climate, compared with continental European areas, and the abundant food resources available.

SPA Citation
July 1992

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	199306
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 14 29 E	51 52 46 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK54	Essex	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment			
		Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
Breed	Winter	Stage						
A052	<i>Anas crecca</i>		3631 I		B		C	
A046a	<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>		6892 I		B		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		520 I		C		C	
A156	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>		1121 I		A		C	
A141	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		3251 I		B		C	
A132	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		317 I		A		B	
A195	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>	55 P			B		C	
A048	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		1629 I		B		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		1461 I		C		C	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	70.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	25.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	1.0
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	1.0
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	2.0
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	1.0
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Alluvium, Clay, Mud, Neutral, Sand

Geomorphology & landscape:

Barrier beach, Coastal, Enclosed coast (including embayment), Estuary, Floodplain, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Islands, Lagoon, Lowland, Open coast (including bay), Subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank)

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

<i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Eastern Atlantic - breeding)	2.3% of the GB breeding population 4 year mean 1992-1995
Over winter the area regularly supports:	
<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Western Europe/Western Mediterranean - breeding)	25% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)	
Over winter the area regularly supports:	
<i>Anas crecca</i> (North-western Europe)	2.7% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Western Siberia/Western Europe)	2.3% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering)	1.1% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Iceland - breeding)	1.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	7.5% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i> (North-western Europe)	2.2% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	0.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

4.3 Vulnerability

The main vulnerability is due to natural changes in sea level, leading to accelerated erosion of saltmarshes. The problem is being addressed in two ways; use of sand and gravels from dredging in Harwich harbour to reinforce existing beaches and protecting grazing marsh areas by reinforcing seawall toe with these materials in the most aggressive areas. The option of managed realignment may be considered in the future.

The nature of the site leads to potential water quality problems due to discharge from boats and from local sewage works as well as small industrial discharges. English Nature is addressing this problem with Water Quality Control officers of the Environment Agency (monitoring) and any authorised discharges will be reviewed under the provisions of the Habitat Regulations.

Although a secluded backwater the site attracts a large number of yachts and accompanying watersports. There is occasional disturbance to the site by water and jet skiers. This is controlled by a wardening scheme.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	64.8
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Monkstone House

City Road

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire PE1 1JY

UK

Telephone/Fax: +44 (0)1733 – 562 626 / +44 (0)1733 – 555 948

Email: RIS@JNCC.gov.uk

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 08 June 1993

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Hamford Water

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for: Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area:

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

7. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;
- ii) **an electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) *Yes*
- iii) **a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables** *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;

b) **Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:**

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The site boundary is the same as, or falls within, an existing protected area.

For precise boundary details, please refer to paper map provided at designation

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

51 52 46 N 01 14 29 E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Nearest town/city: Harwich

Hamford Water is a tidal inlet whose mouth is about 5 km south of Harwich, Essex.

Administrative region: Essex

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): 11. Area (hectares): 2187.21

Min.	-1
Max.	3
Mean	1

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks and islands, intertidal mud and sand flats, and saltmarsh supporting rare plants and internationally important species/populations of migratory waterfowl.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

6

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations

occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Ringed plover , <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> , Europe/Northwest Africa	1169 individuals, representing an average of 1.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common redshank , <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i> ,	2099 individuals, representing an average of 1.8% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Dark-bellied brent goose, <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> ,	3629 individuals, representing an average of 1.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Black-tailed godwit , <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> , Iceland/W Europe	377 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under criterion 6.

Species with peak counts in winter:

Grey plover , <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> , E Atlantic/W Africa -wintering	2749 individuals, representing an average of 1.1% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
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Contemporary data and information on waterbird trends at this site and their regional (sub-national) and national contexts can be found in the Wetland Bird Survey report, which is updated annually. See www.bto.org/survey/webs/webs-alerts-index.htm.

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	neutral, shingle, sand, mud, clay, alluvium, sedimentary
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, coastal, floodplain, barrier beach, subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank), intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), open coast (including bay), enclosed coast (including embayment), estuary, islands, lagoon, pools
Nutrient status	eutrophic
pH	strongly alkaline
Salinity	brackish / mixosaline, fresh
Soil	mainly organic
Water permanence	usually permanent

Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Lowestoft, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/lowestoft.html) Max. daily temperature: 13.0° C Min. daily temperature: 7.0° C Days of air frost: 27.8 Rainfall: 576.3 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1535.5
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General description of the Physical Features:

Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks and islands, intertidal mud- and sand-flats, and saltmarsh.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks and islands, intertidal mud- and sand-flats, and saltmarsh.

18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

Shoreline stabilisation and dissipation of erosive forces, Sediment trapping, Recharge and discharge of groundwater, Maintenance of water quality (removal of nutrients)

19. Wetland types:

Human-made wetland, Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
G	Tidal flats	69.5
H	Salt marshes	25
E	Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)	2
9	Canals and drainage channels	1
5	Salt pans, salines	0.5
Tp	Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	0.5
O	Freshwater lakes: permanent	0.5
K	Coastal fresh lagoons	0.5
J	Coastal brackish / saline lagoons	0.5

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

The main habitat types of this site are, intertidal mud and sand flats; and saltmarsh.

The main vegetation types of this site consist of pioneer saltmarsh communities; *Salicornia sp.*, *Suaeda maritima* and *Spartina maritima*. Mature saltmarsh communities; *Limonium binervosum* and *Atriplex portulacoides*, *Puccinellia sp.* and eelgrass *Zostera sp.* beds

Ecosystem services

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.**Higher Plants.**

Peucedanum officinale (nationally rare RDB Lower risk – near threatened)

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Birds**Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:****Species regularly supported during the breeding season:**

Mediterranean gull , <i>Larus melanocephalus</i> , Europe	3 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 2.7% of the GB population (Seabird 2000 Census)
Black-headed gull , <i>Larus ridibundus</i> , N & C Europe	11000 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 8.5% of the GB population (Seabird 2000 Census)
Little tern , <i>Sterna albifrons albifrons</i> , W Europe	113 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 5.8% of the GB population (Seabird 2000 Census)

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Ruff , <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> , Europe/W Africa	28 individuals, representing an average of 4% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Spotted redshank , <i>Tringa erythropus</i> , Europe/W Africa	3 individuals, representing an average of 2.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common greenshank , <i>Tringa nebularia</i> , Europe/W Africa	76 individuals, representing an average of 12.7% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Common shelduck , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> , NW Europe	1738 individuals, representing an average of 2.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Eurasian teal , <i>Anas crecca</i> , NW Europe	2684 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Pied avocet , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> , Europe/Northwest Africa	388 individuals, representing an average of 11.4% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
European golden plover , <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> <i>apricaria</i> , P. a. <i>altifrons</i> Iceland & Faroes/E Atlantic	3021 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Red knot , <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i> , W & Southern Africa (wintering)	3956 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species Information

None reported

23. Social and cultural values:

Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

- Aesthetic
- Fisheries production
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Scientific research
- Sport fishing
- Sport hunting
- Tourism
- Transportation/navigation

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning? No

If Yes, describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	+	+
Local authority, municipality etc.	+	+
National/Crown Estate	+	+
Private	+	+

25. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Tourism		+
Recreation	+	
Current scientific research		+
Fishing: commercial	+	
Fishing: recreational/sport		+
Marine/saltwater aquaculture		+
Gathering of shellfish		+

Bait collection		+
Livestock watering hole/pond		+
Grazing (unspecified)		+
Rough or shifting grazing		+
Permanent pastoral agriculture		+
Hay meadows		+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	
Industry		+
Sewage treatment/disposal		+
Harbour/port		+
Flood control	+	
Military activities		+

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site’s ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
Erosion	2		+		+

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?
 Erosion - There is a programme of recharge of dredged material from off-site that has alleviated some of the habitat loss on site. The Essex Coast and Estuaries Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMP) (Anon. 2002) covers the site and it is expected to inform the shoreline management plan as well as local plan policies.
 The possibility of managed realignment schemes to address erosion impacts may be considered.

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? YES

27. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation	+	
Management agreement	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	

b) Describe any other current management practices:

The management of Ramsar sites in the UK is determined by either a formal management plan or through other management planning processes, and is overseen by the relevant statutory conservation agency. Details of the precise management practises are given in these documents.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Fauna.

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

There are also other bird counts and research on oysters.

Environment.

Hydrological monitoring.

Sedimentation monitoring.

Saltmarsh erosion.

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

Boat trips are available around the site.

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities, Facilities provided and Seasonality.

Yachting, walking, wildfowling and sport fishing occur on the site.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Head, Natura 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,

European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House, Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

- Anon. (2002) *Essex Coast and Estuaries Coastal Habitat Management Plan: Executive summary*. English Nature, Peterborough (Living with the Sea LIFE Project). www.english-nature.org.uk/livingwiththesea/champs/pdf/ESSEX.FINALEXEC.SUMMARY.pdf
- Barne, JH, Robson, CF, Kaznowska, SS, Doody, JP, Davidson, NC & Buck, AL (eds.) (1998) *Coasts and seas of the United Kingdom. Region 7 South-east England: Lowestoft to Dungeness*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough. (Coastal Directories Series.)
- Buck, AL (ed.) (1993) *An inventory of UK estuaries. Volume 5. Eastern England*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough
- Burd, F (1989) *The saltmarsh survey of Great Britain. An inventory of British saltmarshes*. Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough (Research & Survey in Nature Conservation, No. 17)
- Covey, R (1998) Chapter 6. Eastern England (Bridlington to Folkestone) (MNCR Sector 6). In: *Benthic marine ecosystems of Great Britain and the north-east Atlantic*, ed. by K. Hiscock, 179-198. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough. (Coasts and Seas of the United Kingdom. MNCR series)
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Please return to: **Ramsar Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
 Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • email: ramsar@ramsar.org

EC Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Orfordness – Shingle Street

Unitary Authority/County: Suffolk

SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005

Grid reference: TM440486

SAC EU code: UK0014780

Area (ha): Suffolk

Component SSSI: Alde-Ore Estuary SSSI

Site description:

Orfordness is an extensive shingle structure consisting of a foreland, a 15 km-long spit and a series of recurves running from north to south. It supports some of the largest and most natural sequences in the UK of shingle vegetation affected by salt spray. The southern end has a particularly fine series of undisturbed ridges, with zonation of communities determined by the ridge pattern. Pioneer communities with sea pea *Lathyrus japonicus* and false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland occur. Locally these are nutrient-enriched by the presence of a gull colony; elsewhere they support rich lichen communities.

Drift-line vegetation occurs on the sheltered, western side of the spit, at the transition from shingle to saltmarsh, as well as on the exposed eastern coast. The drift-line community is widespread and comprises sea beet *Beta vulgaris* ssp. *maritima* and orache *Atriplex* spp.

The site also includes a series of percolation lagoons that have developed in the shingle bank adjacent to the shore at the mouth of the Ore estuary. The salinity of the lagoons is maintained by percolation through the shingle, although at high tides sea water can overtop the shingle bank. The fauna of these lagoons includes typical lagoon species, such as the cockle *Cerastoderma glaucum*, the ostracod *Cyprideis torosa* and the gastropods *Littorina saxatilis tenebrosa* and *Hydrobia ventrosa*. The nationally rare starlet sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis* is also found at the site.

The adjacent estuarine and intertidal habitats are designated separately as the Alde, Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC.

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under **article 4(4)** of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Annual vegetation of drift lines
- Coastal lagoons*
- Perennial vegetation of stony banks. (Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves)

Annex I priority habitats are denoted by an asterisk (*).

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.

Register reference number: UK0014780

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	199601
date confirmed as SCI	200412
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200504

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 33 41 E	52 04 53 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK403	Suffolk	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment
Coastal lagoons	3	B	C	B	B
Annual vegetation of drift lines	1.1	A	B	A	A

Perennial vegetation of stony banks	60.3	A	B	A	A
-------------------------------------	------	---	---	---	---

3.2 Annex II species

Species name	Population			Site assessment			
	Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
		Breed	Winter				

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	25.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	15.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	40.0
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	18.0
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	2.0
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

<p>Soil & geology: Mud, Nutrient-poor, Sand, Shingle</p> <p>Geomorphology & landscape: Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Lagoon, Lowland, Shingle bar</p>
--

4.2 Quality and importance

<p>Coastal lagoons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom. <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is one of only four known outstanding localities in the United Kingdom. which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 100 hectares. <p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

4.3 Vulnerability

Vegetated shingle is a sensitive habitat. The site is managed to limit recreational pressures. Much of the interest is self-sustaining with little need for intervention. Natural coastal processes will lead to changes in the extent of lagoons at Shingle Street over time.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

U	K	0	0	1	3	6	9	0
U	K	0	0	3	0	3	7	1

1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	201008
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 32 41 E	51 54 58 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
0	Marine	100.0%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine
 Atlantic
 Boreal
 Continental
 Macaronesia
 Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment			
		Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
Breed	Winter	Stage						
A001	<i>Gavia stellata</i>		6466	I	A		C	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	100.0
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Gravel, Mud, Sand

Geomorphology & landscape:

Range of mobile sediments, Tidal current stream

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

Gavia stellata

(North-western Europe - wintering)

38% of the population in Great Britain
peak mean over the period 1989-2006/07

ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

4.3 Vulnerability

The northernmost extent of the SPA contains some areas licenced for aggregate extraction and other prospecting areas. The site contains several constructed or consented offshore windfarms. There are proposals for extensions to several such windfarms. Furthermore, there is the possibility that new windfarms will be consented under Round 3. Certain shipping channels within the site have been and will continue to be subject to maintenance dredging. There may be a requirement for capital dredging in association with newly developed and future port developments. The Thames supports important commercial fisheries (as well as estuarine and marine recreational angling). There is also a well-established cockle harvesting industry. The potential impacts of many of these existing or future activities will be addressed through the relevant licence requirements and under the provision of the Habitats Regulations (including the review of consents process). Ongoing research associated with offshore windfarm development will improve understanding of the environmental factors influencing red-throated diver distribution and the extent of apparently suitable seabed habitat within the site.

Red throated divers are highly sensitive to non-physical disturbance by noise and visual presence during the winter. Locally, significant disturbance and displacement effects are predicted to arise from noise and visual impacts from wind farm construction, maintenance traffic and visually from the turbines themselves. Disturbance and displacement effects may also arise from shipping (including recreational boating) and boat movements associated with marine aggregate and fishing activities. Marine aggregates activities tend to be temporary and localised. Dredging and shipping activities are expected to be confined to existing shipping channels, which are already known to be avoided by divers. In all these cases it is expected that activity will be lowest during the winter months (when the birds are present) due to the limitations imposed by poor weather conditions. Prince's Channel (which runs through the southern area of the outer Thames SPA) carries a significant amount of vessel traffic in and out of ports in the inner Thames Estuary. Fisherman's Gat is also an active commercial shipping channel. In addition, smaller vessels use the shallower inshore channels across the site. The impacts of many of these existing or future activities will be addressed through the relevant licence requirements and under the provision of the Habitats Regulations. (including the review of consents process).

A number of operators discharge effluent into freshwater input sources upstream of the site and directly into coastal waters adjacent to the site. Direct discharges into the site include low levels of radionuclides and heavy metals. Deterioration of invertebrate and small fish populations as a result of large oil and chemical spills can have a significant impact on important food resources. Oil on the surface and in the water column would present a threat to diving and feeding seabirds. There is a considerable amount of shipping traffic within the site, mostly confined within recognised shipping channels. A small level of contamination will exist as a result of normal shipping activities. There is however, always the risk of a catastrophic spillage event from normal shipping traffic and there is an additional issue of ship-to-ship (s-t-s) oil transfers just off Southwold within 12nm.

Discharges to the freshwater environment upstream of the site will be subject to the requirements of relevant licencing. All major ports such as the Port of London will have oil spill contingency plans to deal with catastrophic events. All s-t-s transfers are well managed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

Fishing activities within the site include: suction dredging for cockles, set and drift-net tramelling, drift gill netting, potting and a limited amount of beam trawling. Removal of fish and larger molluscs can have a significant impact on the structure and functioning of benthic communities. Mechanisms for these activities to impact on red-throated divers may be a direct or indirect reduction in food availability. However, the overall level of exposure of red-throated divers to prey species depletion from biological disturbance is currently considered low. Any future significant changes to the way in which certain fishing activities, such as cockle suction dredging, are conducted (eg total catch, timing etc) will be assessed under the provision of the Habitats Regulations, and will in any case likely be subject to licence arrangements and by-law restrictions overseen by the Marine Management Organisation and/or local Inshore Fishery and Conservation Authority.

Entanglement in static fishing nets is an important cause of death for red-throated divers in the UK waters. Thus, static/passive fishing gear methods such as set gillnets and drift netting represent potentially the most serious direct risk from fishing activity to the birds themselves. Netting is widespread across the sandbanks, however this is seasonally focussed and occurs primarily at times of year outwith the period when the red-throated diver population is at its peak. The scale of the by-catch within the site is unknown. Therefore, consideration of any fishery management measures will need to be preceded by monitoring of the scale of the by-catch problem within the site itself.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK00 (N/A)	100.00

Appendix 2

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

Name: Outer Thames Estuary

Counties/Unitary Authorities: The SPA lies entirely in UK territorial waters adjacent to the following counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent.

Boundary of the SPA: See SPA map. The landward boundary of the SPA generally follows mean low water mark or the boundaries of existing and potential SPAs, whichever is the furthest seaward. Intertidal mudbanks and sandbanks separated from the mainland coast by subtidal areas at mean low water are within the SPA boundary, except where they are within the boundaries of existing SPAs or SPAs. The seaward boundary lies mostly within the 20m depth contour and marginally along the eastern edge of the proposed boundary extends beyond the 20-50 m contour.

Size of SPA: The SPA covers an area of 379,268.14 ha.

Site description: The Thames Estuary is located in the southern part of the North Sea on the east coast of England, between the counties of Norfolk (on the north side) and Kent (on the south) and extends as a broad opening into the North Sea. The SPA boundary is divided into three areas: the main part of the site is the outer part of the estuary (east of a line north from Sheerness, Kent to Shoebury Ness, Essex); a separate area extending south along the coast of E Norfolk (from Caister-on-Sea) to Woodbridge, Suffolk and lying mainly within the 12 nautical mile zone, except for two small areas which extend slightly into the 12 nm zone offshore from about Lowestoft; and a third area lying slightly further north and partly within 12 nm, but also with a larger area extending well beyond the 12 nm zone). The seaward boundary of the SPA lies partly within the 20m depth contour and marginally into the 20-50 m depth contour.

The Outer Thames Estuary SPA consists of areas of shallow and deeper water, high tidal current streams and a range of mobile sediments. Large areas of mud, silt and gravelly sediments form the deeper water channels, the main ones of which form the approach route to the ports of London and as such are continually disturbed by shipping and maintenance dredging. Sand in the form of sandbanks separated by troughs predominates in the remaining areas and the crests of some of the banks are exposed at mean low water. In the northern part of the site the main sandbanks are (north to south) Middle Cross Sand, Scroby Sands, Helm Sand, Newcombe Sand, Aldeburgh Napes, Aldeburgh Ridge, North Ship Head and Bawdsey Bank; in the southern part of the site the main sandbanks are Red Sand, Kentish Flats, West and East Barrow, Sunk Sand, Shingles, Long Sand, Margate Sand and Kentish Knock.

The seabed along the coast of Norfolk and Suffolk coast is of a similar composition to that in the main estuary with large shallow areas of mud, sand, silt and gravelly sediments but, in the absence of main port areas within this area, there is less disturbance through shipping or dredging. The main sandbanks in this area are (from north to south) Dunwich Bank, Sizewell Bank, Aldeburgh Napes, Aldeburgh Ridge and Whiting Ridge.

The seabed and waters of the site provide an important habitat in the non-breeding season for red-throated divers *Gavia stellata* which visit the area to feed on the fish populations.

Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under **article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain population of the following species listed in Annex I in any season:

Annex I species	Count and season	Period	% of GB population
Red-throated diver <i>Gavia stellata</i>	6,466 individuals –wintering peak mean	1989 – 2006/07	38%

Principal bird data sources:

Cranswick, P.A., Hall, C., & Smith, L. 2003. *Aerial surveys of birds in proposed strategic areas for offshore windfarm development, round 2: preliminary report, winter 2002/03.* The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge.

O'Brien, S.H., Söhle, I., Dean, B.J., Webb, A. & Reid, J.B. 2008. *A further assessment of the numbers and distribution of inshore waterbirds using the Greater Thames during the non-breeding season using additional data from 2005-2007.* JNCC Report.

Percival, S., Cranswick, P., Hartley, C., Ford, J., Harding, I., Dodds, P. & Percival, T. 2004. *Thames Estuary proposed offshore wind farm. Progress report on ornithological surveys August 2002 – December 2003.* Ecology Consulting, Durham.

Webb, A., McSorley, C.A., Dean, B.J., O'Brien, S., Reid, J.B., Cranswick, P.A., Smith, L. & Hall, C. 2005. *An assessment of the numbers and distribution of inshore aggregations of waterbirds using the Greater Thames during the non-breeding season.* JNCC Report No.374, Peterborough.

Webb, A. & Reid, J.B. 2004. *Guidelines for the selection of marine SPAs for aggregations of inshore non-breeding waterbirds.* Unpublished consultation paper. JNCC. <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/PDF/comm04P05.pdf>

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds

Citation for Special Protection Area (SPA)

Name: Sandlings

Unitary Authority/County: Suffolk

Consultation proposal: All or parts of Blaxhall Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Leiston - Aldeburgh SSSI, Sandlings Forest SSSI, Snape Warren SSSI, Sutton & Hollesley Heaths SSSI and Tunstall Common SSSI have been recommended as a Special Protection Area because of their European ornithological importance. In particular, for their breeding populations of Nightjars *Caprimulgus europaeus* and Woodlarks *Lullula arborea*.

Site description: The Sandlings SPA lies near the Suffolk Coast between the Deben Estuary and Leiston. In the 19th century, the area was dominated by heathland developed on glacial sandy soils. During the 20th century, large areas of heath were planted with blocks of commercial conifer forest and others were converted to arable agriculture. Lack of traditional management has resulted in the remnant areas of heath being subject to successional changes, with the consequent spread of bracken, shrubs and trees, although recent conservation management work is resulting in their restoration. The heaths support both acid grassland and heather-dominated plant communities, with dependant invertebrate and bird communities of conservation value. Woodlark *Lullula arborea* and Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* have also adapted to breeding in the large conifer forest blocks, using areas that have recently been felled and recent plantation, as well as areas managed as open ground.

Size of SPA: The SPA covers an area of 3,391.80 ha.

Qualifying species:

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

Annex 1 species	Count and Season	Period	% of GB population
Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	109 males - breeding	Count as a 1992	3.2% GB
Woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i>	154 pairs - breeding	Count as at 1997	10.3% GB

Bird figures from:

Morris, A., Burges, D., Fuller, R.J., Evans, A.D. & Smith, K.W. 1994. The status and distribution of nightjars *Caprimulgus europaeus* in Britain in 1992. A report to the British Trust for Ornithology. *Bird Study* **41**: 181-191.

Wotton, S.R. & Gillings, S. 2000. The status of breeding woodlarks in Britain in 1997. *Bird Study* **47**: 212-224.

Status of SPA

Sandlings was classified as a Special Protection Area on 10 August 2001.

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	200108
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 26 33 E	52 04 44 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK403	Suffolk	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment				
		Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global	
			Breed	Winter					Stage
A224	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>		109 P			B		C	
A246	<i>Lullula arborea</i>		154 P			B		C	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	1.5
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	0.9
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	14.6
Dry grassland. Steppes	11.5
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	0.1
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	10.6
Coniferous woodland	57.6
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	1.4
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	1.8
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Geomorphology & landscape:

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	3.2% of the GB breeding population Count as at 1992
<i>Lullula arborea</i>	10.3% of the GB breeding population Count as at 1997

ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

4.3 Vulnerability

Sandlings SPA comprises six SSSIs. Sandlings Forest SSSI, the largest of these, is dominated by commercial forestry. Within the forest, large areas of open ground suitable for woodlark and nightjar were created by storm damage in 1987. Maintenance of open areas in the future relies on clear felling as the main silvicultural practice and the maintenance of some areas earmarked for woodlark and nightjar habitat. These objectives are included in the East Anglia Forest District Strategic Plan.

On the heathland SSSIs, lack of traditional management has resulted in the heathland being subjected to successional changes with the consequent spread of bracken, shrubs and trees. This is being addressed through habitat management work under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and Tomorrows Heathland Heritage, and is resulting in the restoration of more typical heathland habitat favourable to both nightjar and woodlark.

Human influences on the site include the frequent presence of travellers' caravans. This is a longstanding problem, and a variety of mechanisms are utilised to keep them from the heathland; the digging of trenches and construction of earth barriers around the borders of sites is proving effective.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

Appendix 3

**Appendix 3: Screening of Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan policies
Felixstowe Area Action Plan HRA: Proposed Submission Document**

Policy	Brief description	Likely to have a significant adverse effect?	Reason
Policy FPP1: Housing	This policy provides a table that indicates the (minimum) numbers of new units allocated to each area/parish within Felixstowe Peninsula over the Plan period. The purpose of this policy is to implement the Core Strategy Policy SP2: Housing Numbers and Distribution.	No	The provision of those Core Strategy mitigations is satisfactory to demonstrate that the amount of housing allocated in the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy would have no adverse impact on the integrity of any European site. The in-combination effect of site allocations in the Felixstowe Area Action Plan has therefore been considered within the Core Strategy and need not be repeated in this document.
Policy FPP2: Physical Limits Boundaries	In line with Core Strategy Policy SP19: Settlement Hierarchy, this policy confirms that new residential development will be directed to take place within the physical limits boundaries of those settlements which have been identified as a Major Centre, Town, Key and Local Service Centre. Development proposals for outside of these settlement limits will be strictly controlled in accordance with National Planning Policy and Core Policy SP29: The Countryside.	No	This Policy states where any new development will be directed, and seeks to avoid development within the countryside and ensure development takes place in appropriate settlement locations. The Policy does not provide a cause for adverse impacts upon European sites in its own right. The Physical Limits Boundaries have been drawn to include the allocations in the AAP as well as sites which already have planning permission for residential development. The Policy aims to keep development inside the Physical Limits Boundaries of each settlement so protecting the wider countryside (including locations near European sites) from any negative impacts that might result from new developments. Although there is a policy presumption that that development inside the Physical Limits Boundaries is acceptable in principle, each proposal would still need to be acceptable in terms of all other regards that are necessary for planning permission to be granted. The supporting text of the Felixstowe Area Action Plan indicates that the Physical Limits Boundaries have been drawn up to accommodate in excess of the 807 dwellings that the Core Strategy targets and that the allocated sites total over 1100 dwellings. This approach takes into account growing populations and provides a range of options for locating developments, thus encouraging development away from the European sites.
Policy FPP3: Land at Sea Road, Felixstowe	Allocates land at this location for mixed use development including housing (approximately 40 dwellings), commercial/tourism uses, subject to having regard to a number of points.	No	The site is sufficiently far (over 1km) from any European site that no direct impacts would occur from this allocation.

Policy FPP4: Land north of Walton High Street, Felixstowe	Identifies land at this location for a mixture of residential units and including on-site open space, comprehensive landscaping and new business units. To deliver approximately 400 dwellings with a range of housing types subject to a number of points	No	The site is sufficiently far (over 1km) from any European site that no direct impacts would occur from this allocation. The developer will be required to provide public open space to meet the needs of the residents, such as for example dog walking areas to reduce the demand to travel by car to, for example, a European site.
Policy FPP5: Land north of Conway Close and Swallow Close, Felixstowe	Allocates land at this location for residential development, having regard for a number of points. To include approximately 150 dwellings of mixed size and tenure.	No	The site is sufficiently far (over 1km) from any European site that no direct impacts would occur from this allocation. The developer will be required to provide public open space to meet the needs of the residents, such as for example dog walking areas to reduce the demand to travel by car to, for example, a European site.
Policy FPP6: Land opposite Hand in Hand Public House, Trimley St Martin	Land is allocated for residential development with on-site open space to provide a village green, having regard to a number of points. Approximately 70 dwellings minimum with a range of housing types and tenures.	No	The site is sufficiently far (just over 1km) from Stour-Orwell Estuaries SPA that no direct impacts would occur from this allocation. The developer will be required to provide public open space to meet the needs of the residents, such as for example dog walking areas to reduce the demand to travel by car to, for example, a European site.
Policy FPP7: Land off Howlett Way, Trimley St Martin	Land at this location is identified for residential development of approximately 360 dwellings having regard to a number of points. Houses to be a range of sizes and tenures.	No	The site is sufficiently far (over 1km) from any European site that no direct impacts would occur from this allocation. The developer will be required to provide public open space to meet the needs of the residents, such as for example dog walking areas to reduce the demand to travel by car to, for example, a European site.
Policy FPP8: Land off Thurmans Lane, Trimley St Mary	Land at this location has been allocated for residential development of approximately 100 dwellings including a range of housing types and tenures, and having regard to a number of other points.	No	The site is sufficiently far (over 1km) from any European site that no direct impacts would occur from this allocation. The developer will be required to provide public open space to meet the needs of the residents, such as for example dog walking areas to reduce the demand to travel by car to, for example, a European site.
Preferred Policy FPP9: number not used			
Policy FPP10: Port of Felixstowe	Land in the Strategic Employment Area for the Port of Felixstowe will be promoted and safeguarded for employment, activities and operations which support the retention, expansion and consolidation of the Port and jobs associated with it.	No	If the Port of Felixstowe is expanded there may be adverse impacts upon local European sites, the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA in particular, since the Port is situated adjacent to this European site. However, the policy wording includes a paragraph that makes it necessary for any development proposals within the Port of Felixstowe to be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment in its own right. This is to ensure that no development which might cause significant adverse effect that could not be mitigated, would be permitted.
Policy FPP11: Land at Bridge Road, Felixstowe	Employment activities will be encouraged at this site.	No	This is a relatively small area of employment land with small units. The location of the site is several kilometres away from the

			nearest European site and the type of land use is unlikely to cause an increase in visitor numbers to local European sites or to have any significant detrimental effects upon them. The Policy wording seeks to resist proposals that would generate large numbers of heavy traffic movements.
Policy FPP12: Land at Carr Road/Langer Road, Felixstowe	Employment use of land at this location is encouraged. Proposals that include warehousing/storage or will generate large numbers of heavy traffic will be resisted.	No	This is a relatively small area of employment land with small units. The Policy wording seeks to resist proposals that would generate large numbers of heavy traffic movements. The employment use at this site would be unlikely to have any detrimental impact upon local European sites.
Policy FPP13: Land at Haven Exchange, Felixstowe	This site will be encouraged for employment use proposals. Proposals for Business Class use and for starter units will be supported. Proposals will require an Air Quality assessment.	No	The Policy wording and supporting text seeks to promote business uses which are small scale and do not generate heavy traffic. The site is located in an Air Quality Management Area so proposals will need to include an Air Quality assessment. Since the employment use of the site would be unlikely to cause greater recreational use of European sites in the locality, it is therefore unlikely that any business use that might be permitted on this site would cause any harm to local European sites.
Policy FPP14: Felixstowe Town Centre	The policy encourages retail enterprises within the town centre boundary. The policy seeks to enhance the town centre retail experience and develop the shared space system so that it reinforces the link between the town centre and the seafront.	No	The policy seeks to draw visitors into the town centre. This policy may encourage people to visit the town centre rather than using local European sites for recreation.
Policy FPP15: Retail frontages	The policy identifies suitable uses within the Primary and Secondary Shopping frontage areas.	No	This policy does not provide any mechanism for causing adverse impacts upon local European sites. The policy wording seeks to enhance the attractiveness of the town centre as a destination which may have some potential to encourage people away from local European sites for recreation.
Policy FPP16: Primary Shopping Area	The policy identifies the Primary Shopping area where retail and other town centre uses will be encouraged.	No	This policy does not provide any mechanism for causing adverse impacts upon local European sites.
Policy FPP17: District Centres	The policy identifies and defines the district centres within the Plan area. District centres will provide shops and other local services to meet the needs of local residents.	No	None of the district centres are in close proximity to any European site. This policy does not provide any mechanism for causing a detrimental impact upon local European sites.
Policy FPP18: Felixstowe Ferry and Golf Course	This policy seeks to protect the character and amenity of Felixstowe Ferry. Proposals for new access points to the River Deben and houseboats	No	Felixstowe Ferry village is located at the edge of the River Deben estuary which is designated as a European site (SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA). The policy avoids the potential for

	here will only be supported where they do not increase the identified potential significant effect of increased access to the River Deben.		increased visitor pressure or access to the River Deben by including the paragraph ' <i>Proposals for new access points to the river or houseboats that accord with the Deben Estuary Plan will only be supported where they do not increase the identified potential significant effect of increased access to the River Deben.</i> '
Policy FPP19: Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club to Cobbolds Point	This policy seeks to retain the low-key character and appeal of the undeveloped nature of this part of the seafront. Development proposals in this area will be resisted in all but exceptional circumstances.	No	This policy does not provide any mechanism for causing adverse impacts upon local European sites.
Policy FPP20: Cobbolds Point to Spa	Policy supports proposals that offer tourist and commercial activities on the ground floor, and which do not cause detriment to wider tourist offers.	No	Policy does not provide any mechanism whereby there may be an adverse impact on a European site.
Policy FPP21: Spa to Martello Park	The Council will support high intensity tourist uses in this location.	No	The Policy encourages recreational activities into this location which has the potential to draw visitors away from using nearby European sites for this purpose.
Policy FPP22: Martello Park to Landguard	This policy seeks to balance the popular Landguard Peninsula tourist attraction with the need to protect the integrity of the SAM, SSSI and LNR.	No	Policy does not provide any mechanism whereby there may be an adverse impact on a European site.
Policy FPPXX: Visitor Management – Deben Estuary	This Policy seeks to protect the European sites associated with the Deben Estuary (SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA with Marine Components) from adverse impacts that might result from additional numbers of people using the area from new housing developments. In particular, adverse impacts from dog walking and river activities such as jet skiing and sailing.	No	This Policy actively promotes the safeguarding of the integrity of the Deben Estuary European sites (SPA/Ramsar/Inshore SPA with Marine components). The policy will not permit additional car parking provision within 1km of the estuary which might encourage additional recreational visitors. In addition, any proposed improvements to existing Estuary access points will need to demonstrate that they will not result in a significant adverse impact, either alone or in-combination with other users.
Policy FPP23: Car Parking	This policy welcomes redevelopment of surface level car parking within the Physical Limits Boundary as long as provision remains at least the same as current levels.	No	Policy does not provide any mechanism whereby there may be an adverse impact on a European site.
Policy FPP24: Holiday Accommodation	The Council supports the retention of the existing caravan park and holiday village uses within the Plan area. Proposals for permanent holiday accommodation will be supported subject to meeting certain criteria and standards.	No	Whilst there is potential for new holiday accommodation proposals to increase the visitor numbers, and therefore pressure upon local European sites, the policy wording provides criteria that must be met to ensure ' <i>No material adverse impact on the environment or residential amenity.</i> '

Policy FPP25: Access to the countryside	Proposals that provide for the provision of green infrastructure within the Plan area will be encouraged. New residential development proposals will be required to provide new areas of green open space.	No	There is no mechanism in this policy which would cause an adverse impact upon the integrity of any local European sites. The policy encourages and requires new open space provision to have the positive effect of reducing visitor pressure upon local European sites, by providing alternative recreation facilities.
Policy FPP26: Areas to be protected from development	Development within areas as shown on the Policies Map will be severely restricted to protect the character and setting of an area.	No	This policy makes no provision for causing an adverse impact upon local European sites.
Policy FPP27: Historic Parks and Gardens	The preservation and/or enhancement of the Spa Gardens and Town Hall Gardens is encouraged. Development proposals will only be permitted where they do not have a materially adverse impact upon the park and garden.	No	This policy makes no provision for causing an adverse impact upon local European sites.
Policy FPPXX: Special Landscape Areas	The valleys and tributaries of the River Deben are identified as Special Landscape Areas, as shown on the Policies Map. Development proposals in these areas require special consideration regarding their impact of the landscape.	No	The policy has regard to the impact of proposed development upon the landscape of the River Deben Special Landscape Area. There is no mechanism within this policy to cause any adverse impact upon local European sites.

Appendix 4

our ref
your ref
please ask for Robert Hobbs
direct dial 01473 432931
email robert.hobbs@ipswich.gov.uk



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning Policy & Delivery Team
Suffolk Coastal District Council
Melton Hill
Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 1AU

Grafton House
15-17 Russell Road
Ipswich Suffolk
IP1 2DE

www.ipswich.gov.uk

(sent via e-mail to suffolkcoastallocalplan@eastssuffolk.gov.uk)

30th November 2015

Dear Mr Edgerley

Suffolk Coastal District Council Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies, and Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Preferred Options Public Consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above consultation and Ipswich Borough Council would like to make the following comments.

Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies

SSP14, 15, 16 and 17 – sites in Westerfield and Witnesham

We note the proposal for new residential development on identified sites in both Westerfield and Witnesham as detailed in the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies development plan document. As these sites are in close proximity to Ipswich Borough, we feel development here should address any additional impact on existing services and infrastructure. In particular there are current pressures on transport, sports facilities and green spaces within the town. It is noted that the Sustainability Appraisal identifies the services of nearby Ipswich, as well as Westerfield railway station as a positive in terms of the sustainability of the location of certain sites.

Therefore it is considered that the following aspects should be considered in order to address the impact of proposals.

Suggested new allocation – The Ipswich Garden Suburb is an urban extension to Ipswich planned for the north side of Ipswich. This includes a new Country Park to the north of the proposed development which extends to the northern boundary of Ipswich Borough and would form a green buffer to the village of Westerfield.

It is considered that there is scope for the Country Park to extend beyond the Ipswich Borough boundary into Suffolk Coastal. The land shown on the attached plan is in the control of one of the Ipswich Garden Suburb developers and would represent the areas the Council are suggesting could be used to extend the Country Park. This would have potential green infrastructure benefits in terms of creating a network of green spaces which adjoin the proposed allocation SSP14, which includes a village green.

SSP14 and SSP15 – Given the close proximity of these sites to the Ipswich Garden Suburb and its proposed facilities and services, the sustainability and mitigation for the SSP14 and SSP15 sites is improved as a result. Ipswich Borough Council would therefore expect that this is taken into account as part of any assessment of these sites and the necessary contributions towards mitigation within the Ipswich Garden Suburb made. In particular, Habitat Regulations Assessment mitigation in the form of a country park is being provided in very close proximity to these sites which is necessary mitigation to address the impacts on the Orwell and Stour European Estuaries. Similarly there are proposals to improve Westerfield railway station facilities to encourage use from future residents of the Ipswich Garden Suburb development. It would be expected that this is a project which could be identified as mitigation for transport implications for these additional sites and work with Ipswich Borough Council in bringing these improvements forward. Page 99, paragraph 6.06 of the plan notes the relevance of the Country Park proposal for nearby parishes such as Westerfield. It does not clarify what the relevance is but it is taken to mean that it would be used and be of benefit to the residents of those parishes.

It has been identified as part of the supplementary planning document interim guidance for the Ipswich Garden Suburb development that car parking at Westerfield railway station could be one way of facilitating travel by residents to the north of Ipswich by enabling train customers to park at the station for onward travel to Ipswich railway station and beyond. Areas for potential parking are being considered and we would like to suggest that sites adjacent to the railway station in Westerfield could be considered, such as the site to the immediate north or as part of the proposed allocation SSP15. We would consider this to be of benefit to Suffolk Coastal residents and assist with transport mitigation for the development sites coming forward in villages to the north of the site.

It is worth noting that the railway works site is bounded by a footpath in private ownership to the north and east. It provides access to land south of the railway line that will be part of the Ipswich Garden Suburb. This pedestrian access needs to be brought into the public realm as it needs to be public right of way. Suffolk Coastal should take the opportunity to insist on this as part of its policies. This would benefit both authorities. As follows:

1. Ipswich Borough Council would retain public pedestrian access between Westerfield and the Ipswich Garden Suburb to the south of the line
2. Suffolk Coastal District Council would use this Right of Way to help maintain the separation between Westerfield village envelope and the Ipswich Garden Suburb / Railway works site

SSP18 Ransomes, Nacton Heath (replaces AP215 Ipswich Fringe: Nacton Heath) (around 30 hectares)

Ipswich Borough Council supports the allocation of 30 hectares of land at Ransomes, Nacton Heath for new employment provision for a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses, which will be subject to the preparation of a development brief. Ipswich Borough Council will continue to work with Suffolk Coastal District Council and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Board, to see if common agreement can be reached that development can take place as an exception to normal AONB restrictive policy.

Suffolk Showground – (replaces “saved” policy AP227)

Ipswich Borough Council supports the long term future of the Suffolk Showground as an events venue being retained, and notes that planning permission will only be granted for housing within the site where its provision is legally bound to the long term future of the Showground as an events venue being retained.

SSP30 Visitor Management – Deben Estuary

This policy, which restricts car parking at locations along the Deben Estuary, is supported as it contributes towards mitigation of potential effects on the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area arising from housing growth in Ipswich as well as Suffolk Coastal.

Chapter 6 – Recreation and Green Infrastructure

Through the Pre-Submission Main Modifications to the Ipswich Core Strategy and Policies development plan document review Ipswich Borough Council has incorporated provision to ensure that contributions can be sought towards mitigation measures identified through the Habitats Regulations Assessment and that the measures by which contributions will be secured will be set out in a mitigation strategy.

It is recommended that Suffolk Coastal District Council include similar provision within Chapter 6 'Recreation and Green Infrastructure' of their Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies development plan document (or elsewhere if considered appropriate), with the inclusion of a new policy if necessary. This should acknowledge that measures not classified as infrastructure may need to be funded outside of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) process, and this can be investigated as part of the production of a mitigation strategy.

Sustainability Appraisal

Further to comments on policies SSP14-17, it would be useful for text to be added to the Sustainability Appraisal to clarify that consideration of effects is not limited to Suffolk Coastal District and that where effects are identified these may go beyond the boundary of the District. For example, in relation to locations around the edge of Ipswich (such as Westerfield and Witnesham) potential effects related to traffic or service provision may be felt within Ipswich Borough. Provision of infrastructure to address these effects may require CIL funding to be spent within Ipswich Borough.

Habitats Regulation Assessments

A schedule of detailed comments are proposed to ensure that the reports are consistent with the conclusions of the HRAs relating to the Ipswich Core Strategy review and the Ipswich Site Allocations plan and that appropriate reference is made to the role of a mitigation strategy and is enclosed with this letter.

Yours sincerely

Robert Hobbs
Planning Policy Team Leader

To be read in conjunction with Ipswich Borough Council letter of 30th November 2015

Suffolk Coastal Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Preferred Options Habitats Regulations Assessment

Paragraph 3.3.3

Reference to the Green Infrastructure plan should be replaced by reference to a Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy, the production of which is currently being considered as a joint strategy between Suffolk Coastal District Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Babergh District Council.

The paragraph states that the country park at Ipswich Garden Suburb will be funded by developer contributions. Whilst this is the intention it would be more accurate to state that the country park is a requirement of policy CS10 of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies development plan document (DPD) review and the Ipswich Garden Suburb supplementary planning document (Interim Guidance – September 2014).

It would be useful if this paragraph could also clarify the role of the country park at Ipswich Garden Suburb, the mitigation strategy and the country park type facility at Adastral Park in terms of meeting the mitigation requirements for Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal, in a similar way to paragraph 3.3.3 of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Paragraph 3.4.16

This paragraph concludes that policy SSP30, which restricts car parking around the Deben Estuary, is effective. It would be useful if the paragraph could specifically state that this policy would act as a mitigation measure to assist in ensuring that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) in terms of mitigating the effects of housing growth from both Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal District.

Paragraphs 5.1 / 5.2

It would be useful to reiterate in the conclusions that the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD adds further detail to the Core Strategy and that whilst on their own (other than SSP3 and SSP31) the policies do not have an effect, the mitigation measures identified in the HRA of the adopted Core Strategy remain relevant even where a site 'alone' would not have an effect. The way in which each site might contribute towards the mitigation measures could be set out through the mitigation strategy which is currently being considered by Ipswich Borough, Suffolk Coastal District and Babergh District Councils.

Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Preferred Options Habitats Regulations Assessment

Paragraph 3.3.3

Reference to the Green Infrastructure plan should be replaced by reference to a Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy, the production of which is currently being considered as a joint strategy between Suffolk Coastal District Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Babergh District Council.

The paragraph states that the country park at Ipswich Garden Suburb will be funded by developer contributions. Whilst this is the intention it would be more accurate to state that the country park is a requirement of policy CS10 of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies DPD review and the Ipswich Garden Suburb supplementary planning document (Interim Guidance – September 2014).

The final sentence states that the country park at Ipswich Garden Suburb, the mitigation strategy and the country park type facility at Adastral Park implement the final two bullet points of the mitigation measures identified in the HRA of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy (set out in paragraph 3.3.2 of the HRA of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Preferred Options). This clarification is supported.

Paragraph 3.7.3

It would be useful to state that in combination effects with growth in Ipswich have been considered through the HRA of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy.

Paragraphs 5.1 / 5.2

It would be useful to reiterate in the conclusions that the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD adds further detail to the Core Strategy and that whilst on their own (other than FFP10) the policies do not have an effect, the mitigation measures identified in the HRA of the adopted Core Strategy remain relevant even where a site 'alone' would not have an effect. The way in which each site might contribute towards the mitigation measures could be set out through the mitigation strategy which is currently being considered by Ipswich Borough, Suffolk Coastal District and Babergh District Councils.

Date: 30 November 2015
Our ref: 168976 + 168977
Your ref: n/a



Mark Edgerley
Principal Planner
Planning Policy & Delivery
Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils
suffolkcoastallocalplan@eastssuffolk.gov.uk

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mark

**Planning consultation: Preferred Options Public Consultation
Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies; Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan**

Thank you for your consultation on the above which was received by Natural England on 19 October 2015.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)
CONSERVATION OF HABITATS & SPECIES REGULATIONS 2010 (AS AMENDED)**

Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document

[Preferred Options Consultation Document](#) (October 2015)

Preferred Option Policy SSP1: New Housing Delivery 2015 – 2027

We note the requirement for new housing delivery to meet, as a minimum, the Core Strategy requirement for 7,900 homes over the period 2010 – 2027.

Preferred Option SSP3 – Land rear of Rose Hill, Saxmundham Road Aldeburgh

The policy allocates 3ha of land at this location for the provision of a care home plus ten residential units. The site is about 300m from Alde-Ore Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar site and Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The avoidance of strategic housing proposals at Martlesham and at Felixstowe Peninsula within 1km of the Deben Estuary and Orwell Estuary respectively has been proposed as mitigation in part for adverse effects arising from increased recreational disturbance. Preferred Option SSP3 is within 1km of the Alde-Ore Estuary and therefore we advise that it would be required to have a Habitats Regulations Assessment at the application stage.

The Preferred Option is within Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We note the requirements for design to take account of the sensitive landscape context of the development and advise that a Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) would be required at the application stage. In summary, further detailed information will be required to assess the



environmental impact of the proposed policy at this location.

Preferred Option SSP18 Ransomes, Nacton Heath (around 30 hectares)

The potential development within the AONB has significant landscape and visual impacts. We note that potential mitigation is stated to include de-designation of AONB land, rationalising existing AONB boundary and/or high quality design of buildings, structures and setting to reduce landscape impacts and impacts on potential historic interests. We advise that the policy should not rely on the boundary of the AONB being amended. For clarity, it is Natural England's statutory responsibility to determine the designation of AONBs or to review existing AONB boundaries. For further information, please see following a link to our Designations Strategy:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2647412>.

However, we support the proposal for a development brief to be prepared by the District Council to provide detailed planning guidance for the whole area, covering both the former employment allocation and the AONB element to allow for a more flexible approach to be progressed.

Preferred Option SSP30 Visitor Management - Deben Estuary

We agree with the policy to prevent increased recreational disturbance of Deben Estuary by preventing any additional car parking provision within a 1km distance of the estuary and by requiring proposed improvements to existing access points which would result in an increased level of recreational activity on the estuary to demonstrate that they will not result in any "significant effect" either on their own or in combination with other uses.

Preferred Option SSP31 Snape Maltings (replaces policy AP166)

The policy promotes the use of Snape Maltings for arts, recreation, and tourism-related uses. Snape Maltings is within Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and is adjacent to Alde-Ore Estuary SPA/Ramsar site and Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC. Proposals at this location will be required to demonstrate that they will not have an adverse impact on the protected landscape and designated sites and may require a Habitats Regulations Assessment and/or LVIA at application stage.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

We agree with the screening exercise carried out by the HRA that Preferred Options SSP3 (Land rear of Rose Hill, Saxmundham Road Aldeburgh) and SSP31 (Snape Maltings) are likely to have a significant effect on internationally designated sites. We note that the HRA advises that a study of existing visitor disturbance to birds, looking at the amount and origin of visitor activity as well as the birds' response is required for the vicinity of Snape Maltings; we agree with the requirement for further evidence to inform a detailed assessment of this option.

We agree with the conclusion of the HRA (see section 5.1.1) which states that '*Site Allocation Document as a stand-alone document is likely to have a significant effect upon Alde-Ore Estuary European sites, with Preferred Policies SSP3 (land to the rear of Rose Hill, Saxmundham Road, Aldeburgh) and SSP31 (Snape Maltings) likely to have a significant effect by causing an increase in disturbance to SPA-qualifying birds using the estuary*'. However, we are unable to conclude no adverse effect on integrity of European sites from the subsequent statement that '*For both policies, further information and / or study might be able to inform a subsequent conclusion of no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site*' as this is not definite. We advise that either a rewording of the policies and/or further detailed assessment, including potential mitigation measures, is required to enable us to have confidence in a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity of European sites from these Preferred Options. We would be happy to give you further advice in this respect.

We support Preferred Option SSP30 (Visitor Management - Deben Estuary) regarding proposed improvements to access points such as slipways or jetties which may result in an increased level of recreational activity on the estuary needing to demonstrate that the proposal would not result in a

likely significant effect on the notified features of the international site.

We note that the HRA states that mitigation for 'in combination' effects of new housing proposed in the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy is being taken forward (section 3.3.3). In particular, we note that a Green Infrastructure plan is being considered by Suffolk Coastal District and Ipswich Borough to address the visitor management measures. In line with our current advice, we advise that this is not sufficient to give confidence that the required mitigation measures will be delivered. There needs to be a commitment to having a mitigation strategy in place, informed by the green infrastructure plan, ideally by the time the plan is adopted or by a specified timescale shortly after the plan is adopted. We advise this is necessary to give certainty that the mitigation measures will be delivered to ensure the plan is compliant with the Habitats Regulations and with paragraphs 113 and 118 of the NPPF. We therefore suggest the following rewording:

'The Council will produce a mitigation strategy by {INSERT DATE} which will specify the measures required and how these will be delivered and funded'

Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan

Preferred Options Consultation Document (October 2015)

Preferred Policy FPP1: Housing

We note that the Felixstowe Peninsula AAP identifies the requirement for 1,100 new dwellings on the preferred sites outlined in the document.

Preferred Policy FPP10: Port of Felixstowe

The policy promotes and safeguards land for employment, activities and operations which support the retention, expansion and consolidation of the Port of Felixstowe and the jobs associated with the Port. The expansion of the Port may have an impact on internationally designated sites. Please see our comments in Habitats Regulations Assessment below.

Preferred Policy FPP18: Felixstowe Ferry and Golf Course

We note that public access along the sea wall is to be retained within this area to ensure that sustainable links and connections are provided to maintain the unique character of the community and reduce the dominance of the motor car in this area. Please see our comments on England Coast Path below.

Preferred Policy FPP22: Martello Park to Landguard

We support the requirement for any future redevelopment of the port in this area to be carefully considered with the Landguard Partnership to ensure that the favourable condition of Landguard Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is maintained.

Preferred Policy FPP25: Access to the countryside

We support the policy which states that proposals which provide for the provision of green infrastructure in the Felixstowe Peninsula will be encouraged where these are well related to existing communities, offer good accessibility, connected to existing provision and provide alternative and accessible natural green space opportunities. We agree that proposals for new residential development in the Felixstowe Peninsula will be required to make provision of accessible natural green spaces as agreed by the District Council in conjunction with Natural England.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

We agree with the screening of the HRA which identified that Preferred Policy FPP10: (Port of Felixstowe) may have a likely significant effect on Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site as it stands. We agree with the conclusions of the HRA (see section 5.1.3) that the policy needs rewording to include a requirement for a Habitats Regulation Assessment to be provided in

connection with proposals for expansion of Port of Felixstowe. We would be happy to give you further advice in this respect.

We note that the HRA states that mitigation for 'in combination' effects of new housing proposed in the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy is being taken forward (section 3.3.3). Please see our comments for the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document HRA above.

England Coast Path

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the requirements of the England Coast Path (ECP) with you in order to ensure that the requirements of the Coast Path and any mitigation measures arising from it, are clearly distinguished from any mitigation that might be required from the Council's proposed allocations. For more information on ECP, please see our website as follows:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-improving-public-access-to-the-coast> .

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Alison Collins
Norfolk & Suffolk Team
alison.collins@naturalengland.org.uk



Mr Mark Edgerley
Principal Planner
Planning Policy & Delivery
Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils

By email only

23rd November 2015

Dear Mr Edgerley

Re: Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies – Preferred Options Consultation

Thank you for consulting the RSPB regarding the Preferred Options Consultation. Please find our comments below.

Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD – Preferred Options Consultation Document

Introduction

Paras. 106-107 and Policy SSP1 refer to the planning application at Adastral Park. It should be noted that at this stage, there cannot be confidence that the application and its associated green space provision will be realised, as the application is as yet undetermined. Therefore this project should not be relied upon to provide mitigation for recreational pressure on European sites through the provision of green space for the district as a whole.

SSP3 Land to the rear of Rose Hill, Saxmundham Road, Aldeburgh (SHLAA ref 608)

We have previously raised concerns (in our response of 26th February 2015 to the Issues and Options consultation) about this site regarding its proximity to the Alde-Ore Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, however, this was on the basis of 69-108 houses. A reduction to ten houses plus a care home may reduce concerns, but this restriction should be clearly worded (as an upper limit) into the resulting policy (SSP3). At present it is not clear whether the requirement is for less than ten units (as in the excerpt from the Sustainability Appraisal) or 'around ten' as in para. 2.23. As noted in the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), the status and use of the access route to the estuary should be clarified, and the provision of alternative open space considered. It should be noted that, if an application is brought forward for this site, HRA at the project level will be required, and proposals for mitigation should be included in plans for any development.

Eastern England
Regional Office
Stalham House
65 Thorpe Road
Norwich
Norfolk NR1 1UD

Tel 01603 660066
Fax 01603 660088

rspb.org.uk



We support the rejection of alternative option site 982. We note that Appendix 3 indicates that this site was rejected due to potential effects on the Alde-Ore Estuary SPA (in line with our comments). This should be recognised here.

SSP10 Land west of Garden Square Rendlesham

We support the requirement to provide open space for daily dog walking as an alternative to the more sensitive Tunstall and Rendlesham Forests (part of the Sandlings SPA).

SSP22 Bentwaters Park, Rendlesham

We note that the policy refers to the sensitivities of this site within the AONB. This policy should also recognise that Bentwaters Parks adjoins the Sandlings SPA and is in close proximity to the Alde-Ore Estuary SPA, SAC and Ramsar site. It will be necessary to consider potential effects on these designated wildlife sites when making decisions as to future activities on this site.

Section 5 - Tourism

References to Natura 2000 sites in para. 5.02 should include the Sandlings, as well as the estuaries.

Policy SSP30 proposes a restriction on public car parking within 1km of the Deben Estuary as mitigation against increases in recreational pressure resulting from the in-combination effects of housing proposals in the area. Whilst we support some restrictions on new parking provision, we suggest this should focus on provision relating to activities likely to cause most disturbance and/or locations that are most sensitive to disturbance. Seasonal restrictions could also be considered, based on the presence of sensitive species. We are also concerned that purely restricting access does not encourage responsible behaviour and enjoyment of and respect for the natural environment. We therefore recommend that consideration is given to a range of mitigation measures which could be funded through a formalised developer contributions scheme. The Council should consider those measures proposed in the Deben Estuary Plan, with examples including:

- seasonally adapted routes including diversions if necessary
- screening of routes
- provision of information to visitors – signage, interpretation, community events to educate people about the importance of the area and responsible visiting
- gates preventing dogs running ahead
- bunds and hides etc to screen birds from visitors in sensitive areas
- managing visitor numbers during busy periods through charging and parking restrictions
- guidance for dog walkers and river users (e.g. through codes of conduct)
- a wardening scheme
- an ongoing visitor management plan – including provision for monitoring of impacts and review of mitigation

As noted in para. 5.05 of the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD, this approach should be complemented with provision of areas of attractive alternative green space, including areas suitable for dog walking, within individual development sites.

SSP31 Snape Maltings

While para. 5.06 refers to the conservation importance of the area within which Snape Maltings is set, the policy itself does not. We recommend that the sentence requiring that all proposals should seek to protect and enhance the special character and interest of the heritage assets should be amended to include the natural environment as well.

Section 6 Recreation and Green Infrastructure

We are pleased that the Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Strategy (HAGGIS) has recently been updated, however, this update does not appear to be available for review. In our previous comments of 26th February 2015 on the Issues and Options consultation, we recommended that the 2011 Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Suffolk Coastal district is also updated. We commented that:

“At present the district Green Infrastructure Strategy appears focused on recreational provision. Whilst important, we consider that there is also an opportunity to expand the Strategy to include biodiversity targets. This should aim to create networks of sites of biodiversity value that ‘fill the gaps’ between existing green space features and sites of importance for biodiversity. Joined up networks are more functional and allow species to move between sites, helping them to adapt to the likely effects of climate change. We recommend that the currently available maps of priority habitat types are supplemented by map(s) showing designated sites (including international sites, SSSIs and County Wildlife Sites). These maps of current biodiversity resource can then be used to identify those areas which could be targeted for restoration, buffering or linkage through habitat creation or restoration.”

RSPB response to Suffolk Coastal District Council Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Issues and Options Consultation, 26th February 2015

These comments are still relevant. We also recommend that the outputs from the HAGGIS update and an update to the Suffolk Coastal Green Infrastructure Strategy should be consolidated into an SPD setting out a district-wide strategy, alongside standards for green infrastructure provision within developments. The production of an SPD would clarify and formalise requirements and ensure that there is one easily accessible set of targets and standards for the district.

Section 7 – Environment

Para. 7.03 discusses potential mitigation required as a result of increased recreational pressure. It should be clarified that this mitigation is with regard to impacts on designated European conservation sites (SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites).

New site 3007 Saxmundham sub area (Land to south east of Blythburgh Road)

We agree with the rejection of this site due to the acknowledged potential for impact on the Minsmere-Walberswick SPA, SAC and SSSI.

New site 3024 Saxmundham sub area (Land off Aldringham Road)

We agree with the rejection of this site due to the acknowledged potential impact on the Sandlings SPA and SSSI.

Habitats Regulations Assessment for Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD

Para 2.3.2 states that the assessment of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy found no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site. This should be clarified to state that this is dependent on the provision of mitigation to address recreational pressure as a result of housing numbers. Without such mitigation, adverse effects on integrity would result.

Para. 3.3.3 refers to a Green Infrastructure Plan under consideration by Suffolk Coastal District and Ipswich Borough. As stated in our comments above, we consider that this work should be formalised within an SPD.

Para. 3.3.3 also refers to a country park proposed as part of the Adastral Park development. As stated above, there cannot be confidence that the application and its associated green space provision will be realised, as the application is as yet undetermined.

We agree with the assessment in para. 3.4.2 that policies SSP3 Land to the rear of Rose Hill, Saxmundham Road, Aldeburgh and SSP31 Snape Maltings could have a Likely Significant Effect on European sites.

We support the conclusion in para. 3.4.15 that a visitor disturbance study is required for the Alde-Ore Estuary in order to understand possible impacts from Policy SSP31 Snape Maltings. As noted in para. 3.5.1, both the policies resulting in Likely Significant Effect relate to the Alde-Ore Estuary, hence a disturbance study could also aid assessment of SSP3 Land to rear of Rose Hill, Saxmundham Road, Aldeburgh and any future developments close to the estuary.

Para. 3.4.16 refers to the proposed restriction in new car parking around the Deben Estuary and opportunities to apply this policy to other European Sites. We recommend the approach suggested above (see comments on Section 5 – Tourism) for the Deben Estuary, and that consideration should be given to a similar scheme for other European sites (potentially including the Alde-Ore Estuary, dependant on the results of the proposed disturbance study).

We support the statement in para. 3.6.3 that the proposed development of Adastral Park will require its own project level HRA.

The discussion of SSP38 Coastal Change Management Area in Appendix 2 Screening of Individual Policies notes that the policy should emphasis that 'large lengths of the coast are

European sites or related to European sites, and that Habitats Regulations Assessment is likely to apply to developments affecting these lengths of coast.' We support this recommendation.

Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan Preferred Options Document

Para. 2.01 refers to some of the environmental designations which illustrate the importance of the Felixstowe area. Reference to the SPA, which is an international designation, would enhance this.

There appears to be some inconsistency between the AAP and Policy SSP30 Visitor Management – Deben Estuary. Paras. 6.10 and 6.11 discuss access and parking – these should be checked for consistency with the policy. Policy FPP18 Felixstowe Ferry and Golf Course also appears inconsistent with SSP30 in that it seeks to increase parking provision. Note that we have suggested amendments to Policy SSP30 (see our comments on the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD under Section 5 - Tourism).

Para. 6.10 refers to recreational pressure on the Deben Estuary SPA. It should also be noted that The Knolls (just outside the SPA) are important for breeding little terns, and are also vulnerable to recreational pressure.

Paras. 6.28 – 6.33 could make reference to the breeding birds of the Landguard Common SSSI, particularly ground nesters, as these species are particularly sensitive to recreational disturbance.

Paras. 7.05 – 7.07 discuss the update to the HAGGIS study. Please refer to our comments on the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD under Section 6 - Recreation and Green Infrastructure above.

Policy FPP25 Access to the Countryside refers to the provision of green infrastructure. We recommend that proposals for green infrastructure which maximise biodiversity benefits should also be encouraged.

We support the rejection of New Site 3028 Land at Manor Terrace as this site is very close to the Landguard Common SSSI and its sensitive plants and breeding birds.

Habitats Regulations Assessment for Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan

We support the recommendation in para. 3.4.3 that Policy FPP10 Port of Felixstowe is expanded to include reference to the potential need for HRA should developments be proposed within or to expand the Port.

We trust that these comments are helpful. If you have any queries about the comments above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jacqui Miller
Conservation Officer RSPB Eastern England

Email: jacqui.miller@rspb.org.uk

Direct dial: 01603 697582

Mark Edgerley
Planning Department
Suffolk Coastal District Council
Melton Hill
Woodbridge
IP12 1AU

30/11/2015

Dear Mr Edgerley,

RE: Suffolk Coastal DC Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Local Plan Document Preferred Options Consultation and Felixstowe Area Action Plan Preferred Options Consultation

Thank you for consulting us on the above documents. We have the following comments on the sites identified for allocation (or otherwise) presented in the map booklets and on the settlement boundary changes proposed. These comments are based on a desktop assessment of the sites in relation to the presence of areas designated for their nature conservation value, we have not screened these sites for the potential presence of protected species or the potential presence of Priority species or habitats. It is possible that sites included for allocation could support protected species and/or Priority species or habitats and we recommend that this is investigated in detail as the development plan process progresses.

Site Allocations Preferred Options Document

A number of sites proposed for allocation appear to incorporate areas of semi-natural habitat, for example sites at Westerfield and Witlesham (Chapel). Such sites should not be allocated until their biodiversity value has been established. In addition, policies for all site allocations should ensure that all development delivers ecological gain in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (section 110).

The document also includes a number of settlement boundary amendments. Whilst we support the redrawing of boundaries to tighten them around existing development, there are a number of settlements where the boundary has been extended to take in new areas for development. Of particular concern are extensions at Bawdsey and Rushmere St Andrew where ecological surveys accompanying recent planning applications have demonstrated that the areas have existing biodiversity value. This evidence should be taken in to account through the Local Plan process and settlement boundaries should not be amended to take in areas which are of existing biodiversity value.

It is also noted that a settlement boundary is proposed around existing development to the south of Hollesley (Alderton Road/Bushy Lane) which does not currently lie within such a boundary. Designation of such a boundary area would potentially allow further development which may result in an adverse ecological impact. The plan should not allow for development which is likely to result in such impacts.

All site allocation policies should also seek ecological enhancements as part of any new development.

Felixstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) Preferred Options Document

A number of the policies in the draft AAP have negative scores for the biodiversity Sustainability Appraisal indicator (indicator 17). It is unclear how this will be addressed and a

Suffolk Wildlife Trust,
Brooke House, Ashbocking,
Ipswich, IP6 9JY
Tel: 01473 890089

www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org

info@suffolkwildlifetrust.org

Suffolk Wildlife Trust is a
registered charity
no. 262777

plan should not be put forward which results in an overall negative impact on biodiversity, as such this would not be in conformity with the NPPF. For example policy FPP2 scores negatively on the environmental Sustainability Appraisal criteria and it is unclear how allocation of this site would address this. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF requires that plans should aim to minimise adverse effects on the local and natural environment and should allocate land with the least environmental value.

It is also noted that the draft AAP proposes the allocation of sites in Walton; Trimley St Mary and Trimley St Martin. A number of these sites have previously had ecological surveys carried out on them as part of planning applications which has identified that they have biodiversity value. It is unclear how the policies which are proposed to allocate these sites address this issue. It is also unclear whether the cumulative impact of developing all the proposed sites has been assessed. In accordance with the NPPF (paragraph 110) only land with the least environmental value should be allocated.

A number of the policies in the draft AAP include the following text:

“Suffolk Wildlife Trust have identified that the site is within a Suffolk Wildlife Trust consultation area and any future development on this site will need to ensure that issues can be resolved or mitigated through appropriate design”.

We do not set ‘consultation areas’ and are unclear where this concept has come from. We therefore request that reference to this is removed from the AAP. It should also be ensured that where sites are to be allocated, the LPA are certain that “issues can be resolved or mitigated through appropriate design”. Where there is uncertainty that biodiversity impacts can be mitigated the site should not be allocated, in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

The AAP should also seek ecological enhancements as part of any new development.

Green Infrastructure

New development brings increased demand for green space, the evidence for green infrastructure planning in the district is currently underpinned by the Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Strategy (The Landscape Partnership, 2008) and a Green Infrastructure Strategy (The Landscape Partnership, 2011) for the area within the district outside of the Haven Gateway Area. The site allocations process should be used as a mechanism for the implementation of such strategies. As both of these documents are a number of years old we recommend that as part of the development plan process they are updated and that a single plan is produced to cover the whole district. Such a plan should also take account of green infrastructure in neighbouring districts and boroughs in order to produce a plan at a strategic scale.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Site Allocations Preferred Options identifies further work that is required to assess the impacts of several parts of the plan on sites of European nature conservation importance. Such assessment should be undertaken prior to the council’s Preferred Options being progressed in order to determine whether they are likely to result in significant adverse effects on such nature conservation sites.

The HRA report discounts potential impacts from a number of the proposed sites as they are perceived to be outside of walking distance from a European designated site. However, the study does not appear to take account of travel by car from new developments to European designated sites. Prior to the allocation of any new development sites this factor must be addressed to ensure that development of allocated sites, both alone and in-combination, is not likely to result in adverse impacts on any European designated sites. Unless this matter is adequately addressed we do not consider that the plan can be demonstrated to be ‘sound’.

The HRA of the Council’s adopted Core Strategy DPD also identified a number of measures which were required in order to prevent increased recreational pressure from resulting in a

likely significant effect on sites of European nature conservation importance. It should therefore be ensured that these measures are incorporated in to the Site Allocations and Felixstowe AAP documents, with the impacts of the proposals within these documents then assessed accordingly.

If you require any further information or wish to discuss any of the points raised above please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

James Meyer
Conservation Planner