

**Kent Wildfowling and Conservation Association – Higham Marsh
Habitat Enhancement Project**



Water Vole (Rob Budgen, 2016)

**The Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA Citation
Planning Application Proposal Supporting Documentation
Author: Will Tofts**

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Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA – 2000

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

Name: Thames Estuary and Marshes

Unitary Authority/County: Essex County Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, Medway Council, and Thurrock Borough Council.

Consultation proposal: Mucking Flats and Marshes SSSI and South Thames Estuary and Marshes SSSIs have been recommended as a Special Protection Area because of the site's European ornithological interest.

The Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area is a wetland of European importance comprising a mosaic of intertidal habitats, saltmarsh, coastal grazing marshes, saline lagoons and chalk pits. The site provides wintering and breeding habitats for important assemblages of wetland bird species, particularly wildfowl and waders as well as supporting migratory birds on passage. The site forms part of the wider Thames Estuary together with other classified SPAs in both Essex and Kent.

Boundary of SPA: The SPA boundary is within or coincident with the above SSSI boundaries. See SPA map for further detail.

Size of SPA: The SPA covers an area of 4,838.94 ha.

European ornithological importance of the SPA: Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA is of European importance because:

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

Annex I species	5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98	% GB population
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	283 individuals - wintering	28.3% GB
Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	7 individuals - wintering	1.0% GB

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Compilation date: March 2000 Version: 0.4

- b) 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 on Annex I), in any season:

Species	5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98	% of population
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	1,324 individuals - passage	2.6% Europe/ Northern Africa (win)
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	2,593 individuals - wintering	1.7% Eastern Atlantic (wintering)
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>	29,646 individuals - wintering	2.1% N Siberia/Europe/ W Africa
Knot <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>	4,848 individuals - wintering	1.4% NE Can/Grl/ Iceland/NW Eur
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>	1,699 individuals - wintering	2.4% Iceland (breeding)
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>	3,251 individuals - wintering	2.2% Eastern Atlantic (wintering)

- b) the site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterfowl in any season:

Period	Season	Population
1993/94 - 1997/98	Wintering	75,019

Non-qualifying species of interest

Other Annex 1 species which regularly occur on the site in non-qualifying numbers are breeding Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*, and passage and wintering Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* and Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*.

The site also supports nationally important populations of Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, Teal *Anas crecca*, Pintail *Anas acuta*, Gadwall *Anas strepera*, Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* and Pochard *Aythya ferina*.

Status of SPA

The Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA was classified on 31 March 2000.

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Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA Review – 2001

SPA description

(information as published 2001)

Thames Estuary and Marshes

Country	England
Unitary Authority	Medway, Thurrock, Kent
SPA status	Classified 31/03/2000
Latitude	51 29 08 N
Longitude	00 35 47 E
SPA EU code	UK9012021
Area (ha)	4838.94
Component SSSI/ASSIs	Mucking Flats and Marshes South Thames Estuary and Marshes



The Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA is located on the south side of the Thames Estuary in southern England. The marshes extend for about 15 km along the south side of the estuary and also include intertidal areas on the north side of the estuary. To the south of the river, much of the area is brackish grazing marsh, although some of this has been converted to arable use. At Cliffe, there are flooded clay and chalk pits, some of which have been infilled with dredgings. Outside the sea wall, there is a small extent of saltmarsh and broad intertidal mud-flats. The estuary and adjacent grazing marsh areas support an important assemblage of wintering waterbirds including grebes, geese, ducks and waders. The site is also important in spring and autumn migration periods.

Qualifying species

For individual species accounts visit the [Species Accounts section](#)

This site qualifies under **Article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:

Over winter;

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, 276 individuals representing at least 21.7% of the wintering population in Great Britain (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, 7 individuals representing at least 0.9% of the wintering population in Great Britain (5 year mean 93/4-97/8)

This site also qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

On passage;

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, 559 individuals representing at least 1.1% of the Europe/Northern Africa - wintering population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)

Over winter;

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, 541 individuals representing at least 1.1% of the wintering Europe/Northern Africa - wintering population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)

Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.

The area qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl

Over winter, the area regularly supports 33,433 individual waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6) including: Redshank *Tringa totanus*, Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina*, Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, Pintail *Anas acuta*, Gadwall *Anas strepera*, Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons albifrons*, Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*, Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*.

Gravesham Borough Council

Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA Natura 2000 Standard Data Form – 2015

NATURA 2000 – STANDARD DATA FORM

Special Protection Areas under the EC Birds Directive.

Each Natura 2000 site in the United Kingdom has its own Standard Data Form containing site-specific information. The data form for this site has been generated from the Natura 2000 Database submitted to the European Commission on the following date:

22/12/2015

The information provided here, follows the officially agreed site information format for Natura 2000 sites, as set out in the [Official Journal of the European Union recording the Commission Implementing Decision of 11 July 2011 \(2011/484/EU\)](#).

The Standard Data Forms are generated automatically for all of the UK's Natura 2000 sites using the European Environment Agency's Natura 2000 software. The structure and format of these forms is exactly as produced by the EEA's Natura 2000 software (except for the addition of this coversheet and the end notes). The content matches exactly the data submitted to the European Commission.

Please note that these forms contain a number of codes, all of which are explained either within the data forms themselves or in the end notes.

Further technical documentation may be found here
http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura_2000/reference_portal

As part of the December 2015 submission, several sections of the UK's previously published Standard Data Forms have been updated. For details of the approach taken by the UK in this submission please refer to the following document:
http://incc.defra.gov.uk/ndf/Natura2000_StandardDataForm_UKApproach_Dec2015.ndf

More general information on Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in the United Kingdom is available from the [SPA home page on the JNCC website](#). This webpage also provides links to Standard Data Forms for all SPAs in the UK.

Date form generated by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee 25 January 2016.



NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),

Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),

SITE UK9012021

SITENAME Thames Estuary and Marshes

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type	1.2 Site code Back to top
A	UK9012021

1.3 Site name

Thames Estuary and Marshes

1.4 First Compilation date	1.5 Update date
2000-03	2015-12

1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation: Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Address: Joint Nature Conservation Committee Monkstone House City Road Peterborough PE1 1JY
Email:

1.7 Site indication and designation / classification dates

Date site classified as SPA:	2000-03
National legal reference of SPA designation	Regulations 12A and 13-15 of the Conservation Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/490/contents/made) as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/625/contents/made).

2. SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

Longitude

0.506288880

Latitude

51.48555556

2.2 Area [ha]:

4802.47

2.3 Marine area [%]

55.7

2.4 Site length [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code

Region Name

UKJ4	Kent
UKH3	Essex

2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Atlantic (100.0

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

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

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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
B	A672	Calidris alpina alpina			w	29646	29646	i		G	B		C
B	A143	Calidris canutus			w	4848	4848	i		G	C		C
B	A137	Charadrius hiaticula			c	1324	1324	i		G	B		C
B	A082	Circus cyaneus			w	7	7	i		G	C		C
B	A616	Limosa limosa islandica			w	1699	1699	i		G	B		C
B	A141	Pluvialis squatarola			w	2593	2593	i		G	C		C
B	A132	Recurvirostra avosetta			w	283	283	i		G	A		C
		Tringa						9					

B	A162	totanus		w	3251	3251	i		G	B		C	
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- **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

3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)

Species					Population in the site			Motivation						
Group	CODE	Scientific Name	S	NP	Size		Unit	Cat.	Species Annex		Other categories			
					Min	Max		C R V P	IV	V	A	B	C	D
B	WATR	Waterfowl assemblage			75019	75019	i						X	

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, Fu = Fungi, I = Invertebrates, L = Lichens, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **CODE:** for Birds, Annex IV and V species the code as provided in the reference portal should be used in addition to the scientific name
- **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)
- **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](#))

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

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4.1 General site character

Habitat class	% Cover
N07	3.7
N06	5.6
N03	1.5
N09	1.9
N05	0.9
N10	29.1
N02	57.3
Total Habitat Cover	100.00000000000001

Other Site Characteristics

1 Terrestrial: Soil & Geology: shingle, alluvium, mud coastal, floodplain
 2 Terrestrial: Geomorphology and landscape: sandflat/mudflat
 4 Marine: Geomorphology: estuary, intertidal sediments (including

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC) Over winter the area regularly supports: Circus cyaneus 1 the population% o in Great Britain Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 Recurvirostra avosetta (West Europe/Western ern Mediterranean - breeding) 28.3% of the population in Great Britain Five year peak mean fo 1993/93 to 1997/98 r
 ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC) Over winter the area regularly supports: Calidris alpina alpina ar (Northern Siberia/Europe/Western Africa) 2.1% of the population Five ye peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 Calidris ar canutus (North-eastern Canada/Greenland/Iceland/North-west Europe) 1.4% of the population Five year peak rn mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 Limosa limosa islandica (Ic breeding) 2.4% of the population Five year peak ela mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 Pluvialis squatarola (East Atlantic - wintering) 1.7% of the population Five ern year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 Tringa totanus (Eastern Atlantic - wintering) 2.2% of sa the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 On pas the area regularly supports: Charadrius N hiaticula (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering) 2.6% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 50
 ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC): A 7
 INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ASSEMBLAGE OF BIRDS Over winter the area regularly supports: 7 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96) including: Recurvirostra avosetta Pluvialis squatarola Calidris

4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

Negative Impacts				Positive Impacts			
Rank	Threats and pressures [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]	Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
H	M01		B	H	A02		I
H	I01		B	H	G03		I
H	G01		I	H	D05		I
H	M02		B	H	A04		I
				H	A06		I

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low

Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,

T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions i =

4.5 Documentation

Conservation Objectives - the Natural England links below provide access to the Conservation Objectives (and other site-related information) for its terrestrial and inshore Natura 2000 sites, including conservation advice packages and supporting documents for European Marine Sites within English waters and for

Link(s): http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/Natura2000_StandardDataForm_UKApproach_Dec2015.pdf

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/3212324>

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216>

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

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5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
UK04	100.0		11		

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

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Organisation:	Natural England
Address:	
Email:	

6.2 Management Plan(s):

As actual management plan does exist:

☐	Yes
☐	No, but in preparation
☒	No

6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

For available information, including on Conservation Objectives, see Section 4.5.

Gravesham Borough Council