

# 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	199502
date site designated as SAC	

### 2. Site location:

#### 2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
02 59 14 W	53 42 20 N

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

#### 2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK83	Lancashire	54.79%
UK84	Merseyside	45.21%

#### 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						
A054	<i>Anas acuta</i>		2731 I		B		C	
A052	<i>Anas crecca</i>		7157 I		C		C	
A050	<i>Anas penelope</i>		85259 I		B		C	
A040	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>		11764 I		B		B	
A062	<i>Aythya marila</i>		114 I		C		C	
A144	<i>Calidris alba</i>		2882 I		B		C	
A144	<i>Calidris alba</i>			6535 I	B		C	
A149	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>		39376 I		B		C	
A143	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		68922 I		A		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			1657 I	B		C	
A037	<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>		276 I		B		C	
A038	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>		182 I		B		C	
A130	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		18535 I		B		C	
A183	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		1800 P		C		C	
A179	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>		11900 P		B		C	
A157	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		20086 I		A		C	
A156	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>		1273 I		C		C	
A065	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>		746 I		B		C	
A160	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		2046 I		C		C	
A158	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>			697 I	B		C	
A017	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		311 I		B		C	
A151	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>		1 P		B		B	
A140	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>		3598 I		C		C	
A141	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		9355 I		B		C	
A193	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		182 P		C		C	
A048	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		4925 I		C		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		2505 I		C		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			3247 I	B		C	
A142	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		16496 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)	82.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	17.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
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)	

Habitat classes	% cover
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
<b>Total habitat cover</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 4.1 Other site characteristics

##### Soil & geology:

Alluvium, Basic, Neutral, Sand, Sedimentary

##### Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Lowland, Open coast (including bay)

#### 4.2 Quality and importance

##### ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

###### During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

*Philomachus pugnax* 9.1% of the GB breeding population  
(Western Africa - wintering) Count as at late 1980s

*Sterna hirundo* 1.5% of the GB breeding population  
(Northern/Eastern Europe - breeding) Count as at 1996

###### Over winter the area regularly supports:

*Cygnus columbianus bewickii* 3.9% of the GB population  
(Western Siberia/North-eastern & North-western Europe) 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

*Cygnus cygnus* 3.3% of the GB population  
(Iceland/UK/Ireland) 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

*Limosa lapponica* 37.9% of the GB population  
(Western Palearctic - wintering) 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

*Pluvialis apricaria* 1.4% of the GB population  
(North-western Europe - breeding) 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

##### ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

###### During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

*Larus fuscus* 1.5% of the breeding population  
(Western Europe/Mediterranean/Western Africa) Count as at 1993

*Larus ridibundus* 7.1% of the population in Great Britain  
(North-western Europe - breeding) Count as at 1996

###### Over winter the area regularly supports:

*Anas acuta* 4.6% of the population  
(North-western Europe) 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

*Anas crecca* 1.8% of the population  
(North-western Europe) 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

<i>Anas penelope</i> (Western Siberia/North-western/North-eastern Europe)	6.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> (Eastern Greenland/Iceland/UK)	5.2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Aythya marila</i> (Northern/Western Europe)	1.0% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Calidris alba</i> (Eastern Atlantic/Western & Southern Africa - wintering)	2.9% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> (Northern Siberia/Europe/Western Africa)	2.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Calidris canutus</i> (North-eastern Canada/Greenland/Iceland/North-western Europe)	19.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> (Europe & Northern/Western Africa)	2.1% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Iceland - breeding)	1.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Melanitta nigra</i> (Western Siberia/Western & Northern Europe/North-western Africa)	2.7% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Numenius arquata</i> (Europe - breeding)	1.7% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> (North-western Europe)	2.4% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	6.2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i> (North-western Europe)	1.6% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	1.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i> (Europe - breeding)	0.8% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98
<b>On passage the area regularly supports:</b>	
<i>Calidris alba</i> (Eastern Atlantic/Western & Southern Africa - wintering)	6.5% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993 - 1997
<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering)	3.3% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993 - 1997
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i> (Europe/Western Africa)	13.9% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering)	2.2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993 - 1997
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**ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC): AN INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ASSEMBLAGE OF BIRDS**

**During the breeding season the area regularly supports:**

29236 seabirds (5 year peak mean 01/10/2002)

Including:

*Larus ridibundus* , *Larus fuscus* , *Sterna hirundo* .

**Over winter the area regularly supports:**

323861 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 01/10/2002)

Including:

*Phalacrocorax carbo* , *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* , *Cygnus cygnus* , *Anser brachyrhynchus* , *Tadorna tadorna* , *Anas penelope* , *Anas crecca* , *Anas acuta* , *Aythya marila* , *Melanitta nigra* , *Haematopus ostralegus* , *Charadrius hiaticula* , *Pluvialis apricaria* , *Pluvialis squatarola* , *Vanellus vanellus* , *Calidris canutus* , *Calidris alba* , *Calidris alpina alpina* , *Limosa limosa islandica* , *Limosa lapponica* , *Numenius arquata* , *Tringa totanus* .

### 4.3 Vulnerability

Overall, the dunes, intertidal flats and saltmarsh enjoy a relatively robust status and a favourable condition. However, the site is, in places, subject to pressure from recreation, built development (including coastal defence), wildfowling and industry, including sand-winning. Wildfowling is not considered to have a significant impact in terms of direct take; resulting disturbance is effectively managed through the provision of refuge areas and strict regulation on shooting activities. Military activities only take place at Altcar Rifle Range which is adjacent to the Alt Estuary. Recreation is informal and of relatively low intensity along most of the Sefton Coast and in the Ribble Estuary. There is no longer a registered beach airfield at Sefton, however occasional landing of pleasure craft may be requested during large events. Beach activities are managed by the Beach Management Plan. Sand-winning was addressed during a Public Inquiry in August 2001, with the result that detailed environmental monitoring will now be incorporated into the renewed planning permission. Much of the site attracts beneficial land management via the implementation of agreed plans for three NNRs, two LNRs and other initiatives developed by the Sefton Coast Partnership. These plans/initiatives are addressing a number of these pressures, whilst other pressures will be addressed following procedures under the Habitat Regulations. Wider land management issues are being developed via the neighbouring Ribble and Mersey Estuary Strategies. The issue of grazing pressure on the saltmarsh will be addressed through a management agreement to reduce the grazing pressure.

Although there is little evidence of sea-level rise so far, the extent and distribution of habitats remains vulnerable to changes in the physical environment, either natural or man-induced. In contrast the coast at Formby Point and Ainsdale is suffering intense erosion which is being investigated through the Sefton Shoreline Management Plan, and beach management practices have effectively encouraged the creation of considerable areas of embryo dunes on the upper shore elsewhere. The Ribble Estuary is also evolving as sediment patterns are changing and saltmarsh continues to accrete following past land-claim and the closure of Preston Docks. The intertidal habitats are vulnerable to accidental pollution from the nearby Mersey Estuary and the Irish Sea oil and gas fields. Oil spill contingency plans are being updated to deal with such events. The Ribble in particular has failed to meet the requirements of the Bathing Waters Directive. Government Office North West and the Environment Agency are investigating likely sources of pollution that may have caused this.

## 5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

### 5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	37.6
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

