

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

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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	198511
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
02 52 37 W	53 37 24 N

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

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK83	Lancashire	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						
A054	<i>Anas acuta</i>		978 I		B		C	
A050	<i>Anas penelope</i>		9062 I		B		C	
A040	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>		25779 I		B		B	
A037	<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>		449 I		B		C	
A038	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>		621 I		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)	13.5
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	7.0
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	78.5
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	1.0
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:

Acidic, Alluvium, Clay, Mud, Nutrient-poor, Peat, Sand, Sandstone, Sedimentary

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Hilly, Lowland

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

Cygnus columbianus bewickii
(Western Siberia/North-eastern & North-western Europe) 6.2% of the GB population
5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

Cygnus cygnus
(Iceland/UK/Ireland) 11.1% 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 acuta</i> (North-western Europe)	1.6% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Anas penelope</i> (Western Siberia/North-western/North-eastern Europe)	0.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96
<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> (Eastern Greenland/Iceland/UK)	11.5% of the population 5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96

4.3 Vulnerability

Since the sites designation as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention and as a Special Protection Area in 1985 there has been a gradual increase in the usage of the mere by certain species of wildfowl and wading birds as a direct consequence of positive management.

The refuge is vulnerable to water levels being adversely affected water abstraction for agriculture, but this is closely monitored /controlled by the Environment Agency in consultation with English Nature. Similarly the refuge is vulnerable to changes in farming practice. Grazing management is largely dependent upon cattle from surrounding farms.

Water levels on the Mere are controlled to maintain optimum levels throughout the winter period, then lowered progressively in summer to expose marginal mud and the underlying damp pastures and maintain a mosaic of shallow pools. Ditches are regularly cut and dredged and all areas of pasture are positively managed under a Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Nutrients brought in with the water supply from the surrounding arable farmland and inadequate sewage treatment adds considerably to the large deposits of guano from wintering waterfowl. This results in the refuge being highly eutrophic with extremely poor water quality conditions and creates the possible risk of water borne diseases which could affect waterfowl, although no such outbreaks have been recorded. Water quality issues have started to be addressed by WWT with the creation of reedbed water filtration systems and a series of settlement lagoons helps to reduce suspended solids of effluent water arising from waterfowl areas.

Regular herbicide control of trifid burr marigold is necessary in order to prevent this plant from invading lake/scape margins to the detriment of bird populations.

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