

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

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

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

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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## 2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 15 August 1995

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## 3. Country:

UK (England)

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## 4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast

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

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

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## 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):**

54 37 50 N                      01 07 07 W

**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: Middlesbrough

Teessmouth and Cleveland Coast lies 48 km south-east of the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the north-east coast of England.

**Administrative region:** Cleveland; Durham; Hartlepool; Redcar and Cleveland; Stockton-on-Tees

**10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres):    11. Area (hectares): 1247.31**

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.

Medium-large site encompassing a range of habitats (sand and mudflats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh and sand dunes) on and around an estuary which has been much-modified by human activities. Together these habitats support internationally important numbers of waterbirds.

**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).

**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 5

**Assemblages of international importance:****Species with peak counts in winter:**

9528 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*, 883 individuals, representing an average of 0.7% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

**Species with peak counts in winter:**

Red knot , *Calidris canutus islandica*, W & Southern Africa 2579 individuals, representing an average of 0.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

(wintering)

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](http://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	basic, neutral, shingle, sand, mud, clay, alluvium, peat, sedimentary, sandstone, sandstone/mudstone, boulder
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, coastal, floodplain, subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank), intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), open coast (including bay), enclosed coast (including embayment), estuary, lagoon, pools, intertidal rock
Nutrient status	eutrophic, mesotrophic
pH	circumneutral
Salinity	brackish / mixosaline, fresh, saline / euhaline
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent

Summary of main climatic features	<p>Annual averages (Durham, 1971–2000)                  (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/durham.html)</p> <p>Max. daily temperature: 12.5° C                  Min. daily temperature: 5.2° C                  Days of air frost: 52.0                  Rainfall: 643.3 mm                  Hrs. of sunshine: 1374.6</p>
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**General description of the Physical Features:**

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast includes a range of coastal habitats – sand- and mud-flats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh and sand dunes – on and around an estuary which has been considerably modified by human activities.

**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).

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast includes a range of coastal habitats – sand- and mud-flats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh and sand dunes – on and around an estuary which has been considerably modified by human activities.

**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
G	Tidal flats	45
Tp	Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	20
E	Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)	14
H	Salt marshes	7
D	Rocky shores	7
K	Coastal fresh lagoons	3
F	Estuarine waters	2
M	Rivers / streams / creeks: permanent	1
J	Coastal brackish / saline lagoons	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.

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast comprises intertidal sand and mudflats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh and sand dunes. The Tees Estuary has been much-modified by such activities as land-claim, construction of breakwaters and training walls, and deep dredging. The remaining intertidal areas within the estuary are composed of mud and sand, with some *Enteromorpha* beds in sheltered areas. Outside the estuary mouth, sandflats predominate, but with significant rocky foreshores and reefs at both Redcar and Hartlepool and anthropogenic boulder beds at South Gare. Moderately extensive sand dune systems flank the estuary mouth, while a smaller dune system lies north of Hartlepool; foredunes are dominated by *Ammophila*, *Elytrigia juncea* and *Leymus* communities, fixed dunes by *Festuca rubra* communities. Surviving saltmarsh is very limited in

extent, and is largely typified by *Puccinellia*. Behind the dunes and sea-defences a number of significant areas of grazing marsh are found, where *Festuca rubra* saltmarsh persists alongside inundation grassland, a range of swamp communities and several shallow water bodies.

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:

*Festuca arenaria*, *Puccinellia rupestris*, *Ranunculus baudotii* (all 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:

Little tern , *Sterna albifrons albifrons*, W Europe 40 pairs, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (Five year mean for 1995 to 1998)

#### Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Northern shoveler , *Anas clypeata*, NW & C Europe 7 individuals, representing an average of 0% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Common greenshank , *Tringa nebularia*, Europe/W Africa 7 individuals, representing an average of 1.1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

#### Species Information

Nationally important species occurring on the site

Invertebrates:

*Pherbellia grisea*, *Thereva valida*, *Longitarsus nigerrimus*, *Dryops nitidulus*, *Macrolea mutica*, *Philonthus dimidiatipennis*, *Trichohydnobius suturalis* (all RDB)

### 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.

Environmental education/ interpretation

Fisheries production

Livestock grazing

Non-consumptive recreation

Scientific research

Sport fishing

Sport hunting

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	+	+
Recreation	+	+
Current scientific research	+	+
Collection of non-timber natural products: (unspecified)	+	
Fishing: commercial		+
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	+
Bait collection	+	
Arable agriculture (unspecified)		+
Permanent pastoral agriculture	+	+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	+
Industrial water supply		+
Industry		+
Sewage treatment/disposal		+
Harbour/port	+	+
Flood control	+	+
Irrigation (incl. agricultural water supply)		+
Transport route	+	+
Urban development		+

**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?
Eutrophication	2			+	+

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?  
 Eutrophication - Under Asset Management Plan AMP4 Northumbrian Water is obliged to introduce tertiary treatment to its Billingham Sewage Treatment Works, and to undertake a major investigation into the occurrence and spread of *Enteromorpha* algal mats and water/sediment quality issues.

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)	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Other	+	+

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.

Waterfowl monitoring: Durham University Dept of Biological Sciences as part of the above contract

Ringling programmes: Tees Ringling Group.

#### **Habitat:**

Monitoring of the effects of Northumbrian Water sewage inputs (NWL, EA, EN).

Breeding bird surveys of Teesmouth NNR (EN) and Cowpen Marsh SSSI (Industry Nature Conservation Association).

Annual monitoring of breeding Little Terns (INCA).

Monitoring of seal usage of site and breeding success (INCA).

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### **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.

The Teesmouth Field Centre approximately 3000 schoolchildren annually on a variety of study programmes. There are three public hides and several interpretive panels. English Nature, Hartlepool Countryside Wardens and Tees Valley Wildlife Trust undertake regular guided walks and events.

British Energy and Huntsman Tioxide have provided hides which are available during guided visits.

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### **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**

##### **Land based recreation:**

The main activities are walking (especially dog walking), beach recreation, golf, and birdwatching, which take place year-round (though with a pronounced summer peak). The South Gare area has beach huts, car parks and a caravan site. Car parks are also located at North Gare and Seaton Carew. Seaton Carew and Cleveland Golf Clubs have courses adjacent to and impinging slightly on the site. Use is mainly April to September, but golf is played year-round.

Illegal use of motorcycles, quad-bikes and 4WD vehicles is particularly prevalent at South Gare, but is also increasing at Seaton Sands.

Wildfowling is confined to small areas of Cowpen Marsh and Saltholme Pools (1 September to 31 January).

##### **Water based recreation:**

In summer, power-boating, jet-skiing, dinghy-sailing and windsurfing all occur but at a low intensity (apart from Coatham Sands, where 'extreme sports' such as kite-surfing are increasing), and primarily on the open coast. Angling is largely confined to breakwaters (year-round), while bait-gathering in intertidal areas can be locally intensive, especially on Bran Sands (adjacent to the South Gare Breakwater).

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### **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

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**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**

- Barne, JH, Robson, CF, Kaznowska, SS, Doody, JP & Davidson, NC (eds.) (1995) *Coasts and Seas of the United Kingdom. Region 5 North-east England: Berwick-upon-Tweed to Filey Bay*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough (Coastal Directories Series)
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- Bennett, TL & Foster-Smith, JL (1998) Chapter 5. South-east Scotland and north-east England (Dunbar to Bridlington) (MNCR Sector 4). In: *Benthic marine ecosystems of Great Britain and the north-east Atlantic*, ed. by K. Hiscock, 123-154. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough. (Coasts and Seas of the United Kingdom. MNCR series)
- Brazier, DP, Davies, J, Holt, RHF & Murray, E (1998) *Marine Nature Conservation Review Sector 5. South-east Scotland and north-east England: area summaries*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough (Coasts and seas of the United Kingdom. MNCR series)
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- 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)
- Cranswick, PA, Waters, RJ, Musgrove, AJ & Pollitt, MS (1997) *The Wetland Bird Survey 1995–96: wildfowl and wader counts*. British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds & Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Slimbridge
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- Lacey *et al.* (1997) *Tees estuary management plan*. INCA, Billingham
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- Musgrove, AJ, Pollitt, MS, Hall, C, Hearn, RD, Holloway, SJ, Marshall, PE, Robinson, JA & Cranswick, PA (2001) *The Wetland Bird Survey 1999–2000: wildfowl and wader counts*. British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds & Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Slimbridge.  
[www.wwt.org.uk/publications/default.asp?PubID=14](http://www.wwt.org.uk/publications/default.asp?PubID=14)
- Ratcliffe, DA (ed.) (1977) *A Nature Conservation Review. The selection of biological sites of national importance to nature conservation in Britain*. Cambridge University Press (for the Natural Environment Research Council and the Nature Conservancy Council), Cambridge (2 vols.)
- Stroud, DA, Chambers, D, Cook, S, Buxton, N, Fraser, B, Clement, P, Lewis, P, McLean, I, Baker, H & Whitehead, S (eds.) (2001) *The UK SPA network: its scope and content. Volume 3: Site accounts*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough [www.jncc.gov.uk/UKSPA/default.htm](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/UKSPA/default.htm)

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