

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:

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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:

Lower Derwent Valley

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):

53 53 04 N 00 55 34 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: York

The site lies approximately 10 km east of York, much of it on the boundary between North Yorkshire and East Yorkshire.

Administrative region: East Riding of Yorkshire; North Yorkshire; York

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **11. Area** (hectares): 915.45

Min.	4
Max.	7
Mean	5

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 Lower Derwent Valley represents one of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich alluvial flood meadow habitat remaining in the UK. These grasslands, which were formerly widespread, are now very restricted in distribution due to agricultural improvement. The river and these floodlands play a substantial role in the hydrological and ecological functioning of the internationally important Humber basin.

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).

1, 2, 4, 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 1

The site represents one of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich alluvial flood meadow habitat remaining in the UK.

The river and flood meadows play a substantial role in the hydrological and ecological functioning of the Humber Basin.

Ramsar criterion 2

The site has a rich assemblage of wetland invertebrates including 16 species of dragonfly and damselfly, 15 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates as well as a leafhopper, *Cicadula ornata* for which Lower Derwent Valley is the only known site in Great Britain.

Ramsar criterion 4

The site qualifies as a staging post for passage birds in spring. Of particular note are the nationally important numbers of Ruff, *Philomachus pugnax* and Whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus*.

Ramsar criterion 5

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

31942 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 winter:

Eurasian wigeon , <i>Anas penelope</i> , NW Europe	8350 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Eurasian teal , <i>Anas crecca</i> , NW Europe	4200 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the 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

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	neutral, sand, clay, alluvium, peat, nutrient-poor, sedimentary
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Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, valley, floodplain
Nutrient status	mesotrophic
pH	circumneutral
Salinity	fresh
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually seasonal / intermittent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (High Mowthorpe, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/high_mowthorpe_.html) Max. daily temperature: 11.6° C Min. daily temperature: 5.1° C Days of air frost: 52.5 Rainfall: 729.4 mm Hrs. sunshine: 1397.9

General description of the Physical Features:

The Lower Derwent Valley is a major floodplain system holding a series of neutral alluvial flood meadows, fens, swamps, valley mires, alder *Alnus glutinosa* woodlands and other freshwater habitats lying adjacent to the River Derwent, Pocklington Canal and The Beck.

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 Yorkshire River Derwent catchment area covers approximately 2000 km² and includes the River Derwent, River Rye, Sea Cut, River Hertford, Costa Beck, Bielby Beck, Pocklington Canal and other tributaries. The rivers rise in the Vales of Pickering and York, Yorkshire Wolds and North York Moors before joining the River Derwent which joins the River Ouse at a tidal barrage at Barmby.

The River Derwent, its tributaries and associated wetlands are highly valued for nature conservation, ecology and landscape. The river is used extensively for public water supply and for recreation.

18. Hydrological values:

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

Flood water storage / desynchronisation of flood peaks, Maintenance of water quality (removal of nutrients), Water supply

19. Wetland types:

Inland wetland

Code	Name	% Area
4	Seasonally flooded agricultural land	81.9
Ts	Freshwater marshes / pools: seasonal / intermittent	8.7
M	Rivers / streams / creeks: permanent	6.6
Tp	Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	2.2
W	Shrub-dominated wetlands	0.4
Xf	Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands	0.2

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 Lower Derwent Valley contains extensive species-rich flood meadows, fens, swamps and wet woodland. The main vegetation types over 20 ha in extent are MG4; MG7c; MG8; MG9; MG13; S5; S19; S28; *Carex acuta* in swamps and fens; OV32.

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.**

Lathyrus palustris, Sium latifolium, Oenanthe silaifolia, Persicaria laxiflora, Potamogeton trichoides

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:**

Black-necked grebe , <i>Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis</i> , Europe, N Africa	11 pairs, representing an average of 35.4% of the GB population (5 year mean 1994-1998)
Great bittern , <i>Botaurus stellaris stellaris</i> , W Europe, NW Africa	1 individuals, representing an average of 4.7% of the GB population (5 year mean 1994-1998)
Garganey , <i>Anas querquedula</i> , W Africa/Europe	15 pairs, representing an average of 65.2% of the GB population (5 year mean 1994-1998)
Common quail , <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> , Europe	41 pairs, representing an average of 7.9% of the GB population (5 year mean 1994-1998)
Spotted crane , <i>Porzana porzana</i> , Europe	9 individuals, representing an average of 12.3% of the GB population (5 year mean 1994-1998)
Black-headed gull , <i>Larus ridibundus</i> , N & C Europe	2240 pairs, representing an average of 1.7% of the GB population (5 year mean 1994-1998)
Species with peak counts in winter:	
Whooper swan , <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> , Iceland/UK/Ireland	63 individuals, representing an average of 1.1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Gadwall , <i>Anas strepera strepera</i> , NW Europe	286 individuals, representing an average of 1.6% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Mallard , <i>Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos</i> , NW Europe	3850 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Northern pintail , <i>Anas acuta</i> , NW Europe	295 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Northern shoveler , <i>Anas clypeata</i> , NW & C Europe	232 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Water rail , <i>Rallus aquaticus</i> , Europe	8 individuals, representing an average of 1.7% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
European golden plover , <i>Pluvialis apricaria apricaria</i> , P. a. altifrons Iceland & Faroes/E Atlantic	4800 individuals, representing an average of 1.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Ruff , <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> , Europe/W Africa	115 individuals, representing an average of 16.4% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species Information

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Invertebrates.

Panagaeus cruxmajor, *Dytiscus dimidiatus*, *Saprinus virescens*, *Hydraena palustris*, *Atheta terminalis*, *Parphotistus nigricornis*, *Hypera diversipunctata*, *Rhamphomyia phyoprocta*, *Hilara brevittata*, *H. merula*, *Dolichopus cilifemoratus*, *Herrostomus angustifrons*, *Antichaeta analis*, *A. obliviosa*, *Dichetophora finlandica*

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
- Environmental education/ interpretation
- Livestock grazing
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Scientific research
- Traditional cultural

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	+	
Commercial forestry		+
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	+
Arable agriculture (unspecified)		+
Permanent arable agriculture		+
Grazing (unspecified)	+	+
Hay meadows	+	+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	+
Sewage treatment/disposal	+	+
Flood control	+	
Irrigation (incl. agricultural water supply)	+	+
Transport route		+
Domestic 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?
Water diversion for irrigation/domestic/industrial use	1		+		
Reservoir/barrage/dam impact: flooding	1		+		

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For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? NO

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	+	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	+	

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.

Migratory whimbrel.

All important breeding birds.

Otter populations.

Environment.

Biological and chemical water quality (routine).

Miscellaneous.

Research has been undertaken under the Lower Derwent Project into the hydrological and ecological functioning of the river, ings and associated features of wildlife interest.

Eutrophication and its effects on invertebrate communities.

Habitat requirements of farmland birds.

Flora.

NVC survey has been undertaken for much of the site.

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.

Guided walks and lectures are available on request. There are interpretation panels on the site and a site leaflet is available. The site is well used as an educational facility for schools, work-experience placements and for undergraduate/postgraduate demonstrations, placements and projects. It is also used by NGOs for staff development.

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.

There is no significant regular use of the site for recreation or tourism.

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

- ADAS (1990) *Botanical monitoring North Duffield Carrs, North Yorkshire*. Unpublished report from ADAS Land Management Services, to British Coal Corporation
- Crackles, FE (1990) *The flora of the East Riding of Yorkshire*. University of Hull, Hull
- Environment Agency/ Yorkshire Water/ English Nature (2000) *Lower Derwent modelling study: Hydrological modelling report*
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- Key, RS (1987) *Rare and notable species in Yorkshire and Humberside: Species ecology and site occurrence*. Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough (Invertebrate Site Register Report No. 82)
- Mather, JR (1986) *The birds of Yorkshire*. 1st edn. Croom Helm, London
- 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.)
- Pritchard, DE, Housden, SD, Mudge, GP, Galbraith, CA & Pienkowski, MW (eds.) (1992) *Important Bird Areas in the United Kingdom including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man*. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Sandy.
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- 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
- Tolhurst, SA (1987) *A survey of the aquatic flora of the Pocklington Canal, Yorkshire 1986*. Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough (Contract surveys, No. 4)
- Trinder, C. (1990) *Lower Derwent Valley NVC Project – Phase 1*. Nature Conservancy Council North-East England Region (unpublished report)
- Woodroffe, G (1998) Reinforcing otter populations of the Derwent and Esk catchments in North Yorkshire. *British Wildlife*, **9**(3), 145-153

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