

Site Improvement Plan

Orton Pit

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)

UK0030053 Orton Pit SAC

Site description

Orton Pit SAC is comprised of an extensive network of pond-systems occupying disused ridge-and-furrow created as a result of clay extraction for the brick-making industry. The site is of special interest due to both its populations of Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*, containing some of the largest populations known in the UK and possibly Europe, and a network of meso-eutrophic standing water habitats which support an assemblage of nationally rare and scarce *charophyte* (stonewort) species. Ten species of *charophyte* are known to occur at Orton Pit SAC.

Plan Summary

This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Predation	Threat	S1166 Great crested newt	Fish predation and GCN larvae survival study	Natural England, Landowner(s), Froglife
2 Inappropriate scrub control	Threat	H3140 Calcium-rich nutrient-poor lakes, lochs and pools, S1166 Great crested newt	Increase scrub management effort through CES.	Natural England, Landowner(s), Froglife
3 Inappropriate weed control	Threat	H3140 Calcium-rich nutrient-poor lakes, lochs and pools	Increase weed control effort through CES.	Natural England, Landowner(s), Froglife
4 Direct impact from 3rd party	Threat	S1166 Great crested newt	Improve partnership working to manage incidences and improve education and awareness	Natural England, Peterborough City Council, Landowner(s), Froglife
5 Disease	Threat	S1166 Great crested newt	Monitor signs of disease to GCNs and implement future strategy.	Natural England, Landowner(s), Froglife

Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

1 Predation

Whilst surveys of Great crested newts (GCNs) have indicated a positive trend of numbers on site, numbers of fish-free ponds have decreased. The ongoing spread of predatory fish has implications for longer term GCN population sizes.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Investigation into the impact of fish on Great crested newt (GCN) recruitment at the site, and feasibility study of how to limit the spread of fish to unpopulated ponds. Produce a clear methodology for abundance and trend estimation for the whole GCN population on site including costs at different levels of trend change.	£80,000	2014-17	Invasive Control Plan: Other	Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES)	Natural England	Landowner(s), Froglife

2 Inappropriate scrub control

The terrestrial grassland/scrub mosaic of habitat is losing its value for Great crested newt (GCN) as succession takes place. Shading from scrub, and lack of open or short turf are reducing the foraging opportunities for the newts.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Increased resource is required to improve the terrestrial habitat for GCNs through increased scrub management.	£5,000	2015-20	Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES)	Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES)	Natural England	Landowner(s), Froglife

3 Inappropriate weed control

Chara canescens requires open, vegetation free ponds, as the site matures and succession develops, reed and other large graminoides are likely to become a dominant feature, diminishing habitat opportunities for this species.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
3A	Continued resourcing is required to reduce successional stages in ponds to provide habitat opportunities for <i>Chara canescens</i> .	£5,000	2015-20	Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES)	Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES)	Natural England	Landowner(s), Froglife

4 Direct impact from 3rd party

The site is currently affected by illegal activities including off-roading, vandalism, arson and disturbance from dogs jumping into ponds.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
4A	Partnership working between Natural England, Police and legitimate users of the site (Froglife/landowner) is required to ensure quick response to incidences and accurate reporting. Set up a Memorandum of Understanding/partnership group to agree protocol over evidence gathering against third parties carrying out damaging activities.	None	2015-20	Partnership agreement	n/a	Natural England	Landowner(s), Other, Froglife
4B	Collate information regarding known incidences of illicit vehicle use for enforcement where third party damage or disturbance is observed.	Staff time	2015-20	Enforcement	n/a	Natural England	

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
4C	Collate information regarding known incidences of illicit vehicle use. Any registration details obtained should be passed onto the relevant authorities.	Staff time	2015-20	Enforcement: S34 Road Traffic Act/ S28p(6) Liaison With Natural England	n/a	Natural England	
<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
4D	Wardening is currently provided onsite by Froglife, however, additional levels of wardening cover is needed during key time periods when damaging activities occur, including school holidays and weekends during the spring and summer.	Not yet determined	2015-20	Advice: Wardening	Not yet determined	Natural England	Froglife
<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
4E	Work with Froglife, Peterborough City Council and landowners to develop an education and awareness plan to ensure the local community better understand the importance of the site. This should include measures such as school visits, signage, leaflets and open days.	Not yet determined	2015-20	Advice: Education & awareness raising	Not yet determined	Natural England	Peterborough City Council, Landowner(s), Froglife

5 Disease

Chytrid fungus is a major threat to the amphibian assemblage found at the site, and could be devastating to the Great crested newt feature.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
5A	A program of regular liaison with land managers to monitor for signs of disease is required, which will be subsequently followed up with a strategy for tackling it based on best practice advice from national specialists.	None	2015-20	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	n/a	Natural England	Landowner(s), Froglife

Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Orton Pit SAC

S1166 *Triturus cristatus*: Great crested newt

H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara spp*

Site location and links

Orton Pit SAC

Area (ha) **141.24** Grid reference **TL162943** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities City of Peterborough

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Orton Pit SAC](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan [n/a](#)

Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.

Orton Pit SAC

<i>River basin</i>	Anglian RBMP
<i>WFD Management catchment</i>	Nene
<i>WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)</i>	n/a

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Orton Pit SAC	Orton Pit SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Orton Pit SAC	n/a

Ramsar	
Orton Pit SAC	n/a

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Orton Pit SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	08/01/2015	

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000



Environment
Agency

