



**Marine consultation summary document for
the extension of
Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay
Special Protection Area (SPA)**

July 2016

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Purpose of this document

This document provides guidance to stakeholders for the formal consultation on the proposals to extend the existing Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Special Protection Area (SPA).

It explains:

- Natural England's proposal
- the background information which is helpful in understanding Natural England's proposal
- how to respond

Site maps

Available to view on the consultation page (<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/natural-England-marine/dungeness-consultation>).

Natural England's proposal for extensions to the boundary of the existing Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA

Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA is being considered by Natural England for boundary extension. The existing SPA, which was originally classified in 1999 as Dungeness to Pett Level SPA, regularly supports more than 1% of the Great Britain populations of the following 12 species listed in Annex I of the European Commission (EC) Birds Directive; three breeding tern species (Sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, common tern *Sterna hirundo* and little tern *Sternula albifrons*), breeding Mediterranean gull *Larus melanocephalus*, breeding Eurasian marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, breeding pied avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, non-breeding great bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, non-breeding Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, non-breeding hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, non-breeding European golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, non-breeding ruff *Philomachus pugnax* and non-breeding aquatic warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*. This SPA also supports more than 1% of the biogeographical population of shoveler *Anas clypeata* (a regularly occurring migratory species) and more than 20,000 waterbirds during the non-breeding season. In 2010, following revisions of qualifying interest features, several terrestrial extensions were proposed as well as a name change. These changes took effect in March 2016 and the new site (incorporating the terrestrial extensions) is now known as Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA. The new proposed extension to the existing site will offer protection of the at sea foraging areas for little, common and Sandwich tern, enhancing the protection already afforded to their feeding and nesting areas within the existing SPA site boundary.

The site summary and the potential economic impacts summary provide the background information to support the proposal. The departmental brief provides the full scientific rationale for the proposal.

Site summary

The surrounding marine environment of little, common and Sandwich tern colonies within the existing SPA site boundary are important foraging grounds during the breeding season. It is proposed that the westernmost boundary of the existing SPA is extended 21 km further west to Bexhill; that the northernmost boundary is extended 9.6 km further north as far as West Hythe; and that the stretch of foreshore around the point of Dungeness is included within the new site. Between the westernmost and northernmost limits it is proposed that the seaward boundary of the current site is extended up to approximately 9km further seaward. Changes to the landward boundary of the existing SPA are not proposed. The area already classified within the existing SPA is 4,010.29ha and the proposed marine extension is 30,364.13ha. This results in the total area of the SPA after extension being 34,374.42 ha.

The four new areas of the proposed extension are:

- a. Romney Sands – an alongshore extension of the northernmost existing site boundary to include the stretch of coastline past St. Mary’s Bay and Dymchurch up to West Hythe. The landward boundary of the extension follows the mean high water (MHW) mark which includes intertidal habitats as well as subtidal habitats out to the seaward limit. The seaward limit of the boundary moves further offshore (heading south-west) merging into the furthest seaward boundary.
- b. Dungeness Point to Galloways lookout – an alongshore extension to encompass the stretch of foreshore around Dungeness Point to join-up the two existing coastal SPA sections (Littlestone-on-Sea to Dungeness Point and Camber Sands to Broomhill Sands i.e. Galloways Lookout). The landward boundary of the extension follows MHW including intertidal habitats as well as subtidal habitats out to the seaward limit.
- c. Rye Bay – extending into the marine environment with a seaward boundary out to a maximum distance of 9km offshore.
- d. Cliff End to Bexhill – an alongshore extension between Cliff End and Bexhill which includes the rockier foreshore between Cliff End and Hastings, and the mix of rocky and sandy shores between Hastings and Bexhill. The landward boundary of the extension follows MHW and includes intertidal habitats as well as subtidal habitats out to the seaward limit. The seaward limit moves further offshore (heading north-east) merging into the furthest seaward boundary (no more than 9km).

These proposed extensions will provide continuous SPA coverage for common terns, little terns and Sandwich terns foraging from within the existing Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA.

Summary of potential economic impacts

A preliminary assessment of the potential economic impacts of classifying the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay pSPA has been completed. This concluded that the additional costs imposed by the site's re-classification were relatively low as:

- The extension of the site covers important foraging areas for breeding common, Sandwich and little tern. These birds are already associated with existing SPA they are already afforded a degree of protection.

The potential costs that can be attributed directly to the re-classification of the site are those required for additional site monitoring. Based on experience of monitoring required at this site the additional costs are estimated to be £500 per survey (not more than £25,000.00 in one year, every 6 years dependent on emerging monitoring strategy). No other significant costs have been identified.

The estimated costs of classifying the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay pSPA are too low to trigger requirement for Natural England to produce a full socio-economic impact assessment.

How to respond

This consultation runs for 13 weeks from 18th October 2016 to 17th January 2017 and is run in accordance with the [government consultation principles](#). Please navigate to the following locations and read the documentation which will help with your response:

- Departmental Brief setting out the scientific case for the pSPA on the consultation page (<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/natural-england-marine/dungeness-consultation>).
- You may also find it useful to read [TIN120: Establishing Marine Special Protection Areas](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/1476400) (<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/1476400>).

Please submit your response by either completing the survey available on the consultation page above, by e-mailing dungenessconsultation@naturalengland.org.uk or by post to:

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Results from the consultation will be submitted as a report to the Secretary of State for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (SoS). Following consideration of that report, the SoS will decide whether or not to classify the site as a SPA.

If you don't have access to the Internet, please contact us for copies of the documents you need.

Confidentiality

Using and sharing your consultation response:

In line with Natural England's [Access to Information Statement](#), at the end of the consultation period copies of the responses and/or the information contained in them may be subject to publication or release to the public on request and/or on our website.

A report will also be produced collating all representations made during the formal consultation period together with any recommendations arising from the consultation for the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will consider this report before deciding whether or not to classify the site as a SPA.

If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please explain clearly why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. Natural England will acknowledge your explanation, but can't give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances; for example, if we receive a request for release of the information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not be regarded as binding on Natural England.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=natural-England&publication_filter_option=consultations. This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not the names, addresses or other contact details of individual respondents. For more information, please see Natural England's personal information charter on how your information is handled.

Use of maps

Natural England has provided maps which show the complete boundary and additional maps where necessary to support the explanations given for the boundary locations.

Maps which accompany the site summary should ideally be printed on A3 paper. If you don't have this facility:

- print the relevant chapter text
- view the associated map on your computer screen, using the zoom tool to view it at a suitable size