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CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES and DEFINITIONS OF FAVOURABLE CONDITION for DESIGNATED FEATURES OF INTEREST:

These Conservation Objectives relate to all designated features on the SSSI, whether designated as SSSI, SPA, SAC or Ramsar features.

Name of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
North Norfolk Coast	
Names of designated international sites	
Special Area for Conservation (SAC)	The Wash & North Norfolk Coast
Special Protection Area (SPA)	North Norfolk Coast
Ramsar	North Norfolk Coast
Relationship between site designations	
<p>The SPA and Ramsar site are coincident with the SSSI boundary. The SSSI is a component of the North Norfolk Coast GCR. The SAC extends beyond the MLW boundary of the SSSI, SPA and Ramsar and includes subtidal features</p>	

Version Control information		
Status of this Version (Draft, Consultation Draft, Final)	Consultation Draft	
Prepared by:	Ian Levett & Peter Lambley	
Date of this version:	30/11/06	
Date of generic guidance on favourable condition used:	CSM Guidance for Saltmarsh (Aug 2004), Sand Dunes (Aug 2004), Vegetated Coastal Shingle (Aug 2004), Lowland Wetlands (Aug 2004), ENRR315, Woodlands (Feb 2004), Vascular Plant Species (Feb 2004), Mammals (Aug 2004), Marine Mammals (May 2005), Reptiles & Amphibians (Feb 2004) Birds (Aug 2004), Bryophytes and Lichens (July 2005), Earth Science (Feb 2004), Littoral sediment (Aug 2004), Inshore sublittoral sediment (Aug 2004), Terrestrial mammals (Aug 2004).	
Other notes/version history :		
Quality Assurance information		
Checked by	Name:	Date:
	Signature	

Conservation Objectives and definitions of Favourable Condition: notes for users

Conservation Objectives

SSSIs are notified because of specific biological or geological features. Conservation Objectives define the desired state for each site in terms of the features for which they have been designated. When these features are being managed in a way which maintains their nature conservation value, then they are said to be in 'favourable condition'. It is a Government target that 95% of the total area of SSSIs should be in favourable condition by 2010.

Definitions of Favourable Condition

The Conservation Objectives are accompanied by one or more habitat extent and quality definitions for the special interest features at this site. These are subject to periodic reassessment and may be updated to reflect new information or knowledge; they will be used by Natural England and other relevant authorities to determine if a site is in favourable condition. The standards for favourable condition have been developed and are applied throughout the UK.

Use under the Habitats Regulations

The Conservation Objectives and definitions of favourable condition for features on the SSSI may inform the scope and nature of any 'appropriate assessment' under the Habitats Regulations. An appropriate assessment will also require consideration of issues specific to the individual plan or project. The habitat quality definitions do not by themselves provide a comprehensive basis on which to assess plans and projects as required under Regulations 20-21, 24, 48-50 and 54 - 85. The scope and content of an appropriate assessment will depend upon the location, size and significance of the proposed project. Natural England will advise on a case by case basis.

Following an appropriate assessment, competent authorities are required to ascertain the effect on the integrity of the site. The integrity of the site is defined in para C10 of PPS9 as the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified. The determination of favourable condition is separate from the judgement of effect upon integrity. For example, there may be a time-lag between a plan or project being initiated and a consequent adverse effect upon integrity becoming manifest in the condition assessment. In such cases, a plan or project may have an adverse effect upon integrity even though the site remains in favourable condition.

The formal Conservation Objectives for European Sites under the Habitats Regulations are in accordance with para. C10 of PPS9, the reasons for which the European Site was classified or designated. The entry on the Register of European Sites gives the reasons for which a European Site was classified or designated.

Explanatory text for Tables 2 and 3

Tables 2, 2a and 3 set out the measures of condition which we will use to provide evidence to support our assessment of whether features are in favourable condition. They are derived from a set of generic guidance on favourable condition prepared by NE specialists, and have been tailored by local staff to reflect the particular characteristics and site-specific circumstances of individual sites. Quality Assurance has ensured that such site-specific tailoring remains within a nationally consistent set of standards. The tables include an audit trail to provide a summary of the reasoning behind any site-specific targets etc. In some cases the requirements of features or designations may conflict; the detailed basis for any reconciliation of conflicts on this site may be recorded elsewhere

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for this site are, subject to natural change, to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition (*), with particular reference to any dependent component special interest features (habitats, vegetation types, species, species assemblages etc.) for which the land is designated (SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar) as individually listed in Table 1.

Habitat Types represented (Biodiversity Action Plan categories)

- Coastal Lagoons
- Sabellaria spinulosa reefs¹
- Sublittoral Sands and Gravels¹
- Littoral Sediment
- Supralittoral Sediment
- Fen, Marsh and Swamp
- Lowland Neutral Grasslands

¹The SAC extends beyond the MLW boundary of the SSSI, SPA and Ramsar and includes these subtidal features.

Geological features (Geological Site Types)

- Coastal Geomorphology (IA)
- Saltmarsh Morphology (IA)

(*) or restored to favourable condition if features are judged to be unfavourable.

Standards for favourable condition are defined with particular reference to the specific designated features listed in Table 1, and are based on a selected set of attributes for features which most economically define favourable condition as set out in Table 2, Table 2a and Table 3:

Table 1 Individual designated interest features

BAP Broad Habitat Type	Specific designated features	Explanatory description of the feature for clarification	SSSI designated interest features	SAC designated interest features	SPA bird populations dependency on specific habitats				Ramsar criteria applicable to specific habitats				
					Annex 1 species	Migratory species	Waterfowl assemblage	1a Wetland characteristic	2a Hosting rare species &c	3a 20000 waterfowl	3c 1% of population		
Coastal Lagoons	Coastal Lagoons with SM2 <i>Ruppia maritima</i> saltmarsh community	Submerged aquatic community within pans and creeks		*									
	Aggregations of non-breeding birds:												
	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Avocet	*			*				*			
	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	Bar-tailed godwit	*			*				*			
	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Grey plover	*			*				*			
	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Goldeneye	*			*				*			
	Aggregation of non-breeding birds	Wintering waterfowl assemblage				*							
Reefs ¹ Sub littoral sands and gravels ¹	Sabellaria spinulosa reefs	Biogenic reefs		*									
	See appendix 5 (list biotopes)	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water at all times (gravel and sand communities, muddy sand communities)		*									
	Aggregation of breeding birds	Avocet Sandwich tern Common tern Little tern	*			*				*			

¹ The SAC extends beyond the MLW boundary of the SSSI, SPA and Ramsar and includes subtidal features.

Littoral Sediment	Aggregation of non-breeding birds: <i>Limosa lapponica</i> <i>Brania bernicla</i> <i>Calidris alpina</i> <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> <i>Calidris canutus</i> <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> <i>Tringa totanus</i> <i>Calidris alba</i> <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Bar-tailed godwit Brent goose Dunlin Grey plover Knot Oystercatcher Redshank Sanderling Shelduck	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	See appendix 1 (list biotopes)	Intertidal mudflats and sandflats (sand & gravel communities, muddy sand communities, mud communities)	*																	
	SM6 <i>Spartina anglica</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh	*																	
	SM8 Annual <i>Salicornia</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh (Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand)	*																	
	SM9 <i>Suaeda maritima</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh (Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand)	*																	
	SM10 Transitional low marsh vegetation with <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> , annual <i>Salicornia</i> species and <i>Suaeda maritima</i> .	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: low marsh communities)	*																	
	SM11 <i>Aster tripolium</i> var. <i>discoides</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: low marsh communities)	*																	

SM13a <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> saltmarsh, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> dominant sub-community	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: low marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM13b <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> saltmarsh, <i>Glaux maritima</i> sub-community	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: low marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM13c <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> saltmarsh, <i>Limonium vulgare-Airneria maritima</i> sub-community	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: low marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM14 <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: low marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM15 <i>Juncus maritimus</i> – <i>Triglochin maritima</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: mid & upper marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM16a <i>Festuca rubra</i> saltmarsh <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> sub-community	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: mid & upper marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM17 <i>Artemisia maritima</i> saltmarsh	Saltmarsh (Atlantic saltmeadows: mid & upper marsh communities)	*	*																	
SM21 <i>Suaeda vera-Limonium binervosum</i> saltmarsh community	Saltmarsh (Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub)	*	*																	
SM24 <i>Elymus pycnanthus</i> saltmarsh community	Saltmarsh	*	*																	
SM25 <i>Suaeda vera</i> driftline community	Saltmarsh (Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub)	*	*																	
Vascular Plant Assemblage																				

Supralittoral Sediment	within SM21 community: <i>Frankenia laevis</i> <i>Limonium bellidifolium</i> Aggregation of non- breeding birds <i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Sea heath Matted sea lavender Wintering waterfowl assemblage Harbour (common) seal Otter	*	*																	
	<i>Lutra lutra</i>		*																		
	SD1 <i>Rumex crispus</i> - <i>Glaucium flavum</i> ; annual vegetation of drift lines	Vegetated shingle	*																		
	SD2 <i>Honkenya peploides</i> - <i>Cakile maritima</i> ; annual vegetation of drift lines	Strandline vegetation	*																		
	SD4 <i>Elymus farctus</i> ssp. <i>Boreali-atlanticus</i> foredune community; embryonic shifting dunes	Shifting dunes	*																		
	SD6 <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ; shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila</i> <i>arenaria</i>	Shifting dunes	*																		
	SD7 <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> - <i>Festuca rubra</i> ; fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Fixed dune grassland	*																		
	SD8 <i>Festuca rubra</i> - <i>Galium</i> <i>verum</i> ; fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Fixed dune grassland	*																		
	SD9 <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> - <i>arrhenatherum elatius</i> ; fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Fixed dune grassland	*																		
	SD10 <i>Carex arenaria</i> ; fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Fixed dune grassland	*																		

Fen, Marsh and Swamp	SD11 <i>Carex arenaria-Cornicularia aculeate</i> ; fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Fixed dune grassland	*	*																		
	SD16 <i>Salix repens-Holcus lanatus</i> ; humid dune slacks	Dune slacks	*	*																		
	<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>	Petalwort		*																		
	Vascular Plant Assemblage: <i>Gnaphalium luteoalbum Corynephorus canescens</i>	Jersey cudweed Grey hair-grass	*	*																		
	<i>Bufo calamita</i>	Natterjack toad	*																		*	
	Aggregation of breeding birds:	Common tern	*	*																	*	
	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Little tern	*	*																	*	
	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>	Sandwich tern	*	*																	*	
	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Roseate tern	*	*																	*	
	Aggregations of non-breeding birds:	Shelduck	*	*																	*	
	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Ringed plover	*	*																	*	
	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Swamp and reedbed	*																			
	S4 <i>Phragmites australis</i> swamp and reedbed	Swamp	*																			
	S21 <i>Scirpus maritimus</i> swamp	Tall-herb fen	*																			
	S26 <i>Phragmites australis-Urtica dioica</i> tall-herb fen	Otter		*																		
	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	Bittern	*	*																		
	Aggregations of breeding birds:	Marsh harrier	*	*																		
	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Avocet	*	*																		*
	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>																					
Aggregations of non-breeding birds:																						
<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>																						

	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Brent goose	*					*			*		*
	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Oystercatcher	*					*			*		*
	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>	Redshank	*					*			*		*
	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Shelduck	*					*			*		*
	<i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>	White-fronted goose	*					*			*		*
	<i>Anas penelope</i>	Wigeon	*					*			*		*
		Hen harrier		*									
	Assemblage of breeding birds	Mixed assemblage (fen, woodland)	*										
	Aggregation of non-breeding birds	Wintering waterfowl assemblage						*			*		*
Lowland Neutral Grassland	MG11-related MG13-related; Inland wet grassland, <i>Agrostis-Carex</i> grassland,	Wet grassland	*										
	Aggregations of non-breeding birds:												
	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Avocet	*		*			*			*		*
	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Brent goose	*		*			*			*		*
	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Oystercatcher	*		*			*			*		*
	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>	Redshank	*		*			*			*		*
	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Shelduck	*		*			*			*		*
	<i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>	White-fronted goose	*		*			*			*		*
	<i>Anas penelope</i>	Wigeon	*		*			*			*		*
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Assemblage of breeding birds	Mixed assemblage (fen, woodland)	*										
Active Process Geomorphological Sites (IA)	Coastal morphology		*										
	Saltmarsh morphology		*										

NB. Features where asterisks are in brackets (*) indicate habitats which are not notified for specific habitat interest (under the relevant designation) but because they support notified species.

Table 2 Habitat extent objectives

Conservation Objective for habitat extent	To maintain the designated features in favourable condition, which is defined in part in relation to a balance of habitat extents (extent attribute). Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:	
Extent - Dynamic balance	On this site favourable condition requires the maintenance of the extent of each habitat type (either designated habitat or habitat supporting designated species). Maintenance implies restoration if evidence from condition assessment suggests a reduction in extent.	

Habitat Feature (BAP Broad Habitat level, or more detailed level if applicable)	Estimated extent (ha) and date of data source/estimate	Site Specific Target range and Measures	Method of assessment	Comments

Coastal Lagoons	15.5ha (Bamber, R.N. & Barnes, R.S.K., Coastal Lagoons Chapter 3.4, 51-53 in Coasts & Seas of the UK Region 6 Eastern England Flamborough Head to Great Yarmouth, JNCC)	<p>A) No decrease in extent from an established baseline, subject to natural change</p> <p>B) At least 60% of the basin filled with water at all states of the tide and all year.</p> <p>A) Area (ha) of lagoon basin, measured at least once per reporting cycle</p> <p>B) Area (ha) of water occupying the basin measured at least once during the reporting cycle at the same time of year (preferably in late winter/early spring and late summer).</p>	<p>A) Extent is an attribute on which reporting is required by the Habitats Directive. Extent influences both sensitivity of the habitat and (together with shape, i.e. length:breadth ratio) diversity of biological community.</p> <p>Percolation lagoons formed by a sedimentary barrier are relatively short lived, even under natural conditions, due to progression of the barrier landward in the long term and infilling by single in the short term due to storms. However, the net extent of the lagoon may also be impacted by presence of man-made structures to landward constraining migration of the habitat</p> <p>The lagoon resource includes several sites, i.e Broadwater, Salt's Hole, Abraham's Bosom and Blakeney spit lagoons.</p> <p>B) Critical to both the definition and maintenance of a lagoon, and the community of species it supports, is the retention of most or all of the water mass within the system at low water in the adjacent estuary or sea.</p> <p>In most cases the area recorded in past surveys is B). Extent of water in late winter/spring may be taken as the likely extent of the lagoon basin. Extent of water in late summer is likely to be less than the extent of the basin.</p>
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<p>Sabellaria spinulosa reefs</p>				<p>North Norfolk waters not extensively mapped, only survey available is Foster-Smith & Sotheran's 1999 work. That survey suggests the area doesn't support many <i>S.spinulosa</i> communities. See Wash conservation objective for more information. Reference: Foster-Smith & Sotheran (1999). Broad scale remote survey and mapping of sublittoral habitats and biota of The Wash and the Lincolnshire and the North Norfolk Coasts. English Nature Research report 336.</p>
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<p>Littoral Sediment (Inter-tidal mudflats and sandflats)</p>	<p>5.874ha (Davison, N. 1995. Chapter 4.1, 63-66 in Coasts & Seas of the UK Region 6 Eastern England Flamborough Head to Great Yarmouth, JNCC)</p>	<p>No decrease in extent of littoral sediment. Assessed periodically against a baseline map showing the distribution of littoral sediment, or through the review of any known activities that may have caused an alteration in extent.</p>	<p>Extent should be assessed periodically (once per monitoring cycle ie 5/6 years?) against a baseline map showing the distribution of littoral sediment, or through the review of any known activities that may have caused an alteration in extent. Possible sources of baseline data are archive remote sensing, aerial photographs and intertidal resource mapping. No existing baseline information on total extent of intertidal flats. EA Monitoring Program (aerial photography, beach surveys etc) doesn't extend to low water mark, although does give useful information on saltmarsh / intertidal flat boundary. Currently seeking to set up contract to use remote sensing data to collect this baseline data.</p>	<p>Where changes in extent are known to occur due to cyclical natural processes, then the target value should accommodate this variability. If required a declining value may be established where sufficient information is available to predict a trend. Where the field assessment judges extent to be unfavourable, and subsequent investigation reveals the cause is clearly attributable to cyclical natural processes, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature's condition could be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, (e.g. due to anthropogenic activities or unrecoverable natural losses) then condition should be considered unfavourable. Changes in extent would be considered unfavourable if attributable to activities which interrupt natural coastal processes e.g. hard sea defences.</p> <p>Issues to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary with saltmarsh communities (especially samphire) difficult to measure • Important to define low water boundary – should be low water mark but can be difficult to measure
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Littoral Sediment (saltmarsh)	2,127ha Burd, F. (1989). Saltmarsh survey of Great Britain No.17, An inventory of British saltmarshes, NCC) & 2157.41ha Stark, H., Hemphill, P. & Whittle, A. (2003).	No decrease in extent from the established baseline, subject to natural change. A baseline map should be prepared to show the distribution of saltmarsh vegetation, using aerial photography or existing NVC data.	Details on how baseline information was determined can be obtained from: (i) Burd, F 1989 (ii) Stark, H., Hemphill, P. & Whittle, A. (2003).	<p>The main difficulty in determining the extent of saltmarsh habitats is defining the extent of the pioneer zone. This is because the plant communities that are characteristic of this zone are ephemeral, have an annual life cycle and their extent may vary from year to year. Some underestimation of pioneer zone extent will therefore arise if the timing of the aerial photograph survey does not coincide with the peak annual extent of the pioneer zone at low tide.</p> <p>Monitoring will need to take account of the dynamic nature of some of these habitats. Coastal squeeze may result in replacement of Atlantic salt meadows by pioneer saltmarsh. A reduction in extent could be further indicated by ground survey to assess for signs of erosion such as toppled vegetated blocks; cliffing; stepping of saltmarsh edge; signs of roots in intertidal mud; signs of stress/damage to plants. Extent needs to be measured at low tide</p>
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<p>Sulfitoral Sands & Gravels</p>	<p>Lack of data?</p>	<p>No change in extent of inshore sub littoral sediment habitat</p>	<p>Extent should be assessed and compared periodically against a baseline map or through the review of any known activities which may have caused an alteration in extent.</p> <p>Baseline information on extent: EA bathymetric survey? Uses side scan sonar. Along profiles to 15m depth. 1km spacing between profiles. Surveys undertaken once every 5 years.</p>	<p>Where changes in extent are known to occur due to cyclical natural processes, then the target value should accommodate this variability. If required a declining value may be established where sufficient information is available to predict a trend.</p> <p>Where the field assessment judges extent to be unfavourable, and subsequent investigation reveals the cause is clearly attributable to cyclical natural processes, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature's condition could be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, (e.g. due to anthropogenic activities or unrecoverable natural losses) then condition should be considered unfavourable.</p> <p>Changes in extent would be considered unfavourable, if attributable to activities which remove parts of the feature i.e. dredging, aggregate extraction.</p> <p>Acoustic mapping to determine the extent of the sediment habitats within the whole site is unlikely to be used after initial mapping exercises are undertaken. A stratified sampling strategy guided by the initial inventory of the whole resource is likely. In shallow areas it might be appropriate to use air photo/satellite remote sensing, with suitable ground validation.</p> <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EA Shoreline monitoring programme. Coverage? If stratified approach to be used focus on areas where change most likely to occur eg maintenance dredging disposal sites? subtidal channels being filled by landward movement of offshore banks? Dredge fisheries?
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Audit Trail	
Rationale for habitat extent attribute	
(Include methods of estimation (measures) and the approximate degree of change which these are capable of detecting).	
The methods used to assess saltmarsh extent are relatively broad-scale estimates and include habitats (such as creeks) which may not specifically support saltmarsh vegetation. The difference of 30ha between Burd (1989) and Stark <i>et al</i> (2003) may be explained by the growth of saltmarsh in Holkham Bay during the period between the two surveys. In addition determining the boundary of the pioneer zone is difficult and will vary with the time of the survey.	
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)	
Other Notes	

Table 2a Species population objectives

Conservation Objective for species populations	To maintain the designated species in favourable condition, which is defined in part in relation to their population attributes. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:		
Population balance	On this site favourable condition requires the maintenance of the population of each designated species or assemblage. Maintenance implies restoration if evidence from condition assessment suggests a reduction in size of population or assemblage.		
Species Feature (species or assemblage)	List supporting BAP Broad Habitats	Population Attribute (e.g. presence/absence, population size or assemblage score)	Site Specific Target range and Measures (specify geographical range over which target applies i.e. site, BAP broad habitat or more specific)
			Comments

<p>Harbour (Common) seal</p>	<p>Moult distribution as shown in SMRU annual moult data</p>	<p>Distribution of moulting harbour seals within the SAC: A stable or increasing area of usage within the SAC</p>	<p>SMRU annual aerial surveys of moulting seals. Surveys undertaken during the annual moult in August when the greatest and most consistent number of seals are ashore. To further maximise the number of seals counted, surveys are restricted to the period 1.5hrs before and 2hrs after low water. These surveys produce an estimate of the minimum number of harbour seals in the area surveyed.</p>	<p>In north Norfolk common seals concentrated at Blakeney Point. Maintenance of viable populations within SACs is clearly linked to the availability of suitable haul-out sites with foraging areas nearby (<60km) throughout the life cycle. In The Wash, the seals diet is dominated by whiting, sole, dragonet and gobies, with a strong seasonality apparent (Hall et al, 1998). Harbour seals are a mobile species and there is some evidence of redistribution over a period of a few years, which suggests that they may alter the emphasis of use of certain areas in favour of others.</p> <p>Since harbour seals highly mobile important to consider the numbers and distribution of seals in areas adjacent to the SAC to put local population into context. Recent SMRU survey data suggests there may be a re-distribution of individuals between The Wash and Donna Nook / Blakeney: The Wash (c. 3000 seals pre-epidemic) seemed to decline about 22% in 2002 when PDV hit with steady decline since, but for the smaller colonies at Blakeney Point and Donna Nook (c 700, 250 seals respectively pre-epidemic) the epidemic only seemed to cause a temporary interruption to steady growth rates. This may be a cause for concern and require further investigation. However, pup production is increasing in The Wash and is at a higher rate than prior to the epidemic despite the smaller adult population so The Wash population may start increasing again. A similar trend in pup production was observed following the 1988 epidemic.</p>
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Species Feature (species or assemblage)	Population Attribute (eg presence/absence, population size or assemblage score)	Site Specific Target range and Measures (specify geographical range over which target applies ie site, BAP broad habitat or more specific)	Comments
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<p>Harbour seals</p>	<p>Number of harbour seals present during moulting season in the SAC.</p> <p>Seals are resident in site throughout year</p>	<p>A stable or increasing number of harbour seals present throughout the SAC, measured during the moulting season.</p> <p>Assessment method: SMRU annual aerial surveys of moulting seals. SMRU undertake annual moult counts as part of NERC's statutory obligation under the Conservation of Seals Act 1970). Surveys undertaken during the annual moult in August when the greatest and most consistent number of seals are ashore. To further maximise the number of seals counted, surveys are restricted to the period 1.5hrs before and 2hrs after low water. These surveys produce an estimate of the minimum number of harbour seals in the area surveyed.</p> <p>SMRU moult counts show significant colony of seals present at Blakeney. Since surveys began, peak count has been greater than 700 seals achieved in 1988, 2000 (when highest count of 895 seals observed) and since 2004. The Blakeney population crashed to low levels following the first PDV epidemic with c. 300 in 1989, 73 in 1990 and none in 1991. Since then population has been increasing steadily and as noted in comments 2002 epidemic only caused temporary interruption to steady growth rates.</p>	<p>Numbers of seals at haul-out sites varies throughout year. In winter months, seals appear to spend more time at sea, presumably feeding. During the breeding season (late May – early July) seals appear more dispersed and in smaller groups than during their moult. From late July to early Sept, during the annual moult, groups tend to be larger than at other times of year and numbers at many haul-out sites appear to be at maximum.</p> <p>Since harbour seals highly mobile important to consider the numbers and distribution of seals in areas adjacent to the SAC to put local population into context. Recent SMRU survey data suggests there may be a re-distribution of individuals between The Wash and Donna Nook / Blakeney: The Wash (c. 3000 seals pre-epidemic) seemed to decline about 22% in 2002 when PDV hit with steady decline since, but for the smaller colonies at Blakeney Point and Donna Nook (c 700, 250 seals respectively pre-epidemic) the epidemic only seemed to cause a temporary interruption to steady growth rates. This may be a cause for concern and requires further investigation. However, pup production is increasing in The Wash and is at a higher rate than prior to the epidemic despite the smaller adult population so The Wash population may start increasing again. A similar trend in pup production was observed following the 1988 epidemic.</p>
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Audit Trail	
Rationale for species population attributes	
(Include methods of estimation (measures), and the approximate degree of change which these are capable of detecting).	
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)	
Other Notes	
References	
Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Marine Mammals. JNCC, May 2005	
Hall et al (1998). Seasonal variation in the diet of harbour seals in the south-western North Sea: prey availability and predator preferences. Marine Ecology Progress Series 170: 269-281.	

Table 3a Site-Specific definitions of Favourable Condition – Saline lagoons

Conservation Objective for this habitat type			
To maintain the saline lagoon habitat at this site in favourable condition, with particular reference to relevant specific designated interest features. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:			
Site-specific details of any geographical variation or limitations (where the favourable condition standards apply)			
Site-specific standards defining favourable condition			
Attribute	Target	Method of assessment	Use for CA?
Isolating barrier – presence and nature	No change in presence, nature and integrity of the isolating barrier	For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	Yes
		Where changes in the isolating barrier are attributable to natural processes (e.g. coastal erosion) also when restorative measures are not viable, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature's condition could be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the	

			<p>failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site (eg due to anthropogenic or unrecoverable natural losses) then condition should be considered unfavourable.</p> <p>Changes in presence, nature and integrity of the isolating barrier would be considered unfavourable if attributable to alterations in structure arising from anthropogenic activities or due to loss or damage of a sluice or other flow control mechanism.</p>	
<p>Salinity regime</p>	<p>Salinity should be maintained within the range 10 ppt to 50 ppt.</p> <p>Average salinity throughout a saline lagoon would be expected to lie within a range of between 15ppt and 40ppt. Sustained levels of <10ppt and >50ppt should trigger management action in many cases, but a good understanding of local ranges and periodic variability's is essential to individual site management.</p> <p>At this site it is expected that a salinity gradient occurs ranging from less saline waters in the northern lagoons to higher salinities in the southern lagoons.</p>	<p>Seasonal averages (ppt) to be assessed periodically. Salinity measurements should be made at different states of the tide and in different seasons to account for variation in the short term (tidal cycles), medium term (in direct response to rainfall) and in the longer term (in response to seasonal rainfall and periods of drought). Preferably in late winter/early spring and later summer to determine seasonal lows and highs. Information relating to recent / annual weather patterns should be considered when comparing records over time, to help interpret any variations observed. Depending on the size and shape of the lagoon, it may be necessary to measure along a salinity gradient. In complex lagoon systems salinity gradients may occur on more than one horizontal axis and may also include vertical stratification.</p>	<p>Where the field assessment judges the salinity change to be unfavourable, and subsequent investigation reveals the cause is clearly attributable to natural processes, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature's condition could be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site (e.g. due to anthropogenic activities or unrecoverable natural losses) then condition should be considered unfavourable.</p> <p>Changes in salinity would be considered unfavourable if attributable to the following: anthropogenic alterations to the isolating barrier; water abstraction or discharge altering the freshwater input; loss or damage to a sluice or other flow control mechanism.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p>Biotope composition of lagoon</p>	<p>Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site, allowing for succession/ known cyclical change.</p>	<p>Essential that salinity regime is always assessed at a similar time of the year and state of tide. Salinity of adjacent source marine waters should be considered at the same time.</p> <p>Percolation lagoons have a long-term trend to become freshwater. This is a result of natural siltation preventing percolation of seawater into the system. It may also be a result of the separating barrier building up and preventing overtopping. The target may require revision over time to reflect such changes in salinity regime.</p> <p>In cases where reliable baseline data are unavailable the presence and abundance of lagoon species/biotopes may act as a proxy measure of salinity. Changes in the biota that indicate sustained change in the salinity regime should act as a trigger for more intensive salinity surveillance surveys.</p> <p>For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p> <p>Repeated assessment of overall biotope composition or a subset of biotopes identified for the site. For details of assessment techniques see and Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p>	<p>Where the field assessment judges the biotope composition to be unfavourable, and subsequent investigation reveals the cause is clearly attributable to cyclical natural processes, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature's condition could</p>	<p>Yes</p>
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				be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, (e.g. due to anthropogenic activities or unrecoverable natural losses) then condition should be considered unfavourable.	
Distribution of biotopes	Maintain the distribution of biotopes allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change.	Assessment of the distribution of biotope(s) identified for the site. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.		Where a field assessment judges the condition of this attribute to be unfavourable and subsequent investigation indicates the cause is due to natural factors, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature's condition could be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change in biotope distribution outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable.	Yes: not a mandatory CSM attribute but important measure of condition at this site
Species population measures - Presence or abundance of specified species	Maintain presence and/or abundance of the specified species (to ensure no decline in biotope quality due to changes in presence / abundance of specified species, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change).	Assessment of the presence / absence or abundance of a specified species identified for the feature. For details of assessment techniques see Section 2 (JNCC, 2004) and Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.		Where disturbance causes a species of nature conservation importance to be lost, or if there is a significant reduction in abundance, then condition would be considered unfavourable. Species selected should reflect the specific biological characteristics of the lagoon. Species should be used from the list of lagoonal specialists in Appendix A of JNCC 2004. The advice concerning judgement of the feature condition provided under species composition equally applies to this section and should be consulted:	Yes: not a mandatory CSM attribute but important measure of condition at this site

			<p>“Where the field assessment judges the species composition to be unfavourable, and subsequent investigation reveals the cause is clearly attributable to cyclical natural processes such as mass recruitment and dieback of characterising species, the final assessment will require expert judgement to determine the reported condition of the feature. The feature’s condition could be declared favourable where the officer is certain that the conservation interest of the feature is not compromised by the failure of this attribute to meet its target condition. Where there is a change in species composition outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site (e.g. due to anthropogenic activities or unrecoverable natural losses) then condition should be considered unfavourable.”</p>
Audit Trail			
Rationale for limiting standards to specified parts of the site			
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)			
Rationale for selection of measures of condition (features and attributes for use in condition assessment)			
<p>(The selected vegetation attributes are those considered to most economically define favourable condition at this site for the broad habitat type and any dependent designated species).</p>			

Table 3b Site-Specific definitions of Favourable Condition – Saltmarsh

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE FOR THIS HABITAT TYPE	<p>To maintain the coastal saltmarsh habitat at this site in favourable condition, with particular reference to relevant specific designated interest features. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:</p>
Site-specific details of any geographical variation or limitations (where the favourable condition standards apply)	

The location of saltmarsh within The North Norfolk Coast SSSI is shown in FigureX.

Site-specific standards defining favourable condition

Attribute	Target	Method of assessment	Comments
Physical structure: creeks and pans	There should be no alteration of natural creek patterns or loss of pans as determined at the time of notification as a result of anthropogenic factors.	The baseline information for established creek patterns and pans can be obtained from the series of aerial photographs taken by the Environment Agency in the period 1984 to 2000. Future changes to be monitored using aerial photographs combined with information gathered from site visits.	Major erosion of saltmarsh is indicated by internal dissection and enlargement of the drainage network, ultimately leading to the creation of mud basins. However, caution needs to be taken when assessing creeks patterns in front of areas of any set-back behind the sea wall. This is because considerable re-adjustment of natural creek patterns will occur for several years after the sea wall is breached.
Vegetation structure: zonation of vegetation	Maintain the baseline range of saltmarsh zonations, NVC communities and Annex 1 habitats within the levels recorded in the 2001-02 saltmarsh surveys.	Details on how baseline information was determined can be obtained from: Stark, H., Hemphill, P. & Whittle, A. (2003)	Saltmarsh has up to five main zones: pioneer, low-mid marsh, mid-upper marsh, saltmarsh strand plus transitions. The NVC saltmarsh categories recorded within The North Norfolk Coast SSSI are: Lower saltmarsh: SM6, SM8, SM9, SM10, SM11, Low/middle marsh: SM13, SM14, SM15, SM16, Upper saltmarsh: SM17, SM21, SM24, SM25, S4d. The position of transitional communities S4d, SM21 & SM25 is a good indicator of any change in zonation.
Vegetation structure: sward height	Maintain the saltmarsh area as a mosaic of short turf swards (5 – 15 cm) interspersed with areas of tussocks (>15cm). These habitats should ideally occur together in roughly equal amounts, although actual levels will be determined by accessibility to grazing animals/birds, vulnerability to coastal erosion as well as the distribution and requirements of	Visual assessment during standard condition monitoring site visit.	Areas of the North Norfolk Coast were grazed before the Second World War but there has been little or none since, except by wildfowl. At present there is no evidence that grazing is required to keep the vegetation structure in this desired state. Much of the vegetation structure in north Norfolk is probably determined at least in part by small changes in topography resulting from the complex geomorphology of this coast.

<p>Vegetation composition: characteristic species</p>	<p>nationally important species.</p> <p>Maintain frequency of characteristic species of saltmarsh zones as follows:</p> <p><u>Pioneer zone:</u> At least one of the following species frequent and another occasional: <i>Salicornia</i> spp, <i>Suaeda maritima</i>, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, <i>Aster tripolium</i></p> <p><u>Low-mid marsh:</u> At least one of the following species dominant: <i>Aster tripolium</i>, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i> or <i>Salicornia</i> spp;</p> <p>and two of the following species at least frequent: <i>Armeria maritima</i>, <i>Puccinellia maritima</i>, <i>Triglochin maritima</i>, <i>Plantago maritima</i>, <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i>, <i>Spergularia maritima</i>, <i>Suaeda maritima</i>, <i>Salicornia</i> spp.</p> <p><u>Mid-upper marsh:</u> At least one of the following species abundant and three frequent: <i>Festuca rubra</i>, <i>Armeria maritima</i>, <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>, <i>Juncus maritimus</i>, <i>Limonium vulgare</i>, <i>Glaux maritima</i>, <i>Plantago maritima</i>, <i>Aster tripolium</i>, <i>Triglochin maritima</i>, <i>Seriphidium</i></p>	<p>Visual assessment of cover, using structured walk using methodology recommended in Watts, S. & Brockington, S. (2004). Common standards monitoring: generic guidance on objective setting and condition assessment for saltmarsh. English Nature, Peterborough.</p>	<p>Communities may be dynamic in their distribution and are linked to the physical processes operating at the site, including topography, creek patterns etc.</p> <p>The transitional communities may be dominated by one species eg <i>Suaeda vera</i>.</p> <p><i>Phragmites australis</i> is an indicator of freshwater groundwater flows into the upper saltmarsh zone</p>
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	<p><i>maritimum</i> and <i>Elytrigia aetherica</i></p> <p>Transitional communities: At least one of the following species: <i>Suaeda vera</i>, <i>Phragmites australis</i> and <i>Limonium binervosum</i>.</p>		
<p>Vegetation composition: negative indicator species <i>Spartina anglica</i></p>	<p>Existing <i>Spartina anglica</i> stands to show no evidence of expansion into pioneer saltmarsh zone (with an indicative target of less than 10 % expansion in a 10 year time-span)</p>	<p>Aerial photographs, together with visual assessment of cover, using structured walk (see Watts, S. & Brockington, S. (2004). Common standards monitoring: generic guidance on objective setting and condition assessment for saltmarsh. English Nature, Peterborough).</p>	<p><i>Spartina anglica</i> is a species that is considered undesirable in intertidal habitats where it is expanding at the expense of mudflats (see Section 7.2). However it can be a precursor to the development of saltmarsh where sediments are accreting. Natural die-back has occurred in some areas.</p>
<p>Other negative indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artificial drainage channels to be limited to those established by Internal Drainage Boards at their drainage outfalls prior to notification of SSSI and to be maintained at baseline levels. ▪ No unauthorised loss of saltmarsh through the erection of artificial structures. Artificial structures include roads, embankments, sluices and associated developments ▪ No obvious signs of pollution. ▪ Turf cutting to be absent ▪ No creation of bare substrate as a result of anthropogenic activities such as vehicle use or trampling. 	<p>Visual assessment during site visit</p>	<p>Baseline levels are determined at the time of notification of the site or from the time authorisation was granted for the operation to be undertaken on the SSSI.</p> <p>In north Norfolk there are several well used</p>

<p>Indicators of local distinctiveness* *If part of the reason for the notification of the site, this is a mandatory attribute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the exception of localised pathways created by livestock or horses to access the saltmarsh, poaching damage from livestock should not exceed 0.001 ha at any one location. ▪ No artificial decrease in fresh groundwater flows on to the saltmarsh 		<p>footpaths across saltmarsh notably in the Stiffkey & Morston areas. In this case it will be any increase in width may be significant</p> <p>In north Norfolk current levels are very low and confined to one marsh.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain Annex 1 habitats (i.e. Pioneer SM8 and SM9 communities, SM10-14, 17, S4d Atlantic Salt Meadows and SM21 and SM25 Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs) at the levels recorded in 2001-02. ▪ Maintain populations of <i>Limonium binervosum</i>, <i>L. bellidifolium</i>, <i>Frankenia laevis</i>, <i>Suaeda vera</i> 	<p>Site specific surveys.</p>	<p>Any change in the distribution of tidal reed beds is a good indicator of variations in discharge. Natural variations are acceptable</p> <p>This attribute is intended to cover any site-specific aspects of this habitat feature (forming part of the reason for notification) which are not adequately covered by the other attributes, or by separate guidance e.g. for notified species</p> <p>No base line information at present for these features.</p>

Audit Trail	
Rationale for limiting standards to specified parts of the site	
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)	
Rationale for selection of measures of condition (features and attributes for use in condition assessment)	
(The selected vegetation attributes are those considered to most economically define favourable condition at this site for the broad habitat type and any dependent designated species).	
Other Notes	

Table 3c Site-Specific definitions of Favourable Condition – Intertidal Flats

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE FOR THIS HABITAT TYPE
To maintain the littoral sediment habitats at this site in favourable condition, with particular reference to relevant specific designated interest features. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:

Site-specific details of any geographical variation or limitations (where the favourable condition standards apply)

Site-specific standards defining favourable condition			
Attribute	Target	Method of assessment	Comments
Biotope composition of littoral sediment	Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site in Perrins & Bunker (1998) and West (2002), allowing for natural succession/ known cyclical change. Biotopes are listed in Annex 1. North	Repeated assessment of overall biotope composition. Details on how baseline information was determined can be found in: Perrins & Bunker (1998). Methodology as Richards, Bunker & Foster-Smith (1996)	Target requires presence of biotopes listed in Annex 1. Where changes in biotope composition are known to be attributable to natural processes (e.g. winter storm/flood events, changes in supporting processes or mass recruitment or dieback of characterising species) then the target value should accommodate this variability.
			Use for CA? Yes

	Norfolk: 15 biotopes	(Handbook for Marine Intertidal Phase 1 and SSSI mapping). Walk-over survey in January 1998 (220 target notes). McCallum (1997). West (2002). For further details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	Where there is a change in biotope composition outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable. Important to note characteristics of baseline years. For example Perrins & Bunker survey – very few live cockle found but previous surveys have found biotopes characterised by cockles in Brancaster and Blakeney areas. Biotope code used in baselines is version 97.06, updated recently 04.05.	
Sediment character: sediment type	Maintain distribution of mud, muddy sand and sand across the feature, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change. Spatial distribution of sediment types shown in: Figure 6 & 7, Perrins & Bunker (1998)	Distribution of sediment types should be assessed across the whole feature and compared to baseline conditions. Target requires maintenance of spatial juxtaposition of specified sediment types (mud, muddy sand, sand) across the feature. Details on how baseline information was determined can be found in: Perrins & Bunker (1998) for details of method see above. For further details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	Where changes in sediment type are known to be clearly attributable to natural processes (e.g. winter storm/flood events, changes in supporting processes) then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where extreme events cause a change in sediment type, then this may have caused a change in the structure of the feature, which may lead to the condition of the feature being considered as unfavourable. Note North Norfolk data very broadscale.	Yes
Distribution of biotopes	Maintain the distribution of biotopes set out in Annex 1, allowing for natural	Assessment of the distribution of biotopes identified for the site in Annex 1, key biotopes shown in		Yes

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	<p>succession/ known cyclical change.</p> <p>Map of biotopes: Figure 4 & 5 (Perrins & Bunker, 1998). Zostera (West 2002).</p> <p>See composition of biotopes attribute for selected biotope partners.</p>	<p>bold.</p> <p>Details on how baseline information was determined can be found in: North Norfolk: Perrins & Bunker (1998) for details of method see above. Zostera: McCallum (1997), West (2002). For further details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p>	<p>Uncommon biotope and of conservation importance, food source for brent geese and wigeon. Where there clearly established natural variation in extent or in cyclical succession between biotopes, then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where there is a change in extent outside the expected variation or a change in the structure of the biotope leading to a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable.</p>	<p>Yes: not a mandatory CSM attribute but <i>Zostera</i> beds key conservation feature of the site.</p>
Extent of Zostera biotope	<p>No change in extent of the Zostera biotope as shown in West (2002). allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change.</p> <p>East Hills / Lodge Marsh particularly important site: 25ha Smaller areas on Scolthead (survey sites a, 1ha; b, 0.03ha; e, 0.75ha & f, 0.05ha) and Stiffkey (0.48ha)</p>	<p>Assessment of the extent of biotope(s) identified for the site because of their nature conservation importance. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001. Baseline information: McCallum (1997), West (2002).</p>		
Species composition of representative or notable	<p>No decline in biotope quality due to changes in species composition or loss of notable species,</p>	<p>Assessment of biotope quality through assessing species composition, where the biotope is representative of the site or</p>	<p>Where a change in species composition is known to be clearly attributable to natural succession, known cyclical change or mass recruitment or dieback of characterising species, then the target value should accommodate this</p>	<p>Yes: not a mandatory CSM attribute but key</p>

<p>biotopes</p>	<p>allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change.</p> <p>Macoma biotopes Cockle biotopes</p>	<p>contains a number of species of conservation importance. Assessing this attribute will require specialist taxonomic expertise. For details of assessment techniques see Section 2 and Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p>	<p>variability.</p> <p>Where there is a change in biotope quality outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable.</p> <p>Dependant on future quantitative surveys</p>	<p>conservation feature of the site.</p>
<p>Species population measures – Population of a species.</p> <p>- Presence or abundance of specified species</p>	<p>Maintain presence or abundance of named positive indicator species. Cockle, Macoma</p> <p>No increase in presence or abundance of named negative indicator species, Ensis directus, Crassostrea gigas, Crepidula fornicata.</p>	<p>Population structure and abundance should be assessed in terms of viability of the named species identified for the feature. For details of assessment techniques see Section 2 and Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001. Assessment of the presence or abundance of positive/negative indicator species identified for the feature. For details of assessment techniques see Section 2 and Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p>	<p>Where there is a sizeable shift in the age/size class structure (i.e. loss of mature adults or recruitment failure) or if disturbance causes a species of nature conservation importance to be lost, or if there is a significant reduction in abundance, then condition would be considered unfavourable.</p> <p>Increased abundance of negative indicator species i.e. those indicative of stressed habitats which would be detrimental to the feature as a whole, would also cause condition to be considered unfavourable.</p>	<p>Yes: not a mandatory CSM attribute but cockle and macoma are key conservation features of the site.</p> <p>Invasive non-natives present in site.</p>
<p>Topography</p>	<p>No change in topography of the littoral sediment, allowing for natural responses to hydrodynamic regime.</p> <p>Topography as shown in EA beach profiles</p>	<p>Tidal elevation and shore slope to be assessed periodically.</p> <p>EA undertake beach profile surveys down transects around the site. Surveys from fixed point inland to Mean Low Water. Transects are spaced at intervals of 1km.</p> <p>For details of assessment techniques see Section 2 and</p>	<p>Obvious changes in topography in terms of an overall lowering (shallowing) of the shore slope may act as a trigger for further investigation. Scouring adjacent to sea defences, which lowers the shore slope, should be considered unfavourable. A suitable period over which to ascertain trends resulting in a net lowering of shore profiles is 5 years.</p>	<p>Yes: not a mandatory CSM attribute but changes in topography give an indication of the stability of the shore, whether erosion is occurring etc.</p>

	Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.
Audit Trail	
Rationale for limiting standards to specified parts of the site	
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)	
Rationale for selection of measures of condition (features and attributes for use in condition assessment) (The selected vegetation attributes are those considered to most economically define favourable condition at this site for the broad habitat type and any dependent designated species).	
Other Notes	
References:	
Davies et al (2001). Marine Monitoring Handbook. JNCC	
McCallum (1997). <i>Zostera</i> survey Wells to Cley, North Norfolk. Unpublished report to English Nature.	
Perrins & Bunker (2002). Biotope survey of the littoral sediments of the North Norfolk candidate SAC. English Nature Research Report 285.	
West (2002). Survey of eelgrass species (<i>Zostera</i> spp.) in the intertidal habitats on the North Norfolk Coast within The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Marine SAC. Unpublished report to English Nature.	
Yates et al (2002). Littoral sediments of The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC: The 1998 and 1999 surveys of intertidal sediment and invertebrates. English Nature Research Report 470.	

Table 3d Site-Specific definitions of Favourable Condition – Subtidal sandbanks

Conservation Objective for this habitat type	To maintain the sub littoral sands and gravel habitats at this site in favourable condition, with particular reference to relevant specific designated interest features. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:
Site-specific details of any geographical variation or limitations (where the favourable condition standards apply)	

Site-specific standards defining favourable condition				
Attribute	Target	Method of assessment	Comments	Use for CA?
Topography	No alteration in topography of the inshore sub littoral sediment, allowing for natural responses to hydrodynamic regime. Topography as shown on Admiralty Charts. Also Figure 8.7 and 8.8 of Foster-Smith & Sotheran (1999).	Assessment of the depth distribution/profile of the inshore sub littoral sediment and periodic comparison with baseline conditions. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001. Foster-Smith & Sotheran used AGDS supported by Admiralty Chart data to produce their bathymetric maps (Foster-Smith & Sotheran, 1999). Other potential data sources are from ESFJC AGDS / Sidescan surveys. Also EA shoreline monitoring programme bathymetric surveys (Uses side scan sonar. Along profiles to 15m depth. 1km spacing between profiles. Surveys undertaken once every 5 years).	The depth distribution of the sediment has a direct influence on the structure and function of the system.	Yes
Sediment character: sediment type	No change in composition of sediment types across the feature, allowing for natural succession/ known cyclical change. Composition of sediment	Distribution of sediment types should be assessed across the whole feature and compared with baseline conditions. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	Where changes in sediment type are known to be clearly attributable to natural processes then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where extreme events cause a change in sediment type, then this may have caused a change in the structure of the feature, which may lead to the condition of the feature being considered as unfavourable.	Yes

Distribution of biotopes	<p>types as shown in Fig 7.2 and 9.2 of Foster-Smith & Sotheran, 1999.</p> <p>Maintain the distribution of biotopes in each sub-feature (gravel and sand communities, muddy sand communities), allowing for natural succession/ known cyclical change.</p> <p>Key biotopes listed in Appendix 5:</p> <p>Gravel & Sand communities sub-feature: CGS.VenBra (<i>Ophiura ophiura</i> beds) IGS. Fas.Lcon (<i>Lanice conchilega</i> beds)? Muddy Sand communities sub-feature: CMS.AbrNucCor (<i>Sabella pavonina</i> community; <i>Sabella discifera</i> / <i>Sabellaria</i> community; <i>Abra alba</i> community; dense <i>Ophiura albida</i> beds) IMS.FaMS.SpiSpi (<i>Scoloplos</i> / <i>Spiophanes</i> community)</p> <p>Distribution of biotopes as set out in Fig 7.3 and 7.4 of Foster-Smith &</p>	<p>Assessment of the distribution of range of biotopes identified for the site. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001.</p>	<p>Where changes in distribution are known to be clearly attributable to cyclical succession or expected shifts in distribution then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where there is a change in biotope distribution outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable</p> <p>Biotopes of North Norfolk mapped using acoustic techniques (AGDS, Sidescan Sonar) which were ground-truthed by grab and video (Foster-Smith & Sotheran, 1999).</p> <p>Appendix 5 lists subtidal biotopes in The Wash and north Norfolk using the national biotope classification but highlighted local distinctiveness where relevant based on the Foster-Smith & Sotheran, 1999 report.</p> <p>Points of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not much data available for north Norfolk, just relatively few sample points in Foster-Smith & Sotheran (1999). -The limited data indicates western Norfolk coast characterised by coarse sandbanks inhabited by <i>Nephtys</i> / <i>bathyporeia</i> community. -The eastern north Norfolk coast appears to support a more heterogeneous distribution of sediments of muddier sands and cobblely sands supporting <i>Sabella discifera</i>; <i>Sabellaria</i> & <i>Lanice</i> communities. 	Yes
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	Sotheran, 1999, and Fig 2.1 and 2.2 of Bailey, Coad & Bamber, 2005.			
Extent of sub-feature	No change in extent of inshore sublittoral sediment biotopes or sub-feature (Gravel and sand communities, muddy sand) identified for the site allowing for natural succession / known cyclical change	Assessment of the extent of biotopes identified for the site because of their nature conservation importance. For details of assessment techniques see Davies et al., 2001.	Where there is a clearly established natural variation in extent or in cyclical succession between biotopes, then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where there is a change in extent outside the expected variation or a change in the structure of the sub-feature leading to a loss of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable.	Yes although not a mandatory CSM attribute
Species population measures: Presence or abundance of specified species	No increase in presence or abundance of negative indicator species (non-native American razor shell <i>Ensis directus</i> , Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> , Slipper limpet <i>Crepidula fornicata</i>).	Assessment of the presence or abundance of positive/negative indicator species identified for the feature. For details of assessment techniques see Davies et al., 2001. CEFAS have undertaken regular surveys of <i>Ensis directus</i> since 1999, using Hamon or Day grabs (Palmer 2003).	Where there is a sizeable shift in the age/size class structure (i.e. loss of mature adults or recruitment failure) or if disturbance causes a species of nature conservation importance to be lost, or a significant reduction in abundance then condition would be considered unfavourable. Increased abundance of negative indicator species i.e. those indicative of stressed habitats or polychaete worms indicative of organic pollution, which would be detrimental to the feature as a whole, would also cause the condition of the feature to be considered unfavourable. CEFAS hamon grab surveys have estimated adult populations of 200 per square metre in 1999 (Palmer, 2003). Distribution seems concentrated in south and east side of Wash ie Nene to Thornham although can occur in other areas (eg off Long Sand, Roger, Scullridge) Current population is estimated as exceeding 10,000 tonnes (Addison et al, 2006). Large settlements can occur but populations seem extremely sporadic and frequently fail	Yes not a mandatory CSM attribute but non-natives present in site which can have a serious negative impact on native communities

		altogether. There are concerns about inter-specific competition with other filter feeders including mussel and cockle.
Audit Trail		
Rationale for limiting standards to specified parts of the site		
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)		
Rationale for selection of measures of condition (features and attributes for use in condition assessment)		
(The selected vegetation attributes are those considered to most economically define favourable condition at this site for the broad habitat type and any dependent designated species).		
Other Notes		
References		
Addison, Palmer, Lart, Misson & Swarbrick, 2006. Development of a suitable dredge for exploitation of razorfish (<i>Ensis directus</i>) in The Wash. CEFAS & Seafish Report.		
Davies et al. 2001. Marine Monitoring Handbook. JNCC.		
Foster-Smith & Sotheran, 1999. Broadscale remote survey and mapping of sublittoral habitats and biota of The Wash and the Lincolnshire and the north Norfolk coasts. English Nature Research Reports, Number 336.		
JNCC, 2004. Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for inshore sublittoral sediment habitats. JNCC Feb 2004.		
Palmer, 2003. The introduced razor fish <i>Ensis directus</i> in The Wash and north Norfolk. Shellfish News, No 16 Nov 2003.		

Table 3e Site-Specific definitions of Favourable Condition – *Sabellaria spinulosa* (ross worm) Reef

Conservation Objective for this habitat type		To maintain the <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> reef habitats at this site in favourable condition, with particular reference to relevant specific designated interest features. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:		
Site-specific details of any geographical variation or limitations (where the favourable condition standards apply)				
Site-specific standards defining favourable condition				
Attribute	Target	Method of assessment	Comments	Use for CA?
Distribution of reef biotope. Spatial arrangement of biotopes at specified locations	Assess the geographic distribution of specified biotopes identified for the site. Assess the zonation pattern or the juxtaposition of specified biotopes.	Maintain the distribution and/or spatial arrangement of biotopes, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change	Where changes in distribution/spatial pattern are known to be clearly attributable to cyclical succession or an expected shift in distribution then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where there is a change in biotope distribution/spatial pattern outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable.	Yes
Biotope composition of reef	Repeated assessment of overall biotope composition or a subset of specified biotopes identified for the site.	Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site, allowing for natural succession or known cyclical change.	Where changes in biotope composition are known to be attributable to natural processes (e.g. winter storm/flood events, changes in supporting processes or mass recruitment or dieback of characterising species) then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where there is a change in biotope composition outside the expected variation or a loss of the conservation interest of the site, then condition should be considered unfavourable.	Yes
Topography	No alteration in topography of the inshore sub littoral sediment, allowing for natural responses to hydrodynamic regime.	Assessment of the depth distribution/profile of the inshore sub littoral sediment and periodic comparison with baseline conditions. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i> , 2001.	<i>S. spinulosa</i> often favours slope areas. Where changes in topography are known to be clearly attributable to natural processes then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where extreme events cause a change in topography, then this may have caused a change in the structure of the feature, which may lead to the condition of the feature being considered as unfavourable.	Yes: not a CSM attribute for this feature but reef known to favour slopes

<p>Sediment character: sediment type</p>	<p>No change in composition of sediment types across the feature, allowing for natural succession/ known cyclical change.</p>	<p>Distribution of sediment types should be assessed across the whole feature and compared with baseline conditions. For details of assessment techniques see Davies <i>et al.</i>, 2001</p>	<p><i>S. spinulosa</i> typically associated with edges of sandbanks or areas where there are sand waves.</p> <p>Where changes in sediment type are known to be clearly attributable to natural processes then the target value should accommodate this variability. Where extreme events cause a change in sediment type, then this may have caused a change in the structure of the feature, which may lead to the condition of the feature being considered as unfavourable.</p>	<p>Yes: not a CSM attribute for this feature but reef known to favour particular substrates</p>
Audit Trail				
Rationale for limiting standards to specified parts of the site				
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)				
Rationale for selection of measures of condition (features and attributes for use in condition assessment)				
<p>(The selected vegetation attributes are those considered to most economically define favourable condition at this site for the broad habitat type and any dependent designated species).</p>				
Other Notes				
<p>North Norfolk waters not extensively mapped, only survey available is Foster-Smith & Sotheran's 1999 work. That survey suggests the area doesn't support many <i>S. spinulosa</i> communities. See Wash conservation objective for more information.</p> <p>Reference: Foster-Smith & Sotheran (1999). Broad scale remote survey and mapping of sublittoral habitats and biota of The Wash and the Lincolnshire and the North Norfolk Coasts. English Nature Research report 336.</p>				

Table 3f Site-Specific definitions of Favourable Condition – Otter

<p>Conservation Objective for species</p>	<p>To maintain the designated species in favourable condition, which is defined in part in relation to their population attributes. Favourable condition is defined at this site in terms of the following site-specific standards:</p>
Site-specific details of any geographical variation or limitations (where the favourable condition standards apply)	

Site-specific standards defining favourable condition				
Attribute	Target	Method of assessment	Comments	Use for CA?
Food availability	Fish biomass stays within expected natural fluctuations.	Environment Agency, local fishery trusts data.	Accurate information on fish stocks is difficult to obtain according to a recent review of data from England, produced by the Environment Agency (Research and Development Technical Report TR W256, Otters- Fish Prey Availability, Biomass and Sustainability) and may be extremely difficult to interpret. However, there is an obligation to monitor fish communities under the Water Framework Directive and a more comprehensive monitoring system is being instigated by the Environment Protection Agencies.	Yes
Habitat requirements coastal areas: Freshwater for rinsing sea salt from the fur	No reduction in overall availability of freshwater.	Number of streams or small pools on or near the site	Freshwater may be outside the site boundary. Due to the distance otters can range, this attribute can only be indicative for a site. Can be assessed on site and using map information.	Yes
Toxic chemicals	No increase in pollutants potentially toxic to otters.	Monitoring by relevant Environment Agency. Specialist group to meet at intervals to identify national trends and extract information on individual SACs.	Liaison between Country Agency Staff and EA essential.	Yes
Otter population - coastal	No decline in otter distribution or abundance. For baseline see broadscale maps from national survey reports. NOTE: most recent survey only	National surveys undertaken at approx 7 year intervals (surveys undertaken in 1977-79, 1984-86, 1991-94, 2000-2002). Survey sites selected at 5-8km		Yes

	<p>covered the coast from Nene to Blakeney and a short section near Friskney (due to survey methodology of only surveying alternate 50 km-squares).</p> <p>Full survey data set held on National Biodiversity Network. Interrogation of dataset reveals otter present at R. Stiffkey (Sluice Gates, 1978, 1992), R. Burn (Burnham Overy, 1978), Titchwell (1978), Holme Nature Reserve (1978)</p>	<p>intervals along main rivers / coasts / lake shore. Survey carried out in alternate 50-km squares. At each site 600m survey undertaken along one bank by searching for otter signs usually 300m upstream and downstream of a bridge or other access point. Survey halted at first positive sign of an otter.</p> <p>Survey noted whether location is positive (and whether this is a new positive or on-going positive) or negative for otter.</p>		
Anthropogenic mortality	<p>Otter populations not significantly impacted by human induced kills.</p>	<p>Road and rail casualties. -Deaths due to fishing gear etc. -Any site where there is a feature causing otter mortality. -Data from EA's reporting system.. Obtain views from EA on implications of recent data. -JNCC otter data on the CITES database.</p>	<p>Monitoring this attribute, where appropriate should provide data for installing mitigation.</p> <p>This attribute is not mandatory and should be assessed at a local level for individual sites where anthropogenic mortality appears to be a problem.</p>	Disc
Audit Trail				
Rationale for limiting standards to specified parts of the site				
Rationale for site-specific targets (including any variations from generic guidance)				
<p>Rationale for selection of measures of condition (features and attributes for use in condition assessment)</p> <p>(The selected vegetation attributes are those considered to most economically define favourable condition at this site for the broad habitat type and any dependent designated species).</p>				

Other Notes
Reference: Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Terrestrial Mammals. JNCC, August 2004