

File ref: NY 03/2

County: Cumbria **Site Name:** Siddick Pond

District: Allerdale

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part of this site is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

Local Planning Authority: Allerdale District Council

National Grid Reference: NY 002304 **Area:** 21.4 (ha) 52.8 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 89 **1:10,000:** NX 93 SE, NY 03 SW,
NX 92 NE, NY 02 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1951 **Date of Last Revision:** 1968

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:** 1984

Other Information:

1. The site boundary has been modified by partial deletion and extension at this review.
2. LNR declared in 1977 under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.

Reasons for Notification:

Siddick Pond is situated 1 km north of Workington and is just above sea level, its northern end being less than ½ km from the coast at the southernmost end of the Solway Firth. The Pond was formerly a swampy depression in a delta of the River Derwent which now runs ½ km to the south. As a result of excavation and the building of adjacent railway embankments the depression flooded and open water now covers an area of 14.5 ha. This and the surrounding area of fen, grassland and scrub, although not of outstanding interest in their own right are the habitat of a rich variety of passage and wintering birds, which include waterfowl, seabirds, waders and birds of prey, as well as a diverse and varied community of breeding birds.

The pond water is base-rich and this is reflected by the aquatic flora which includes common and autumnal starworts *Callitriche stagnalis* and *C. hermaphroditica*, amphibious bistort *Polygonum amphibium*, Canadian pondweed *Elodea canadensis*, lesser water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides* and four species of pondweed *Potamogeton* spp. Around the pond margin are large beds of common red *Phragmites australis* and smaller areas of common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris*, water horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* and reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea*. Surrounding the pond are areas of grassland and scrub, the latter being particularly abundant on the railway embankments and on the ancient sea cliff known as the Oyster Bank which lies along the eastern edge of the site. Dominant species in this scrub are hawthorn, bramble, gorse *Ulex europaeus* and willow *Salix* spp.

The coastal location of Siddick Pond makes it an excellent site for waterfowl and other birds. The site has been studied by ornithologists since 1921 and a total of more than 155 species have been recorded, these falling into the three broad categories of breeding, wintering and migrant/casual species. At least 35 species nest on or around the pond and these include

waterfowl, for example: mute swan, little grebe, pochard, shoveler and tufted ducks; seabirds, such as little tern; and waders such as redshank, as well as many others, including sedge warbler, reed bunting and linnet. Warblers nest in the areas of scrub and include grasshopper warbler, willow warbler, garden warbler, whitethroat and blackcap. Wintering species include considerable numbers of pochard, goldeneye, shoveler, tufted duck, teal, whooper swan and other wildfowl, as well as a variety of other species including grey heron, cormorant, curlew, common gull, water rail, short-eared owl and kingfisher. In autumn and winter the site supports a large starling roost and this in turn attracts such birds of prey as peregrine, kestrel and sparrowhawk. The third group, the migrants and casual visitors include a good number of rarities, for example: little bunting, black-necked grebe, black-tailed godwit, marsh harrier, black tern, ruff, green sandpiper and Bewick's swan, in addition to good numbers of more common species such as greenshank, common sandpiper and snipe.