

**File Ref:**

**COUNTY:** LINCOLNSHIRE

**SITE NAME:** NORTH  
KILLINGHOLME HAVEN PITS

**DISTRICT:** NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Glanford Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** TA 165198      **Area:** 20.61 ha

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 113      **1:10,000:**

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

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1996      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Other Information:**

1. Saline lagoons are listed as a priority habitat under the EC Habitats and Species Directive.
2. Parts of the Humber Estuary are designated as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site.

**Description and Reasons for Notification**

North Killingholme Haven Pits are situated adjacent to the Humber Estuary near Immingham on the south bank. The main reasons for notification of these pits are their importance as large saline lagoons with an exceptionally rich fauna, and their significance as roosting and feeding grounds for waterfowl, which occur in internationally important numbers in the Humber Estuary in winter.

The site comprises three pits of differing size and salinity, both factors, which contribute to its national and local importance. Nine species of specialist lagoonal species recorded from the pits include the polychaete worm *Alkmaria romijni*, which is known from just four sites in Great Britain. Other species of note include the prawn *Palaemonetes varians*, the molluscs *Hydrobia ventrosa* and *Hydrobia neglecta* and the bryzoan *Conopium seurati*. The number of specialist lagoonal species is exceptionally high in North Killingholme Haven Pits and particularly so for their latitude.

Water levels within the lagoons vary and provide expanses of open mud for visiting waterfowl, especially waders. Amongst these are nationally important numbers of black-tailed godwits, which have visited the site in increasing numbers since the late 1980's. There are also occasional visits by large flocks of roosting redshank. These visitors indicate that North Killingholme Haven Pits form an integral part of the estuarine feeding and roosting opportunities for the internationally important populations of winter waterfowl for which the Humber Estuary is noted.

The lagoons are fringed with common reed *Phragmites australis* and sea club-rush *Scirpus maritimus* and this fringe provide valuable feeding and breeding grounds for a range of summer migrants such as reed and sedge warblers. The seed heads of the reeds are also a food supply for bearded tit, which occur along the Humber Estuary in nationally important numbers. Bittern are also regular winter visitors.

The site is fringed in places with thick hawthorn scrub which also provides important bird habitat, including a roost of up to five long-eared owls which also breed here and are of particular local importance.