

South West London Waterbodies SPA RAMSAR:

COUNTY: GREATER LONDON/SURREY

SITE NAME: KEMPTON PARK  
RESERVOIRS

DISTRICT: LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW/SPELTHORNE BOROUGH

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

Local Planning Authority: Hounslow Borough Council/Spelthorne Borough Council

National Grid Reference: TQ 118707

Area: 25.62 (ha.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 176

1:10,000: TQ 17 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 26 October 1999

Date of Last Revision: –

Reasons for Notification:

Kempton Park Reservoirs are of national importance for wintering gadwall *Anas strepera*.

General Description:

Kempton Park Reservoirs comprises two artificially embanked basins to the northeast of Kempton Park Racecourse near Hampton. The site consists of Kempton Park East Reservoir and Red House Reservoir which lie within the operational boundary of Kempton Waterworks.

In addition to the nationally important numbers of gadwall, the site also supports significant numbers of wintering shoveler *Anas clypeata*.

Kempton Park East Reservoir was constructed in 1906 but has been redundant since 1980. In 1982 the reservoir was drained but continued to hold a residual amount of water, supplemented by rainfall. In 1996 part of the earth and clay embankment was removed to ensure compliance with maximum water volumes for redundant reservoirs under The Reservoirs Act.

Kempton Park East Reservoir has been actively managed as a nature reserve since 1996 when substantial works aimed at protecting and improving habitats for wetland bird species were begun under a planning agreement with the local authority. These included the creation of refuge islands, deep water channels and reed beds within the basin.

Regular breeding waders on the East Reservoir include lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* redshank *Tringa totanus* ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula* and little ringed plover *Charadrius dubius*. Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* bred on the East Reservoir in 1996. This represented the first successful inland breeding of this species in the British Isles.

A wide range of passage birds, including smew *Mergus albellus* garganey *Anas crecca* Temminck's stint *Calidris temminckii* spotted crake *Porzana porzana* and red-necked phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, have been recorded in recent years.

Red House Reservoir is the smaller of the two reservoirs. It remains operational as a water storage facility and is fed by the Staines Reservoirs Aqueduct.

The secluded wooded setting of Red House Reservoir is particularly favoured by feeding bats and the site supports Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* serotine *Eptesicus serotinus* Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentoni* and pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*. Other mammals include water vole. Reptiles and amphibians present include populations of

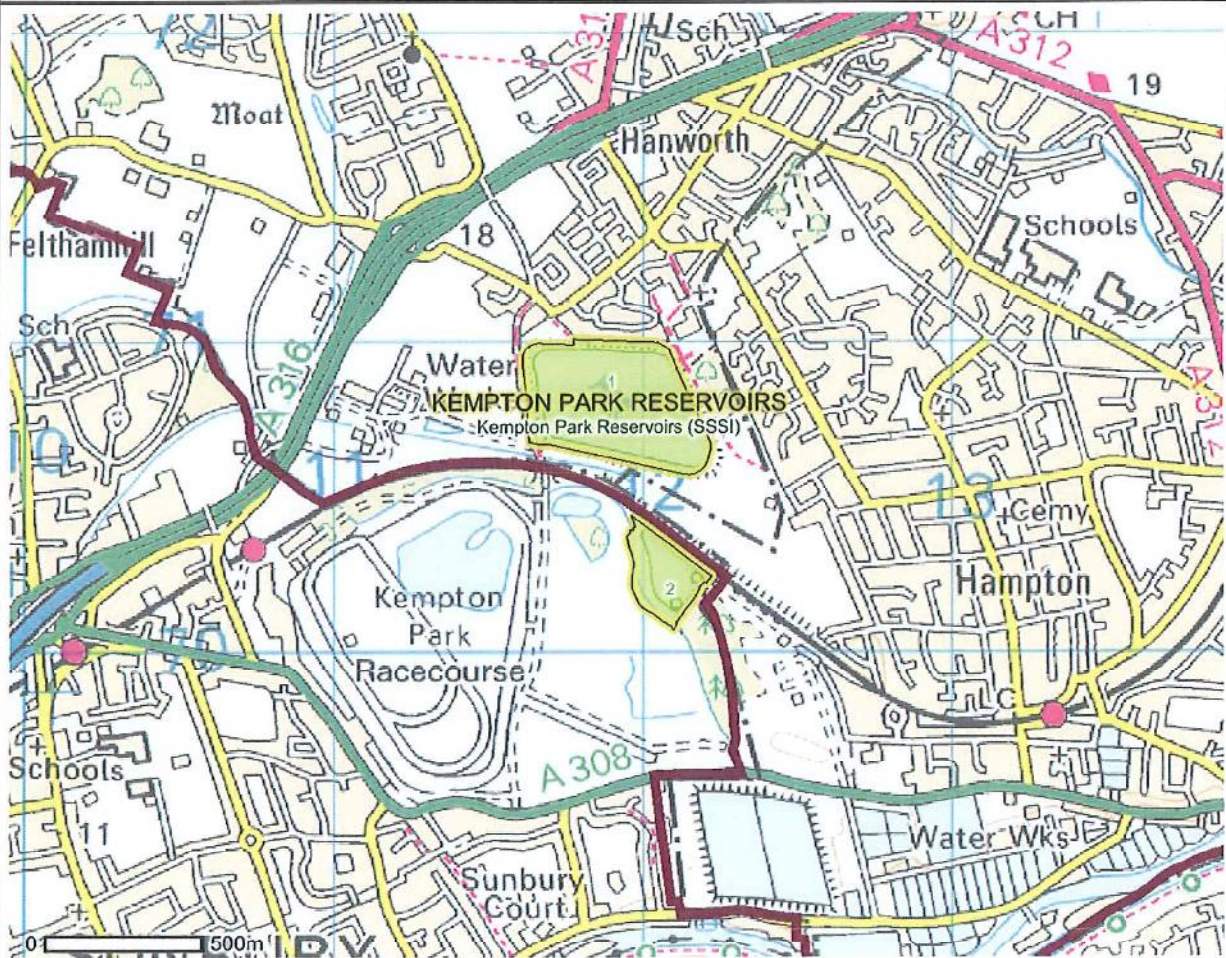
grass snake *Natrix natrix* palmate newt *Triturus helveticus* smooth newt *Triturus vulgaris* common frog *Rana temporaria* and common toad *Bufo bufo*.





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| ■ Selected Sites of Special Scientific Interest  | ■ Natural England Regions              |
| ■ SSSI Live Management Agreements                | ■ Natural England Area Teams           |
| ■ SSSI Unit condition - last updated 21 Apr 2011 | ■ Scotland, Wales and Ireland          |
|  | ■ Ordnance Survey background mapping   |
|  | □ England                              |
| ■ Favourable Condition                           |  |
| ■ Unfavourable Recovering                        |  |
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**COUNTY:** SURREY

**SITE NAME:** KNIGHT & BESSBOROUGH RESERVOIRS

**DISTRICT:** ELMBRIDGE DISTRICT

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Elmbridge District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 120680    **Area:** 62.89 (ha.)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 176                      **1:10,000:** TQ 16 NW

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

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

**Reasons for Notification:**

Knight and Bessborough Reservoirs are of national importance for wintering shoveler *Anas clypeata*.

**Description:**

Knight and Bessborough Reservoirs consist of two connected artificially embanked water storage reservoirs built about 1906 which support a variety of waterfowl, including nationally important numbers of shoveler.

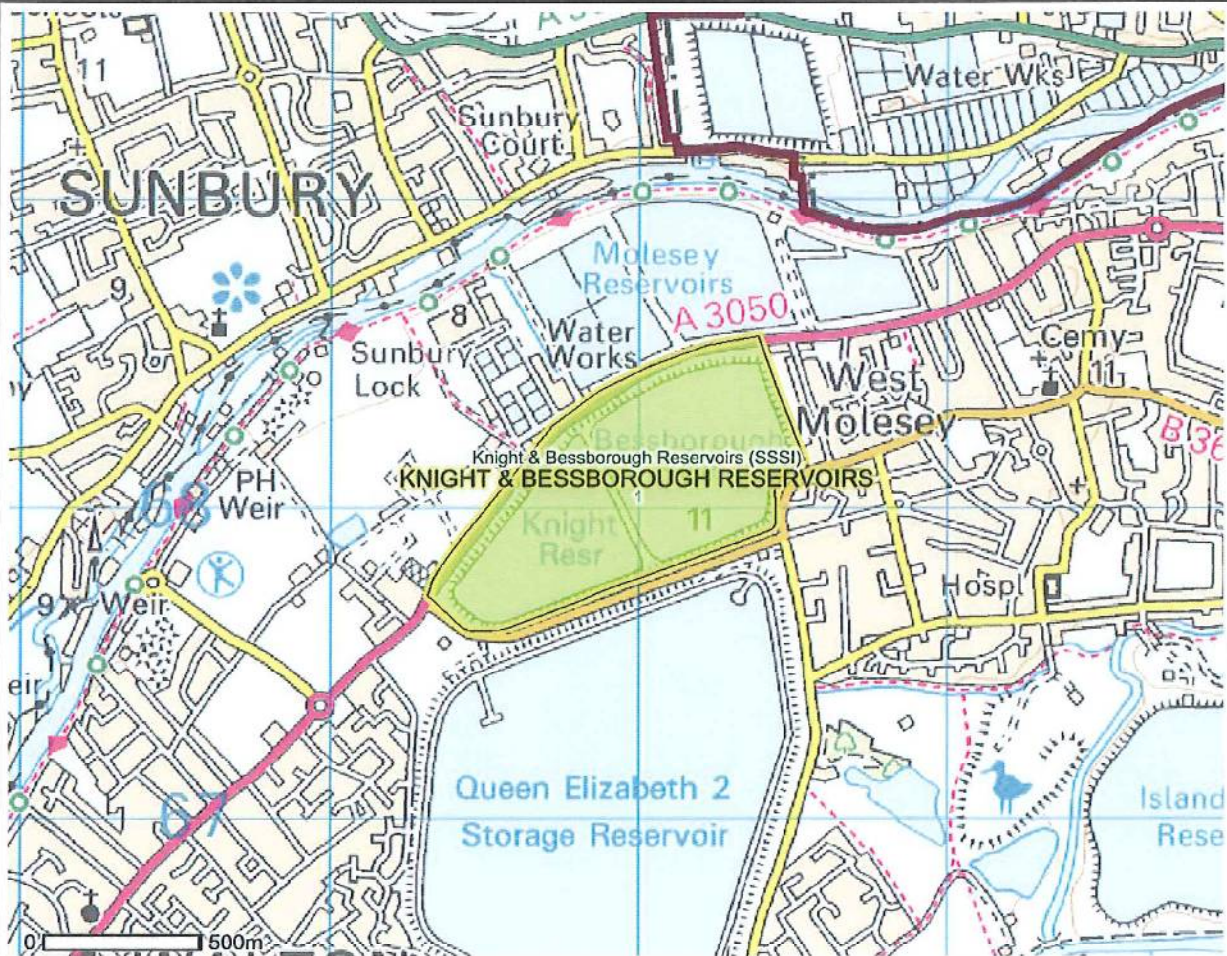
Wintering gadwall *Anas strepera*, cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* and goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* also occur in notable numbers.





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| ■ SSSI Live Management Agreements               | ■ Natural England Area Teams           |
| SSSI Unit condition - last updated 21 Apr 2011  | ■ Scotland, Wales and Ireland          |
|   | ■ Ordnance Survey background mapping   |
|   | □ England                              |
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## EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Name:** South West London Waterbodies

**Unitary Authority/County:** Surrey, Windsor and Maidenhead, Greater London

**Component SSSI:** Kempton Park Reservoirs; Knight and Bessborough Reservoirs; Staines Moor; Thorpe Park No. 1 Gravel Pit; Wraysbury and Hythe End Gravel Pits; Wraysbury No. 1 Gravel Pit; Wraysbury Reservoir

**Site description:** The South-West London Water Bodies SPA comprises a series of embanked water supply reservoirs and former gravel pits that support a range of man-made and semi-natural open water habitats. The reservoirs and gravel pits function as important feeding and roosting sites for wintering wildfowl, in particular Gadwall *Anas strepera* and Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, both of which occur in numbers of European importance.

**Size of SPA:** The SPA covers an area of 828.14 ha.

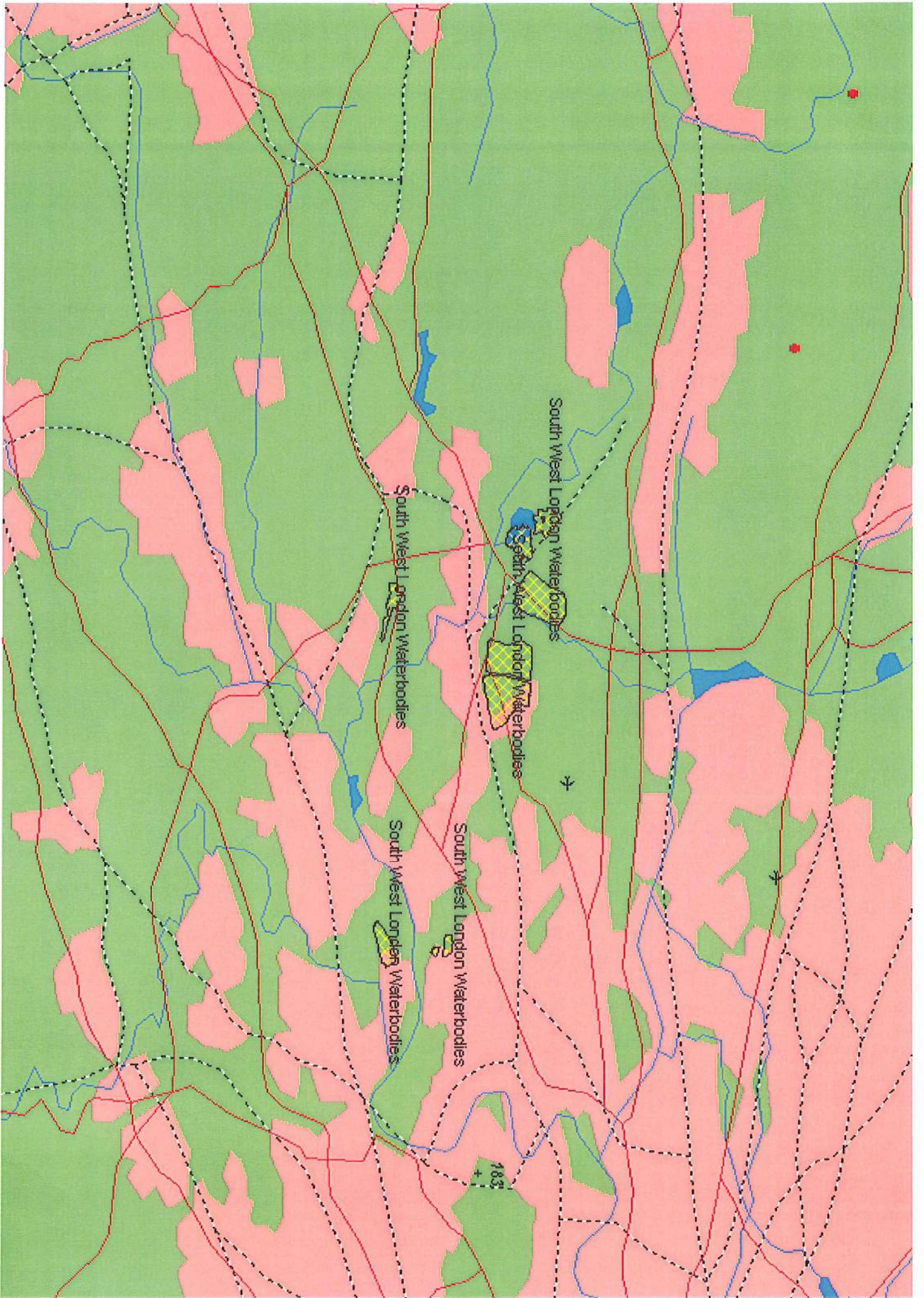
### Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the biogeographical populations of the following regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed in Annex I) in any season:

Migratory species	Count and season	Period	% of biogeographical population
Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>	710 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1993/4 - 1997/8	2.4% (NW Europe)
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	853 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1993/4 - 1997/8	2.1% (NW/Central Europe)

**Status of SPA:** South West London Waterbodies was classified as a Special Protection Area on 22 September 2000.







**File Reference:** TQ/07-1

**County:** Surrey

**Site Name:** Staines Moor

**District:** Spelthorne

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Spelthorne Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 040730      **Area:** 513.6 (Ha) 1269.1 (Acres)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet:** 1:50,000 : 176      1:10,000: TQ 07 SW, NW, SE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1955      **Date of last Revision:** 1975

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

**Reasons for Notification:**

The site chiefly consists of Staines Moor, a semi-natural stretch of the River Colne which flows through it, and three adjacent reservoirs. Staines Moor represents the largest area of alluvial meadows in Surrey and supports a rich flora while the reservoirs hold nationally important populations of wintering wildfowl. A pond at the site carries an aquatic flora which is of national importance; this flora includes one plant which is extremely rare in Britain.

The alluvial deposits of Staines Moor Poyle meadows (TQ 033753) and Shortwood Common (TQ 048717) lie above river sands and gravels. There is great variation in terrain and drainage and the alluvial meadows are consequently an intricate juxtaposition of a wide range of grassland types. Several plant species which have a restricted distribution in Surrey are present in the meadows. In addition to the River Colne and the reservoirs open water habitats are represented by a small stretch of the River Wraysbury and by open ditches and ponds. A belt of scrub, flanked by rough grassland lines the old railway embankment in the west of the site and woodland is present in places. Wintering wildfowl and wading birds use Staines Moor as an alternative ground to the reservoirs and a number of birds breed on the moor.

The alluvial meadows have not been subject to intensive agricultural use in recent years; this factor, combined with the large size of the meadows and the richness diversity of their flora, is responsible for the importance of these grasslands to wildlife. The plant communities of the alluvial meadows are complex but range from dry grassland dominated by red fescue *Festuca rubra*, sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, bent grass *Agrostis capillaris* an sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* to wet communities with marsh fox-tail *Alopecurus geniculatus*, tussock grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus* and floating sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans*. Depressions with a permanently high water table occur throughout the meadows and support a fen-type flora with reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima*, reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea* and yellow flag *Iris pseudacorus*. These alluvial meadows support one plant which is uncommon in Britain: small water-pepper *Polygonum minus*. Several other plants which occur are uncommon in the County, these include brown sedge *Carex disticha*, southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, marsh stitchwort *Stellaria*

*palustris*, strawberry clover *Trifolium fragiferum*, marsh arrowgrass *Triglochin palustris*, meadow rue *Thalictrum flavum* and upright chickweed *Moenchia erecta*. Three other plants which are scarce in Surrey occur on Shortwood Common, these are wormwood *Artemisia absinthium* wild clary *Salvia verbenaca* and Bermuda grass *Cynodon dactylon*.

Scrub on the old railway embankments consists of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, willow *Salix cinerea*, birch *Betula pendula* and pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*. The adjacent rough grassland is dominated by cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, tall fescue *Festuca arundinacea*, tussock grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* and thistles.

Woodland is present along Bonehead ditch and at the southern end of the old railway; these woodlands consist of crack willow *Salix fragilis*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, birch and pedunculate oak. Mature hedgerows of hawthorn, oak and crack willow line the drains south of Lower Mill Farm (TQ 035741) and are present in Poyle meadows.

The areas of open water support a rich and varied flora. The rivers carry stands of tall fen vegetation with common reed *Phragmites australis*, rushes *Juncus* species and yellow flag *Iris pseudacorus*. Water crowfoot *Ranunculus peltatus*, an uncommon plant in Surrey, occurs in this stretch of the River Colne. The ditch flora includes stands of tall fen vegetation and small aquatic plants such as arrowhead *Sagittaria sagittifolia*, water-cress *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum* and thread-leaved water-crowfoot *Ranunculus trichophyllus*. The ponds carry a tall fen flora which includes common reed, rushes, yellow flag, trifid bur-marigold *Bidens tripartita* and great reedmace *Typha latifolia*; plants of open water which are present include white waterlily *Nymphaea alba*, water fern *Azolla filiculoides* and water-starworts *Callitriche* species. A number of uncommon plants occur in the ponds at this site including one of only three known British localities of the brown galingale *Cyperus fuscus*.

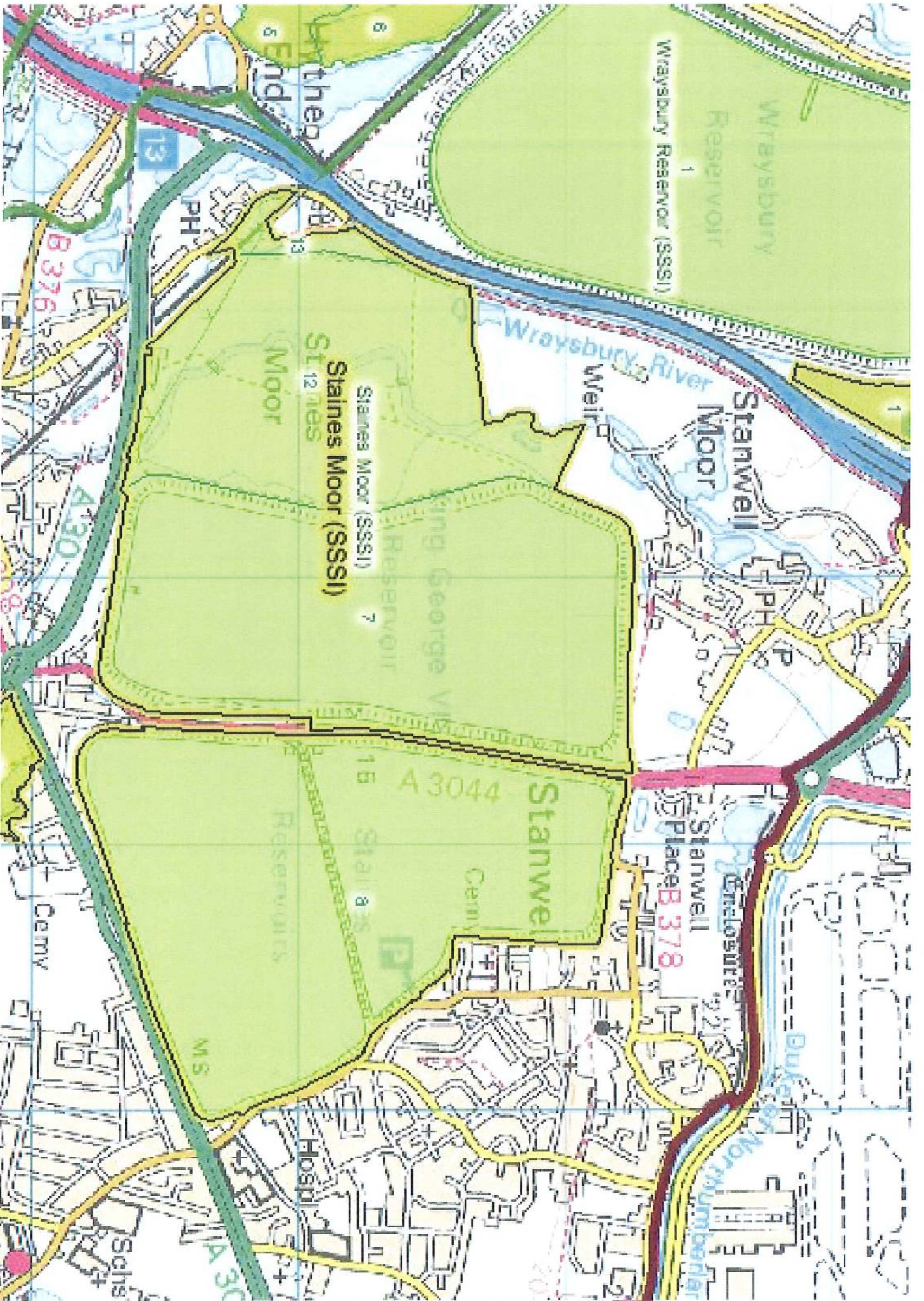
Other plants which have a restricted distribution nationally are orange foxtail grass *Alopecurus aequalis*, needle spike-rush *Eleocharis acicularis* and sharp-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton acutifolius*. Several other aquatic plants are scarce in Surrey including sweet flag *Acorus calamus*, alternate-flowered water-milfoil *Myriophyllum alterniflorum* and greater bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris*. Although the flora of the reservoirs is of limited interest their large expanse of open water and the bare muds on their margins provide the ideal habitat for some birds, particularly wildfowl and waders.

The reservoirs carry over 1% of the total British wintering populations of tufted duck, pochard, goosander and shoveler; the numbers of shoveler are also internationally significant. Other birds which winter on the reservoirs in large numbers include wigeon, teal, garganey, goldeneye and great crested grebe. Staines Moor regularly supports a large flock of wintering golden plover and redshank, ruff, snipe and dunlin are other wading birds which travel between the moor and the reservoirs in winter. In recent years Staines Moor has carried up to six wintering short-eared owls and other raptors, such as buzzard and hen harrier, have been recorded on passage. Birds which regularly breed on Staines Moor include yellow wagtail, lapwing and meadow pipit. In all 130 species of bird have been recorded from the site in recent years.

Although Staines Moor has not been well studied for invertebrates it does support the oldest known anthills of *Lasius flavus* in Britain; some of these anthills are estimated to be 180 years old and they have considerable research value. In addition over sixty species of



mollusc have been recorded from the meadows and ditches while the areas of open water and fen support several species of dragonfly.

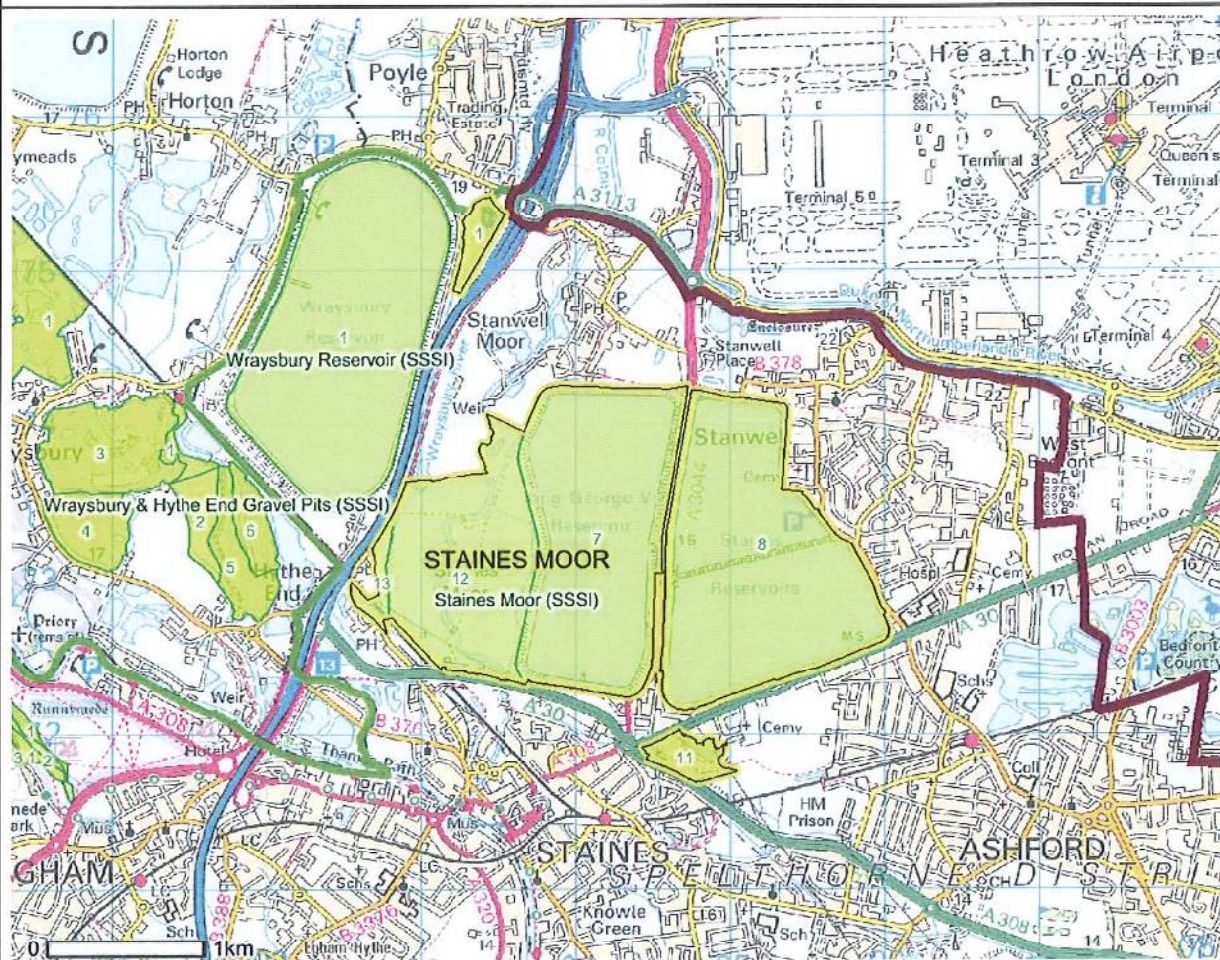






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- Unfavourable Recovering
- Unfavourable no change
- Unfavourable Declining
- Part Destroyed
- Destroyed
- Not Assessed
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Natural England Regions
- Natural England Area Teams
- Scotland, Wales and Ireland
- Ordnance Survey background mapping
- England

**COUNTY:** SURREY      **SITE NAME:** THORPE PARK NO. 1 GRAVEL PIT

**DISTRICT:** RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Runnymede Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 028681      **Area:** 42.17 (ha.)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 176      **1:10,000:** TQ 06 NW

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

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

**Reasons for Notification:**

Thorpe Park No. 1 Gravel Pit is of national importance for wintering gadwall *Anas strepera*.

**Description:**

Thorpe Park No. 1 Gravel Pit is a former gravel pit which has now matured to a relatively stable ecological state, the banks being almost entirely dominated by trees and shrubs.

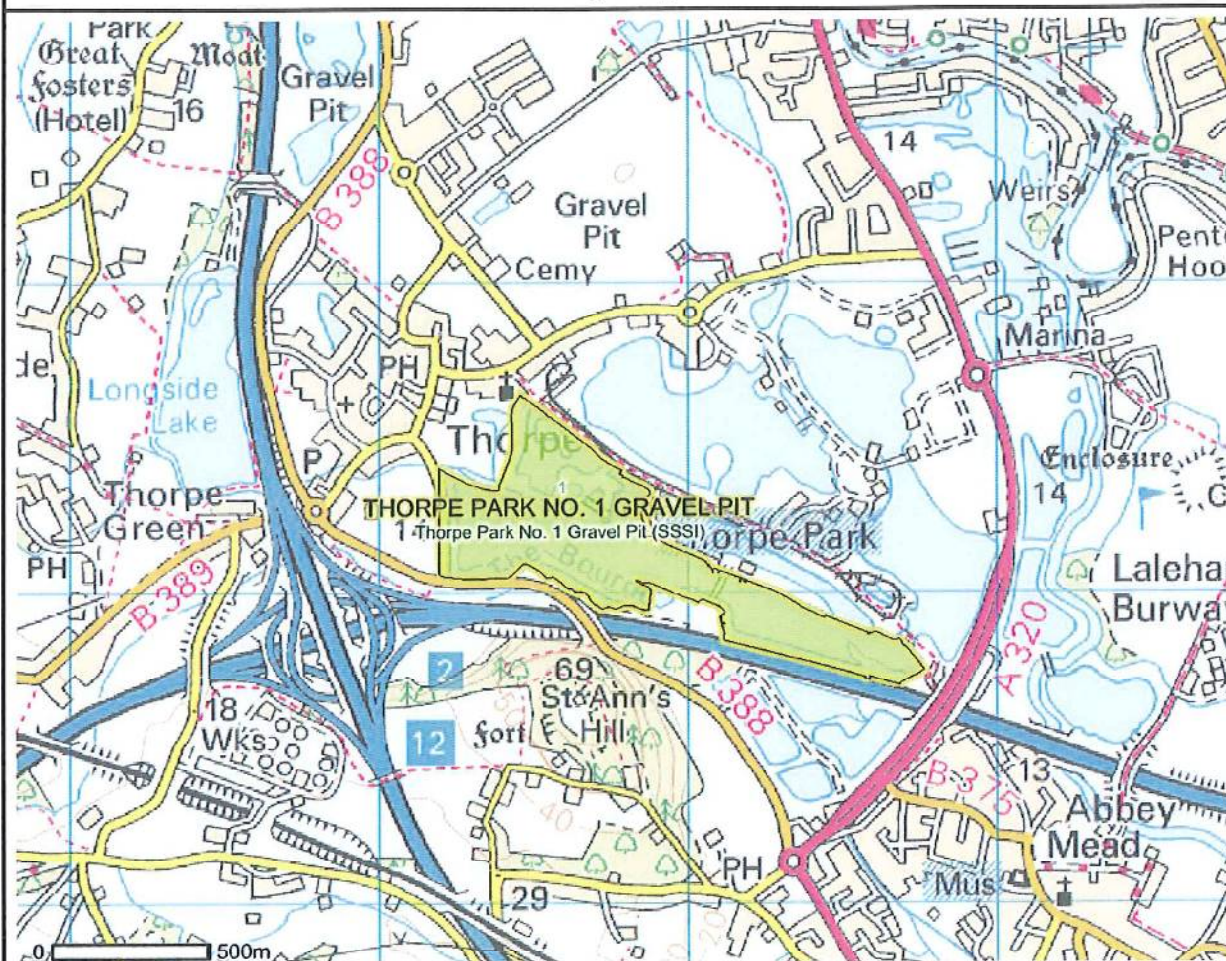
The site also supports a number of other species of wintering waterfowl including goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* and smew *Mergus albellus* which occur regularly in small but significant numbers.





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| ■ SSSI Live Management Agreements               | ■ Natural England Area Teams           |
| SSSI Unit condition - last updated 21 Apr 2011  | ■ Scotland, Wales and Ireland          |
|   | ■ Ordnance Survey background mapping   |
|   | □ England                              |
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| ■ Not Assessed                                  |  |



**COUNTY:** BERKSHIRE      **SITE NAME:** WRAYSBURY AND HYTHE END GRAVEL PITS

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

**Local Planning Authorities:** Berkshire County Council, Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 014737

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 176      **1:10,000:** TQ 07 SW

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 3 July 1992      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 116.65 ha 288.24 acres

### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

Wraysbury and Hythe End Gravel Pits comprise a mosaic of open water, islands, grassland, scrub and woodland within an area of former gravel extraction. The site supports nationally important numbers of three species of wintering wildfowl together with an important assemblage of breeding birds associated with open waters and wetland habitats. In addition the site supports two nationally scarce invertebrates and a number of locally uncommon plants.

The site, which incorporates four former gravel pits, lies within the floodplains of the River Thames and the Colne Brook. The unworked areas of the site comprise floodplain gravels and alluvium of the Quaternary period. The site also includes part of the Colne Brook.

The flooded gravel pits are structurally diverse with Wraysbury North pit having the most complex shoreline and a number of islands. Of note is the shingle bank in the north-east corner with a colonising ruderal community. Small areas of swamp and carr occur, dominated by common reed *Phragmites australis*, lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis* and greater pond-sedge *C. riparia*. Aquatic species include the locally uncommon pondweed *Potamogeton pusillus*. Wraysbury South pit has a more regular shoreline with willow predominant along the banks and bulrush *Typha latifolia* and common reed occurring along the shores. The Hythe End pits have steep banks fringed with alder and crack willow *Salix fragilis*. Species occurring around the water's edge include the locally uncommon trifid bur-marigold *Bidens tripartita* and horned pondweed *Zannichellia palustris*.

The habitat west of the Colne Brook supports an area of scrub and damp grassland. The flora is rich, but secondary, having developed from alluvial material deposited on the site during construction of the Wraysbury Reservoir. Species found here include grass vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia*, spiked sedge *Carex spicata* and buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus*.

As a consequence of its biological richness and structural diversity the site regularly supports more than 1% of the national populations of wintering tufted duck, gadwall and goosander. It is also important for the smew, holding a significant percentage of Britain's wintering population. The total number of all wintering wildfowl regularly exceeds 1,000 individuals at any one time. As well as being used for feeding and roosting, the site is also an important sheltered refuge, particularly for diving duck, within the complex of adjoining larger pits and reservoirs. Other species which frequent the site include pochard, goldeneye, wigeon and the introduced mandarin.

The range of habitats support an important assemblage of breeding bird species typical of lowland open waters and their margins. Shelduck and pochard breed along the pit margins, the banks attract kingfisher whilst passerines, such as the grasshopper warbler and reed warbler favour the *Phragmites* and scrub. The wet meadow area supports breeding redshank. The pits and their margins also have a rich invertebrate community which includes the nationally uncommon white-legged damselfly *Platycnemis pennipes* and two species listed in the British Red Data Book\*, a riffle beetle *Oulimnius major* and a caddisfly *Leptocerus lusitanicus*.

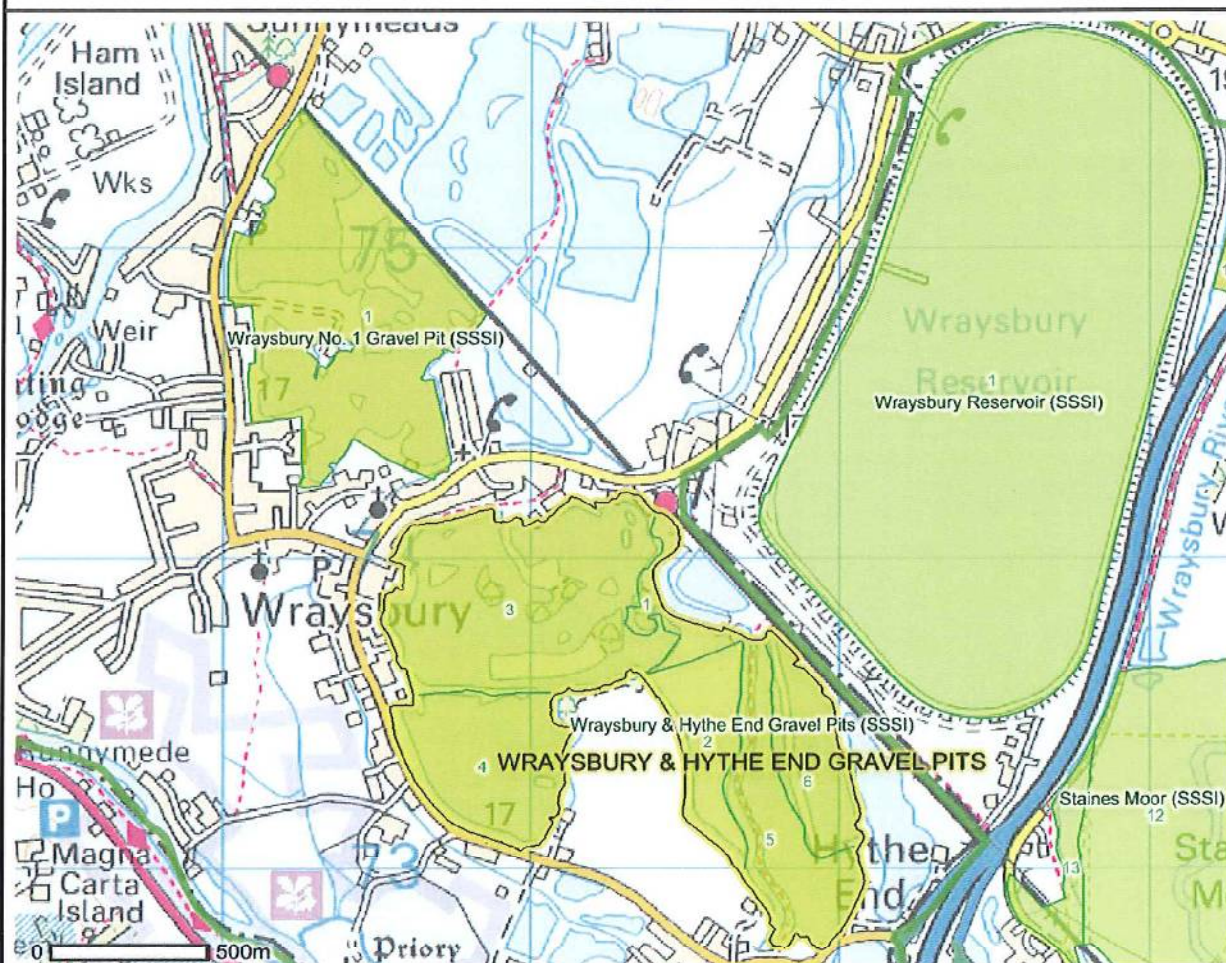
\*The British Red Data Book is a listing of species judged to be endangered, vulnerable or under threat in Great Britain





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**County:** Berkshire **Site Name:** Wraysbury No. 1 Gravel Pit

**District:** Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 004745 **Area:** 57.75 ha

**Ordnance Survey Sheet:** 1:50,000 176 1:10,000: TQ 07 NW

**Date Notified (under 1949) Act:** Not applicable

**Date of Last Revision:** Not applicable

**Date Notified (under 1981) Act:** 26 October 1999

**Date of Last Revision:** Not applicable

**Reasons for Notification:**

Wraysbury No 1 Gravel Pit is of national importance for wintering gadwall *Anas strepera*.

**General Description:**

Shoveler *Anas clypeata* goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* and smew *Mergus albellus* are regular winter visitors in small but significant numbers.

The site is also locally important for other wintering bird species including great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus* cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* pochard *Aythya farina* tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* and coot *Fulica atra*.

The pit was excavated in the 1950s and is now almost fully mature, with most of the lake margins dominated by trees and scrub. In a few places there are still small areas of neutral grassland containing such species as common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* and wild carrot *Daucus carota*.

The woodland and scrub surrounding the gravel pits support a range of woodland birds including hobby *Falco subbuteo* garden warbler *Sylvia borin* treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* and great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*.



**COUNTY:** SURREY      **SITE NAME:** WRAYSBURY RESERVOIR

**DISTRICT:** SPELTHORNE DISTRICT

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Spelthorne District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 025745

**Area:** 205.03 (ha.)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 176

**1:10,000:** TQ 07 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** –

**Date of Last Revision:** –

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 26 October 1999

**Date of Last Revision:** –

**Reasons for Notification:**

Wraysbury reservoir regularly supports nationally important numbers of wintering cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus* and shoveler *Anas clypeata*.

**Description:**

Wraysbury Reservoir is an artificially embanked reservoir constructed around 1970. The reservoir also support notable numbers of wintering gadwall *Anas strepera*.