



Scottish Natural Heritage
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**ROSEHEARTY TO FRASERBURGH
COAST
Site of Special Scientific Interest**

SITE MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Site code: 1375

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Purpose



This is a public statement prepared by SNH for owners and occupiers of the SSSI. It outlines the reasons it is designated as an SSSI and provides guidance on how its special natural features should be conserved or enhanced. This statement does not affect or form part of the statutory notification and does not remove the need to apply for consent for operations requiring consent.

We welcome your views on this statement.

Description of the site

This coastal site comprises an area of relatively low relief with rocky shores and extensive areas of intertidal mud and sand flats between Rosehearty and Fraserburgh. The coast to the west comprises areas of high seacliffs with sandy bays. The site is backed in places by a narrow fringe of sand dune or salt marsh. To the east is the town of Fraserburgh with its harbour and sandy beaches extending south.

Geological

The Rosehearty-Fraserburgh Coast SSSI contains excellent exposures of metamorphic rocks (those which have been altered under the action of heat and pressure), belonging to the Dalradian Supergroup. The geological interest lies within three separate areas within the site. The Fraserburgh part of the site contains exposures of the Kinnaird Head group of rocks, which originally formed as limestones and muds on an ancient seabed, whilst to the west are exposures of the Rosehearty group, which was deposited by sediment and water flowing down sea-bed slopes.

These rocks were deposited around 600 million years ago and subsequently buried, deformed and metamorphosed during a period of mountain-building. Some of the structures which formed when the rocks were originally deposited have been preserved. This has allowed geologists to investigate the nature of the deformation of these rocks, and the complex geological history and structure of the Buchan area, making this a nationally important geological site.

Biological

The site is of special interest for the numbers of passage and wintering waders which it supports. It is of national significance for the number of turnstone, regularly holding over 500 (up to 1200) individuals. Nationally significant concentrations of eider and curlew also occur.

In addition to the notified bird interest, a rich mollusc fauna is found along this coastline including the two-toothed white snail *Leucophytia bidentata*, a rare species in north-east Scotland, and *Calliostoma zizyphinum*, a shell-less marine snail.

Natural Features of Rosehearty to Fraserburgh Coast SSSI	Feature Condition (date monitored)
Dalradian	Favourable, maintained (July 2000)
Curlew, non-breeding	Unfavourable, declining (December 2001)
Eider, non-breeding	Unfavourable, no change (January 2003)
Purple sandpiper, non-breeding	Unfavourable, declining (December 2001)
Turnstone, non-breeding	Unfavourable, declining (December 2001)

Site condition Monitoring (SCM) of the site's features was carried out in 2000-3 for cycle 1 of SNH's programme. The Dalradian feature was in favourable condition. Some un-consented waste dumping was found but this did not obscure or affect the outcrops. Rubble used for coastal defences had the potential to wash onto and obscure the outcrops. This had not occurred at the time, but will be continue to be monitored. All of the bird features were in unfavourable condition as recent 5-year averages were below baselines.

Past and present management

There has been some grazing of the cliff top vegetation west of Rosehearty by sheep.

The site is easily accessible to the public either from adjacent roads or along coastal paths, and has been used for informal recreation for many years. The harbour at Sandhaven adjacent to the site previously operated as a boatbuilding centre. Parts of the shore at Rosehearty have been subject to coastal protection works. A number of parking places between Sandhaven and Fraserburgh have been used in the past for fly-tipping. The site is crossed in several places by outfall pipes for disposal of sewerage.

Grazing of the cliff top to the west of Rosehearty continues, though probably at a fairly low intensity as the site lies principally between the fenced field boundary and the cliff edge in this area. The levels of grazing are not recorded as this activity is not listed as an operation requiring consent.

Public utilisation of the site for informal recreation such as dog walking continues. Boatbuilding at Sandhaven has ceased and the harbour is presently disused. The breakwaters are in poor repair and have been breached in places.

The council has constructed picnic facilities at Rosehearty and curbed fly tipping by closing off the parking areas. Opening of the Fraserburgh Lighthouse museum has led to an increase in visitors to Kinnaird Head.

Access to the site is straightforward from the B9031 coastal road and roads leading to Fraserburgh lighthouse.

Objectives for management (and key factors influencing the condition of natural features)

We wish to work with the owners and occupiers to protect the site and to maintain and where necessary enhance its features of special interest. SNH aims to carry out site survey, monitoring and research as appropriate, to increase our knowledge and understanding of the site and its natural features.

1. To maintain and protect the important rock exposures

In general, the rocks are well exposed throughout the site, although the full extent of the exposure is only seen at low tide. Around Kinnaird Head in particular, the shore is in places crossed by sewage outfall pipes which to some extent obscure the rock exposures. In some cases these pipes may no longer be in use, or may cease to be in use in the near future due to plans for new waste water works. If possible, pipes that are no longer in use should be removed to improve access to the rock exposures unless this would result in additional damage.

Other possible threats to the site include dumping and erection of coastal protection works. These operations should not be allowed to obscure rock exposures at any point within the crucial areas identified by SNH.

2. To maintain the nationally important bird populations

The principal factors affecting the populations of wildfowl are likely to be external to the site. There is no evidence that changes in recreational pressure have affected the special interest of the site.

Date last reviewed: 26 May 2011.