

**Site name:** Barn Elms Wetland Centre

**County:** London

**District:** Richmond upon Thames

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Richmond-upon-Thames

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 228770

**Area:** 29.86 hectares

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

**1:10,000:** TQ 27NW

**Date Notified (under 1981 Act):** 2 February 2002

**Reasons for Notification:**

A mosaic of wetland habitats supporting nationally important wintering populations of shoveler *Anas clypeata* and an assemblage of breeding birds associated with lowland waters and their margins.

**General description:**

Barn Elms Wetland Centre comprises a mosaic of different wetland habitats created on the site of redundant artificial reservoir basins. The majority of the site comprises areas of standing open water, grazing marsh and reedbed. Other significant habitats include carr woodland, scrub and mesotrophic grassland. The Barn Elms reservoirs were constructed in 1886 but became redundant in 1989. Wetland habitat creation was initiated in 1995 and the site is now being managed as a nature reserve.

In addition to the nationally important numbers of shoveler, the site also supports significant numbers of wintering gadwall. Also present is an outstanding assemblage of regularly breeding birds associated with lowland open waters and their margins. These include little grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*, great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, grey heron *Ardea cinerea*, mute swan *Cygnus alor*, gadwall *Anas strepera*, pochard *Aythya ferina*, tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, little ringed plover *Charadrius dubius*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, common tern *Sterna hirundo*, sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* and reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*.

Other important wetland species which have bred or attempted to breed at the site include snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, shoveler *Anas clypeata*, pintail *Anas acuta* and water rail *Rallus aquaticus*.

A number of breeding passerines have been recorded including whitethroat *Sylvia communis*, garden warbler *Sylvia borin* and blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*.

Mammals are well represented on the site. Species present include water vole *Arvicola terrestris* and serotine bat *Eptesicus serotinus*, noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*.

**Other information:**

This is a new site although the site boundary closely follows that of the Barn Elms Reservoir Site of Special Scientific Interest notified in 1975 under Section 23 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Notifications made under the 1949 Act ceased to have effect by virtue of section 75(2) of the Countryside and Right of Ways Act 2000.