

23 Sheltered muddy gravels

Sheltered muddy gravels are most often found in estuaries, sea lochs and rias where a sheltered position protects them from wave action and tidal streams. Species richness is greatest in high salinity. Only intertidal and shallow subtidal areas are of interest here, not deeper water.

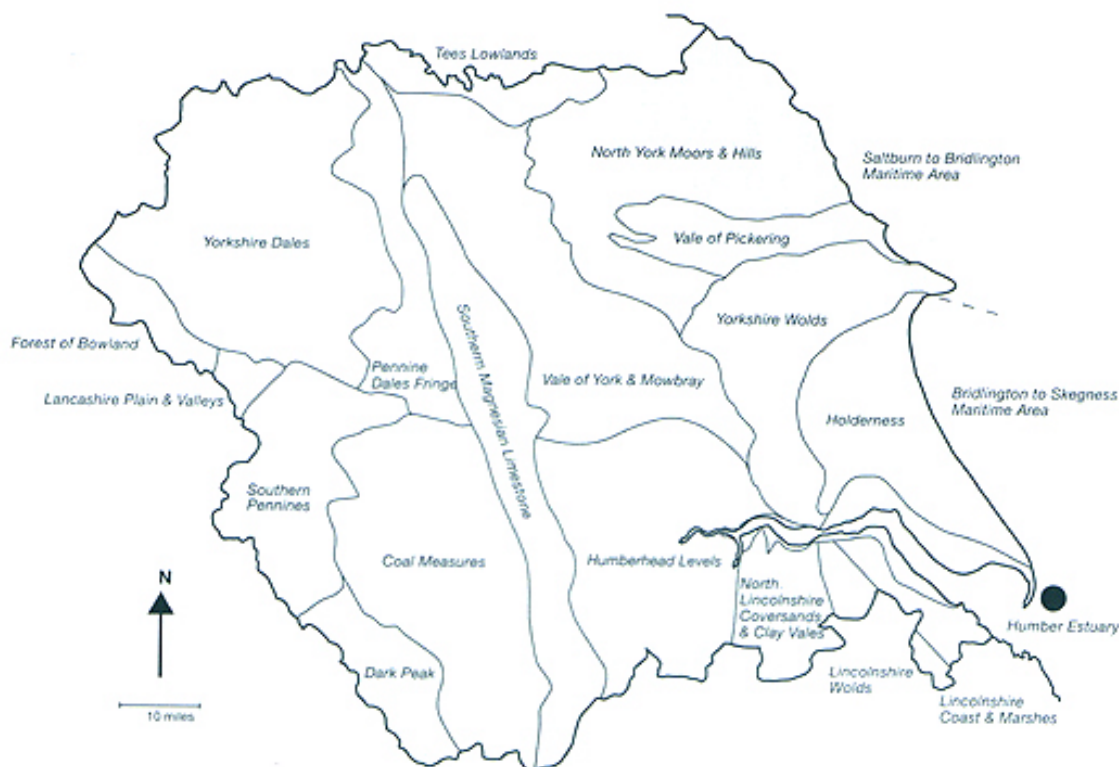
Status

This region is not renowned for its sheltered muddy gravels but at the mouth of the Humber, at Spurn, there is the remains of a glacial moraine ridge of coarse cobbly gravel with mud in it (Elliot *pers. comm.*). It holds a muddy gravel community characterised by horse mussels *Modiolus modiolus* (the beds of which form a separate priority habitat), brittlestars *Ophiothrix fragilis* and erect bryozoa of the genus *Flustra*¹.

Threats

Potential threats come from dredging for aggregates, for harbour works or for the clearance of channels, and from trawling for fish.

Map 27: The location of sheltered muddy gravels of possible interest shown by Natural Areas



● Location of site