

RECLAMATION THREAT TO THE HUMBER ESTUARY

A planning application has been made to Humberside County Council for permission to dump rubbish on 36 acres of foreshore and mudflats at Pyewipe, on the southern shore of the Humber estuary in eastern England (see Figure 1). Dumping is thought to have begun already, before the planning application has been considered.

The Humber is an internationally important site for 10 species of waders and wildfowl. Nationally important numbers of Redshanks *Tringa totanus*, Dunlins *Calidris alpina*, Curlews *Numenius arquata* and Grey Plovers *Pluvialis squatarola* occur in winter at Pyewipe, as do internationally important numbers of Shelducks *Tadorna tadorna* during their autumn migration back from the north German Wattenmeer to Britain. The Humber is to be listed as a "Special Protection Area" under the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Under this directive, the British Government has a duty to protect the site.

There are many other methods of rubbish disposal that do not result in the destruction of important habitats such as the mudflats at Pyewipe. Furthermore, the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, established by the British Government, is currently examining the whole matter of waste disposal by dumping. The Royal Commission will report on its evaluation of the different methods for safe disposal of rubbish.

The planning application is due to be considered by Humberside County Council on 24 July 1984. We will report on the outcome of this meeting, and its implications, in due course.

Stop Press. Just before the meeting of the Planning Subcommittee, the Secretary of State for the Environment made an Order preventing the County Council from deciding the application at the moment. This is to allow him time to decide whether the proposal is of such importance that he should determine it himself. The timing of any further decision about the future of Pyewipe mudflats is not yet known.

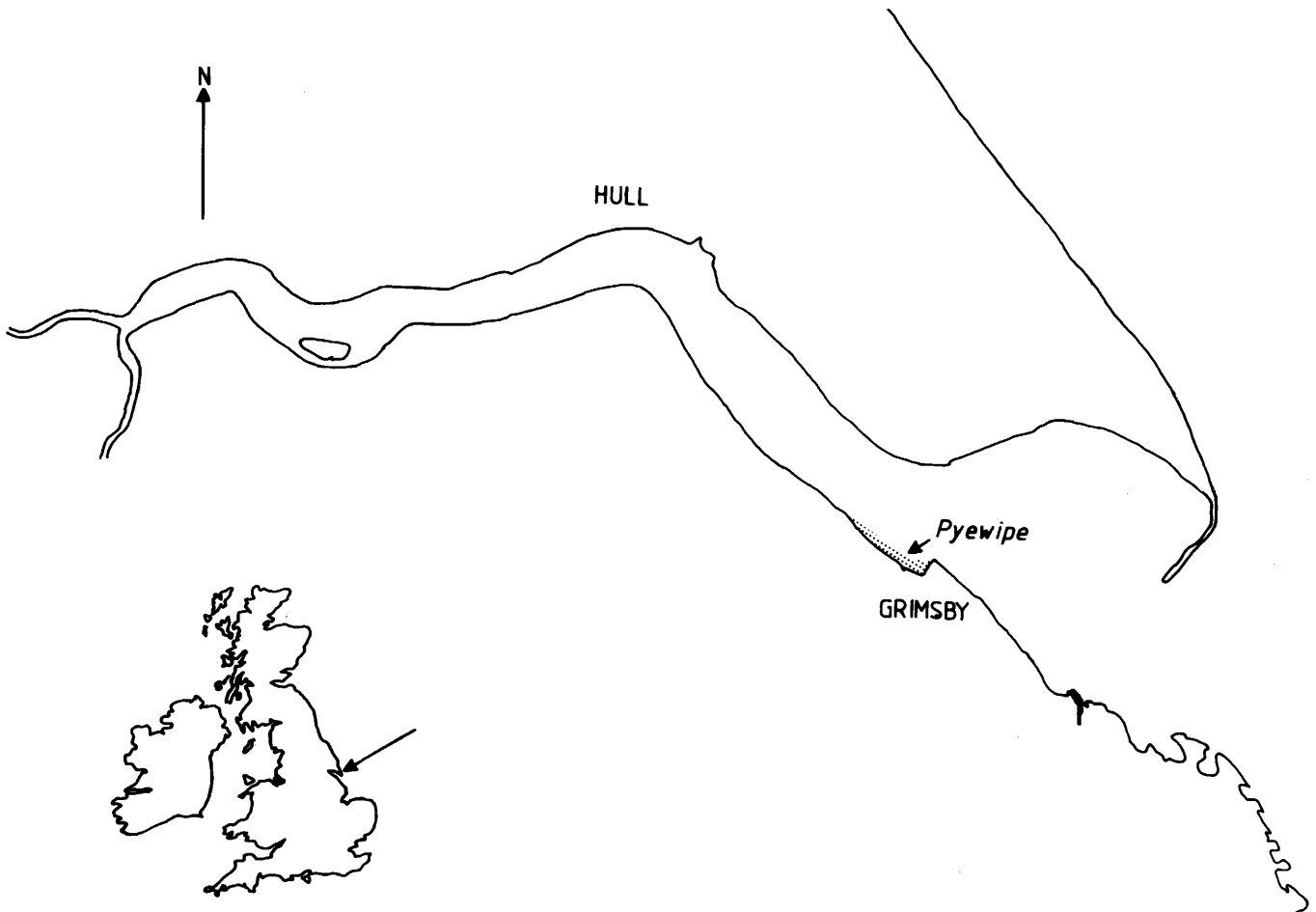


Figure 1. The location of Pyewipe mudflats on the Humber Estuary in eastern England.