



Mersey Tidal Barrage position statement

October 2024

The UK has made international commitments to protect biodiversity at the COP conferences and has legally binding targets to prevent wildlife decline by 2030. These commitments cannot and should not be ignored. We cannot push for stronger action to tackle the global destruction of nature if we are unwilling to protect the nature we have at home.

The Mersey Estuary has a threefold legal protection with international, European, and national designations. These protections are in place because of the value the estuary holds, not just for our own wildlife, but wildlife across the world. The saltmarshes and mudflats of the Mersey are a vital feeding ground for birds that migrate from Canada, Siberia, and Europe every year.

The nature and the climate crises are two sides of the same problem; one cannot be tackled without the other. Cheshire Wildlife Trust wants to see a rapid transition to renewable energy achieved in tandem with nature's recovery. A tidal barrage across the River Mersey is not such a scheme. Current proposals could cause significant damage to irreplaceable and legally protected habitats as well as violate international agreements.

Given the magnitude of the crisis we face, we cannot tackle any one problem in isolation. We need to see a far more coherent approach to tackling the climate crisis where the true value of nature and the benefits it provides to society are recognised. Any loss of protected habitat is unacceptable, and we will firmly oppose any scheme that results in such destruction.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust