



Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI Herefordshire

***Notification under section 28C of the Wildlife
and Countryside Act 1981***

Issued by Natural England's Herefordshire Land Management Team on **14 December 2011**.

Contact points and further information

This notification document is issued by Natural England's Herefordshire Land Management Team. Our address for correspondence is:

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Your contact point for enquiries relating to this notification is **Katey Stephen**.

A second document (Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI - supporting information) is available on request from the address above. This contains information and extracts from relevant documents that have been used in the decision to notify this SSSI under section 28C.

The date of notification of Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI is **14 December 2011**.

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This document explains why Lugg and Hampton Meadows is notified by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 1.2 Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI is a nationally important site by reason of the following features of special interest: lowland meadows with species-rich neutral grassland, and its populations of narrow-leaved water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia* and mousetail *Myosurus minimus*. Lowland meadows are listed as a priority habitat in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and are included in the list of habitats and species considered to be of principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity in England (Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006).
- 1.3 Lugg Meadows SSSI, covering 16.06 ha, was last notified in 1984 for its species-rich neutral grassland. Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI includes Lugg Meadows SSSI and also enlarges the area notified to include substantial additional areas of special interest totalling 139.62 ha.
- 1.4 The annexes to this document comprise the legal papers that detail the interest of Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI and the management required to maintain that interest. You have a right to make representations or objections to this notification. Part 3 of this document explains how to do this.
- 1.5 Natural England's consent is required by owners and occupiers before any of the operations listed in *Annex 3* can be carried out. We will work closely with owners and managers, as well as other bodies, to ensure that existing operations and new works that are not considered likely to damage the special features of the SSSI can be carried out.

2. The legal background

- 2.1 Lugg Meadows SSSI is enlarged under section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as inserted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and is now known as Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI. The Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI includes land within and extending beyond Lugg Meadows SSSI, as previously notified in 1984. With effect from the date of this notification under section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the previous notification of Lugg Meadows SSSI given in 1984 ceases to have effect (section 28C(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).
- 2.2 Part 9 of this notification document contains the following legal papers required by section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981:
 - a citation detailing the reasons for notification (*Annex 1*)
 - a statement of Natural England's views on the management of the SSSI (*Annex 2*)
 - a list of operations requiring Natural England's consent (*Annex 3*)
 - maps identifying the land subject to this notification (*Annex 4*).
- 2.3 This notification has several effects. The key ones can be summarised as follows:
 - owners and occupiers must give Natural England notice before carrying out, causing or permitting to be carried out any of the activities in the list of operations at *Annex 3*;
 - owners of land included in the SSSI have a legal obligation to notify Natural England within 28 days if the ownership or occupancy of the land changes;
 - it is an offence for any person intentionally or recklessly to destroy or damage the special features of the SSSI or to disturb any of the fauna;
 - other public bodies must consult Natural England before carrying out or authorising any works that may damage the SSSI.

If you require any further information or advice on how this notification affects you, please do not hesitate to contact Natural England at the address shown at the beginning of this notification document.

3. Making representations

- 3.1 You have a legal right to make objections and representations about this notification. Any representations or objections should be made in writing by **16 April 2012** to Natural England's Herefordshire Land Management Team at the address shown on page 2. You may wish to seek legal or independent advice and your representative may wish to write to us on your behalf.
- 3.2 The Herefordshire Land Management Team will consider your objections or representations and will try to resolve them. Any unresolved objections or representations will be considered by the Board of Natural England within nine months of this notification. If you wish to emphasise any of your objections or representations to the Board in person, you should tell us when you write to us. You will then be advised of the date and location of the Board meeting. Following consideration of objections and representations, the Board may confirm or withdraw all or part of this notification.
- 3.3 Natural England has a policy of openness, which reflects our obligations under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This legislation provides a legal right of access to information held by public bodies. This means that we will provide information on how we make our decisions on SSSIs to any person on request. This includes details of objections and representations received. We will assume, therefore, that your representation or objection can be made publicly available unless you indicate with clear and valid reasons which (if any) part(s) of these you wish to be excluded from this arrangement. However, you should be aware that the requirements of the legislation may mean that we cannot comply with your request that this information be withheld. We do, however, respect people's privacy and will take all reasonable steps to consult you before reaching a decision on disclosure of the information.

As an individual with an interest in Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI, your information will be stored and processed on a computer database that will be operated within the Data Protection Act 1998. This Act gives individuals the right to know what data we hold on them, how we use it and to which third parties it is disclosed. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the data controller is Natural England, Touthill Close, City Road, Peterborough PE1 1UA.

4. Reasons for notification

- 4.1 Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI is of special interest by reason of the following nationally important features:
- **Species-rich neutral grassland**
The SSSI supports a large expanse of traditionally managed Lammas¹ hay meadows with species-rich neutral grassland. The meadows support various expressions and atypical varieties (compared to the published account in Rodwell 1992²) of the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG4 meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis* – great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* grassland and a community transitional between this NVC type and the nationally scarce MG5 crested

¹ Lammas meadows are flood meadows managed under a common system, whereby strips of meadow are randomly allotted (by drawing lots) to commoners to take hay, but grazing is shared by all the commoners. The Lammas meadow system is very ancient, possibly over a thousand years old.

² Rodwell, J.S. (ed.) 1992. *British Plant Communities Volume 3: Grasslands and Montane Communities*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland. 'Lowland meadows' are listed as a priority habitat in the UKBAP.

- **Vascular plants**

The SSSI supports a large population of the nationally scarce narrow-leaved water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia*, growing here close to the western edge of its UK range. The species is also listed as 'Near Threatened' in the vascular plant Red List for Great Britain, with evidence of a decline in the last 40-50 years. The site is also a long-standing location for mousetail *Myosurus minimus*, a nationally declining species listed as 'Vulnerable' in the vascular plant Red List for Great Britain and rare in Herefordshire.

5. Interests that do not currently meet the SSSI selection guidelines

5.1 The meadows support small numbers of breeding curlew *Numenius arquata*.

6. Site boundaries and relationships with other SSSIs

6.1 The boundary has been drawn to include land supporting the features of special interest and those areas required to ensure the long-term sustainability of these features. The site is made up of three adjacent blocks of meadows: Upper Lugg Meadows, Lower Lugg Meadows and Hampton Meadow.

6.2 The boundary of the SSSI generally follows a number of distinct landscape features. The edge of the River Lugg forms the boundary along the north-east side of the Upper and Lower Lugg Meadows, with drainage ditches and the Lugg Rhea to the south and south-west and the A4103 road to the north. The Upper and Lower Lugg Meadows are divided by the A438 road, where the boundary of the site is marked by roadside hedgerows. The boundary has been drawn to follow the nearest physical feature on the ground where possible, including a perimeter drains, fence line, roads and boundary hedgerows.

6.3 Around Hampton Meadow, the edge of the River Lugg forms the entire western boundary, the River Frome runs along the south-eastern boundary, and elsewhere the site is bounded by hedgerows and fences. Hampton Meadow is separated from the southern end of the Lower Lugg Meadows by the River Lugg and less than 300m of improved agricultural land.

6.4 The boundary has been drawn to follow the nearest physical feature on the ground where possible, including perimeter drains, fence lines, roads and boundary hedgerows. There is no physical feature marking the boundary where the site abuts the River Lugg. Further clarification of the precise location of the boundary in specific parts of the SSSI can be obtained from Natural England's Herefordshire Land Management Team at the address on page 2 of this document.

6.5 Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI lies adjacent to The River Lugg SSSI, which is notified for its nationally important river habitats.

7. Management of the SSSI

7.1 This notification includes at *Annex 2* a statement of the management that Natural England considers is needed to conserve and enhance the features of special interest. Different management may be appropriate in different parts of the site and this statement is not intended to detail the exact requirements at specific locations. The statement is intended to explain how we can work with and support owners and managers in continuing to achieve positive management of the SSSI.

7.2 This notification also includes a list of the operations requiring Natural England's consent at *Annex 3*. The basis for the selection of these operations is set out in the supporting information document. Some of the operations may already be taking place and where

they do not cause any damage they will be given consent. We will work with landowners and managers to agree lists of such existing and planned activities, which can be approved.

- 7.3 Where an operation has been granted a consent, licence or permission from another public body a separate consent will not generally be required from Natural England. However, other public bodies are required to consult Natural England before such consents, licences or permissions are issued.
- 7.4 In particular, we recognise the important roles of the owners and managers of the land in managing this site. We will work with them to develop means to secure the sustainable management of Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI.

8. Supporting information

- 8.1 The detailed information, which has been used to assess the importance of this SSSI, is available on request from the address on page 2 of this document.

9. Legal documents

- 9.1 Attached at *Annexes 1 - 4* are the legal documents that are required by section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Annex 1

Citation

This is a legal document on which you have a right to make objections or representations, as explained in part 3 of this notification document

Site Name: Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI **Unitary Authority:** Herefordshire

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as inserted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Local Planning Authority: Herefordshire Council

National Grid reference: SO546400 **Area:** 155.68 ha

Ordnance Survey Sheet: **1:50,000:** 149 **1:10,000:** SO 53 NW, NE; SO 54 SW, SE

Notification date: 14 December 2011

Reasons for notification:

Lugg and Hampton Meadows is a nationally important site for its species-rich neutral grassland communities, with various expressions and varieties of the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG4 meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis* – great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* grassland and a community transitional between this NVC type and the nationally scarce MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland, and for its populations of two vascular plants: the nationally scarce and near threatened narrow-leaved water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia*, and the declining and vulnerable mousetail *Myosurus minimus*.

General description:

Lugg and Hampton Meadows are a large expanse of traditionally managed hay meadows in the floodplain of the River Lugg to the east of Hereford. They represent one of the largest surviving Lammas meadows in the country and are thought to have been managed in this way for at least 900 years.

Lugg and Hampton Meadows comprise three areas of unimproved neutral grassland on alluvial soils with underlying gravels. The land is adjacent to the River Lugg and floods seasonally providing some enrichment to the soils. As Lammas meadows, they are managed by taking a hay cut in late June or early July and grazing of the aftermath from the 1st August. Unimproved grasslands have suffered substantial decline nationally due to agricultural intensification and Lugg and Hampton Meadows represents a rare surviving example.

The species composition of the grassland varies throughout the site as a result of topography and management history, but it is characterised by grasses such as meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, meadow barley *Hordeum secalinum*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*. Hairy sedge *Carex hirta* is locally frequent. The broadleaved flora is characterised by the presence of meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and wild onion *Allium vineale*, with localised areas of common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* and meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*.

Large populations of the nationally scarce narrow-leaved water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia* are found across the site, but are most frequent on the Upper Lugg Meadows in otherwise species-poor communities. Mousetail *Myosurus minimus* is a declining species that occurs in several places across the site. Other notable vascular plant species include fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*, the near threatened meadow saffron *Colchicum autumnale* and common meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum*, and the site supports a diverse assemblage of dandelion *Taraxacum* species.

In addition to the reasons for notification described above the meadows support small numbers of breeding curlew *Numenius arquata*.

Annex 2

Views about Management

This is a legal document on which you have a right to make objections or representations, as explained in part 3 of this notification document.



Views About Management

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 28(4) as inserted by
Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

A statement of Natural England's views about the management of Lugg and Hampton Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

This statement represents Natural England's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. Natural England has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

This Statement does not constitute consent for any of the operations requiring Natural England's consent'. The written consent of Natural England is required before carrying out any of those operations. Natural England welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management principles

Neutral hay meadows require active management if they are to retain their conservation interest. In order to maintain a species-rich sward, each year's growth of vegetation must be removed. Otherwise the sward becomes progressively dominated by tall and vigorous grasses which, together with an associated build up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and reduce the botanical diversity of the site. In neutral hay meadows, the above objective is traditionally achieved by closing the fields to stock in the autumn and cutting the resultant growth as hay, usually in late June/early July. The precise timing of the cut depends on local factors, including past management and current weather conditions, but should be after ground-nesting birds have fledged their young and any short-lived, characteristic plants have set seed. The aftermath is then grazed in late summer/autumn. Aftermath grazing is important for maintaining a species-rich sward, both through controlling competitive grasses and through hoof-prints providing suitable sites for seedlings to establish. Heavy poaching must be avoided, however. The application of pesticides including herbicides or fertilizers would be damaging but occasional dressings of lime may be acceptable.

For the damper meadows, regular and careful maintenance of surface drainage including ditches and drains can be necessary to prevent adverse changes in the plant species composition of the sward. Deepening of surface drainage should be avoided.

Drains and seasonal ponds/inundated areas should be retained and maintained to benefit mousetail. Active management for this species may be required.

Date notified: 14 December 2011

Annex 3

List of operations requiring Natural England's consent

This is a legal document on which you have a right to make objections or representations, as explained in part 3 of this notification document.

Operations requiring Natural England's consent

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 28 (4)(b) substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The operations listed below may damage the features of interest of **Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI**. Before any of these operations are undertaken you must consult Natural England, and may require our consent.

It is usually possible to carry out some of these operations in certain ways, or at specific times of year, or on certain parts of the SSSI, without damaging the features of interest. If you wish to carry out any of these activities please contact a Natural England Adviser who will give you advice and where appropriate issue you with a consent. Please help us by using the form sent to you with the notification documents to ask us for consent to carry out these operations.

In certain circumstances it will not be possible to consent these operations, because they would damage the features of interest. Where possible your Natural England Adviser will suggest alternative ways in which you may proceed, which would enable a consent to be issued. To proceed without Natural England's consent may constitute an offence. If consent is refused, or conditions attached to it, which are not acceptable to you, you will be provided with details of how you may appeal to the Secretary of State.

Standard reference number	Type of operation
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- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1. | Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing and re-seeding. |
| 2. | Grazing and alterations to the grazing regime (including type of stock, intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing). |
| 3. | Stock feeding and alterations to stock feeding practice. |
| 4. | Mowing or cutting vegetation and alterations to the mowing or cutting regime (such as from haymaking to silage). |
| 5. | Application of manure, slurry, silage liquor, fertilisers and lime. |
| 6. | Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers) whether terrestrial or aquatic, and veterinary products. |
| 7. | Dumping, spreading or discharging of any materials. |
| 8. | Burning and alterations to the pattern or frequency of burning. |
| 9. | Release into the site of any wild, feral, captive-bred or domestic animal, plant, seed or micro-organism (including genetically modified organisms). |
| 10. | Killing, injuring, taking or removal of any wild animal (including dead animals or parts thereof), or their eggs and nests, including pest control, and disturbing them in their places of shelter. |
| 11. | Destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb, hedge, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungus, leaf-mould or turf. |
| 12. | Tree and/or woodland management and alterations to tree and/or woodland management (including, planting, felling, pruning and tree surgery, thinning, coppicing, changes in species composition, removal of fallen timber). |
| 13.a. | Draining (including, the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains). |

Standard reference number	Type of operation
13.b.	Modification to the structure of water courses (rivers, streams, springs, ditches, dykes, drains), including their banks and beds, as by re-alignment, re-grading, damming or dredging.
13.c.	Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes.
14.	Alterations to water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, storage and abstraction from existing water bodies and through boreholes). Also the modification of current drainage operations including the installation of new pumps.
15.	Infilling or digging of ditches, dykes, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or pits.
16.a.	Freshwater fishery production and/or management, including sporting fishing and angling and alterations to freshwater fishery production and/or management.
20.	Extraction of minerals including sand and gravel, topsoil, subsoil and spoil.
21.	Destruction, construction, removal, rerouting, or re-grading of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, including soil and soft rock exposures or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground.
22.	Storage of materials.
23.	Erection of permanent or temporary structures or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
26.	Use of vehicles or craft.
27.	Recreational or other activities likely to damage or disturb the features of special interest or their habitats.
28.a.	Game and waterfowl management and hunting practices and alterations to game and waterfowl management and hunting practice.

Notes

- i. This is a list of operations appearing to Natural England to be likely to damage the special features of the SSSI, as required under section 28 (4) (b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- ii. Where an operation has been granted a consent, licence or permission from another authority separate consent will not be required from Natural England. However, other authorities are required to consult Natural England before such consents, licences or permissions are issued.
- iii. Any reference to 'animal' in this list shall be taken to include any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish, or invertebrate.

Date notified: 14 December 2011
National Grid Reference: SO546400

Annex 4

Map(s) showing the land notified

This is a legal document on which you have a legal right to make objections or representations, as explained in part 3 of this notification document.

Insert notification map here

Insert extension map here