



**Wall Lands SSSI
Derbyshire**

***Notification under Section 28 of the Wildlife
and Countryside Act 1981***

Issued by Natural England's Lowland Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Land Management Team on
23 November 2011

Contact points and further information

This notification document is issued by Natural England's Lowland Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Land Management Team. The address for correspondence is:

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Telephone number: 0300 060 2206

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Your contact point for specific enquiries relating to this notification is **Dan Abrahams** (Daniel.abrahams@naturalengland.org.uk).

A second document (*Wall Lands 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.

The date of notification of Wall Lands SSSI is: **23 November 2011**

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This document explains why Wall Lands is notified by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 1.2 Wall Lands SSSI is a nationally important site by reason of the following biological features of special interest: species-rich neutral grassland dominated by the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland. This community forms part of the Lowland Meadows habitat, which is a Priority Habitat in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and is included on the list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England as required under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- 1.3 The annexes to this document comprise the legal papers that detail the interest 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.
- 1.4 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 Wall Lands SSSI is notified under section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- 2.2 Part 8 of this notification document contains the following legal documents required by section 28 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*); and
 - a map 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; and,
 - 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 **23 March 2012** to Natural England's Lowland Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire 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 Natural England's Lowland Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire 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 of Natural England 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 Wall Lands 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 Wall Lands SSSI is of special interest by reason of the following nationally important feature:
- Unimproved neutral grassland characterised by the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

5. Site boundaries and relationships with other SSSIs

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 The Wall Lands SSSI consists of an extensive series of species-rich grasslands managed as meadow and pasture. The boundary of the SSSI is marked by a combination of fence-lines, hedgerows and stone walls. See the map at *Annex 4* for detail of the SSSI boundary. Further clarification of the precise location of the boundary of the SSSI can be obtained from Natural England's Lowland Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Land Management Team. at the address on page 2 of this document.
- 5.3 The nearest SSSI is Kirkham's Silica Sandpit SSSI which is a nationally important geological SSSI located approximately 1.4 km north-west of the SSSI.
- 5.4 The MG5 grassland community is currently represented as a feature of special interest on 21 other SSSIs in Derbyshire, much of it occurring within the Peak District National Park where it largely forms part of the diverse grassland vegetation associated with limestone dale-side and lead rake grasslands on SSSIs in the White Peak National Character Area (NCA). The community occurs more rarely as traditional hay meadows on six SSSIs.
- 5.5 Wall Lands SSSI is located within the Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent NCA, where MG5 grassland is currently represented on just one other SSSI at Ogston Reservoir SSSI.

6. Management of the SSSI

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 In particular, we recognise the important roles of the owners and managers of the land in managing this site. We will continue to work with them to develop means to secure the sustainable management of Wall Lands SSSI.

7. Supporting information

- 7.1 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.

8. Legal documents

- 8.1 Attached at *Annexes 1 - 4* are the legal documents, which are required by section 28 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: Wall Lands **County:** Derbyshire
District: Derbyshire Dales
Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Local Planning Authority: Derbyshire Dales District Council, Derbyshire County Council

National Grid reference: SK 227529 **Area:** 8.94 ha

Ordnance Survey sheet: **1:50,000:** 119 **1:10,000:** SK 15 SE

Notification date: 23 November 2011

Reasons for notification:

Wall Lands SSSI is a nationally important site for its lowland unimproved neutral grassland. The grassland consists mainly of the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

General description:

The site consists of an extensive series of species-rich grasslands managed as meadow and pasture and separated by defunct but species-rich hedgerows, with all but one situated on the gentle west-facing slopes of a small valley on damp clay soils. Collectively these grasslands represent one of the largest blocks of enclosed unimproved grassland in Derbyshire outside of the Peak District.

Much of the site comprises agriculturally-unimproved, species-rich grassland characterised by a diverse and rich range of native grasses and herbs. Grasses such as red fescue *Festuca rubra*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* all occur in abundance, whilst on damper ground tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* is prominent. Throughout is a diverse range of characteristic herbs which include an abundance of common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* and yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*. On steeper drier slopes, stands of grassland are particularly herb-rich and distinguished by frequent betony *Betonica officinalis* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, along with autumn hawkbit *Scorzoneroides autumnalis*, rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and the locally uncommon bitter vetch *Lathyrus linifolius*. Also present in small quantities is the adder's tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.

Where there is impeded drainage on the lower wetter slopes, stands of taller marshy vegetation occur but these are also species-rich, comprising a mix of the characteristic grassland species together with a range of rushes, such as sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus* and soft rush *J. effusus*, small sedges, including carnation sedge *Carex panicea*, star sedge *C. echinata* and glaucous sedge *C. flacca* and herbs including an abundance of great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* with ragged robin *Silene flos-cuculi*.

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 Wall Lands 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 and neutral pasture 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. The cut is usually done in early July, but the precise timing depends on local factors, including past management and current weather conditions. It should always 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.

On pasture land this management is achieved by grazing. The precise timing and intensity of grazing will vary both between and within sites, according to local conditions and requirements (such as the type or availability of stock, or the needs of individual plants or animals of conservation concern) but should aim to keep a relatively open sward without causing excessive poaching. Light trampling can be of benefit by breaking down leaf litter and providing areas for seed germination. Any surrounding, well-managed hedgerows may considerably add to the habitat in providing shelter for invertebrates. Occasional dressings of lime may be acceptable.

For 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.

Date notified: 23 November 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 **Wall Lands 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
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.
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).
13a.	Draining (including the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains).
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.

Standard reference number	Type of operation
15.	Infilling or digging of ditches, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or pits
20.	Extraction of minerals including hard rock, topsoil, subsoil, lime and spoil.
21.	Destruction, construction, removal, rerouting, or regrading 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.
24a.	Modification of natural or man-made features and clearance of boulders, large stones, loose rock or scree.
26.	Use of vehicles or craft.
27.	Recreational or other activities likely to damage or disturb the features of special interest.
28a.	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: 23 November 2011

National Grid Reference: SK 227529

Annex 4

Map 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 map here