

Notification date: 22 August 1986

COUNTY: DERBYSHIRE
CUTTING

SITE NAME: BREADSALL RAILWAY

DISTRICT: EREWASH

SITE REF: 15 WMC

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, Erewash Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SK 395394

Area: 5.0 (ha.) 12.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 128

1:10,000: SK 33 NE

Date Notified Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

The site is a Local Nature Reserve owned by Derbyshire County Council. New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site is important for a mosaic of habitats particularly grasslands which support many species which are now uncommon in the area.

This short length of disused railway cutting runs through acid Bunter pebble beds overlain by calcareous boulder clay, and carries a mosaic of calcareous, neutral and acidic grassland. At the eastern end, water seeping from the calcareous boulder clay creates a series of flushes rich in bryophytes and sedges. The east-west orientation of the cutting provides additional diversity with variation in species composition and flowering times on the north and south sides.

Several of the grassland types present in the cutting are similar to old unfertilized meadows and pastures and provide examples of vegetation types that were once present in adjacent fields which are now improved. Although there are a range of grasslands most of the locally uncommon plant species are those of unimproved neutral grassland.

Scrub of various types has colonised parts of the cutting and at the eastern end has developed into woodland. The scrub provides nesting cover and winter food for a whole range of birds and is particularly noted for warblers.

The site is notable for its large and diverse butterfly population which includes species of local distribution in Derbyshire such as holly blue *Celustrina argiolus* and species which are now recolonising the county such as gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*.