

File ref:

County: Lincolnshire **Site name:** Sotby Meadows

District: East Lindsey

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

Local Planning Authority: East Lindsey District Council

National Grid Reference: TF 203779 **Area:** 7.1 (ha) 17.5 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 122 **1: 10 000:** TF 27 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1981 **Date of Last Revision:**

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

Part of the area is leased and part owned by the County Trust as a nature reserve.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Sotby Meadows are three species-rich unimproved grasslands managed traditionally for hay and late grazing. Their value for wildlife is increased by the adjacent green lane and its ancient hedges and the stream which bisects the site. The neutral to lime-rich soils derive from the Boulder Clays of the Lindsey Vale and provide suitable conditions for five species of orchid and one of the few locations in the county for moonwort *Botrychium lunaria*.

A wide range of grasses include an abundance of meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* with some quaking grass *Briza media*, wood false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum* and downy oat grass *Avenula pubescens*. The northern meadow is characterised by bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus* and black knapweed *Centaurea nigra* associated with pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*. The marshy areas, dominated by hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, are breeding grounds for snipe and lapwing.

The southern meadow supports plants such as rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and great burnet *S. officinalis* which are dependent on lime-rich soils. Other plants typical of unimproved grasslands are adder's tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* and more unusually lady's mantle *Alchemilla vulgaris*.

The aquatic grasses fringing the stream are breeding grounds for reed bunting and sedge warbler. The greatest concentrations of breeding birds are found in tall hedges fringing the green lane where mature ash provide accommodation for hole-nesting birds.

