

File ref:

County: Nottinghamshire **Site name:** Gotham Hill Pasture

District: Rushcliffe

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

Local Planning Authority: Rushcliffe Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SK 532307 **Area:** 8.56 (ha) 21.14 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 129 **1: 10 000:** SK 53 SW

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

The site comprises one of the best mixed pastures and associated grassland in Nottinghamshire, and is representative of species-rich grassland developed on calcareous and neutral clays in Central and Eastern England.

Biology:

A fine example of species-rich pasture developed on the south-east facing slope of a ridge formed of a succession of limestones, shales and clays of Upper Triassic and Lower Triassic Jurassic age. The character of the sward changes with soil type and slope, and examples of both calcareous and neutral grassland are present. The basic sward components over the majority of the site comprise crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, in a community which contains such characteristic herbs as sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, musk thistle *Carduus nutans*, harebell *Campanula rotundifolia* and bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*. Locally, on areas of bare shale, the small-flowered buttercup *Ranunculus parviflorus* is established. On soils which have a limestone or gypsum component the sward character changes with tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* becoming dominant in a plant community which includes salad burnet *Poterium sanguisorba*, dwarf thistle *Cirsium acaule*, burnet-saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga* and thyme *Thymus drucei*. A similar sward occurs in the south-east of the site on an area of gypsum spoil where the plant community contains an abundance of wild carrot *Daucus carota*, fairy flax *Linum catharticum*, greater knapweed *Centaurea scabiosa* and restharrow *Ononis repens*.