

**County:** Humberside

**Site Name:** Barn Hill Meadows

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Boothferry Borough Council.

**National Grid Reference:** SE 728286, 734285, 737281, 740281

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 106

**1:10,000:** SE 72 NW

**Area:** 8.6 (ha) 21.2 (ac)

**First Notified:** 1987

**Description:**

Barn Hill Meadows comprise seven fields lying just to the west of Howden, in the flood plain of the Old Derwent. The site is important for its herb-rich, unimproved, neutral grassland, a habitat now uncommon in the intensively farmed landscape of Humberside and in lowland England generally.

The fields have been traditionally managed for hay and several of them retain remnant ridge and furrow characteristics. Boundary hedgerows and ditches form an integral part of the site.

The dominant grasses in the sward are red fescue *Festuca rubra*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* with false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* locally abundant and quaking grass *Briza media* occurring sparsely.

A particular feature of these fields is the abundance of great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* which occurs here with other species indicative of unimproved grassland, such as pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus* and meadow crane's-bill *Geranium pratense*. Characteristic species on drier ground also include oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* while in wetter areas there are tall herb communities comprising meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*, yellow loosestrife *Lysimachia vulgaris*, common meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum* and ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*.

Common reed *Phragmites australis* and sweet-grass *Glyceria* spp., are locally dominant along ditches and in the damper furrows.