

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: BITTELL RESERVOIRS

DISTRICT: BROMSGROVE SITE REF: 15WRK

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL,
Bromsgrove District Council

National Grid Reference: SP 018750 Area: 66.9 (ha.) 165.3 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 139 1:10,000: SP 07 NW, SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1956 Date of Last Revision: 1971

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Site formerly known as Lower Bittell Reservoir.
Site boundary modified (extension).

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Bittell Reservoirs lie in the Upper Arrow Valley of north Worcestershire. They were formed by the damming of a large shallow basin in the Keuper Marl.

These reservoirs together form the largest area of open water in the county and represent one of the most important sites in the West Midlands for passage and wintering waders as well as other waterfowl, with over 200 species recorded. A variety of birds breed on the site including great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, little ringed plover *Charadrius dubius* and grasshopper warbler *Locustella naevia*.

The reservoirs are surrounded by a diversity of marginal communities. These include a rare silt shoreline community in the draw down zone of Upper Bittell where the nationally rare plants slender spike rush *Eleocharis acicularis* and mudwort *Limosella aquatica* are abundant. The open water community is also very diverse with small pondweed *Potamogeton berchtoldii*, blunt-leaved pondweed *P. obtusifolius* and horned pondweed *Zannichellia palustris*, all of which are scarce species in Worcestershire.

The invertebrate fauna of the site is likewise rich and includes 5 species of dragonfly. The rare mud snail *Lymnaea glabra* also occurs.