

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: MALTHOUSE FARM
MEADOWS

DISTRICT: MALVERN HILLS

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

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

National Grid Reference: SO 806390 Area: 4.77 (ha.) 11.82 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150 1:10,000: SO 83 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
New site.

Reasons for Notification:

Malthouse Farm Meadows are a group of three adjacent hay meadows lying south east of the village of Welland. Such meadows have become much rarer in Worcestershire as well as throughout Britain in recent years mainly due to changes in traditional agricultural practice.

The meadows are unusual in that they contain large areas of impeded drainage dominated by jointed rush *Juncus articulatus* and sedges *Carex* spp.

The meadows are some of the richest in the county and contain one of the largest colonies of the southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* in Worcestershire, as well as common spotted orchid *D. fuchsii* and green winged orchid *Orchis morio*. The sedge community is particularly important with ten species recorded. The meadows have one of the longest lists of species for any meadow in the county. This includes saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, common milkwort *Polygala vulgaris* and pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*.

The hedgerows contain some fine old trees, including oaks *Quercus robur* and white willow *Salix alba* pollards. The large number of other trees and shrubs present suggests they are very old.

The marshy nature of the site makes it a suitable habitat for birds such as curlew *Numenius arquata*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago* and lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*.