

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THE 20 OCTOBER 1986

COUNTY: DERBYSHIRE/CHESHIRE

SITE BANE: TODDBROOK
RESERVOIR

DISTRICT: HIGH PEAK/MACCLESFIELD

SITE REF: 15 WNE

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

Local Planning Authority: DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL/PEAK PARK
JOINT PLANNING BOARD, High Peak Borough Council/Macclesfield Borough
Council

National Grid Reference: SK 004809

Area: 19.6 (ha.) 48.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 109, 110

1:10,000: SJ 98 SE, SK 08 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1963

Date of Last Revision: 1981

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Site boundary alteration (extension & reduction).

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Toddbrook Reservoir is situated to the south west of Whaley Bridge. Built in the 19th-century as a canal feeder reservoir at maximum capacity it covers an area of some 20 ha. In periods of drought it has an extensive draw-down zone which exposes large areas of mud. The reservoir is recharged to full capacity in winter.

The site is one of a very few in Britain which periodically support an unusual community of short-lived mosses and liverworts. Such 'ephemeral bryophyte' communities are characteristic of the muddy draw-down zones of a few reservoirs and ponds, but are well documented only at Toddbrook and one other nearby site.

The most characteristic species is the rare moss *Physcomitrium sphaericum* which is only known from very few localities. It was first recorded here in 1893 and has reappeared intermittently since, when summer droughts have produced a muddy substrate suitable for this group of short-lived bryophytes. These include the mosses *Pseudephemeridum nitidum* and *Physcomitrella patens*, and the liverworts *Riccia sorocarpa* and *Blasia pusilla*.

Toddbrook reservoir has thus provided a site for the detailed investigation of these unusual plant communities.

A wide range of breeding birds is also present on the site. Some 30 species breed regularly including waterbirds such as great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus* and mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*. Other waterfowl such as teal *Anas crecca* and pochard *Aythya ferina* use the reservoir as a wintering roost and feeding area.