

COUNTY: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE/SOUTH YORKSHIRE      SITE NAME: RIVER  
IDLE WASHLANDS

DISTRICT: BASSETLAW/DONCASTER

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

Local Planning Authority: BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

National Grid Reference: (Area 1) SK 662 936	(Area 1) 50 (ha.) 123.6 (ac.)
(Area 2) SK 685 937	(Area 2) 10.6 (ha.) 26.2 (ac.)
(Area 3) SK 706 945	(Area 3) 5.1 (ha.) 12.7 (ac.)
(Area 4) SK 720 963	(Area 4) 22.8 (ha.) 56.6 (ac.)
Total – Notts 51.9 (ha.) 128.4 (ac.)	
Total – S. Yorks 36.7 (ha.) 90.6 (ac.)	

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 111, 112      1:10,000: SK 69 SE, SK 79 SW, SK 79

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1972      Date of Last Revision: 1981

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

**Other Information:**

The site boundary has been amended. Parts of the site are managed as nature reserves.

**Reasons for Notification:**

The site comprises good examples of wet grassland plant communities, and attracts large numbers of wintering and passage waterfowl.

**Biology**

The site combines the best remaining washland grasslands along the River Idle floodplain. Characteristically the grassland swards are dominated by marsh foxtail *Alopecurus geniculatus* in a community which contains such wet meadow herbs as la smock *Cardamine pratensis* and great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*. In wetter areas the vegetation is dominated by stands of reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima* which has also colonised the internal drains although, locally, a more varied wetland plant community occurs which includes such plant species as meadow rue *Thalictrum flavum*. There are occasional stands of common reed *Phragmites australis* notably between an artificial scrape and the River Idle in Area 3.

The washlands are important as feeding and roosting sites for populations of wintering and passage waterfowl including Bewick's, whooper and mute swans, wigeon, teal, pochard, snipe and a variety of other wildfowl and wading birds. Additional interest is provided by the breeding bird community which includes snipe and redshank.