

File ref:

County: Lincolnshire **Site name:** Scotton Beck Fields

District: West Lindsey

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

Local Planning Authority: West Lindsey District Council

National Grid Reference: SK 877988 **Area:** 16.3 (ha) 40.3 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 112 **1: 10 000:** SK 89 NE

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1987 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Scotton Beck Fields comprise an extensive area of acidic unimproved grassland, a habitat of considerable scarcity in the county owing to agricultural improvement and afforestation of much of the cover sands of north-west Lincolnshire. Continued grazing of these fields by cattle has maintained their botanical diversity, which includes several heathland species both of a restricted county and national distribution. The site supports the only known grassland community of this type in the County.

Much of the area is dominated by wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, and sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* with abundant purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, mat-grass *Nardus stricta* and common bent *Agrostis capillaris*. Associated herbs include heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, field wood-rush *Luzula campestris*, green-ribbed sedge *Carex binervis* and creeping willow *Salix repens*. The northern field is an inland site for sand sedge *Carex arenaria*.

In the southern field is an area of impeded drainage where heather *Calluna vulgaris*, carnation sedge *Carex panicea* and cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix* occur in association with the above herbs and grasses.

Damp areas in the old meanders of Scotton Beck support cuckoo flower *Cardamine pratensis*, common marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*, marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, jointed rush *Juncus articulatus*, silverweed *Potentilla anserina* and lesser spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*.