

File ref:

County: Leicestershire **Site name:** Debdale Meadow,
Muston

District: Melton

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

Local Planning Authority: Melton Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SK 835395 **Area:** 4.4 (ha) 10.9 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 130 **1: 10 000:** SK 83 NW

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:

This meadow is an outstanding example of a traditionally managed neutral grassland, supporting a wide range of plants that are characteristic of the clay soils of the Midlands. Unimproved meadows of this type are now rare in lowland Britain.

The meadow lies on Lias clay and slopes gently to the north-east. The higher ground exhibits the pronounced ridge and furrow pattern left by medieval cultivation.

The grassland is dominated by crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*, although upright brome *Bromus erectus* is locally abundant on the drier ridges. Common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, cowslip *Primula veris*, bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus* and betony *Stachys officinalis* are abundant throughout, whilst pignut *Conopodium majus*, lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria* and yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens* are locally frequent. Other notable species include quaking grass *Briza media*, dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* and adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.