

COUNTY: EAST SUSSEX SITE NAME: FOLKINGTON RESERVOIR

DISTRICT: WEALDEN

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

Local Planning Authority: WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TQ 564036 Area: 5.7 (ha.) 14.1 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 199 1:10,000: TQ 50 SE

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

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

Further Information:

This is a new site.

Reasons for Notification:

Folkington Reservoir is a covered reservoir on the slopes of the South Downs above Folkington village. The banks support a rich chalk grassland flora with abundant orchids and the top is the only known locality in the county for the rare and protected hairy mallow *Althaea hirsuta*, a species listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

The grassland slopes around the reservoir have a diverse chalk flora including chalk milkwort *Polygala calcarea*, kidney vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*, horseshoe vetch *Hippocrepis comosa* and various orchids: pyramidal *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, bee *Ophrys apifera*, fragrant *Gymnadenia conopsea* and common spotted *Dactylorhiza fuschii*. The dry and exposed bare chalk on top of the reservoir supports typical ruderal species such as scarlet pimpernel *Anagallis tenella* and parsley piert *Aphanes arvensis*. This habitat also contains a large population of hairy mallow *Althaea hirsuta* normally a mediterranean species of disturbed ground and known from only a few sites in the country.

A small area of ash *Fraxinus excelsior*/sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* woodland is also included within the site.