

**COUNTY:** LINCOLNSHIRE

**SITE NAME:** CLAXBY CHALK PIT

**DISTRICT:** EAST LINDSEY

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

**Local Planning Authority:** East Lindsey District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TF 450717

**Area:** 2.2 (ha.) 5.4 (ac.)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 122

**1:10,000:** TF 47 SE, TF 47 SW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1968

**Date of Last Revision:** 1981

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1984

**Date of Last Revision:** –

**Other Information:**

This site was previously notified for its geological interest. It is owned and managed as a county trust nature reserve under the name of Mill Hill Quarry.

**Reasons for Notification:**

A particularly fine example of Lincolnshire Wolds chalk grassland, which only survives in disused quarries or on steep, unploughable slopes. Since this grassland is in the context of an old chalk pit, its value is increased for it represents a stage within the process of continuous changes from grassland through to scrub and broad-leaved woodland.

**Biology:**

The grassland is dominated by characteristic chalk downland species: upright brome *Bromus erectus* and red fescue *Festuca rubra* with meadow oak *Avenula pratensis*, tor grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* and quaking grass *Briza media* locally common. Within this sward are numerous herbs (each abundant) dependent upon the very high levels of calcium in the soil; examples are marjoram *Origanum vulgare*, hawkweed oxtongue *Picris hieracioides*, wild basil *Clinopodium vulgare*, wild carrot *Daucus carota* and perforate St John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum*. Four orchid species occur bee *Ophrys apifera*, pyramidal *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, common spotted *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and twayblade *Listera ovata*.

The hawthorn and blackthorn scrub has abundant wild rose *Rosa canina*. The areas of woodland to the south and fringing the quarry to the east and west are dominated by beech *Fagus sylvatica* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* with some pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. In the ground flora dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* is locally dominant with violets *Viola* spp, primrose *Primula vulgaris* and toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*.

Breeding birds include spotted flycatcher, tawny owl and pied wagtail. Woodcock occurs. Both pipistrelle and long-eared bats are regularly seen.