

File ref:

County: Lincolnshire **Site name:** Copper Hill

District: South Kesteven

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

Local Planning Authority: South Kesteven County Council

National Grid Reference: SK 980427 **Area:** 7.1 (ha) 17.5 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 130 **1: 10 000:** SK 94 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1951 **Date of Last Revision:**

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

1. Cooper Hill is a Geological Conservation Review site.
2. The boundary of the site has been modified at renotification by a partial deletion and extension.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site includes nationally important exposures of Lincolnshire Limestone as well as examples of Eastern Jurassic Limestone grassland, which is nationally scarce.

Biology:

The main biological interest of the site lies in the wide verges of Ermine Street, a Roman road, and the verges of the branch road to Belton, which is closed to traffic. The road verges have a rich and varied limestone flora, with grasses including upright brome *Bromus erectus*, tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* and quaking-grass *Briza media* and associated herbs including horseshoe vetch *Hippocrepis comosa*, dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris*, common rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*, spiny restharrow *Ononis spinosa*, purple milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*, purging flax *Linum catharticum* and harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*. The man orchid *Aceras anthropophorum* occurs here, at the northern edge of its range in Britain.

Several species of butterfly, including those whose larvae feed on typical limestone plants, occur at the site, such as brimstone, common blue, small skipper, orange tip, small tortoiseshell and wall.

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Copper Hill (cont...)

Geology:

This locality is of particular importance because of the evidence it provides of the environmental conditions under which the Middle Jurassic Lincolnshire Limestone was laid down about 170 million years ago. The existence of submarine channels within these rocks, and in which the "Ancaster Beds" occur is an important indicator of the type of sedimentary environments that existed at this time.