

COUNTY: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

SITE NAME: BARROW HILLS SANDPIT

DISTRICT: BASSETLAW

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

Local Planning Authority: Bassetlaw District Council

National Grid Reference: SK 683917

Area: 1.93 (ha.) 4.77 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: No 111

1:10,000: SK 96 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1981

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Description:

The site comprises a fine example of species-rich grassland and scrub developed on freely-draining unconsolidated sands of glacial origin and is representative of grassland developed on base-rich sandy soils in the North Midlands.

Biology:

A series of sandy soils of varying base-status has been exposed by old sand workings into the south-facing slope of part of the Barrow Hills. On the upper soils of the quarries, where the leached sandy soils are acidic in character, the ground vegetation is dominated by common bent *Agrostis tenuis*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* and contains such typical heathland plants as heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile*. Areas of acid scrub including patches of gorse *Ulex europaeus* and broom *Sarothamnus scoparius* also occur. Lower down quarrying has exposed mineral sandy soils containing abundant chips, pebbles and nodules of limestone. Here rabbit grazing maintains areas of herb-rich short sward dominated by silver hair grass *Aira caryophylla* and sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* and containing such characteristic sandland plants as common stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium*, buck's-horn plantain *Plantago coronopus*, hoary cinquefoil *Potentilla argentea*, biting stonecrop *Sedum acre*, common whitlow grass *Erophila verna*, lesser hawkbit *Leontodon taraxacoides*, restharrow *Ononis repens* and viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare*. Parts of the sandpit consist of areas of bare sand, while others have been colonised by scrub which is characterised by the abundance of privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, rose *Rosa* spp, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* together with a few specimens of buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus*. The mix of habitats present is ideally suited to support a diverse invertebrate fauna.