

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: BARN MEADOW

DISTRICT: MALVERN HILLS SITE REF: 15W6E

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD AND WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL,
Malvern Hills District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 790363 Area: 1.8 (ha.) 4.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150 1:10,000: SO 73 NE

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

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

Other Information:
New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Barn Meadow is an ancient hay meadow situated on the eastern side of the Malvern Hills in South Worcestershire. It lies on neutral soils derived from the underlying Keuper Marl of this part of the Severn Valley.

It has been selected as a particularly fine example of a species rich, lowland, neutral grassland traditionally managed for haymaking and with aftermath grazing. Such meadows were once a common feature of this part of the south-west Midlands, but due to changes in agricultural practices have largely disappeared.

Barn Meadow is one of the few that have survived. It is particularly rich in plants with more than 90 species occurring. Over twenty grasses are recorded with many characteristic hay meadow species including the local meadow barley *Hordeum secalinum*. A particular feature of the meadow is the large population of green-winged orchid *Orchis mario*. Other noteworthy species present include pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* and adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, this last species being an indicator of undisturbed meadows. Also present are two species of local distribution: wild liquorice *Astragalus glycyphyllos* and grass vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia*. In the damper parts of the meadow meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre* occur. The conservation value of the site is enhanced by ancient hedgerows that border the site with a variety of tree and shrub species including aspen *Populus tremula*, field maple *Acer campestre*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* and wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*.