

File ref:

**County:** Lincolnshire **Site name:** Keal Carr

**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 385648 **Area:** 23.0 (ha) 56.9 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000:** 122 **1: 10 000:** TF 36 NE, SE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1968 **Date of Last Revision:**

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

#### **Other Information:**

Part of the site is owned and managed as a nature reserve by the Lincolnshire and South Humberside Trust for Nature Conservation.

#### **Description and Reasons for Notification:**

Keal Carr is an example of a base-rich springline alder woodland, especially characteristic of the southern Lincolnshire Wolds. Here, the upper reaches of Toynton Beck have cut a steep sided valley through the porous Spilsby Sandstone to the underlying impermeable Kimmeridge Clay, exposing a springline along the valley side. The wood supports a rich flora typical of flushed ground and is one of the best sites in the county for the alternate-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium alternifolium*. Woodlands dominated by alder are rather rare nationally, as many such stands have been lost through drainage.

The bottom of the valley is a mosaic of tall herbs in open areas and woodland, with shaded marsh vegetation under the tree canopy. The woodland below the springline is dominated by old coppiced alder *Alnus glutinosa* with some scattered coppiced ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and a shrub layer of willows *Salix* spp. The field layer is characterised by abundant giant horsetail *Equisetum telematia*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, common valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, broad buckler fern *Dryopteris austriaca*, red currant *Ribes rubrum*, and the uncommon black currant *R. nigrum*. Keal Carr is an important Lincolnshire locality for greater tussock sedge *Carex paniculata*. In some areas opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* is abundant, occurring in association with moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina* and wavy bittercress *Cardamine flexuosa*.

Above the springline, the steep dry sandy slopes have a similar mosaic of woodland and open areas, the latter dominated by bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*. Despite invasion by sycamore cont...

### **Keal Carr (cont...)**

*Acer pseudoplatanus*, the woodland still retains a typical ground flora of bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, red campion *Silene dioica* and greater stitchwort *Stellaria holostea*.

At the northern end of the site an area of open water provides additional interest as it is much used by duck. Keal Carr is a habitat for a number of breeding birds, including all three species of woodpecker, willow tit and garden warbler. In winter the area is used as a feeding ground by siskin.