

County: Devon **Site Name:** Billacombe

District: Plymouth

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

Local Planning Authority: Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council

National Grid Reference: SX 518540 **Area:** 1.9 (ha) 4.8 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 201 **1:10,000:** SX 55 SW

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1989 **Date of Last Revision:** –

Other Information:

A new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site supports a population of the nationally rare field eryngo *Eryngium campestre*, a plant that is specially protected under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The locality consists of a gently sloping field with a southerly aspect and the soils, which overlie Devonian limestone, are generally thin and well drained.

A species-rich sward of neutral grassland occupies much of the site. Among the most abundant grass species are yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*, bents *Agrostis* spp. and red fescue *Festuca rubra* with occasional cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*. Many broad-leaved herbs occur with frequent common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, burnet saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga*, field scabious *Knautia arvensis*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, red clover *Trifolium pratense* and local patches of lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* and common restharrow *Ononis repens*. Of occasional distribution are wild carrot *Daucus carota*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus* and field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis*.