

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER    SITE NAME: BAYNHALL MEADOW

DISTRICT: WYCHAVON

Site Ref: 15P3P

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL,  
Wychavon District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 981531

Area: 1.07 (ha.) 2.64 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 95 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 24.3.93

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Baynhall Meadow is located on the East Worcestershire plain near the village of Naunton Beauchamp. It is a traditionally managed hay meadow overlying a medieval ridge and furrow system. The soils are poorly drained and slightly calcareous, derived from the underlying Lower Lias clays of the Jurassic Period.

The special interest of this site lies in the diversity of the semi-natural grassland sward which has been maintained under traditional management by hay cutting and grazing, and is of a type which is nationally scarce and declining. The dominant vegetation is mesotrophic (neutral) grassland characterised by common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*. The undulating topography of the ridge and furrow increases the diversity of the grassland giving rise to two sub-communities. Within the seasonally wet furrows the meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* sub-community occurs with characteristic species which include meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, tall fescue *Festuca arundinacea*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*. The locally uncommon pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus* occurs frequently in this community.

In contrast, the ridges have drier, more calcareous (base rich) grassland of the lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* sub-community, which forms the greater area of the meadow. Characteristic species frequently occurring here include yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*, sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*.

A particular feature of this meadow is the number of locally uncommon plants which occur frequently within the sward. Of particular note are dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris*, dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, adder's tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum* and saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*.

The site is bounded on all sides by tall, thick hedgerows dominated by English elm *Ulmus procera*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, midland hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, dog rose *Rosa canina* agg. and blackberry *Rubus fruticosus*. Pollard willows *Salix alba* surround a small pond in the north-west corner of the meadow.