

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: BIRMINGHAM  
PLATEAU GRASSLANDS,  
2 HURST FARM PASTURE

DISTRICT: BROMSGROVE

SITE REF: 15 P1Z

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,  
Bromsgrove District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 930758

Area: 2.21 (ha.) 5.46 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 139

1:10,000: SO 97 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 22.2.94

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Hurst Farm Pasture is situated in North Worcestershire, two kilometres south-south-west of the village of Belbroughton. It is a pasture on a slope facing north to north-west, overlying the red Mercia Mudstones of the Triassic Period, and is lightly grazed by horses.

The special interest of the site lies in the diversity of the semi-natural grassland sward. The vegetation conforms to the mesotrophic (neutral) grassland characterised by crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, with a mosaic of the heathgrass *Danthonia decumbens* and meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* sub-communities. The acidic influence is characterised in the abundance of tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, with lady's-mantle *Alchemilla filicaulis* spp *vestita*, betony *Stachys officinalis*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, common centaury *Centaureum erythraea* and zigzag clover *Trifolium medium*. There are flushed areas to the east end of the bank with glaucous sedge *Carex flacca*, carnation sedge *C. panicea*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, compact rush *J. conglomeratus*, jointed rush *J. articulatus* and field wood-rush *Luzula campestris*.

Species more typical of the meadow vetchling sub-community include abundant common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, heath spotted-orchid *D. maculata* and pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*. The locally uncommon dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria* is frequent.

The hedges are dominated by hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*. There is a small area of scrub at the eastern end.