

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: BIRMINGHAM PLATEAU
GRASSLANDS, 4 OAKLAND
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 940731

Area: 1.09 (ha.) 2.69 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 139

1:10,000: SO 97 SW

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:

Oakland Pasture is situated in north Worcestershire immediately north-east of the village of Dodford. It overlies a medieval ridge and furrow system. The sloping eastern part is cut for hay, while the western part on level ground is currently unmanaged. The pastures lie on neutral soils derived from the underlying Mercia Mudstones of the Triassic Period.

The special interest of the site lies in the diversity of the semi-natural grassland sward. The vegetation conforms to the meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* sub-community of the mesotrophic (neutral) grassland characterised by crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*.

Characteristic grasses include abundant common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and yellow oat grass *Trisetum flavescens*. The ridges are floristically rich, with frequent common-bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, common vetch *Vicia sativa* and oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*. Other characteristic species include agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, hairy hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, autumn hawkbit *L. autumnalis*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, salad burnet *Sanguisorbia minor*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and cowslip *Primula veris*. Over fifty spikes of the common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* have been recorded on the lower slopes.

The hedges are dominated by hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, with field maple *Acer campestre*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.