

**Site name:** Hallam Barn Grasslands **County:** Derbyshire

**District:** High Peak

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

**Local Planning Authority:** High Peak Borough Council, Peak District National Park Authority

**National Grid reference:** SK188833 **Area:** 5.02 ha

**Ordnance Survey sheet:** **1:50,000:** 110 **1:10,000:** SK 18 NE

**Notification date:** 23 November 2011

**Reasons for notification:**

Hallam Barn Grasslands SSSI is a nationally important site for its lowland unimproved neutral grassland, comprising the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

**General description:**

The site consists of two small fields managed as either meadow or pasture lying on clay soils on the outskirts of the village of Aston above the River Noe in the Hope Valley.

Much of the site comprises agriculturally-unimproved, species-rich grassland characterised by a diverse and rich range of native grasses and herbs. Grasses such as red fescue *Festuca rubra*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* all occur in abundance. Present throughout is a diverse range of characteristic herbs which include a high frequency of meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, common cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* and yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*. Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* occurs more locally, with common spotted orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* occurring frequently in places.

The southern section of the site is wetter where a small stream separates the two fields. Rushes are locally dominant in this area, with other locally abundant species including glaucous sedge *Carex flacca*, greater bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*, selfheal *Prunella vulgaris* and floating sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans*. Additional species such as ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, lesser trefoil *Trifolium dubium* and wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris* have also been recorded here.