

Views About Management



A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Donington Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

Wood pasture and Parkland

These habitats are typically mosaics of scattered old trees (often pollards), and relatively extensive open areas (often acid grassland or heath), with patches of scrub and young growth. They are maintained in this mixed state by higher levels of grazing than are common in woods with a coppice or high forest history. The habitat may now lack one or other of the components of the mosaic or no longer be grazed. The preferred management is usually aimed at restoring the missing elements.

Old pollards may need attention in terms of reducing competition from younger growth or lightening the crown, for example, by re-pollarding. Dealing with old pollards is a specialist job as each has a unique structure and context. Large cut branches, fallen dead wood or the remains of old trees should be left on site as they may contain populations of important fungi or invertebrates. Grazing or cutting helps to maintain old trees in relatively open conditions, which is desirable where these are important for lichens on the lower trunks.

The pasture may be of conservation interest in its own right and grazing or cutting also promotes open semi-natural vegetation with some scrub and young trees in

between the main woodland trees. Care needs to be taken to establish the most appropriate stocking density or cutting regime.

This site is highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, applications of which should be avoided both within the site itself and in adjacent surrounding areas. Herbicides may be useful in targeting certain invasive species, but should be used with extreme care. Access to this site, and any recreational activities within, may also need to be managed.

Species interest

The dead wood invertebrate fauna of the site is of special interest. Managing the dead wood resource of the park will be an important undertaking in ensuring the conservation of the associated invertebrate fauna. The natural decay of all cut and fallen dead wood should be accommodated wholly within the site in order to promote conditions suitable for maintaining the exceptionally rich dead wood community, which includes a number of rare invertebrate species.