

File ref:

County: Leicestershire **Site name:** Muston Meadows

District: Melton

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

Local Planning Authority: Melton Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SK 824367 **Area:** 8.77 (ha) 21.67 (ac)
SK 829372

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 130 **1: 10 000:** SK 83 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1981 **Date of Last Revision:**

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

The site contains some of the best remaining examples of neutral clay grasslands in the Midlands and has been accepted for inclusion within the 'Nature Conservation Review'.

Biology:

Muston Meadows are fine examples of neutral ridge and furrow grasslands and are developed on soils derived from the Lower Lias Clay. The sward of the ridges and flatter areas is typically dominated by grasses such as creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, crested dog's tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and quaking grass *Briza media*. Herbs include an abundance of pignut *Conopodium majus*, cowslip *Primula veris*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* and greed-winged orchid *Orchis morio*. Some areas are characterised by an abundance of the great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*. The sward of the furrows is characterised by the dominance of tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia caespitosa* and rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*, and these damper soils support an abundance of Lady's smock *Cardamine pratensis*. Additional interest is provided by the field ponds which contain a population of the great-crested newt *Triturus cristatus* and by the field boundary hedgerows and verges.