

COUNTY: SHROPSHIRE

SITE NAME: LYDEBROOK DINGLE

DISTRICT: The Wrekin

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

Local Planning Authority: SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, The Wrekin District Council

National Grid Reference: SJ 661060                      Area: 21.36 (ha.) 52.8 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 127                      1:10,000: SJ 60 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –                      Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984                      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site. Owned by Telford Development Corporation.

Reasons for Notification:

A narrow, steep-sided wooded dingle on Coal Measures and basalt, through which flows the Lyde Brook, a tributary of the Severn. This is considered to be the best example of this type of ancient, relatively undisturbed, woodland in this part of Shropshire.

The woodland vegetation consists of three distinct stand types, dominated by i) ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and wych elm *Ulmus glabra*, ii) oak *Quercus petraea* and birch *Betula pendula*, and iii) alder *Alnus glutinosa*. There are also rock face communities and an area of marsh with abundant pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*. The woodland ground flora varies according to under-lying geology, as do the dominant trees. Oak and birch dominated stands have developed on acidic soils and possess a ground flora with abundant great wood-rush *Luzula sylvatica*, wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa* and bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*. Ash and wych elm stands, which have been badly affected by Dutch elm disease, occur on more base-rich soils, and have a ground flora characterised by dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, and woodruff *Galium odoratum*. The alder stands have pendulous sedge and giant horsetail *Equisetum telmateia*, and locally opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*.

Lime rich water from the springs along the valley sides has caused the accumulation of large deposits of tufa, mainly in association with the moss *Cratoneuron commutatum*.

Other plants found include uncommon species, such as wood barley *Hordelymus europaeus*, wood horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum* and the moss *Hookeria lucens*. Other trees and shrubs include small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata*, yew *Taxus baccata* and field maple *Acer campestre*.