

SCHEDULE OF QUALIFYING LAND FOR MAPPING OPEN COUNTRY

Ramblers' Association East Yorkshire and Derwent Area	North East Region 5	Sheet 1 of 1
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RA Map	Site references	Name on Map	OS Grid Ref	Area (ha)	Parcels
13	A, B, C, D	Nova Slack and Stonepit Slack	SE 880 652	25	3
Qualifying type	Vegetation Type	Justification for inclusion			
Mountain	Heather Moor	Predominance of qualifying type (M, M, H, D)			
Moor	Rough acid grassland	Contiguous to large parcel of open country			
Heath	Calcareous grassland	Contiguous to existing access land or common land			
Down	Scattered trees or scrub	Provides clearer physical boundary to larger area			
	Bracken	Local value of small parcel (view, feature, accessible, PRoW etc)			
	Rock outcrops	Provides means of access to other access land			
		Steep sided			

This submission claims the area described, which did not appear on the Draft Map, should be mapped as open country.

Comments supporting vegetation type and justification for inclusion:

Stonepit and Nova Slacks comprise a inverted Y-shaped area of chalk grassland west of Wharram le Street. The NLT definitive attributes are RLE and the whole area is designated CG on the **Phase I Habitat Map**. It is in the **Grasslands Inventory** (NY/SE/86/N01). The northern valley (**A**) is accessible from the lane named The Stray (not a PRoW). The SE valley is named Nova Slack (**B**) and the SW valley is named Stonepit Slack (**C**). Only the name Stonepit Slack is shown on the OS Explorer map.

The **Phase II Habitat** survey carried out August 1982 of Nova Slack covered two separate areas indicated by dotted boundaries, parts of which the aerial photographs indicate have now been improved and are therefore excluded from the claim. The report recorded 11 grasses and 34 other herbs, of which 12 were calcicolous indicator species. The plant community on the N-end of the SW-facing side of the Nova Slack (Q131) was described as CG2d and on the S-end (Q131) CG2c. The most abundant grasses were sheep's and red fescue *Festuca ovina* and *rubra* and the most abundant calcicolous indicator herbs were salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*, rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium* and field scabious *Knautia arvensis*.

Stonepit and Nova Slacks constitute an **SSSI** (1000305, 1986). The citation comments that Nova Slack (**B and D**) had not been grazed recently and includes extensive areas of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and gorse *Ulex europaeus*. Areas of species rich grassland were present among the scrub and the grassland is dominated by sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina*, quaking grass *Briza media* and yellow oat-grass *Avenula flavescens*. Herbs mentioned included dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris*, ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, wild thyme *Thymus praecox* and rock rose. When the area was recently visited (September 2002) it was found to be ungrazed and heavily invaded by scrub.

The **SSSI** describes the SW-facing side of Stonepit Slack (**C**) as a species-rich grassland dominated by a mosaic of tor grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* and sheep's fescue. Forbs included clustered bellflower *Campanula glomerata*, carline thistle *Carlina vulgaris*, rock rose, small scabious *Scabiosa columbaria* and purple milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*. The facing slope is dominated by crested dogs-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*. Among the herbs present were harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and a small population of green-winged orchid *Orchis morio*. Gorse *Ulex europaeus* is also present on this slope. When the area was visited (September 2002) it was found to be grazed but otherwise unchanged.

When the northern valley was **visited** in September 2002, it was found to be ungrazed grassland. The grassland on the SW-facing slope was similar to **area B**.

A recent survey, including a **site visit** in May 2003 and inspecting **aerial photographs** taken in 2000, shows that the site appears as described in 1980s, and that it has not received any recent agricultural improvement.

The evidence presented here suggests that the areas outlined on the map, including that shown on the Draft Map, are predominantly unimproved calcareous grassland and should be mapped as open country.

Prepared by:	TKH, LW	Date:	June 2003
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