

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
22	A, B, C, D, E, F, H	Thixen Dale (South)	SE 845 595	95	7
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 supports the inclusion of the area show as open country on the Draft Map and seeks extend the boundaries of open country as shown.

Comments supporting vegetation type and justification for inclusion:

The complex of valleys south of Thixendale village provides characteristic examples of a range of chalk grassland types found on the Yorkshire Wolds. The areas **B, C, D** and **E** are in the **Grasslands Inventory**, form part of the **SSSI** (1004472 Long Dale and Thixendale), were surveyed in the **Phase II Habitat Survey** (EFU30) in July 1982 and are subject to **Countryside Stewardship Agreements** (Chalk and Limestone). The areas **A, F** and **H** are also subject to **Countryside Stewardship Agreements** (Chalk and Limestone).

The **Phase II Habitat** survey for areas **B, C, D** and **E**, recorded 14 grasses and 65 other herbs, of which 17 were calcicolous indicator species. The most abundant characteristic calcicolous herbs: Rock rose *Helianthemum nummularium*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and wild thyme *Thymus praecox* are components of a community dominated by sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* red fescue *Festuca rubra*, tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* and quaking grass *Briza media*.

The southern half of Thixen Dale, **area B**, (GI Thixendale B NY/SE85/T01) is heavily grazed, with large areas of almost pure tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* alternating with richer islands of fescue-dominated turf. In the Phase II Habitat Survey the plant communities were classified as CG2d.

Bradeham Dale (**areas C&D**) and Worm Dale (**area E**) are, according to the SSSI citation, are similar in character to Long Dale, with their strongly calcareous south/south-east facing slopes supporting a tor grass-fescue mosaic and the slightly more acidic north/north-west facing slopes containing species such as tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and pignut *Conopodium majus*. The plant communities in Worm Dale (GI Thixendale E NY/SE85/T04) were classified as CG4c and CG5 and in Bradeham Dale (GI Thixendale C+D NY/SE85/T02-03) area C as CG2c, area D as CG2d, CG4a and CG4b.

The **area H** at the extreme SE end of the complex is a SW-facing bank containing earthworks. The area is shown on the 1:10,000 OS map as rough grazing and as unimproved calcareous grassland on the Phase I HS. A **target note 1** is filed with the Phase I HS. **Aerial photographs** taken in 2000 suggest that this area is similar in character to the adjacent area C in Bradeham Dale.

North Breckenholme Dale, **A**, appears, from aerial photographs, to be very similar to South Breckenholme Dale, **F**.

The Wolds Way runs through the main dale and there are PRowS in both Bradeham and Worm Dale.

Recent surveys, including **visual inspections** in August 2002 and May 2003 and inspection of aerial photographs, show that the site appears to be as described in 1985 and that it has not received any recent agricultural improvement.

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

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