

SCHEDULE OF QUALIFYING LAND FOR MAPPING OPEN COUNTRY

Ramblers' Association East Yorkshire and Derwent Area	North East Region 5	Sheet 1 of 2
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RA Map	Site references	Name on Map	OS Grid Ref	Area (ha)	Parcels
16	B, D, G, K, L	Raisthorpe Dale :Vessey Pasture Dale, Back Dale and The Warrens	SE 833 622	23	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 supports the area included on the draft map and seeks extend the boundaries of open country as shown.

Comments supporting vegetation type and justification for inclusion:

Vessey Pasture Dale is at the W end of a series of dales west of Raisthorpe Manor supporting chalk grassland that may qualify for Open Access. The NLT attributes for the dale are RLE. The dale is listed in the **Grassland Inventory** as Raisthorpe Dale **K** and **L** NY/SE86/R04.

In the **Phase I Habitat** Survey, the target note for **location 8** (SE 803624) states that the dominant grass is upright brome *Bromopsis (Bromus) erecta*. Other species listed include: false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* quaking- grass *Briza media* crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* crested hair-grass *Koeleria macrantha* rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*. 21 other herbs are recorded

The **Phase II Habitat** survey in August 1982 for Vessey Pasture Dale and Back Dale, areas **G, K** and **L**, recorded 15 grasses and 76 other herbs, of which 13 were calcicolous indicator species. Analysis of the data showed that the composition of the swards corresponded to a mosaic of NVC CG2c, CG3, CG7a and CG0. The most abundant grasses recorded were sheep's fescue, red fescue and upright brome. Among the most abundant calcicolous indicator species are salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and wild thyme *Thymus praecox* (see Species List).

The site includes an **SSSI** (1003847, Site name: Vessey Pasture Dale and Back Dale). The citation describes the site as follows: "The dale sides are, in the main, close-grazed and free from scrub. In Vessey Pasture Dale, the grassland contrasts with that of the S-facing slope in Back Dale (in which abundant species include sheep's fescue, quaking grass, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*). Absence of grazing has favoured rank growth of upright brome. although the herbs salad burnet, bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* are still abundant. The N-facing slope (K) is less species-rich, indicative of a lower calcareous influence, but herbs such as pignut *Conopodium majus*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and tormentil *Potentilla erecta* are present. In Back Dale there are numerous ant hills amongst the short species-rich turf on the south-facing slope (area G), in which abundant species include sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina*, quaking grass *Briza media*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, rock rose *Helianthemum nummularium*, thyme *Thymus praecox* and fairy flax *Linum catharticum*. The more local autumn gentian *Gentianella amarella* and clustered bell-flower *Campanula glomerata* also occur. The underlying chalk has been exposed in stretches along this slope, corresponding with the site of an old plantation which has now been felled. An impressive earthwork with a species-rich, even turf, occupies the valley bottom. The north-facing slope in Back Dale (**D**) is less species-rich, indicative of a lower calcareous influence, but herbs such as pignut *Conopodium majus*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and tormentil *Potentilla erecta* are present."

A visit to the west-facing side of the northern extension of Vessey Pasture Dale (**location 7**) in May 2003 found that it was more heavily grazed than the opposite side but several characteristic calcicolous species were found, including cowslip *Primula veris*, bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, fairy flax and glaucous sedge *Carex flacca*, and the grasses sheeps' and red fescue, upright brome and downy oat-grass *Avenula pubescens*.

A survey, including **walking the site** in July 2002 and inspecting **aerial photographs** taken in 2000, shows that areas **D, G, K** and **L**, appear as described in 1985, except for invasion by hawthorn scrub *Crataegus monogyna*. Inspection of aerial photographs also indicates that part of The Warrens, **area B**, is unimproved calcareous grassland.

The Wolds Way long-distance footpath crosses the site

The evidence presented here suggests that the area mapped is predominantly unimproved calcareous grassland part of which is correctly mapped on the Draft Map as open country.

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