

PARISH COUNCIL - BROAD GREEN

Parish Council Management of Broad Green SSIS site

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Broadwas & Cotheridge Parish Councillor
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Executive Summary

Broad Green as a Village Green registered area of land is additionally designated as a Site of special Scientific Interest and as such has protected restrictions which the Parish Council are obligated to maintain.

Since winning a 2018 award from Natural England the site has not been maintained and has been damaged in areas. The site needs remedial repairs and a future maintenance plan assigned to it to avoid fines from Natural England.

A large amount of the recommended preventions can be funded through a Natural England Mid-Tier grant, with the shortfall needed to be covered by the Parish Council.

Document Scope

The scope of the document is to provide:

- A summary of the Broad Green , WR65NW site status and restrictions
- Parish Council obligations
- Current status & remedy required

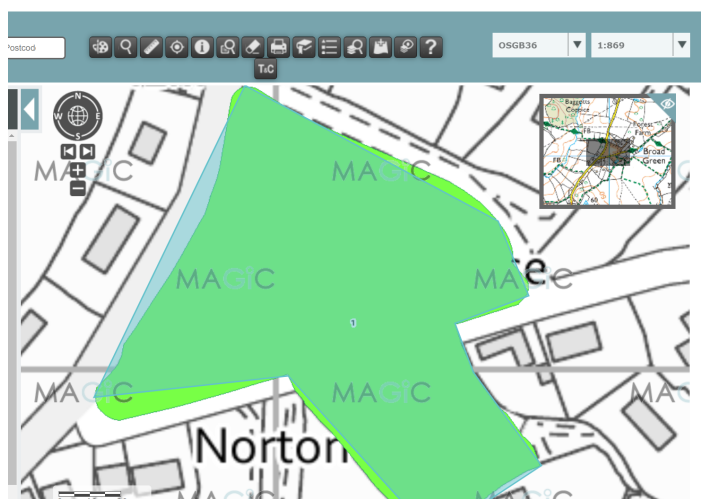
History

Site Layout:

Broad Green consists of 3 separate areas of common land registered as 2 field areas:

- SO77560103 (size:0.7783ha)
- SO77550598 (size:0.2772ha)

[Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://defra.gov.uk/magicmap/)



Site History

Following the Commons Commissioners hearing on 13th November 1973, Broad Green land was registered as Common Land under the Commons Registration Act of 1965.

Broad Green (CommonCD 65078) is registered (April 1982) in the Common Lands Registry as Village Green Common Land and is the responsibility of Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council.

[Link to Common Land Registry](#)

[Broad Green Land registry entry: Appendix A1.1]

SSSI Status

In September 1984 the site became a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. [Broad Green \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](http://naturalengland.org.uk). [Appendix A1.2]

Reason for SSSI assignment:

Broad Green lies in the village of the same name. It consists of an area of neutral grassland with a rich plant community of a type which is rare in this part of the West Midlands. The sward is dominated by grasses such as meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*. Other plants include some locally uncommon species such as dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, pepper saxifrage *Silene acaulis*, adder's tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, wild carrot *Daucus carota*, cowslip *Primula veris* and lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*. In the damper parts meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* also occurs. The Green is particularly noted for an abundance of the uncommon grass vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia*. In recent years some scrub, mainly hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and goat willow *Salix caprea*, has become established over parts of the site.

Management of SSSI Locations

As a SSSI location Broad Green has, in addition to restriction placed on a Village Green Common Land area (No Right to Roam), further restrictions to protect the area which require permission from Natural England as follows:

[Microsoft Word - OLD1001507.doc \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#)

{Appendix A1.3}

Specific to Broad Green, Natural England advise on specific site management actions as follows:

[Views about Management \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#) {Appendix A1.4}

“Neutral hay meadows require active management if they are to retain their conservation interest. In order to maintain a species-rich sward, each year’s growth of vegetation must be removed. Otherwise the sward becomes progressively dominated by tall and vigorous grasses that, together with an associated build-up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and reduce the botanical diversity of the site. In neutral hay meadows, the above objective is traditionally achieved by closing the fields to stock in the autumn and **cutting the resultant growth as hay, usually in early to mid-July**. The precise timing of the cut depends on local factors, including past management and current weather conditions, but should be after ground-nesting birds have fledged their young and any short-lived, characteristic plants have set seed. The aftermath is then grazed in late summer/autumn. Aftermath grazing is important for maintaining a species-rich sward, both through controlling competitive grasses and through hoof-prints providing suitable sites for seedlings to establish. Heavy poaching must be avoided, however. Any surrounding, well-managed hedgerows may considerably add to the habitat in providing shelter for invertebrates. The application of pesticides including herbicides or fertilizers would be damaging but periodic dressings of well rotted farmyard manure may be acceptable if the sward does not receive regular input of nutrients from flooding. Occasional dressings of lime may be acceptable.”

Parish Council Obligations

Malvern Hills Council delegated management of Broad Green as a Village Green Common Land to Broadwas & Cotheridge Council. The Parish Council are obligated to ensure the restrictions applied to a Village Green designated land are adhered to.

Right to Roam Restrictions:

There are certain activities you cannot usually do on open access land, including:

- horse-riding
- cycling
- camping
- taking animals other than dogs on to the land
- driving a vehicle (except mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs) (SSSI additional restrictions apply)
- water sports

Dogs on open access land:

You must keep your dog on a lead no more than 2 metres long on open access land:

- between 1 March and 31 July - to protect ground-nesting birds
- at all times around livestock

SSSI Additional conditions:

The Parish council must take reasonable steps to conserve and enhance the special features of sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs). Failure to protect the SSSI can result in a fine in a magistrates court against the Parish Council from £2k to £20K.

SSSI Grass Cutting:

In addition to the Village Green status, as noted above in Management of a SSSI location, funds are provided for the Parish Council to cut the grass in the allowed annual window.

A prior Parish Council Chair has kindly cut the area of land annually on behalf of the Parish Council. It is understood that this individual does not wish to continue to offer this service and therefore the Parish Council must establish a new resource to complete this for the 2022 season.

Enforcement of SSSI & Village Green Restrictions:

Damage to common land is a criminal act.

It is recommended that enforcement obligations by a public body such as a Parish Council are handled in the first instance as a civil matter through correspondence.

Natural England are able to collaborate in this with the Parish Council to correspond with the known parties to ensure no repeated breach of restriction.

It is recommended to seek local community policing support to ensure restrictions are not breached.

Current Site Position

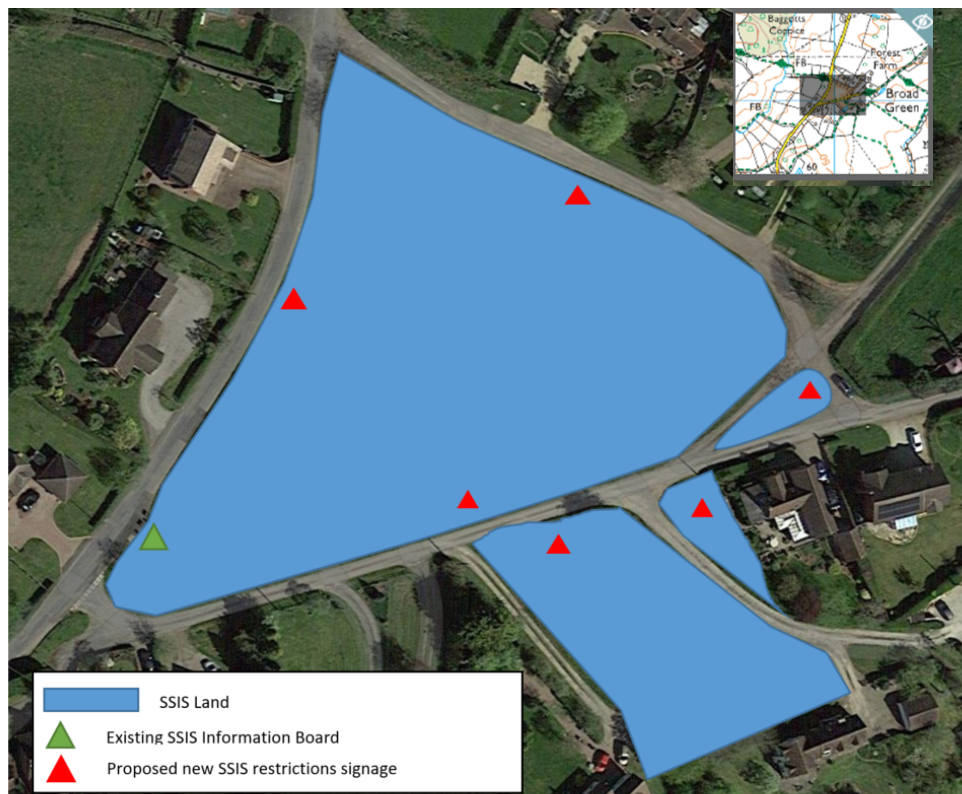
- There has been no active site management from the Parish Council for over four years apart from the annual grass cutting.
- The site has considerable damage to a number of areas perimeter which has led to @2m of site area being lost to grassland which needs to be recovered. The damage has occurred due to increase of vehicle use to Broad Green and the protected site being used as extra parking for residents.
- In addition the site has areas which require tree and ground maintenance to reduce the prohibited species down to the allowed 5% coverage over the area.
- There is a pond area accessible on the land which is a health and safety concern and requires securing.

Outstanding works

Site Signage.

The existing site signage has not been maintained and requires replacement.

To ensure all residents and visitors to the SSSI and surrounding area of the restrictions and obligations, it is proposed that new signs are positioned at the primary points to each of the 4 areas within the village green boundary.



Site Signage-Layout

The below sign format has been submitted to Natural England and is awaiting final confirmation.



Site Signage-Costs

The best price for 6 new laminated waterproof signs is **£180.00**

We have received two quotes for provision and construct of 6 posts at the proposed locations on the green.

Quote 1:

£350 plus VAT

[Appendix A1.5]

Quote 2:

“half round” 6 ft post, driven 18” into the ground (offer no risk to the area). **£270 plus VAT**

[Appendix 1.6]

Recommendation:

Progress with best price quotation.

Guidance:

All signage erections to be approved prior to installation by Natural England.

Damage to Site:

The existing site damage to the perimeter requires investigation. It is considered that remedy should consist of hard soil infill and seeding to reinstate the grassland.

This cannot be funded by a Natural England grant.

Future Prevention:

It is recommended that the Parish Council write to all Broad Green residents to remind them of the SSSI site status, its restrictions and their obligations.

It is recommended that small evenly spaced wooden poles are inserted on along specific points of the perimeter to prevent both vehicle parking and traffic using the green as a shortcut.

A Natural England mid-tier grant can be submitted to cover the majority of this work. The Parish council would be liable to find the remainder amount.

Two quotes for said work have been provided.

Site Maintenance:

The site required prohibited species to be removed and the pond area to be cut back and secured.

A natural England mid-tier grant can be submitted to cover the majority of this work. The Parish council would be liable to find the remainder amount.

It is recommended that a maintenance schedule is assigned to Broad Green to adhere to SSSI conditions.

Appendix

A1.1 Broadwas: Common Land Registry

COMMONCD	County	District/BoroughRegistration number	Number of commons	Registration authority	Registered AREA in hectare	OS 1:50,000 sheet number	10km grid square	Easting	Northing
65078	Hereford/Worcester	Malvern Hills	78	Worcestershire	1.01	150	SO75	377000	256000
65086	Hereford/Worcester	Malvern Hills	86	Worcestershire	0.05	150	SO75	376800	255600

Common land name	PARISH	SITE	MIN Contour	MAX Contour	Median Elevation	DATE
road Green	Broadwas	Located at Broad Green, 1km N of Broadwas.	45	50	47	April 1982. September 1984.
he Pound	Broadwas	Located on A44 at W end of Broadwas.	30	30	30	April 1982. September 1984.

A1.2 Broad Green entry: Natural England

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: BROAD GREEN

DISTRICT: MALVERN HILLS

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, Malvern Hills District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 770560 Area: 0.97 (ha.) 2.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150 1:10,000: SO 75 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1979 Date of Last Revision: –

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

Other Information:
Broad Green is registered as a Village Green.

Description and Reasons for Notification:
Broad Green lies in the village of the same name. It consists of an area of neutral grassland with a rich plant community of a type which is rare in this part of the West Midlands.

The sward is dominated by grasses such as meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*. Other plants include some locally uncommon species such as dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, adder's tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, wild carrot *Daucus carota*, cowslip *Primula veris* and lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*. In the damper parts meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* also occurs. The Green is particularly noted for an abundance of the uncommon grass vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia*.

In recent years some scrub, mainly hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and goat willow *Salix caprea*, has become established over parts of the site.

Operations likely to damage the special interest

Site name: Broad Green

OLD1001507

Ref. No.	Type of Operation
1	Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, and re-seeding.
2	The introduction of grazing.
3	The introduction of stock feeding.
4	Changes in the mowing or cutting regime (including hay making to silage and cessation).
5	Application of manure, fertilisers and lime.
6	Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers).
7	Dumping, spreading or discharge of any materials.
8	Burning.
9	The release into the site of any wild, feral or domestic animal*, plant or seed.
10	The killing or removal of any wild animal*, other than pest control.
11	The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb or turf.
12	Changes in tree management including afforestation, planting, felling and changes in species composition.
13a	Drainage (including the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains).
14	The changing of water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, storage and abstraction from existing water bodies and through boreholes).
15	Infilling of ditches, drains or ponds.
20	Extraction of minerals, including topsoil, subsoil and spoil.
21	Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground.
22	Storage of materials.
23	Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
26	Use of vehicles likely to damage or disturb features of interest.
27	Recreational or other activities likely to damage the grassland.
28	The introduction game management.

* 'animal' includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.

Views About Management



A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Broad Green Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

Neutral hay meadows require active management if they are to retain their conservation interest. In order to maintain a species-rich sward, each year's growth of vegetation must be removed. Otherwise the sward becomes progressively dominated by tall and vigorous grasses that, together with an associated build up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and reduce the botanical diversity of the site. In neutral hay meadows, the above objective is traditionally achieved by closing the fields to stock in the autumn and cutting the resultant growth as hay, usually in early to mid July. The precise timing of the cut depends on local factors, including past management and current weather conditions, but should be after ground-nesting birds have fledged their young and any short-lived, characteristic plants have set seed. The aftermath is then grazed in late summer/autumn. Aftermath grazing is important for maintaining a species-rich sward, both through controlling competitive grasses and through hoof-prints providing suitable sites for seedlings to establish. Heavy poaching must be avoided, however. Any surrounding, well-managed hedgerows may considerably add to the habitat in providing shelter for invertebrates. The application of pesticides including herbicides or fertilizers would be damaging but periodic dressings of well-rotted farmyard manure may be acceptable if the sward does not receive regular input of nutrients from flooding. Occasional dressings of lime may be acceptable.

For the damper meadows, regular and careful maintenance of surface drainage including ditches and drains can be necessary to prevent adverse changes in the plant species composition of the sward. Deepening of surface drainage should be avoided.

A1.5

Signage Quote 1:

Signage Quote 2:

Thank you for contacting me regarding this matter, I'm delighted to be able to quote, for what is an important task to the local area.

Having now inspected the site at length, I agree that there is definite evidence of vehicular presence and damage, which is a tremendous shame to an area of such importance.

Although the area contains a relatively small number of properties, it seems to have a disproportionate amount of traffic.

In the short time I was there I noted several commercial vehicles and two heavy good vehicles, almost all travelling at speed.

With regards the three tasks, I would take the same approach to all of them in terms of materials. As the area is of such interest scientifically, the use of all cements and chemicals should really be avoided where possible.

Timber should be used, and in the interest of longevity should be tannin treated, and not creosote dipped as many are.

Regarding the posts around the larger areas, I would ask for some more specific information on the posts themselves, as I believe in many cases, an area of SSSI require each post to be notched with a particular colour. Aside from this, I think keeping them as natural as possible is the right thing to do, but some measure should be taken to make them visible to all road users. Perhaps a reflective disk on each would provide sufficient visibility in dark conditions, without looking too industrial.

The village pond, I didn't know was there. This is in part, due to a lot of brush and weeds around it.

If this is for safety, I suggest a sensible distance around the edge, to again be post driven, and three rails across it.

I would ask for clarification regarding the clearance of the area first, as this will significantly alter the amount of hours involved, and therefore the cost.

This would be an easier job, with the use of cement, but again, I would be very reluctant to use it given the importance of the environment.

Both the posts and the barrier fence would be considerably easier to do, once the grass has received its annual cut.

The six sign posts dotted around the green, again would be anchored well enough without the use of concrete, and I would opt for a "half round" 6 ft post, driven 18" into the ground. These would take considerable effort to deliberately remove by hand, and offer no risk to the area. This could be done for the price of £270, and I could do these as soon as you like.

I hope this of help to you

BTwents Property Services
