

File ref: SE 50/5

**County:** South Yorkshire     **Site Name:** Potteric Carr

**District:** Doncaster

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** SE 599003     **Area:** 118.6 (ha) 293.0 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 111     **1:10,000:** SE 50 SE, SE 60 SW, SK 59 NE,  
SK 69 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1977     **Date of Last Revision:** –

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1983     **Date of Last Revision:** –

**Reasons for Notification:**

This site is located 3 km south of Doncaster in the vicinity of a formerly extensive wetland complex of the same name, which occupied the flood plain of the river Torne and which was probably fully reclaimed before this century.

The present Potteric Carr has developed as the result of mining subsidence beginning in the early 1905's (but occurring particularly between 1960–67), which caused the flooding and severe waterlogging of former agricultural land and woodland. A mosaic of open water, reed bed, wet grassland and carr habitats was thus created which now represents the largest and most diverse wetland of its type in the county.

The open water and drains support an abundant and representative aquatic flora including several species of pondweed *Potamogeton* spp., duckweeds *Lemna* spp., amphibious bistort, whorled water-milfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum* and water violet *Hottonia palustris*.

The extensive reed beds consist mainly of common reed and bulrush but include also reed sweet-grass, yellow iris and great pond sedge *Carex riparia*. Whereas these species may form near monocultures the emergent and marginal aquatic vegetation is in places more diverse and includes lesser water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides*, water dock *Rumex hydrolapathum*, tufted sedge *Carex acuta*, common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris*, marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* and lesser spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*.

The reed beds grade into wet grassland and wet woodland. The wet grassland is largely dominated by tall herbs such as meadowsweet and great willowherb together with rushes *Juncus* spp., but includes a range of sedges, for example, hammer sedge *Carex hirta*, common yellow-sedge *Carex demissa* and false fox-sedge *Carex otrubae*.

The wet woodland which is dominated by willow *Salix* spp., contains plants such as purple small-reed *Calamagrostis canescens* and meadow rue *Thalictrum flavum*. Recent oak and birch woodland occurs in drier parts of the site and notably on the railway embankment which cross the site. Where these embankments remain open the limestone ballast of their construction has

permitted the development of an unusual limestone flora including species such as pyramidal orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, ploughman's spikenard *Inula conyza* and yellow-wort *Blackstonia perfoliata*.

Vegetational diversity is reflected in an equally varied fauna; the assemblages of invertebrates and birds being particularly notable. A number of insects recorded here are scarce in the county and close to the northern edge of their range, for example the beetle *Anthocomus rufus* and the fly *Phonia atriceps*. Some are nationally scarce, for example the crane fly *Tanyptera nigricornis*.

Over 70 species of birds have been recorded breeding regularly at this site with particularly good populations of riparian species such as reed warbler and sedge warbler; waders, including lapwing and snipe, and wildfowl such as tufted duck and coot. The site also attracts good numbers of overwintering and passage waders and wildfowl.

**Other Information:**

1. Potteric Carr is a Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust reserve.
2. Site boundary changed at renotification by partial deletion.