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| <b>Ramblers' Association East Yorkshire and Derwent Area</b> | <b>East Region 8</b> | <b>Sheet 1 of 1</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|

| RA Map          | Site references          | Name on Map                                  | OS Grid Ref                                                        | Area (ha) | Parcels |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 14              | A B C D E F G            | Cottam Well Dale                             | SE 97 63                                                           | 130       | 5       |
| 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, PRowW etc) |           |         |
|                 | Rock outcrops            |                                              | Provides means of access to other access land                      |           |         |
|                 |                          |                                              | Steep sided                                                        |           |         |

**This submission supports the inclusion of the area already shown on the draft map.**

### Description of land submitted

Cottam Well Dale is a chalk grassland site in a dry valley east of Sledmere. To the north east two dales, Cowlam Well Dale (E) and Phillip's Slack (G), join the main valley (B, D and F). Garton Bottom (A, C) is the southern extension of Cottam Well Dale running south of the junction with Greenland Slack, which joins it from the north west; its lower half is an east facing bank along the eastern side of a minor road. There are bridleways and footpaths running down the bottom of the main dales to join the road. These dales join a number of other dales, which would together form a useful network of open country.

### Comments supporting vegetation type and justification for inclusion:

The **Phase II Habitat** survey for Cottam Well Dale recorded 14 grasses and 47 other herbs, of which 22 were calcicolous indicator species. Analysis of the data showed that the composition of the swards corresponded to the NVC CG2 and CG4 communities (see Table). Tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum*, sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* and red fescue *F. rubra* were plentiful. Salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* is the most abundant of the characteristic lime-loving herbs and 4 species that are particularly adversely affected by improvement were recorded: clustered bell-flower *Campanula glomerata*, autumn gentian *Gentianella amarella*, rock rose *Helianthemum nummularium* and small scabious *Scabiosa columbaria*.

The eastern side of Cottam Well Dale is designated as a **SSSI**. The citation states the two southern banks are ungrazed and support a coarse growth of tor-grass and oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, with invading hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* scrub. In the northern grazed unit, sheep's fescue and red fescue *Festuca ovina* and *F. rubra* and other fine grasses dominate large areas rich in characteristic herbs; widespread species include harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, clustered bellflower *C. glomerata*, lesser knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, felwort *Gentianella amarella*, rockrose *Helianthemum nummularium*, rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, mouse-ear hawkweed *Hieracium pilosella*, fairy flax *Linum catharticum*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*, small scabious *Scabiosa columbaria*, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria* and thyme *Thymus praecox*. Although coarser grasses such as tor grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* and upright brome *Bromus erectus* are present in the sward, they have generally been kept in check by grazing. However, these areas are still locally rich with many of the above herbs.

The separate Phase II Habitat survey for Garton Bottom recorded 8 grasses and 40 other herbs, of which 18 were calcicolous indicator species. Analysis of the data showed that the composition of the sward corresponded to the NVC CG4a/b sub-community (see Table). Sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* and tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* were plentiful with meadow oat-grass *Avenula pratensis* and quaking grass *Briza media* recorded as sparse. Among the calcicolous herbs recorded that are most sensitive to improvement were carline thistle *Carlina vulgaris*, rock rose *Helianthemum nummularium*, small scabious *Scabiosa columbaria* and hairy violet *Viola hirta*. Rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus* was plentiful. The Garton Bottom site consists of that part of Cottam Well Dale which runs south of the junction with Cowlam Well Dale which joins it from the north west; areas A and B were part of this Phase II Habitat Survey.

Our study of **aerial photographs** indicates the area surveyed remains unimproved grassland.

A **site visit** in July 2003 found, in area B, a variety of 4 grasses including yellow oat-grass *trisetum flavescens*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, and rough meadow grass *Poa trivialis*. They also found 16 different herbs including the following indicator species Lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, field scabious *Knautia arvensis*, rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, fairy flax *Linum catharticum*, common milkwort *Polygala vulgaris*, cowslip *Primula veris* and saw-wort *serratula tinctoria*. In area F a variety of 5 grasses were found, all being calcicolous: sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum*, quaking grass *Briza media*, crested dog's tail *Cynosurus cristata* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus Lanatus*. 21 herbs were also found including Lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, field scabious *Knautia arvensis* and hoary plantain *Plantago media*. This confirmed the view that the sites remain unimproved

### Conclusion

**We think the evidence presented here suggests that the area mapped, which was shown on the draft map, is unimproved calcareous grassland and should be mapped as open country.**

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| Prepared by: | MB SD TKH AI EC | Date: | 11.2003 |
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