

North Yorkshire farmer admits Wildlife & Countryside offences on Site of Special Scientific Interest

A farmer from Pickering in North Yorkshire has admitted three offences under the Wildlife & Countryside Act after being prosecuted by Natural England.

These offences included the creation of a track at Newtondale [Site of Special Scientific Interest \(SSSI\)](#) and significant earthworks and the felling and removal of trees and vegetation, without Natural England's consent. These actions had a damaging effect on the woodland, mire and physiographic features of the SSSI.

Newtondale SSSI is one of the most important nature conservation sites in North Yorkshire and it is particularly noted for its post-glacial valley landscape with ancient woodlands and extensive semi-natural grassland and mire vegetation. Sites of this nature are rare nationally and particularly rare in North Yorkshire.

At a hearing of York Magistrates Court in mid-July, Brian Eddon, 50, pleaded guilty to three charges and was handed down a fine and ordered to make a contribution to Natural England's costs.

Adelle Rowe, Natural England's Area Manager for Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire, said:

When we find cases of damage, such as this, in some of England's most important and iconic countryside, we will take action and prosecute those responsible. We take our role as a regulator seriously and we look forward to working with Mr Eddon in order to avoid damage to the SSSI in future.

Background

- [Newtondale SSSI](#) was first notified in 1955. It is a large site (935.5 ha) situated within a deep valley extending from north of Pickering towards Goathland, within the North York Moors National Park. It is of geological importance as a large glacial meltwater channel and for sections of exposed Callovian age strata. The site is also of importance for its biodiversity and provides a fine example of the succession of habitats between the upland and lower valley regimes which includes woodland, grassland, fen, valley mire and moorland edge.