

Date Notified: 18 March 1987

File ref: SE 34/2

**County:** West Yorkshire      **Site Name:** Eccup Reservoir

**District:** Leeds

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Leeds City Council

**National Grid Reference:** SE 300417      **Area:** 114.5 (ha) 282.9 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 104      **1:10,000:** SE 24 SW, SE 34 SE

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1987      **Date of Last Revision:** –

**Other Information:**

This is a new site.

**Description:**

Eccup Reservoir is located 5 miles north of Leeds City Centre at an altitude of 122m AOD and lies midway between the Aire and Wharfe river systems. The underlying geology of the reservoir is East Carlton Grit of the Millstone Grit series. Eccup Reservoir was originally constructed in 1830 and enlarged to its present size in 1897. It is the largest single stretch of water in West Yorkshire. Water for the reservoir is supplied from the River Ouse and several upland reservoirs.

The vegetation in the reservoir is largely confined to the western end. The submerged vegetation comprises shore-weed and amphibious bistort. The fringing vegetation includes stands of bulrush and common spike-rush with scattered beds of bottle sedge *Carex rostrata* and bladder sedge *Carex vesicaria*. Bladder sedge is only recorded from two other locations in West Yorkshire and is therefore locally scarce in the county.

Eccup Reservoir has long been a site of major attraction for wildfowl and other water birds and the earliest documented records date from the 1920's. The reservoir supports regular populations of wintering wildfowl including wigeon, teal, pochard and goldeneye. Large numbers of mallard and tufted duck are present throughout the year and mallard breed at Eccup.

The most significant population of wintering wildfowl is the goosander. On average Eccup holds between 1–2% of the estimated total wintering population of goosander in the British Isles. The Eccup population is therefore of national importance and is currently the fourth largest population in the British Isles.

Many other species of birds are recorded as regular visitors and passage migrants. These include wildfowl such as shelduck, shoveler, ruddy duck and greylag goose and wading birds such as dunlin and green sandpiper. Curlew, redshank and common sandpiper are seen on the reservoir and breed locally.

Eccup Reservoir is on the trans-Pennine bird migration route and its size and location make it a very attractive site for wintering birds and passage migrants. Its recognised national significance for goosander makes it the most important open water area for wildfowl in West Yorkshire.

## Operations likely to damage the special interest

Site name: Eccup Reservoir

OLD1003837

Ref. No.	Type of Operation
1	Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, and re-seeding.
2	The introduction of grazing and changes in the grazing regime (including type of stock, intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing and cessation of grazing).
3	The introduction of stock feeding and changes in stock feeding practice.
4	The introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation and 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 and changes in the pattern or frequency of 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*, including pest control.
11	The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb, hedge, dead or decaying wood.
12	The introduction of tree and/or woodland management+ and changes in tree and/or woodland management+.
13a	Drainage (including the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains).
13b	Modification of the structure of watercourses (eg dykes and drains), including their banks and beds, as by re-alignment, re-grading and dredging.
13c	Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes.
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 dykes, drains and reservoir.
16a	The introduction of freshwater fishery production and/or management and changes in freshwater fishery production and management, including sporting fishing and angling.
20	Extraction of minerals, including peat, shingle, sand and gravel, topsoil and subsoil.
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 on the site.
23	Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
26	Use of vehicles likely to damage or disturb the ornithological interest.
27	Recreational or education activities likely to damage the ornithological interest.
28	The introduction of game or waterfowl management and changes in game and waterfowl management and hunting practices.

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

+ including afforestation, planting, clear and selective felling, thinning, coppicing, modification of the stand or underwood, changes in species composition, cessation of management.