

#### **Appendix 4- Criteria for designation**

***Is the site the focus of local community interest and concern, or does it have the potential to capture people's imagination? Have local people (both those living and working nearby, and interested groups and users) been involved in the selection process?***

Windmill Hill is the focus of local community interest and it captures the imagination of local residents, visitors and tourists

***Will interested communities be involved in steering the site's development, management and monitoring?***

Yes, through Much Wenlock Town Council and the Much Wenlock Windmill Trust who hold the lease and undertake habitat management using local contractors and volunteer work parties and botanical monitoring through annual orchid counts and regular grassland condition monitoring using expert botanists and the Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

***Is the site reasonably close to schools, community education centres and/or field study centres? Will there be opportunities for local schools to get involved and for schemes such as the Forest School programme or a Watch group to be set up?***

Yes, the site is used by the William Brookes school for educational visits.

***Are there areas where children are welcome to play?***

Yes, informally.

***Is the site in an area generally lacking in publicly accessible natural heritage?***

No

***Is there some public access – rights of approach, entry or use that are legally defined or established through long-standing use? Is the site linked to wider public access networks, green networks, other open spaces, etc?***

Yes, there are two public footpaths through the site. There is direct access from Much Wenlock to Windmill Hill through the Gaskell Recreation Ground (also known as the Linden Field). Windmill Hill forms part of The Wenlock Walk that provides a delightful stroll around Much Wenlock to see its hidden treasures and understand its history (<http://www.visitmuchwenlock.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/WenlockWalk.pdf>).

***Is it safe and physically easy to get into and around the site, accepting that access to highly sensitive areas may need to be restricted wholly or periodically?***

Yes. There are a number of informal footpaths in addition to two public footpaths and there are four wooden benches.

***Can people enjoy the access rights and feel comfortable about using the site, for example without fear of crime?***

Yes

***Can people get to the site by active and public transport? Does the site have, or could it have, car parking, and provision for safe delivery and pick-up for educational visits?***

The public has unrestricted access to Windmill Hill. There are public transport links by local buses and car parking in Much Wenlock. There is direct access from Much Wenlock to Windmill Hill through the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

***Does the site lend itself to being a safe educational resource, for example with good site interpretation, without adversely affecting its special interest?***

Yes

***Is the site safeguarded, notably through the development plan process, or can safeguarding be included in the next Local Plan revision?***

The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2026 (adopted July 2014) covers Windmill Hill in Objective 7: Green and open spaces, where Windmill Hill is designated as 'Local Green Space' in Plan 2, and in Objective 8: The local landscape and wildlife (<https://www.muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Much-Wenlock-Neighbourhood-Plan-201326-Adoption-Version.pdf>).

***Has the site been (or is it likely to be) identified of local importance in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan or Local Geodiversity Action Plan?***

Windmill Hill contributes to both the Local BAP and Local GAP with the limestone grassland and the small limestone quarry is a regionally important geological & geomorphological site.

***Are there any implications for neighbouring areas, or other sites or facilities?***

No

***Is the site's future secured for some time? There is limited benefit in investing resources in an LNR that will be de-declared and subsumed into the development cycle in the short, or perhaps even medium-term.***

Windmill Hill is leased to the Much Wenlock Windmill Trust until 2100. Much Wenlock Town Council is negotiating a nature reserve agreement with the Trust and the landowner.

***What is the existing use of the site and how can this be taken into account when planning the LNR development? Will alternative provision have to be made, and will there be an overall public benefit?***

Windmill Hill is currently used for informal recreation, education and the enjoyment of nature by the public. It is managed to enhance local biodiversity with community involvement and interpretation for a wider audience.

***Is the site a viable management unit with appropriate access for management, etc?***

Yes. There is a gated access from Farley Road that is used for agricultural machinery.

***What are the likely costs to be incurred during the life-cycle of the LNR (including initial developmental, establishment, staffing costs, etc), and has provision been made for these?***

Costs are on-going and unaffected by LNR designation. Windmill Hill is subject to a Countryside Stewardship agreement (Higher Level and Entry Level) with the Much Wenlock Windmill Trust. The Much Wenlock Town Council provides money for specific projects as part of its overall grant programme.

