



Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

1981 CHAPTER 69

PART II

NATURE CONSERVATION, COUNTRYSIDE AND NATIONAL PARKS

^{X1}[^{F1} Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements]

Editorial Information

- X1** S. 27A and preceding heading repealed (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1)(2), 107, Sch. 11 para. 77, **Sch. 12**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2** and new s. 27AA and preceding heading inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 78**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 27AA and preceding heading inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 78**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

27A Construction of references to Nature Conservancy Council.

F2

Textual Amendments

- F2** S. 27A and preceding heading repealed (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1)(2), 107, Sch. 11 para. 77, **Sch. 12**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

[^{F3}27AA Application of sections 28 to 34 in Wales

[In relation to land in Wales, sections 28 to 34 (which relate to sites of special scientific ^{F4}(1)] interest and limestone pavements) have effect as if references to Natural England were

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references to ^{F5}the Natural Resources Body for Wales and as if section 28D(2)(d) were omitted].

[Subsection (3) applies where—

- ^{F6}(2) (a) any provision of sections 28 to 34 requires the Natural Resources Body for Wales to give a notification or notice to the local planning authority in whose area land is situated, and
- (b) all or part of the land is included in ^{F7}a strategic planning area designated under section 60D of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004^{F7}the area of a corporate joint committee to which Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applies by virtue of regulations under Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021] .
- (3) The Natural Resources Body for Wales must also give the notification or notice to ^{F8}the strategic planning panel for the strategic planning area^{F8}that corporate joint committee] .]

Textual Amendments

- F3** S. 27AA and preceding heading inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, [Sch. 11 para. 78](#); [S.I. 2006/2541](#), [art. 2](#)
- F4** S. 27AA(1): s. 27AA renumbered as s. 27AA(1) (6.9.2015 for specified purposes, 7.1.2021 in so far as not already in force) by [Planning \(Wales\) Act 2015 \(anaw 4\)](#), s. 58(2)(b)(4)(b), [Sch. 2 para. 6\(2\)](#); [S.I. 2021/7](#), reg. 2(c)
- F5** Words in s. 27AA substituted (1.4.2013) by [The Natural Resources Body for Wales \(Functions\) Order 2013 \(S.I. 2013/755\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 2 para. 172](#) (with Sch. 7)
- F6** S. 27AA(2)(3) inserted (6.9.2015 for specified purposes, 7.1.2021 in so far as not already in force) by [Planning \(Wales\) Act 2015 \(anaw 4\)](#), s. 58(2)(b)(4)(b), [Sch. 2 para. 6\(3\)](#); [S.I. 2021/7](#), reg. 2(c)
- F7** Words in s. 27AA(2)(b) substituted (W.) (21.1.2021) by [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021 \(asc 1\)](#), s. 175(1)(e), [Sch. 9 para. 21\(a\)](#)
- F8** Words in s. 27AA(3) substituted (W.) (21.1.2021) by [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021 \(asc 1\)](#), s. 175(1)(e), [Sch. 9 para. 21\(b\)](#)

^{F9} 28 Sites of special scientific interest. **E+W**

- (1) Where ^{F10}Natural England] are of the opinion that any area of land is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features, it shall be the duty of ^{F10}Natural England] to notify that fact—
- (a) to the local planning authority ^{F11}(if any)] in whose area the land is situated;
- (b) to every owner and occupier of any of that land; and
- (c) to the Secretary of State.

[The reference in subsection (1) to land includes—

- ^{F12}(1A) (a) any land lying above mean low water mark;
- (b) any land covered by estuarial waters.
- (1B) Where the area of land to which a notification under subsection (1) relates includes land falling within subsection (1A)(a) or (b) (“area A”), it may also include land not falling within subsection (1A)(a) or (b) (“area B”) if—
- (a) area B adjoins area A, and
- (b) any of the conditions in subsection (1C) is satisfied.

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- (1C) The conditions are—
- (a) that the flora, fauna or features leading to the notification of area A is or are also present in area B;
 - (b) that the notification of area A is by reason of any flora or fauna which are dependent (wholly or in part) on anything which takes place in, or is present in, area B;
 - (c) that, without the inclusion of area B, the identification of the boundary of the land notified (either in the notification or on the ground for the purposes of exercising functions in relation to it) would be impossible or impracticable.]
- (2) [^{F10}Natural England] shall also publish a notification of [^{F13}the fact mentioned in subsection (1)] in at least one local newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated.
- (3) A notification under subsection (1) shall specify the time (not being less than three months from the date of the giving of the notification) within which, and the manner in which, representations or objections with respect to it may be made; and [^{F10}Natural England] shall consider any representation or objection duly made.
- (4) A notification under subsection (1)(b) shall also specify—
- (a) the flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the land is of special interest, and
 - (b) any operations appearing to [^{F10}Natural England] to be likely to damage that flora or fauna or those features,
- and shall contain a statement of [^{F14}Natural England's] views about the management of the land (including any views [^{F10}Natural England] may have about the conservation and enhancement of that flora or fauna or those features).
- (5) Where a notification under subsection (1) has been given, [^{F10}Natural England] may within the period of nine months beginning with the date on which the notification was served on the Secretary of State either—
- (a) give notice to the persons mentioned in subsection (1) withdrawing the notification; or
 - (b) give notice to those persons confirming the notification (with or without modifications).
- [^{F15}In the case of a notification given in relation to land lying below mean low water mark by virtue of subsection (1B), this subsection is subject to section 28CB(4) and (6).]
- (6) A notification shall cease to have effect—
- (a) on the giving of notice of its withdrawal under subsection (5)(a) to any of the persons mentioned in subsection (1); or
 - (b) if not withdrawn or confirmed by notice under subsection (5) within the period of nine months referred to there, at the end of that period.
- [Subsection (6)(b) does not apply in a case where notice has been given to Natural
- ^{F16}(6A) England under section 28CB(3).]
- (7) [^{F14}Natural England's] power under subsection (5)(b) to confirm a notification under subsection (1) with modifications shall not be exercised so as to add to the operations specified in the notification or extend the area to which it applies.

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- (8) As from the time when there is served on the owner or occupier of any land which has been notified under subsection (1)(b) a notice under subsection (5)(b) confirming the notification with modifications, the notification shall have effect in its modified form in relation to so much (if any) of that land as remains subject to it.
- (9) A notification under subsection (1)(b) of land in England and Wales shall be a local land charge.
- [For the purposes of this Part “estuarial waters” means any waters within the limits ^{F17}(9A) of transitional waters, within the meaning of the Water Framework Directive (that is to say, Directive 2000/60/ EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy).]
- (10) For the purposes of this section and sections 28A to 28D, “local planning authority”, in relation to land within the Broads, includes the Broads Authority.]

Extent Information

- E1** This version of this provision extends to England and Wales only; a separate version has been created for Scotland only

Textual Amendments

- F9** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F10** Words in s. 28 substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F11** Words in s. 28(1)(a) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 2(2)(8)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F12** S. 28(1A)-(1C) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 2(3)(8)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F13** Words in s. 28(2) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 2(4)(8)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F14** Words in s. 28 substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F15** Words in s. 28(5) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 2(5)(8)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F16** S. 28(6A) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), **ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii)**, **Sch. 13 para. 2(6)(8)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F17** S. 28(9A) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 2(7)(8)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**

28 Areas of special scientific interest. **S**

^{F111}

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Extent Information

E5 This version of this provision extends to Scotland only; a separate version has been created for England and Wales

Textual Amendments

F111 S. 28 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\)](#), ss. 57, 59, [Sch. 7 para. 4](#) (with transitional provisions and savings in [Sch. 5 Pt. 2](#)) (S.S.I. 2004/495), {art. 2}

[^{F18}28A Variation of notification under section 28.

- (1) At any time after notice has been given under section 28(5)(b) confirming a notification (with or without modifications), [^{F19}Natural England] may by notice vary the matters specified or stated in the confirmed notification (whether by adding to them, changing them, or removing matter from them).
- (2) The area of land cannot be varied under this section.
- (3) [^{F19}Natural England] shall give notice setting out the variation to—
 - (a) the local planning authority [^{F20}(if any)] in whose area the land is situated,
 - (b) every owner and occupier of any of the land who in the opinion of the Council may be affected by the variation, and
 - (c) the Secretary of State,and after service of a notice under paragraph (b) the notification under section 28(1)(b) shall have effect in its varied form.
- (4) Section 28(3) shall apply to such a notice as it applies to a notification under section 28(1).
- (5) Where a notice under subsection (3) has been given, [^{F19}Natural England] may within the period of nine months beginning with the date the last of the owners and occupiers referred to in subsection (3)(b) was served with the notice either—
 - (a) give notice to the persons mentioned in subsection (3) withdrawing the notice; or
 - (b) give notice to them confirming the notice (with or without modifications).
- (6) A notice under subsection (3) shall cease to have effect—
 - (a) on the giving of notice of its withdrawal under subsection (5)(a) to any of the persons mentioned in subsection (3); or
 - (b) if not withdrawn or confirmed by notice under subsection (5) within the period of nine months referred to in that subsection, at the end of that period.
- (7) As from the time when there is served on the owner or occupier of any land a notice under subsection (5)(b) confirming a notice of variation with modifications, the notification under section 28(1)(b) shall have effect as so varied.
- (8) A local land charge existing by virtue of section 28(9) shall be varied in accordance with a notice under subsection (3) or (5)(b).]

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Textual Amendments

- F18** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F19** Words in s. 28A substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F20** Words in s. 28A(3)(a) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** (c. 23), ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 3**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**

[^{F21}28B Notification of additional land.

- (1) Where [^{F22} Natural England] are of the opinion that if land adjacent to a site of special scientific interest (“the extra land”) were combined with the site of special scientific interest (“the SSSI ”), the combined area of land would be of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features, [^{F22} Natural England] may decide to notify that fact.
- (2) If they do so decide, the persons whom they must notify are—
- the local planning authority [^{F23}(if any)] in whose area the extra land is situated;
 - every owner and occupier of any of that extra land; and
 - the Secretary of State.
- [The reference in subsection (1) to land includes—
- ^{F24}(2A) (a) any land lying above mean low water mark;
- any land covered by estuarial waters.
- (2B) If any of the conditions in subsection (2C) is satisfied, the extra land may consist of or include an area of land not falling within subsection (2A)(a) or (b).
- (2C) The conditions are—
- that the flora, fauna or features that led to the notification of the SSSI is or are also present in the area of the extra land not falling within subsection (2A) (a) or (b);
 - that the notification of the SSSI is by reason of any flora or fauna which are dependent (wholly or in part) on anything which takes place in, or is present in, that area;
 - that, without the inclusion of that area, the identification of the boundary of the SSSI (either in the notification or on the ground for the purposes of exercising functions in relation to it) would be impossible or impracticable.]
- (3) No [^{F25}notification under subsection (2)] may be given until after notice has been given under section 28(5)(b) confirming (with or without modifications) the notification under section 28(1) relating to the SSSI.
- (4) Subsections (2) and (3) of section 28 shall apply for the purposes of this section as they apply for the purposes of that section.
- (5) A notification under subsection (2)(b) shall also specify—
- the area of land constituting the SSSI;

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- (b) what (as at the date of the notification under subsection (2)(b)) is specified or contained in the notification under section 28(1)(b) relating to the SSSI by virtue of section 28(4); and
 - (c) the reasons why [^{F22}Natural England] is of the opinion referred to in subsection (1).
- (6) In addition, the notification under subsection (2)(b) shall include a statement—
- (a) saying whether or not anything among the matters specified in the notification by virtue of subsection (5)(c) is particularly relevant to the extra land; and
 - (b) if any such thing is of particular relevance, specifying which.
- (7) Subsections (5) to (7) of section 28 apply in relation to a notification under subsection (2) of this section as they apply in relation to a notification under subsection (1) of that section, as if references to “subsection (1)” [^{F26}and “subsection (1B)”] in section 28(5) to (7) were references to subsection (2) [^{F27}and subsection (2B) of this section respectively].
- (8) As from the time when a notification under subsection (2)(b) is served on the owner or occupier of any land, the notification under section 28(1)(b) shall have effect as if it included the notification under subsection (2)(b).
- (9) As from the time when there is served on the owner or occupier of any land which has been notified under subsection (2)(b) a notice under section 28(5)(b) (as applied by subsection (7) of this section) confirming the notification under subsection (2)(b) with modifications, the notification under section 28(1)(b) (as extended by virtue of subsection (8) of this section) shall have effect in its modified form.
- (10) A local land charge existing by virtue of section 28(9) shall be varied in accordance with a notification under subsection (2) or under section 28(5)(b) as applied by subsection (7) of this section.]

Textual Amendments

- F21** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F22** Words in s. 28B substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F23** Words in s. 28B(2)(a) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 5(2)(6)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F24** S. 28B(2A)-(2C) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 5(3)(6)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F25** Words in s. 28B(3) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 5(4)(6)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F26** Words in s. 28B(7) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 5(5)(a)(6)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F27** Words in s. 28B(7) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 5(5)(b)(6)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**

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[^{F28}28C Enlargement of SSSI.

- (1) Where [^{F29} Natural England] are of the opinion that any area of land which includes, but also extends beyond, a site of special scientific interest (“the SSSI”) is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features, [^{F29} Natural England] may decide to notify that fact.
- (2) If they do so decide, the persons whom they must notify are—
 - (a) the local planning authority [^{F30} (if any)] in whose area the land (including the SSSI) is situated;
 - (b) every owner and occupier of any of that land (including the SSSI); and
 - (c) the Secretary of State.

[The reference in subsection (1) to land includes—

- ^{F31}(2A)
 - (a) any land lying above mean low water mark;
 - (b) any land covered by estuarial waters.

(2B) If any of the conditions in subsection (2C) is satisfied, the area of land to which a notification under subsection (2) relates may include an area of land not falling within subsection (2A)(a) or (b).

(2C) The conditions are—

- (a) that the flora, fauna or features that led to the notification of the SSSI is or are also present in the area of land not falling within subsection (2A)(a) or (b);
 - (b) that the notification of the SSSI is by reason of any flora or fauna which are dependent (wholly or in part) on anything which takes place in, or is present in, that area;
 - (c) that, without the inclusion of that area, the identification of the boundary of the SSSI (either in the notification or on the ground for the purposes of exercising functions in relation to it) would be impossible or impracticable.]
- (3) Subsections (2) to (8) of section 28 apply to a notification under subsection (2) of this section as they apply to a notification under subsection (1) of that section, as if references to “subsection (1)” [^{F32}, “subsection (1)(b)” and “subsection (1B)”] in section 28(2) to (8) were references to subsection (2) [^{F33}, subsection (2)(b) and subsection (2B)] of this section respectively.
 - (4) No notification may be given under subsection (2) until after notice has been given under section 28(5)(b) (or section 28(5)(b) as applied by subsection (3)) confirming (with or without modifications) the notification under section 28(1) (or subsection (2)) relating to the SSSI.
 - (5) As from the time when a notification under subsection (2) is served on the owner or occupier of any land included in the SSSI, the notification in relation to that land which had effect immediately before the service of the notification under subsection (2) shall cease to have effect.
 - (6) A notification under subsection (2)(b) of land in England and Wales shall be a local land charge; and, to the extent that any such land was the subject of a local land charge by virtue of section 28(9), that local land charge shall be discharged.
 - (7) A notice under section 28E(1)(a) and a consent under section 28E(3)(a) given before a notification under subsection (2)(b) continue to have effect.

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- (8) The enlargement of a site of special scientific interest under this section does not affect anything done under section 28J to 28L.
- (9) Any reference to—
- (a) a notification under section 28(1) (or any of its paragraphs) shall be construed as including the corresponding notification under subsection (2);
 - (b) a notification under section 28(5)(b) shall be construed as including a notification under that provision as applied by subsection (3); and
 - (c) a local land charge existing by virtue of section 28(9) shall be treated as including one existing by virtue of subsection (6).]

Textual Amendments

- F28** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by [2000 c. 37, ss. 75\(1\), 103\(2\), Sch. 9 para. 1](#) (with [Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20](#))
- F29** Words in s. 28C substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\), ss. 105\(1\), 107, Sch. 11 para. 79; S.I. 2006/2541, art. 2](#)
- F30** Words in s. 28C(2)(a) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(c. 23\), ss. 148, 324\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\), Sch. 13 para. 6\(2\)\(5\); S.I. 2014/3088, art. 2\(b\)](#)
- F31** S. 28C(2A)-(2C) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(c. 23\), ss. 148, 324\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\), Sch. 13 para. 6\(3\)\(5\); S.I. 2014/3088, art. 2\(b\)](#)
- F32** Words in s. 28C(3) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(c. 23\), ss. 148, 324\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\), Sch. 13 para. 6\(4\)\(a\)\(5\); S.I. 2014/3088, art. 2\(b\)](#)
- F33** Words in s. 28C(3) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(c. 23\), ss. 148, 324\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\), Sch. 13 para. 6\(4\)\(b\)\(5\); S.I. 2014/3088, art. 2\(b\)](#)

[^{F34}28CAGuidance in relation to subtidal notifications of SSSIs

- (1) The ministerial authority may issue guidance to Natural England about the exercise of the power conferred by section 28(1B), 28B(2B) or 28C(2B) to give a notification under section 28(1), 28B(2) or 28C(2) (as the case may be) in relation to land lying below mean low water mark.
- (2) In this section and section 28CB “the ministerial authority” means—
- (a) in relation to England, the Secretary of State;
 - (b) in relation to Wales, the Welsh Ministers.]

Textual Amendments

- F34** S. 28CA inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(c. 23\), ss. 148, 324\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\), Sch. 13 para. 7; S.I. 2014/3088, art. 2\(b\)](#)

Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

[^{F35}28CB Power to call in subtidal notifications

- (1) This section applies where a notification under section 28(1), 28B(2) or 28C(2) has been given in relation to land lying below mean low water mark (“the subtidal land”) by virtue of section 28(1B), 28B(2B) or 28C(2B) (as the case may be).
- (2) Natural England may not give notice under section 28(5)(b) confirming the notification unless, at least 21 days before doing so, they have given notice of their intention to the ministerial authority.

(For the meaning of “the ministerial authority”, see section 28CA.)
- (3) At any time before the notification is confirmed the ministerial authority may give notice to Natural England that the ministerial authority is considering whether to give a direction under subsection (5) regarding the subtidal land.
- (4) If the ministerial authority gives notice under subsection (3), Natural England may not give notice under section 28(5) until the ministerial authority has given a direction under subsection (5).
- (5) The ministerial authority may direct—
 - (a) that the notification (if confirmed) must include all of the subtidal land;
 - (b) that the notification (if confirmed) must not include any of the subtidal land;
 - (c) that the notification (if confirmed) must, or must not, include such part of that land as is specified in the direction;
 - (d) that the decision whether the notification (if confirmed) should include the subtidal land is to be taken by Natural England.
- (6) If the ministerial authority gives a direction under subsection (5), Natural England must give notice under section 28(5)(a) or (b), in accordance with that direction, within the period of three months beginning with the date on which the direction is received by them.
- (7) The ministerial authority may, before deciding whether to give a direction under subsection (5), give to any person the opportunity of—
 - (a) appearing before and being heard by a person appointed by the ministerial authority for that purpose;
 - (b) providing written representations to such a person.
- (8) A person appointed under subsection (7) must make a report to the ministerial authority of any oral or written representations made under that subsection.
- (9) The ministerial authority may make regulations providing for the procedure to be followed (including decisions as to costs) at hearings held under subsection (7).
- (10) The power to make regulations under subsection (9) is exercisable by statutory instrument.
- (11) A statutory instrument containing regulations made under subsection (9) by the Secretary of State shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (12) A statutory instrument containing regulations made under subsection (9) by the Welsh Ministers shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of the National Assembly for Wales.]

Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

Textual Amendments

F35 S. 28CB inserted (E.W.) (12.11.2009 for specified purposes, 12.1.2010 for specified purposes, 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(c. 23\)](#), s. 324(1)(c)(d)(2)(b)(ii), [Sch. 13 para. 8](#); S.I. 2014/3088, art. 2(b)

[^{F36}28D Denotification.

- (1) Where [^{F37}Natural England] are of the opinion that all or part of a site of special scientific interest
 - [^{F38}(a)] is [^{F39}not] of special interest by reason of any of the matters mentioned in section 28(1), [^{F40}or
 - (b) should no longer be the subject of a notification under section 28(1) because that land has been designated as (or as part of) a marine conservation zone under section 116 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009,]they may decide to notify that fact.
- (2) If they do so decide, the persons whom they must notify are—
 - (a) the local planning authority [^{F41}(if any)] in whose area [^{F42}the land mentioned in subsection (1)] is situated;
 - (b) every owner and occupier of any of that land;
 - (c) the Secretary of State;
 - (d) the Environment Agency; and
 - (e) every relevant undertaker (within the meaning of section 4(1) of the ^{M1} Water Industry Act 1991) and every internal drainage board (within the meaning of section 61C(1) of the ^{M2} Land Drainage Act 1991) whose works, operations or activities may affect the land.
- (3) [^{F37}Natural England] shall also publish a notification of [^{F43}the fact mentioned in subsection (1)(a) or (b)] in at least one local newspaper circulating in the area in which the land referred to in subsection (2)(a) is situated.
- (4) Section 28(3) shall apply to a notification under subsection (2) or (3) as it applies to a notification under section 28(1).
- (5) Where a notification under subsection (2) has been given, [^{F37}Natural England] may within the period of nine months beginning with the date on which the notification was served on the Secretary of State either—
 - (a) give notice to the persons mentioned in subsection (2) withdrawing the notification, or
 - (b) give notice to those persons confirming the notification, or confirming it in relation to an area of land specified in the notice which is smaller than that specified in the notification under subsection (2),but if they do neither the notification shall cease to have effect.
- (6) A notification under subsection (2) shall have effect in relation to any land as from the time a notice under subsection (5)(b) is served on its owner or occupier, and from that time a notification under section 28(1)(b) in relation to that land shall cease to have effect.

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- (7) A local land charge existing by virtue of section 28(9) shall be discharged in relation to land which is the subject of a notice under subsection (5)(b).]

Textual Amendments

- F36** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F37** Words in s. 28D substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F38** Words in s. 28D(1) renumbered (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) as s. 28D(1)(a) by virtue of **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 9(2)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F39** Words in s. 28D substituted (31.5.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 56, 107; S.I. 2006/1382, **art. 2**
- F40** S. 28D(1)(b) and preceding word inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 9(2)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F41** Words in s. 28D(2)(a) inserted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 9(3)(a)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F42** Words in s. 28D(2)(a) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 9(3)(b)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**
- F43** Words in s. 28D(3) substituted (E.W.) (12.1.2010 for E., 12.12.2014 in so far as not already in force) by **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (c. 23)**, ss. 148, 324(2)(b)(ii), **Sch. 13 para. 9(4)**; S.I. 2014/3088, **art. 2(b)**

Marginal Citations

- M1** 1991 c. 56.
M2 1991 c. 59.

[^{F44}28E Duties in relation to sites of special scientific interest.

- (1) The owner or occupier of any land included in a site of special scientific interest shall not while the notification under section 28(1)(b) remains in force carry out, or cause or permit to be carried out, on that land any operation specified in the notification unless—
- (a) one of them has, after service of the notification, given [^{F45}Natural England] notice of a proposal to carry out the operation specifying its nature and the land on which it is proposed to carry it out; and
 - (b) one of the conditions specified in subsection (3) is fulfilled.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply to an owner or occupier being an authority to which section 28G applies acting in the exercise of its functions.
- (3) The conditions are—
- (a) that the operation is carried out with [^{F46}Natural England's] written consent;
 - (b) that the operation is carried out in accordance with the terms of an agreement under section 16 of the 1949 Act [^{F47}, section 7 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 or section 16 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016];

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- (c) that the operation is carried out in accordance with a management scheme under section 28J or a management notice under section 28K.
- (4) A consent under subsection (3)(a) may be given—
- (a) subject to conditions, and
 - (b) for a limited period,
- as specified in the consent.
- (5) If [^{F45}Natural England] do not consent, they shall give notice saying so to the person who gave the notice under subsection (1).
- (6) [^{F45}Natural England] may, by notice given to every owner and occupier of any of the land included in the site of special scientific interest, or the part of it to which the consent relates—
- (a) withdraw the consent; or
 - (b) modify it (or further modify it) in any way.
- (7) The following—
- (a) a consent under subsection (3)(a) granting consent subject to conditions or for a limited period, and
 - (b) a notice under subsection (5) or (6),
- must include a notice of [^{F46}Natural England's] reasons for imposing the conditions, for the limitation of the period, for refusing consent, or for withdrawing or modifying the consent, and also a notice of the matters set out in subsection (8).
- (8) The matters referred to in subsection (7) are—
- (a) the rights of appeal under section 28F;
 - (b) the effect of subsection (9); and
 - (c) in the case of a notice under subsection (6), the effect of section 28M.
- (9) A withdrawal or modification of a consent is not to take effect until—
- (a) the expiry of the period for appealing against it; or
 - (b) if an appeal is brought, its withdrawal or final determination.
- (10) [^{F45}Natural England] shall have power to enforce the provisions of this section.]

Textual Amendments

- F44** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F45** Words in s. 28E substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F46** Words in s. 28E substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F47** Words in s. 28E(3)(b) substituted (21.5.2016) by **Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (anaw 3)**, s. 88(2)(a), **Sch. 2 para. 3(2)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 28E excluded (1.6.2016) by **The A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme Development Consent Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/547)**, arts. 1, **3(1)(f)** (with arts. 4, 5(3))
- C2** S. 28E excluded (30.10.2019) by **The Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Order 2019 (S.I. 2019/1358)**, arts. 1, **45(1)(d)** (with art. 45(7), **Sch. 13 Pt. 1 para. 19**)

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- C3** S. 28E excluded (25.5.2020) by [The West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange Order 2020 \(S.I. 2020/511\)](#), arts. 1, **44(1)(e)** (with art. 44(8))
- C4** S. 28E excluded (2.6.2022) by [The M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange Development Consent Order 2022 \(S.I. 2022/549\)](#), arts. 1, **3(1)(f)** (with arts. 6, 34)
- C5** S. 28E excluded (4.8.2023) by [The A303 \(Amesbury to Berwick Down\) Development Consent Order 2023 \(S.I. 2023/834\)](#), arts. 1, **3(1)** (with arts. 6(2), 18, Sch. 11 paras. 5, 30)
- C6** S. 28E excluded (28.3.2024) by [The A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Development Consent Order 2024 \(S.I. 2024/360\)](#), arts. 1, **3(1)** (with arts. 18, 35, Sch. 9)
- C7** S. 28E(1) excluded (30.1.2001) by 1987 c. 53, s. **9(7)(a)** (as substituted (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 76(1), 103(2), **Sch. 10 Pt. II para. 6**)
S. 28E(1) excluded (30.1.2001) by 1996 c. 61, s. 38, **Sch. 10 para. 6(a)** (as substituted (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 76(1), 103(2), **Sch. 10 Pt. II para. 11**)

[^{F48}28F Appeals in connection with consents.

- (1) The following persons—
 - (a) an owner or occupier who has been refused a consent under section 28E(3)(a),
 - (b) an owner or occupier who has been granted such a consent but who is aggrieved by conditions attached to it, or by the fact that it is for a limited period, or by the length of that period,
 - (c) an owner or occupier who is aggrieved by the modification of a consent;
 - (d) an owner or occupier who is aggrieved by the withdrawal of a consent,
 may by notice appeal to the Secretary of State against the relevant decision.
- (2) If [^{F49}Natural England] neither give consent nor refuse it within the period of four months beginning with the date on which the notice referred to in section 28E(1)(a) was sent, the person who gave that notice may for the purposes of subsection (1) treat [^{F49}Natural England] as having refused consent (and his appeal is to be determined on that basis).
- (3) Notice of an appeal must reach the Secretary of State—
 - (a) except in a case falling within subsection (2), within the period of two months beginning with the date of the notice giving consent or the notice under section 28E(5) or (6), or
 - (b) in a case falling within subsection (2), within the period of two months beginning immediately after the expiry of the four-month period referred to there,
 or, in either case, within such longer period as is agreed in writing between [^{F49}Natural England] and the appellant.
- (4) Before determining an appeal, the Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit—
 - (a) cause the appeal to take, or continue in, the form of a hearing (which may be held wholly or partly in private if the appellant so requests and the person hearing the appeal agrees), or
 - (b) cause a local inquiry to be held,
 and he must act as mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) if either party to the appeal asks to be heard in connection with the appeal.
- (5) On determining an appeal against a decision, the Secretary of State may—
 - (a) affirm the decision,

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- (b) where the decision was a refusal of consent, direct [^{F49}Natural England] to give consent,
 - (c) where the decision was as to the terms of a consent (whether the original or a modified one), quash all or any of those terms,
 - (d) where the decision was a withdrawal or modification of consent, quash the decision,
- and where he exercises any of the powers in paragraphs (b), (c) or (d) he may give directions to [^{F49}Natural England] as to the terms on which they are to give consent.
- (6) The Secretary of State may by regulations made by statutory instrument make provision about appeals under this section, and in particular about—
 - (a) notices of appeal and supporting documentation required, and
 - (b) how appeals are to be brought and considered,and any such regulations may make different provision for different cases and circumstances.
 - (7) A statutory instrument containing regulations under subsection (6) shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
 - (8) The Secretary of State may appoint any person to exercise on his behalf, with or without payment, his function of determining an appeal under this section or any matter involved in such an appeal.
 - (9) Schedule 10A shall have effect with respect to appointments under subsection (8).
 - (10) Subsections (2) to (5) of section 250 of the ^{M3} Local Government Act 1972 (local inquiries: evidence and costs) apply in relation to hearings or local inquiries under this section as they apply in relation to local inquiries under that section, but as if the reference there—
 - (a) to the person appointed to hold the inquiry were a reference to the Secretary of State or to the person appointed to conduct the hearing or hold the inquiry under this section; and
 - (b) to the Minister causing an inquiry to be held were to the Secretary of State.
 - (11) Section 322A of the ^{M4} Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (orders as to costs where no hearing or inquiry takes place) applies in relation to a hearing or local inquiry under this section as it applies in relation to a hearing or local inquiry referred to in that section.
- [In relation to Wales this section has effect as if for subsections (10) and (11) there ^{F50}(12) were substituted—
- “(10) Section 322C of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (costs: Wales) applies in relation to a hearing or inquiry under this section in Wales as it applies in relation to a hearing or inquiry mentioned in that section.”]]

Textual Amendments

F48 Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)

F49 Words in s. 28F substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

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F50 S. 28F(12) inserted (6.9.2015 for specified purposes, 1.3.2016 in so far as not already in force) by Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (anaw 4), s. 58(2)(b)(4)(b), **Sch. 5 para. 5**; S.I. 2016/52, art. 4(a) (with art. 17)

Marginal Citations

M3 1972 c. 70.
M4 1990 c. 8.

[^{F51}28G Statutory undertakers, etc.: general duty.

- (1) An authority to which this section applies (referred to in this section and in sections 28H and 28I as “a section 28G authority”) shall have the duty set out in subsection (2) in exercising its functions so far as their exercise is likely to affect the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest.
- (2) The duty is to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority’s functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the site is of special scientific interest.
- (3) The following are section 28G authorities—
 - (a) a Minister of the Crown (within the meaning of the Ministers of the ^{M5} Crown Act 1975) or a Government department;
 - (b) the National Assembly for Wales;
 - (c) a local authority;
 - (d) a person holding an office—
 - (i) under the Crown,
 - (ii) created or continued in existence by a public general Act of Parliament, or
 - (iii) the remuneration in respect of which is paid out of money provided by Parliament;
 - (e) a statutory undertaker ^{F52} . . . ; and
 - (f) any other public body of any description.

[“Statutory undertaker” means a person who is or is deemed to be a statutory undertaker ^{F53}(4) for the purposes of any provision of Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.]]

Textual Amendments

- F51** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F52** Words in s. 28G(3)(e) repealed (1.10.2006) by Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16), ss. 105(1)(2), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 81(2)**, **Sch. 12**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art.2**
- F53** S. 28G(4) inserted (1.10.2006) by Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 81(3)**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art.2**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C8** S. 28G(2) excluded (30.1.2001) by 1987 c. 53, **s. 9(7)(b)** (as substituted (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 76(1), 103(2), **Sch. 10 Pt. II para. 6**)

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S. 28G(2) excluded (30.1.2001) by 1996 c. 61, s. 38, **Sch. 10 para. 6(b)** (as substituted (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 76(1), 103(2), **Sch. 10 Pt. II para. 11**)

Marginal Citations

M5 1975 c. 26.

[^{F54}28H Statutory undertakers, etc.: duty in relation to carrying out operations.

- (1) A section 28G authority shall give notice to [^{F55}Natural England] before carrying out, in the exercise of its functions, operations likely to damage any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest.
- (2) Subsection (1) applies even if the operations would not take place on land included in a site of special scientific interest.
- (3) In response to the notice referred to in subsection (1), [^{F55}Natural England] may send a notice—
 - (a) saying that they do not assent to the proposed operations, or
 - (b) assenting to them (with or without conditions),but if they do not send a notice under paragraph (b) within the period of 28 days beginning with the date of the notice under subsection (1) they shall be treated as having declined to assent.
- (4) If [^{F55}Natural England] do not assent, or if the authority proposes to carry out the operations otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the Council's assent, the authority—
 - (a) shall not carry out the operations unless the condition set out in subsection (5) is satisfied, and
 - (b) shall comply with the requirements set out in subsection (6) when carrying them out.
- (5) The condition is that the authority has, after the expiry of the period of 28 days beginning with the date of the notice under subsection (1), notified the Council of—
 - (a) the date on which it proposes to start the operations (which must be after the expiry of the period of 28 days beginning with the date of the notification under this paragraph), and
 - (b) how (if at all) it has taken account of any written advice it received from [^{F55}Natural England], before the date of the notification under this paragraph, in response to the notice under subsection (1).
- (6) The requirements are—
 - (a) that the authority carry out the operations in such a way as to give rise to as little damage as is reasonably practicable in all the circumstances to the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the site is of special interest (taking account, in particular, of any such advice as is referred to in subsection (5)(b)); and
 - (b) that the authority restore the site to its former condition, so far as is reasonably practicable, if any such damage does occur.]

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Textual Amendments

- F54** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F55** Words in s. 28H substituted (1.10.2006) by Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C9** S. 28H excluded (28.3.2024) by The A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Development Consent Order 2024 (S.I. 2024/360), arts. 1, **3(1)** (with arts. 18, 35, Sch. 9)

[^{F56} **28I Statutory undertakers, etc.: duty in relation to authorising operations.**

- (1) This section applies where the permission of a section 28G authority is needed before operations may be carried out.
- (2) Before permitting the carrying out of operations likely to damage any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest, a section 28G authority shall give notice of the proposed operations to [^{F57}Natural England].
- (3) Subsection (2) applies even if the operations would not take place on land included in a site of special scientific interest.
- (4) The authority shall wait until the expiry of the period of 28 days beginning with the date of the notice under subsection (2) before deciding whether to give its permission, unless [^{F57}Natural England] have notified the authority that it need not wait until then.
- (5) The authority shall take any advice received from [^{F57}Natural England] into account—
 - (a) in deciding whether or not to permit the proposed operations, and
 - (b) if it does decide to do so, in deciding what (if any) conditions are to be attached to the permission.
- (6) If [^{F57}Natural England] advise against permitting the operations, or advise that certain conditions should be attached, but the section 28G authority does not follow that advice, the authority—
 - (a) shall give notice of the permission, and of its terms, to [^{F57}Natural England], the notice to include a statement of how (if at all) the authority has taken account of the Council's advice, and
 - (b) shall not grant a permission which would allow the operations to start before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of that notice.
- (7) In this section “permission”, in relation to any operations, includes authorisation, consent, and any other type of permission (and “permit” and “permitting” are to be construed accordingly).]

Textual Amendments

- F56** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F57** Words in s. 28I substituted (1.10.2006) by Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

Changes to legislation: *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C10** S. 28I excluded (30.1.2001) by 1987 c. 53, s. 9(7) (as substituted (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 76(1), 103(2), **Sch. 10 Pt. II para. 6**)
S. 28I excluded (30.1.2001) by 1996 c. 61, s. 38, **Sch. 10 para. 6** (as substituted (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 76(1), 103(2), **Sch. 10 Pt. II para. 11**)

[^{F58}28J Management schemes.

- (1) [^{F59}Natural England] may formulate a management scheme for all or part of a site of special scientific interest.
- (2) A management scheme is a scheme for—
 - (a) conserving the flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the land (or the part of it to which the scheme relates) is of special interest; or
 - (b) restoring them; or
 - (c) both.
- (3) [^{F59}Natural England] shall serve notice of a proposed management scheme on every owner and occupier of any of the land (or the part of it to which the scheme would relate); but it may be served on them only after they have been consulted about the proposed management scheme.
- (4) The notice may be served with the notification referred to in section 28(1)(b) or afterwards.
- (5) The owners and occupiers upon whom the notice must be served (referred to in this section as “the relevant owners and occupiers”) are—
 - (a) if it is served with the notification under section 28(1)(b), or later but before the notification referred to in section 28(5)(b), the owners and occupiers referred to in section 28(1)(b);
 - (b) if it is served with the notification under section 28(5)(b) or later, the owners and occupiers of such of the land as remains subject to the notification.
- (6) The notice of a proposed management scheme must include a copy of the proposed scheme.
- (7) The notice must specify the time (not being less than three months from the date of the giving of the notice) within which, and the manner in which, representations or objections with respect to the proposed management scheme may be made; and [^{F59}Natural England] shall consider any representation or objection duly made.
- (8) Where a notice under subsection (3) has been given, [^{F59}Natural England] may within the period of nine months beginning with the date on which the notice was served on the last of the relevant owners and occupiers either—
 - (a) give notice to the relevant owners and occupiers withdrawing the notice, or
 - (b) give notice to them confirming the management scheme (with or without modifications),and if notice under paragraph (b) is given, the management scheme shall have effect from the time the notice is served on all of the relevant owners or occupiers.
- (9) A notice under subsection (3) shall cease to have effect—

Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (a) on the giving of a notice of withdrawal under subsection (8)(a) to any of the relevant owners and occupiers; or
 - (b) if not withdrawn or confirmed by notice under subsection (8) within the period of nine months referred to there, at the end of that period.
- (10) [^{F60}Natural England's] power under subsection (8)(b) to confirm a management scheme with modifications shall not be exercised so as to make complying with it more onerous.
- (11) [^{F59}Natural England] may at any time cancel or propose the modification of a management scheme.
- (12) In relation to—
- (a) the cancellation of a management scheme, subsections (3) to (5) apply, and
 - (b) a proposal to modify a management scheme, subsections (3) to (10) apply, as they apply in relation to a proposal for a management scheme.

^{F61}(13)]

Textual Amendments

- F58** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F59** Words in s. 28J substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F60** Words in s. 28J substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16)**, ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F61** S. 28J(13) omitted (21.5.2016) by virtue of **Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (anaw 3)**, s. 88(2)(a), **Sch. 2 para. 3(3)**

[^{F62}28K Management notices.

- (1) Where it appears to [^{F63}Natural England] that—
- (a) an owner or occupier of land is not giving effect to a provision of a management scheme, and
 - (b) as a result any flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the land is of special interest are being inadequately conserved or restored,
- they may if they think fit serve a notice on him (a “management notice”).
- (2) They may not serve a management notice unless they are satisfied that they are unable to conclude, on reasonable terms, an agreement with the owner or occupier as to the management of the land in accordance with the management scheme.
- (3) A management notice is a notice requiring the owner or occupier to—
- (a) carry out such work on the land, and
 - (b) do such other things with respect to it,
- as are specified in the notice, and to do so before the dates or within the periods so specified.

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- (4) The work and other things specified in the notice must appear to [^{F63}Natural England] to be measures which it is reasonable to require in order to ensure that the land is managed in accordance with the management scheme.
- (5) The management notice must explain the effect of subsection (7) and (8) and of sections 28L and 28M(2) to (4).
- (6) A copy of the management notice must be served on every other owner and occupier of the land.
- (7) If any of the work or other things required by a management notice have not been done within the period or by the date specified in it, [^{F63}Natural England] may—
 - (a) enter the land, and any other land, and carry out the work, or do the other things; and
 - (b) recover from the owner or occupier upon whom the notice was served any expenses reasonably incurred by them in carrying out the work or doing the other things.
- (8) If an appeal is brought against the management notice, and upon the final determination of the appeal the notice is affirmed (with or without modifications), subsection (7) applies as if the references there to the management notice were to the notice as affirmed.]

Textual Amendments

- F62** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F63** Words in s. 28J substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

[^{F64}28L Appeals against management notices.

- (1) A person who is served with a management notice may appeal against its requirements to the Secretary of State; and a management notice does not take effect until—
 - (a) the expiry of the period for appealing against it; or
 - (b) if an appeal is brought, its withdrawal or final determination.
- (2) An appeal may be on the ground that some other owner or occupier of the land should take all or any of the measures specified in the management notice, or should pay all or part of their cost.
- (3) Where the grounds of appeal are, or include, that mentioned in subsection (2), the appellant must serve a copy of his notice of appeal on each other person referred to.
- (4) Before determining an appeal, the Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit—
 - (a) cause the appeal to take, or continue in, the form of a hearing (which may be held wholly or partly in private if the appellant so requests and the person hearing the appeal agrees), or
 - (b) cause a local inquiry to be held,and he must act as mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) if either party to the appeal (or, in a case falling within subsection (2), any of the other persons mentioned there) asks to be heard in connection with the appeal.

Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (5) On determining the appeal, the Secretary of State may quash or affirm the management notice; and if he affirms it, he may do so either in its original form or with such modifications as he thinks fit.
- (6) In particular, on determining an appeal whose grounds are, or include, those mentioned in subsection (2), the Secretary of State may—
 - (a) vary the management notice so as to impose its requirements (or some of them) upon any such other person as is referred to in the grounds; or
 - (b) determine that a payment is to be made by any such other person to the appellant.
- (7) In exercising his powers under subsection (6), the Secretary of State must take into account, as between the appellant and any of the other people referred to in subsection (2)—
 - (a) their relative interests in the land (considering both the nature of the interests and the rights and obligations arising under or by virtue of them);
 - (b) their relative responsibility for the state of the land which gives rise to the requirements of the management notice; and
 - (c) the relative degree of benefit to be derived from carrying out the requirements of the management notice.
- (8) The Secretary of State may by regulations made by statutory instrument make provision about appeals under this section, and in particular about—
 - (a) the period within which and the manner in which appeals are to be brought, and
 - (b) the manner in which they are to be considered,
 and any such regulations may make different provision for different cases or circumstances.
- (9) A statutory instrument containing regulations under subsection (8) shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (10) The Secretary of State may appoint any person to exercise on his behalf, with or without payment, his function of determining an appeal under this section or any matter involved in such an appeal.
- (11) Schedule 10A shall have effect with respect to appointments under subsection (10).
- (12) Subsections (2) to (5) of section 250 of the ^{M6} Local Government Act 1972 (local inquiries: evidence and costs) apply in relation to hearings or local inquiries under this section as they apply in relation to local inquiries under that section, but as if the reference there—
 - (a) to the person appointed to hold the inquiry were a reference to the Secretary of State or to the person appointed to conduct the hearing or hold the inquiry under this section; and
 - (b) to the Minister causing an inquiry to be held were to the Secretary of State.
- (13) Section 322A of the ^{M7} Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (orders as to costs where no hearing or inquiry takes place) applies in relation to a hearing or local inquiry under this section as it applies in relation to a hearing or local inquiry referred to in that section.

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[In relation to Wales this section has effect as if for subsections (12) and (13) there^{F65}(14) were substituted—

“(12) Section 322C of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (costs: Wales) applies in relation to a hearing or inquiry under this section in Wales as it applies in relation to a hearing or inquiry mentioned in that section.”]]

Textual Amendments

- F64** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by [2000 c. 37, ss. 75\(1\), 103\(2\), Sch. 9 para. 1](#) (with [Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20](#))
- F65** S. 28L(14) inserted (6.9.2015 for specified purposes, 1.3.2016 in so far as not already in force) by [Planning \(Wales\) Act 2015 \(anaw 4\), s. 58\(2\)\(b\)\(4\)\(b\), Sch. 5 para. 6; S.I. 2016/52, art. 4\(a\)](#) (with art. 17)

Marginal Citations

- M6** [1972 c. 70.](#)
- M7** [1990 c. 8.](#)

[^{F66}28M Payments.

- (1) Where [^{F67}Natural England], under section 28E(6), modify or withdraw a consent, they shall make a payment to any owner or occupier of the land who suffers loss because of the modification or withdrawal.
- (2) [^{F67}Natural England] may, if they think fit, make one or more payments to any owner or occupier of land in relation to which a management scheme under section 28J is in force.
- (3) The amount of a payment under this section is to be determined by [^{F67}Natural England] in accordance with guidance given and published by the Ministers.
- (4) Section 50(3) applies to the determination of the amount of payments under this section as it applies to the determination of the amount of payments under that section.]

Textual Amendments

- F66** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by [2000 c. 37, ss. 75\(1\), 103\(2\), Sch. 9 para. 1](#) (with [Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20](#))
- F67** Words in s. 28M substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\), ss. 105\(1\), 107, Sch. 11 para. 79; S.I. 2006/2541, art. 2](#)

[^{F68}28N Compulsory purchase.

- (1) [^{F69}Natural England] may in circumstances set out in subsection (2) acquire compulsorily all or any part of a site of special scientific interest.
- (2) The circumstances are—
 - (a) that [^{F69}Natural England] are satisfied that they are unable to conclude, on reasonable terms, an agreement with the owner or occupier as to the management of the land; or

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- (b) that [^{F69}Natural England] have entered into such an agreement, but they are satisfied that it has been breached in such a way that the land is not being managed satisfactorily.
- (3) A dispute about whether or not there has been a breach of the agreement for the purposes of subsection (2)(b) is to be determined by an arbitrator appointed by the Lord Chancellor.
- (4) Where [^{F69}Natural England] have acquired land compulsorily under this section, they may—
- (a) manage it themselves; or
 - (b) dispose of it, or of any interest in it, on terms designed to secure that the land is managed satisfactorily.
- (5) Section 103 of the 1949 Act (general provisions as to acquisition of land) applies for the purposes of this section as it applies for the purposes of that Act.]

Textual Amendments

F68 Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)

F69 Words in s. 28N substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

[^{F70}28P Offences.

- (1) A person who, without reasonable excuse, contravenes section 28E(1) is guilty of an offence and is liable [^{F71}on summary conviction, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine].
- (2) A section 28G authority which, in the exercise of its functions, carries out an operation which damages any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest—
- (a) without first complying with section 28H(1), or
 - (b) (if it has complied with section 28H(1)) without first complying with section 28H(4)(a),
- is, unless there was a reasonable excuse for carrying out the operation without complying, guilty of an offence and is liable [^{F72}on summary conviction, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine].
- (3) A section 28G authority acting in the exercise of its functions which, having complied with section 28H(1), fails without reasonable excuse to comply with section 28H(4) (b) is guilty of an offence and is liable [^{F73}on summary conviction, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine].
- (4) For the purposes of subsections (1), (2) and (3), it is a reasonable excuse in any event for a person to carry out an operation (or to fail to comply with a requirement to send a notice about it) if—
- (a) subject to subsection (5), the operation in question was authorised by a planning permission granted on an application under Part III of the ^{M8} Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or permitted by a section 28G authority which has acted in accordance with section 28I; or

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- (b) the operation in question was an emergency operation particulars of which (including details of the emergency) were notified to [^{F74}Natural England] as soon as practicable after the commencement of the operation.
- (5) If an operation needs both a planning permission and the permission of a section 28G authority, subsection (4)(a) does not provide reasonable excuse unless both have been obtained.
- [A section 28G authority which, in the exercise of its functions, permits the carrying out
^{F75}(5A) of an operation which damages any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest—
- (a) without first complying with section 28I(2), or
- (b) where relevant, without first complying with section 28I(4) or (6),
- is, unless there was a reasonable excuse for permitting the carrying out of the operation without complying, guilty of an offence and is liable [^{F76}on summary conviction, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine].
- (5B) For the purposes of subsection (5A), it is a reasonable excuse in any event for a section 28G authority to permit the carrying out of an operation without first complying with section 28I(2), (4) or (6) if the operation in question was an emergency operation particulars of which (including details of the emergency) were notified to Natural England as soon as practicable after the permission was given.]
- (6) A person (other than a section 28G authority acting in the exercise of its functions) who without reasonable excuse—
- (a) intentionally or recklessly destroys or damages any of the flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features by reason of which land is of special interest, or intentionally or recklessly disturbs any of those fauna, and
- (b) knew that what he destroyed, damaged or disturbed was within a site of special scientific interest,
- is guilty of an offence and is liable [^{F77}on summary conviction, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine].
- [A person (other than a section 28G authority acting in the exercise of its functions)
^{F78}(6A) who without reasonable excuse—
- (a) intentionally or recklessly destroys or damages any of the flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest, or
- (b) intentionally or recklessly disturbs any of those fauna,
- is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.]
- (7) It is a reasonable excuse in any event for a person to do what is mentioned in subsection (6) [^{F79}or (6A)] if—
- (a) paragraph (a) or (b) of subsection (4) is satisfied in relation to what was done (reading references there to an operation as references to the destruction, damage or disturbance referred to in subsection (6) [^{F80}or (6A)]), and
- (b) where appropriate, subsection (5) is also satisfied, reading the reference there to an operation in the same way.
- (8) A person who without reasonable excuse fails to comply with a requirement of a management notice is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum or on conviction on indictment to a fine.

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- (9) In determining the amount of any fine to be imposed on a person convicted of an offence under this section, the court shall in particular have regard to any financial benefit which has accrued or appears likely to accrue to him in consequence of the offence.
- (10) Proceedings in England and Wales for an offence under this section shall not, without the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions, be taken by a person other than ^[F74]Natural England].
- (11) In this section, “a section 28G authority” means an authority to which section 28G applies.]

Textual Amendments

- F70** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F71** Words in s. 28P(1) substituted (12.3.2015) by [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(Fines on Summary Conviction\) Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/664\)](#), reg. 1(1), **Sch. 4 para. 10(2)(a)** (with reg. 5(1))
- F72** Words in s. 28P(2) substituted (12.3.2015) by [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(Fines on Summary Conviction\) Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/664\)](#), reg. 1(1), **Sch. 4 para. 10(2)(b)** (with reg. 5(1))
- F73** Words in s. 28P(3) substituted (12.3.2015) by [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(Fines on Summary Conviction\) Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/664\)](#), reg. 1(1), **Sch. 4 para. 10(2)(c)** (with reg. 5(1))
- F74** Words in s. 28P substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F75** S. 28P(5A)(5B) inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), **ss. 55(2)**, 107; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F76** Words in s. 28P(5A) substituted (12.3.2015) by [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(Fines on Summary Conviction\) Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/664\)](#), reg. 1(1), **Sch. 4 para. 10(2)(d)** (with reg. 5(1))
- F77** Words in s. 28P(6) substituted (12.3.2015) by [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(Fines on Summary Conviction\) Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/664\)](#), reg. 1(1), **Sch. 4 para. 10(2)(e)** (with reg. 5(1))
- F78** S. 28P(6A) inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), **ss. 55(3)**, 107; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F79** Words in s. 28P(7) inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), **ss. 55(4)**, 107; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**
- F80** Words in s. 28P(7) inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), **ss. 55(4)**, 107; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

Marginal Citations

- M8** 1990 c. 8.

^[F81]28Q Change of owner or occupier.

- (1) This section applies where the owner of land included in a site of special scientific interest—
- (a) disposes of any interest of his in the land; or
 - (b) becomes aware that it is occupied by an additional or a different occupier.

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- (2) If this section applies, the owner shall send a notice to [^{F82}Natural England] before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which he disposed of the interest or became aware of the change in occupation.
- (3) The notice is to specify the land concerned and—
 - (a) in a subsection (1)(a) case, the date on which the owner disposed of the interest in the land, and the name and address of the person to whom he disposed of the interest; or
 - (b) in a subsection (1)(b) case, the date on which the change of occupation took place (or, if the owner does not know the exact date, an indication of when to the best of the owner’s knowledge it took place), and, as far as the owner knows them, the name and address of the additional or different occupier.
- (4) A person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with the requirements of this section is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 1 on the standard scale.
- (5) For the purposes of subsection (1), an owner “disposes of” an interest in land if he disposes of it by way of sale, exchange or lease, or by way of the creation of any easement, right or privilege, or in any other way except by way of mortgage.]

Textual Amendments

- F81** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F82** Words in s. 28Q substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

[^{F83}28R Byelaws.

- (1) [^{F84}Natural England] may make byelaws for the protection of a site of special scientific interest.
- (2) The following provisions of the 1949 Act apply in relation to byelaws under this section as they apply in relation to byelaws under section 20 of that Act—
 - (a) subsections (2) and (3) of section 20 (reading references there to nature reserves as references to sites of special scientific interest); and
 - (b) sections 106 and 107.]

Textual Amendments

- F83** Ss. 28-28R substituted for s. 28 (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 1** (with **Sch. 11 paras. 1-17, 20**)
- F84** Words in s. 28R substituted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** (c. 16), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

[^{F85}28S Notices and signs relating to SSSIs

- (1) Natural England may, on any land included in a site of special scientific interest, put up and maintain notices or signs relating to the site.

Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (2) Natural England may remove any notice or sign put up under subsection (1).
- (3) Any other person who intentionally or recklessly and without reasonable excuse takes down, damages, destroys or obscures a notice or sign put up under subsection (1) is guilty of an offence.
- (4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.]

Textual Amendments

F85 S. 28S inserted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), [ss. 58\(1\)](#), [107](#); [S.I. 2006/2541](#), [art. 2](#)

29 Special protection for certain areas of special scientific interest.

F86

Textual Amendments

F86 S. 29 repealed (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by [2000 c. 37](#), [ss. 75\(1\)](#), [102](#), [103\(2\)](#), [Sch. 9 para. 2](#), [Sch. 16 Pt. III](#) and s. 29 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\)](#), [ss. 57](#), [59](#), [Sch. 7 para. 4](#) (with transitional provisions and savings in [Sch. 5 Pt. II para. 11](#)); [S.S.I. 2004/495](#), [art. 2](#)

30 Compensation where order is made under s. 29.

F87

Textual Amendments

F87 S. 30 repealed (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by [2000 c. 37](#), [ss. 75\(1\)](#), [102](#), [103\(2\)](#), [Sch. 9 para. 2](#), [Sch. 16 Pt. III](#) and s. 30 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\)](#), [ss. 57](#), [59](#), [Sch. 7 para. 4](#); [S.S.I. 2004/495](#), [art. 2](#)

31 [^{F88}Restoration following offence under section 28P.] **E+W**

[^{F89}(1) Where—

- (a) the operation in respect of which a person is convicted of an offence under section 28P(1), (2) or (3) has destroyed or damaged any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest, or
- (b) a person is convicted of an offence under section 28P(6) [^{F90}or (6A)],

the court by which he is convicted, in addition to dealing with him in any other way, may make an order requiring him to carry out, within such period as may be specified in the order, such operations (whether on land included in the site of special scientific interest or not) as may be so specified for the purpose of restoring the site of special scientific interest to its former condition.]

Changes to legislation: *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

- (2) An order under this section made on conviction on indictment shall be treated for the purposes of sections 30 and 42(1) and (2) of the ^{M9}Criminal Appeal Act 1968 (effect of appeals on orders for the restitution of property) as an order for the restitution of property; and where by reason of the quashing by the Court of Appeal of a person's conviction any such order does not take effect, and on appeal to [^{F91}the Supreme Court] the conviction is restored by [^{F91}the Supreme Court], [^{F91}the Supreme Court] may make any order under this section which could be made on his conviction by the court which convicted him.
- (3) In the case of an order under this section made by a magistrates' court the period specified in the order shall not begin to run—
- in any case until the expiration of the period for the time being prescribed by law for the giving of notice of appeal against a decision of a magistrates' court;
 - where notice of appeal is given within the period so prescribed, until determination of the appeal.
- (4) At any time before an order under this section has been complied with or fully complied with, the court by which it was made may, on the application of the person against whom it was made, discharge or vary the order if it appears to the court that a change in circumstances has made compliance or full compliance with the order impracticable or unnecessary.
- (5) If, within the period specified in an order under this section, the person against whom it was made fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with it, he shall be liable on summary conviction—
- to a fine not exceeding [^{F92}level 5 on the standard scale]; and
 - in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding £100 for each day during which the offence continues after conviction.
- (6) If, within the period specified in an order under this section, any operations specified in the order have not been carried out, [^{F93}Natural England] may enter the land and carry out those operations and recover from the person against whom the order was made any expenses reasonably incurred by them in doing so.
- (7) In the application of this section to Scotland—
- subsections (2) and (3) shall not apply; and
 - for the purposes of any appeal or review, an order under this section is a sentence.

Extent Information

- E2** This version of this provision extends to England and Wales only; a separate version has been created for Scotland only
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Textual Amendments

- F88** S. 31 sidenote substituted (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 3(3)**
- F89** S. 31(1) substituted (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 3(2)**
- F90** Words in s. 31(1)(b) inserted (1.10.2006) by **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c. 16), ss. 55(5), 107; S.I. 2006/2541, art. 2**
- F91** Words in s. 31(2) substituted (1.10.2009) by **Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (c. 4), ss. 40, 148, Sch. 9 para. 37; S.I. 2009/1604, art. 2(a)(d)**

Changes to legislation: *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

- F92** Words substituted (E.W.S.) by virtue of (E.W.) [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c. 48, SIF 39:1\), s. 46](#) and (S.) [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\), s. 289G](#)
- F93** Words in s. 31 substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\), ss. 105\(1\), 107, Sch. 11 para. 79; S.I. 2006/2541, art. 2](#)

Marginal Citations

- M9** [1968 c. 19.](#)

31 Restoration where order under s. 29 is contravened. **S**

F112

Extent Information

- E6** This version of this provision extends to Scotland only; a separate version has been created for England and Wales

Textual Amendments

- F112** S. 31 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\), ss. 57, 59, Sch. 7 para. 4; S.S.I. 2004/495, art. 2](#)

32 Duties of agriculture Ministers with respect to areas of special scientific interest. **E+W**

- (1) Where an application for [^{F94}a farm capital grant] is made as respects expenditure incurred or to be incurred for the purpose of activities on [^{F95}land included in a site of special scientific interest]. . ., the appropriate Minister—
- (a) shall, so far as may be consistent with the purposes of [^{F96}the grant provisions], so exercise his functions thereunder as to further the conservation of the flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the land is of special interest; and
 - (b) where [^{F97}Natural England] have objected to the making of the grant on the ground that the activities in question have destroyed or damaged or will destroy or damage that flora or fauna or those features, shall not make the grant except after considering the objection and, in the case of land in England, after consulting with the Secretary of State.
- (2) Where, in consequence of an objection by [^{F97}Natural England] , an application for a grant as respects expenditure to be incurred is refused on the ground that the activities in question will have such an effect as is mentioned in subsection (1) (b), [^{F97}Natural England] shall, within three months of their receiving notice of the appropriate Minister's decision, offer to enter into, in the terms of a draft submitted to the applicant, an agreement under section 16 of the 1949 Act or section 15 of the 1968 Act—
- (a) imposing restrictions as respects those activities; and
 - (b) providing for the making by them of payments to the applicant.

[^{F98}(2A) Subsection (2) has effect in relation to Wales as if the reference to an agreement under section 16 of the 1949 Act or section 15 of the 1968 Act were a reference to an agreement under section 16 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.]

Changes to legislation: *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

[^{F99}(3) In this section—

“the appropriate Minister” means the Minister responsible for determining the application;

“farm capital grant” means—

- (a) a grant under a scheme made under section 29 of the Agriculture Act 1970; or
- (b) a grant under regulations made under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 to a person carrying on an agricultural business within the meaning of those regulations in respect of expenditure incurred or to be incurred for the purposes of or in connection with that business, being expenditure of a capital nature or incurred in connection with expenditure of a capital nature;

“grant provisions” means—

- (i) in the case of such a grant as is mentioned in paragraph (a) above, the scheme under which the grant is made and section 29 of the Agriculture Act 1970; and
- (ii) in the case of such a grant as is mentioned in paragraph (b) above, the regulations under which the grant is made and the [^{F100}EU] instrument in pursuance of which the regulations were made.]

Extent Information

E3 This version of this provision extends to England and Wales only; a separate version has been created for Scotland only

Textual Amendments

F94 Words substituted by [Agriculture Act 1986 \(c. 49, SIF 2:1\)](#), **s. 20(2)(a)**

F95 Words in s. 32(1) substituted (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by 2000 c. 37, ss. 75(1), 103(2), **Sch. 9 para. 4**

F96 Words substituted by [Agriculture Act 1986 \(c. 49, SIF 2:1\)](#), **s. 20(2)(b)**

F97 Words in s.32 substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, **Sch. 11 para. 79**; S.I. 2006/2541, **art. 2**

F98 S. 32(2A) inserted (E.W.) (21.5.2016) by [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016 \(anaw 3\)](#), s. 88(2)(a), **Sch. 2 para. 3(4)**

F99 S. 32(3) substituted by [Agriculture Act 1986 \(c. 49, SIF 2:1\)](#), **s. 20(3)**

F100 Words in Act substituted (22.4.2011) by [The Treaty of Lisbon \(Changes in Terminology\) Order 2011 \(S.I. 2011/1043\)](#), arts. 2, 3, 6 (with arts. 3(2)(3), 4(2), 6(4)(5))

32 Duties of agriculture Ministers with respect to areas of special scientific interest. **S**

^{F113}

Extent Information

E7 This version of this provision extends to Scotland only; a separate version has been created for England and Wales

Textual Amendments

F113 S. 32 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\)](#), ss. 57, 59, **Sch. 7 para. 4**; S.S.I. 2004/495, **art. 2**

Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

^{F101}33 Ministerial guidance as respects areas of special scientific interest.

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Textual Amendments

F101 S. 33 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\)](#), ss. 57, 59, [Sch. 7 para. 4](#); [S.S.I. 2004/495](#), [art. 2](#)

34 Limestone pavement orders. **E+W**

^{F102}(1) Natural England must notify any local planning authority of any limestone pavement in that authority's area.]

(2) Where it appears to the Secretary of State or the relevant authority that the character or appearance of any land notified under subsection (1) would be likely to be adversely affected by the removal of the limestone or by its disturbance in any way whatever, the Secretary of State or that authority may make an order (in this section referred to as a “limestone pavement order”) designating the land and prohibiting the removal or disturbance of limestone on or in it; and the provisions of Schedule 11 shall have effect as to the making, confirmation and coming into operation of limestone pavement orders.

(3) The relevant authority may, after consultation with ^{F103}Natural England], amend or revoke a limestone pavement order made by the authority; and the Secretary of State may, after such consultation as aforesaid, amend or revoke any such order made by him or that authority but, in the case of an order made by that authority, only after consultation with that authority.

(4) If any person without reasonable excuse removes or disturbs limestone on or in any land designated by a limestone pavement order he shall be liable ^{F104}on summary conviction, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine].

(5) It is a reasonable excuse in any event for a person to remove or disturb limestone or cause or permit its removal or disturbance, if the removal or disturbance was authorised by a planning permission granted on an application under ^{F105}Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990]. . . .

(6) In this section—

^{F106}

“limestone pavement” means an area of limestone which lies wholly or partly exposed on the surface of the ground and has been fissured by natural erosion;

^{F107} “the relevant authority” means—

(a) in relation to a non-metropolitan county ^{F108}in England], the county planning authority and, in relation to any other area in England, the local planning authority;

(aa) ^{F109}in relation to any area in Wales, the local planning authority;]

(b) ^{F110}

Extent Information

E4 This version of this provision extends to England and Wales only; a separate version has been created for Scotland only

Changes to legislation: *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

Textual Amendments

- F102** S. 34(1) substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, [Sch. 11 para. 83\(2\)](#); S.I. 2006/2541, [art. 2](#)
- F103** Words in s. 34(3) substituted (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1), 107, {[Sch. 11 para. 83\(3\)](#)}; S.I. 2006/2541, [art. 2](#)
- F104** Words in s. 34(4) substituted for paras. (4)(a)(b) (E.W.) (12.3.2015) by [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(Fines on Summary Conviction\) Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/664\)](#), reg. 1(1), [Sch. 4 para. 10\(3\)](#) (with reg. 5(1))
- F105** Words in s. 34(5) substituted by [Planning \(Consequential Provisions\) Act 1990 \(c. 11, SIF 123:1, 2\)](#), s. 4, [Sch. 2 para. 54\(1\)](#)
- F106** S. 34(6): definition of “the agency” repealed (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1)(2), 107, [Sch. 11 para. 83\(5\)\(a\)](#), [Sch. 12](#); S.I. 2006/2541, [art. 2](#)
- F107** Definition in s. 34(6) substituted by [Local Government Act 1985 \(c. 51, SIF 81:1\)](#), ss. 1, 2, 7, [Sch. 3 para. 7\(2\)](#)
- F108** Words in s. 34(1)(3)(6) inserted (1.4.1996) by 1994 c. 19, s. 66(6), [Sch. 16 para. 65\(3\)](#) (with ss. 54(5)(7), 55(5), [Sch. 17 paras. 22\(1\), 23\(2\)](#)); S.I. 1996/396, art. 4, [Sch. 2](#)
- F109** Para. (aa) in the definition of “the relevant authority” in s. 34(6) inserted (1.4.1996) by 1994 c. 19, s. 66(6), [Sch. 16 para. 65\(3\)](#) (with ss. 54(5)(7), 55(5), [Sch. 17 paras. 22\(1\), 23\(2\)](#)); S.I. 1996/396, art. 4, [Sch. 2](#)
- F110** S. 34(6): para. (b) definition of “the relevant authority” repealed (1.10.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 105(1)(2), 107, [Sch. 11 para. 83\(5\)\(b\)](#), [Sch. 12](#); S.I. 2006/2541, [art. 2](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C11** S. 34(2): functions of local authority not to be responsibility of an executive of the authority (E.) (16.11.2000) by virtue of S.I. 2000/2853, reg. 2(1), [Sch. 1](#)

34 Limestone pavement orders. **S**

F114

Extent Information

- E8** This version of this provision extends to Scotland only; a separate version has been created for England and Wales only

Textual Amendments

- F114** S. 34 repealed (S.) (29.11.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\)](#), ss. 57, 59, [Sch. 7 para. 4](#); S.S.I. 2004/495, [art. 2](#)

Changes to legislation:

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Cross Heading: Sites of special scientific interest and limestone pavements is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 2(1A)-(1D) substituted for s. 2(1A) by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(2)(a)
- s. 2(3A)(a)(ii) word repealed by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(2)(b)(i)
- s. 2(3C)(c) and word inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(2)(b)(ii)
- s. 11(1)(ab)-(ad) substituted for s. 11(1)(a)(aa) by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(2)(a)
- s. 11(2)(aa)(ab) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(2)(c)(ii)
- s. 11(2A) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 1(6)(b)
- s. 11(3CA) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(2)(e)
- s. 12A-12G and cross-heading inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(2)
- s. 16(1A)(c)(d) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(4)(a)(ii)
- s. 16A(ab) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(4)(b)
- s. 16A(1A) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(4)(a)
- s. 16A(1B) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(3)(a)
- s. 16A(5)(aa) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(3)(c)
- s. 16A(5A) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(3)(d)
- s. 16A(5B) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(4)(c)
- s. 16AA-16AF inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(2)
- s. 21(ga)(gb) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(6)
- s. 26(2)(c) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(7)(a)(ii)
- s. 26(2)(d) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(3)(a)
- s. 26(2)(d)(e) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(5)(a)
- s. 26(2)(f) and word inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(7)(a)
- s. 26(3)(c) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(7)(b)(ii)
- s. 26(3)(d) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(3)(b)
- s. 26(3)(d)(e) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(5)(b)
- s. 26(3)(f) and word inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(7)(b)
- s. 53(3)(c)(ia) inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 2(b)
- s. 53B(4A)(4B) inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 4
- s. 53ZA inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 3
- s. 54B54C inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 5
- Sch. 2 Pt. 1B inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(5)
- Sch. 13A inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 6
- Sch. 14A inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 7