

CITATION**FALLS OF CLYDE
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
South Lanarkshire**

Site code: 624

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NS 884415

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 72
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 335

AREA: 18.07 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES**Geological: Geomorphology: Fluvial Geomorphology of Scotland****Geological: Quaternary Geology and Geomorphology: Quaternary of Scotland****Biological: Woodland: Upland Mixed Ash Woodland****DESCRIPTION**

The Falls of Clyde are situated 3km south of Lanark and provide excellent examples of geological features with Fluvial Geomorphology and Quaternary interests, as well as one of the best examples of semi-natural deciduous gorge woodland in South Lanarkshire.

The site includes a large-scale sequence of waterfalls and rapids set within a steep-sided gorge which has been cut within a pre-glacial surface of gently dipping sandstones and mudstones of Devonian age. The Fluvial Geomorphology and Quaternary of Scotland interests are thus mostly overlapping.

At the larger of the two main falls, Corra Linn, there is a narrowing of the gorge and a stepped fall of 27m over more resistant beds. Bonnington Linn, of lesser magnitude and height and with vegetated islands midstream, completes the sequence. The dramatic change in river character at the falls, in comparison with the upper and lower Clyde Valley, is the result of glacial diversion of the river system. This is the most dramatic example in Scotland of the disruption of a major river course by glacial deposition in the original river channel, forcing the river to cut a new bedrock channel. The site thus provides a particularly good example of the way in which the configuration of the present river channel and its individual landforms are controlled by the geology and the glacial legacy. It is also unusual in Scotland to find such spectacular falls in the lower reaches of large rivers.

The woodland interest within the site comprises upland mixed ash, which is now largely restricted to the riverbanks and the rim and shallower slopes of the gorge. The canopy is comprised of predominately ash, elm, birch and oak, with alder in wetter areas. Other deciduous species such as rowan, hazel and bird cherry form the shrub layer. The ground flora includes two Nationally Scarce grasses - lesser hairy brome *Bromopsis benekenii* and wood fescue *Festuca altissima*.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1971, 1979

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 29 October 1984 with approximately 1.5 hectares net reduction in area

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 18 March 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 18.5 hectares)