

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE      **SITE NAME:** BRAMPTON WOOD

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

**Local Planning Authorities:** Huntingdonshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 180702

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 153      **1:10,000:** TL 16 NE, TL 17 SE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1954      **Date of Last Revision:** 1972

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1983      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 132 ha 324 ac

### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

This is one of the largest remaining blocks of ancient woodland in Cambridgeshire. Situated on the chalky Boulder Clay it is of the wet ash-maple woodland type which is nationally restricted to heavy soils in lowland England. The rides support a rich neutral grassland flora, representing additional plant communities which are now uncommon in the county. The variety of habitat makes this a valuable site for invertebrates for which it is additionally noted.

Parts of the woodland have been adversely modified by forestry activities but a large area remains as mixed coppice of ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, field maple *Acer campestre* and hazel *Corylus avellana*. Birch *Betula* sp. and aspen *Populus tremula* are also frequent throughout the wood, together with occasional oak *Quercus robur* standards.

The woodland provides a rich ground flora of the dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*-bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* type. A variety of plants characteristic of ancient woodland sites are present including wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, wood sedge *Carex sylvatica*, remote sedge *C. remota*, yellow archangel *Galeobdolon luteum*, primrose *Primula veris* and violets *Viola* spp.

The rides hold a diversity of grassland species, the dominant grasses being smooth meadow-grass *Poa pratensis*, quaking-grass *Briza media*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*. The variety of herbs include primrose, yellow pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus uliginosus*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*.