

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** BUFF WOOD

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

Local Planning Authorities: South Cambridgeshire District Council

National Grid Reference: TL 283503

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 154 **1:10,000:** TL 25 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1958 **Date of Last Revision:** 1971

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:**

Area: 15.6 ha 38.5 ac

Other information: The northern arm of the site is an addition to the SSSI. The wood is a nature reserve extensively used for scientific research and managed by the University of Cambridge.

Description and Reasons for Notification

Buff Wood is a woodland with a primary core and adjacent later (secondary) additions which were planted from the Middle Ages onwards. It is primarily of value as a good representative of wet ash-maple and pedunculate oak-hazel/ash woodland which contains both oxlip *Primula elatior* and primrose *P. vulgaris*, woodland types which are of restricted distribution in the British Isles. The site is additionally of value for containing varied stands of elm (largely *Ulmus minor*), a woodland type which is particularly characteristic of this area but relatively uncommon over the remainder of Britain.

The ground flora is varied and reflects the diverse history of the wood. Many parts of the secondary woodland are dominated by rough-stalked meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*, stinging nettle *Urtica dioica* and ivy *Hedera helix*. The primary core, however, holds typical ancient woodland plants such as wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, early-purple orchid *Orchis mascula* and herb-paris *Paris quadrifolia*. Of particular interest is the presence of green hellebore *Helleborus viridis*, a plant rarely found in Cambridgeshire woods.

Rides and ponds are present and provide additional habitats of general wildlife value.

The site has been well documented and is extensively used for ecological research and study.