

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** GAMLINGAY 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 242535

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 153 **1:10,000:** TL 25 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1955 **Date of Last Revision:** 1971

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

Area: 46 ha 114 ac

Description and Reasons for Notification

This is a woodland of ancient origin which consequently holds well developed plant and animal communities. It is of the ash-maple woodland type and represents a habitat which has now become relatively scarce throughout its natural range over lowland England. In a Cambridgeshire context the site is additionally noted for its part location on a sandy loam soil type, unusual for this county, which is reflected in the vegetation.

The majority of the wood is mixed coppice of oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and field maple *Acer campestre*. Where the soil is of the calcareous marl type overlying Boulder Clay on Gault, the nationally restricted oxlip *Primula elatior* is a key component of the ground flora, together with dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, yellow archangel *Galeobdolon luteum* and wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*. On the sandy loam which overlays Boulder Clay on Greensand, oak is more abundant with ash being replaced by birch. The ground flora here holds bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, together with creeping soft-grass *Holcus mollis*. This type of vegetation is characteristic of dry oak woods on acid soils and extremely rare in the county.

Parts of the wood have been modified by plantation, but elements of the natural vegetation still persist and retain potential for enhancement through sympathetic management.