

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: PULHAM MARKET BIG WOOD

DISTRICT: South Norfolk

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

Local Planning Authority: South Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TM 205896 Area: 4.7 (ha) 11.6 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 156 1:10,560: TM 28 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): N/A Date of Last Revision: N/A

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
A new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Pulham Market Big Wood is an ancient woodland site on heavy boulder clays, overlain in places by acidic sandy loams. The site is probably of primary origin and appears to be the sole remaining fragment of a once much larger area of woodland. The structure is coppice-with-standards and the wood is notable for the exceptional range of stand-types which reflect the underlying variations in soil acidity. A rare variant of plateau alderwood is present and there are also stands of lowland birch–pedunculate oak woodland and the uncommon birch–hazel variant of pedunculate oak–hornbeam woodland. The ground flora is fairly diverse and contains a few uncommon species.

Standard trees are mature Pedunculate Oaks *Quercus robur* over a coppice layer which is now very overgrown. The rare acid plateau alderwood contains, in addition to Alder *Alnus glutinosa*: Downy Birch *Betula pubescens*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium* and Alder Buckthorn *Frangula alnus*. Coppiced species in other parts of the wood include Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Maple *Acer campestre* and Holly.

The ground flora on the acid soils is dominated by Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* with Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, Bluebell *Hyacinthoide non-scripta*, White Climbing Fumitory *Corydalis claviculata* and Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*. Heavier, more calcareous soils along a massive ancient woodbank are dominated by Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis*. Here the ground flora is more diverse and includes Sanicle *Sanicula europaea*, Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon*, Primrose *Primula vulgaris*, Hairy Woodrush *Luzula pilosa*, Wood Melick *Melica uniflora* and Yellow Pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*.

Small stands of the ash-maple variant of pedunculate oak–hornbeam woodland, wet ash–maple woodland and lowland hazel–pedunculate oak woodland are also present.