

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** PERRY WOODS

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 135665

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 153 **1:10,000:** TL 16 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1958 **Date of Last Revision:** 1972

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

Area: 66.7 ha 164.8 ac

Other information: A boundary modification has been made at this revision.

Description and Reasons for Notification

The site is of the ash-maple ancient woodland type characteristic of the heavy Oxford and Boulder Clays. It represents a habitat type which has become increasingly scarce in the county and over its natural range in lowland England.

The dominant tree community is of mixed coppice of ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and field maple *Acer campestre* with frequent standards of pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*. The ground flora is of a richness typical of ancient woodlands. Old woodland 'indicators' present include wood melick *Melica uniflora* and early-purple orchid *Orchis mascula*. The dominant field layer plants are of the characteristic dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*-bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* type.

Additional valuable habitats are provided by the shrubby woodland fringes, the system of rides, streams, and an adjacent area of grassland which holds plants such as cowslip *Primula veris* and salad burnet *Poterium sanguisorba*. Such adjacent grassland strips enhance the value of the woodland edges as habitats for invertebrates in particular.