

File ref:

County: Lincolnshire **Site name:** Willoughby Wood

District: East Lindsey

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

Local Planning Authority: East Lindsey District Council

National Grid Reference: TF 462708 **Area:** 23.4 (ha) 57.8 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 122 **1: 10 000:** TF 47 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1951 **Date of Last Revision:** 1959

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

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Willoughby Wood is representative of the series of ancient woodlands found on the middle Marsh Boulder Clay on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. It is predominantly oak-ash and hazel, managed as coppice with standards. This supports a characteristic and rich ground flora. The site is notable for its breeding birds.

In addition to pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* the field maple *Acer campestre* is common in the margin and within the wood, on pockets of lime-rich soil. The shrub layer includes dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, goat willow *Salix caprea* and the occasional thicket of blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.

The more open canopy has a ground flora dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus* but there is an abundance of ferns, including male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas* and broad buckler *D. dilatata*. One ride is notable for the quantity of woodruff *Galium odoratum* and the wood banks are dominated by dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and wood false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*. Though enrichment of the soil beneath the heronry has favoured plants like nettle *Urtica dioica*, scarcer plants are found throughout the wood. These include early purple orchid *Orchis mascula*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, broad-leaved helleborine *Epipactis helleborine*, wood speedwell *Veronica montana*, yellow pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum* and toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*. The abundance of the moss *Fontinalis antipyretica* is a feature of the spring and stream.

Breeding birds include heron, woodcock, tawny owl and greater spotted woodpecker.