

Notification Date: 13 October 1986

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: WELLINGTON WOOD

DISTRICT: SOUTH HEREFORDSHIRE SITE REF: 15 WG4

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, South Herefordshire District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 485497 Area: 146.0 (ha.) 360.8 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 149 1:10,000: SO 44 NE

Date Notified (Under 19149 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

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

Other Information:
New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Wellington Wood is a large block of ancient semi-natural woodland on part of the southern slopes and plateau of a hill to the north of Hereford. This woodland has mainly developed on strongly leached, acidic soils overlying cornstones with bands of 'Psammosteus' limestone which outcrops in various parts of the wood.

Wellington Wood is of great antiquity with records going back to the 12th century. It has been selected as an example of a sessile oak *Quercus petraea* wood with silver birch *Betula pendula* and hazel *Corylus avellana* associated with a number of other types of woodland. The wide variation in soil and topography is reflected in the woodland composition. The oak woodland occurs mainly on the plateau whilst on the lower slopes base-rich soils support ash *Fraxinus excelsior* with field maple *Acer campestre*. In other areas ash is associated with small leaved lime *Tilia cordata*. Alder *Alnus glutinosa* occurs along spring lines and in the wetter areas of the wood.

In addition to the dominant tree species a wide variety of other native trees and shrubs are also present. These include wild service-tree *Sorbus torminalis*, yew *Taxus baccata*, wild cherry *Prunus avium*, guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* and both native hawthorns *Crataegus monogyna* and *C. laevigata*. A particular feature of the wood is the presence of some very fine ancient pollarded large-leaved lime *Tilia platyphyllos*, one of our rarest native trees.

The varied woodland composition is reflected in the ground flora. More than 130 species of vascular plants have been recorded. These include herb Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, great wood-rush *Luzula sylvatica* and wood vetch *Vicia sylvatica* with spurge-laurel *Daphne laureola*, stinking iris *Iris foetidissima* and nettle-leaved bellflower *Campanula trachelium*. The rides support a number of woodland edge plants including dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*.

There are several small springs and streams in the wood, with characteristic wetland species such as marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*, opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* and brooklime *Veronica beccabunga*.