

COUNTY: SURREY SITE NAME: GONG HILL

DISTRICT: WAVERLEY

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

Local Planning Authority: WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: SU 948434                      Area: 6.59 (ha.) 16.28 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 186                      1:10,000: SU 84 SE/SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –                      Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988                      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

This is a new site.

Reasons for Notification:

This site supports one of the last native Wealden populations of the endangered and specially protected sand lizard *Lacerta agilis*. The lizards survive in a small area of dry heathland over the Lower Greensand Folkestone Beds and occur at a very high population density.

The heathland consists of a mosaic of uneven-aged ling *Calluna vulgaris*, interspersed with bell heather *Erica cinerea* and wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, with occasional specimens of dwarf gorse bushes *Ulex minor* and cross-leaved heath *E. tetralix*. Bell heather is particularly frequent on the mown heath at Bracara, where the parasitic common dodder *Cuscuta epithimum* also occurs. Bryophytes and lichens are prominent members of the heathland community. There are also scattered gorse *U. europaeus*, silver birch *Betula pendula* and a number of Scot's pine trees *Pinus sylvestris*.

The heathland blocks are interconnected by firebreaks which allow for movement of reptiles between the open areas, and also provide important egg-laying sites in the patches of bare sand. The south-facing aspect of the site is very favourable for reptiles generally, and four other species also occur at the site.