

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** WEST, ABBOT'S AND LOUND WOODS

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

Local Planning Authority: Peterborough City Council

National Grid Reference: TF 060012

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 141 **1:10,000:** TL 00 SE

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1987 **Date of Last Revision:**

Area: 51.1 ha 126.2 ac

Other information: This is an addition to the Cambridgeshire Schedule.

Description and Reasons for Notification

This site holds a range of lowland woodland types, many of which are scarce in Britain. These include a stand of plateau alderwood (a type known from no other ancient woodland in Cambridgeshire), stands of wet ash-wych elm and calcareous ash-wych elm woodland as well as areas of pendunculate oak and wet ash-maple. A small area of invasive elm woodland is also present.

The woodlands are situated in a small valley where a number of different geological deposits outcrop. This has given rise to a variety of differing soil types, and correspondingly, to the variety of woodland stand types.

Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and field maple *Acer campestre* are present in many parts of the wood, with scattered trees of pendunculate oak *Quercus robur*. Wych elm *Ulmus glabra* is locally common. Of particular note is the occurrence of alder *Alnus glutinosa* on a springline at the base of the limestone plateau.

Part of Lound Wood is markedly acidic, giving rise to a characteristic ground flora containing bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and creeping soft grass *Holcus mollis*, in contrast to other areas of the site where limestone reaches the soil surface. Some typical ancient woodland plants are recorded including yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* and toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*. Rides are present and these provide additional habitat diversity.

A narrow strip of land between the two woodland blocks is included. This area holds habitats of general wildlife value including a lake and a small marsh, holding plants such as early marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnata*.