

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 14 JULY 1986

COUNTY: PEAK DISTRICT, DERBYSHIRE SITE NAME: YARNCLIFF WOOD,
PADLEY

DISTRICT: WEST DERBYSHIRE SITE REF: 15 WLQ

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

Local Planning Authority: PEAK PARK JOINT PLANNING BOARD, West Derbyshire District Council

National Grid Reference: SK 255795 Area: 26.1 (ha.) 64.1 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 119 1:10,000: SK 27 NE

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

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

Other Information:

Site boundary alteration (extension & reduction). Formerly known as Padley Woods.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Yarncliff Wood lies astride the Burbage Brook immediately north of the village of Nether Padley. It is the best example of the remnant oak-birch woodland that once covered much of the edges of the gritstone uplands of the Peak District and which is now mostly confined to small areas on the flanks of steep sided valleys (cloughs).

The woodland is mainly sessile oak *Quercus petraea* and birch *Betula pubescens* and *Betula pendula* with alder *Alnus glutinosa* along the stream side. Scattered through the wood are holly *Ilex aquifolium* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*. The trees have very poor growth and are mainly rooted into thin acid soils in pockets in block scree. The average height of the trees is less than 10 metres, however the majority are over 100 and some may be as much as 300 years old.

There has been poor natural regeneration, particularly of oak, because of undergrazing by sheep. However, an enclosure established 30 years ago has resulted in abundant oak and birch regeneration and a luxuriant growth of bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*. In less shaded areas heather *Calluna vulgaris* has developed as a shrub layer.

The humidity within the clough is high and lichens are abundant. Although lacking the diversity of less polluted areas the site is of considerable regional importance. On the rocks 3 species of *Umbilicaria* occur which are now very rare in the Midlands. Bryophytes are also abundant and the site has been used for studies on their ecology.

The wood is of importance as a breeding site for pied flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*, wood warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* and hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*.

Several uncommon beetles have been found associated with fungi.