

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** LANGLEY WOOD

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

Local Planning Authorities: South Cambridgeshire District Council
Uttlesford District Council

National Grid Reference: TL 607424

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 154 **1:10,000:** TL 64 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1971 **Date of Last Revision:** 1979

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:**

Area: 31.13 ha 76.93 ac

Other information: A small fraction of this wood lies over the Essex county border.

Description and Reasons for Notification

Langley Wood is a woodland of ancient origin holding stands of the ash-maple woodland type together with areas of hornbeam. Such woodland types are restricted to lowland England and have suffered a rapid decline since the first half of this century. In a Cambridgeshire context, Langley Wood is notable for its size and relatively unmodified state and for the presence of hornbeam at the edge of its geographical range.

The woodland structure is essentially of coppiced ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, maple *Acer campestre* and hazel *Corylus avellana* together with oak *Quercus robur* and some ash standards. Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* is present as large coppice, becoming dominant in areas to the exclusion of hazel in particular.

The ground flora is of the dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* type, together with bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and species such as sanicle *Sanicula europaea* and wood avens *Geum urbanum*. The wood is also noted for the presence of the uncommon sweet woodruff *Galium odoratum*.

The woodland rides are of species-rich neutral grassland holding plants typical of such ancient habitats which include wood sedge *Carex sylvatica*, wild strawberry *Fragaria vesca* and red bartsia *Odontites verna* together with meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, self heal *Prunella vulgaris* and bugle *Ajuga reptans*.