

File ref:

County: Essex **Site Name: Quendon Wood**

District: Uttlesford

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

Local Planning Authority: Uttlesford District Council

National Grid Reference: TL 515298 **Area:** 32.1 (ha) 79.3 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 167 **1: 10 000:** TL 52 NW, TL 53 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1956 **Date of Last Revision:** -

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

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Quendon Wood is an ancient coppice-with-standards woodland supporting an unusually rich and varied flora associated with a range of soil types. The Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam woodland includes both the rare Birch-Hazel variant and the Ash-Maple variant, developed over Chalky Boulder Clay and glacial gravels.

The wood also includes wet Ash-Maple and Lowland Pedunculate Oak woodland types. The canopy is varied, some areas being dominated by almost pure Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and others by Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* as standard trees and high forest, with varying proportions of Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Aspen *Populus tremula*, Birch *Betula spp.* and Goat Willow *Salix caprea*. Hazel *Corylus avellana* and Field Maple *Acer campestre* are abundant, often as overgrown coppice. There is also a small area of planted conifers within the wood.

There is a gradient of variation in the ground flora reflecting variation in soil texture and base status. Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, Bramble *Rubus sp.*, Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* are locally dominant. Both Oxlip *Primula elatior*, a nationally uncommon plant at the western edge of its range, and Primrose *P. vulgaris*, together with their hybrids, are locally abundant. Other species of interest include Wild Daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, Herb-Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla vestita*, Green Hellebore *Helleborus viridis spp. occidentalis* and Violet Helleborine *Epipactis purpurata*.

The woodland also includes a number of rides over both the wet clay and the well-drained acidic soils, each with characteristic floras. Trailing Tormentil *Potentilla anglica*, Water Purslane cont...

Quendon Wood (cont...)

Lythrum portula, Heath Wood-rush *Luzula multiflora*, Trailing and Slender St. John's-wort *Hypericum humifusum* and *H. pulchrum* are typical of the acid soils, and are generally uncommon in the Boulder Clay region. The unimproved acidic and neutral grasslands of the rides provide valuable additional habitat for invertebrates.