Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside	e Act
1981	
Local Planning Authorities: Newbury District Council, Berkshire County Council	
National Grid Reference: SU375659	
Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 174 1:10,000: SU36 NE	
Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):1984Date of Last Revision:	

Area: 24.46 ha 60.44 ac

Description and Reasons for Notification

Old coppice-with-standards woodland, situated mainly on clayey Reading Beds soils, and supporting a rich flora.

The wood consists predominantly of hazel coppice under a canopy of oak standards. Depending on local variations in soil and drainage, some areas also contain overgrown coppiced ash and birch and, more locally, alder, maple, aspen, cherry, sallow and crab apple. Shrubs include alder buckthorn *Frangula alnus*, guelder rose *Viburnum opulus* and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.

The site is generally poorly drained and includes locally waterlogged areas, together with a stream and a small pond. These wet conditions undoubtedly add considerably to the general diversity and species richness of the flora which is one of the richest recorded in any Berkshire woodland.

The wide rides are an important feature of the site containing several locally scarce plants including pale sedge *Carex pallescens*, water avens *Geum rivale*, bitter vetch *Lathyrus montanus*, cow-wheat *Melampyrum pratense*, marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica* and greater butterfly orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*. The wetter rides also contain creeping Jenny *Lysimachia nummularia*, greater skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, brooklime *Veronica beccabunga* and water pepper *Polygonum hydropiper*.

Although mainly dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, together with bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* in drier areas and tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* in wetter places, the general ground flora includes a wide range of plants characteristic of old coppiced woodland including dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*, moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina*, bugle *Ajuga reptans*, wood sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, primrose *Primula vulgaris*, hairy woodrush *Luzula pilosa* and yellow pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, together with the ferns *Dryopteris dilatata*, *D. felix-mas*, *Athyrium filix-femina* and *Blechnum spicant*. Lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis* is locally dominant in permanently wet areas.