

COUNTY: SUFFOLK      SITE NAME: STAVERTON PARK AND THE THICKS, WANTISDEN

DISTRICT: SUFFOLK COASTAL

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

Local Planning Authority: SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TM 355503      Area: 80.8 (ha.) 199.66 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150      1:10,000: TM 35 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1954      Date of Last Revision: N/A

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

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Staverton Park is an ancient park with a well documented medieval history. It is composed of three main areas of woodland on an unpodsolized sandy soil.

The Park is an open canopy wood pasture, predominantly of over mature pollard Oak *Quercus robur* but Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Birch *Betula pubescens* and *B pendula* and Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* also occur. Some of these trees achieve great age. Below the canopy, there are dense stands of Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, patches of Bramble *Rubus spp.*, Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* and grassy glades *Holcus mollis* and *Dactylis glomerata*. There are also small areas of acid grassland with some heathland elements. An eight hectare deer enclosure has been fenced off in the northern part of the Park.

The Thicks is an area of about twenty hectares of dense, closed canopy Holly wood. Many of these hollies have attained great size and are reputed to be the largest in Britain. Nature oaks also occur, but many are suppressed by the shade of the holly. There is little ground vegetation.

Little Staverton is a mall outlying oak-birch wood within the original boundary of the medieval park and has similarities with the Park.

This site has a rich corticolous and lignicolous lichen flora and a large invertebrate fauna including several rare species only associated with ancient parkland trees. Additionally, the site is of ornithological interest.