

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE:** PAPWORTH 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

**National Grid Reference:** TL 291630

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 153                      **1:10,000:** TL 26 SE

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

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

**Area:** 8.9 ha 22.0 ac

**Other information:** Papworth Wood is a nature reserve of the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Naturalists' Trust. Two small areas of the SSSI as notified in 1971 have been deleted at revision.

### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

Papworth Wood is known to be one of the oldest secondary woods in Cambridgeshire. Although originally a coppice-with-standards woodland of ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, field maple *Acer campestre* and hazel *Corylus avellana* the site is now dominated by invasive small-leaved elm *Ulmus minor* and represents a woodland type scarce in the British Isles.

The majority of the wood is dominated by clones of small-leaved elm with a few contemporary stands of pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*, field maple and ash. A discontinuous shrub layer is present comprising suckering elm, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and elder *Sambucus nigra* with other shrub species scattered throughout.

The ground flora varies within the wood. Parts are dominated by bramble *Rubus* agg., rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*, stinging nettle *Urtica dioica* and ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*. Many other species are present including bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and primrose *Primula vulgaris*.

Paths, clearings and rides in the wood and a boundary stream provide additional habitats of general wildlife value.

The site has been the subject of much research by woodland ecologists and soil scientists and, as a very old secondary woodland, Papworth Wood is of particular importance for the study of factors determining plant colonisation in woodlands.