File Ref : EA/N/17/14 WDX

County: Norfolk **Site name:** **Bryant's Heath, Felmingham**

District: North Norfolk

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

Local Planning Authority: North Norfolk District Council

National grid reference: TG 259294 **Area:** 17.56[ha] 43.38 [ac]

Ordnance Survey sheet 1:50,000: 133 1:10,000: TG 22 NE

Date notified (Under 1949 Act): 1968 **Date of last revision:** -

Date notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985 **Date of last revision:** -

Other information:

Much of the site is registered common land.

Reasons for notification:

Bryant's Heath is an area of dry acidic heathland on glacial sands with sloping ground to the south and west. This site is unusual in that it encompasses within a relatively small area a mix of dry heath, wet heath and fen communities. Rich plant communities have developed in association with the flushed areas that occur where nutrient-poor sands meet underlying calcareous clays. These areas include several plants that are now uncommon in East Anglia due to the drainage of many similar sites.

Dry heathland covers much of the site and includes areas dominated by Bracken [*Pteridium aquilinum*] and Gorse [*Ulex europaeus*] and small patches of grass heath with Common Bent-grass [*Agrostis capillaris*], Sheep's Sorrel [*Rumex acetosella*], Wood Sage [*Teucrium scorodonia*] and Tormentil [*Potentilla erecta*]. Atlantic coastal heath, which occurs as isolated fragments in East Anglia, is also present. Heather [*Calluna vulgaris*] is dominant with frequent Bell Heather [*Erica cinerea*] and Western Gorse [*Ulex gallii*].

There is a gradation from dry to wet heathland at the top of the sloping ground. Cross-leaved heath [*Erica tetralix*] and Purple Moor-grass [*Molinia caerulea*] are dominant with other characteristic species such as Common Cotton-grass [*Eriophorum angustifolium*], Heath Rush [*Juncus squarrosus*]. Many-stemmed Spike-rush [*Eleocharis multicaulis*] and Pill-headed Sedge [*Carex pilulifera*]. The acidic flushes are marked by an abundance of bog mosses [*Sphagnum spp.*] with Round-leaved Sundew [*Drosera rotundifolia*], Marsh Violet [*Viola palustris*], Bogbean [*Menyanthes trifoliata*] and Marsh Pennywort [*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*]. Bog Pondweed [*Potamogeton polygonifolius*] is locally abundant along the seepage lines.

Calcareous springs emerge lower down the slope and small areas of fen have developed in the valley-bottom. Reed [*Phragmites australis*], Blunt-flowered Rush [*Juncus subnodulosus*] and Meadowsweet [*Filipendula ulmaria*] are dominant and other notable species include Grass of Parnassus [*Parnassia palustris*], Lesser Spearwort [*Ranunculus flammula*], Ragged Robin [*Lychnis flos-cuculi*] and Common Spotted Orchid [*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*].

Much of the valley-bottom is reverting from fen to carr woodland dominated by Alder [*Alnus glutinosa*] and Sallow [*Salix cinerea*] with a ground flora that includes Yellow Flag [*Iris pseudacorus*], Marsh Marigold [*Caltha palustris*], Water Mint [*Mentha aquatica*] and Remote Sedge [*Carex remota*].

A number of uncommon mosses and lichens have been recorded from the wetter parts of the site.