

COUNTY: EAST SUSSEX SITE NAME: LEASAM HERONRY WOOD

DISTRICT: ROTHER

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

Local Planning Authority: ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TQ 907216 Area: 2.2 (ha.) 5.2 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 189 1:10,000: TQ 92 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1966 Date of Last Revision: 1979

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

A small, not long established woodland which contains a nationally important heronry. Birds first began to establish themselves here in 1935 and have been breeding since 1940, showing a distinct preference for ash trees to nest in. The numbers of herons regularly reach fifty pairs which represents 1% of the total British breeding population.

Although not ancient the woodland contains an interesting diversity of plants. Oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, and hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* form the main tree canopy with holly *Ilex aquifolium* forming the shrub layer beneath. The ground flora is rather poor and dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and nettles *Urtica dioica* although the locally rare greater chickweed *Stellaria neglecta* has been recorded from here.