

Date notified: 2nd January 1987

COUNTY: SUFFOLK            SITE NAME: FRITHY AND CHADACRE WOODS

DISTRICT: BABERGH

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

Local Planning Authority: BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TL 860535            Area: 29.09 (ha.) 71.90 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 155            1:10,000: TL 85 SW & SE

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1987            Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

This site covers the northern part of the area formerly included within the Kentwell and Chadacre Woods SSSI. Within this area the boundary has been modified to exclude several areas of woodland that are not of SSSI standard.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The site contains three areas of ancient, semi-natural woodland which are all good examples of this type of habitat.

All three woods are of the wet Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*/Maple *Acer campestre* type, with Hazel *Corylus avellana* also present in some quantity. There are Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* standard trees and other tree and shrub species include Aspen *Populus tremula*, Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*, Midland Hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*, Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, Crab Apple *Malus sylvestris*, Holly *Ilex aquifolia*, Spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*. The woods contain Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra*, and several patches of Lineage and invasive Elm *Ulmus spp.*, but nearly all the Elm has succumbed to disease. The structure of these woods has been greatly influenced by management on the coppice with standards system, a system which has recently been revived in these woods.

The three woods have a diverse woodland floor vegetation, which is dominated by either Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis* or Brambles *Rubus spp.* and which contains a number of plants characteristic of woodlands of this type; Herb Paris *Paris quadrifolia* is widespread in Ashen's Wood, Wood Spurge *Euphorbia amygdaloides*, Woodruff *Galium odoratum*, Sanicle *Sanicula europaea* and Gladdon, Stinking Iris *Iris foetidissima* are found in Frithy Wood. The site lies within the distribution of Oxlip *Primula elatior* and all three woods contain this species but lack Primrose *Primula vulgaris*. There are many other woodland floor plants including Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula*, Twayblade *Listera ovata*, Gromwell *Lithospermum officinale* and Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*.

There are several well-vegetated rides in this group of woods which support a mixture of woodland and meadow plant species and which attract considerable numbers of common butterflies. Amongst the plants found are Adders' tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, Common St John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum*, Square-stemmed St John's Wort *Hypericum tetrapterum*, Common Centaury *Centaureum erythraea*, Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre*, Wood Sedge *Carex sylvatica* and Pendulous Sedge *Carex pendula*. Frithy Wood also contains an area of pasture which projects into the wood. A number of standard trees were retained at the time that this area was created.

The birdlife of Frithy Wood has been recorded in some detail. Nightingales, Green, Greater Spotted and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers are amongst the species that have bred regularly.

There is documentary evidence for the existence of Frithy Wood back to 1545 and its Saxon name would imply that the wood is much older than that. All three woods contain broad boundary banks and ditches typical of coppice woods dating from the medieval period or before.

The two Chadacre woods lie within the grounds of the Chadacre Agricultural Institute and are used regularly for demonstration and educational purposes.