

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** CHERRY HINTON PIT

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

**Local Planning Authorities:** Cambridge City Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 483557

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 154                      **1:10,000:** TL 45 NE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1951                      **Date of Last Revision:** 1971

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1986                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 12.83 ha 31.70 ac

**Other information:** The site boundary was revised in 1986. Part of the area is a nature reserve of the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Naturalists' Trust.

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

This area is primarily notified for the populations of four nationally uncommon plant species which occur on the site. In addition, areas of herb-rich chalk grassland are present and these represent a habitat type which has almost disappeared from the eastern counties of England.

Of the four uncommon plants present, three are listed in the British Red Data Book<sup>1</sup>. These are great pignut *Bunium bulbocastanum*, moon carrot *Seseli libanotis* and grape hyacinth *Muscari neglectum*. The other rare plant recorded is perennial flax *Linum perenne* ssp. *anglicum*. Many specimens of these plants grow along the road verges as well as within the quarry areas.

The chalk grassland is dominated by the grass upright brome *Bromus erectus* and holds a number of the nationally rare plants as well as typical chalkland species such as wild thyme *Thymus praecox*, yellow-wort *Blackstonia perfoliata* and kidney vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*.

Hedgerows, scrub and woodland provide additional habitats of general wildlife value.

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<sup>1</sup> Perring, F.H & Farrell, L. 1983. *British Red Data Books: 1 Vascular Plants* (2nd Edition). Lincoln, Royal Society for Nature Conservation.