

Isle of Wight Ancient Woodland Survey
Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse, Guildfordheath Copse

REPORT AUTHOR Dr Vicky Basford **DATE OF REPORT** 10th March 2014

SITE DETAILS

Walkershill Copse, Wilderness Copse and the main parts of Ramcroft Copse and Blackbridge Copse comprise a single 'site' in the Provisional Inventory of Ancient Woodland and therefore the area needs to be considered as a whole.

Guildfordheath Copse is not included in the Provisional Inventory of Ancient Woodland but much of it is shown as woodland on maps from the late eighteenth century onwards. It is therefore necessary to consider whether it should be added to the Inventory.

All the woods discussed in this report are identified in, Figure 1. Historically almost the entire area of woodland discussed in this report fell within the ecclesiastical parish of Arreton as shown on the 1:10,560 1st edition Ordnance Survey of 1863 (Figure 2). Part of Wilderness Copse to the east of the Chillingwood Brook fell within Newchurch Parish. However, this report deals with the whole area of Wilderness Copse since nearly all of it falls within the Ancient Woodland Inventory 'site' discussed below.

Historically, Chillingwood Copse and Little Chillingwood Copse fell within the ecclesiastical parish of Newchurch and are not discussed in this report.

LOCATION

All the woods fall within National Grid squares SZ5488, SZ5489, SZ 5588 and SZ 5589.

AREAS CURRENTLY DEFINED AS ANCIENT WOODLAND

Three areas are identified in Figure 3 and have been labelled 'A', 'B' and 'C'. The size of these areas is given on the MAgiC website.

Area A

This area comprises 29.85 hectares of Ancient Replanted Woodland. It includes Walkershill Copse, Wilderness Copse, most of Ramcroft Copse and most of Blackbridge Copse.

Area B

This area comprises 0.8 hectares of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland. It lies on the edge of Blackbridge Copse to the south-west of Deadman's Brook.

Area C

This area comprises 1.45 hectares of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland. It lies at the southern end of Ramcroft Copse.

STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

AONB

HABITAT

Most of the area containing Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse and Walkershill Copse is classified as Deciduous Woodland BAP although parts of Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse have been excluded (see MAgiC website).

LAND OWNERSHIP

Most of the woodland discussed in this report is Forestry Commission land. However, the Forestry Commission land excludes the eastern edge of Walkershill Copse, a small area on the edge of Blackbridge Copse to the east of Chillingwood Brook, the southern part of Wilderness Copse and a small area on the eastern edge of Wilderness Copse. These areas can be identified on the MAgiC website and also on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer Map (OL29) where they are not marked as 'Access Land'.

SITUATION IN LANDSCAPE AND WOODLAND SHAPE

Historically, Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse lay close to the eastern boundary of Arreton Parish which in this area followed the course of Chillingwood Brook. Deadman's Brook runs along the southern edge of Guildfordheath Copse and through Blackbridge Copse before flowing into Chillingwood Brook (see Figures 1 and 2). All the woods discussed in this report are interconnected and of irregular shape.

TENURIAL HISTORY

The area now containing Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse apparently formed part of Combley Grange in the medieval period. Combley Grange belonged to Quarr Abbey and was one of the outlying farms associated with the abbey. The reconstructed map of Combley Grange in *The Charters of Quarr Abbey* (Hockey 1991, Map 2) suggests that the eastern boundary of the grange excluded the area that later became Great Duxmore Farm as well as the area now containing Blackbridge Copse, Ramcroft Copse and Wilderness Copse (see Figure 4). However, there is evidence that Great Duxmore Farm may have formed part of Combley Grange in the medieval period. In about 1275 John de Merrield renounced to Quarr all rights in the dyke between the grange of Quarr and his land of Prykely (Hockey 1991, Charter 121). Webster (1975-95) has suggested that the eastern part of Great Duxmore, which is actually in Newchurch Parish, was formerly the site of Prickle Hedge. If this assumption is correct then the eastern boundary of Combley Grange would have lain along the Arreton/Newchurch parish boundary (see Figure 2) and would have included part of the later holding of Great Duxmore. In 1532 the abbot of Quarr leased to Robert Hawkyslond *alias* Aclond 'two messuages in the parish of Arreton with the pasture called Withyggen meads' (Hockey 1991, Charter 106). This is clearly the property of 'Great Duxmoor' as recorded in the 1559 Royal Survey where it is stated that 'Thomas Aclond holds by indenture dated 1 May 1537 from Thomas Wriottesley, late lord of the manor, two messuages in the parish of Arreton and the pasture called Wythygen medes in the same parish' (Webster 1975-95). The manor of Combley had been granted to Thomas Wriottesley in 1537, having formerly been Combley Grange until the dissolution of Quarr Abbey in 1536 (Hockey 1970, 242). Great Duxmore was thus part of the part of the Combley estate in 1559 but was leased as a separate farm from Combley which was occupied by William Colnet in 1559.

After the dissolution of Quarr Abbey in 1536 the Combley estate was held by only three families until the late twentieth century. Thomas Wriottesley was granted Combley by the Crown in 1537 but held it for just over a year until before selling the manor to John Mill (Hockey 1970, 244-245). Sir Thomas Fleming acquired Combley Manor and Farm with other former possessions of Quarr Abbey on 29 May 1609 (Page 1912, 142-143; 151). In 1613 Sir Thomas Fleming died in possession of 'the manors of Combley, Heasley, Quarr, Newnham and Binstead, and a tenement in Duxmoor in the parish of Arreton' (Webster 1975-95). Much of the southern part of the Fleming estate, depicted on the 1771 estate map and later known as the Downend Estate, remained intact until the 20th century. The estate was offered for sale at auction on 8 June 1956 but failed to reach the reserve price. The sale prospectus stated that certain portions of the estate were let out including 'five farms from 158 to 378 acres, about 354 acres of woodland and three cottages let to the Forestry Commission' (Willis Fleming Historical Trust 2007a). Most of the woodland discussed in this report was almost certainly

amongst that let out to the Forestry Commission in 1956 but it is not known when the Commission first took on the management of this woodland.

LAND USE HISTORY

There is no clear evidence for the existence of the individual woods of Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath before 1771 when they were accurately depicted for the first time on the Fleming Estate Map (Figure 5). The first reference to woodland in the Combley area occurs in 1537 when a survey of Combley was made on behalf of the crown after the dissolution of Quarr Abbey. The survey stated that the 'farm of the manor' comprised 471 acres of arable and pasture, 10 acres of meadow and 50 acres of woodland (Webster 1975-95). This acreage does not seem to have included the tenements at Guildford and Blackbridge and other properties separately listed in the survey but may have included Great Duxmore Farm. The 50 acres of woodland specifically mentioned in the survey is a surprisingly small amount when compared with the acreage of the woods listed in the Fleming estate survey of 1771 (IWCRO/AC 2013/099). This survey recorded 166 acres at Combley Great Wood (in three parcels), 32 acres at Hoglease Copse (probably an underestimate), 43 acres at Ramcroft Copse and Blackbridge Copse, 16 acres at Walkershill Copse, 7 acres in Wilderness Copse and 11 acres in different parts of Guildfordheath Copse. Assuming that Combley Manor included the area where the woods listed in the 1771 survey were located, there are various explanations which may account for the discrepancy between the acreage of woodland recorded in 1537 and that recorded in 1771.¹ It is possible that the Crown reserved some of the woodland within Combley Manor for its own use after the dissolution of Quarr Abbey and thus did not include it in the survey. On the 1771 map of the Fleming estate (Figure 5) the woods were listed separately from the various farms on the estate because they were retained in hand for the use of the landowner. A similar arrangement may have existed in 1537 with not all the woodland being accounted for because some of it was retained in hand for the use of the Crown. However, in describing Wriosthesley's sale of Combley to John Mill in 1538, Hockey (1970, 244-245) states specifically that he sold 'all the manor, with the various tithes and the woods'. If the Crown did retain some woodland on the Combley estate after the grant to Wriosthesley, this must have been acquired by the Mill family or the Fleming family at a later date since it fell within the Fleming estate in 1771. Another possible explanation for the relatively small area of woodland recorded in 1537 may simply be that the amount of woodland was underestimated. Alternatively, there could actually have been much less woodland in the early sixteenth century than in the late seventeenth century. The Royal Survey of the Isle of Wight (1559) refers to 'the ferme or grange of Combley of the lands of George Mille, gent., in occupation of William Colnet, gent., holden of the Quene in capite upon which by sundrey coppices newly with certain trees imparketed to the value of 8 acres by estimation' (Webster 1975-1995). Thus, some new coppice was clearly being created in the sixteenth century and perhaps at a later date. The Flemings may have had good reason to extend the woodland at Combley since woodland was considered to be a valuable resource by Isle of Wight landowners. Jones (2003, 80) has pointed out that in 1630 the woodlands within Swainston Manor constituted the most 'commercially valuable part of the estate'. At a later date, the Oglander family at Nunwell made large profits by selling the timber in Whitefield Wood to the Royal Navy at Portsmouth. Nonetheless, the 50 acres of woodland recorded within Combley Manor in 1537 may well be an underestimate of what actually existed, particularly as landscape evidence in the Combley area hints at an ancient origin for much of the present-day woodland. Indeed, the shapes of the woods in this area suggest that they were *assarted* in the medieval period i.e. eaten into by the creation of fields within formerly wooded areas. A possible example of this process is provided by the closes of 'Little Ramcroft' and 'Great

¹ Even if the area now containing Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse, Guildfordheath Copse was not included in the 1537 survey, the area of Combley Great Wood alone might be expected to account for at least 150 acres of woodland.

Ramcroft' (marked as plots 35 and 36 on the 1771 Fleming Estate Map) which give the impression of having been assarted from Ramcroft Copse.

Place-name evidence does not provide strong support for the antiquity of the woodlands discussed above. A lease of Combley Grange dating from 1534/5 records 'two fields called Walterhylls' (Hockey 1991, Charter 123) and one of these fields probably equates with the field called 'Walkers Hill' which lies to the south of Walkershill Copse and is named on the 1771 Fleming estate map (see Figure 6). Walkers Hill Copse itself is shown but not named on the 1771 map. It may possibly have originated as the second of the two fields recorded in 1534/5, becoming wooded at a later date. Ramcroft Copse and Wilderness Copse are first named on the 1771 Fleming estate map. The term 'croft' was used in the medieval period for an enclosed meadow or piece of arable land, usually adjacent to a house (Richardson 1986, 12). Chillingwood Farm lies close to the area of Ramcroft Copse but is in Newchurch Parish whilst Great Duxmore Farm lies about 500 metres to the south of Ramcroft Copse and was first recorded in the sixteenth century. However, the name of Ramcroft Copse does not necessarily mean that it comprises secondary woodland within a medieval field since the woodland itself could have been named from an adjacent croft. Blackbridge Copse is not recorded by name on the 1771 map but is shown as part of Ramcroft Copse. Likewise, Guildfordheath Copse is not recorded by that name on the 1771 map although two areas of woodland corresponding to parts of the present copse are shown. It was not until the 1st edition 1:2500 and 1:10560 Ordnance Survey maps of 1863 (Figure 2) that the copses of Blackbridge, Guildfordheath and Walkershill were shown under their present names. The name of 'Guildford Heath Copse' suggests it could possibly be secondary woodland established on former heathland although it could equally have been named after adjacent heathland. The 1771 Fleming Estate Map shows a field named 'Upper Heath' (Plot 26) occupying land that is now within the copse and another field called 'Lower Heath' on the other side of Guildford Lane (see Figure 6).

None of the place-names described above were recorded in the medieval period. The relatively late date of these names and the names themselves may hint that the woodland discussed in this report is not of ancient origin

MAP EVIDENCE

'Combley Wood' is shown on John Andrews' *Topographical Map of the Isle of Wight* at 2 inches to 1 mile scale (1769) and seems to include the woods now called 'Combley Great Wood', 'Hoglease Copse', 'Guildfordheath Copse', 'Walkershill Copse', 'Blackbridge Copse' and 'Ramcroft Copse'. However, these woods are not depicted accurately. In contrast, all the woods mentioned above are depicted with reasonable accuracy on the *General Plan and Survey of Several Farms called Guildford, Cumbley, Duxmoor and Heasley, in the Isle of Wight and County of Hants, Belonging to John Flemming Esq* prepared by George Salmon in 1771 (Figure 5). On this later map, the woods can be recognised as those that exist in the same locations today.

The printed legend around the outside of the 1771 Fleming Estate Map lists the woods associated with the farms of Guildford, Cumbley, Duxmoor and Heasley and identifies these woods by letters of the alphabet.² The details for Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse are shown below

² The extract from the 1771 Survey Plan reproduced as Figure 5 does not include the legend around the outside of the plan.

1771 Map: Alphabetic Code/Number	1771 Map: Name	Area listed on 1771 Map	Name & Location on modern OS map	Notes
A	'North of No. 28'	16a 1r 37p	'Walkershill Copse'	Plot No. 28 is a clearing named 'Walkers Hill' surrounded by woodland
D	'West of A'	4a 0r 33p	'Guildfordheath Copse' (east part)	West side abuts clearing labelled Plot 26: 'Upper Heath'
U	Harts Rew	7a 0r 08p	'Guildfordheath Copse' (west part)	West side abuts clearing labelled Plot 26: 'Upper Heath'
E	'Ramcroft Coppice'	43a 3r 29p	'Ramcroft Copse' and 'Blackbridge Copse'	
F	Wilderness	7a 2r 08p	'Wilderness Copse'	
29 & 31	Spinney north & west of Lower Ramcroft	5a 3r 04p	South part of Blackbridge Copse	These spinneys are listed among the lands of Duxmoor Farm

Thus, all the woods shown and named on the modern Ordnance survey map (Figure 1) are also shown on the 1771 map (Figure 5) although the actual boundaries are not identical on the two maps. It should be noted that although Guildfordheath Copse is not included in the Provisional Inventory of Ancient Woodland (Figure 3) it is shown on the 1771 map as two discrete pieces of woodland (labelled 'D' and 'U'), separated by a clearing or close named as 'Upper Heath'. Wood and field names are shown on a modern transcription of the 1771 map (Figure 6). The piece of woodland labelled 'U' was named as 'Harts Rew' on the 1771 map. This name is also recorded in 1793 when William Taylor took a new lease for seven years of Combley Farm (368a. 1r. 39p.), with the coppice grounds called Combley Mead Row and Harts Row, from John Fleming, Esq (IWCRO /FLM/61). It would appear from the 1771 map that the southern boundary of Blackbridge Copse lay to the north of Deadman's Brook but that a spinney, marked as Plot 29, had been planted to the south of this boundary along the north side of 'Lower Ramcroft'. Another spinney is shown along the west side of Lower Ramcroft (see Figures 5 and 6).

The Ordnance Survey drawing of 1793-4 does not identify the woods of Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse by name but labels all the woods in the general area as 'Combley Woods' (Figure 7). The shapes and boundaries of the woods shown on the 1793-4 drawing are similar to those shown on the 1771 Fleming estate map but there are subtle differences. The boundary between Wilderness Copse and Great Ramcroft Rew (see Figure 6) has a somewhat different profile, suggesting a slight expansion of the woodland in this area. There also appears to have been a slight expansion of the woodland in the north-east corner of Blackbridge Copse where Deadman's Brook and Chilingwood Brook merge. The spinney marked as 'Plot 29' on the 1771 map appears to have become merged with Blackbridge Copse. However, in general the 1793-4 drawing shows little change from the 1771 map. The clearing of 'Walkers Hill' between Ramcroft Copse and Walkershill Copse is shown much as it was depicted on the 1771 map, as is the clearing of 'Upper Heath' which separated the two parts of Guildfordheath Copse. The clearing of 'Walkers Hill' is shaded green, indicating that it was pasture. Within the eastern part of Guildfordheath Copse, the density of tree cover shown on the 1793-4 drawing appears to be less

than in the other wooded areas, possibly suggesting that this particular area of woodland may have been grazed open woodland that had developed from heath.

Both the 1771 Fleming Estate map and the 1793-4 Ordnance Survey drawing show a ribbon of woodland extending from the southern end of Guildfordheath Copse as far as Combley Farm on the south-east side of a lane or track. This ribbon of woodland is labelled 'T' on the Fleming Estate map and named as 'The Lane Rew' (see Figures 6 and 7).³ However, by the time of the Whitcher Plan of Combley Farm, dated 1817, this woodland ribbon had become grassland (see Figure 8).

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps at 1:2500 scale and 1:10560 scale produced in 1863 name 'Ramcroft Copse', 'Blackbridge Copse', 'Wilderness Copse', 'Walkershill Copse' and 'Guildfordheath Copse' (see Figure 2). By 1863 some areas of woodland had been removed in and around Ramcroft Copse, no doubt in the interest of greater farming efficiency. One such area was a projecting part of Ramcroft Copse extending southward from the south-west corner of the copse that had been shown on the 1771 and 1793-4 maps but was absent from the 1863 map. Also absent from the 1863 map was a small piece of woodland shown on the 1771 and 1793-4 maps between the fields of 'Lower Ramcroft' and 'Little Ramcroft' and which is marked as 'Spinney' on Figure 6. Two ribbons of woodland had been marked on the maps of 1771 and 1793-4 to the west and south of Ramcroft Copse (Figures 5, 6 and 7). The first of these ribbons of woodland lay on the west side of 'Little Ramcroft' (Plot 35 on the 1771 map). The second 'ribbon', labelled 'G' and named as 'Great Ramcroft Rew' on the 1771 map, protruded from the west side of Wilderness Copse along the south sides of 'Little Ramcroft' and 'Great Ramcroft' (Plots 35 and 36 on the 1771 map). Both these woodland 'ribbons' had been removed by 1863. The 1771 and 1793-4 maps had also shown a strip of woodland on the east side of 'Walkers Hill' field, connecting Blackbridge Copse with Walkers Hill Copse but this strip of woodland had been removed by 1863. However, there had also been a gain in the amount of woodland within Guildfordheath Copse as part of the field shown as 'Upper Heath' on the 1771 map had become wooded. 'Guildford Cottage' is shown for the first time on the 1863 OS map within 'Upper Heath'. The spinney shown on the 1771 map at the southern edge of Blackbridge Copse (Plot 29) appears to have merged with the main part of Blackbridge Copse. It also looks as if the channel followed by Deadman's Brook along the southern edge of Blackbridge Copse had been altered between 1771 and 1863.

A network of sinuous paths is shown on the 1863 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 and 1:10560 maps within the various copses (see Figure 2). The main path within Ramcroft Copse survived after this wood passed into Forestry Commission ownership in the twentieth century and is shown on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of c.1970. However, other paths within Ramcroft Copse that were shown on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1863 had disappeared by c.1970 and had been replaced by three straight parallel paths running in a north-westerly direction from the original path to the western edge of the copse. The Ordnance Survey map of c.1970 shows an expansion of woodland beyond the eastern boundary of Wilderness Copse and Ramcroft Copse as marked on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey of 1910. A boundary between the northern and southern parts of Wilderness Copse is not shown on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey of 1863 but appears on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey of 1898. It is also marked on the Ordnance Survey of c.1970 and on the modern digital OS map (Figure 1). During the twentieth century the remains of the 'Upper Heath' clearing within Guildfordheath Copse gradually disappeared and the modern digital OS map shows only a garden enclosure around Guildford Cottage with all the surrounding area being wooded (see Figure 1). The modern OS map also shows a straightening of the track between Guildfordheath Copse and Walkershill Copse and the confinement of this track between defined boundaries.

³ NB 'The Lane Rew' is incorrectly transcribed as 'The Large Rew' in Figure 6.

HER DATA (Figure 1)

No archaeological sites, monuments or finds are recorded within Ramcroft Copse, Wilderness Copse, Blackbridge Copse, Walkershill Copse, Guildfordheath Copse.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISION OF ANCIENT WOODLAND INVENTORY based on an analysis of documentary and cartographic evidence (see Figure 9)

The documentary, place-name, landscape and cartographic evidence discussed above has demonstrated that there must be some doubt about whether all or most of the present woodland in the Combley area existed by 1600. However, the earliest clear evidence is provided by the Fleming estate map of 1771 and this has been used as the basis for making recommendations for the revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory. The recommended areas have been determined by tracing the outlines of the woods shown on the 1771 map onto a modern map base and then removing areas of woodland shown on the 1771 map but subsequently lost. This trace has been incorporated into a digital map produced by the Isle of Wight Council (Figure 9). Possible inaccuracies in the 1771 map and changes to boundaries in the modern landscape mean that total accuracy cannot be achieved but discrepancies between the actual areas of woodland that existed in 1771 and the areas mapped in Figure 9 will be very minor. Where the 1771 map was difficult to interpret, the Ordnance Survey drawing of 1793-4 has also been used to determine historic woodland boundaries (see Figure 7).

Ramcroft Copse, Blacklands Copse and Wilderness Copse

Ramcroft Copse and Wilderness Copse are named on the 1771 Fleming estate map (Figures 5 and 6). Blackbridge Copse is shown as part of Ramcroft Copse on the 1771 map but is named on the 1st edition 1:2500 and 1:10560 maps of 1863, as are Ramcroft Copse and Wilderness Copse (see Figure 2). However, nearly the whole area of the three copses was mapped as a single site of Ancient Replanted Woodland in the Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory whilst two small areas on the edges of this site were identified as Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland (see Figure 3). Nearly the whole area of Ramcroft Copse, Blacklands Copse and Wilderness Copse has been treated as a single site of Replanted Ancient Woodland in Figure 9 although a small area of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland has also been identified.

By plotting the outline of the 1771 map onto a modern map base it is apparent that the modern area of woodland is slightly larger than that existing in 1771. This is particularly noticeable along the southern edge of Ramcroft Copse and the western edge of Wilderness Copse where woodland has encroached into the field named 'Great Ramcroft' since 1771 (compare Figures 1, 5, 6 and 9). At the north-east corner of Blacklands Copse the 1771 woodland area did not extent quite as far as the junction between Deadman's Brook and Chillingwood Brook and this is reflected in Figure 9. However, the most significant proposed change to the Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory is the suggested exclusion of a small strip of woodland along the southern edge of Blackbridge Copse (labelled as 'Area B' in Figure 3) which is included at present as an area of 'Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland'. This strip of woodland is marked as 'Plot 29' on the 1771 map but is named as a 'spinney' and has a different appearance from the main area of Blackbridge Copse, suggesting that it was a recently planted strip of ground. **The suggestion that 'Area B' is removed from the Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory is based purely on an interpretation of the 1771 map evidence. The existence of a good suite of ancient woodland indicator plants within this area may be a reason to leave it within the revised Ancient Woodland Inventory area.**

Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse

The area of Walkershill Copse recommended for inclusion in the Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory follows the eastern side of the track shown on the 1771 map (Figure 5). This appears to be represented by a solid boundary on the 1793-4 Ordnance Survey drawing (Figure 7) which is replicated on the 1863 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 2) and is marked as the line of a drain on Figure 1. The boundary lies a short distance to the south-east of the modern bridleway. A space between the bridleway and the historic woodland boundary appears to have become wooded after 1771 and

this area has been included in the Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory but is now recommended for exclusion.

Guildfordheath Copse is not included in the Provisional Inventory of Ancient Woodland (see Figure 3). It has been suggested in the section on land use history that Guildfordheath Copse may have been secondary woodland established on former heathland as its name implies. **However, since the age of Guildfordheath Copse cannot be clearly established and it is shown on the 1771 map, this site is recommended for inclusion in the Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory.**

The 1771 map (Figure 5) shows a field named 'Upper Heath' (Plot 26) occupying land that is within the present-day area of the copse but this field separates two blocks of woodland marked 'D' and 'U' on the map. Area 'U' is named as 'Harts Rew' in the key around the edge of the map. These two blocks of woodland have been delineated in Figure 9 but the area of present-day woodland shown as a clearing on the 1771 map and on the 1793-4 Ordnance Survey drawing has been excluded. The private track running between Walkershill Copse and Guildfordheath Copse has also been excluded from the area mapped in Figure 9 since this track is shown on the 1771 map and appears to have separated the two pieces of woodland although this distinction is not clear on the 1793-4 Ordnance Survey drawing (Figure 7). It can be further observed that the 1793-4 Ordnance Survey drawing makes a distinction between the vegetation in the western and eastern sections of Guildfordheath Copse on either side of the clearing named as Upper Heath on the 1771 map (see Figure 6). The vegetation in the western section of the Copse is similar to that shown for surrounding woodland but a sparser scattering of trees is indicated in the eastern section, possibly suggestive of grazed open woodland rather than heavily managed coppice.

REFERENCES

Hockey, S F 1970 *Quarr Abbey and its Lands*. Leicester University Press

Hockey, S F 1991 *The Charters of Quarr Abbey*. Newport. Isle of Wight County Record Office

Page, W ed 1912 *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*. Volume 5. London. Constable

Richardson, J 1986 *Local Historian's Encyclopaedia*. New Barnet.
Historical Publications Ltd. 2nd edition

Webster, C 1975-1995 *The Royal Surveys of the Isle of Wight 1559/1560*.
Typescript of draft text held at Isle of Wight Record Office.

Willis Fleming Historical Trust 2007a *Manor of Combley*.
Webpage available at: http://www.willisfleming.org.uk/estates/hants_and_iow/Combley
[Accessed 9 March 2014]

Willis Fleming Historical Trust 2007b *Fleming Estate Timber Plantations*. Webpage available at:
http://www.willisfleming.org.uk/estates/hants_and_iow/Category:Fleming_Estate_timber_plantations
[Accessed 9 March 2014]

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Harry Willis-Fleming for permission to reproduce Figure 8, to Rebecca Loader of the Isle of Wight Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Service for supplying HER data and to Clifford Webster (formerly Isle of Wight County Archivist) for information on the tenorial history of the Combley area.

[illegible]

Figure 2. 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey: surveyed 1863, engraved 1865 & published 1866
 Scanned from a copy in the possession of Vicky Basford (not to scale)

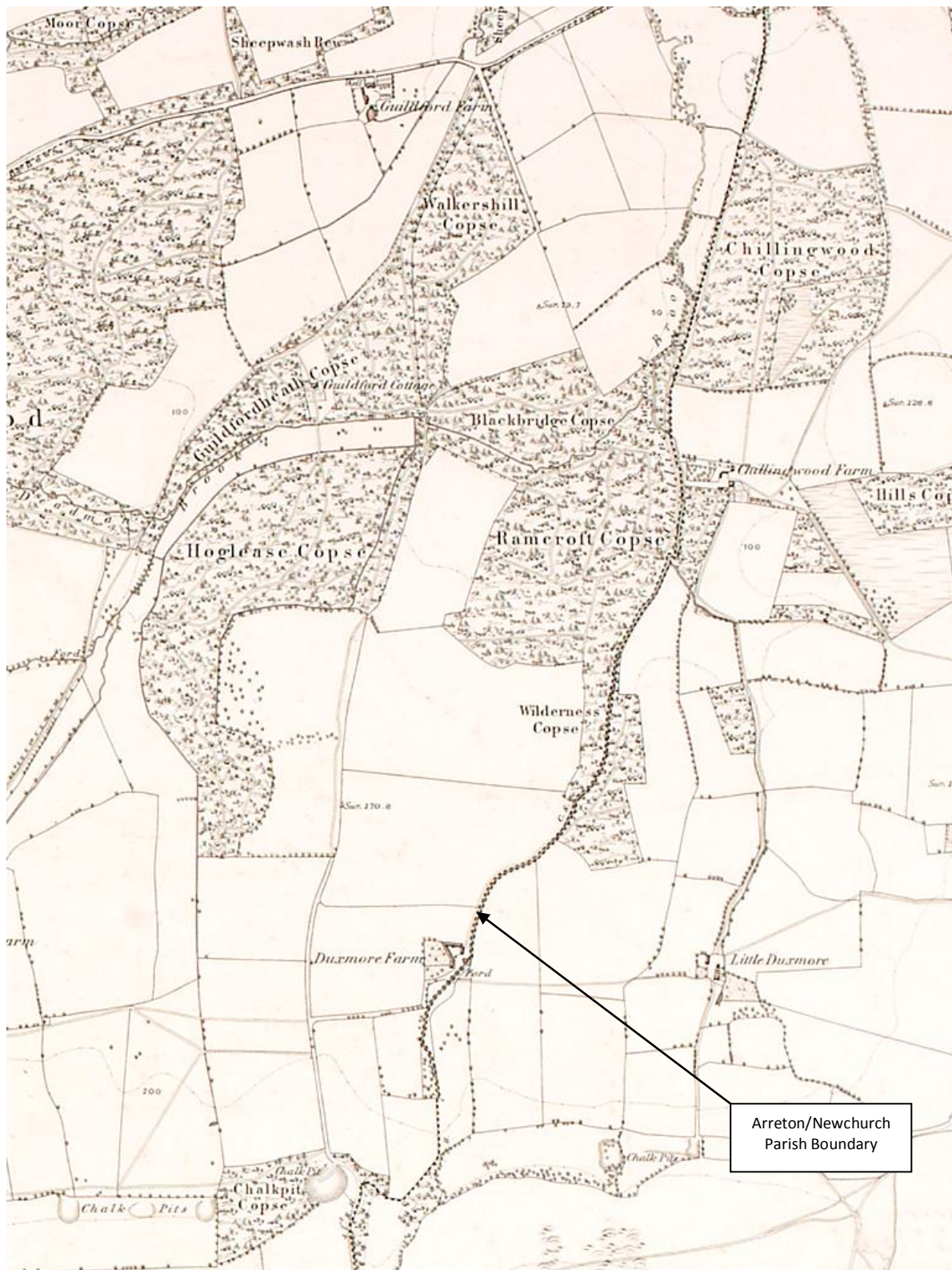


Figure 3: Area currently included in Ancient Woodland Inventory
(map not to scale)

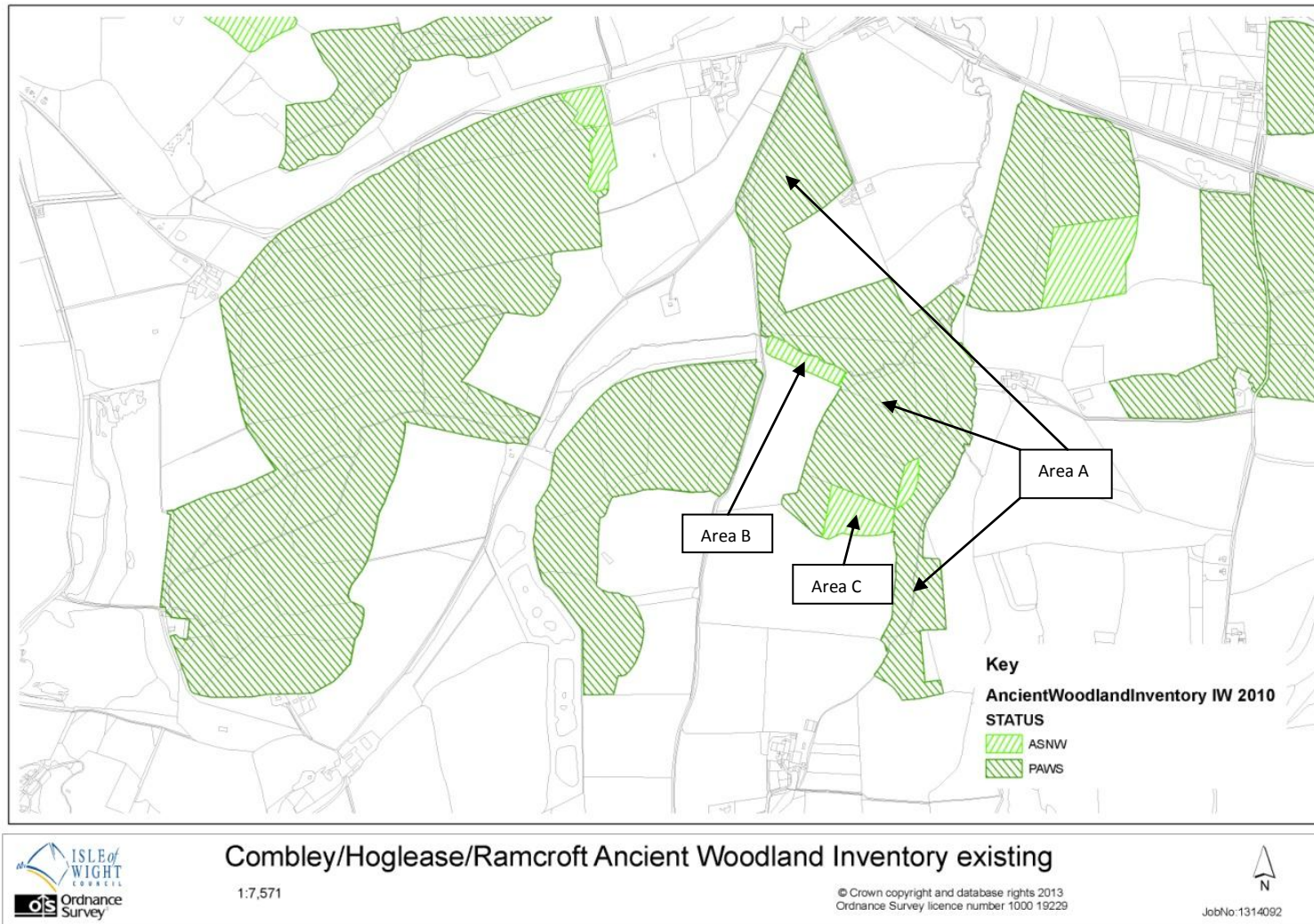


Figure 4: Reconstruction of the Lands of Combley Grange (Hockey 1991, Map 2)

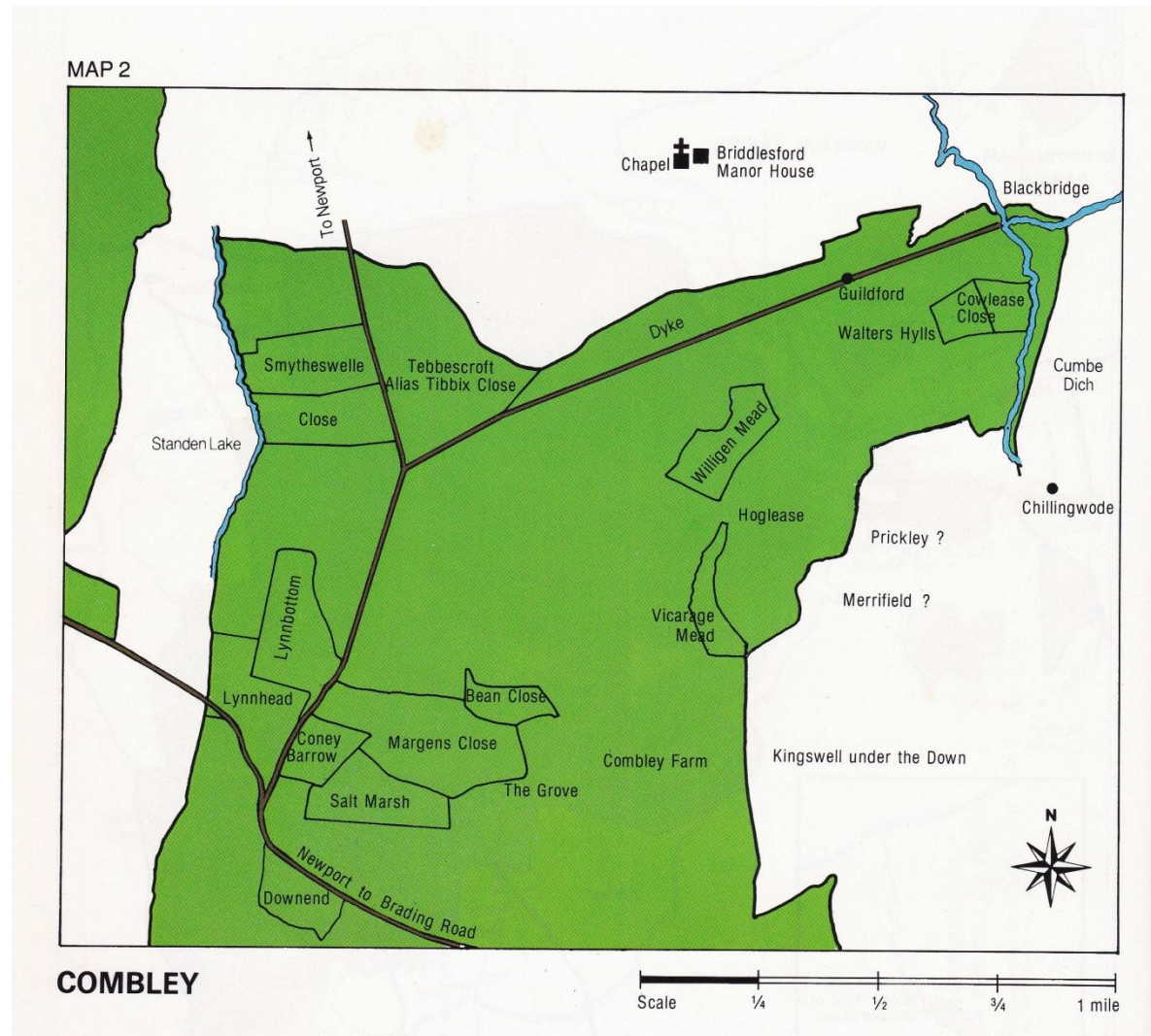


Figure 5: Extracts from Survey of Fleming Estates 1771

Scanned at reduced scale from photocopy at Archaeology and Historic Environment Centre
(Original: Isle of Wight Record Office/AC 2013/099)



Prepared by Don Vincent for the Isle of Wight Archaeology & Historic Environment Service c.1990

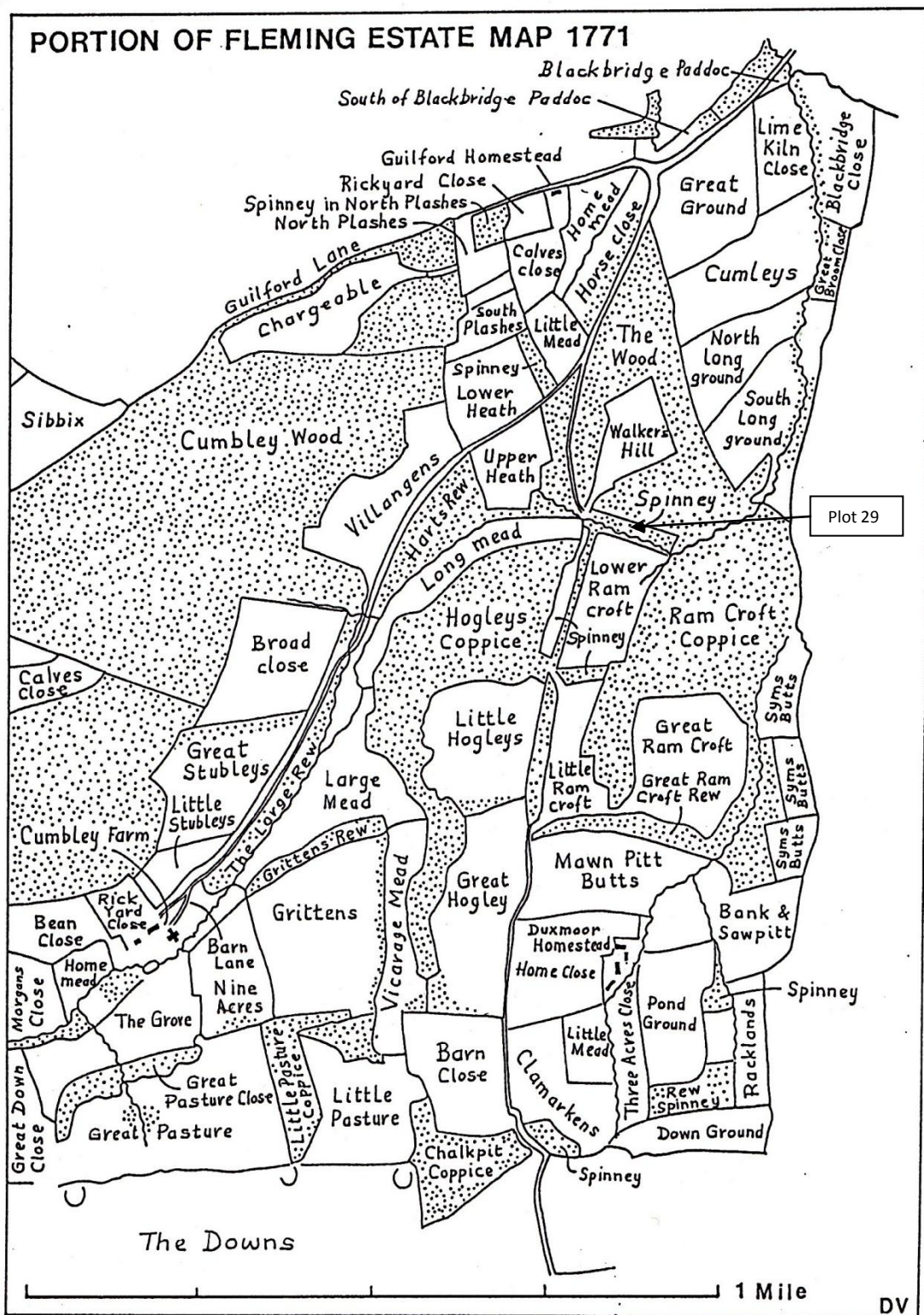


Figure 7: Extract from 1793-4 Ordnance Survey Drawing of Woods in Combley Area
(not to scale)



Figure 8: 1817 Plan of Villangers Copse and Combley Great Wood
 From a Survey of the Estates on the Isle of Wight, 1817, by John Whitcher
 Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Willis Fleming Historical Trust
 WF 2659

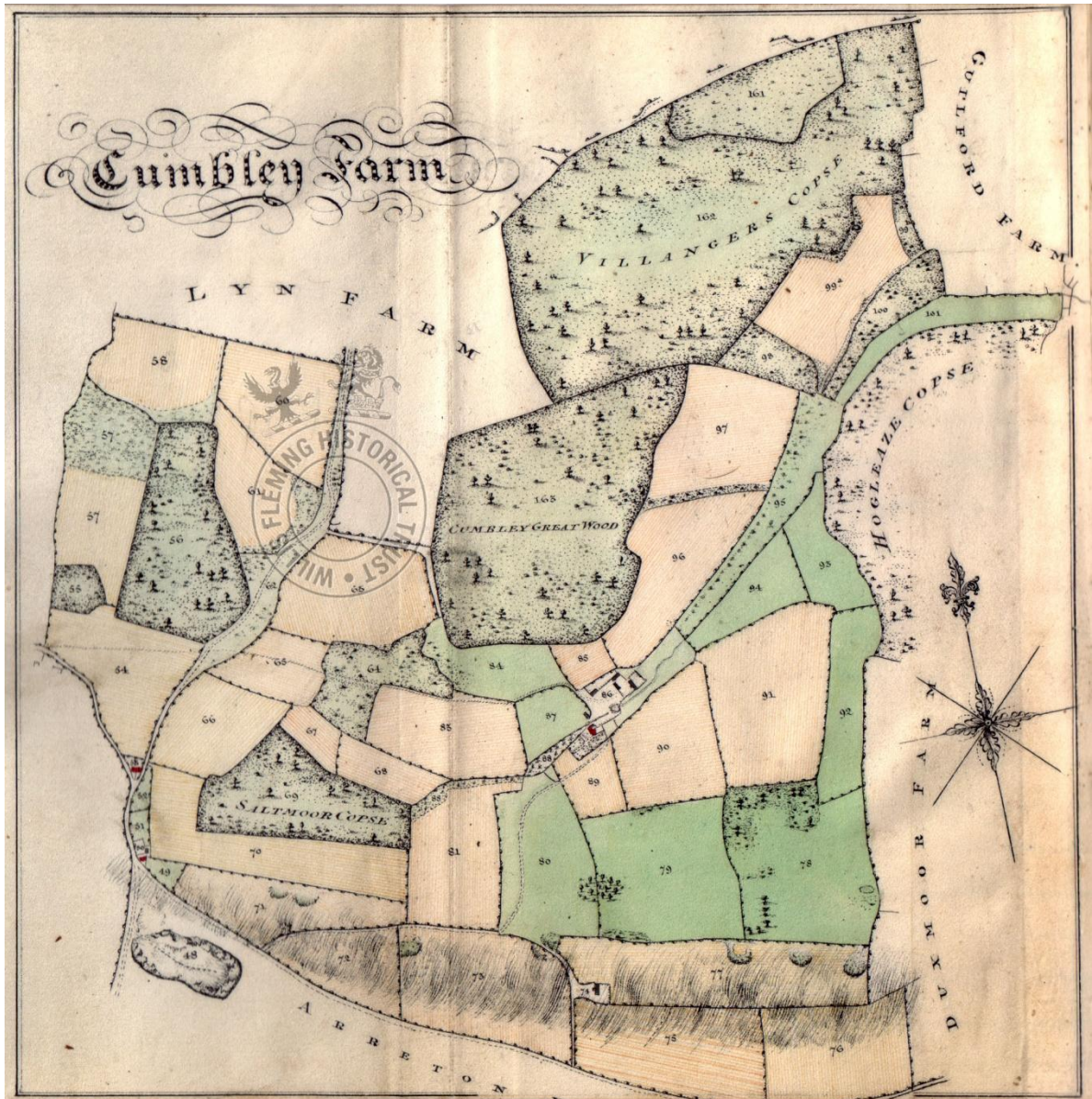


Figure 9: Recommended Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory Areas 2014
 Areas proposed by Vicky Basford and John Brownscombe mapped as striped blocks
 (map not to scale)

