

From: Mindykowski, Adam  
Sent: 23 October 2021 11:42  
To: Aldridge, Steven; Levine, Cody  
Subject: RE: Ancient Woodland Adjacent to Lea Castle site, Wolverley, Worcs

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Hi Steve,

Thank you for sharing the Agent's response Mr Singlehurst's assessment is a detailed and an interesting treatise for the Parish of Wolverley. The fundamental issue rests on the soundness of the WHI interpretation of ancient woodland, which if I understand correctly, was based on a survey carried out by John Day in 1983. The morphology of land enclosure within the site and its setting is consistent with a pattern of piecemeal encroachment into woodland and heathland typical of north Worcestershire landscapes and often resulting in the survival of long re-established woodland communities in the more marginal land parcels. Dating this process is, however, difficult because its origins reach back before the production of reliable maps. Therefore, returning to the WHI, it is a material evidence base that informs our advice and decision making, and its status as a reliable source extends beyond the threshold of national inventory classifications. However, I do acknowledge that we cannot provide contextual documentation to further support the ancient woodland interpretation. I have liaised with colleagues in our HER and Archive team to check for sources that may not have been included in the Archaeological DBA quite simple because they are more obscure in nature. I have shared the detailed results with Cody along with my interpretation (as summarised here), and conclude that we can demonstrate woodland cover was established earlier than the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any points raised above.

Kind regards,

Adam

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From: Aldridge, Steven <SAldridge@worcestershire.gov.uk>  
Sent: 12 October 2021 07:54

To: Levine,Cody<CLevine@worcestershire.gov.uk>,Mindykowski,Adam<AMindykowski@worcestershire.gov.uk>  
Subject:FW:AncientWoodlandAdjacentto LeaCastlesite,Wolverley,Worcs  
Importance:High

Hi Cody and Adam,

With regard to Lea Castle Farm Quarry (Ref: 19/000053/CM). A new Planning Agent – Bob Williams of Alder Mill has taken over from Robin Smithyman of Kedd Limited as the agent for the Lea Castle Farm Quarry application. Further to comments from the Woodlands Trust and yourselves regarding the potential Ancient Woodland at the site. The new agent has looked into this matter and has provided the response below and attached. In view, of this I would be most grateful for your comments on this further information, as soon as possible, ideally by **22 October 2021**. If this is not possible, please let me know.

Kind regards

Steve

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From:BobWilliams<[aldermill@btconnect.com](mailto:aldermill@btconnect.com)>  
Sent:11 October202120:32  
To:Aldridge,Steven<[SAldridge@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:SAldridge@worcestershire.gov.uk)>  
Subject:AncientWoodlandAdjacentto



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From: Mark Singlehurst  
Sent: 11 October 2021 19:19  
To: Bob Williams <[aldermill@btconnect.com](mailto:aldermill@btconnect.com)>  
Subject: Ancient Woodland Adjacent to Lea Castle site, Wolverley, Worcs  
Importance: High

Hello Bob,

I have now looked into the Ancient Woodland question at Lea Castle, Wolverley, in some detail and this is an account of my findings.

First of all, the sites identified on the Worcestershire Habitat Inventory and Ancient Woodland Catalogue as "Ancient Semi Natural Woodland" (ASNW) are as follows:

WOLVERLEY LODGE (87023) is the name given to the woodland that curves around the west Worcestershire

According to the Desk Based Archaeological Assessment previously prepared for this site, the earliest known map covering this area in detail is the 1838 Wolverley tithe map, the relevant extract from which is attached. Unfortunately, this map shows the plot boundaries and reference numbers, but does not clearly distinguish between woodland and grassland. Faint, blue grey outlines indicate which land was either woodland or pasture, with yellow outlines indicating arable fields, but that's as far as it goes. All earlier mapping was not at a large enough scale to show such natural features as woodland or field/plot boundaries.

The first map to clearly show the extent of the woodland was the 1881 25" Ordnance Survey 98 10

“semi ancient”, although where this is I have not been able to ascertain. Birch and Bodenham Woods are near the parish's western boundary and

rather doubt). The woodland may still have significant ecological value, but that is not the same thing as being 'ancient'.

Hope that helps.

Regards,

Mark Singlehurst