

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

DOWNS COMMITTEE

25 January 2016

Report of: Service Director, Environment and Leisure

Title: Downs Management Report

Ward: N/A

**Officer Presenting Report: Andrew Gordon,
Heritage Planning and Partnership Officer**

Contact Telephone Number: Internal 74497

RECOMMENDATION:

Members:

To note the points and recommendations made in the report.

Summary

This report reflects the objectives of the Downs Management Plan and to inform members of progress since the last meeting.

The significant issues in the report are:

- Enjoyment
- Access
- Working Groups
- Landscape
- Wildlife
- Management and Resources.

1. Policy

Not Applicable

2. Consultation

a) Internal

John Williams, Area Manager North.

Andrew Gordon, Heritage Planning and Partnership Officer

Mike Allen, Business Manager
Becky Belfin, Nature Conservation Officer
Richard Ennion, Environmental Improvement Manager

b) External

Mandy Leivers, Avon Gorge and Downs Biodiversity Education Officer
Jack Penrose, FOD + AG
Chris Westcott, Natural England

3. Context

Enjoyment:

Interpretation

At the April 2015 meeting, members approved the recommendations of the interpretation sub-group, to plan the production of three new welcome /gateway panels for the Downs. This work relates to the following actions from 'A Management Plan for Clifton and Durdham Downs 2012 – 2017':

- **7.1.4** Review provision of existing information materials and develop new high quality interpretation materials as appropriate
- **7.6.16** Provide an information point adjacent to Stoke Road, which includes emergency telephone contact numbers and information such as public notices

The audit identified that of the five large wooden-framed 'welcome' signs produced in the 1990s, only two remained and that they were in a very poor state (see attachment 1). The signs had been placed in strategic 'gateway' locations to the Downs; on one side was an annotated map and on the other bye-laws.

The Downs Supervisor, a Merchant Venturer and the Avon Gorge & Downs Biodiversity Education Officer met to produce a project brief and plan the production of three new welcome panels. Following a second meeting with a graphic designer from Bristol Design, quotes were provided for restoring two existing line drawings, creating five new line drawings, recreating the back of the sign graphics (removing the bottom graphic and adding logos and contact information) and restoring the map by scanning from an existing sign. Quotes for printing the panels and creating the wooden frames were also provided.

Recommendation: That the Downs Committee approve the commissioning of Bristol Design to produce three welcome panels at a total cost of £11,299 subject to budget approval.

OTIS training Equipment

Members resolved at their meeting in July 2014 that that a '**second item of OTIS training equipment** (behind the Downs changing rooms) **be allowed on the Downs for a period of 12 months**'. As it has been over year since the installation of this equipment it will be necessary for members to decide

whether or not they wish it to stay. Feedback from the person who installed the equipment reports that:

- The equipment has been checked twice a month for the first 6 months, then monthly from there on. The only replacement part was the body sling; otherwise there have been no other maintenance issues. The Downs supervisor has confirmed this.
- He has had no negative feedback, only positive responses from the public and personal trainers alike. It seems to be used on a daily basis by trainers and the public with people sharing it on Facebook to friends in Bristol and across the country.

Recommendation: Members continue to allow the OTIS equipment to remain at both Ladies Mile and the changing rooms subject to it being regularly inspected and maintained, to meet Health and Safety standards in accordance with the risk assessment.

Access:

Information provided by BCC Security Services recorded no incidents of anti-social behaviour from 27 October 2015 to 8th January 2016. However we have received an e-mail from local resident reporting scaffolding lorries parking on Christchurch Green.

Working Groups

Traffic Subgroup

The group met on the 5th of January 2016 and the key points arising were:

Issues raised by Susan Carter from Ramblers Association with respect to the Zoo temporary car park off Ladies Mile

- The car park area only affects 0.7% of the Downs and is only used for up to 10% of the year
- It provides critical parking for visitor especially families at peak time of the year
- The fee paid by the Zoo provides important revenue source
- The introduction of the restricted parking times on the Downs should increase the number of available car parking spaces throughout the year for visitors to both Downs and Zoo and this should reduce the demand for parking at the temporary car park
- The Zoo need to continue to demonstrate that they are exploring and implementing alternative solutions to parking on the Downs including linking advance tickets and webpage group on offers to using the Park and Ride

Highways restricted parking scheme on the Downs

It was recognised that the scheme will take time to establish.

Movement and Place Framework

Members considered that there is a need to use a workshop facilitator to help DC come to collective decision of their preferred option(s) set in the Framework. Officers are in the process of finding a facilitator for the workshop.

Rock Fall Group:

Tendering and appointment of a contractor to carry out the Bridge Road rock stabilisation works has been completed. The total cost of the works will be £51,992. This price includes £12,220 traffic management costs. The works are programmed to take up to 3 weeks and finish before the end of February 2016.

Landscape:

Downs Parking restrictions

BCC Highways intend to complete the installation of the road markings for the parking restrictions on The Downs and Sneyd Park by the end of January 2016 subject to weather conditions. Also surfacing works have taken place to bring some roads up to a standard where lines can be installed. This is generally where the edge has broken away due to cars parking with their wheels partially on the grass.

Plans showing the type and location of signs needed to make the parking restrictions enforceable are shown on maps in attachment 2. In the case of the parking bays Highways have halved the number required (from 30m intervals to 60m) however if enforcement is challenged then it may be necessary to subsequently add more to bring it in accordance with the regulations.

As explained in previous reports to the committee, the majority of posts will be low-level timber (details of which can be seen on drawing TRO-08). The advantage of this is that when cars are parked in the bays the signs will not be visible from the centre of The Downs. Where possible we have used existing street furniture and removed redundant signs and posts. By Seawalls we are replacing some of the existing wooden bollards with our wooden posts which should minimise any visual impact.

Whilst it may appear to be a lot of additional signage, it should be noted that it is below the minimum requirements of the Department of Transport regulations and they will bring significant benefits in terms of removing the long-term parking of student, advertising and commercial vehicles. The higher turnover of parking will benefit the café and any concession licences as well as the local shops on Whiteladies Road and increase the amount of space for leisure users.

The traffic order was sealed on the 8th December 2015 and became operative on the 12th December 2015 although not all the signs will be in place by this time. Highways are focussing on the signs on Stoke Road in order to address the ongoing issues of congestion particularly for the number 4 bus service.

Highway officers have confirmed that all works should be completed by the end of January 2016.

Playground

Officers have met with the Downs Finance officer and he has confirmed that the Downs budget is able cover the costs of turfing and rubber matting around the bespoke playground bench and up to tarmac footpath, at a cost of £6,781. As a consequence Bristol City Council (BCC) landscapes have been commissioned to carry out works when ground conditions are suitable.

Wildlife

Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project

Officers have met with Natural England to discuss the proposals to help reduce the number of suicides in Avon Gorge including: planting new thorny hedges, retaining existing hedges, allowing new hedges to establish where there are gaps, the use of gates to allow climbers access along the cliff tops. The key points were:

- The introduction/planting of thorny bushes would not help the conservation objectives for the SSSI/SAC to be met which includes reducing the amount of scrub species to zero cover in species rich grassland areas and therefore Natural England would be unlikely to consent to this operation.
- They accept BCC position that existing hedges should be retained unless money becomes available for new safety fencing
- They consider that allowing hedges to grow up and establish in smaller gaps does not require assent, because BCC is not actively 'doing' something. It would possible for active conservation management to remove scrub on the rock faces but leave areas where there is desire to let hedges develop in the gaps.
- Whilst this addresses much of the suicides concern around the Observatory, there are still a number of areas where there is need to consider doing taking additional measures where people are known to

- have taken their lives.
- The section between Peregrine Watch and Bridge Valley Road (above Great Quarry), is more difficult, as there is far less of a hedge, and some easily accessible sections of cliff edge. In terms of the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project longer term aspirations for the Gorge in this area this is likely to be the next section that the project would look at for creating another grazing enclosure. Putting in stock proof estate fencing with weld mesh to make it un-climbable, with a few gates for the climbers in agreed locations, would address both the suicide concern and contribute to the infrastructure that would be needed to graze this area. Natural England may be able contribute something towards this but the Committee would be asked to help fund this as well.

Discussions have been had with Natural England about the possibility of extending the Avon Gorge Higher Level Stewardship agreement to include hay cut areas on the Downs will depend on Rural Payment Agency providing the appropriate registered land maps. Although NE had indicated their support for this proposal no final decisions have reached.

Management and Resources:

Downs Team

The Richard Long art installation was deconstructed and removed in late November. Any re-instatement works to the ground will be carried out in the Spring.

Normal day to day duties continue, litter removal, daily Goat monitoring, football provision and pitch marking. Leaf collection has finished for the season

Another section of our bench/seat stock has been cleaned off and re wood stained, with the metal ends getting a coat of protective paint.

Between November 1st 2015 and January 1st 2016, 25 compartments of scrub have been removed from the Downs. These compartments were in different areas, so as not to have too severe an impact in any one part of the Downs. They also comprised of different species within them and were different sizes in accordance with the prescriptions for each compartment. The wood has been removed and all brash chipped and used on shrub beds, underneath benches and on the running track. Information boards were put out to inform Downs's users of the reasons for this work. The work will recommence again on in October 2016.

From January 4th, the team have been working on the Clifton Hill fort clearance works. Community PayBack operatives have been used again to carry out the re-cutting of new growth in the previously cut sections. The

Downs team are moving towards completing the clearance work at the end of 2016. However it will necessary to consult Historic England to establish where the finish point is with regard to working along the rock face around the children's play area.

Summary of 2015 Review of Annual work Plan Actions (see table in attachment 3)

Out of a total of 83 management plan objectives, 75 have either been met, are progressing or are ongoing. The key actions officers wish to highlight for 2015 include:

7.1.2 Increasing diversity by encouraging participants from all backgrounds, levels of ability and from across the City. The Your Downs initiative (a partnership between the Avon Gorge & Downs Biodiversity Education Officer, FOD+AG and the Downs Supervisor), continued to plan and run a series of events to widen the range of people who visit and enjoy the site.

7.1.2 Increase the diversity of events at the Downs. New Events have included Internationally recognised Kite Fiesta, Foody Fair, two Cycling on Sunday events, arts events including a Bristol Murmuration, Tree Song Richard Long Boyhood line installation.

7.1.3 Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Education Programme:

The outstanding achievements of this programme are being reported in separate item.

7.2.2 Investigate the alternative options and implications of extending the cycling routes on existing roads and paths and the provision of cycle parking facilities at visitor attractions. Awaiting DC decision on options for enhancing visitor experience of walking and cycling experience in the Movement and Place Framework Produced by City Design Group approved by DC members

7.2.5 Upgrade the footpath into the Gully where the quality is poor. Victorian steps restored in 2015 in the gully to enhance access to this area as result of a partnership between Downs Committee, Merchant Venturer's, Friends of the Downs and Gorge Group and Bristol City Council

7.3.1 & 7.3.2 Prepare and implement plan for the future management of scrub areas to balance conflicting pressures of ecology, landscape, access and archaeology. A 10 year scrub management plan (2014 -2024) has been produced through the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project, and agreed by DC members. The Downs Team have started the implementation including areas around the Zoo banks. The plan is linked to restoration of species rich grassland within the Avon Gorge Site of Special Scientific

Interest and wider Downs.

7.3.3 Remove all scrub growing within the boundary of the scheduled ancient Monument known as Clifton Down Camp, an Iron Age hill fort.

Continuing scrub clearance on Iron Age Fort earth banks with the assistance of Community PayBack with about 20% left to complete which will be carried out in 2016 but the exact figure will be determined after a meeting with Historic England in January.

7.3.9 Prepare a tree planting plan for the Downs to include options for replanting with existing or new species to fill gaps within existing avenue planting and / or phased felling and replanting of horse-chestnut avenues.

28 avenue trees have been planted with plaques under the BCC website sponsorship scheme, at a cost of £295 per tree - this includes the purchase cost of the tree and watering. In order to complete the planting plan officers are working towards having a high profile event, between the 4th to 12th of February 2016, with the aim of involving a senior Royal. The tree planting will be carried out by the One Tree Per Child project and will include an educational element. Organisations have been approached about sponsoring the event and so far the Clifton and Howell's Improvement Society have offered to pay for 6 trees, the Bristol Rotary Club 3 and Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge 3 trees respectively. Officers need to sell another 35 trees to complete the planting programme.

7.4.2 Investigate the potential for creating new areas of wildflower meadow in carefully selected areas.

In summer 2014 FODAG volunteers, collected wildflower seeds from areas of species rich grassland adjacent to Circular Road and spread them on the small grassland area at the top of the Gully view point, to enhance the botanical interest. Results of this work: whole site surveys on May 3 and June 2015 found 47 species including 5 of the sown species. Subsequent surveys in July and August 2015 prior to mowing found a further nine species, none of them plants that had been sown, giving a species list of 57. Five species found in 2014 were not found in 2015. Additional areas of more species-rich grassland adjacent to existing meadow areas will also be allowed to develop into wildflower meadow from 2016 (as reported at the last Downs Committee meeting).

7.4.4 Goats monitored daily by the Downs Team. Daily monitoring takes place by the Downs Team and FODAG volunteers who do this on the weekends.

7.5.4 Improve the enforcement of the byelaws forbidding the lighting of fires (barbeques).

A new dedicated BBQ area was created. As well as providing an important facility this was aimed at trying to reduce the number of unauthorised incidents of BBQs across the Downs. The Downs Team report that area was well used, by the public last summer.

7.6.17 Manage the Downs budget as business unit. Review of the Downs budget has been carried out by Downs finance officer

The following management plan objective actions are unlikely to be met within the lifetime of the plan:

7.1.7 Design and cost and provision of new Downs pavilion to include changing facilities café and visitor information centre on the site of existing changes rooms and café. Not progressed due to lack of resources. This will reviewed in the next management plan including exploring opportunities for external funding.

7.1.8 Seek the agreement of Secretary of State to build a secondary visitor point at Seawalls. Not progressed due to lack of resources. This will reviewed in the next management plan including exploring opportunities for external funding

7.1.9 Investigate the technical and financial options to provide secondary visitor point at Seawalls with café and toilet facilities. Not progressed due to lack of resources. This will reviewed in the next management plan including exploring opportunities for external funding

7.1.10 Establish full costs of providing a secondary visitor centre at Seawalls. Not progressed due to lack of resources. This will reviewed in the next management plan including exploring opportunities for external funding

7.2.1 Investigate the options of how to provide electric mobility scooters for disabled people. The now retired Downs Ranger had previously investigated this objective and found that suitable vehicles are available but the implementation of such a scheme will need to be linked with any future development of a visitor facility.

7.2.7 Investigate the possibility of erecting brown informative directional signs in the city to guide visitors to all destination parks including the Downs. This was not progressed as it was established in 2007 that the BCC Planning and Transport policy restricts the use of brown signs within the city and the Downs would not qualify for such signs.

7.4.6 Undertake grazing feasibility study of The Downs. This has not been progressed, because grazing was not seen as not currently considered a practical option for managing the grassland on the Downs, given its common land status, being open to the public and therefore preventing fencing from being erected. However the BCC conservation officer is exploring alternatives grazing systems that do not require fencing.

7.6.2 Monitor user's enjoyment of the Downs through regular Survey's. Not progressed due to lack of resources. This will be reviewed in

the next management plan including exploring opportunities for external funding

7.6.10 Produce an interpretation and promotion plan. Not progressed due to lack of resources. This will be reviewed in the next management plan including exploring opportunities for external funding.

Review and updating of the Downs Management Plan

The Downs management plan objectives/actions cover the period from January 2012 to January 2017 and therefore will need to be reviewed and updated during 2016. The Avon Gorge Management Plan actions covered a period up to December 2014 and therefore needs to be reviewed and updated as soon as possible.

Some of the key objectives/actions in both these management plans and indeed the Movement and Place Framework will require substantial investment e.g. visitor centre/café at Sea Walls, extension of grazing on species rich grassland areas and these will require external funding if they are to be realised. The most likely source of funding will come from Heritage Lottery Funding. To improve the chance of success for an application for the Downs and Avon Gorge Officers consider a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) should be produced. This sets out the history of the landscape, identifies its conservation value and assesses its current management and use. It then proposes ways in which its importance and value for conservation, education and enjoyment can best be recognised, managed and enhanced. It is proposed that a CMP is produced to cover both the Downs and Avon Gorge (Bristol side) as well as including the Movement and Place Framework preferred option(s) for improving the cycling and walking experience on the Downs. To help members understand what a plan could look like an example of CMP can be found in attachment 4.

It may be possible that the preparation of the CMP could be funded through a Heritage Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. However before an application could be made it will be necessary for BCC to develop and agree with HLF a clear policy/approach on how and when they should make funding applications relating to estates, parks and open spaces to ensure the best chance of success.

Recommendation: Members agree in principle to production of CMP to replace the Downs Avon Gorge and Downs plans subject to quotes obtained.

Finance

As part of wider estate programme officers has commissioned land agents to purchase additional Basic Payment Scheme 15 entitlements (European Union agricultural subsidy paid to farmers and land owners to support their businesses) on the Downs. Once the capital outlay has been repaid future claims for the subsidy, based on current rates are expected to yield around

£2700 per year. The purchase of entitlements and expected income needs to be confirmed by land agent and is subject to contract)

As mentioned above the BCC conservation officer is exploring extending the Natural England Higher Level Stewardship agreement to include and expanded area of hay cuts on the Downs with the aim of restoring key areas species. If successful this could generate possible additional income.

The Seawalls concession has been asked to sign a contract to start trading on 1 March 2016. Parry's Lane will be retendered after the works to implement the parking restrictions have been completed.

Risk Assessment:

WSP Parson Brinkerhoff have been commissioned to undertake the annual inspection of Bridge Valley Road and Downs playground rock faces and the sides of the Zig Zag path in February 2016.

5. Public Sector Equality Duties

5a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - tackle prejudice; and

- promote understanding.

6. Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

The Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861 provides that the Downs should remain as a place for the resort and recreation of the citizens of Bristol, and that a committee should be appointed to manage them. The recommendations of this report are within the powers conferred by this statute.

Financial

(a) Revenue:

(b) Capital

None

Financial advice provided by Mike Allen, Business Partner.

7. Land

The land is under the control of the Downs Committee.

8. Personnel

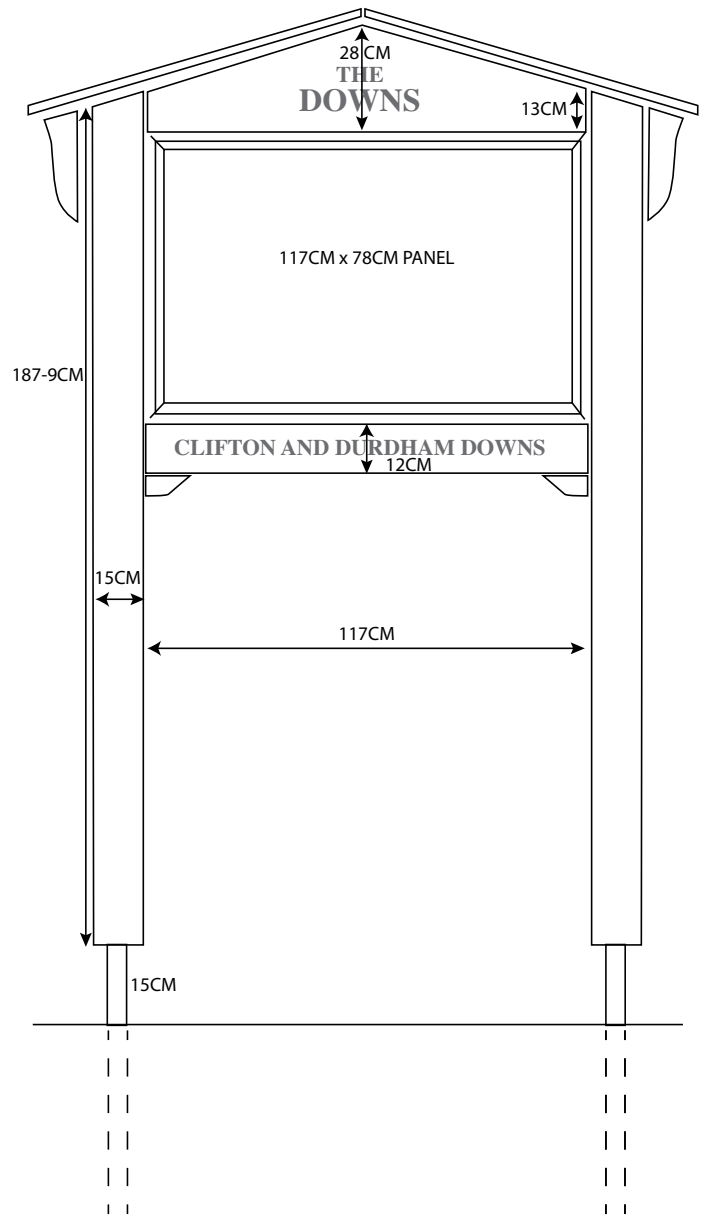
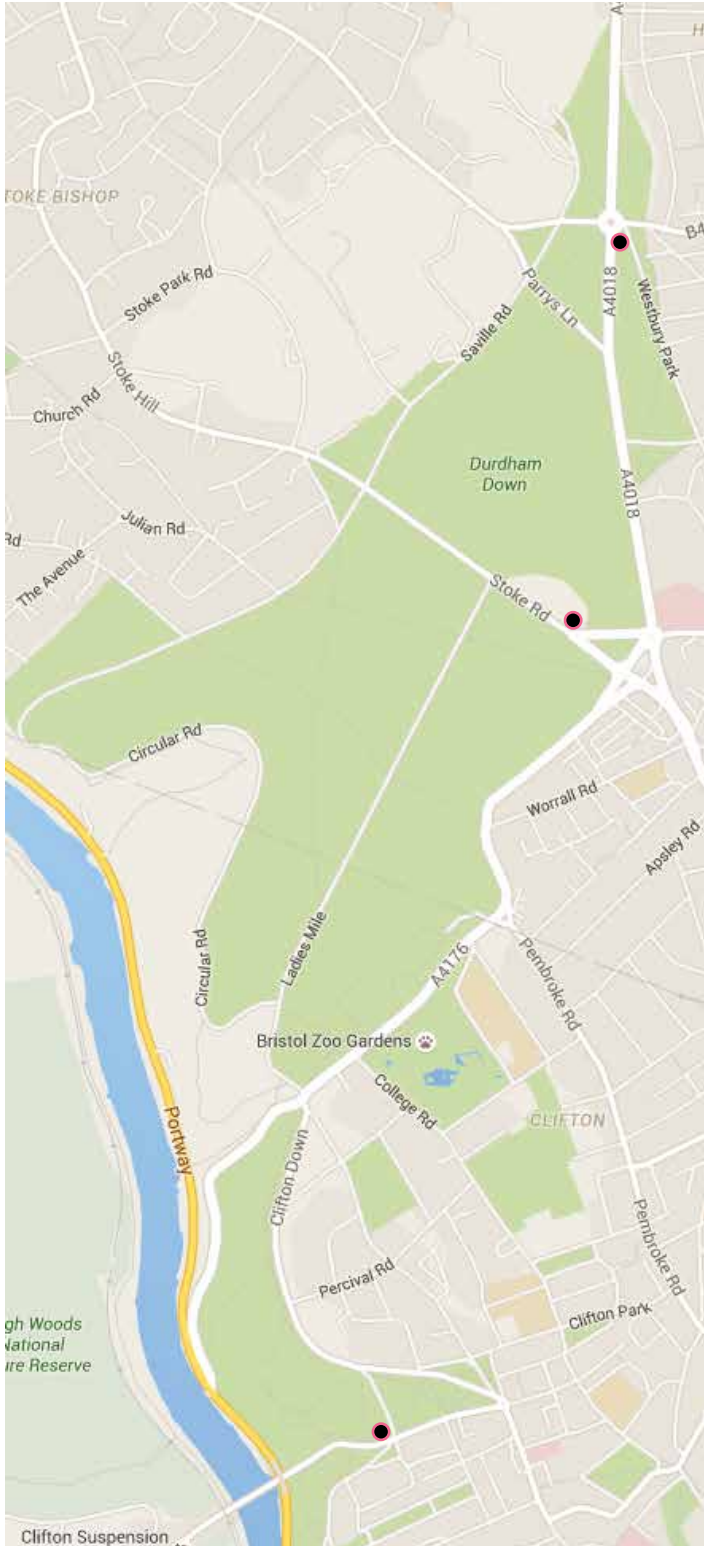
Not applicable

Appendices: 1& 2

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: None

CLIFTON AND DURDHAM DOWNS X3 SIGNS (double sided)



Replace 2x existing signs:

- White Tree roundabout
- Observatory Hill

1x new sign:

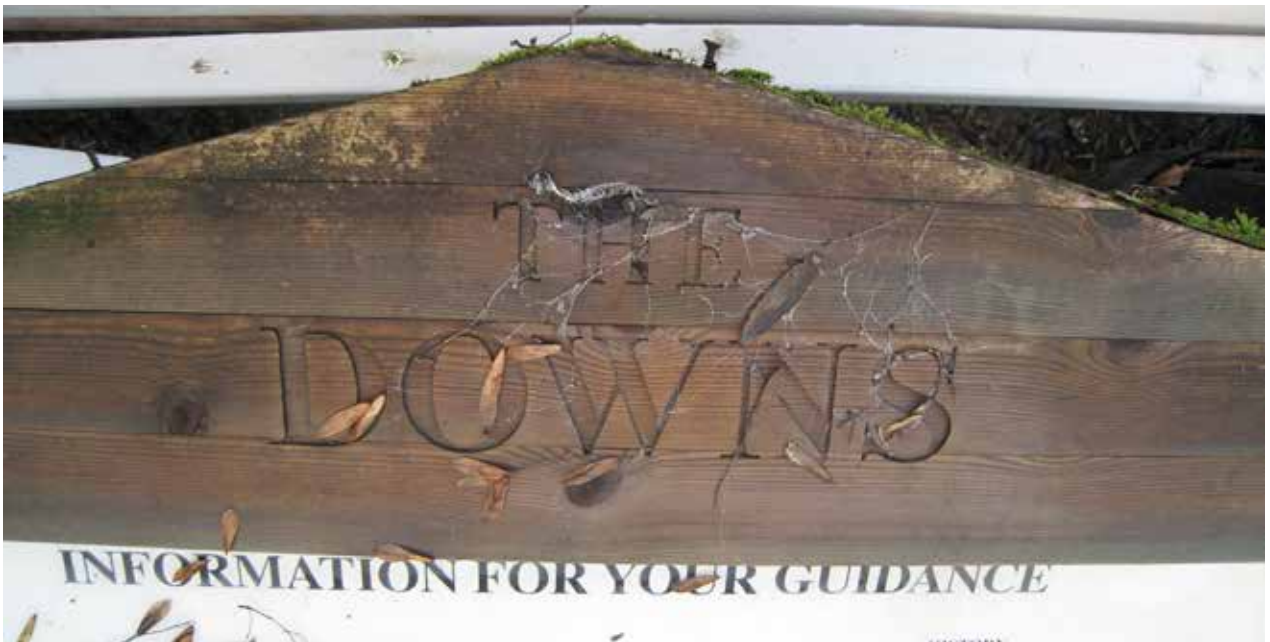
- Stoke Road

Itemised price for each of the following:

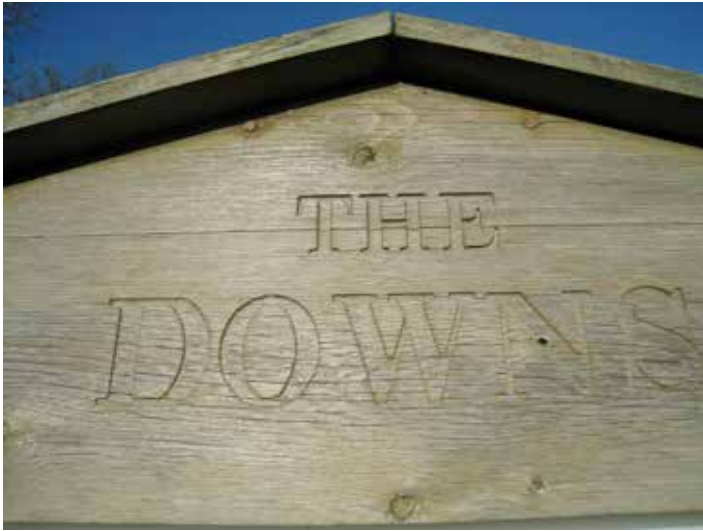
- Timber frame (with rust proof fixings) attached to rectangular metal poles.
- Groundwork (to match existing)
- Recessed lettering on frame (sandblasted)
- Digital Printing on waterproof substrate 117x78cm panel UV protected (from a/w supplied)
- Alternative Screen Printing on waterproof substrate 117x78cm panel UV protected (from a/w supplied)
- Clear panel to be scratch/vandal resistant (Glass Reinforced Plastic) and UV / weather resistant. Set into aluminium frame.

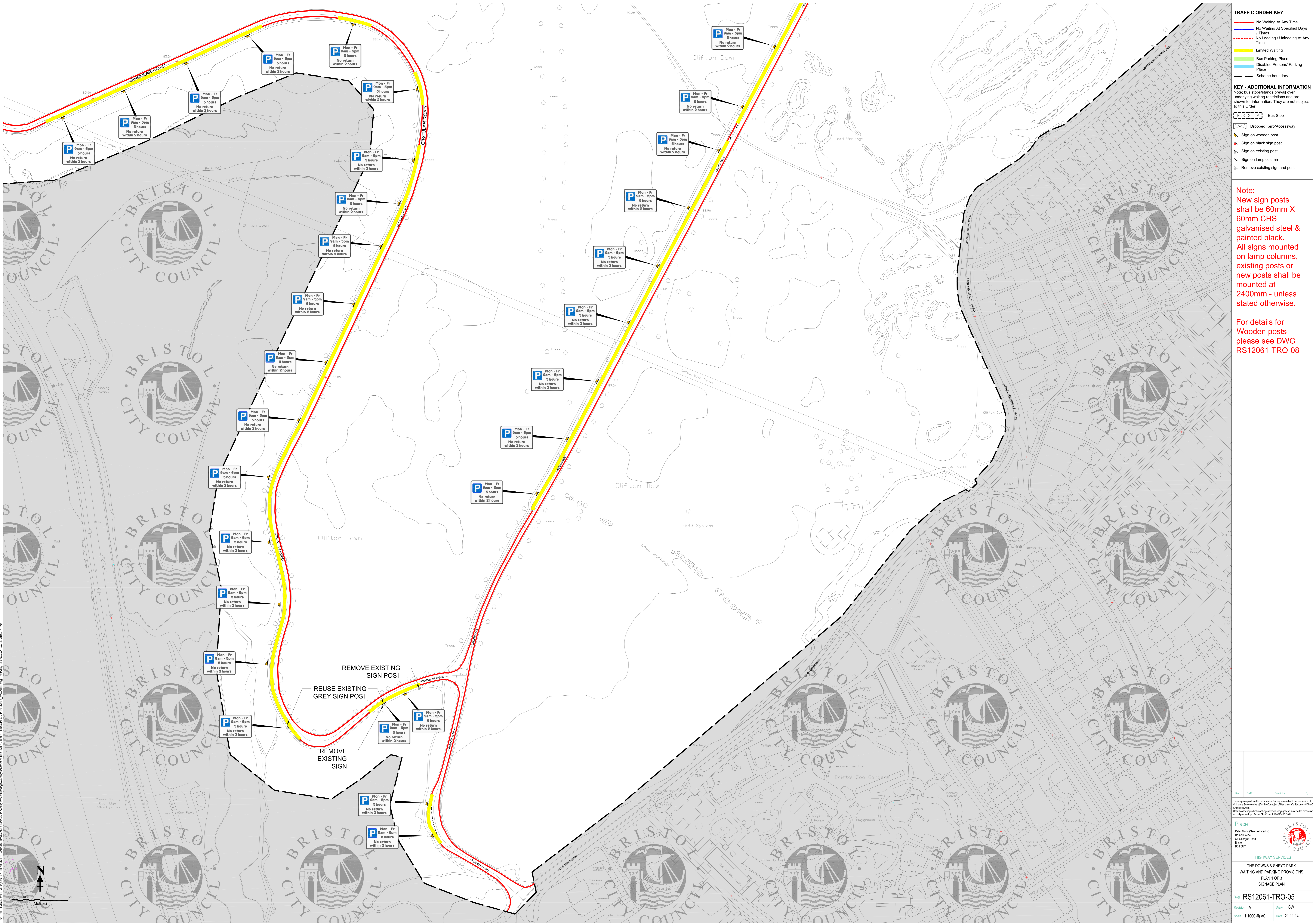
(See photos on next 4 pages.)











- TRAFFIC ORDER KEY**
- No Waiting At Any Time
 - No Waiting At Specified Days / Times
 - - - - No Loading / Unloading At Any Time
 - Limited Waiting
 - Bus Parking Place
 - Disabled Persons' Parking Place
 - Scheme boundary
- KEY - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
- Note: Bus stops/signs prevail over underlying waiting restrictions and are shown for information. They are not subject to this Order.
- Bus Stop
 - Dropped Kerb/Accessway
 - Sign on wooden post
 - Sign on black sign post
 - Sign on existing post
 - Sign on lamp column
 - Remove existing sign and post

Note:
 New sign posts shall be 60mm X 60mm CHS galvanised steel & painted black. All signs mounted on lamp columns, existing posts or new posts shall be mounted at 2400mm - unless stated otherwise.

For details for Wooden posts please see DWG RS12061-TRO-08

SITE PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED BUS LANE AND WAITING ZONES AT CLIFTON DOWN, BRISTOL. DRAWN BY: [Name], DATE: [Date], SCALE: 1:1000 @ A0.

| Rev | Date | Description | By |
|-----|------|-------------|----|
| | | | |

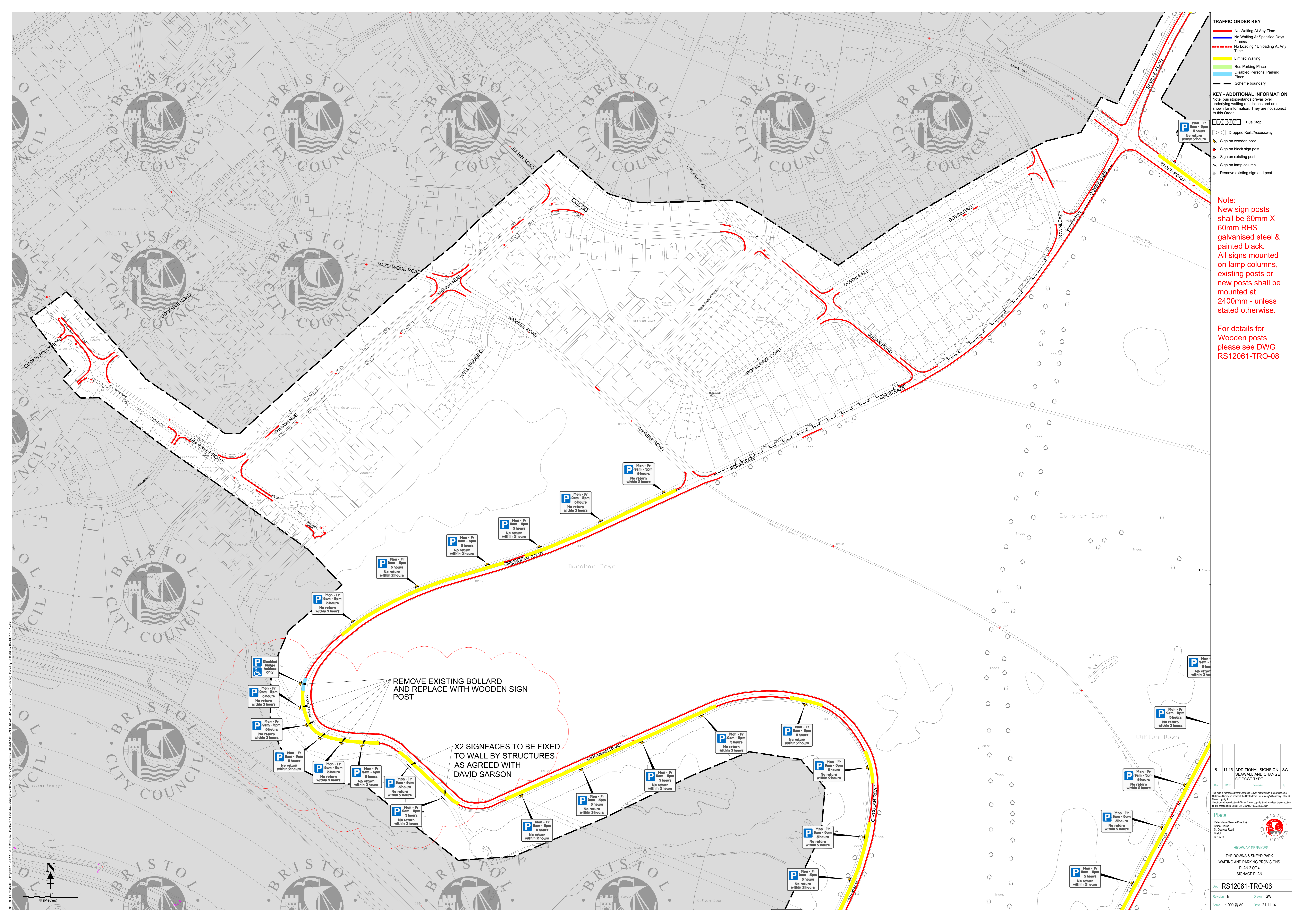
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Place
 Paper Mill (Service Director)
 Bristol House
 St Georges Road
 Bristol
 BS1 5UJ

HIGHWAY SERVICES
 THE DOWNS & SNEYD PARK
 WAITING AND PARKING PROVISIONS
 PLAN 1 OF 3
 SIGNAGE PLAN

Dwg RS12061-TRO-05

Revision A Drawn SW
 Scale 1:1000 @ A0 Date 21.11.14



- TRAFFIC ORDER KEY**
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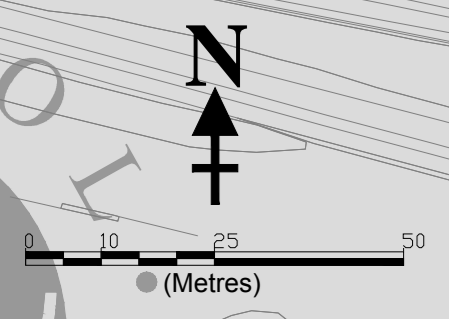
Note:
 New sign posts shall be 60mm X 60mm RHS galvanised steel & painted black.
 All signs mounted on lamp columns, existing posts or new posts shall be mounted at 2400mm - unless stated otherwise.

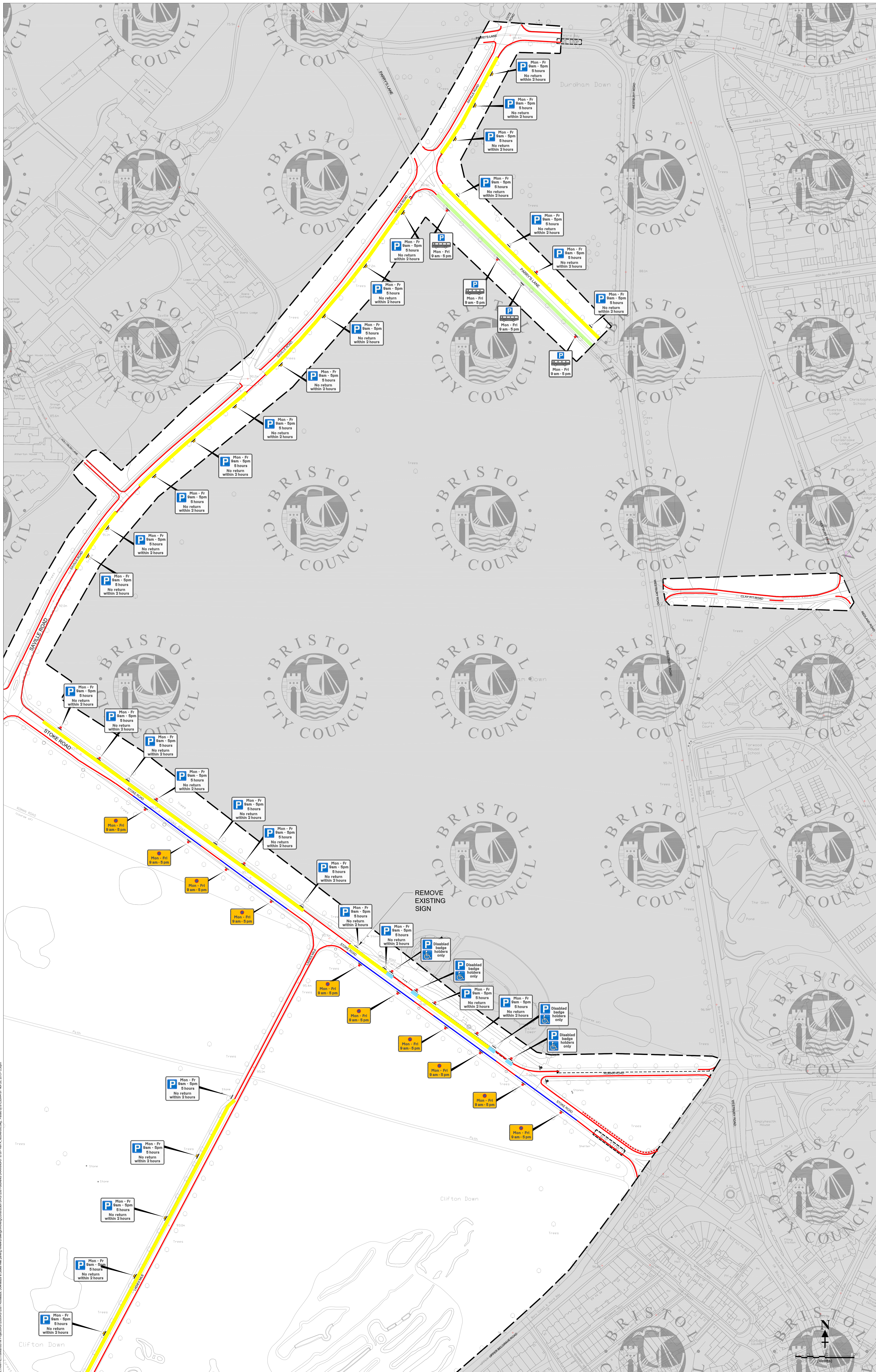
For details for Wooden posts please see DWG RS12061-TRO-08

REMOVE EXISTING BOLLARD AND REPLACE WITH WOODEN SIGN POST

X2 SIGNFACES TO BE FIXED TO WALL BY STRUCTURES AS AGREED WITH DAVID SARSON

| | | | |
|---|-------------|---|----|
| B | 11.15 | ADDITIONAL SIGNS ON SEAWALL AND CHANGE OF POST TYPE | SW |
| Rev | Date | Author | By |
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| <p>Place Fairer Bristol (Service Director) Bristol House St. Georges Road Bristol BS1 5JY</p> | | | |
| <p>HIGHWAY SERVICES THE DOWNS & SNEYD PARK WAITING AND PARKING PROVISIONS PLAN 3 OF 4 SIGNAGE PLAN</p> | | | |
| <p>Dwg: RS12061-TRO-06</p> | | | |
| Revision | B | Drawn | SW |
| Scale | 1:1000 @ A0 | | |
| Date | 21.11.14 | | |





- TRAFFIC ORDER KEY**
- No Waiting At Any Time
 - No Waiting At Specified Days / Times
 - - - - - No Loading / Unloading At Any Time
 - Limited Waiting
 - Bus Parking Place
 - Disabled Persons' Parking Place
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For details for Wooden posts please see DWG RS12061-TRO-08

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 User: [redacted]
 Project: [redacted]
 Title: [redacted]

| No. | DATE | DESCRIPTION | BY |
|-----|------|-------------|----|
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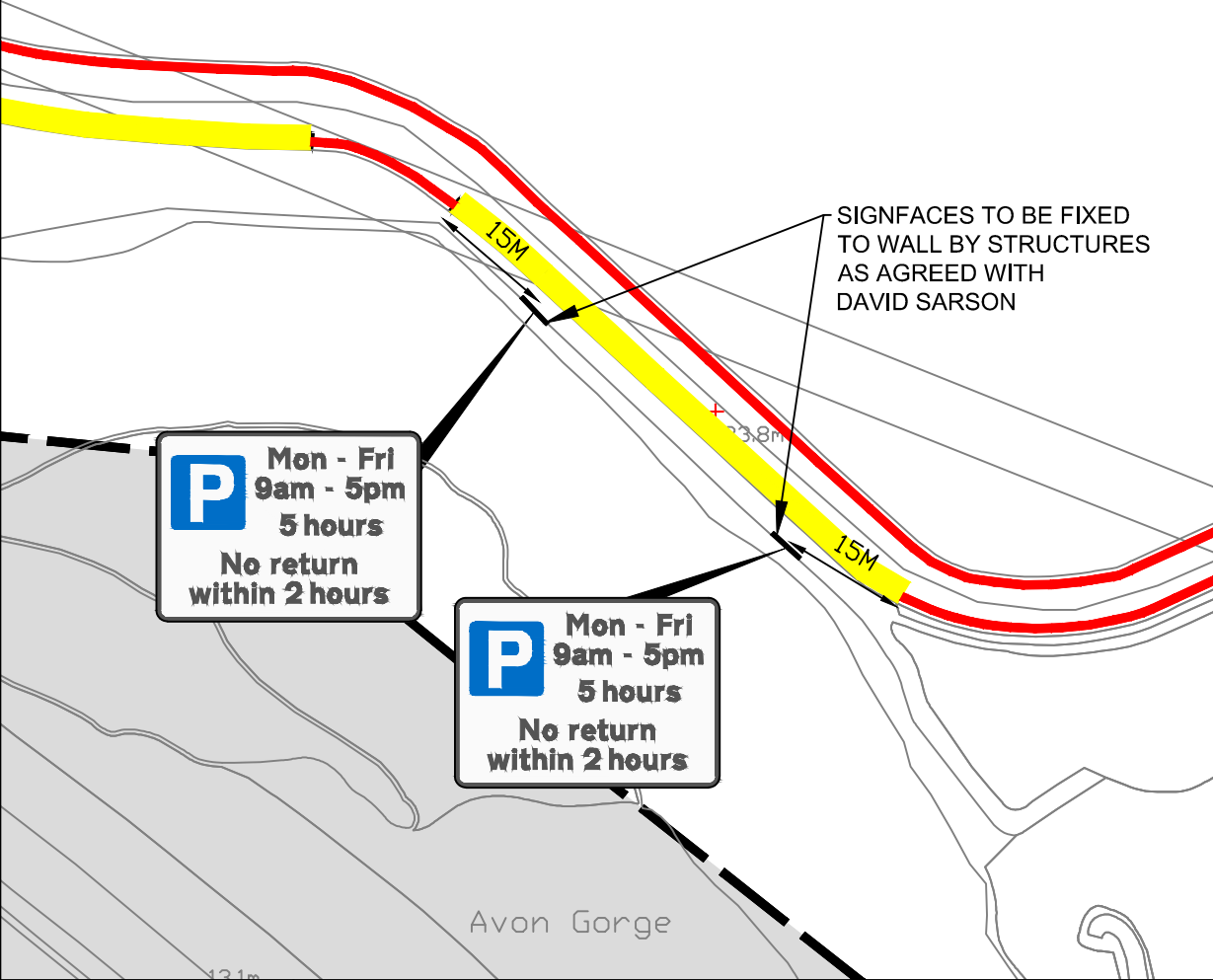
Place
 From New Service Director
 Bristol Road
 Bristol
 BS1 1UR

Highway Services
 THE DOWNS & SNEYD PARK
 WAITING AND PARKING PROVISIONS
 PLAN 3 OF 4
 SIGNAGE PLAN

Dwg: **RS12061-TRO-07**
 Revision: **A** Drawn: **SW**
 Scale: 1:100 @ A0 Date: 21.11.14

NOTES

- 1. INSTALL X2 SIGNS ON TO EXISTING SEA WALL AS AGREED WITH DAVID SARSON.
- 2. SIGNS TO BE WITHIN 15M OF EACH END OF PARKING RESTRICTION.
- 3. SIGNS TO BE A MINIMUM OF 500MM FROM GROUND LEVEL.



Place
 Peter Mann (Service Director, Transport)
 Brunel House
 St. Georges Road
 Bristol
 BS1 5UY



HIGHWAYS SERVICE
**THE DOWNS & SNEYD PARK
 WAITING AND PARKING PROVISIONS
 SIGNAGE DRAWING**

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Attachment 3

The Downs Annual Work Plan 2015-2016

Key themes.

7.1 Enjoyment

7.2 Access

7.3 Landscape

7.4 Wildlife

7.5 Antisocial behaviour

7.6 Management and Resources

Key

Green = objectives/actions being met or target to met

Yellow= progress being made to meet objectives/actions

Red= objectives/actions not being met or likely to be met

The work programme will be subject to change from outside influences including pressure from site users, from the results of surveys or monitoring the availability of finance and operational changes as result of organisational restructuring.

The management plan is to be reviewed every 5 years; this will be carried out in 2016

| NO | Objective | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | Comment |
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| 7.1 | Enjoyment | | | |
| 7.1.1 | Produce an events policy in line with city wide approach to events | | | The Downs events subgroup continues to operate to use its delegated powers decide on events in liaison with BCC Site Permissions team which is in accordance with BCC Events policy |

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| <p>7.1.2</p> | <p>Investigate how to improve the changing facility for sport with provision for all genders.</p> <p>Increase diversity by encouraging participants from all backgrounds, levels of ability and from across the City.</p> <p>Increase the diversity of events at the Downs.</p> | | | <p>Ongoing; Redecoration works of The Downs dressing rooms being by Community PayBack</p> <p>The Your Downs initiative (a partnership between the Avon Gorge & Downs Biodiversity Education Officer, FOD+AG and the Downs Supervisor), continued to plan and run a series of events to widen the range of people who visit and enjoy the site.</p> <p>Activities in 2015 included; running Star parties as well as contributing to the Portway Sunday events, Bristol Walking Festival, Bee Festival and Kite Festival. Also guided walks for groups such as: the 'Walking the five ways to well-being group', the Heartful Dodgers (people recovering from heart attacks and strokes from Southmead hospital); Knowle Townswomen's Guild; Bristol Nature Network and public walks for the Bristol Murmuration project.</p> <p>In addition to the Your Downs activities, the education officer gave a talk or guided walk to 512 people from 20 community groups.</p> <p>176 children from playschemes, from across the city, visited us for education sessions.</p> <p>Bristol 2015 Green Capital year provided many extra opportunities to engage with the public and widen our audiences, including running activities at the 2015 Science Lab and at the BRI's new Welcome Centre. We also made a film with the Bristol 2015 education officer as part of the 'Best of Bristol virtual fieldtrip project'. The film features an education session on the Downs and aims to give schools ideas of places to visit with their children.</p> <p>New Events Kite Fiesta and Foody Fair, Cycling on Sunday, arts events including a Bristol Murmuration, Tree Song Richard Long Boyhood line installation</p> |
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| 7.1.3 & 7.1.3a | Continue to support and develop the existing Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Education Programme | | | <p>During 2015, 13,667 people took part in one of the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project education programme walks, talks, courses, children's or family events, or came to the Downs for education sessions.</p> <p>For the eighth year running, we employed a seasonal education officer with funding from Downs Committee (30 hours a week, from 17th March – 30th October).</p> <p>It was our best year yet for teaching school groups - 1,840 children taught (compared with 1,809 children in 2014).</p> |
| 7.1.4 | Review of provision of existing information materials and develop new high quality interpretation material as appropriate | | | <p>A Downs Committee interpretation sub group met to review an interpretation audit prepared by the education officer. Actions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-printing 5,000 copies of both the Durdham Down History Trail No.1 and No 2 Clifton Down History No. 2 leaflets. Completed in September and the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project have already distributed 12 boxes to a variety of venues such as Libraries, the Tourist Information Centre, the Observatory, Suspension Bridge visitors' centre etc. • Planning the re-development of three of the old Downs' 'Welcome signs' – work to be completed in 2016. • Updating the Downs page on the Bristol City Council website – completed Dec 2015. • Re-development and re-printing of the Downs tree trail leaflet in 2016. • Councillor Glenise Morgan has raised importance of estates in green capital year delivery <p>An app. for the Downs was launched in September. It was produced as a collaboration</p> |

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| | | | | between FOD+AG, University of the West of England, Bristol Parkhive and the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project. |
| 7.1.5 | Investigate options for developing a history education programme for the Downs. | | | Objective met: The history education programme has been delivered by displaying a series of boards providing information on the history of the Downs on the railing in front of the water tower and selected panels will be redisplayed in the Downs dressing rooms |
| 7.1.6 | Produce an all-encompassing interpretation and promotion plan (covering access recreation, history and wildlife etc) to ensure the Downs are Widely promoted | | | An all-encompassing interpretation and promotion plan has not been produced due to lack of resources. The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project partially contributes to this action by producing events programmes and guided walks leaflets, various interpretation boards but these are focussed on wildlife, geology and landscape. This action should be re-visiting once resources do become available, so that an all-encompassing plan can be produced. Content of the Downs page on the Bristol City Council Website has been updated. |
| 7.1.7 | Design and cost and provision of new Downs pavilion to include changing facilities café and visitor information centre on the site of existing changes rooms and cafe | | | Requires external funding including FA grants. Movement and Place Framework proposes the construction of café/toilet facility at Sea Walls to replace the current toilet block at this location. |
| 7.1.8 | Seek the agreement of Secretary of State to build a secondary visitor point at Seawalls | | | Requires external funding including FA grants. Movement and Place Framework proposes the construction of café/toilet facility at Sea Walls to replace the current toilet block at this location. |

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| 7.1.9 | Investigate the technical and financial options to provide secondary visitor point at Seawalls with café and toilet facilities | | | Requires external funding including FA grants. Movement and Place Framework proposes the construction of café/toilet facility at Sea Walls to replace the current toilet block at this location. |
| 7.1.10 | Establish full costs of providing a secondary visitor centre at Seawalls | | | Not progressed due to current budget constraints and financial pressures no funding is available to progress this project However the Movement and Place Framework proposes a new café and toilet facility at Sea Walls, but this would require substantial external funding such Heritage Lottery Fund. |
| 7.1.11 | Design and cost new play area | | | Objective met: the land around the new playground bespoke bench will be turfed and rubber laid to enable all year round access |
| 7.2 | | | | |
| 7.2.1 | Investigate the options of how to provide electric mobility scooters for disabled people. | | | The now retired Downs Ranger had previously investigated this objective and found that suitable vehicles are available but the implementation of such a scheme will need to be linked with any future development of a visitor facility. |
| 7.2.2 | Investigate the alternative options and implications of extending the cycling routes on existing roads and paths and the provision of cycle parking facilities at visitor attractions. | | | Awaiting DC decision on options for enhancing visitor experience of walking and cycling experience in the Movement and Place Framework Produced by City Design Group approved by DC members |

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| 7.2.3 | Act on recommendations of the first access audit of the site to identify where improvements (if any) can be made. | | | Victorian steps restored in 2015 in the Gully to enhance access to this area. |
| 7.2.4 | Carry out a condition survey of all paths | | | Ongoing: Downs supervisor has carried out a condition survey. In summary this found that the Zig Zag footpath had been resurfaced. The Footpath at bottom half of the Promenade had been refurbished in 2011. The Bridge Valley Road footpath was found to be adversely affected by a build-up of moss and needs resurfacing. The goat enclosure footpath has had aggregate placed at the bottom end. All other footpaths are considered in a reasonable and safe condition. |
| 7.2.5 | Upgrade the footpath into the Gully where the quality is poor | | | Objective met: Victorian steps restored in 2015 in the gully to enhance access to this area |
| 7.2.6 | Liaise with Highways Department to provide disabled parking bays at Stoke Road cafe, Seawalls and other areas. | | | Objective met: Highways Parking restrictions proposal implemented in December 2015 which included disabled parking bays at Seawalls and the Downs Café |
| 7.2.7 | Investigate the possibility of erecting brown informative directional signs in the city to guide visitors to all destination parks including the Downs. | | | This was not progressed as it was established in 2007 that the BCC Planning and Transport policy restricts the use of brown signs within the city and the Downs would not Qualify for such signs. |
| 7.2.8 | Prepare a site use and access guide for event organisers | | | Site Permissions have produced check list for event organisers.. |
| 7.3 | Landscape | | | |
| 7.3.1 | Prepare a plan for the future management of scrub areas to balance conflicting pressures of ecology, landscape, access and archaeology | | | Objective met A 10 year Scrub management plan (2014 -2024) has been produced through the AGDWP, and agreed by DC members. The Downs Team have started implementing with the clearing of the species rich grassland across the Downs. The plan is linked to restoration of species rich grassland within the SSSI and wider Downs. Discussions are taking |

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| | | | | place with Natural England to include these areas as part of the Avon Gorge Higher Level Stewardship agreement, in order to get funding towards scrub removal, and grassland restoration work. |
| 7.3.2 | Implement a programme of scrub management subject to 7.3.1 | | | Downs Team have started implementing the new 10 year scrub management plan including clearance of scrub on the Zoo banks |
| 7.3.3 | Remove all scrub growing within the boundary of the scheduled ancient Monument known as Clifton Down Camp, an Iron Age hill fort. | | | Continuing scrub clearance on Iron Age Fort earth banks with the assistance of Community PayBack |
| 7.3.4 | Check the condition of all trees growing on the iron Age Fort annually and maintain them to reduce the risk of them ever being blown over in strong winds. | | | This is linked to above and in future years will form part of the Tree officer system of tree inspection set out 7.3.8. |
| 7.3.5 | Review the provision and design of all 'park furniture' e.g. seats, litter bins, signage, obstacle fences etc. and produce a design guide. | | | Ongoing programme of maintaining existing park furniture plus the addition of appropriate numbers and siting of new memorial benches |
| 7.3.6 | Create and implement a replacement programme of existing park furniture and the provision of additional items – following 7.3.5. | | | Ongoing: Downs Team carry out annual bench condition reports and using this information to carry out repairs and refurbishment and remove if considered redundant |
| 7.3.7 | Identify and open lost views across The Downs and Avon Gorge. | | | View opened up along the Promenade by Community PayBack and second view of the Promenade opposite Merchants House has been identified but requires DC approval. |
| 7.3.8 | Continued inspection and proactive management of the Downs Tree Stock in line with the risk management strategy. | | | Ongoing Trees were inspected by BCC tree officers using zonation system based on frequency of use i.e. the more frequently the use the greater frequency of inspection. There are estimated be up to be more than 2000 trees and inspections are likely to result in significant remedial works and costs. |

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| 7.3.9 | Prepare a tree planting plan for the Downs to include options for replanting with existing or new species to fill gaps within existing avenue planting and / or phased felling and replanting of horse-chestnut avenues. | | | Objective being met. Tree planting programme/strategy to enhance and replace avenue diseased trees agreed by DC and is being implemented by the public by purchasing trees through the BCC website and schools planting event One Tree per Child project |
| 7.3.10 | Maintain an elm tree felling and removal programme where elm disease is identified in an effort to remove the residual disease base with a view to possibly reintroducing elm trees through a planting scheme later. | | | Objective met. Elm Felling programme has resulted in numbers of Huntington Elms being reduced to two trees which are currently considered to be healthy |
| 7.4.0 | Wildlife | | | |
| 7.4.1 | Maintain the existing wildflower meadows | | | Objective being met. Hay cut carried out after July 15 by contractors. Hay given to city farms. HLS agreement extended to include the hay cut areas |
| 7.4.2 | Investigate the potential for creating new areas if wildflower meadow in carefully selected | | | Objective met In summer 2014 FODAG volunteers, collected wildflower seeds from areas of species rich grassland adjacent to Circular Road and spread them on the small grassland area at the top of the Gully view point to enhance the botanical interest. Results of this work: whole site surveys on May 3 and June 2015 found 47 species including 5 of the sown species, Common Vetch, Ox-eye Daisy, Pale Flax, Yellow Rattle and Hop Trefoil. It should be noted that research over the past four years has shown that many species take more than a year to become identifiable and to flower. Subsequent surveys in July and August 2015 prior to mowing found a further nine species, none of them plants that had been sown, giving a species list of 57. Five species found in 2014 were not found in 2015, including Quaking Grass, Ladies Bedstraw and Rough Hawkbit. The existing hay meadows are being extended in 4 locations, and the whole meadow area will be integrated into a revised HLS agreement. These extension areas were selected on the |

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| | | | | basis of their potential for restoration, and members of the AGDWP were consulted on the proposals. Three areas in the base of the Gorge, are also going to be managed as meadows. |
| 7.4.3 | Develop and implement survey and monitoring programmes for rare plants, insects and other animals | | | A survey and monitoring programme has been drawn up, and will be implemented once funding has been obtained. A request for funding from Downs Committee is included in the associated Downs Committee Report. |
| 7.4.4 | Goats monitored daily by the Downs Team | | | Ongoing: Continued daily monitoring takes place by the Downs Team and FODAG do this on the weekends |
| 7.4.5 | Reviewing goat grazing project | | | Ongoing by BCC, Natural England, Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project and FODAG |
| 7.4.6 | Undertake grazing feasibility study of The Downs | | | This has not been progressed as grazing not seen as practical option for managing the grassland on the Downs given its common land status and open to the public preventing fencing being erected. |
| 7.5 | Antisocial behaviour | | | |
| 7.5.1 | Produce a detailed plan to manage fairyland with the aims of encouraging greater public access | | | The new scrub management plan includes the removal of scrub from Fairyland. Also the proposed extension to Natural England Higher level Stewardship Agreement will include scrub clearance of Fairyland to restore species rich grassland |
| 7.5.2 | Investigate ways to control traffic speed on the Downs. FODAG to present a report to Committee | | | Objective met: 20 MPH speed introduced by Highways across the Downs |
| 7.5.3 | Improve enforcement of byelaws especially those forbidding the parking of vehicles on the grass | | | Enforcement of the byelaws is undertaken by BCC Security Services, who in most cases have demonstrated they are able to successfully remove offenders and reduce reoffending. |
| 7.5.4 | Improve the enforcement of the byelaws forbidding the lighting of fires (barbeques). A recommendation will be brought to committee | | | New dedicated BBQ area created which is clearly identified on site maps and BCC website. The number of incidents of BBQs |

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| | | | | outside this area needs to be assessed |
| 7.5.5 | Further the process of "preventing" vehicles from parking on the grass by the use of physical barriers and reinstate existing damage to turf (whilst being sensitive to ecological considerations, where appropriate). | | | Traffic subcommittee met in 2014 and agreed that physical barriers would not be the solution to preventing parking on the Downs as they cause maintenance problems. Enforcement of the byelaws is undertaken by BCC Security Services, who in most cases are able to successfully remove offenders and reduce reoffending therefore barriers not needed. Installation of double lines stopping with 2 wheels on the Downs . |
| 7.5.6 | Implement fixed penalties for acts of littering and dog fouling. Dog warden service to assist | | | Patrols by BCC Security Services are used to deter these and other anti-social activities and in general have proved to be successful. BCC also have dog warden who issue fixed penalties |
| 7.5.7 | Evaluate the arguments for and against the provision of litterbins and the cost thereof. | | | The Downs Team use temporary bins in addition to permanent bins which are placed in strategic important locations |
| 7.5.8 | Provide more comprehensive cover of dog bins, Achieved with additional bins | | | Ongoing: A rolling replacement programme of replacing poor quality bins is underway. Downs Team consider there sufficient coverage of bins across the Downs |
| 7.6 | Management and resources | | | |
| 7.6.1 | Investigate and experiment with all options to reduce the effects of joggers eroding grassed areas and any associated 'wildlife'. | | | FODAG continue to maintain and create dead hedges still waiting for finance Maintenance and extension of areas protected by 'dead hedges' completed and is continually monitored. FODAG carry out renovations of fences every winter. Avon Gorge and Wildlife Project produce signs to explain why dead hedges are there. Downs Team use wood chip to put down on jogging tracks this encouraging this to stay one path |

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| 7.6.2 | Monitor users enjoyment of the Downs through regular Surveys | | | The Downs team require specialist assistance for this piece of work. Members are requested to consider whether they wish to commission visitor surveys given current budget constraints |
| 7.6.3 | Continue to monitor the playing quality of the sports pitches and ensure the quality of the playing surface. | | | Ongoing: All playing surfaces are subject to an annual inspection by the Downs Supervisor and remedial action taken as required The height of cut grass has been amended to reflect the requirements of Estates including the Downs. |
| 7.6.4 | Monitor demand for sport provision and report all changes to committee with recommendation's for reaction | | | Current use is Saturday downs league football, and Wednesday Bristol university football. Any new applications to use Downs would come into BCC sports lettings, who would then contact downs management. |
| 7.6.5 | Review the present specification for grounds maintenance. | | | Objective met |
| 7.6.6 | Consider ways to introduce car parking charges for events and predict the effect on attendance/income generation | | | A trial was established with the 'Wool Fair' event in September 2014 seeking £1 per parked car. With the formulation of The Downs Committee Sub group for events , DC have the opportunity to meet with larger events to formulate an approach to charges on a case by case basis. It is expected that the baseline |

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| | | | | £1 per car will be a model that will generally be adopted in the future. If parking restrictions are to be implemented across The Downs the introduction of additional Car Parking charges should lead to an increase in event revenue from at least Funderworld and The Circus. |
| 7.6.7 | Investigate ways to increase income through donations and sponsorship of e.g. benches and trees. | | | Bench sponsorship has averaged approximately 4-6 a year generating an income. . Sponsored trees form part of the new Avenue Tree planning scheme |
| 7.6.8 | Investigate all grant funding opportunities for capital works | | | Natural England have agreed in 2015 to extend the existing Higher level Stewardship Agreement which will provide capital funding for removal scrub in Avon Gorge for duration of the agreement (needs confirm with NE this will happen). |
| 7.6.9 | Retain Green Flag award | | | Deferred until further notice due to financial constraints |
| 7.6.10 | Produce an interpretation and promotion plan | | | Not produced due to lack of resources but a number of interpretative materials have been/will be produced through the collective ideas and actions of members of Interpretation subgroup |
| 7.6.11 | Audit the EMAS action plan | | | The Downs Supervisor carries out an annual audit. |
| 7.6.12 | FODAG well established and the expansion of the groups role to evolve through the life of the Plan. | | | Objective met. The group make a significant contribution to the running of the Downs, including, fund raising, goat management, traffic surveys, mammal and butterfly monitoring, working parties assisting at events, litter forays and supporting the Avon Gorge Wildlife project. Further details on their |

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| | | | | contribution will be presented in in separate item |
| 7.6.13 | Develop the existing staff on site to enable then to enforce byelaws and assist members of the public as they arise | | | This requires Downs Team to obtain specific training. Enforcement of the byelaws is undertaken by BCC Security Services. who in most cases are able to successfully remove offenders and reduce reoffending |
| 7.6.14 | Investigate and encourage volunteer assistance for the Downs | | | Ongoing: FODAG continue to grow in numbers and provide a range of support across the Downs |
| 7.6.15 | Investigate the options and benefits of establishing a volunteer ranger service | | | Ongoing FODAG volunteers continue weekend goat monitoring |
| 7.6.16 | Provide an information point adjacent to Stoke Road, which includes emergency telephone contact numbers and information such as public notices | | | Existing Information point existing sign at Stoke Road 2015 incorporates site management contacts details |
| 7.6.17 | Manage the Downs budget as business unit | | | Ongoing The Downs finance officer reports to the Downs Committee on budget spend |
| 7.6.18 | Carry out risk assessments | | | Downs Supervisor and Area manager North review risk assessment on an annual basis. Electronic and hard copies are available at the Downs depot. New risk assessment for site as a whole and the cliff edges was produced and works carry out to implement recommendations. |
| 7.6.19 | Revise the 5 Year work programme | | | Work programme revised annually by the Downs Management Team |

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| 7.6.20 | Non listed building and structures inspected by property services | | | Carried out annually by property services |
| 7.6.21 | All listed buildings and structures inspected by the property section | | | Carried out annually by property services |
| 7.6.22 | Downs Committee monitors the implementation of the five year plan. | | | Heritage Planning and Partnership Officer reports directly to Committee with an update of current activities and progress against the Plan. This will be reviewed in 2016. |
| 7.6.23 | Avon Gorge Downs Project produce annual review of project | | | The AGDWP present an annual report to Committee. |
| 7.6.24 | Parks Grounds Maintenance Manager reviews the Departmental Asset Management Plan for the maintenance of buildings and structures. | | | BCC Property Services carry out inspections of buildings and structures on the Downs |
| 7.6.25 | Monitor income and expenditure against annual budget. | | | The Area Manager and Heritage and Planning officer meets with the Downs Finance Officer quarterly |
| 7.6.26 | Monitor and record the number of events | | | Historically the Site Permissions service reports 5 times a year to DC via the delegated powers report with larger events requiring a separate report for consideration. The formation of the Subgroup for Events builds on this reporting function and ensures any increased event activity is fully considered. |
| 7.6.27 | Monitor and record number of football games and income generated | | | The Downs Supervisor monitors and records weekly football games. Income generated in monitored by the BCC Finance Officers |
| 7.6.28 | Downs Supervisor formally monitors quality of work against specifications | | | Ongoing compliance with BCC grounds maintenance specification |
| 7.6.29 | Play ground checks carried out weekly and filed in the play section | | | The playground is monitored weekly by the play inspector and records filed centrally. New playground installed and grounds |

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| | | | | reinstatement carried out Two sets of OTIS fitness equipment installed on one year trial basis. Downs Team monitor condition. |
| 7.6.30 | Informal ground maintenance quality inspections carried out the Downs supervisor | | | Ongoing duty of the Downs Supervisor |
| 7.6.31 | Review the environmental register currently used by the landscape design Team. Adapt and adopt it for specific needs of the Parks and Estates Services | | | Not currently being progressed |
| 7.6.32 | Revise the Management Plan | | | Heritage Planning and Partnership officer to commission project to reviewed the management plan in 2016 |
| 7.6.33 | Downs Committee monitor the implementation of the 5 year plan through Regular Heritage Planning and Partnership reports | | | Ongoing Heritage Planning and Partnership reports to Downs Committee |
| 7.6.34 | Downs Committee reports to the Council and Society of Merchant Venturer's | | | This is reported on annually. |
| | Additional Works Undertaken | | | |
| 1 | Established and managed successful partnership with Community Payback | | | Community PayBack completed refurbishment of the Downs dressing rooms in 2014 and continue scrub clearance of the iron age fort |
| 2 | Bridge Valley Road | | | The Downs Team will close the road and carry out annual scrub clearance early in the new year 2016 to permit rock safety inspections. |
| 3 | Downs Events | | | Downs Events Managed by BCC site permissions Team |
| 4 | Working Groups | | | Subgroups that met include the Traffic group, Interpretation Group and Downs Events group |
| 5 | Bristol Resilience Scheme | | | Bristol Water installation of major new pipeline was completed in summer of 2014 |
| 6 | Staff Development | | | Ongoing Downs staff resource currently includes Downs Supervisor and 5 gardeners plus support from Heritage planning and partnership officer The Downs team have completed and assessed annual Performance management and training shortfalls and development |

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| | | | | opportunities identified. |
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Arlington Court Parkland Plan February 2015



Nicholas Pearson Partnership LLP
Historic Landscapes • Landscape Management • Landscape Design

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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2.0 METHODOLOGY

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3.0 OUTLINE HISTORY

A chronological history of Arlington Court from the eleventh century to the present day.

4.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

A summary of the current ownership, designations, policies and management which apply to the site, together with an overview of its archaeological and wildlife value.

5.0 ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A review of the history of Arlington, identifying key phases in its development, and setting out the significance of the site based on the historic analysis and the information set out in section 4.0.

6.0 GENERAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND PROPOSALS

Identification of the key general issues and vulnerabilities affecting the conservation of the site, based on the above analysis, condition and consultation with relevant stakeholders, with proposals that address these issues and recommendations for opportunities to enhance the site and improve current management.

7.0 AREA-BY-AREA PROPOSALS

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8.0 PRIORITISATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

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- 8. Schedule of Works
- 9. Parkland Masterplan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This parkland plan has been prepared in accordance with the client's brief, advised by Natural England. It sets out the history, significance and current condition of the parkland at Arlington Court, and advises on its future management and restoration under a Higher Level Stewardship agreement.

The subject of this plan is the grade II* Registered parkland surrounding Arlington Court, owned by the National Trust. The park, farmland, woodland and ponds are of considerable scenic appeal, providing the setting for the grade II* listed early nineteenth century house and gardens. Documentary research, site survey, previous research, and consultations with key stakeholders, have informed this plan.

The park at Arlington is significant as:

- A Site of Special Scientific Interest, designated for its nationally important lichen and invertebrate interest.
- A largely surviving, grade II* Registered, early and mid nineteenth century landscape park, overlapping with a probable medieval deer park of the 1340s, based on archaeological evidence and field names.
- The home of a branch of the ancient Devon family, the Chichesters, for over 500 years, culminating in the 66-year ownership by Miss Rosalie Chichester.
- The setting of a grade II* listed early nineteenth century country house designed by Thomas Lee.
- A landscape with a number of locally significant archaeological features and sites.
- A popular and attractive destination for both local people and visitors to the area, with a highly scenic, undulating parkland landscape, good visitor facilities and an events programme.

However, the parkland is not without its issues:

- In the Trust's attempts to follow the wishes of Miss Chichester and preserve a wild, 'natural' landscape character at Arlington, key design elements of the early to mid nineteenth century landscape park have become obscured.
- Two of the five units that make up the Arlington SSSI are in unfavourable recovering condition due to shading of lichens and use of fertiliser.
- Many mature parkland trees were felled in the early to mid twentieth century and those that remain or have been replanted are now at risk from novel and introduced diseases, affecting Horse Chestnut, pines, larch and ash.

- Ungrazed areas are becoming overgrown with scrub, threatening the quality of the lichen habitat and detracting from the aesthetic values of the parkland.
- The Lake has almost entirely silted up and this key feature of the nineteenth century designed landscape is at risk of loss.
- Parkland management is divided between the Trust and their Home Farm tenant, leading to variation in the condition and appearance of the pasture, fencing styles and limiting public access to parts of the park.
- Stone-faced boundary and tree mound banks vary in condition.
- Fallen dead trees have been left for ecological benefit, but a few detract from the aesthetic values of the parkland.
- The suspension bridge piers and three, single-span drive bridges over the river Yeo are becoming overgrown, undermining their aesthetic role in the landscape and potentially obscuring structural defects.
- Twentieth century agricultural fence boundaries have resulted in the concealment of the notably indented historic garden boundary.
- Free access generated by the public rights of way network reduces the scope for paying and repeat visitors to help fund the essential conservation work at Arlington.

To address these issues, the Parkland Plan sets out proposals to:

- Adopt a conservation management approach that balances the aims of Miss Chichester's Reserve, the SSSI objectives, and conservation of the nationally important designed landscape park.
- Improve understanding and awareness of the early to mid nineteenth century designed landscape by opening up lost views and revealing picturesque parkland structures.
- Regenerate the parkland tree cover based on historic evidence.
- Restore grazed parkland clumps and former meadows to low density grazing.
- Conserve and repair the distinctive stone-faced boundaries and tree mound banks.
- Seek to enhance the conservation of parkland within the Home Farm tenancy.
- Prepare a feasibility study for the long-term future of the lake.
- Provide guidance on the location of fallen deadwood.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful for the assistance provided by the National Trust staff, in particular, Ana Chylak, Murray Sharpe, James Parry, Kelly Bezer, Janet Lister, Ian Wright, Angela Wood and Emma Jones, and to Jon Grimes of Natural England, Kim Auston of English Heritage, and the staff of the North Devon Record Office, the Devon Heritage Centre and the Devon and Exeter Institution. Maxine Putnam produced the lichen survey and significantly improved our understanding of the status and condition of lichens at Arlington.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Study Area

Arlington Court stands at the centre of the Arlington Estate, 10 miles northeast of Barnstaple in Devon. The study area comprises the grazed parkland and lake components of the landscape registered as being of special historic interest by English Heritage, covering around 145 hectares and owned by the National Trust (figures 1 and 2). While the historic research and analysis covers the whole Registered area, management and conservation proposals focus on the parkland areas eligible for Higher Level Stewardship funding. This report does not, therefore, include proposals for residential properties, the gardens and grounds around the Court, or the woodlands, which are subject to separate English Woodland Grant Scheme agreements.

1.2 Purpose of the Parkland Plan

This Parkland Plan has been prepared for the National Trust and is to be used as a management tool for the care and conservation of the parkland at Arlington Court. The Plan will also inform the Home Farm Higher Level Stewardship agreement for the areas of parkland managed under this tenancy. It summarises the history of the designed landscape, assesses its current management and use, and proposes ways in which its importance and value can best be managed, conserved and, where appropriate, restored.

1.3 Consultation

This Parkland Plan has been reviewed by the following stakeholders and consultees:

- Ana Chylak, General Manager, Arlington Court
- Murray Sharpe, Head Ranger, Arlington Court
- Janet Lister, Wildlife and Countryside Advisor, NT
- Emma Jones, Curator, NT Cornwall and West Devon
- James Parry, Archaeologist, NT
- Kelly Bezer, Rural Surveyor, NT
- Ian Wright, Consultancy Manager, NT
- Jon Grimes, Natural England
- Kim Auston, English Heritage

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Documentary Research

Previous reports on the history and ecology of the landscape at Arlington formed the basis of the documentary research. These included:

- Colvin and Moggridge, *The Historic Landscape of Arlington Court* (July 1993, revised January 1994)
- Spalding Associates *Nature Conservation Assessment of the Arlington Estate* (2005)
- Jonathan Lovie, *Arlington Court, Devon: Conservation Statement* (January 2009)
- Dr. Nick Berry, *Arlington Court, Devon: Archaeological and Historic Landscape Survey of the Arlington Estate* (August 2011)

Original documents were also consulted in the National Trust Property Archives at Arlington Court and the regional office at Killerton House, the North Devon Record Office, and the Devon Heritage Centre. Further information, illustrations and maps were gathered online and from the National Monuments Record and the British Library. A full list of references can be found in appendix I. Key historic maps and images of Arlington are included as figures in this report.

2.2 Site Survey and Analysis

The aims of the site survey were:

- To identify and map landscape features, including driveways, footpaths, boundaries and artefacts. All items were photographed and are included in the Historic Landscape Gazetteer (appendix 3);
- To record the location of the principal views, circulation routes, derelict features and the sites of structures marked on early plans;
- To assess the current condition and management of the landscape;
- To identify areas of important wildlife habitat and diversity;
- To identify the conservation measures required to preserve the key surviving historic features;
- To assess the condition and significance of individual mature and veteran parkland trees, clumps and belts;
- To identify constraints to, and opportunities for, landscape and wildlife enhancement and management.

The site survey was a walkover survey over three days in October 2014, carried out using the Ordnance Survey first edition 25-inch map, on which extant features were recorded, enabling comparison with earlier maps and identification of surviving landscape elements and phasing. This has informed the proposals by guiding the identification and survival of the *last complete phase* of the designed landscape as well as relicts of earlier features which merit further investigation and conservation, leading to proposals for the conservation of the landscape as a whole, its better understanding and enjoyment.

2.3 Tree Survey Methodology

A survey of the mature and veteran parkland trees at Arlington was undertaken to update the previous survey carried out by Colvin and Moggridge in 1994. A veteran tree is a tree that is of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of its age, in the ancient stage of its life, and old relative to others of the same species. For oaks, this stage might correspond to a girth greater than 470 cm, but for other species much smaller girths might apply.

Veteran trees are generally important as:

- a reserve of genetic material
- a historic record, documenting changes in past management through their form and shape
- wildlife habitat, in particular for nesting and roosting birds, bats, other mammals, lichens, fungi and deadwood invertebrates
- a source of aesthetic, landscape or spiritual inspiration
- a living monitor of environmental change, from changes in soil condition to the reaction of epiphytic lichens to atmospheric pollutants.

The veteran and parkland trees at Arlington are primarily important as:

- Key structural elements of the designed historic landscape.
- A historic record of eighteenth and nineteenth century plantings, parkland management and landscape design.
- Landscape features and wildlife habitats in the SSSI.
- Wildlife habitats for lichens, decay fungi and insects, nesting birds and feeding woodpeckers, but also as potential bat roosts. Overall the wildlife interest is considered to be of national importance.

The mature and veteran parkland tree survey at Arlington was carried out in October 2014, primarily to identify the key conservation requirements for managing the trees in the park, but also to improve understanding of the development of the landscape. The survey was carried out as part of the general site survey. The girth of each parkland tree was taken in order to calculate an approximate planting date, and the species, condition and ecological value was also noted. Trees were located using the old 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps, and recent aerial photographs, overlaid onto modern 1:2500 scale digital mapping. Condition was assessed from ground level for conservation purposes only; the survey does not constitute a full safety inspection, and all trees posing potential hazards to people, livestock or property should be inspected by a qualified arboriculturalist. No such inspection was carried out as part of this survey. No off-site laboratory testing, fungi or insect identification has been carried out.

The condition survey and description record (appendix 7) was informed by the Natural England Veteran Tree recording forms (which were designed as a hard copy card record) and H. Read *Veteran Trees: a guide to good management* (31). Unfortunately there is no standard national database yet established to record the UK's veteran tree population.

Each tree girth was measured by tape at 1.3m above ground, unless otherwise stated; 1.3m is the recognised forestry standard for measuring tree girths.

The tree age estimates were based on these girth measurements and assumptions on historic growing conditions, that is, the extent of competition with other trees. Some of the estimates are made with a degree of confidence, whilst others require wide margins of error. Some of the trees, for example, may be considerably older than estimated as they may have competed with adjacent trees, now lost, earlier in their lives. Over-mature trees, particularly on exposed and nutrient-poor sites, may grow very slowly for many years at the end of their lives. We have used the simple empirical method set out by A. Mitchell (32), cross-referred to documentary records for this site. The estimated ages can be used to indicate a latest planting date. Adjustment factors for close competition have only been adopted for known close-grown avenues. Research by Tree-Ring Services (70) has started to provide evidence of the relationship between age and girth for veteran oaks at two sites in Kent and Gloucestershire using invasive live tree coring to produce accurate

dendrochronological data. While this data will be amended by further research – the data utilises only seventeen trees – it is the first important step towards an evidence-based best approximation, rather than a theoretical model. However further data and research is needed to substantiate the Tree-Ring Services model, in particular to match tree ring dendrochronology with known dated samples.

The locations are plotted in AutoCAD in a DWG/DXF format on the park masterplan, to maximise flexibility for uploading to future systems. Updating and uploading the files in future may require IT support.

Tree work proposals are identified in outline only by a Chartered Forester, with a view to maximising the lifespan of the tree. All tree works need to be carried out by an arboriculturalist with good experience of veteran tree conservation management, including climbing inspections.

The results of the tree survey can be found in appendix 7.

A specialist lichen survey was undertaken by lichenologist, Maxine Putnam. The methodology and results of this are summarised in 4.6, with the full report available in appendix 6.

2.4 Landscape Restoration Philosophy

The conservation of historic parks and gardens has to respond to a number of characteristics which differentiate landscapes from buildings or archaeology. Some facets will affect buildings or archaeology, such as biological decay or erosion, but in landscapes these characteristics are dominant.

- i. *Biological growth* and decline of trees, shrubs, grass and flowers means that certain factors are not readily controlled, and can only be controlled by action, that is, active management, whether it be grazing, pruning or mowing. Buildings also require maintenance but, in the landscape, a default in management can have a very rapid effect that alters the entire character of the heritage asset. At Arlington, the impact of novel tree disease could have increasing effects, for example, if ash dieback (*Chalara*) impacts upon young ash planted to provide a high pH bark 'bridge' for lichen veteran trees.

- ii. *Geomorphological processes*, primarily siltation and erosion, do impact on buildings or buried archaeology, but again it is a matter of timescale and magnitude of effect. The lake is at risk of loss from siltation.
- iii. The *aesthetic design* rationale is dominant, and so designed landscapes have very little scope for productive adaptive re-use without impact on their essential characteristics. Parks may be maintained agriculturally, but the conservation of a historic park requires techniques different from modern, commercial, mechanised agriculture.
- iv. *Modern perceptions* have tended to view landscapes as natural, implying that they can be appreciated free of charge. In contrast, archaeology has been regarded as either a fixed constraint, or an opportunity for investigation; whereas buildings are useful, capable of re-use, and are known to be expensive to maintain. Preconceived ideas about resource allocation limit what can be achieved in landscapes.
- v. The '*Secret Garden*' effect; it is often the most neglected or abandoned parks and gardens that have the greatest aesthetic and emotional power. Conservation has to respond to modern perceptions of the landscape which might be entirely at odds with an original design, resulting from the processes of growth and decay. Conservation *as found* might be appropriate for many such sites, as intended by Miss Chichester's wishes to establish a *reserve*, albeit that intervention is necessary at intervals to arrest the loss of fundamental features, such as the potentially catastrophic impact of tree roots on a bridge.
- vi. Most, but not all, landscapes are a *palimpsest*, with several layers of design. Conservation largely of the *last complete phase* may well be the most appropriate, as it is widely adopted for buildings. Restoration to a defined early date now tends to be limited to specific circumstances (where resources allow; later phases are of low significance; intervention is unavoidable; early evidence is dependable; and recreation is acceptable). Two risks arise, however, from restoration to the last complete phase: firstly that we could end up conserving mostly late nineteenth century landscapes, being the last significant design phase in many great landscapes. Secondly, that the mix of characters might, through growth and decay, degrade the most important design features on a site. This is precisely the situation at Arlington.

The conservation and restoration of designed landscapes does not, therefore, fall readily into a predetermined philosophy or approach. Conservation guidelines are useful but, in practice, policies have to respond to:

- an understanding of the cultural importance of the site;
- identification and conservation of the essential qualities and character of an individual site, be they historic, visual, aesthetic, architectural, biological or perceptual;
- a diversity of approaches between parks, so that different sites conserve different aspects of designed historic landscapes;
- opportunities created by fortune, or by natural circumstance.

For many sites, a phased process of conservation and repair provides opportunities to enhance our understanding of the landscape, and evolve approaches that are best adapted to the nature, character, use and qualities of the particular designed landscape.

Conservation comprises all the processes involved in caring for a place to retain its cultural significance, and may include restoration. Restoration is part of the whole conservation approach, involving repair that seeks to reinstate meaning or use to a feature. In the ICOMOS International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, restoration is defined in Article 9 as follows:

The process of restoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.

The biological decay of designed landscapes and gardens means that restoration in the form of periodic replanting and other landscape management works is inevitable if a site is to survive. As such, caring for any designed landscape is a blend of both conservation and restoration. The *last complete phase*, for which there may be good documentary or physical record, avoids conjecture as far as possible and is, therefore, frequently stated as the restoration aim in a conservation plan.

3.0 OUTLINE HISTORY

This section sets out the documentary evidence found to date, in chronological order. Section 5.0 analyses this evidence to tell the story of the park at Arlington Court and place its history in context. If only an overview is required, then the reader is advised to skip to section 5.0 and see figures 35 and 36, Historic Landscape Analysis.

- 1086 Arlington, or *Alferdintona* (4), was recorded in the Domesday Survey with a small population of nine households and comprising arable land, pasture, meadow and four acres of woodland with 5 cattle and 100 sheep. The lord of the manor and tenant-in-chief was Alfred of Spain (3).
- 1166 Arlington was held by Philip de Columbers. Philip *enfeoffed one knight on his lordship manor of Allwrintona, to wit Hugh de Ralege* and Arlington subsequently descended in the Raleigh family (4).
- 1241 William de Ralegh held Arlington from Philip de Columbers, who held it in chief for the King (4).
- 1258 First rector of Arlington, Philip Fitz-Urze, was appointed. He would have been employed by the Raleghs and therefore his appointment provides further support for the existence of a manor house in close proximity to the church (4).
- 1285 Isabella de Fichours possessed Arlington in dower of Thomas de Ralegh (4).
- 1341 A Charter of Feoffment refers to *Wytemor Wood* bounded by the *Combisheade* stream on one side and a ditch on the other. This seems to correspond with Deer Park Wood and may relate to enclosure of a medieval deer or hunting park (4).
- 1343 A quitclaim refers to a *new ditch* made around *Wytemorewode* (4).
- 1345 A second quitclaim refers to *Thomas's* [Thomas de Ralegh, son and heir of William] *park of Lokkesore Wode*, which included *Blakewill Doune* and *Wytemorlond* (4).
- 1377 John Ralegh died, holding the properties of Raleigh Manor near Barnstaple and Arlington, Challacombe and Fitelcote manors. The manor and advowson of Arlington passed to his widow, Lady Elizabeth Paulet (4).

- 1384/5 The manors of Raleigh, Challacombe and Fitelcote passed to Thomasina, daughter and heiress of John Raleigh. Thomasina married Sir John Chichester (1,2,4).
- 1396 Lady Elisabeth Raleigh presented to Arlington rectory, suggesting that she was still resident at Arlington (4).
- 1404 Thomasina Chichester died and was buried at Arlington (4).
- 1416 An indenture makes the first documented reference to a mill at Arlington (4).
- 1433 Sir John Chichester, son of Thomasina and John Chichester, presented to the rectory of Arlington. Sir John was married to Alice, coheiress of Wotton of Widworthy, Devon (4).
- 1437 Sir John Chichester died and was succeeded by his son, Richard (4).
- 1495 Documents relating to the manor and advowson of Arlington record that the Chichesters had handed the management of the estate over to Nicholas Poyntz and William Bawen, suggesting that they were not resident (4).
- 1534 Amyas Chichester (b. c.1512), great grandson of Richard Chichester, enlarged or rebuilt the manor house (2). He was the first Chichester to live at Arlington and was married to Joan, daughter of Sir Roger Gifford of Brightley, Devon. Joan and Amyas had nineteen sons and four daughters (4).
- 1553 An estate document relating to a legal dispute listed the Chichesters' property at Arlington: *Manor of Arlynton, 20 messuages, 1 mill, 600 acres of land, 60 acres of meadow, 150 acres of pasture, 50 acres of wood, 250 acres of heath and 50 shillings rent, in Alrington, Whytmore in Lockysford, Woollywoode and Shewwoode, and the advowson of the churches of Alrington and Lockysforde* (DRO 50/11/4/3 quoted in (4)). The list records a significant increase in the size of the estate since 1086 (4).
- 1577 Amyas Chichester died and was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry (1547-89). Henry was married to Mary, daughter of George Burgoyne of Zeal, Devon (4).

- 1581 Estate documents refer to at least two mills at Arlington; a grist mill and a fulling mill, with a description that implies they stood next to each other and shared the same water supply (4).
- 1589 Henry Chichester died and was succeeded by his son, Amyas (1573-1622). Amyas was married to Susan, daughter of Sir Thomas Playters of Sotterly, Suffolk (fellow Catholics)(4). The family had retained their Catholic faith at the Reformation and, as recusants, were subject to financial penalties and made relative outcasts from court and political society (1).
- 1607 In punishment for the family's recusancy, the King seized two-thirds of their lands, including Arlington, and leased them to William Awes, of London (4).
- 1611 Speed's map of Devon (figure 3) recorded Arlington as a settlement close to *East Downe*. There is no indication of the existence of a deer park pale in contrast to Shirwell, which was presumably Youlston Park.
- 1622 Amyas Chichester died and was succeeded by his son, John (1602-44). John married Anne, daughter of Francis Howe of East Tilbury, Essex (4).
- 1630 Enclosure of Arlington Down and other downland commenced (2,4). The mid seventeenth century also saw the Chichesters prospering from the development of Barnstaple as a busy trading place with America, and there is a corresponding increase in the development of the Arlington's estate farmhouses (4).
- 1632 Following the succession of Charles I, large parts of the estate previously seized by James I were returned to John Chichester on payment of several hundred pounds each. The Chichesters remained recusants, but it is thought that Charles I was more sympathetic to the Catholic faith. It has also been suggested that John Chichester may have compromised by going to the established church once a month (4).
- 1642 Arlington was searched by supporters of the Parliamentary forces, and it was reported that there was *more substantial armour found at Mr Chichester's house at Arlington and Master Courtenay his house at Molland, than in our whole county* (4).

- 1644 John Chichester died and was succeeded by his eleven-year-old son, also John (1633-99) (4).
- 1640s The Chichesters supported the Royalists during the Civil War, and were subject to financial penalties (1).
- c.1650s John Chichester married Ursula, daughter of Nicholas Borlase of Treluddra, Cornwall (4).
- 1671 A further legal document listed the property of John Chichester esq.: *Manors of Arlington, Woolacombe and Morteheo, and 40 messuages, 3 mills, 2 dovecotes, 40 gardens, 30 orchards, 400-500 acres of land, 150 acres of meadow, 400-500 acres of pasture, 180 acres of wood and 320 acres of furze and heath, in Arlington, Loxford, alias Loxhore, Bratton Fleming, East Downe, Sherwill, Woolacombe, Fremington, Morteheo, and Cruise Morchard. Consideration £1000* (DRO 50/11/4/41 translated and quoted in (4)).
- 1679 The family were subject to rules that forbade Catholics from travelling over five miles from home without licence from the Privy Council. In 1679, they were granted a licence to visit Bath for a maximum of two months so that John Chichester's wife and daughter, Ursula and Prudence, could take the waters as advised by their physicians (4).
- 1699 John and Ursula's eldest son, Giles, married Catherine, daughter of James Palmer of Wingham and niece and heiress of the Earl Castlemaine. Through Catherine, the Chichesters acquired large estates in Wales *through the Clements heiress*, which helped restore their financial prosperity (4, 43).
- 1699/1700 John Chichester died and was succeeded by his son, Giles (1677-1724) (4).
- 1724 Giles Chichester died and was succeeded by his seventeen-year-old son, John (1707-83).
- 1734 First documented reference to the area called *New England*. It may have been created as a result of moving cottages away from the manor house (4). In the same year, Thomas Huxtable was paid for work thatching on the estate and for work at Arlington Mill (12).

c.1740s-60s Likely period when a Palladian style façade was added to the south front of Arlington manor house (figure 5).

- 1764 John married his second wife, Mary (d.1815), daughter of Major Donald MacDonald of Terndriech, Inverness. Major Donald had fought for the Young Pretender Bonnie Prince Charlie in the 1745 Rebellion (a largely Catholic uprising) (4). He was taken prisoner and hung, and Mary was raised by the Dowager Countess of Dundonald (43). John's first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of John Courtenay of Molland (43).
- 1765 Donn's map of the county of Devon (figure 3) mapped the church, parsonage and mansion at Arlington, owned by *Chichester Esq.*, and on the road to *Westland Pound* (Wistlandpound). *Brocomb Bridge* was also located but, as with the 1611 map, there is no indication of an enclosed deer park. Once again, the nearest was Sir John Chichester's park at Youlston. Arlington fell into the administrative division of the hundred of Sherwell.
- 1774 An estate document (NDRO 50/11/6/16) described the Barton at Arlington, listing Horkins Down, the Higher Barton, the Lower Barton, two quarry Closes, the Easter Deer Park Lands, the Barn, Linhay and two cottages thereon. It also described the rights to wood, except timber: *except for the liberty at all times to convey or draw timber for the repair of the rails around the clumps of plantations of firs growing* (2).
- 1776 A tracing of a plan of the estate by Charles Hassall (figure 4) provides the earliest detailed record of Arlington manor house and its immediate landscape. The *Barton House* (illustrated in figure 5) was mapped immediately southeast of the parish church, overlooking a group of small enclosures, collectively known as *Gardens*, and some further outbuildings. To the east of the house were woodlands, *Northern Grove* and *Southern Grove Woods*, and to the west and along a valley, ponds and stream to the southwest, were orchards. Around the house, gardens, woodland and orchard were a number of large fields including *Great Gratton* (meaning Great Hill (2)); *Higher* and *Lower Cunney Close* (probably a variation of coney, meaning rabbit (2)); *Lower Barton* (named after Barton Court Farm); *Western Quarry Field* (named after a quarry in the adjacent field); *Western, Middle* and *Smallcombe Meadows* (meadowland along the river Yeo); and *Western Deerpark Lands* and *Deerpark Lands Meadow*, which provide the documentary evidence for the existence of a deer park at Arlington.

The valley orchards were known as *Lower Culvercombe*, which also hint at the existence of a dovecote at Arlington (*culver* meaning dove (2)).

Late 1700s An undated sketch map of *North Woolly & Shoewood in the Parish of Sherwell with Safford Land & Priory in East Down* (figure 6) provides the earliest detailed record of Woolley Wood and the farmland around North Woolley and Saffordland farms. It pre-dates the realignment of the public road to Barnstaple (the A39) and the establishment of the Woolley Belt. A field at the bottom of Woolly Wood was noted as belonging to *Arlington Barton*; the pre-fix letters, *a, b, c, d* and *e* may indicate tenancies.

1783 John Chichester died and was succeeded by his fourteen-year-old son, John Palmer Chichester (1769-1823). Accounts from February 1783 to July 1784 record the period when Arlington was managed by the trustees of the late John Chichester esq. Payments included regular estate activities, such as sawing timber and labourers' salaries, as well as some more unusual entries, including £36 for a harpsichord. There were small bills for building materials, indicating maintenance rather than major works. The *Mill carpenter* was named as Mr A Huxtable (9).

1790 Colonel John Palmer Chichester married Mary Ann Cary of Torre Abbey, Torquay (4).

1790 Colonel John Chichester remodelled the manor house to designs by John Meadows (1732-1791) (1). Undated drawings record the south front and ground plan of *Arlington House* with proposed alterations (figure 5). They show a complex building consisting of walls that were *part of the old building*, additions to the structure that were *lately made*, and *proposed buildings and alterations*. This suggests that some improvements to the house had been made by the late John Chichester, and the Palladian style front shown in the elevation is clearly a Georgian addition, probably to update the old medieval building. It seems that these initial alterations were considered to be insufficient to meet Colonel Chichester's ambitions, as a second set of undated drawings, in the same hand, then record a more major rebuild, including a revised ground floor layout and a third floor. The northeast location of the service wing suggests that the rebuilt mansion was designed to occupy the same location.

- 1791 Mary Chichester died in child birth (4).
- 1793 Colonel John Chichester married Agnes, daughter of James Hamilton of Bangour, Linlithgowshire, Scotland and converted to the Church of England (1). The oldest chaplaincy in Devon was closed and the last incumbent, the Reverend Henry Innes, was dismissed (4). Agnes Hamilton was the niece of the celebrated North Africa explorer, James Bruce of Kinnaird (5).

- 1794 Three sketches (figure 7) and a short report was prepared by an individual called either T or J Hodgkinson about an intended dam at Arlington:

A sketch for an Intended Head or Dam to raise the water in the Bottom to flow back to the mouth of the Drain near the old stables.

The pinstock must be set on a foundation of stone and which ___ monk to be levied up, as is shown in the sketch No. 3, to support the frame of the pinstock and also to keep up the Bank in that part and to support the grateing before the pin.

The wood trunk may be a piece of oak timber hollow'd out, about 7 or 8 inches square, the hollow part, and 20 feet long.

The row of grove (grooved) piles to be near the mid of the wood trunk, & next the stone arch or drain, to be hit into the wood trunk about half an inch to prevent the water passing by on the sides bottom or top of the trunk, & to be drove into the ground 18 inches or two feet, & stand above (in the middle) about 4 or 5 feet and so on lessening there height as ___ assessed the bank on each side, as is shown in sketch No. 1 these may be two inch fir, but out of the young firs from out the plantation, with a groove in ___ edge & a tang (tongue) of about 3/8 thick of oak.

The puddle dam or mudwall to be the out or upper side of these grave piles, and to be made thicker when it comes above the piles (up to the top of the head) and the mode to do this is by having a channel along the dam as described in No. 2, which must be filled about one foot or one foot and a half deep with earth and then let in water (which may be brought, by small wood gutters from the stream above into this earth in the channel, & mix it well with spades till it is like mortar, when this is done ___ soft, then turn off the water & hit it dry, & when dry, then pursue the same till it is raised to the top of the dam, or nearly so.

The bottom of the stone drain, from the end of the wood trunk, must be laid with broad stones laped over, and side walls set on them, to keep them down, this drain to be the size of the one now made by the stables.

Arlington 28th June 94

T Hodgkinson

It is recommended that the foregoing plan may be carried into execution, as it will make a complete, the small piece of water, and will be a pleasing object from the House, but should it be thought not quite agreeable to carry the head so high as to make the water to flow back to the mouth of the present new drain by the stables, still it is advisable to keep the foundation to the same thickness as here recommended (___ the pinstock to be placed 70 feet above the upper side of the old wall now standing) there being plenty of rubbish to fill up and make the same.

The present old head in the middle may be made good at a very small expense by putting in a pinstock there with small grove piles as directed above and a puddle dam between them and the wall of the old head with a little dry rubbish before, to farm a slope

against the water and this may be useful in shutting off the water at a time while fishing the lower part or doing any little repair to the lower works. (10).

The three sketches illustrate a cross-section, profile and plan of the proposed dam, showing a central stone drain and outfall (figure 7). This is probably the pond below the church, now known as the Wilderness Pond.

c.1797 Paintings of Arlington by Maria Pixell (figure 8) record a fine three-storey classical, rendered mansion with a central bowed section on the main façade, very similar to *Plan no.1* of the designs by Meadows of circa 1790 (figure 5). It was located close to the church, at a high point in the grounds, and the eye-catching, gothic church tower forms part of the picturesque scene. The well-wooded surrounding grounds drop down to the river below and glimpses of the Exmoor hills can be seen in the distance. The enclosed gardens and groves mapped in 1776 appear to have been swept away and replaced with a smooth lawn and gravel forecourt. The maturity of the trees in this new, surrounding parkland may indicate a 1770s-1780s planting phase and, therefore, landscaping works that pre-date the rebuilding of the house or earlier tree planting in Gratton to complement the Palladian south front of the mid-eighteenth century.

A similar view, attributed to John Keast, provides a little more detail, including a visual link to East Down church and manor (figure 8) (58).

1799 Thomas Please was paid £9 *as per bill*. This is probably the Exeter nurseryman who was also paid for trees ten years later (11).

1804 The Ordnance Survey surveyor's drawing (figure 9) is the first map to clearly distinguish a park at Arlington. It appears to show the amalgamation of the former fields of Pond Close, Higher and Lower Cunney Close, Great Gatton and part of the Western Deerpark Lands to create a park extending down the hill and either side of the wooded *Culvercombe*. A perimeter belt of trees is discernible, particularly in the northeastern corner, and clumps of parkland trees had also been established on the higher ground. Meadow appears to have remained alongside the river, below the park, crossed by a new track or drive that ran from the Barnstaple road, north of Woolly farm, through Woolly Wood, over the river and up through the centre of the park. The drawing also recorded the extent of woodland along the steep southwestern banks of the Yeo valley and to Coombeshead.

1809 The Old Series Ordnance Survey map (figure 9) provides an engraved version of the earlier surveyor's drawing, with a clearer depiction of the parkland area and the central drive up from the river (now known as the Smallacombe Drive).

Thomas Please of Exeter was paid £14.16.0 for *trees, seeds &c* (1).

1814 Plans were produced for pineapple pits, signed W. A. (1).

1815-18 James Rendell was paid £6.10.4 for 184 flowerpots (1).

1817 Charles and William Ford, Exeter nurserymen, were paid £17.6.4 for *trees, seeds &c* (1).

1818 A bill was paid for *guttering etc. to the New house* (12).

1819 J. Heming was paid £1.8.0 for *Painting on the Hothouse*. William Delve submitted a bill for sawing oak and larch, *Roofing the stable* and for *Putting up seats in Hot House* sawing timber etc. and *Painting ditto*. John Delve, the blacksmith, charged for various activities including *New Iron worke to Drag Stone bath* – possibly a carriage wash, as a large four-horse carriage was known as a Drag (12).

1820 Colonel John commissioned the construction of a new house at Arlington, appointing the local architect, Thomas Lee (1794-1834) (1).

1822 A note in the Arlington estate archives from John Delve to John Chichester refers to the valuation of what reads as a 16 foot section of iron fencing. The note also refers to the distance *from the house to the west Bartin Hedge, which was about 18 or 20 Land yard* (7). Estate receipts for the same year record payments to: William Delve carpenter *for putting up 28 yards of Rails in west Bartin*; Hancock(?) and Co. for *cutting 10 acres of grass for Hay Deerpark land*; John Radford was paid £7 *for making a wall Double on Wolley at 5s pr yard 29 yard against the Highway* and for opening a quarry, carrying the stones and *for walling up a corner wall*. Another receipt recorded the building of a *stone wall at higher Bartin etc.* (8).

1822 Colonel John Chichester married his third wife, Sophia Catherine Ford (d.1847), daughter of Lady Mary and Sir Francis Ford of Ember Court, Surrey. Lady Mary Ford

was acquainted with the artist, William Blake (1757-1827)⁽⁴⁹⁾. At about this time, Colonel John purchased an allegorical painting by Blake, entitled *The Sea of Time and Space (Vision of the Circle of the Life of Man)* (1).

1823 Colonel John Chichester died and was succeeded by his son, also John (1794-1851) (1).

c.1824 The Glebe House was built for the Rev James Chichester, younger son of Colonel Chichester (1).

1828 Quarter Session records include the formal request, layout plan and press advertisement for a road diversion at Arlington, instigated by John Palmer Bruce Chichester. The surveyor was Robert Mortimer. The plan (figure 10) shows the new section of road running passed two buildings and the *Nursery* to *Finney Lane*, and adjacent to *Hungerwell Field*. The location of these features on later maps suggests, therefore, that this was the realignment of the road that originally ran to the old house and church, and its relocation at a distance away from the new house.

1831 Lt. Obadiah Newell wrote to his friend, John Chichester, saying that he had thanked Sir James Gordon for the sheep and that he had put them in his stable so they didn't eat the flowers and shrubs in his new plantations. Chichester was to send a person for them as soon as possible. Newell went on to tell Chichester about some *curious pine seeds from the mountains in Peru. I have put them into Dr Armstrong's Hot House. If they shoot you shall have them but I have some doubts of it because the earth in which they were kept onboard the vessel which brought them had been saturated with salt water. I thought it best to put them into heat at once rather than delay by sending them to you and the probability of you being from home in which event they would of course be destroyed beyond hope.* Newell went on to discuss a cow Chichester had given him, which had a *wildness of character*. In a subsequent letter, Sir James Gordon wanted to offer Chichester further livestock, a Yeo sheep and two lambs (13).

1833 *An Analysis of the Payments made by Thomas Lock from 1833, on account of John Palmer Bruce Chichester Esq. M.P.* provides a record of estate works during this period. In 1833, payment categories included *Farm and Game account, House-keeping bills, Garden and Plantation*, and *New Coach Road*. £219 was spent on the *Garden and Plantation* account, mainly payments to the head gardener Mr Norris and to Mr

Burge (a Barnstaple nurseryman) for plants (£31). £143 was spent on the new coach road – Charles Bastin and John Squire were the main labourers.

- 1834 In the 1834 accounts, there were *payments on account of pond, coach road etc.* Bills included £15 to J Squire *on a/c of Woolly Road* and several payments of £5 and £10 to Squire and P Parkin in the autumn specifically on account of *the pond*. In October, £55 was paid to Lucombe & Pince & Co. and further payments were made to William Burge. Over 1834, £300 was spent on the gardens and £269 on the pond and coach road.

A sketch plan records the realignment of the roads, plantations and estate entrance near Woolley Farm (figure 11). It appears to show a road to the farm, and two options for a drive *to the house* off the main Barnstaple road. Of the two pencilled options for the new drive, one has a gate lodge to the south and the other has one on the north side, within a clearing in the plantation. The whole junction was to be surrounded by woodland. The solid line across the two roads marked the boundary of *Sir A Chichester's* land (Sir Arthur Chichester of Youlston) and the edge of the unenclosed area mapped in 1804 and known as *Garmonds Down*.

- 1835 The *Garden and nursery* account was separated from the *Wood and plantation* account. Over the year, £209 was spent on the gardens, £259 on the woods and £316 on the *pond etc.* A further payment of £1.16.0 was made to Lucombe & Co., Mr Burge was paid £5.9.5, Mr Pamplin was paid £3.7.2 and two glaziers, Mr Benham and Mr Davis, were paid £0.6.8 and £0.8.9 respectively (1). Several large payments, totalling over £100, were made to Mr Gould on the account of the *New Lodge* (44).

Mr John Nash replaced Mr Norris as head gardener and the forester was Mr Valentine (1).

- 1836 The accounts included an additional expenditure category of *Labour at Lake and Pleasure Grounds* and *Tradesmens' bills for House, Lodges etc.* This would have been the start of work to create a lake in the Yeo valley. Over the year, £346 was spent on the gardens, £122 on the woods, £941 on house and lodge bills and £269 on *Labours at the Lake, Roads and Pleasure Grounds*. John Squire received two payments of £10 for his work on the lake and was paid £7 for *Arlington Bridge*, also listed under the lake account; J. Pugsley received £2.10.0 for Walling in Park and Mr Gould was paid

£50 for *Lodge*. Further seeds and plants were acquired from Mr Burge and Mr Finch was paid £17 under the *Garden and Nursery account* (44).

- 1837 Accounts recorded the expenditure of £424 on the gardens, £92 on the woods, £516 on the house and lodges and £229 on the *Lake and Pleasure Grounds*. John Squire continued to receive regular payments for work to the lake and Mr Gould received a further £30 on account of the Lodge. Mr Moon was paid £10.13.9 for *sundries* and Collum or Callum & Co. were paid £36.15.0 for *pinery* (1).
- 1838 Arlington's head gardener, John Nash, published an article in *The Gardeners' Magazine* entitled *On Moving and Replanting large Trees, as practised at Arlington Court, near Barnstaple*. It was intended as an informative account of his method for moving and replanting large-sized trees. This involved selecting *as good plants as we can for the situation*, normally selected from an *exposed place* where they have a *good stout stem, strong thick bark and plenty of branches*; carefully uprooting them; placing them on a *truck, much like those used by the brewers in London for taking small casks on without wheels*; and planting the tree in its new location, avoiding cutting any roots and with the *most branchy side next the strongest wind, which, with us, is south-west*. Nash goes on to state that he had moved plants of *oak, beech, elm, ash, and sweet chestnut from 2ft 6 in. to 3ft 6in. in circumference of stem, at 1ft. from the ground, from 20ft. to 35 ft. high*. He also mentions moving *Portugal laurel, common laurel, evergreen oaks, deciduous cypresses, common cedar, holly, rhododendrons, box, balm of Gilead, silver and spruce firs, larch and Scots pine*. One of the benefits of relocating large plants was that an effect was achieved *in a year or two, as opposed to twelve or fourteen years*. Nash did not recommend acquiring large plants from *a nursery, or from a dug shrubbery, or the plantation of a London garden; but some from a natural wood, common hedgerow copse etc.* (45).

John married Caroline, daughter of Thomas Thistlethwayte of Southwick Park, Hampshire (4).

The Shirwell parish tithe plan, also of 1838 (figure 12), recorded a number of changes to the landscape around Woolley Wood. As per the 1834 sketch plan, a new, gently curving drive had been created off the Barnstaple road (A39). It led to Woolley Wood through a flanking belt of trees, where it zig-zagged its way down the steep slope to the valley bottom. The entrance to the drive was marked with a

gate lodge occupied by John Taylor, who also had his own garden – a semi-circular enclosure in the field adjacent to the drive plantation. Another drive or track was shown going along the bottom of Woolley Wood to a bridge over the river. Woolley Wood, the drive plantations, Great Hammetts and Little Hammetts Woods and Shoe Wood were all in hand; most of the surrounding, mainly arable, farmland was let to James Kingdom of North Woolley Farm.

The section of the Barnstaple road from Arlington Bridge to Shirwell Cross was made a turnpike road under the Combe Martin Turnpike Trust Act (46).

1839 By 1839, the lake expenses had been combined with the garden and plant account and a total of £594 was spent over the year. Expenditure was mainly to Mr Nash, probably on account of gardeners' wages, but regular payments are also made to Mr Nash for *Lake*, suggesting costs for planting around the new lake (44).

1840 A anonymous collection of sketches of follies and a building plan suggest ideas for a gothic folly. One was drawn on a piece of scrap paper, which included the signature of Sir Bruce Chichester and the printed date 1840 (14).

Estate accounts record a payment to *Kernan* for unspecified supplies or services worth £7.6.6. Burge, seedsman, was also paid £0.11.0 (1). A total of £394 was spent on the *Gardens, Plantations and Woods* account (44).

John Palmer Chichester was awarded a baronetcy by Lord Melbourne's government, having been MP for Barnstaple since 1831 (5).

c.1840s In his undated manuscript for an unpublished history of Devon, Frederick Stockdale (1786-1858) wrote a short account of Arlington Court, describing the mansion as *an elegant example of modern architecture and being near the church, has with the surrounding plantations an imposing appearance* (6).

1841 The head gardener, Mr Nash, was replaced by Mr McEvoy. Estate accounts also record payments to Mr Burge, gardener (£7.15.9); *Osborne's bill* (£5.18.6); *Veitch's bill* (£6.3.6); *Rendle's account* (£5.9.0); *Kernan's account* (£5.17.1); and *Bale's account* (£0.11.6) (1). A total of £287 was spent on the *Gardens and Nursery*, and Mr Baker was paid £40 on account of *Lodge gates* (44).

1842 Estate accounts record garden related payments for *Huxtable's work* (£8.17.8); to *Mr Charlewood, seedsman* (£4.14.6); Mr George Tucker (£14.9.10); and Mr Conway for seeds (£1.1.6) (1). A total of £361 was spent on the *Gardens, Nursery and Lake*. Philip Pyle, William Benham, mason, Mr Penberthy and the gardener, Mr McEvoy were paid for *work at Bridge* and Thomas Bowen for *making drain in Park* (44).

The East Down tithe plan (figure 12) recorded the thin strip of fields along the western bank of the river Yeo, which were predominantly meadow and/or marsh, in ownership but tenanted and not part of Chichester's parkland. The only in-hand area was the park lake, described as a *Pond* and featuring an island at the northern end (36).

1843 £34.14.7 was paid for *Horse Labour on Ornamental Grounds* (1).

The Loxhore parish tithe plan (figure 13) recorded Chichester's in-hand land to the south of the park, along the Combeshead valley and to the east of the Yeo. This comprised the two large woodlands, *Deer Park Wood* and *Webbers Wood & Loxhore* (described as *Furze etc.*) on the steeper valley sides; *Whitemoor* plantation, which was an extension of *Deer Park Wood*; and four other small plantations, including *Great* and *Little Pixey Pit*. Chichester's remaining holding in Loxhore parish was tenanted. A small rectangular building was plotted in *Deer Park Wood*, but was not referred to in the tithe apportionment.

1844 The Arlington parish tithe plan (figure 14) provides a detailed record of the house and park, and was the first map to show the lake. The mansion sat within a fenced area measuring 34 acres and referred to as *House and Grounds*. The L-shaped section of the boundary of this enclosure, to the south of the house, was depicted as a fence, possibly indicating iron railings, while the other boundaries with the parkland were more irregular and curved, and represented by a solid black line, probably indicating a woodland or shrubbery edge. A circuit drive ran from the house, around the perimeter of the park, crossing open parkland at the southern and northern ends, but otherwise passing through plantations. This route also served as approach drives, picking up the Woolley Lodge route from over the river to the south, and the two much shorter drives from the lane to New England and from the church and parsonage to the northwest and northeast. The park occupied all the land to the southwest, west and northwest of the main house. The parkland to the east of

Culvercombe, mapped in 1804, appears to have reverted to farmland called *Gratton*, although it was still in-hand pasture with two boundary plantations or clumps. As a result of the 1834 road diversion, several enclosures and gardens had been made to northeast of the mansion, including an *Outer Garden and Pinery, Walled Garden, Flower Garden and Town Meadow*. A stream ran down the Culvercombe valley from a square pond close to the church, and, in the main valley, the river Yeo had been dammed to create an ornamental lake at the foot of the park. Parkland buildings included a *Sheep Fold* screened by a plantation, close to the north entrance gate, and a small, square lodge, halfway along the northwest drive to the house.

£6.19.8 was paid for *Horse Labour in Park and Ornamental Grounds* (1). The total *Garden, Nursery and Ornamental Grounds* expenditure was £150 (44).

1847 Estate accounts record a payment of £60.4.6 to *J Walter – on account of New Road* (1). They also include payments to John Huxtable and others for *Putting up Rail fence in Park and Putting up Rails Woolley Wood road* (16). A total of £357 was spent on the garden and nursery (44).

1847-9 Several plans of proposed conservatories survive in the Arlington archives. They include a design by Richard Turner (1).

1848 John Huxtable was paid for *Making a House at the Lake* and Robert Rawl for *Painting gates and the boat*. Huxtable and Rawl were also paid for *making oak gate and stritching wire fence in Park, and work at the Lake* (16). £96 was spent on *Payments on account of Lake* and a total of £357 was spent on the *Garden and Nursery* (44).

1849 *A Perspective for Intended Suspension Bridge for Sir Bruce Chichester* (figure 15) was drawn up by William Dredge of Bath. It was called a *Baltic suspension bridge* with ironwork supplied by C. D. Young & Co. of Edinburgh (2). The bridge was not completed and the ironwork was later re-used elsewhere (2). The sketch depicts a picturesque bridge crossing the lake from two raised banks, either side. A path runs along the edge of the lake, under the bridge to the side of the left masonry pier. The lakeshores are shown densely planted with mixed mature trees.

In the same years, plans for new service quarters were also drawn up to designs by James Howell (1).

- 1851 Sir John Chichester died and was succeeded by his nine-year-old son, Sir Alexander Palmer Bruce Chichester (1842-1881) (1).
- 1863 Sir Bruce Chichester came of age and took over the management of Arlington. His subsequent improvements were largely related to new building works (1).
- c.1860s An anonymous, undated sketch map of the Arlington estate has been estimated by Dr. Nick Berry as dating from the 1860s, and, therefore, the early days of Sir Bruce's ownership (figure 16). Like the earlier tithe plan, it recorded the parkland to the west and southwest of the *Court* and showed clumps on the higher ground and woodland in the valleys. Culvercombe valley was labelled *Wilderness* and the lodge on the northwest approach drive was identified as the *Gardener's House*. A *Lodge* was also plotted, east of *New England*, and above the latter was the *Keeper's House*. The drives are crudely depicted, particularly that through *Woolly Wood*, but broadly relate to those shown on the tithe plan.
- 1864 Sir Bruce commissioned a new service wing, dining room and stable block, to designs of R. D. Gould of Barnstaple (1871-1900). New estate cottages were also built including a new farmhouse at Home Farm, again, probably to designs by Gould, (1).
- 1865 Sir Bruce married Rosalie Chamberlayne (1842-1908), daughter of Thomas Chamberlayne of Cranbury Park, Hampshire (4).
- 1871-8 Home Farm farmhouse and much of the farmstead was built. It replaced Barton Court as the Estate farm and provided the Chichesters with milk, butter, eggs and cream until 1949. A cottage and cowshed to the rear were built in the early 1800s and formed part of a courtyard of buildings called the *Sheep Pen* (33).
- 1878 Home Farm was first mentioned in White's Directory for 1878, when it was the residence of Thomas Best, farm bailiff to Sir Chichester. The previous bailiff, Robert Bale, lived at *Higher Lodge* (East Lodge on later OS maps) (33).
- 1881 Sir Bruce Chichester died and Arlington was inherited by his widow, Lady Rosalie Chichester. The Estate was in a poor financial state and the family's debts were not cleared for another 50 years (1). A memorial to two of the family dogs was erected

in a glade to the southwest corner of the pleasure grounds. The original marble sculpture of one of the dogs, called Memory, is now stored in the house. Memory died seven weeks after Sir Bruce (1).

1883 Sir Bruce's widow married Sir Arthur Chichester, 8th Baronet, of Youlston Park, and management of the Arlington estate was taken over by Sir Bruce's daughter, Rosalie Chichester (1865-1949) (1).

1884 A map of the Arlington estate was produced for Miss Chichester (figure 17). The map is based on the 1844 tithe plan, using the same plot numbering, but shows some important changes. By this stage, *The Park* had been subdivided into two by a central fence running from the pleasure grounds boundary to the corner of Brockham Plantation. The *Lower Part of the Park* was also now distinguished with a fence, while the parkland southwest of *Mill Close* was known as *Part Park* and was subdivided into three. *Sheep Fold* had been redeveloped as *Home Farm* and incorporated into a thin, enclosed part of the parkland that also contained a section of the circuit drive around the northern side of the park. The lake had been enlarged since the 1840s, involving a new dam at the southern end and widening of the northern half. A new drive ran around the top of the lake from the Barnstaple Road and ran along the lakeshore.

1886/9 The first edition of the Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (figure 18), recorded a number of additional features and changes since 1884. These included the introduction of grazing to five of the parkland clumps; planting either side of the previously open section of the northern circuit drive, creating a dense shelterbelt screen; further tree planting around Home Farm; slight realignment of the pleasure grounds and parkland boundary, west of the house; enlargement of the top pond in the Wilderness and excavation of a second, slightly further down the slope; the erection of a flagstaff on the top of Gratton hill; and siltation of the upper end of the lake. The Court had been extended and the Boat House on the lake was clearly plotted and labelled. An additional footpath was plotted coming off the Woolley Wood drive and joining with Rocky Lane to the northwest. The 25-inch Ordnance Survey map is saved as a layer in the Park Masterplan (appendix 9).

- 1887 A bonfire was lit at a high point in the park to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. An obelisk was later erected on the site, consisting of a conical pile of white quartz. It replaced an earlier flagstaff in the same location (1).
- 1889 A memorial to Miss Chichester's pet bird, Little Sandy, was erected in the pleasure grounds. Four years later, the death of another pet bird, known as Dick VI, was added to the same stone tablet (1).
- 1880s-1900s Photographs of the house, gardens and park form the start of a large collection of images taken by Miss Chichester over the late 1800s and early 1900s (figures 20 to 24). They record neat, well-tended pleasure grounds around the Court with views to and from Gratton; picturesque views of the river Yeo and its bridges; conifers and ornamental shrubs around the lake; a small, pitched roof timber boathouse by the northeast bridge pier; timber parkland field gates; the Queen Victoria Jubilee bonfire stack, which was later marked by the stone obelisk or cairn; a path and fence along the pleasure ground/parkland boundary; and hay-making and ponies in the park. A further selection of Miss Chichester's photographs can be found in appendix 2.
- 1891 The census recorded the residents of Arlington as Rosalie Amelia Chichester and her 25-year-old daughter, Rosalie Caroline Chichester, together with six servants. A gardener was living in the Rectory House Glebe Cottage called Frederick Manning (22).
- 1903-4 Photographs record the drives in Deer Park Wood (appendix 2).
- 1906 The second edition of the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map (figure 19), recorded some minor changes to the park at Arlington, including the replacement of the flagstaff on Gratton hill with an *Obelisk*; further subdivision of the main parkland and a new fence along the drive from Woolley Wood to the Wilderness. A *Pump* and *Tanks* were recorded in the northern part of the park.
- 1909 A year after Lady Rosalie Chichester died, Miss Rosalie Chichester gifted coastal land to the National Trust in memory of her parents (1).

- 1912 Rosalie Chichester was joined at Arlington by her friend and travel companion, Miss Chrissie Peters (4)
- 1919 A second pet memorial was installed in the East Meadow, commemorating the death of Polly, an Amazon parrot that had been living at Arlington since 1873 (1).
- 1920 The National Trust agreed to accept the Arlington Estate from Miss Chichester on her death (27).
- 1921 The grounds of Arlington Court were opened to the public (1).
- 1919-22 Miss Chichester's sketchbooks included a few small watercolours of Home Farm and views of the parkland and trees in the immediate surroundings (appendix 2).
- 1924 Correspondence between Miss Chichester and the National Trust recorded her intention for the Arlington Estate to remain *much as it is at present*, after her death (1).
- c.1930 The lodge (known as the *Gardener's House* in the 1860s) on the northwest drive was demolished, possibly because it was in a poor state of repair (1).
- 1930 Aerial photographs (figure 25) record the main parkland well populated with mature deciduous and coniferous trees and a textured grassland suggesting it was more lightly grazed than the surrounding pasture fields. Several parkland trees were also growing on Gratton, mainly conifers, and the lakeshore was entirely planted.
- 1933 Correspondence between Miss Chichester and the National Trust noted a programme of improvements to estate properties prior to the First World War which had to be abandoned due to wartime economies and subsequent taxation (1).
- 1934 Eight miles of deer fencing had been erected around Arlington, under the direction of Miss Chichester. The fencing created a reserve in which hunting and game shooting was prohibited. Miss Chichester's vision for Arlington was set out in correspondence with the Trust: the Court was to be let as a rest or convalescent home, and the grounds would be opened to the public *as a National Park, such as one sees in Australia and NZ though of course on a smaller scale, where the native plants and*

birds are not interfered with – unless the Trust should find it necessary in the interest of the Estate – and at the same time a place where the public can enjoy the scenery etc. (1).

- 1940s During the Second World War, Miss Chichester lived at Home Farm and a bathroom was added for her convenience (33).
- 1946 James Lees Milne recorded a visit to Arlington in his diary: *Arlington Court is plain to ugliness. Of a dark, hard ironstone, the old part is severe Greek Regency, featureless. Unappetising annexe built on c.1875 by Miss Chichester's father. The park untidy and overrun with rabbits, the whole estate no more remarkable than the country round it. Miss Chichester very old, white-haired and dropsical, the last of her line. Looked after by a gentle, fawn-like young man from Shaftesbury Avenue. Her museum, made by herself, is a nightmare of model ships, shells and New Zealand Maori headdresses. She lives and sleeps in her drawing-room which is made into an aviary. Birds fly over her bed and perch on a clutter of bric-à-brac and masses of flowers. He goes on to praise the architecture of the rectory (28).*
- 1948 The Annual Meeting of the Devonshire Association took place at Arlington. Miss Chichester welcomed them, and the gardens were praised. A black swan was admired on the Lake (22).
- 1949 Rosalie Chichester died on 17th January and the National Trust took over the management of the Estate on 1st November (27). The bequest included the 3471-acre estate, 3 hamlets, 18 farms and 41 cottages and a £16,000 endowment. Following her wishes, Rosalie Chichester's ashes were placed beneath the memorial urn on the northeast slopes above the lake (4).

In her *Memorandum of Wishes*, Miss Chichester stated that a museum should be set up in the house for her collections; that the Trust should keep a herd of Shetland ponies and a flock of Spanish sheep; and that her 8-mile iron and wire netting deer park fence around the enclosure known as the *Nature Reserve* should be maintained (27). Only pedestrians and bicycles were allowed into the Reserve; suitable *parking grounds* outside the main gates were to be provided for visitors with cars. Miss Chichester recommended the appointment of two park keepers and desired the preservation of the heronry *as far as possible*. Any alterations or building additions should not *interfere with the attractions or amenities of the Estate* and she envisaged the

Court being used as a nursing home with a publicly accessible museum, but not a private dwelling house, convent or monastery (48).

In May, James Lees-Milne visited Arlington and described the parkland: *The trees all over-mature, intergrown and 'gone back'; the park a jungle...Surrounding country very beautiful and remote.* He went on to complain how the eccentric Miss Chichester had spent the last eighteen months of her life spending £35,000 on *buying whatever junk she could get hold of.* The following August, James returned and worked with his friend, the artist and art dealer, Eardley Knollys, arranging Miss Chichester's collections. He regretted not being able to show the house properly furnished, and instead crammed *with ships and show-cases.* Further sorting of the collections took place in October when James and Eardley discovered a drawing by Blake, dated 1821, in *a dusty heap on top of a wardrobe in the housemaid's pantry* (29).

- c.1950 A dining room built by Sir Bruce Chichester, the ice house and a vine house in the walled garden, and the laundry east of the churchyard, were demolished by the Trust. The walled garden became a holding nursery and the original Estate tree nursery adjacent the north drive went out of use. The cottage in its southeast corner was built during the first half of the 1900s (1).
- 1950s The current visitor entrance along the western edge of Town Meadow was created (1).
- 1951 The Trust's estate manager at Arlington produced a *Progress Report*, describing the condition of the estate and proposed improvements (27). The farms and estate buildings had been *very badly neglected for the last thirty years or more*, with no modern conveniences and inadequate water supplies. No planting or maintenance had taken place in the woodlands *during this century* and 1300 trees had been selected for felling. Rhododendron and laurel were *rampant in nearly all the woods*. 42 acres of in hand land around the Court, the ring fenced *Nature Reserve*, was grazed by Spanish Sheep and Shetland ponies. 18 acres had been ploughed and re-seeded in 1950 and it was all to be opened to the public. The lake measured 9 acres, had a *lovely setting* and home to a large heronry and many wildfowl. Two gardeners looked after the gardens and a keeper attended the livestock in the Nature Reserve. Painting and maintaining the Reserve fence was estimated at £125 per year. The main priority for the Trust was repair rather than improvement, particularly of the Estate farms.

- 1954 In *The National Trust Secretary's Notes on Tours XXIX West Country with J.L.E. Smith*, Arlington was discussed. Comments included:
- The possibility of opening up the view from the house to the church.
 - How the park was not suitable for Shetland ponies and so they were declining. Exmoors were recommended.
 - How much work was required on maintaining the wider estate buildings and the need for more estate staff.
 - *There is much one would like to do to the lake, but this must wait.*
 - The woods were considered a problem – *we must maintain at least round the lake and along the rides to Loxhore Lodge the facade of an untidy and impenetrable jungle. This is a great feature of the place. I am sure that the present plan of felling and replanting the inside of Woolley Wood in blocks is the right one...*
 - The immediate surroundings of Miss Chichester's grave needed to be *tidier* (17).

1960s The outer houses of the glasshouse range in the flower garden were demolished (1).

1963 In a report on the gardens at Arlington, Gardens Advisor, Graham Stuart Thomas wrote: *I think our policy should be to plant a dozen or so trees around the lawns and garden every year, adopting autumn planting for preference, & encouraging clumps of rhodos, & planting fresh clumps under trees as well. The whole to be of park or landscape planting style, not spotty pieces, & to foster shelter for the future. Beeches are a safe bet, but for the sake of variety I should use *Pinus austriaca* & variegated sycamore* (Head Gardener's file 18/3/63, quoted in 1).

A Park Planting Plan was prepared for Arlington. Overall the trees were considered to be in good condition, but the lack of younger trees concerned the Trust. The plan was revised in 1971 and again in 1976 (figure 26) and shows an even distribution of seventy-four newly planted parkland trees over the thirteen-year period. A new subdividing field boundary was also erected in the northern parkland, and some of the clumps were re-fenced and proposed for replanting and/or extensions (19).

1965 In a second report on the gardens at Arlington, Gardens Advisor, Graham Stuart Thomas wrote:

It seems to me that we have now reached a point when the future of the grounds must be reassessed. I doubt if much more improvement can be made, but in upkeep and in interest they are below the general standard of the National Trust... The interior of the house is

beautiful and full of interest and I think the garden, if further improved, would be a great asset. At present it falls short in several ways:

- a. The drive could be embellished with summer flowering shrubs.*
- b. The lawns could be improved with a more thoughtful distribution of areas of close-mown and rough mown, thus making an enticement to explore the outer areas.*
- c. The small lake should be planted in landscape tradition, to provide colour and beauty through the year and mown paths should encompass it, and views should be opened.*
- d. About 6 dying or over-mature conifers should be felled, and some previously felled trunks removed. Numerous trees should be planted.*
- e. The tenants garage and car park area needs screening on all side with shrubs.*
- f. A path needs laying from the approach drive to the lavatories, 6ft wide*
- g. In the Victorian garden, two new monkey puzzles should be planted eventually to replace present pair which are becoming unsightly. The large greenhouse range needs repairing and the walls need refacing or pointing. The herbaceous borders need a new planting scheme to add dignity and to save work.*
- h. The hydrangea dell is formless.*
- i. The approach from the car park is by means of a straight path, and is uninteresting. At the end of these notes I will suggest a few trees to add interest.*

(1) [HG file 11/10/65].

In the same report, Graham Stuart Thomas advocated the removal of the two end extensions of the deteriorating Victorian garden greenhouse and heating and repairing the central conservatory as a feature in the gardens (1).

- 1967 The glasshouse range was partially demolished, following Stuart Thomas's recommendation. A timber-framed granary was relocated to Arlington from Dunsland (1).
- 1969 Access to Home Farm was improved, with new access provided to the yard and parlour (33).
- 1970 A one-day National Trust meeting was held at Arlington on the management of woodlands. The introduction to Arlington included a list of the estate staff – Estate Clerk, Carpenter and Mason, Forester and two woodmen, and one gardener. Visitor numbers had increased from 9,500 in 1958 to 43,300 in 1969. The woodland had been managed under the Forestry Commission dedication scheme since 1952.

When the Trust had acquired the estate, the woodland was mainly overmature oak and beech with groups of silver fir and Norway spruce. The rate of replanting was 5 acres a year. Woodland areas included The Wilderness (12 acres of over-mature beech and European silver fir, with laurel; felled and replanted in 1962-3), Smallacombe Meadow/Woolley Wood (oak with beech, sweet chestnut and mid nineteenth century planted silver fir; four acres felled and replanted 1967-8), Brockham Plantation (small area between path and lake replanted with beech to reduce weeding, beech and Douglas fir planted below drive in 1962), The Lake (included a heronry), Smallacombe Bridge (Douglas fir and beech planted in 1968 with 250 year-old oak), Woolley Wood (11 acres felled and replanted in 1956-7 with beech, European larch, Scots pine and Douglas fir) Webbers Wood, Deer Park (replanted 1968-9; Silver Fir regeneration being encouraged; Western Hemlock planted in 1962) (21).

- 1972 In a response to a critical report about the grounds at Arlington by the National Trust Gardens Advisor, Graham Stuart Thomas, Michael Trinick, Secretary for the National Trust Committee for Devon and Cornwall, wrote:
- ...when Arlington came to the Trust it was overgrown everywhere and we knew that we had to do a great deal of clearing. [John] Gaze and his predecessors and I were always agreed that we should keep as far as we could the feeling of the place, hidden away among dripping evergreens. We don't want to open up views. We do want to keep a sense of mystery...Again, I am afraid we have a difference of opinion as to the character which we should give to the wilder part of the garden on either side of the main drive. Gaze and I have been in agreement about this and we don't want to trim up the nice whiskey oak boles and make them clean trees which are not in our view in character with the place. With this in mind we really must not do what you suggest to the beech on its mound, which has an untidy but beautiful shape acquired over the years, a good deal of ivy at its base, self sown trees and all sorts of other nice things.* (1).
- 1972 The visitor reception building was built to designs by Pearn and Proctor of Plymouth (1). Garden urns were reinstated to articulate the carriage turn to the east of the house. The design was copied from an original nineteenth century example, found in the basement of the house (1).
- 1973 A *Sounding Survey* of the lake was undertaken by Roger Chadney, Consulting Engineer (figure 27). In an accompanying Dredging Specification, it was estimated

that 5,800 cubic yards of mud, weed, reeds and bushes needed to be removed to expand the existing area of water, coloured blue on the plan. The yellow coloured areas on the survey plan were *possible deposit grounds* (37).

c.1975 The south and west ha-has were constructed by the Trust, replacing nineteenth century post and wire fencing (1).

1975 The new Gardens Advisor, John Sales, made the following recommendations for the grounds at Arlington:

Policy

1.1 The general intention is that the main part of the garden should be a suitable setting for the house and in keeping with its historical associations. It should be informal in style and in scale and sympathy with the surrounding landscape.

1.2 The terraced formal garden should be Victorian in character and, as far as possible, full of flowers and interest.

1.3 The garden has a tradition for wild flowers and for encourage garden 'escapes'. For unavoidable reasons it may not be possible to restore all the plants previously seen in abundance, but the aim should be to continue the same tradition, with alternative plants. (HG file 11.6.14, quoted in 1).

The Ordnance Survey map (figure 28) shows some of the fenced clump extensions proposed on the 1963-76 Parkland Planting Plan and a new subdivision of part of the park east of the lake.

1977 Demolition of the conservatory, or the central house in the glasshouse range, was considered. Garden Advisor, John Sales, recommended that it was retained and restored as a focal point and shelter with seating (1).

1978 The central house of the glasshouse range was demolished (1).

Aerial photographs (figure 29) record felling and replanting of large areas of Brockham Plantation. Conifers either side of the northern circuit drive had also been removed, restoring open ground between the northern park and the former parkland southwest of Mill Close.

- 1979 30,000 tons of mud were dredged from the lake and deposited on grassland downstream (32).
- 1980 The path leading from the visitor reception building to the drive was planted with rhododendrons supported with larch poles planted with *Lonicera* and under planted with ferns (1).
- New farm buildings were erected at Home Farm (33).
- 1980s The lake was dredged (4).
- 1981 From 1981 to 1997, over 60 rhododendrons were planted in the pleasure grounds, principally hardy hybrids. Unusual varieties of *Fraxinus* were also planted from the 1970s, following a policy recommended by Stuart Thomas and continued by Sales (1). *Country Life* published an article on Arlington Court, mainly discussing the house and its contents (18).
- 1982 The new 'conservatory' to replace the demolished central house of the glasshouse range, was completed (1).
- 1983-4 Trellised pergolas and basket flower beds were installed as part of improvements to the Victorian flower garden (1).
- 1985 A metal arbour was erected to the west of the house and the Rabbit Pit was redesigned, involving the removal of a concrete path and realignment of steps at the southwest corner of the house (1).
- 1986-7 The flower garden pool was replaced with a Haddonstone model and a new metal gate was erected at the entrance (1).
- 1987 Borders on the east and west side of the house were replanted to schemes designed by Jim Marshall (1).
- 1988 Jim Marshall recommended continuation of an earlier policy of planting exotics in the Wilderness, but limiting them close to the track with beech on the bank (1).

Engineers assessed the condition of the bridge piers in the lake at Arlington. They were found to be structurally sound, but in need of maintenance (23).

- 1990 A Biological Survey of the Arlington Court Estate concluded that the Park was nationally important for its epiphytic lichens and regionally important for its dead-wood invertebrates and heronry. It also noted a good mosaic of habitats and an excellent extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland. Management issues included the lack of young trees, particularly in the eastern park, poor woodland management, Japanese knotweed and Indian Balsam in the Wilderness and the high grazing density in the meadows around Tucker's Bridge (35).
- 1990-2 The east walk in the flower garden was re-instated and a policy to retain the view to the Glebe House from the front steps of the Court was recommended by Jim Marshall, Gardens Advisor and successor to John Sales in 1982 (1).
- 1992 The Wilderness pond was desilted and repairs were made to the dam and drains to raise the water level. As part of this work, the Trust excavated the Overflow Pond and the Lower Overflow Pond in the valley below the dam. The walled garden was cleared and planted as an orchard with Devon varieties of apple, and the 1972 visitor reception building was extended (1).
- 1993 A Survey and Management Plan was prepared by Colvin and Moggridge to inform a Countryside Stewardship Scheme Agreement (1). The pheasantry was rebuilt (1).
- 1996 The path along the eastern side of the Wilderness stream was reinstated, first mapped in 1903. It was planted with exotic conifers, deciduous trees, ferns and wild flowers to create areas of *light and gloom* (1).

Two geophysical surveys were undertaken by Martin Papworth, National Trust archaeologist, in the paddock south of the church and at the Lock Lane earthwork on the east side of the estate. The paddock survey attempted to identify the exact location of the 1790s house. It found a number of anomalies which were interpreted as probable spread of demolition rubble or footings of a former building measuring 22m by 12m; linear features – possibly the footings of stone walls; and a modern drain (4).

Further archaeological work from 1996 to 2000 was undertaken by Colin Humphreys and Terry Green, including: excavation of the Wilderness pond dam prior to rebuilding; a survey of the Wilderness; partial excavation and recording of building remains in the paddock; and clearance and recording of the Pinery north of the walled garden. There was evidence for improvements to both the upper and lower Wilderness ponds dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (4).

- 1997 In a letter relating to a proposed Countryside Stewardship Scheme Agreement for Arlington, it was stated that metal deer fence erected around 1930 had been collapsing for many years and was being systematically removed. However, good surviving sections with the best examples of stiles and gates were being retained as a historic record. An extension of the ha-ha was also part of the CSS proposals (21).
- 1998 Archaeological investigations along a section of field drain in Church Paddock revealed the remains of at least one stone building and other wall foundations. Finds dated from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The location of the structures related to those of buildings shown on the tracing of Hassall's 1776 map (34).
- 1999 The ruins of the pine pits were cleared to prevent further damage by tree growth. They showed several different building phases reflecting changes in the heating and use of the buildings. They were last used by Miss Chichester as a fernery but had been partly demolished and neglected since 1949. The structures did not precisely relate to the drawings for pine pits made in 1814 and in the Estate archives, although the plan layout was similar (31).
- 2001 Arlington was included in an assessment of livestock grazing in National Trust parklands. The report mentions the removal of boundaries on the in-hand land under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, together with replacement of wire with iron fencing and removal of hedges by the tenant in the East Park. The Front Park was stocked with Jacob sheep and Devon red cattle, Middle Park with sheep, carriage horses and Shetland ponies, West Park with Fresian x Holstein dairy cattle and East Park with bullocks. Nine species of bats had been recorded. No Ivermectin based wormers were in use; the tenant of East Park used Nilsan Supergold. Grassland in West and East Parks was very species poor (30).

2001/02 The lake was dredged (40).

2000s The walled garden was restored as a productive kitchen garden, following the nineteenth century path and bedding pattern. The vinery was also rebuilt (1).

2003-4 A new, two-storey carriage museum was built on the west side of the stable courtyard (1).

2005 Spalding Associates prepared a *Nature Conservation Assessment of the Arlington Estate* (32).

2007 Diseased rhododendrons were cleared from the gardens and Lodge Plantation (4).

2009 Jonathan Lovie researched and produced a report on the gardens at Arlington, entitled *Arlington Court, Devon: Conservation Statement* (1).

2011 *An Archaeological and Historic Landscape Survey of the Arlington Estate* was undertaken by Dr. Nick Berry (4).

2012 The central section of the garden glasshouse range, known as the conservatory, was rebuilt for a second time by David Salisbury Joinery Ltd. (as pers. comm. Ana Chylak).

4.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

4.1 Location, Extent and Ownership

The Arlington Court Estate is located in north Devon, 10 miles northeast of Barnstaple. The Court, gardens and park at the centre of the estate lie within the parish of Arlington, and the wider estate extends into the neighbouring parishes of Loxhore, Shirwell and East Down. The local authorities are North Devon District Council and Devon County Council.

Of the 1400 hectares bequeathed to the Trust by Miss Chichester in 1949, 1370 hectares remain in ownership today. Part of the parkland, the woods and a few pockets of land have been retained in hand, while the majority of the estate is managed by six Agricultural Holding Act Tenancies (five whole farm and one bare land), seven Farm Business Tenancies (two whole farm and five bare land) and two grazing licences. The tenancies within the study area and adjacent fields are mapped on figure 31.

4.2 Topography and Geology

The parkland lies on a gently sloping plateau, ranging from 180m to 150m above sea-level, bordered to the west and south by steeply sloping, wooded combes dropping to 40m. The river Yeo, a tributary of the river Taw, flows through the western combe and a tributary of the Yeo runs along the southern combe. The Arlington Estate is underlain by Devonian age slates and grits, known as the Morte slates. Alluvium lies in the valley bottoms and the soils are predominantly well-drained brown earths with a loamy texture, mapped as the Manod and Denbigh I Associations (32), with extensive wet springs and flushes in the valley bottom.

4.3 Landscape Character

Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge District (LCA)

In the LCA for North Devon, adopted in 2011, the Registered landscape at Arlington was identified as character type 3H: *Secluded Valleys* and specifically mentioned as a historic parkland within this area, along with Youlston Park. Key characteristics also included:

- *Steep-sided, v-shaped valleys with fast-flowing streams and rivers carving through the landscape, crowned by rounded hill summits.*
- The main tributaries of the Taw, Torridge, Bray and Mole.

- *Dense tree cover cloaking valley sides, including ancient semi-natural oak woodlands with a colourful ground flora, beech-dominated broadleaved woodlands and conifer blocks. Patches of wet woodland tracing river/stream courses.*
- *Mixture of field sizes and shapes – often smaller, irregular medieval enclosures on lower slopes, with upper slopes merging into larger post medieval and modern fields, often retaining earlier curving boundaries.*
- *Species-rich Devon hedges on wildflower-rich banks, with bank-side ferns and frequent hedgerow trees associated with lower valley locations.*
- *Steep valley sides dominated by pasture grazed by sheep and cattle, with patches of rough grazing land on upper slopes and rushy meadows fringing watercourses.*
- *Ancient and broadleaved woodlands interspersed with patches of Culm grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands, wet meadows and gorse and willow scrub. Parkland estates containing veteran trees within wood pasture featuring along some valleys.*
- *High levels of peace and tranquillity frequently defined by sounds of rushing water echoing out from the valley bottoms.*
- *Nucleated villages, hamlets and farmsteads and a strong local vernacular of exposed local stone and slate, along with cream whitewashed and yellow buildings, some with thatched roofs.*

Issues affecting landscape character include:

- 20th century conifer planting along valley sides;
- a decline in woodland management;
- derelict traditional farm buildings;
- heavy traffic along narrow lanes;
- decline in grazing levels along steep valley sides resulting in gorse and bracken;
- non-native wildlife species disrupting the balance of river ecosystems;
- impacts on tranquillity from forestry operations and traffic (39).

National Character Area (NCA)

Arlington lies within NCA 145 Exmoor. The key characteristics include:

- *A diverse upland landscape, rising abruptly out of the surrounding lowlands. Central high, treeless moorlands used for rough grazing, incised by steep wooded valleys and combes with occasional grass and arable fields.*
- *The underlying consistent geology of mid to late Devonian sandstones, slates and fissile mudstones (shale), underpin and give coherence to the entire area.*

- *Complex coastline of headlands, steep cliffs, waterfalls and coves with dramatic exposures of folded strata accessible via the South West Coast Path, a National Trail. It boasts the highest coastline, the highest sheer sea-cliff and the longest stretch of coastal woodland in England.*
- *Acidic peaty soils on the moorland plateau give rise to tracts of heather, occasionally turning rich purple in late summer, blanket bog, grass heath and bracken.*
- *19th century farms and rectilinear moorland-edge enclosures with beech-topped hedgebanks and wind-sculpted standard beech trees and windbreaks. Elsewhere, older field patterns are defined by irregular hedges and stone walls. Medieval field systems occur across the area and are particularly notable at Braunton Great Field.*
- *Across the western plateau, fields of semi-improved rush pasture and arable of 19th century origin are defined by closely trimmed hedges with occasional standard trees.*
- *Villages and farmsteads nestle in sheltered valley bottoms often at river crossings. Buildings are mainly of local slate and shale rubble, sometimes whitewashed. A variety of local stone is used in the villages, along with cob and brick, with slate roofs. Scattered, often whitewashed farmsteads punctuate the western plateau.*
- *Woodlands, mostly ancient and oak-dominated, cloak the steep coastal combes and inland valleys. Ancient parks and more recent conifer plantations are features of the lower slopes.*
- *High archaeological interest from all eras of human activity. A particularly rich source of Bronze Age monuments such as stone rows, stone settings and barrows. Notable industrial archaeology including quarrying, mining and iron working, lime burning and longshore fishing (fishweirs) from all eras.*
- *Red deer and Exmoor ponies, trout-filled, fast flowing, shallow rivers and streams over stony and pebbly beds. (38).*

4.4 Archaeology

In 2011, Dr. Nick Berry undertook a detailed archaeological survey of the whole National Trust-owned Arlington Estate. The main findings in the parkland and its immediate area were:

- *Identification of probable prehistoric route to the centre of the Arlington settlement.*
- *Confirmation of the bounds of the medieval deer park*
- *Identification of overgrown medieval holloways and routes through Woolley Wood and Deer Park Wood, in the latter a holloway clearly pre-dates the establishment of the deer park boundary in the 1340s.*

- *Identification of overgrown sixteenth and seventeenth century carriage drives and approaches to the old Arlington Court.*
- *Identification of the large level platform in the park as ground prepared for a large building, probably for the new mansion, prior to the building of Arlington Court in 1820.*
- *Widespread evidence of the sheer scale of the changes imposed on the local landscape in the nineteenth century to enlarge and embellish the parkland. Evidence includes closure and blocking of local roads and rebuilding of new roads, adapting existing routes, with some work extending beyond the bounds of the estate.*
- *Identification of disused nineteenth century approach drives and associated parkland features, plus widespread formal planting in the farmland and modelling of the whole area (4).*

The survey included a detailed record and mapping of all the earthworks on the estate. Those within the Registered landscape are listed in appendix 4.

4.5 Conservation Designations

Arlington Court and its historic landscape are subject to the following statutory and non-statutory designations (figure 33):

i. Registered Landscape

The gardens, park and perimeter woodland, measuring in total around 145 ha (figure 2), have been designated grade II* on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The significance of the landscape is summarised as *Early to mid C19 pleasure grounds and gardens surrounding an early C19 mansion, set in a late C18 and early C19 parkland landscape with surviving early and mid C19 elements.* The Entry Number is 1000687.

ii. Listed Buildings

The following listed buildings lie within or adjacent to the Registered landscape at Arlington Court. Their locations are mapped on figure 33:

Grade II*

- Arlington Court
- St James's Church
- Glebe House

Grade II

- Woolley Lodge

- Woolley Lodge railings, gates and gate piers
- North Woolley farmhouse
- Entrance drive gate piers
- Stable block and coachman's house
- Granary
- New England Cottages
- Cairn
- Mill Cottages

iii. *Historic Environment Records (HER)*

Several hundred undesignated features, sites and findspots have been identified within the Parkland Plan study area. The majority of these are on the National Trust Historic Buildings, Sites and Monuments Record (HBSMR) and originate from the surveying undertaken by Dr. Nick Berry in 2011. Of these NT HBSMR records, most are listed on the Devon HER and one has been recorded on the Exmoor National Park HER. A full list of entries and their reference numbers can be found in appendix 4.

iv. *Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*

The parkland, lake and part of the river valley forms part of the Arlington SSSI. The reason for the designation is as follows: *Arlington is important for its rich lichen flora with many rare species. It also supports a good assemblage of invertebrates, including national rarities.*

The SSSI units (figure 33) have been assessed as follows:

| Habitat | Unit no. | Ref. | Area (ha) | Last assessed | Condition | Comments |
|--|-----------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland | 1 | 1003917 | 10.02 | 26.8.2009 | Unfavourable - recovering | Adverse condition: agriculture – fertiliser use |
| Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland | 2 | 1003918 | 25.57 | 25.6.2010 | Favourable | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---------|------|-----------|---------------------------|--|
| Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland | 3 | 1019345 | 5.57 | 31.3.2010 | Unfavourable - recovering | Adverse condition: <i>rhododendron ponticum</i> shading out lichens. Eradication underway. |
| Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland | 4 | 1019346 | 3.39 | 26.8.2009 | Favourable | |
| Neutral grassland - upland | 5 | 1019350 | 1.49 | 25.6.2010 | Favourable | |

v. County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)

The study area has three County Wildlife Sites (see appendix 5 for location): Deer Park Moor lies within *Coombeshead Valley Field* CWS; *Brockham Bridge Field* (Brockham Meadow/Mill Close Meadow) is a single-field CWS; and The Wilderness, Gratton, Wester Deer Park, Kennel Wood, Lower Barton, Town Meadow and the pleasure grounds around Arlington Court are all included within the *Arlington Court and Gardens* CWS (more details for each site are given below in 4.6 and in appendix 5). The Wilderness, Deer Park Wood and parts of Woolley Wood have also been identified as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands (mapped in appendix 5). This is a non-statutory designation, but provides protection in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF para.118: *planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland...*). Similarly, County Wildlife Sites are a non-statutory designation, identifying sites with habitats or the known presence of a particular species that are of county importance, and also receive protection through the NPPF.

4.6 Wildlife

In 2005, a *Nature Conservation Assessment of the Arlington Estate* was undertaken by Spalding Associates (32). For its ecological interest, Arlington was identified as being *one of the most important National Trust properties in Devon*. Many Nationally Scarce and other uncommon lichens and invertebrates were found in the SSSI and in other areas on the estate, considered to be of equal ecological value to the SSSI habitat. Of particular importance for biodiversity were the valley-side grasslands with herb-rich swards rich in invertebrates. Several BAP species were recorded: Marsh Fritillary butterfly (Brockham Bridge field); dormouse, brown hare, barn owl, otter and over ten species of bats, including Greater and Lesser horseshoes. Arlington House supports one of the largest colonies of Lesser Horseshoe bats in the country. The

fungi and freshwater invertebrates were also noted, the latter due to very good water quality in the river Yeo. A mapped Phase I habitat survey, undertaken as part of this *Nature Conservation Assessment*, can be found in appendix 5. Please note that this extract only covers the study area relevant to this management plan.

Management recommendations included the conservation of unimproved and semi-improved pasture with zero inputs and spring and autumn grazing with cattle and/or cattle and sheep; extensive management of permanent pasture; re-establishment of lost hedges; tree, hedge and watercourse buffer zones; avoidance of avermectin based products; replanting of oak and ash; thinning of woodland edges and creation of glades; control of beech regeneration; continued removal of rhododendrons; and control of the spread of Indian Balsam.

Devon Biodiversity Records Centre

Wildlife and habitat data held by the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre (DBRC) was requested for the Parkland Plan study area and 0.5km from the study area boundary (full details in appendix 5). In addition to the SSSI, the records identified three County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and a number of protected/notable species:

- Deer Park Moor lies within *Coombeshead Valley Field* CWS – 2.1 hectares of *rush pasture and Molinia mire with butterfly interest*.
- *Brockham Bridge Field* (Brockham Meadow/Mill Close Meadow) is a single-field CWS – *a small mosaic site with lowland meadow, lowland fen, wet woodland and purple moor grass & rush pasture*.
- The Wilderness, Gratton, Wester Deer Park, Kennel Wood, Lower Barton, Town Meadow and the pleasure grounds around Arlington Court are all included within the *Arlington Court and Gardens* CWS – 79.8 hectares of *Gardens with large trees and lichen and bat interest, and some areas of unimproved neutral grassland*.
- Legally protected and notable species within the search area include: Daubenton's, Natterer's, Noctule and Whiskered bats (all recorded in 2002); Redstart, Wood Warbler, Green Sandpiper, Green Woodpecker, Little Grebe, Mallard, Marsh Tit, Pied Flycatcher and Teal (recorded between 2001 and 2006); Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Marsh Fritillary, Wall and Dingy Skipper butterflies (1990); Red deer (2010) and European Otter (1997-2012); and Indian Balsam (notable as an invasive non-native species posing a risk to biodiversity), Marsh Valerian and Witches' Whiskers Lichen (2013 and 1999). Other bat

species recorded in and around Arlington, but outside the study area, include Lesser Horseshoe, Serotine, Long-eared, Common Pipestrelle and Brown Long-eared.

The Wilderness, Deer Park Wood and parts of Woolley Wood have been identified as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands (ASNW) and therefore assessed as being predominantly native woodlands, not obviously originating from planting.

Grassland

In 2005, much of the park was classified as semi-improved grassland (32). The exceptions were the tenanted parts of Mill Close, West Park and Lower Barton. A bank of semi-improved grassland was identified along the western slope of Mill Close, above Mill Close Meadow (see appendix 5). The steeper slope of pasture in Hound Close was also classified as semi-improved permanent acid grassland with ant hills. The former meadows north of Tucker's Bridge were not classified and instead described as a damp woodland with tussock sedge, hemlock water-dropwort, meadowsweet, greater bird's foot trefoil, ragged robin, gypsywort, lesser spearwort and tufted hair grass.

A decade on, the park grassland continues to remain largely semi-improved, with improved grassland fields grazed by Home Farm. Extensive rhododendron removal and other scrub clearance has helped enhance the riverside meadows. Deer Park Moor and Mill Close meadow are under a species-rich grassland restoration management prescription (Higher Level Stewardship management option HK7). In Mill Close Meadow, this is partly to enhance the habitat for Marsh Fritillary butterflies and Heath-spotted orchid, both of which have been previously recorded in this field (32). An area of Brockham Plantation, above the lake, has also been cleared to restore area of parkland, which is now grazed as part of Front Park.

Trees

In 2007, Arlington was one of sixteen sites included in a *Provisional Inventory of Parkland, Wood Pasture & Veteran Tree Sites in Devon*. The park was recorded as being of *County* importance for veteran trees, having between 10-100 veterans and less than 15 ancient trees. Noted was the reported presence of invertebrate, *Thymalus limbatus* at Arlington (also found at Glenthorne and Watersmeet Woods). As a site on the National Nature Conservancy Invertebrate Site Register, due to the several

indicator beetles that have been found there over the 1980s to 2000s, Arlington was considered to be of *Regional* importance for invertebrates. Deadwood availability was limited but improving. The development of epiphytes *Cetrelia olivetorum* and *Heterodermia obscurata* at Arlington was noted as the best in South West England and with a National Index of Ecological Continuity rating of 52, Arlington was classed as being of *National* importance for epiphytic lichens. The overall recommended site quality was considered to be of *National importance* (24).

Invertebrates

In 2004, Dr. Keith Alexander undertook an *Invertebrate Survey within the Arlington SSSI* (26) to provide more detailed information of the species present in the SSSI and to guide management. 55 wood-decay beetles were identified, including five Nationally Scarce species: *Malthodes frontalis* (soldier beetle), *Phloiophilus edwardsi* and *Abdera flexuosa* (fungus beetles), *Acalles ptinoides* (weevil) and *Thymalus limbatus*. 18 species of wood-decay Diptera were found including a large population of the tiger crane fly *Dictenidia bimaculata*, which is rare in Devon and Cornwall, and 15 species of barkfly were noted with three nationally scarce or uncommon species. Management recommendations included leaving deadwood in situ; recording and monitoring tree health; encouraging natural regeneration; maintaining the grazing regime; and monitoring changes in grassland management that may impact on tree health.

In 2007, Dr. Keith Alexander undertook a further Saproxylic Invertebrate Survey of part of the Arlington Court Estate, for the National Trust (25). The survey was undertaken to extend knowledge of the saproxylic interest of the Arlington Estate, especially for areas adjacent to the SSSI. A total of 26 wood-decay beetles were found. This included five additional species to those recorded in previous surveys, and a Nationally Scarce old growth species, the hornet longhorn *Leptura aurulenta*, was found within the park. Seven wood-decay Diptera were also identified. Alexander calculated the saproxylic beetle Index of Ecological Continuity for the Arlington Court Estate as 14. Arlington is therefore a site of moderate interest in the context of Devon and Cornwall and approaching the minimum value of 15 for Regional SW England significance.

The heavily wooded slopes adjacent to the SSSI were considered to be a poor habitat for wood-decay invertebrates due to the close grown older oak and ash,

with oaks reaching the end of their life expectancy, and the increasing dominance of beech, especially in Deerpark and Woolley Woods. A combination of forestry and grazing was recommended to improve the habitat for oak and ash associated wood-decay fauna.

Lichens

A parkland lichen survey was undertaken as part of this Parkland Plan, as an update of previous studies. Little change was noted in the overall lichen population, species or habitat condition since the most recent survey of 2005, which identified Arlington as containing *the highest number of lichens recorded at one parkland site in Devon* (32). However, three new species were found at Home Farm; there was some species loss in Brockham Meadow; some decline in lichens around Tucker's Bridge due to shading; good *Lobaria* and *Sticta* species in wet wood pasture; and 40 new species were added to the Arlington list as a result of a detailed survey of the willow carr on the site of the lake. Full details can be found in appendix 6. The Arlington SSSI reflects the site's value as lichen habitat, and it should be noted that this habitat extends beyond the boundaries of the designated SSSI area. The NIEC (New Index of Ecological Continuity) and T value score (number of NIEC species + Bonus species, which are additional significant local or rare species not on the NIEC list) of 34 exceeds the guideline level of 30 for a site of *high conservation value*. Arlington has been assessed as a grade 3 site for lichenological importance (based on the grade system devised and used by the British Lichen Society since 1982) and, therefore, a site of national importance (appendix 6).

River Yeo

The river Yeo lies within the North Devon Management Catchment Area and South West River Basin District. The river's *Current Ecological Quality* has been assessed by the Environment Agency as being of *Moderate Status* (52). The *Water for life and livelihoods: River Basin Management Plan South West River Basin District* (Environment Agency, 2009) has identified the impact of agriculture and other land uses as the main reason for the North Devon catchment failing to meet Water Framework Directive targets. In contrast, the *Nature Conservation Assessment of Arlington Estate* (Spalding Associates, 2005) identified a diverse range of aquatic invertebrates and several sensitive species, indicating no significant water quality problems (32).

The Yeo drains into the Taw, and *nutrient issues* are identified as a cause of poor ecological status in this catchment. Across the whole North Devon catchment, the main reasons for less than good ecological status are: high levels of phosphate; physical modification; impacted fish and diatom communities; and high zinc concentrations (53). Key actions include:

- coordinating the captive breeding programme and river restoration work to enable the reintroduction of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel in the Taw and Torridge catchments;
- establishment of a Strategic Partnership in the Taw and Torridge catchments to advise farmers how to reduce water pollution;
- working with South West Water to improve water quality;
- wetland restoration by the Devon Wildlife Trust, including advising landowners on how to restore valuable habitats and reduce land-use impacts on water quality (53).

In the *North Devon Catchment Flood Management Plan* (Environment Agency, 2012) the river Yeo at Arlington lies within *Sub-area 3: Rural North Devon*. The flood risk is considered by the Environment Agency as being effectively managed in this area, where the number of people at risk and economic damages are relatively low. The proposals include reducing existing flood risk management outside towns and villages to allow increased flooding, in order to bring environmental enhancements and to reduce flood risks further downstream (54).

4.7 Public Access

Arlington Court and its grounds are open daily from March to October, and then at weekends only throughout November and December. The property is closed in January and February, with the exception of February half-term. The standard entrance fee is £9 for an adult ticket, or £7.20 for entry into the Carriage Museum and grounds only. The Trust provides a free visitor car park west of New England. Vehicular access within the grounds is limited to disabled visitors and staff. Woolley Lodge is let by the National Trust as a holiday home.

The parkland at Arlington is accessible via several public rights of way (figure 34), including a footpath along the length of the Wilderness, crossing the river and following the valley around to Tucker's Bridge, and another which enters the park through the historic entrance gates at Home Farm. Several walks are promoted by

the National Trust to its paying visitors, including the Deer Park Walk, the Lake Walk, the Centenary Walk, Cott Brake Walk and the Winford Valley Walk. These walks largely follow historic estate drives and tracks. Access to the open parkland southwest of the Court is restricted due to livestock grazing and tenancies.

4.8 Planning Context

The parkland at Arlington is covered by the following North Devon Local Plan policies (adopted 2006):

- ENV6 *Areas of Great Landscape Value: In the Areas of Great Landscape Value...development will not be permitted where it detracts from the particular landscape qualities and characteristics.*
- ENV10 *Sites of Special Scientific Interest: Development will not be permitted where it would harm the wildlife, geological or geomorphological interest of a SSSI*
- ENV15 *Historic Parks and Gardens: Development will not be permitted where it would harm the historic character, appearance, setting or features of special historic interest of an historic park or garden.*

4.9 National Trust Context

i. Arlington Court Property Business Plan 2014-17

The *Arlington Court Property Business Plan 2014-17* (40) sets out the vision and objectives for the development of Arlington over the next three years:

- *Our Vision: More than the sum of its parts, Arlington is a sustainable estate and **the** natural attraction in North Devon.*
- *Our theme: Arrive at Arlington and explore a secluded landscape full of incident and contrasts.*

Sub themes include:

- *An estate shaped by man, influenced by nature and sustainable for the future.*
- *Get closer to animals with our cattle sheep and horses.*

Measures of success include increasing the visitor very enjoyable rating from 56% to 75%; volunteer recommendation from 65% to 70%; overall staff satisfaction from 55% to 59%; and operational contribution from £274,800 to £447,500 in three years. Providing visitor access to Home Farm was noted as an aspiration and proposed property developments included developing the phase 1 and 2 path network in the Wilderness, including gazebos and bridges. In 2012/13, Arlington Court received 90,514 visitors, largely non-local holidaymakers, and had 20 full-time

staff. Free access to the park and gardens at Arlington via the public rights of way is cited as an issue that considerably reduces the income from outdoor activities. Another issue is the cessation of carriage rides due to unsuitable routes, repeated near misses and a lack of staff. Planned facility improvements include ongoing refreshment of interpretation and displays, ongoing garden conservation and car park improvements in year 2015/16.

Over the years, the National Trust has tried to follow Miss Chichester's wishes (see Section 3, 1949) although, it has not been feasible to maintain the 8-mile reserve fence. In her *Memorandum of Wishes*, Miss Chichester acknowledged that the Trust was under *no legal obligation to control and manage* the estate as she wished at her death, and that she gave them *absolute discretion* as to how they used Arlington Court (48).

ii. *National Trust Historic Parks: Policy and Guiding Principles*

The *National Trust Historic Parks: Policy and Guiding Principles* (Conservation Directorate, September 2007), sets out ten principles to guide the conservation and management of historic parks:

Principle 1: Significance

Management of historic parks must recognise and be informed by an understanding of the breadth of cultural, natural and social significance of the site, its setting and context. This should form part of a conservation management plan (or conservation statement) for each historic park and requires an integrated approach to their management.

Principle 2: Access

We will promote the conservation of our historic parks for the benefit of people by enabling sustainable public access, by engaging with the widest possible audience, and by developing and sharing good practice.

Principle 3: Visitor facilities

We will ensure that new facilities, required to enable sustainable public access and engagement with our visitors, are designed to the highest appropriate standards. These must have the minimum environmental impact on the park, be in harmony with its significant features and enhance its enjoyment.

Principle 4: Public safety

We will manage our parks in such a way that we fulfil our obligations, morally and in law, to consider people's safety in historic parks.

Principle 5: Agriculture management

We will seek to remove damaging agricultural practices from within park boundaries. We shall do this by establishing appropriate farm business tenancy agreements or licences with conditions that reflect these management principles.

Principle 6: Environmental management

We will manage historic parks in a sustainable way, that takes account of wider environmental influences and climate change.

Principle 7: Tree management

We will value and seek to protect trees in historic parks throughout their lives, including when they are old and senescent.

Principle 8: Restoration plans

Proposals for restoration within an historic park must be based on a full assessment of its significance(s) and a conservation management plan. This must assess the impact on other areas of significance and cause them no adverse effects. Any proposal must be based on historical precedent or supported by historical evidence and not by conjecture.

Principle 9: Record management

Management activities within an historic park must be documented as part of the record of the park and as a reference for the future.

Principle 10: Condition monitoring

The condition of all key features of an historic park must be regularly tracked and recorded, at least on a quinquennial basis.

4.10 Existing Management Agreements

Environmental Stewardship

The National Trust has a Higher Level Stewardship Agreement on their in-hand land (Agreement Ref: AG00446642) which commenced on 1 November 2013 (figure 32). With the exception of the northern part of the park which is let to Home Farm, the parkland is under option HC12 Maintenance of wood pasture and parkland, as is

Town Mead, the field south of the church and some of the pasture along the Yeo valley around Tucker's Bridge. The former lake area and adjacent plantation is to be restored as woodland under management option HC8. Four areas along the Yeo valley and the sloping pasture to the east of North Woolley Farm has been placed under HK7 to restore its species-rich grassland. Capital works included tree planting and a Parkland Plan.

The tenant of Home Farm also has a Higher Level Stewardship Agreement, covering the remaining area of the parkland and Gratton.

Woodland Management Agreements

Nearly all the woodland has been under an English Woodland Grant Scheme management agreement, which expired in 2014. Since 2007, 20 to 30 acres of *Rhododendron ponticum* has been cleared at Arlington.

5.0 ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Early and Medieval history is largely informed by Dr Nick Berry's 2011 report.

5.1 Early History

Arlington lies within an ancient landscape that includes several prehistoric sites and find spots. One of the earliest sites lies close to the park in a field behind the Old Post Office, where a Neolithic stone axe was found in the 1950s. Kentisbury Down and Mattock's Down, some 3km to the north of Arlington, were important throughout prehistory, the latter featuring a row of standing stones and therefore of spiritual significance. Close to Mattock's Down are two of several Bronze Age barrows in the area, sited on higher ground, and, given our understanding of the wider area, Berry surmises that there was probably a small Bronze Age settlement at Arlington.

A possible late Iron Age farmstead has been identified at Lock Lane, to the northeast of Arlington Court and Berry has made two tentative identifications of additional prehistoric enclosures at North Town Farm in Loxhore and at North Woolley. However, compared to the area around Bratton Fleming, Arlington has relatively little evidence of other late prehistoric settlement. As many of the named settlements date from the Domesday survey, Berry suggests that the lack of evidence is due to a continuity of settlement and the re-use of the same farm and settlement sites since prehistoric times.

Although Barnstaple is likely to have been a Romano-British port, and intensive iron mining took place on Exmoor, very few finds or evidence for Roman activity have been found in the Arlington area. Instead, it is understood that the early medieval period of 400-700AD was a key period for Devon, when many settlements were established. North Devon formed part of the Kingdom of Dumnonia and was settled by ancient British or Celtic speaking people, many of whom had been converted to Christianity. From around 700AD to the Norman Conquest, the area was gradually colonized by the Saxons, evidence for which survives in the pre-Conquest place names such as cott and worthy. The name Arlington also has Saxon origins, derived from the personal name of Ælffrip.

5.2 *Medieval Manor*

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, the manor of Arlington was above average size for North Devon, but relatively small compared to estates across the rest of the county. It was held with the neighbouring manor of Tuchel or Twitchen, and Berry estimates that the extent of both manors combined may have equated roughly to the current parish of Arlington (4). A separation of the lord's land, or *desmesne*, and the villagers' land, which was common in Devon, is thought to explain why Arlington has a manor house, church and hamlet at some from distance from the medieval strip fields at Arlington Beccott. Documentary evidence distinguishes these two nucleated settlements as 'town' and 'village' respectively. The villagers would have worked on their own farmland at Arlington Beccott and been required to work their lord's *desmesne* around the manor house.

By 1135, the manor of Arlington had been granted to Hugh de Ralege, and subsequently descended with the Raleigh family who held a number of other estates in Devon. The appointment of a rector of Arlington by the Raleighs in 1285 indicates the existence of the church by this stage, almost certainly next to their manor house. Fragments of the surrounding strip fields, surviving as faint ridge and furrow earthworks, have been identified by Berry in the park at Arlington. This hints at the existence of an arable landscape, which was probably later enclosed into small pastoral fields, or 'closes', for livestock grazing in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. The re-use of the field boundaries of old strip, arable fields was common and accounts for curving examples such as the 'S' shaped boundary that survives as an earthwork across the middle of the park, south of Arlington Court.

The impression is, therefore, that medieval Arlington would have consisted of the manor house, church and outbuildings on the top of the hill above the river Yeo, with the surrounding land under the plough and later converted to pasture. Documentary and archaeological evidence suggests that the Raleighs may also have possessed a deer park at Arlington, enclosed from adjacent woodland and moor to the southeast of the manor. A description of *Wytemor Wood* in a Charter of Feoffment dated 1341 equates it to Deer Park Wood and the remains of substantial boundary banks around this area provide strong evidence for a medieval park. There is also a mention of Thomas de Raleigh's *park at Lokkesore Wood* in 1345.

Unlike the more ornamental post-medieval landscape park, a deer park such as this belonging to the Raleighs at Arlington was principally an enclosed area where deer were contained by a deer-proof pale. It was, in effect, a farm for raising venison and provided the luxury of fresh meat for the lord of the manor. Deer parks became very popular after the Norman Conquest as sought-after status symbols, and peaked in number around 1300 (41). They typically ranged from 100 to 200 acres, and an area of this size has been identified by Berry at Arlington (figure 36). Normally, the landowner would need to obtain a *grant of free warren* from the King to enclose a deer park, although a documented record of this has yet to be found for Arlington.

In addition to a deer park, the medieval manor of Arlington may have also possessed a rabbit warren, fishponds and a dovecote. These would have provided the Raleighs with further supplies of fresh meat. The evidence for this is in the field names shown on the 1776 estate plan, namely Higher and Lower Cunney Closes and Culvercombe, and the series of ponds descending the valley below the manor.

Thomas de Raleigh's granddaughter, Thomasina, married Sir John Chichester in 1385 and after her death in 1404, Arlington began its 545-year history in the ownership of the Chichesters. Documentary evidence suggests that, initially, the family did not live at Arlington, presumably residing one of their other properties in Devon. Therefore, it may have been during this early period that the de Raleighs' deer park was disparked.

5.3 *Productive Estate 1534-1783*

The first Chichester to live at Arlington was Amyas (born c.1512), residing there from about 1534. As a rising member of Devon's landed gentry, it is thought Amyas enlarged or rebuilt the old medieval manor house. He was married to Joan Gifford, brought up in the moated mansion of Brightley in Chittlehampton. Their large family of 19 sons and four daughters founded the Chichester of Arlington branch of the family. An account of the Arlington estate in 1553 reveals that the estate had grown significantly over the medieval period and included 20 houses, 1 mill, over 1000 acres of farmland, meadow, pasture, woodland and heath, together with Whitemoor, Woolley Wood and Shoe Wood. A second mill was mentioned during the 12-year ownership of Amyas's son and heir, Henry.

Elizabethan and early Stuart Arlington was occupied by Amyas Chichester II (1573-1622), who held the estate for over thirty years from 1589 to 1622. It is during this period that documentary evidence starts to reveal the impact of the Chichesters' determination to retain their Catholic faith after the Reformation. As recusants they were subject to financial penalties and excluded from parts of society. Two-thirds of their lands, including Arlington, were seized by the King as a punishment in 1607, and not returned to the family until 1632. As Royalists, the Chichesters were also fined in the 1640s during the Civil War.

A measure of financial hardship and exclusion from court and political society may explain why there were few major developments at Arlington over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Whereas neighbouring Youlston, owned by a titled and protestant branch of the Chichester family, was enlarged and rebuilt, and appears on early maps with an extensive landscape park, Arlington remained a relatively modest agricultural estate. Any improvements were, in the words of Berry, focussed on *agricultural efficiency and gentrification of the core of the estate*. These included additional land acquisition (as demonstrated by further written descriptions of John Chichester's property in the 1670s); the enclosure of Arlington Down in 1630 (high ground to the northeast of Arlington and southeast of Arlington Beccott); the erection of a Palladian front on the medieval and Tudor manor house; improved irrigation of the pasture and meadows below the house; and the building of cottages known as New England and Barton Court Farmhouse and farm, relocating labourers and agricultural activities away from increasingly private main residence and grounds.

Helping to fund these improvements and restore some of the family's financial credibility (although still not on a scale with the Chichesters of Youlston), Giles Chichester married Catherine Palmer, heir to Sir Roger Palmer, the 1st Earl of Castlemaine (1634-1705). Earl Castlemaine had been a courtier, diplomat and politician in the Stuart Court, and was married to the infamous Barbara Villiers, mistress of Charles II. The bulk of his estate was left to his nephew, Charles Palmer of Dorney Court, Buckinghamshire (42). This is said to have included extensive but unprofitable property in Wales. Charles's sister, Catherine, also inherited land in Cardiganshire and Montgomeryshire, although possibly from a different source. The absence of a sudden rise in the fortunes of the Chichesters suggests that these Welsh estates were similarly of limited value.

Inheriting at a young age, Giles and Catherine's son, John Chichester III held Arlington for 59 years from 1724 to 1783. There is very little documentary evidence for this period as one might find with other gentry estates, possibly because the family maintained a low profile. Notably, the Reverend Swete, who normally didn't miss a grand house or landscape in his extensive travels around Devon, only made a passing reference to Arlington. However, there are hints of estate improvements at Arlington during John Chichester III's ownership, and probably in the mid-late 1700s as implied by the mention of *lately made* alterations to the house in the circa 1790 proposals.

There is also the suggestion of landscape improvements including a mention of clumps of firs – Scots pine, and a symbol of Jacobite sympathies – enclosed with railings in 1774. Two years later, an estate plan was prepared by Charles Hassall. Plans were normally produced on change of ownership, reorganisation of farming management or as a survey to inform landscape changes. Hassall's plan of Arlington is dated 1776, seven years before John Chichester died, so it is possible that he was considering landscape improvements but was unable to complete them. The surviving version of this plan only shows the house, church, gardens and the immediate surrounding fields and woodlands, and it provides evidence that, despite some improvements to the house, Arlington had remained a modest, agricultural estate throughout the eighteenth century. The manor or *Barton House* was still surrounded by formal, enclosed gardens, while orchards filled the sheltered Culvercombe valley below. Four fishponds were located to the west, and woodlands to the east were described as *groves*, suggesting an ornamental function as well as screens and shelterbelts. The house forecourts and formal, straight drive were typical of the traditional grand barton houses of Devon gentry, with parallels to, for example, Dunsland (51).

5.4 *Late Georgian House and Park 1783-1823*

It was John Chichester's son, Colonel John Palmer Chichester (1769-1823), who finally broke with two family traditions: firstly, he completely remodelled Arlington House, building a new, fashionable, classical-style mansion set within a landscape park and, secondly, he married a protestant and converted to Anglicanism. Colonel Chichester was clearly out to increase the status and prominence of the Arlington branch of the Chichester family.

Colonel Chichester employed the architect John Meadows to design his new house, which partly incorporated the original manor house, located in the same position, next to the church. The date of the building can be estimated with fair accuracy as Colonel Chichester did not turn 21 until 1790, and Meadows died, at Arlington, in 1791. Meadows was a London architect, but received several Devon commissions including alterations to Eggesford House in 1770-2 and remodelling of Hartland Abbey for Paul Orchard in a Gothick style in 1779. The new mansion at Arlington may have been partly funded by Colonel Chichester's marriage to his first, Catholic, wife, Mary Cary in 1790 and in the spirit of Eggesford House, Hartland Abbey and his wife's home of Torre Abbey, involved the remodelling of an earlier building rather than a complete rebuild.

Maria Pixell's paintings of the 1790s provide an invaluable record of Colonel Chichester's new mansion and park. The ordered, classical, rendered front of the mansion stands amidst a well-wooded, picturesque parkland. The garden walls, outbuildings, field boundaries and ponds mapped in 1776 had been cleared and simplified to create grazed parkland (figure 35). The paintings suggest that the church tower remained an important landmark and eye-catcher in the landscape. As identified by Lovie, it seems likely that Colonel Chichester may have been inspired and informed by the new landscape park at Eggesford, designed by the landscape gardener and former assistant of Capability Brown, Nathaniel Richmond (1724-1784), as a setting for another house by John Meadows. Colonel Chichester may also have had knowledge of the landscape park at Shugborough, the neighbouring estate of his sister's home at Tixall Hall, Staffordshire. Colonel Chichester's sister, Mary MacDonald Chichester, married Sir Thomas Hugh Clifford (later Constable) (1762-1823) in 1791 – a topographer and botanist, and later heir to Burton Constable and Wycliffe Hall.

The full extent of the new park at Arlington was recorded on the Ordnance Survey surveyor's drawing of 1804. It is shown extending down to the meadows along the Yeo, either side of the Culvercombe Valley. A drive ran from Woolley Wood, up Culvercombe to the house, or it could be reached via a road to the north of the church. Culvercombe appears to be wooded, and was almost certainly cleared of orchards and laid out as the *Wilderness* at this stage – the term often referring to an ornamental woodland, typically with winding paths running through it (the first labelling of the *Wilderness* is on a map of the 1860s).

Lovie suggests that the use of the name *Wilderness* at Arlington had connotations with a sense of 'wild' scenery. This seems particularly likely given Colonel Chichester's acquaintance with Thomas Johnes (1748-1816), creator of the picturesque landscape of Hafod in Cardiganshire, and his almost certain knowledge of the aspirations of John Knight (d.1850), purchaser of Exmoor in 1818, and the writings of Knight's cousin, the picturesque theorist, Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824). The picturesque qualities of North Devon were also widely recognised in the early 1800s by poets, artists, travel writers and aesthetes. The steep, narrow, wooded combe of the Wilderness, with a babbling stream and rocky outcrops would have ideally suited this contemporary fashion for the 'untamed' landscape and offered an exciting approach to the main house.

Chichester continued to make improvements to Arlington throughout the 1790s and early 1800s. These included tree planting, with trees supplied from a local Exeter nurserymen, and the building of a pinery and hothouse. The latter demonstrate Chichester's horticultural interests and an aspiration to grow exotic fruit and flowers – a increasingly popular hobby amongst the wealthy, keen to propagate newly introduced plants being found by Britain's plant collectors. The mid 1790s also saw works to raise a pond dam, and this probably marks the creation of the large pond near the church as the water body was designed to *form a pleasing object from the House*.

Before Colonel Chichester's house was barely thirty years old, he commenced work on a new mansion, 200m to the west. This is generally attributed to the date 1820-3, however a reference in the accounts to guttering on the *New house* in 1818, may indicate a slightly earlier building date. Now in his fifties, it seems unlikely that Chichester would have simply rebuilt the house on a whim, and adds weight to the local tradition that it was out of necessity because Meadows's building became structurally unsound. Either way, a second mansion, this time in the more up-to-date Greek Revival manner, took centre stage in the park. It was designed by Barnstaple architect, Thomas Lee (1794-1834), who had trained under the leading Neo-Classical architect, Sir John Soane ((1753-1837). It appears to have been his first major country house commission and during, or just after, his commission at Arlington, Lee designed a new house for the Hon. Newton Fellowes at Eggesford. Although this was designed in the quite different Tudorbethan style, it also replaced

an earlier Meadows building and also involved the re-location of the principal residence to a more picturesque location in the park.

Colonel Chichester and his third wife's tastes are also demonstrated by his acquisition of a work by William Blake. Blake was a fairly contentious figure by the 1820s, so this may suggest Chichester had made almost radical social connections in his later life.

5.5 *Regency and Victorian Embellishments 1824-1881*

Colonel Chichester only enjoyed his new house for a couple of years, dying in 1823. Walling and railing accounts of 1822 may indicate that he commenced landscape improvements before his death, but it was left to his son, John Palmer Bruce Chichester (1794-1851), to complete the designed landscape setting of *Arlington Court* (addressed as such in a letter of 1831). One of John's first tasks was the realignment of the public road away from Arlington church and the new house. This was granted permission in 1828, and would have greatly enhanced the privacy of his house and grounds.

Chichester had a brief naval career before settling at Arlington, and it is probably during this service that he became friends with Lt. Obadiah Newell. In a few surviving letters from Newell to Chichester, dated 1831, mention is made of *curious pine seeds from Peru* (*Araucaria*), Newell's gardens, Dr Armstrong's hothouse and various exchanges of livestock with Sir James Gordon. Gordon was probably the distinguished naval officer who is thought to have been model for C. S. Forester's *Horatio Hornblower* novels. Between 1828 and 1832, Gordon was the Superintendent of the Naval Hospital at Plymouth where Newell and Dr Armstrong also resided. We will never know whether the curious Peruvian pine seeds survived and were planted at Arlington ahead of the main introduction of the Monkey puzzle tree in 1839 (although five had been planted in 1795) but this correspondence provides a glimpse of horticultural exchanges between retired naval officers interested in the new and exotic coming straight off the ships as they docked at Plymouth.

A detailed summary of expenditure on the Arlington estate for the years 1833 to 1844 provides a valuable record of John P. B. Chichester's developments. The payments were listed under several categories including *Farm and Game*, *House-keeping*, *Garden and Plantation*, and the *New Coach Road*. Later, payments *on the Pond*

were added to the *New Coach Road* account; in 1835 payments on the *Woods and plantations* were separated from the *Garden* expenses; and in 1836, new accounts for *Labour at Lake and Pleasure Grounds* and *Tradesmens' bills for House, Lodges etc.* were added. 1836 was a particularly expensive year, with £941 spent on building works, £346 on the gardens and £269 on the lake, roads and pleasure grounds. The head gardeners were Mr John Nash, Mr Norris from 1835 and Mr McEvoy from 1841.

A clear distinction was made between the pond and the lake. The former was being worked on in 1834 and 1835 and was probably enlargement of the Wilderness pond, close to the church. The lake starts to be accounted for in 1836, with almost monthly expenditure throughout 1837. By 1839, the lake expenses had been combined with those for the gardens, suggesting that building work was complete. Entries entitled *Mr Nash – Lake* in 1839 and 1840 suggest that gardening and planting of the lakeshore was taking place. Nursery bills included £55 paid to Lucombe and Pince in 1834 and purchases of plants from Veitch's, Osbourne and Conway in 1841-2 reveal that Arlington was being supplied by some of the leading nurserymen in the country. Regular payments to Mr Burge of Barnstaple shows that they were also using very local firms, probably for the more run-of-the-mill plants.

The accounts also record the construction of a lodge. Large payments totalling just under £200 were made to *Mr Gould* (Lovie suggests that Gould was probably the Barnstaple architect, Richard Davie Gould, 1816/17-1900) on account of the new lodge between 1835 and 1837. The lodge under construction was almost certainly Woolley Lodge on the Barnstaple Road, as 1835 was a year after a plan was drawn up for a road diversion and new estate entrance here in 1834. We also know that the building had been completed by the date of the Shirwell tithe plan, in 1838. The classical lodge with its fine cast iron gates would have tied in with the architectural style of the Court and created a much grander estate entrance for visitors arriving from the newly turnpiked Barnstaple road. In 1837, Gould would have been at the very start of his career, at a time when he specialised in classical architecture. This contrasts with his later, Gothic style buildings at Arlington and elsewhere, and demonstrates the flexibility of architects such as Gould and Thomas Lee to design structures that met the eclectic tastes of Victorian society.

The Arlington tithe plan records the culmination of Sir John P. B. Chichester's initial flurry of parkland developments, the layout of which responded to his father's

relocated mansion. The result was a picturesque landscape park spread over the sloping valley, enjoyed from a circuit park drive and featuring a lake. The dramatic topography would have enhanced the scene, particularly arriving at Arlington Court along the Woolley Lodge drive, descending to the valley bottom, enjoying the lake and then rising again through the Wilderness to the Court.

There has, so far, been no documentary evidence for a named landscape gardener working at Arlington. The layout and character shows influence of the early and mid nineteenth century Picturesque style, as advocated by designers and commentators such as Uvedale Price, Humphry Repton, John Loudon and William Sawrey Gilpin. All four men disseminated their ideas in popular and influential publications. Gilpin wrote a guide to landowners, *Practical hints upon landscape gardening* (1832), which aimed to set out the principles of improving a landscape. Aspects of his advice are clearly evident at Arlington, raising the possibility that John Chichester was aware of this contemporary publication. Gilpin designed, visited and advised on many landscapes over his career, including Killerton and Bicton in Devon, and so it is possible that he paid Arlington a visit as well.

Evidence for the potential influence of Gilpin or, at least, Gilpin's theories of landscape design, at Arlington, could be interpreted in the layout of the Woolley Drive, the lake and the distinctly irregular shapes of clumps and tree belt edges (later mapped on the 1844 tithe plan). Gilpin believed that an approach drive should *appear to be an unstudied road to the house* and, like the Woolley Drive, that it should avoid running parallel to the public road off which it came, and avoid a *uniform curve or easy sweep* (56). He also recommended that where a house commanded an extensive prospect, the drive should provide a contrast by approaching *through more confined scenery*, possibly explaining the lack of obvious viewpoints of Arlington Court from the Woolley Drive in historic maps and illustrations.

In terms of creating lakes, Gilpin devoted a whole chapter of his book to water, and how *forming a piece of water was the highest achievement of the improver's skill...In water, as in a plantation, the outline is of the utmost moment; and the same observation will apply to both, viz. that the excellence of the form will depend on the boldness of its indentations*. The aim of irregularity was to create variety and the impression of Picturesque natural scenery, rather than an artificial water-body. Gilpin also applied this theory to the shape of clumps and plantations, imploring his reader to avoid so

monotonous a form as an oval or a circular group of trees and instead creating irregular shapes of varied size and character (56).

Chichester continued to develop the Arlington landscape until his death in 1851. During the late 1840s, he worked on improving the lake with a *House*, probably a boathouse, and commissioned William Dredge to design him a suspension bridge (figure 15), designed to convey the approach drive over the lake with a dramatic piece of engineering. Suspension bridges were new and innovative structures in the 1840s. The first patented design was published by the American, James Finley, in 1810, and one of the earliest to be built in the UK was the Menai Suspension Bridge in 1826, to designs by Thomas Telford. William Dredge was the son of another great bridge architect, James Dredge (1794-1863), designer of the Victoria Bridge in Bath (1836), and innovator of wrought iron suspension chains, rather than cables, which weighed less and were quicker to install. Both his sons were also civil engineers and William worked for the *Scottish Engineers, Iron Founders and Contractors*, Messrs. C. D. Young and Co. The company catalogue includes several illustrations of suspension bridges that used *Dredge's Patent Principle*, so William was clearly continuing to apply his father's design. The Young's catalogue for 1857 also included several designs for drawn wire and iron post fencing, similar to those photographed at Arlington in the 1880s.

Sir John's son and heir, Sir Bruce Chichester, was only nine when he inherited Arlington, so his period of management did not commence until the 1860s. Once again, Gould was engaged to update and extend the mansion, design new estate cottages and a new Home Farm complex on the site of the old Sheep Fold. Home Farm in particular, reflects a change in taste from stark classicism to more picturesque gothic style with pitched roofs, decorative bargeboards, and prominent Tudor-style chimneys. Although mapped in 1843, based on the style of Home Farm, it seems likely that the lodge to the northwest of the Court, identified in the 1860s as the *Gardener's House*, originates from this period and was perhaps a rebuild of the previous structure in its fenced enclosure. The gothic style is also shared by other examples of Gould's work in Barnstaple, where he worked as Borough architect.

Another possible initiative of Sir Bruce, that has become a key characteristic of Arlington, is the planting of monkey puzzle trees on the estate. Lovie has identified a similar preference for the distinctive specimen tree at the home of Sir Bruce's wife,

Cranbury Park, in Hampshire. Monkey puzzle trees did not become readily available until 1842, when they were cultivated by Veitch's in Exeter. At Arlington, they were mound planted along the circuit path, on the shores of the lake and single specimens are found on some of the estate farms. A quick ring-count of a felled monkey puzzle next to the lake at Arlington reveals a planting date of around 1880, which also suggests they originate, or certainly, continued to be planted, during Sir Bruce's period of ownership.

5.6 *Home of Miss Chichester 1881-1949*

Sir Bruce left the Arlington estate and considerable debts to his widow, Lady Rosalie Chichester. Two years later, she married Sir Arthur Chichester of neighbouring Youlston Park, and the management of Arlington was taken over by her daughter, the eighteen-year-old Miss Chichester. The independent and eccentric Miss Chichester held Arlington for 66 years, and it is her wishes and management style of the parkland that has governed and later guided the conservation of Arlington since 1881.

The landscape she inherited is recorded on an estate plan of 1884. This records her father's improvements, including Home Farm and expansion of the lake. It also shows the start of subdivision of the parkland with fencing. This was presumably for grazing management purposes, but it set a precedent for subsequent subdivision, and fencing of the circuit drives, which has permanently altered the character of the early-mid nineteenth century landscape park, reducing the sense of smooth, uninterrupted pasture. Contributing to this move away from her grandfather's designed landscape, were her increasing interests in nature conservation and public access.

Some of the first evidence of this was Miss Chichester's donation of some of the Estate's coastal land to the National Trust in 1909. The Trust had been established fourteen years earlier with the key objective of preserving *for the benefit of the Nation...lands and tenements of beauty and historic interest and, as regards lands, for the preservation of their natural aspect, features and animal and plant life...* It emerged out of a growing awareness for nature and landscape conservation that can be traced back to Wordsworth's comments about the Lake District in the 1830s, where he declared it was *national property in which every man has a right and interest*. Protection of wild nature was particularly strong in the United States, establishing its first

national park in 1872. The concept was also adopted early by the nations of Australia and New Zealand, who founded the Royal National Park (1879) and the Tongariro National Park (1887) respectively.

Miss Chichester's awareness of the National Park movement would have been heightened by her international travels in 1920-1, when she visited Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. One the features of the new national parks was that they were open to visitors, and public access was clearly an objective for Miss Chichester at Arlington. In 1920, she negotiated the donation of Arlington to the National Trust at her death, ensuring its long-term conservation and ownership by the nation, and in 1921 she opened Arlington to the public for the first time.

As well as nature conservation and public access, another factor driving Miss Chichester's management of Arlington was her passionate dislike of hunting. In 1897, she banned hunting on her Loxhore coverts and in 1902 her case against the Barnstaple Staghounds was taken to the High Court. Miss Chichester succeeded in enforcing a ban across her estate, although there were considerable objections in an area with a long tradition of stag-hunting and the ban was breached several times. In 1934, Miss Chichester erected an eight mile *iron and wire netting* fence around what she called the *nature reserve*, described in a letter to the Trust as a small scale *National Park, such as one sees in Australia and New Zealand*. Hunting was banned within this area, the plants and birds were to be protected and the area and scenery was to be enjoyed by the public. In creating a micro National Park, Miss Chichester was ahead of her time, the first national parks in England not being designated until 1951.

Relatively little change in the landscape layout is picked up by historic maps during Miss Chichester's period of ownership, with the exception of the demolition of the Gardeners House or Lodge, near the Court, around 1930 (1), the construction of a perimeter path around the pleasure grounds by 1903, and additions and realignments of fencing in the wider parkland. However, Miss Chichester's Arlington is well documented by a collection of photographs. Many are undated, but were probably taken by Miss Chichester from the 1880s to the first or second decades of the 1900s. They record well-kept pleasure grounds around the house, dotted with specimen shrubs and trees, and a sheep and pony grazed parkland with a good population of mixed parkland trees. Repeatedly photographed key views start to

emerge, such as that from the far side of the lake towards the park, or from Gratton hill back towards the Court, over the Wilderness Pond. Miss Chichester's photographs of woodland, trees reflected in water and the rustic scenes of Smallacombe bridge and the park gates, all reveal an eye and appreciation for more naturalistic, less managed scenery and are again indicative of Miss Chichester's passion for nature.

5.7 *National Trust Property 1949-present*

When the National Trust acquired the Arlington estate, following the death of Miss Chichester in 1949, the park was described as *a jungle* by James Lees Milne. A report in 1951 similarly bemoaned the fact that the woods were overgrown and unmanaged and the estate, in particular, its farms and estate buildings, had been *very badly neglected for the last thirty years or more*. The neglect is, perhaps, not surprising given the debts Miss Chichester was burdened with when she inherited Arlington from her father in 1883 and the fact that she was in her 80s when she died, and probably lacked energy and drive to make major improvements to the estate. With no child or close family due to inherit, she may have thought she could leave the entire maintenance backlog to the National Trust.

In 1924, in the heyday of Miss Chichester's ownership, she stated that she wanted Arlington to remain *much as it is at present* after her death, and in her *Memorandum of Wishes*, written in 1945, she requested that the Nature Reserve enclosure was maintained. Together, these have given rise to the idea that, in order to follow Miss Chichester's wishes, Arlington's parkland should remain under a light-touch management regime. When this approach was questioned by the Trust's Garden Advisor, Graham Stuart Thomas, in the 1970s, he was told by Michael Trinick, Secretary for the National Trust Committee for Devon and Cornwall, that they did not want to tidy up the landscape and reopen views, but instead preserve *a sense of mystery with dripping evergreens and whisky oaks*.

The result of this management approach has had several long-term consequences for Arlington. On the positive side, it has probably helped ensure the conservation of an ecological habitat so suitable for lichens that it has become nationally important as a SSSI. From a cultural heritage perspective, preserving *the mystery* has resulted in a significant dilution of the early to mid nineteenth century landscape park and the setting of the Regency mansion, also considered to be nationally exceptional. The

loss of key landscape views and subdivision of the pasture have interrupted the flow of the landscape park and compromised what Lovie refers to as the *aesthetic intent of its principal phase of development*.

Changes in staff and conservation approach towards the end of the twentieth century has resulted in some restoration of the historic designed landscape, in particular the pleasure grounds and walled garden which have to play an increased role as a visitor attraction. The lake continues to be a major issue, and a decision needs to be made as to whether it should be dredged once again or left to silt up and revert to river, meadow and woodland. Such a decision leads back to the overriding conundrum of the conservation of Arlington – to preserve a semi-wild but naturally changing landscape, supposedly advocated by the estate’s last owner; or to conserve a historic designed landscape, created and developed by Miss Chichester’s father, grandfather and great grandfather, and which was, in fact, the landscape that she herself knew and loved for most of her life.

5.8 Summary of Development Phases

The history of the landscape around Arlington Court can be divided into the following development phases, illustrated on figure 36:

1. Medieval farmland centred around a manor house and church, home of the Raleigh family and with a deer park to the southeast. Surviving from this phase are the earthworks of former hedge boundaries, roads and strip farming.
2. Enclosed fields, orchards and gardens around *Arlington House* – the remodelled manor house, depicted with a Palladian front by c.1790. The landscape is recorded in 1776.
3. A Georgian landscape park with clumps and perimeter belts, the Wilderness and a new approach drive to provide the setting of the rebuilt *Arlington House* of the early 1790s. This phase is recorded on the 1804 Ordnance Surveyor’s drawing.
4. A Regency and early Victorian enlargement of the landscape park by John Palmer Bruce Chichester and Sir Bruce Chichester, following the re-location and building of *Arlington Court* in c.1820. Additional features included the lake, circuit drive and further tree planting.
5. Modest modifications of the early and mid nineteenth century pleasure grounds and park between 1883 and 1949 by Miss Rosalie Chichester, including the preservation of the park within a fenced *Nature Reserve*.

6. Conservation of the mature landscape park since 1949, as left by the last Chichester to live at Arlington, Miss Rosalie Chichester, following acquisition by the National Trust. This continuing phase does not include a distinct development sub-phase, but the Trust's work is evident in some significant additions to the landscape, including the ha-has, ticket office and shop, Carriage museum, replacement glasshouses, car park, new parkland railings, parkland tree planting and the creation of some additional clumps and plantations. While this is a clear development phase at Arlington as a whole, it has not constituted a significantly different design phase in the parkland alone, comprising both areas of replanting and other areas of reduced management.

5.9 Statement of Significance

The parkland at Arlington Court is a nationally important landscape and habitat resulting from a combination of the various characteristics that have developed from its history, design, ecology and topography:

5.9.1 Cultural Significance

Historic Designed Landscape

As a grade II* Registered landscape, the *early to mid C19 pleasure grounds and gardens* and *C18 and early C19 parkland landscape* at Arlington Court have been recognised as being of particular national significance by English Heritage. The rationale for the outstanding grade is not stated, but may relate to its completeness and integrity. The Regency and early Victorian Picturesque landscape park, which grew out of the late Georgian, 1790s landscape as the setting of the c.1820 Arlington Court and was largely complete by 1850, is arguably the most significant phase in the development of the landscape park. It continues to form the fundamental structure and aesthetic principals of today's landscape, despite subsequent modifications, the diminishing size of the lake and a maturing tree population. As a design, it is a good example of a Picturesque landscape park of the early nineteenth century, possibly influenced by landscape gardener, William Sawrey Gilpin.

Setting of Arlington Court and other listed buildings

The landscape also forms the setting of several nationally important, listed buildings, especially the Regency mansion of Arlington Court and the medieval parish church (both grade II*); but also the Glebe House (grade II*); the fine, grade II listed nineteenth century Woolley Lodge and stable block; and the Queen Victoria Jubilee

cairn and drive entrance gate piers (grade II). In addition, the landscape provides the setting for a number of other, unlisted structures, including the Victorian suspension bridge piers and several historic bridges over the river Yeo.

Seat of the Chichesters

The estate's long ownership by the Chichesters of Arlington for over 500 years is principally of local significance, as they were a branch of one of Devon's oldest gentry families and, until 1793, staunchly retained their Roman Catholic faith. Miss Chichester, the last in the line, is particularly significant as an independent and eccentric woman whose tastes and interests have left an enduring mark on the nature and character of Arlington Court and its parkland today – most particularly, in her intent on preserving the natural environment.

5.9.2 Archaeological Significance

Over 200 features of archaeological interest have been identified in the parkland, recognising the rich archaeological heritage at Arlington relating to earlier farmland, former deer park and field boundaries, routeways, catch meadow systems, and lost parkland features, ranging in date from the early medieval period to the mid 1900s. This strong evidence for the evolution of the landscape around Arlington Court means that the park is of local archaeological significance. The medieval deer park is locally significant as evidence of the pre-Chichester landscape.

5.9.3 Ecological Significance

The parkland at Arlington is nationally significant for its lichen and invertebrate populations, with two large areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In addition, the whole park is considered to be of county significance as it provides a range of UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat types including lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland, species-rich lowland calcareous grassland, lowland meadows, wood pasture and parkland with veteran trees, hedgerows, and pond and river aquatic habitats including eutrophic standing water. These support a wide range of wildlife, including several Biodiversity Action Plan species and over ten species of bats. However, it is considered that the description of the ecological components underplays the scope and value for Arlington as a core site in a much bigger, better and more joined-up habitat, linking the river valleys and coast to Exmoor.

5.9.4 **Aesthetic Significance**

Arlington is of considerable scenic value, largely as a result of its dramatic topography of high ground plunging into deep river valleys. This topography was exploited by the Chichesters to maximise the prominence and setting of their residence, and the visual qualities and character of the surrounding designed landscape. As well as enjoying a range of internal picturesque views, the parkland is enhanced by panoramic views of the wider rural setting of this largely unspoilt and tranquil part of North Devon. Arlington's aesthetic values are enjoyed by the visitors to the Court, and also the many users of the extensive public footpath network across the estate.

5.9.5 **Social and Economic Significance**

Arlington Court is a popular visitor attraction and the main National Trust property in North Devon. It is readily accessible free of charge via public rights of way and by paid entry to the house and gardens.

5.9.6 **Summary**

The relative significance of individual features of the park at Arlington has been set out in Appendix 3 Historic Landscape Gazetteer. The following table sets out the relative significance of the broad aspects of Arlington as a summary, using National Trust assessment terms of exceptional, considerable, moderate, neutral and intrusive (broadly corresponding to international, national and local levels of importance, used by others):

| <i>Aspect</i> | <i>Relative significance on a national scale</i> |
|---|--|
| Designed landscape – 1820-1850 Picturesque landscape park (Registered park) | Considerable |
| Setting of listed buildings (LB I and II*) | Considerable |
| Home of the Arlington branch of the Chichester family (Local gentry history) | Moderate |
| Archaeology – evidence of former agricultural landscape (Undesignated field archaeology) | Moderate |
| Ecology – lichen and invertebrate habitat (SSSI, lichen NEIC species index 34) | Considerable |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Scenic qualities (Outside National Park, within AGLV) | Moderate |
| Visitor attraction and public access (90,000 visitors p.a.) | Moderate |

As an example of how this summary can be used, the views which contribute most to the aspects of *considerable* significance (such as those belonging to the Picturesque landscape park) should be accorded a greater importance than those which reflect either a modern appreciation of the landscape, or originated from now lost components of the historic landscape, such as the setting of the earlier eighteenth century house, now rated as a *moderate* significance.

5.10 Objectives

In the light of the foregoing chronology, historic analysis and statement of significance, the following objectives for the future management and conservation of the park at Arlington Court are proposed:

- i. Wherever feasible, to conserve archaeology and surviving historic landscape fabric of earlier landscapes *in situ*.
- ii. To conserve the historic character of the different areas of the designed landscape park by active conservation and restoration of historic landscape features and areas, to the *last significant design phase* in each area, based on the best available evidence. At Arlington, this approach is complicated by the donor's wishes to preserve her *reserve* landscape, which changed significantly in her own lifetime, with a decline in the maintenance and management needed to conserve the character and quality of the landscape she was seeking to retain. This objective is interpreted further in the proposals below.
- iii. To conserve and, where feasible, enhance biodiversity primarily through the conservation of the historic landscape, rather than by the creation of new habitats at odds with the designed landscape. Enhancement of biodiversity should be a priority where the designated Site of Special Scientific Interest is not in a *favourable* condition. There is an ongoing conflict inherent in this objective, with the development of lichen-rich sallow carr on the silted-up part of Arlington lake.
- iv. To seek funding towards restoration and management projects consistent with identified priorities, phasing and a programme of works.

- v. To retain the long-term sustainability of the park primarily by grazing management to support the management and conservation of the key values of the Site of Special Scientific Interest, as well as the historic landscape.
- vi. To increase visitor appreciation and understanding of the development of the whole property and offer further opportunities to explore and enjoy its historic, scenic and ecological values.

5.11 Overall Integrated Vision

The National Trust vision for Arlington Court, as set out in the Property Business Plan is as follows:

Our Vision

*More than the sum of its parts, Arlington is a sustainable estate and **the** natural attraction in North Devon.*

Our theme

Arrive at Arlington and explore a secluded landscape full of incident and contrasts.

In the light of the foregoing analysis (in particular, relating to the sustainability of the lake and the man-made design of the landscape park), we would recommend that, as well as stressing the natural and ecological aspects of the landscape, the Trust's vision might also place greater emphasis on revealing the designed historic landscape at Arlington. For the purposes of this study, the following revised vision is proposed:

Arlington holds the essence of North Devon: a fusion of nature and picturesque design, forged out of clean air, clean water, ancient and exotic trees, native breeds, rare wildlife, family histories, artistic enterprise and an eccentric resolve.

6.0 GENERAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND PROPOSALS

6.1 Parkland and Grazing Management

The parkland and park-like pasture subject to this overview is located in the following Site Description Areas (mapped on figure 2):

1. Mill Close (Home Farm)
2. West Park (Part Home Farm, part in hand)
3. Front Park (in hand)
4. Gratton (Home Farm, paddock in hand)
5. Wester Deer Park (Home Farm)
6. Part of Deer Park Moor (in hand)
7. Kennel Wood and Lower Barton (Home Farm)

Condition

The parkland is currently managed by grazing with Ruby Red cattle, sheep, a few horses and ponies, wild Red deer, and, at Home Farm, crossbred beef steers. Within Front Park, Wester Deer Park and part of Deer Park Moor, the current level of grazing achieves an attractive mixed tussocky sward, consistent with the historic character of the deer park, and also maintains the more species-rich areas of the turf with minimal livestock damage to parkland trees except for the limited areas run as horse paddocks, where there is moderate tree damage. Most of the previously improved pasture areas have yet to develop a more diverse turf, in terms of species and structure, to match the above, whereas part of Deer Park Moor and, to a lesser extent, *Lower Moor*, are under grazed and progressively reverting to scrub woodland and/or coarse grassland with dense forbs. In the case of the former, this has led to the loss of some lichen diversity since 2005.

In the absence of an enclosed Fallow deer herd, mixed grazing low density stocking with cattle, sheep and wild Red deer replicates the effect of Fallow deer on the sward, trees and visual character, including a clear browse line.

Parkland trees fall into six broad age and condition classes:

- i. Veteran and overmature oak, beech and ash, mainly boundary and hedgerow origin, but now individual parkland trees. These trees possess the greatest of lichen habitats including species representing continuity with 'old forest'

- habitat. These trees are at risk of major branch loss and structural damage due to storms. A number of such trees have fallen since 1993.
- ii. Mature oak, beech, Turkey oak and sycamore dating from the 1830s, mainly planted in clumps, belts and plantations, generally less diverse lichen habitats due to dense growth, shade, competition and erect form. Subject to group windblow, exacerbated by livestock damage and soil compaction during previous periods of overstocking.
 - iii. Mature oak, beech, Turkey oak, sweet chestnut, sycamore, lime, silver fir, Austrian pine, Wellingtonia and *Araucaria*, in small clumps, groups, lines and as individual trees, planted in the mid nineteenth century. Subject to some of the above risks.
 - iv. Natural regeneration of oak, ash, sycamore, alder and willow; circa 1960s and associated with the cessation of grazing in small valley meadows.
 - v. Naturally regenerated willow carr on the silted-up section of the lake, and wet flush areas in valley meadows, with notable and distinctive twig lichen flora.
 - vi. Replanted clumps of beech, Scots pine, oak and individually planted beech, Corsican pine, oak, ash, sycamore, together with minor species (larch, poplar, walnut, Horse chestnut, lime), from the 1990s. Corsican pine showing symptoms of red band needle blight. Larch largely removed due to *Phytophthora* risk, Horse chestnut with bleeding canker. Clumps generally well-established, oaks subject to heavy deer browsing in areas. This replanting is now ready for thinning, pruning and reopening to grazing, where the grazing pressure can be controlled. Diseases due to globalisation and climate change will require some of these trees to be replaced with other species of similar aesthetic character and value to wildlife.

Significance

The parkland and its mature and veteran parkland trees are culturally significant as a Registered designed landscape and as the setting of listed buildings, and form an important wildlife habitat, supporting notable and scarce lichen species. Grazing is fundamental to conserve the character, visual quality and ecological attributes of the parkland. Dung is especially important for bats feeding on invertebrates, while browsing controls scrub, and creates views under the browse line.

Vulnerability

Parklands are vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather conditions, which accentuate issues such as waterlogging and poaching, and loss of trees through pests, disease and windthrow. The North Devon climate and soils may accentuate some of these risks, balanced by the high rainfall and clean air which ameliorates the impact of tree losses by improving the viability of alternative species for lichens. Careful selection of appropriate and diverse tree species in replanting the park is also important to reduce the risk of disease and avoid significant change in visual character which could occur if inappropriate short-lived, highly coloured ornamental trees were to be planted. Overgrazing or overwintering livestock could restrict the development of a more species-rich grassland, cause erosion of field archaeology and leat banks, impact on veteran trees directly but also through soil compaction, and lead to weed-infested pastures. Modern cattle tend to be heavier than traditional breeds, and winter feeding could also lead to bare soil, and nutrient enrichment of the sward and bark, damaging both trees and epiphytic lichen habitats. Heavy stocking could damage parkland through bark rubbing of trees and soil compaction of the pasture. Vermicides (worming medication given to livestock) are believed to impact on rare invertebrates and soil fauna and, possibly, mycorrhizae, harming bats, soil condition, and veteran trees. While of ecological value, fallen deadwood can detract from the aesthetic qualities of the historic parkland. This issue is discussed further under *Principle 7: Trees of the National Trust's Policies and Guiding Principles for the Conservation and Management of Historic Parks (2007)*.

Having successfully established in the 1990s a more balanced age structure to the parkland tree population, the two greatest risks are, probably, uncontrolled squirrel damage to the young plantings, and a novel disease risk affecting mature lichen trees. As parkland management is key to retaining the condition of the SSSI, these are all high priority proposals.

Proposals

- i. Continue to graze the park at low stocking density with sheep, Ruby Red cattle, and Exmoor ponies, with continued additional grazing by wild Red deer, and extend grazing into replanted clumps, once established. Seek to increase the area subjected to this ideal extensive grazing regime; firstly, into valley meadows where lichens are being lost through under grazing;

secondly, across West Park, to reduce eutrophication of parkland tree bark; and, thirdly, across the Registered parkland more generally.

- ii. Selectively thin or selectively fell and formative prune young, established belts and clumps in areas of the park that were historically grazed, and reopen to grazing, initially with care to monitor bark and soil damage. Open-grown individual trees are most likely to be of high value for wood-decay invertebrates as they age and decay.
- iii. Replant individual parkland trees to reinstate the parkland tree cover recorded in 1886, using timber pale parkland guards. Replant mainly with local provenance sessile oak and other species present on the site, as shown on the parkland masterplan (appendix 9; drawing NT.139.10). Seek to replace inappropriate modern planting with ornamental species, except where that species provides appropriate landscape character and wildlife habitat potential, due to loss of historic species to disease (for example, lime and walnut in place of elm, Scots pine in place of Corsican pine).
- iv. Manage the parkland pasture by grazing, without applications of fertiliser, or selective herbicides, other than for spot or contact treatment of nettles, bracken, thistles, docks, and ragwort. Top the parkland annually, where necessary, to control nettles, bracken, bramble and thistles, to maintain an open park, with 'smooth' sward characteristic of the landscape park within 30 metres of the historic circulation routes and identified viewpoints, to avoid significant erosion of the ornamental parkland character from designed access points.
- v. The National Trust Conservation Directorate historic parks guidance recommends that where there are conflicts between managing trees for their aesthetic value and managing them for their ecological value, a balance needs to be sought: *resolved by informed debate and negotiation and a full understanding of the trees' significance for wildlife and their aesthetic role in landscape design* (55). At Arlington, it is recommended that fallen deadwood over 200mm diameter should be retained under the tree canopy spread and *in situ*, where safe and feasible, to enhance saproxylic beetle and other deadwood habitat, excepting:
 - Sound, marketable timber lengths of commercial value (that is, of large dimensions with minimal decay and deadwood habitat).
 - within 30 metres of designed circulation routes, garden boundaries and key views plotted on parkland masterplan (appendix 9; drawing

NT.139.10), where the close proximity of decay would also erode the ornamental character of the parkland. Thirty metres relates to the height of a fully mature tree, and a perceptual measure of immediate proximity at the human scale. Where there is concern over the interpretation of this, consult the National Trust ecologist and curator to secure an agreed approach with Natural England.

- vi. Retain mature and veteran parkland trees to their maximum safe, biological life, retaining standing deadwood, only carrying out tree surgery where necessary to extend the tree's life or for public safety.
- vii. Adopt Forestry Commission advice on sanitation and Acute Oak Decline as a precautionary measure, including:
 - limit movement of deadwood, sapwood and bark around the site
 - avoid felling potentially infected trees when wet and process on site
 - avoid pruning potentially infected trees
 - disinfect felling and pruning equipment, machinery, chippers, tyres and footwear between each worksite.
- viii. Seek to progressively reduce the extent and visual impact of subdividing livestock fences, to the minimum necessary to manage effective grazing, and provide for an acceptable level of security and access control.
- ix. Relocate any essential winter-feeding trailers regularly to avoid any long-term impact on the grassland sward, avoiding tree canopy and species-rich areas.
- x. Discourage public access close to veteran or over-mature trees, and standing deadwood, to minimise the need for safety tree works.

6.2 Boundary Management

Condition

There is a range of boundary types at Arlington, in various states of repair. In summary these include:

- Traditional stone-faced boundary banks, with overgrown trees and scrub in place of dense hedgerows (Appendix 3, Item 21). The stone facing varies in pattern and style, including horizontal and zig-zag bedding. Where individual trees have been isolated from earlier, removed boundary banks, the stone-facing has been continued around the isolated section of bank, creating stone-faced tree mounds (Appendix 3, Item 31) (referred to as *planters* by Dr. Nick Berry).

In some places, such as along the conjectured deer park pale, these boundary banks appear to be long-established but eroded and damaged.

- A stone-built freestanding wall and part retaining wall along the western Wilderness boundary (Appendix 3, Item 65) and a corner of the Deer Park Wood boundary (Appendix 3, Item 49).
- Modern steel parkland railings (Appendix 3, Item 27).
- A section of historic drawn wire and galvanised post fencing (Appendix 3, Item 24). This is some of the only surviving historic metal parkland fencing at Arlington. It was made by a Francis Morton and Co. of Liverpool – a Victorian iron works and engineering company, established in 1857. This *Patent Oval Tapered Wrought Iron Fence* was advertised in the 1870s and was erected at Arlington before 1884.
- A section of derelict steel palisade reserve fencing, probably dating from the 1930s, along the northern boundary of Lower Barton field (Appendix 3, Item 42).
- Modern livestock fences in good condition (Appendix 3, Item 37).
- Modern timber post and rail fence (Appendix 3, Items 26 and 36).
- Two sections of concrete block ha-ha built around 1975 along the pleasure ground boundaries (Appendix 3, Item 28 and 32).

Significance

Stone-faced field boundary banks and tree mounds are of high archaeological and, often, ecological value and form a distinctive feature in the Park's landscape character. The historic parkland railings are original surviving fabric from the Victorian and early twentieth century landscape, and have high evidential value for understanding the historic parkland boundaries.

Vulnerability

While nineteenth century estate iron fencing and railings are found in parklands across the UK, they are generally in a poor condition and a source of evidence for the historic layout and character of a landscape is consequently at risk from being lost. Visible modern livestock net and wire fencing detracts from the scenic qualities and historic character of a parkland landscape. Modern fences have to follow straight lines, in direct contrast with the curving and deeply indented historic banks and railings, which defined the picturesque landscape park. Poor management of

hedgerows and livestock damage to hedgebanks reduces their evidential, functional and visual qualities, as well as their wildlife value.

Proposals

Boundary works can generally be carried out when resources are available, and are therefore generally less urgent. Detailed proposals for individual boundaries can be found in section 7.0 below, but the following general proposals are recommended:

- i. Seek to reduce, wherever feasible, the visible extent of modern fences which do not follow historic alignments.
- ii. Restore damaged and eroded hedgebank boundaries by reinstating protective fencelines, restoring stone-facing, laying or coppicing to the local style and retaining hedgerow beech, oaks, selected old thorns, and other mature hedgerow trees at intervals. Some of the park boundary adjoins public highways, but is in good condition. Once restored, trim on a biennial basis to stewardship requirements, roughly half each year.
- iii. Seek to maintain historic deer and other parkland railings along historic park boundaries, wherever these survive. Repair and retain old iron fence posts and gates wherever feasible. Reinststate traditional pattern parkland railings, between ha-has, adjoining the pleasure grounds. Prioritise areas of high visibility and public access. Conserve historic joinery and ironwork at the main public entrances into the park.
- iv. Seek to re-face the concrete block ha-ha with stone ditch walling to match the visual quality and wildlife value of the historic stone-faced banks.
- v. Where replanting in hedgerows, use SW provenance sessile oak, beech, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, holly and *Salix cinerea*, to reflect site evidence.

6.3 Archaeology

Condition

Recorded archaeology in the park at Arlington largely comprises earthworks of former ridge and furrow, field boundaries, park pales, old roads, and field gutters. These earthworks are generally in good condition.

Significance

The field archaeology provides important physical evidence of the pre-park landscape and is useful in testing the nineteenth century documentary evidence.

Vulnerability

Field archaeology is potentially at risk from agricultural cultivations, livestock poaching (caused by overstocking, winter grazing and poor drainage), vehicular access, services installation and drainage repairs, and erosion of the pond banks by Canada geese or livestock. Earthworks in wooded areas have historically received greater protection than cultivated land, but are at risk from mechanised woodland management works, burrowing mammals, tree roots, the results of windthrow, and erosion along earth footpaths.

Proposals

- i. Ensure field archaeology is protected from damage by excavation, drainage works, compaction by machinery and livestock, and from the use of metal detectors. Any excavations for services, drainage or repairs should be accompanied by an archaeological appraisal and watching brief.
- ii. Coppice, pollard or reduce the height of tall-growing trees on the earthworks which are at risk of windblow.
- iii. Monitor the condition of archaeological features to avoid erosion and damage.

These are generally matters of constraint, rather than urgent actions.

6.4 Park Structures

Condition

Park structures within the study area include:

- The cairn (pre 1904; grade II listed building; Appendix 3, Item 46a; figure 23)
- A livestock shelter in Front Park, on the western boundary of the Wilderness (existed pre 1904; rebuilt 1994; unlisted; Appendix 3, Item 30);
- Park boundary timber field gates on carriage drives (appear in photographs of the early 1900s);
- The lake and dam, including spillway (lake 1830s, enlarged c.1850; unlisted) and the two suspension bridge piers (c.1849; unlisted; Appendix 3, Item 13). The spillway is rated maximum 18 tonnes and needs minor re-pointing and vegetation control (57);
- Old Brockham Bridge and adjacent inlet flood relief channel (pre 1886; unlisted; Appendix 3, Item 6);

- Smallacombe or *Middle Meadow* Bridge (pre 1804; unlisted; Appendix 3, Item 55) rated maximum 7.5 tonnes, in need of vegetation removal, re-setting of voussoir stones and repointing of eroded mortar (57);
- Tuckers Bridge (pre 1843; unlisted; Appendix 3, Item 53) rated maximum 18 tonnes, in need of vegetation control, removal of a fallen tree and rebuilding of a collapsed section, upstream, left hand side (57).

Significance

The lake, created from 1836, was a fundamental part of the design of the mid-nineteenth century landscape park, introducing a large reflective sheet of water that was then expanded in a second phase of works around 1850. The bridge piers and river Yeo bridges are key to the intended circulation to and around Arlington and display significant, if understated, picturesque appreciation. Celebrating the location of the Jubilee bonfire, the cairn is a definitively Victorian feature – eccentric, patriotic and indigenous.

Vulnerability

Built structures are some of the most expensive items to maintain, manage, conserve and/or restore, and it is difficult to justify investment when a structure or building is redundant, surplus to requirements or in very poor condition. This places some of the park's built heritage at risk from decay and could result in the loss of key features that were integral to the original design of the landscape. In contrast, modern built structures can have a negative affect on the landscape character if visible widely, and can lead to tolerance of further visually intrusive infrastructure. The bridges are at variable risk of tree root growth, windblow and increased flood risk due to climate change. The only individually listed structure is the cairn, however, the other structures lie within the curtilage of Arlington Court offering a degree of protection through the National Planning Policy Framework.

Proposals

Individual proposals for these structures can be found in section 7. Inevitably, a system of prioritisation, based on the criteria set out in 8.1 below will need to be adopted.

6.5 Access and Interpretation

Condition

Basic information is provided to visitors at the site entrance and on two interpretation boards in legible condition. The bird hide is a modern structure; birds are attracted by the use of feeders. More detailed walk circuit guides with interpretation of historic features are provided on the National Trust property website. The public gain access to the park via these publicised circuit routes and via existing rights of way. Paying visitors have unrestricted access to the Front Park.

Significance

The parkland at Arlington is much valued by local people and visitors to North Devon as a place for quiet recreation. Special events held by the National Trust are also well-attended.

Vulnerability

Public access increases disturbance to wildlife, livestock, the need for tree safety works, and soil compaction in key areas. At Arlington, public footpaths and bridleways provide free public access to parts of the gardens and park, including the Smallacombe bridge drive across the meadow, through the Wilderness, around Wilderness pond, into the eastern end of the pleasure grounds and past the stables to Lower Barton. Part of the parkland circuit drive alongside Home Farm is also a public footpath. While this means Arlington is accessible to all, potential visitor income is lost due to an insecure pay barrier. Without footpath diversions or patrolling the grounds and requesting to see visitor's tickets, there is little the Trust can do to prevent walkers diverting from the public footpath and enjoying free public access to the park and gardens.

Proposals

- i. Maintain existing public rights of way as per the landowner's statutory duties.
- ii. Erect clear but modest wildlife protection notices to keep people out of sensitive areas and away from potentially hazardous veteran trees.
- iii. Seek to provide a single combined interpretation and notice board at the main visitor car park, to control a proliferation of notices.
- iv. Seek funding to install and maintain simple slab benches at key view locations, where no historic structures survive.

- v. Consider introducing car-parking charges to help balance the shortfall of visitor admission income as a result of free access to Arlington's park and gardens via public rights of way.
- vi. Maintain existing waymarked permissive routes, which provide access to all the historic circulation routes, except those involving fording the river, or existing via a potentially hazardous highway entrance (Woolley Lodge). Review the interpretation and hierarchy of walks at five-year intervals.

6.6 **Setting**

The following is an outline assessment of the setting of the park at Arlington and is not the outcome of a systematic evaluation in accordance with English Heritage guidance.

Condition

Located at the centre of the Arlington Estate, the core setting of the Registered landscape is predominantly the tenanted farmland and in-hand woodlands, within the Trust's estate ownership, with low risk, therefore, of inappropriate development. As with other Picturesque landscapes, designed viewpoints from the extended approach drives borrow views from the wider landscape which are beyond the estate ownership boundary, including Kentisbury hill, East Down and at Loxhore. At the same time, the surrounding hills provide the park with a sense of enclosure and rural isolation. The core setting areas, most sensitive to land use change, are mapped on figure 2, and fall largely within Trust ownership.

Significance

The setting of a park can have a significant impact on its historic character, affecting both its aesthetic values and qualities, in particular, tranquillity.

Vulnerability

Lying outside Exmoor National Park, the local landscape is particularly vulnerable to change through crop diversification, wind turbines and solar panels on land outside National Trust ownership, all of which could impact on the landscape character of the setting of Arlington. Loxhore Lodge belongs to the Trust, but is not protected as a listed building.

Proposals

- i. Potential impacts arising from future development within the setting of Arlington should be considered in the light of the evidence in this report and the identification of key inward and outward views shown on appendix 9.
- ii. Consider the production of a more comprehensive *Setting Study* for Arlington to help inform the local planning authority, and developers, of the potential sensitivity of the Registered landscape to new development within its setting.

6.7 Climate Change and Tree Disease

Vulnerability

The effects of climate change are unlikely to be entirely predictable, but extended summer drought and high summer temperatures, combined with wetter, windier and less cold winters are anticipated. Windblown trees can cause a significant loss of historic garden structures, such as dams. Indirect effects are likely to be at least as significant, including plant diseases, pests, and impacts on the global economy, the socio-political effects of competition for water, energy and migration away from desertification, and the demand for energy and food from the countryside.

While it is not possible to anticipate all of these indirect effects, the following diverse impacts are already emerging in the landscape:

- soil compaction due to farm mechanization, drought or waterlogging
- continuing progression towards arable land uses, and ‘ranched’ grassland in the wider landscape, for globally traded products including wheat, oil seed and novel crops
- visual impact on setting, due to wind turbines and other new technology
- increasing environmental regulation of building refurbishment and drainage work, impacting on heritage features
- increasing need for property and personal security due to social change:
- increasing disease risks, such as *Phytophthora ramorum*, ash dieback, red band needle blight (RBNB) of pines, and Horse Chestnut bleeding canker.

It will be necessary to:

- develop practices for tree establishment to encourage deeper, wider rooting, better drainage by mound planting and, possibly, recycled water irrigation during establishment. Incorporation of biochar (charcoal) and

selected mycorrhizae into planting areas may also prove beneficial to improve soil fertility and help provide protection against some foliar and soil-borne diseases;

- adopt a wind policy which reduces storm damage in woodlands, through the use of uneven canopy, and assumptions of a reduced lifespan, implying the need for a regular cycle of active tree management;
- identify alternative strategies for signature species in heritage landscapes. Beech, for example, is becoming a short-lived species. Ash can no longer be planted to provide 'bridging' habitat for lichens on veteran oaks. Stricter selection of forms to reduce wind damage will be needed;
- diversify species selection where feasible without unduly undermining biodiversity, and historic landscape significance or character; high pH bark for lichens may require the substitution of walnut and sycamore, in place of ash and elm, because they are, currently, at less risk of disease.
- continue the programme of removing *Rhododendron ponticum* and larch to reduce the spread of *Phytophthora ramorum*.

Horse chestnuts are vulnerable to the bacterial infection commonly known as 'Bleeding Canker'. Horse chestnut, larch, ash and Corsican pine are not recommended for any new plantings due to disease risk. All have been recorded in or close to Arlington. A plant health policy to control pest and disease impacts may be required with strict sanitation measures.

The priority of these tasks will have to respond to the progression of disease risks regionally.

Proposals

- i. During thinning, seek to remove or reduce trees threatening and growing on or immediately adjacent to important historic structures.
- ii. When necessary to replace horse chestnut, seek a less susceptible species, either sweet chestnut, lime, oak, or beech.
- iii. Seek early removal of *Rhododendron ponticum* and larch, to reduce the risks of *Phytophthora ramorum* infection.
- iv. Wherever feasible, seek to improve functional connectivity between wildlife habitats, to improve prospects for migration and resistance to environmental shocks.

- v. Encourage local visitors to enjoy higher quality, longer stay visits to reduce both car and air miles.
- vi. Adopt the Forestry Commission *Phytophthora* and Acute Oak Decline sanitation guidelines for all tree works.
- vii. Procure only UK grown plant stock, from reputable nurseries, unless quarantine measures are adopted for rare species. An Arlington nursery is unlikely to be viable for single estate use, but opportunistic use of the gardens, for example, to grow Arlington acorns, may be appropriate.
- viii. Seek to diversify tree planting with other high pH bark species in case ash *Chalara* spreads to Arlington, including lime, field maple and walnut. In compensation, the high rainfall at Arlington allows quite sensitive species to colonise normally lower pH bark species, like alder.

7.0 AREA-BY-AREA PROPOSALS

The following section provides an analysis of individual character areas, identifies their significance, vulnerabilities and makes proposals for their specific conservation and management. The boundaries of site description areas are set out on figure 2.

7.1 Mill Close

History

Sloping farmland in 1804, crossed by the Arlington Beccott road and two additional routes to and from the mill (figure 9). By 1844, the roads had been realigned resulting in the replacement of the two mill roads with a single curving road, creating today's distinctive curved end to the northeast boundary of the character area (figure 14). The old Arlington Beccott road had been stopped up, and the whole area was by-passed by an extended valley route, screened from view by a perimeter belt plantation and allowing the fields to become an extension of the landscape park. The north-easternmost part of the pasture was fenced off but remained in hand, known as *Mill Close*, and similarly, the meadows along the river were a separate field called *The Hams*. The park circuit drive ran along the southern boundary of the area, through a clump and passed a quadrangular complex of farm buildings referred to as the *Sheep Fold*, also screened within a parkland clump.

By 1884, the area had been subdivided into three paddocks called *Part Park* and *Park*, with *Mill Close* remaining to the northeast and *The Hams*, now known as *Lower Meadow*, along the river (figure 17). The circuit drive had also been fenced off and *Sheep Fold* had been rebuilt as *Home Farm*. By 1886 (figure 18), numerous conifers had been planted around *Home Farm* and along the parkland circuit drive, and small groups of three or four parkland trees were mapped in *Part Park* and *Park*. Grazing livestock could access a field shelter that had been built within the plantation along the line of the former Arlington Beccott road.

One of the *Part Park* fences had been removed by 1906 and additional farm buildings had been built at *Home Farm* (figure 19). By 1975, a large new farm building had been built on the west side of the *Home Farm* farmstead, and the remaining *Park* and *Part Park* field boundary had been removed (figure 28). *Lower Meadow* was shown as marshy grassland, and its boundary with the rest of the area had been partially removed. Some mature parkland trees remained in 1978 (figure 29), and there was a

clear, treeless opening through the circuit drive tree belt, allowing views to and from *Mill Close* and *West Park*.

Condition

Permanent pasture tenanted by Home Farm, managed under HLS, recently re-fenced and grazed by cattle. With the exception of the Meadow (*Hams/Lower Meadow*), the area features improved grassland of limited ecological value with areas of poaching. Several replanted trees in tree guards (recently rebuilt due to livestock damage), heavily browsed oak, and ash. A modern clump along the Mill Close boundary has failed. The Meadow is a County Wildlife Site (known as Brockham or Mill Close Meadow), managed by the Trust under HLS management option HK7, *Restoration of species-rich, semi-natural grassland*, but is currently dense, tussocky coarse grasses, with smaller patches of species-rich edges and ant hills, with Devil's Bit Scabious. Two public footpaths run across Mill Close, one following the route of the pre 1804 road to Arlington Mill and the other running from the circuit drive, northwest to the A39, just above Brockham Bridge.

Significance

Mill Close includes a number of well-defined earthworks of local significance for the evidence they provide of the pre-nineteenth century landscape. The area had become part of the main park by 1843 and forms part of the nationally important Registered landscape. The Meadow (Brockham Meadow), historically known as *Hams* or *Lower Meadow*, has potential for significant ecological value as a grassland and meadow habitat, as recognised by its designation as a County Wildlife Site. The whole area lies adjacent to the Arlington SSSI.

Vulnerability

The quality of the pasture and health of the replanted parkland trees is currently at risk from browsing, overstocking and poaching. These issues also threaten the condition of the archaeological earthworks. Mature trees along the fenced circuit drive have reduced the visual connectivity between West Park and Mill Close, which undermines its role as a historic part of the parkland. While of ecological value, fallen deadwood can detract from the aesthetic qualities of the historic parkland. This issue is discussed under *Principle 7: Trees* of the National Trust's *Policies and Guiding Principles for the Conservation and Management of Historic Parks* (2007) and in 6.1 above. Scrub and coarse grasses in the Meadow need management.

Proposals

- i. Reintroduce seasonal grazing to the Meadow, to ensure scrub and coarse grasses do not overwhelm the wildlife interest. This is the priority proposal for this area.
- ii. Maintain replanted and regenerated oaks, and thin out dense blocks of scrub and regeneration in the Meadow.
- iii. Reduce winter stocking in Mill Close.
- iv. Weed replanted oaks and upgrade parkland shelters to protect oaks.
- v. Replant parkland trees lost since 1884, including picturesque Austrian pines and local provenance Sessile oak.
- vi. Should the opportunity arise, seek to remove modern farm buildings and silage clamp, to reinstate the integrity of the historic farm building group, and restore the original field boundaries, realigning modern fences to the historic banks.
- vii. Reinststate the curving plantation boundary northeast of Home Farm as the field boundary, and repair the damaged stone-faced bank to a holly tree.

7.2 **West Park**

History

Crossed by a southwest curving field boundary in 1776 (figure 4) and shown as farmland in 1804 (figure 9). By 1844 (figure 14), the farmland had been incorporated into the landscape park around Arlington Court, known as the *Higher Part of Park*, and was planted with four irregularly shaped clumps of trees (referred to as *Plantations*). Creating the curving northern boundary was the parkland circuit drive; to the northeast and east was the sinuous boundary of the pleasure grounds, and to the west was *Brockham Plantation*. The layout remained largely unchanged in 1884, with the exception of the fencing off of the circuit drive and the subdivision of the *Higher Part of the Park*, now known as simply *The Park*, with a central fence (figure 17). The pleasure ground boundary had also been slightly realigned and straightened. By 1886, the area was shown with a large population of mature parkland trees (figure 18). Only one of the pre 1843 clumps remained enclosed; the others were grazed through and a smaller, oval enclosed clump had been created for two conifers and three deciduous trees in the south of the area. The pleasure ground boundary had been slightly realigned once again to accommodate a *Pheasantry* to the southwest of the Court.

By 1906, the West Park had been divided into three by fencing and the remaining pre 1843 clump was grazed through (figure 19). A pump and tanks were plotted in the northern half of the area. Photographs by Miss Chichester record views of Home Farm from West Park, with an iron post and drawn wire fence in the foreground (figure 24). In aerial photographs of the 1930s, the parkland appears well populated with mature trees and under a fairly light grazing regime, as suggested by the light tone of the grassland (figure 25). Surfaced paths run along the southern and western edges of the pleasure grounds, apparently with an adjoining paddock on the western parkland side. By 1975 (figure 28), a ha-ha had been excavated, the subdividing parkland fence had been realigned and new, fenced blocks of tree planting had been established along the pleasure ground boundary. Aerial photographs of c.1978 (figure 29) record a decline in the number of parkland trees and clear felling of the adjacent Brockham Plantation. Tree planting was undertaken across the West Park by the Trust in the 1960s and 70s and included additional planting of blocks along the pleasure ground boundary (figure 26).

Condition

Permanent pasture partly tenanted by Home Farm and partly under Trust management. The whole area is under HLS and grazed by sheep and cattle. The tenanted pasture is in good condition, but has been improved and shows very limited biodiversity. A recently repaired stone-faced bank forms the boundary with Brockham Plantation, with an adjacent modern livestock fence. Along the northern boundary with the circuit drive are two straight sections of a galvanised drawn wire fence made by Francis Morton and Co. of Liverpool. Modern lengths of parkland railings form the pleasure ground boundary. Some groups of mature trees have been recently fenced to help re-establish clumps. Several trees grow on raised, stone-faced bank enclosures, probably as a result of the isolation and protection of hedgerow bank trees, which were incorporated into the parkland when it was first formed. The stonework varies in condition due to erosion caused by livestock, weathering and tree root growth.

Significance

West Park is part of the Arlington SSSI (unit 1 and part of unit 2) and is therefore nationally important for its lichen habitat. It was part of the main landscape park by 1843, and forms a core part of the Registered landscape. The area continues to form an essential part of the setting Arlington Court and its pleasure grounds. It is not

readily accessible by the public and visitors, but is highly visible from public rights of way and the pleasure grounds.

Vulnerability

Unit 1 of the Arlington SSSI (the tenanted area of West Park) has been assessed by Natural England as being in unfavourable recovering condition and unit 2 (the part of West Park managed by the Trust) is in favourable condition. The ecological values of a large part of West Park have, therefore, been identified as being at risk and requiring further beneficial management for the conservation of the lichen habitat. This issue also demonstrates the weaknesses created by division of occupation, and differing management regimes will remain a risk to parkland conservation, both in terms of ecology and aesthetic values, until the whole of West Park reverts to a single management regime. Other issues that undermine the historic aesthetic qualities of the landscape include the loss of the distinctive wavy pleasure ground boundary plotted in 1844 and replacement with straight fencelines; lack of stone-faced bank maintenance; large, pieces of fallen deadwood in clumps near the pleasure grounds; and some tree clumps where the fence needs to be removed to allow grazing and control scrub growth.

Proposals

- i. Seek to bring West Park under unified, extensive grazing management, to enable removal of the subdividing fencelines, and bring the area into favourable SSSI condition. This is the priority proposal for this area.
- ii. Restore and maintain the integrity of designed clumps by the repair and reuse of pleasure ground boundary banks and fencelines which respect the deeply indented boundary; the removal of fallen sound timber lengths from designed view lines, and; relocation of fallen deadwood to an adjacent shaded location within clumps; reduction, or relocation of decaying rootplates to a less visible location within clumps; periodic re-fencing and replanting of parkland trees; and control of bramble and *Rhododendron ponticum*.
- iii. Heavily thin and graze through established replanted blocks outside the historic pleasure ground boundary.
- iv. Improve housekeeping and removal of debris, and provide a firm base for the livestock trough(s) opposite the main entrance. Move the trough away from the tree's crown spread.

- v. Repair any damage to stone-faced bank enclosures.

7.3 Front Park

History

Mapped in 1776 as farmland (figure 4) comprising of part of *Pond Close*, *Higher Cunney Close*, part of an adjacent unnamed field, *Lower Cunney Close*, *Western Meadow*, *Middle Meadow* and part of *Smallacombe Meadow*. By 1804 (figure 9), the field boundaries had been removed and parkland with several clumps of trees was indicated. Although faint, the parkland appears to have extended as far as the northern boundary of *Western* and *Middle Meadow*. A drive crossed the eastern end of *Middle Meadow* and climbed the hill, partially running along the boundary with *Smallacombe Meadow*. By at least the 1860s (figure 16) the valley woodland to the east of Front Park was known as the *Wilderness*. By 1844 (figure 14) the meadows had been incorporated within the parkland and were known as *Lower Part of Park*. The *Higher Part of Park* was separated from the *Lower Part* by a parkland circuit drive. The 1804 *Middle Meadow* drive was not clearly delineated on the tithe map, possibly because it was no longer in regular use. Two angular and one irregularly-shaped clump had been established in *Higher Park* and the northeast corner of the park, nearest the Court, was plotted as a right-angle defined by two straight sections of fencing – possibly to distinguish it from adjacent stone-faced banks and suggesting the existence of iron drawn-wire fencing.

Very little change had taken place by 1884 (figure 17), with the exception of some subdivision of the parkland. A new fence had been erected between the *Higher*, now simply *The Park*, and *Lower Park*, close to the line of the 1776 northern boundary of *Western* and *Middle Meadow*, and another new fence subdivided *The Park* (creating West Park). The 1886 map (figure 18) records a high number of mixed parkland trees across *The Park*, and some on the slopes of the *Lower Park*. The map also recorded the old *Middle Meadow* drive, suggesting that it had returned to regular use. Two of the clumps were no longer fenced and the right-angled corner of the pleasure ground boundary had been modified. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs in Miss Chichester's collection include a number of the *Middle Meadow* drive bridge and the river Yeo (figure 21). The timber gates on the circuit drive, into and out of Front Park, were also favourite subjects (figure 23).

Further subdivision of *The Park* had taken place by 1906, including a fence across the centre of *Higher Park* and along the western edge of the *Middle Meadow* drive (figure 19). This latter fence and the drive were unmapped in 1975, suggesting that they had, once again, fallen out of use. New fenced clumps had been established along the western boundary of the Front Park and fencing separated off the western corner of the parkland, adjacent Brockham Plantation. A distinctive notch of open parkland in the southern end of the plantation had been infilled with conifers. A ha-ha was excavated by the Trust in circa 1975, replacing the drawn wire fence along the southern pleasure grounds and park boundary.

Condition

Front Park is managed in-hand, under HLS option HC12 *Maintenance of wood pasture and parkland*. It has a large number of mature and replanted parkland trees and a semi-improved grassland grazed by a small herd of Ruby Red cattle, sheep and wild Red deer. Many of the trees support good lichen populations and several grow within stone-faced mounds, suggesting that they originate and were isolated from earlier hedgebanks. The stone-facing varies in condition and age, but is a distinctive feature of Arlington's parkland. Linear earthworks cross the parkland and are in good condition. A large levelled area in the park in front of the house may have been a marquee pitch, or the site of the observatory. The boundary with the Wilderness plantation is marked with a substantial stone faced bank and wall. A livestock shelter rebuilt in 1994 sits discreetly in the park, alongside the Wilderness wall. An adjacent fenced area is becoming increasingly overgrown with scrub. The boundary with the pleasure grounds to the south of the house is marked by a ha-ha, which replaced a drawn wire fence recorded in photographs of the early 1900s. Meadowland along the river has been used for depositing silt from lake dredging over recent decades and this has resulted in large rectangular areas dominated by marshy grassland and rush. The old Middle Meadow drive bridge over the Yeo, much-photographed by Miss Chichester in the late 1800s and early 1900s, has become partly overgrown and, whilst functional and apparently structurally sound, is now barely visible.

Significance

Front Park is part of the Arlington SSSI (unit 2) and is therefore nationally important for its lichen habitat. It formed the western side of the original, Georgian landscape park laid out by Colonel Chichester before 1804, probably in the 1790s, and is

therefore a critical part of the Registered landscape. The area continues to form an essential part of the setting Arlington Court and its pleasure grounds. It is readily accessible by the public and Trust visitors, via a gate direct from the pleasure grounds, or along public rights of way and sign-posted Trust walks.

Vulnerability

The SSSI unit has been assessed as being in favourable condition by Natural England, and this was supported by the site surveys undertaken as part of this study. The health of some parkland trees was a concern, including suspected Phytophthora and RBNB. The build up of bramble and scrub between modern fenced boundaries and historic walls, together with large quantities of fallen deadwood, needs to be managed to prevent loss of some of the 'polite' aesthetic qualities of the Georgian parkland. Scrub and young trees also a limit some views along the now-ungrazed banks of the river.

Proposals

- i. Repair the Wilderness wall along the east boundary to match the surviving sections and top wire, or fence, close to the wall so as to allow bramble control and grazing up to the boundary, bringing key boundary trees back into the grazed park, and reinstating the curving, picturesque boundary.
- ii. Relocate the water trough adjacent lichen-rich tree (31) to the west, to remove a source of water logging and compaction.
- iii. Heavily thin and prune replanted clumps and, once established, progressively remove fences to allow grazing through. Otherwise manage parkland as in section 6.0.
- iv. Control bracken in the area recently reinstated as parkland from conifer plantation.
- v. Repair any damage to stone-faced back enclosures.
- vi. Reinststate the historic pleasure ground boundary using continuous or drawn wire parkland railings.
- vii. Regenerate clumps which are maturing or gappy by new planting, protected from browsing.
- viii. Cut vegetation, repair and repoint masonry to Smallacombe bridge in accordance with the engineer's inspection, in order to reinststate the bridge's picturesque role, as illustrated in early photographs. Given the vulnerability of the structure to vegetation, this is considered to be a priority for this area.

7.4 The Lake

History

In 1804, the area was recorded as river meadow below the sloping farmland and park, and where the stream from Saffordland (a farmstead to the west of Arlington) met the river Yeo (figure 9). Just above the confluence was a bridge that conveyed the Barnstaple road around the side of the hill towards Arlington Mill. Estate accounts record considerable expenditure on works and planting at the lake in the late 1830s, and this probably records the construction date of the first dam, just below the confluence. By 1844 (figure 14), the dam served the dual purpose of forming the lake and providing a new river crossing to link the parkland circuit drive with Woolley Wood. Separating the lake from the rest of the park was the Brockham Plantation, which ran the length of the western parkland boundary and a small rectangular building, probably a livestock shelter, stood to the east of the dam.

Further lake works took place during the late 1840s: estate accounts record the *Making of a house at the lake* – probably the boathouse – in 1848, and a design for a suspension bridge was prepared in 1849 (figure 15). As the suspension bridge followed the line of the pre 1844 dam, it is likely that the late 1840s and early 1850s was when a new dam was built further east and the lake was enlarged, as shown complete on the sketch estate map of the 1860s (figure 16).

By 1884, the extended lake was shown as a roughly L-shaped body of water at the foot of the park and with a central island (figure 17). Following the diversion of the Barnstaple road (pre 1844), the old road bridge, now at the upstream end of the lake, had been modified to create a flood relief channel and convey one of the parkland drives over the head of the lake. A drive also ran across the new, relocated dam, and mixed woodland was shown all around the lake, as an extension of Brockham Plantation. By 1886, the northern end of the lake was beginning to silt up, with the river returning to the line of its original course (figure 18). This marshy ground was subsequently plotted again in 1906 (figure 19). The later map also recorded a second island, a line of mature conifers (Monkey Puzzle trees) along the northern shore, and a walk around the western side, through the woodland between the road and the lake edge.

By 1975, just over half the lake had become silted, and was mapped with trees (figures 27 and 28). The boathouse had gone out of use. A memorial urn had been

installed among Monkey Puzzle trees on the north shore to mark the burial place of Miss Chichester's ashes by the lake, following her death in 1949. The lower half of the lake was dredged to remove silt in the late 1990s, and the silt was held in lagoons in the downstream meadow.

Condition

The lake and the surrounding woodland is managed in-hand by the Trust under HLS option HC8 *Restoration of woodland*. The 1975 extent of the lake remains, but the water is very shallow due to the continued build-up of silt. Lake edges are overgrown and are starting to obscure key historic lake views. The Lake is well used by wildfowl; trees adjoining the northern end of the former lake have been home to a heronry since at least 1949. The suspension bridge piers were assessed as being in good structural condition in 1988, and they remain apparently sound, although increasingly overgrown and obscured by regenerating willow carr. The site of the boathouse is overgrown. Close to the site, however, is a derelict three-walled masonry structure that is almost certainly the livestock shelter mapped in 1844. The reference to *making* the boathouse in 1848 possibly suggests it was a timber structure. A pitched roof structure is visible in an undated glass slide of the northern bridge pier (appendix 2). A substantial embankment survives which would have brought the parkland drive up to the level of the suspension bridge. The current dam is functional (as confirmed by Reservoir Engineer's reports). A modern inspection platform has created an ugly, fenced intrusion at the end of the lake. Visitors are currently discouraged from walking along the western lake walk. Skunk cabbage and Himalayan balsam are established within the willow carr areas.

Significance

The Lake is part of the Arlington SSSI (unit 3) and is nationally important for its lichen habitat. The water body was also a major feature of the landscape park from the 1830s, providing a picturesque expanse of open water, not visible from the Court, but enjoyed from the approach and parkland circuit drives, intended to feature a dramatic suspension bridge. Therefore, as a SSSI and a key feature in the Registered landscape, the lake at Arlington has high ecological and equally high cultural value, for contrasting habitat types. Its aesthetic and spiritual values were greatly appreciated by Miss Chichester, given the number of lake photographs in her collection and her wish for her ashes to be interred on its banks. Today, the lake is accessible for paying National Trust visitors as part of the designated parkland walks.

Vulnerability

Unit 3 of the Arlington SSSI has been assessed as being in unfavourable recovering condition by Natural England. The current HLS management policy is aimed at enhancing the lichen habitat, growing on the young willows which colonise the silted up marsh of the former lake area. However, the cultural values of the lake are at significant risk of being lost as it becomes more and more silted up. Without major, regular dredging, it is impossible to maintain the lake as open water. Three long-term management options have been assessed:

Table 1: Lake Options

| Option & Issues | 1. Do nothing | 2. De-silt at circa 20-year intervals | 3. Draw down the circa 1850 dam |
|--|--|---|---|
| <i>Ecology</i> | + Willow carr retained and continues to spread to full lake area. | o Retains existing areas of willow carr, although this may revert to woodland over the longer term. | o Scope to retain upper lake willow carr through re-use of earlier dam as a weir. |
| | - Loss of open water habitat. | o Retention of open water habitat. | +/- Loss of open water habitat balanced by restoration of stream habitat in woodland. |
| | - Eventual reduction of willow carr as permanent woodland develops on deposited gravels and silt. This will effect the distribution and abundance of the lichen species. | o Parkland SSSI area downstream subject to continuing periodic disturbance by use as silt lagoons. | |
| <i>River quality</i> | o Downstream siltation increases once lake is filled. | o Continuing reduction of downstream siltation balanced by periodic works disturbance. | o Downstream siltation increases following removal of lake silt trap. |
| | o Dam spillway acts as barrier to spawning migratory trout. | o Continuing reduction of downstream siltation balanced by periodic works disturbance. | + Lake drawdown and new fish pass to old dam will open the river Yeo to migratory trout. |
| <i>Registered landscape Historic/ Evidential value</i> | - Permanent loss of designed lake. | o Conserves the remaining part of the lake landscape. | - Permanent loss of the designed lake. |
| | - Permanent loss of views across the lake and a decline in the quality of the designed walks. | o Conserves walks and views, enabling restoration works. | o Views and walks modified to enjoy new deep valley setting. |
| <i>Economic Sustainability</i> | o Continued low recurrent reservoir costs. | - High periodic recurrent costs of de-silting, including silt disposal, works, fees and consents. | - High one-off capital cost of drawdown, including silt removal, dam modification, fish pass to old dam/weir, fees, consents. |
| | - Risk of reduced visitor appeal over time. | - Periodic disruption to visitor access. | + Low recurrent costs as reservoir drawn down. |
| | | | o No net change in visitor income expected. |
| <i>Visitor Impact Communal value</i> | - Gradual change; loss of visitor attraction. | o Maintains the current aesthetic value that is appreciated by visitors. - Periodic unsightly disruption to visitor enjoyment of the park by de-silting works. | - Dramatic change and loss of picturesque open water. |

+ Net beneficial impact/ - Net detrimental impact/ o No net change; as existing

Proposals

- i. Control Skunk cabbage, Himalayan balsam and other invasive, exotic aliens in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- ii. Regularly coppice alders etc., growing around the lake margins, and cut grass and bramble on the eastern lake edge to reopen designed views across the lake.
- iii. Consult Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency on the lake management options listed in Table I, and illustrated on figure 37. Commission a Water Framework Directive and Reservoirs assessment, and a feasibility study, of the options to inform future decision-making on the lake. Option I is likely to be the default choice once vegetation becomes settled on the silt deposited in the lake, within the next ten years, and therefore this is now a priority action to start the necessary studies.
- iv. Secure the old stone livestock shelter (mapped in 1844) as a landscape ruin.
- v. Carry out a direct structural inspection of the bridge piers, and conduct minor repairs if required, during the survey, as access is likely to be the primary difficulty. Retain the piers to assist in the visualisation of the incomplete suspension bridge.
- vi. When next needing repairs, consider options to reduce the visual impact of the sluice controls access platform.
- vii. Carry out minor matching repairs to the spillway coping.
- viii. Consider the extension of the sheep grazing area up to, and even on to, the lake dam embankment from the park, to reduce maintenance and enhance habitat connectivity.
- ix. Consider thinning and grazing the previous riverside meadow, known as *Miss Chichester's Fancy Piece*, now a young ash plantation, to enhance the viability of grazing Mill Close/Brockham Meadow upstream, but also to improve habitat connectivity.
- x. Seek to reinstate a full circuit path around the lake, closed only during the heron-nesting season. This will require the addition of a footbridge over the upper end flood relief channel.
- xi. Inspect the maintain the upper end bridges at the lake inlet, consider channel dredging, and maintenance of the spillway as part of 7.5iii above.

7.5 Gratton

History

Farmland in 1776, comprising of a large field known as *Great Gratton*, a smaller field to the northeast known as *Little Gratton* and part of *Hound Close* (figure 4). Running uphill between *Great Gratton* and *Hound Close* was a road, which led to the Chichesters' *Barton House* and its various outbuildings, gardens, orchards and small woodlands or *groves*. By 1804, *Barton House* had been rebuilt and enclosures to the south had been removed, to make way for a landscape park (figure 9). The old *Hound Close* road had also been relocated further west, to rise up through the new plantation, later referred to as the *Wilderness*, in *Culvercombe*. A belt of trees had also been established along the northeast edge of the park and several clumps were depicted within. The park is visible in Maria Pixell's paintings of circa 1797, suggesting it was laid out contemporaneous with the rebuilding of the main house (figure 8).

The 1844 tithe plan (figure 14) recorded that *Great Gratton* and *Little Gratton* had been merged into a single field, simply known as *Gratton*, described as pasture and in-hand. All trace of the former garden enclosures and outbuildings associated with the pre 1776 house at the northern end of *Gratton* had been removed. A short section of the pre 1804 boundary belt survived on the western boundary of *Gratton*, and a triangular clump, probably also originating from the pre 1804 belt, was located further south. In 1993, Colvin and Moggridge identified the former as *Prince Edward's* plantation, based on the tithe apportionment. The name was not found in the version of the apportionment consulted during this study (held by the Devon Heritage Centre), but may have been selected to commemorate the birth of Prince Edward (later King Edward VII) in 1841. *Hound Close* had been merged with the other previously enclosed meadows along the river to create the *Lower Part of the Park* (also in-hand pasture). Part of its northeast field boundary with *Gratton* had been retained.

Very little change had taken place by 1886 (figure 18). The first edition does, however, record parkland trees, including thirteen conifers arranged in ones, twos and threes, and an enclosure alongside the boundary belt clump, which contained a *Flagstaff*. By 1906, the flagstaff had been replaced with an *Obelisk* (the cairn), slightly further to the west, to mark Queen Victoria's Jubilee and the site of a celebratory bonfire, and its surrounding enclosure had been removed (figure 19). A new fence

created a paddock at the northern end of *Gratton*, and a small, oblong structure – probably a livestock shelter – was mapped at the western end. By 1975, the paddock had been enlarged, subdivided and incorporated an open ditch (figure 28). The old boundary belt clump had been re-fenced and contemporary aerial photographs (figure 29) show a considerable reduction in the number of parkland trees in *Gratton* since 1906. Outside the main landscape park, very little parkland tree replanting was undertaken by the Trust in the 1950s, 60s and 70s (figure 26). Since circa 1978, the *Hound Close/Lower Part of Park* northern section of field boundary has been removed and the southern boundary of *Gratton* extended to the west.

Condition

Most of *Gratton* is improved pasture tenanted and managed by Home Farm under Higher Level Stewardship and grazed by sheep and cattle. The northern paddocks are owned by the Trust and are over-grazed by ponies and horses. The stone *Obelisk*, or cairn, is listed grade II and in reasonable condition, but stands in the tenanted field and is not directly accessible by visitors. The stone faced enclosure, once accommodating the flagstaff, is fenced off from the surrounding pasture and forms a viewing platform, with a large timber picnic table. The adjacent boundary plantation (known as *Prince Edward's Wood*) is also enclosed and forms a mixed deciduous woodland with some mature beech. The second triangular boundary clump is also mixed woodland, but grazed through. The old *Hound Close/Lower Part of Park* boundary survives as a line of hedgebank trees on fragments of relict stone-faced bank, alongside the linear earthwork of the road mapped in 1776. The southern field boundary has been recently re-fenced and incorporates a livestock handling pen, with an adjacent scrubby modern clump. A fine stone-faced bank forms the boundary with the *Wilderness* to the west.

Significance

Gratton formed the eastern half of the pre 1804 Georgian landscape park and is therefore a critical part of the Registered landscape. Although it was not referred to as *Park* from the 1840s, following the relocation of the main house, individual trees plotted on the later Ordnance Survey maps indicate that it retained parkland character. The location of the flagstaff, obelisk and current viewing platform reflect the important aesthetic role of this part of the parkland in views to and from the main house. *Gratton* is also a critical part of the setting of the listed church and stable block. The area is not accessible to the public, but plays a significant visual role

in views from a public bridleway along its western boundary and from the Wilderness paths, pleasure grounds and house. The whole area forms part of the Arlington Gardens County Wildlife Site, valued for its bat and lichen interest.

Vulnerability

Late twentieth century field boundary changes have undermined the historic layout of Gratton, and the paddocks have interrupted the flow of the former parkland. Fallen deadwood and a few mis-located replanted parkland trees are reducing the aesthetic quality of the area and threaten to block historic views in the long-term.

Proposals

- i. Selectively thin *Prince Edward's Wood* and the associated boundary bank, and seek to progressively reintroduce grazing, subject to public access considerations, to enhance the lichen potential and reinstate the historic character of the major clump.
- ii. Seek to remove the Gratton pony paddock, so as to remove a modern fenced boundary and reduce the grazing pressure on Gratton as a whole, using sheep. Relocate ponies to the Glebe Meadow, Town Meadow or other suitable historic paddock.
- iii. Reinstate and repair the northern boundary of the paddock, adjoining Kennel Wood.
- iv. Heavily thin replanted clumps and progressively reopen to grazing once established.
- v. Seek to reinstate the eastern boundary bank and hedge of *Houndswell meadow* (in conjunction with proposal 7.6i), removed since 1978, but forming part of the archaeology of an early track route. This would reinstate part of the historic landscape enclosure, enhance shelter for livestock, improve habitat connectivity for bats and create improved conditions for lichen trees.
- vi. Retain the triangular clump as enclosed woodland, as it holds a good woodland flora and sufficient natural regeneration to establish continuous cover management.
- vii. Seek to thin out trees within the pleasure grounds, so as to reinstate more open historic views and visual links between the house and the cairn.

As this area is not of the highest significance for the SSSI, these proposals are of lower priority.

7.6 **Wester Deer Park**

History

Farmland known as *Western Deerpark Lands* in 1776 (figure 4), and including part of *Hound Close* and *Deerpark Lands Meadow*. It was also crossed by a road running uphill along the eastern boundary of *Hound Close*. According to Berry's assessment of the extent of Arlington's medieval deer park (figure 36), it is thought to lie to the northwest of the 1340s deer park boundary. By 1804 (figure 9), the *Hound Close* road had been relocated to the wooded Culvercombe valley, and the area was mapped as wooded meadow, apparently below and outside the main landscape park. In 1844, *Hound Close* had been amalgamated with the other meadows to the west to create the *Lower Part of the Park*, and *Wester Deer Park Land* remained as a separate enclosed meadow, managed in hand (figure 14). There was very little change by 1886 (figure 18); three parkland trees were plotted in the *Lower Park* and a watercourse or leat was shown in *Wester Deer Park Land*, probably associated with a catch-meadow system for irrigating the steeply sloping pasture. The fields remained unchanged throughout the twentieth century, with the exception of the removal of the eastern field boundary of *Hound Close/Lower Park* and the extension of the southern Gratton fence to create one large field, at some point after 1978.

Condition

The whole area is semi-improved pasture tenanted and managed by Home Farm under Higher Level Stewardship and grazed by sheep and cattle. *Hound Close* is now known as Houndswell Meadow. The linear earthwork of the leat remains prominent and in good condition, and it is also possible to identify the line of the old *Hound Close* road and catch meadow field gutters in the western part of the field. Anthills in the eastern part confirm that the field has not been cultivated for many years. The river banks and a parallel strip of land has been fenced off along the river Yeo. A deer wallow has been formed alongside the river and a badger sett is evident in the sloping ground below the Wilderness. Stone-faced hedgebanks run along the Wilderness and eastern field boundaries, and the overgrown stream forms the western boundary with the Front Park. A short row of trees and fragments of bank mark the old *Lower Park* field boundary. A number of parkland trees have been replanted across the area in recent years, within tree guards.

Significance

As part of the 1843 parkland, the western part of *Wester Deer Park* is an important area of the Registered landscape. The eastern half appears to have remained farmed pasture or meadow since 1776, although it will have played a significant aesthetic role as the setting of the landscape park. The catch-meadow system has evidential value as archaeological evidence for previous agricultural management, and the earthwork of the former road up the hill along Hound Close is also valuable evidence for the pre 1776 landscape. The whole area forms part of the Arlington Gardens County Wildlife Site, valued for its bat and lichen interest.

Vulnerability

The realignment and removal of the field boundaries in the late twentieth century has resulted in undermining the former parkland character of the eastern part of the area by increasing the area of open, improved pasture. Modern tree planting has tried to overcome this issue, but covers the whole field rather than just the former parkland area.

Proposals

- i. Seek to reinstate the eastern boundary bank and hedge of Houndswell Meadow, to reinstate a historic park boundary, improve shelter for livestock and lichens, enhance habitat connectivity and mark the historic track route (in conjunction with proposal 7.5v).
- ii. Enhance control of thistle by spot treatment, to avoid damage to anthills and archaeology.
- iii. Repair short, damaged sections of the intricate park wall boundary with Deer Park Moor. Also, restore the longer boundary bank with Deer Park Moor by fencing to both sides; steeping up the eroded banks (carefully retaining the field gutter gaps through the banks) and laying the hedgerow.
- iv. Maintain the grazing density to conserve ant hill habitat.
- v. Cut and lay the western field boundary hedge and repair the Wilderness stream banks, retaining hedgerow trees at 10 metre intervals, once the reinstated hedge 7.6i above is established to provide additional connectivity for bats.

This area is of less than top priority for the parkland SSSI.

7.7 Deer Park Moor

History

Assessed by Berry as being part of Arlington's medieval deer park (figure 36). Part of *Western Deerpark Lands* in 1776, and included the southeast end of the oblong enclosure known as *Deerpark Lands Meadow* (figure 4). Similarly suggested as a continuous block of meadow below the main park in 1804 (figure 9). In 1844, the area comprised of *Deer Park Land Moor* and part of *Deer Park Wood*, both managed in-hand (figure 14). By 1886, the western boundary of the Moor had been realigned further east, and the valley floor formerly recorded as woodland, was shown as open pasture with in-field trees (figure 18). The area was separated from *Deer Park Wood* and *Woolley Wood* by a fence or boundary bank, indicating its management as grazed field or meadow as far as Tucker's Bridge. Open pasture continued to be shown in 1906 (figure 19). By 1975, the valley floor had largely reverted to woodland (figure 28). The Moor remained un-wooded pasture with marshy grassland at the western end.

Condition

As in the 1970s, the valley floor remains wooded and the Moor fenced marshy pasture, grazed by a small herd of Ruby Reds. Both areas are managed by the Trust under HLS options HC12 and HK7, and the valley woodland has been included within the Arlington SSSI for its lichen interest. Linear earthworks in the moor record former catch-meadow irrigation leats connected with *Wester Deer Park*. A dry-stone wall runs along the boundary between the valley floor and *Wester Deerpark Lands*, and an eroded field boundary bank delineates the northern edge of the moor (and probably the medieval deer park). Several fine mature oaks survive on the sloping ground of the once grazed, open pasture alongside the Yeo, surrounded by a diverse ground flora, part marshland and part woodland, with other areas less diverse due to recently removed rhododendron. Tucker's bridge is an unlisted, single-span masonry structure, apparently structurally sound. Deer Park Moor is not accessible to the public, but is visible from National Trust estate walks and the public footpath to South Woolley.

Significance

As part of the SSSI, the western half of Deer Park Moor has nationally significant ecological value. This area is also an important part of the Registered landscape as

evidence for the medieval deer park, with good surviving field archaeology. The moor is a County Wildlife Site, significant for its rush pasture and butterfly habitat.

Vulnerability

Although managed under HLS option HC12 and assessed by Natural England as being in favourable condition, the wooded valley floor is becoming overgrown and shaded, important lichens having been lost from some of the previously recorded trees. The extremely moist conditions generate good lichen flora where light conditions allow.

Proposals

- i. Guided by lichen flora records, selectively thin to favour mature oak, mature hazel, other recorded lichen trees and retention of fallen deadwood. Exotic conifers should be removed, from the entire area, together with most of the line of poplars, excepting, three with the best lichen flora. Reinstate livestock wire fences and allow periodic low levels of grazing by Ruby Red cattle and Exmoor ponies. Livestock will need to be carefully monitored for welfare, due to the risks of excessive poaching, but can access the area from the existing grazing unit at the east end. As the loss of lichens to shading is ongoing, this is considered to be a priority.

7.8 Kennel Wood and Lower Barton

History

Mentioned in 1774 and recorded as one large field in 1776 (figure 4), known as *Lower Barton*, with part of *Northern Grove Wood* in the northwest corner. A quadrangular building was shown in *Northern Grove Wood* in 1804 (figure 9), and further outbuildings were plotted on this site in 1844, after the mansion had been relocated (figure 14). A curving field boundary separated this corner from the rest of *Lower Barton*, labelled as *Plantation*. Along the northern boundary of *Lower Barton* was a strip of woodland called *Grove*, and semi-circular clumps had been established on the eastern and southern boundaries, again referred to as *Plantations*. *Lower Barton* itself was described as pasture, and all the areas were managed in-hand. By 1886, kennels and other estate buildings had been built within the northwest corner plantation and a network of footpaths and/or tracks were plotted, two of which led into and over *Lower Barton* field (figure 18). The *Grove* woodland strip had become fragmented into a strip and a clump. The eastern semi-circular clump was mapped as

comprising mature deciduous trees; while the southern clump consisted entirely of conifers. There was also a single in-field conifer. This, the clumps and *Barton Belt* to the east would have increased the sense of parkland landscape character in this part of the estate and visually extended the landscape park.

By 1906, the *Grove* woodland belt was even more fragmented (figure 19) and only four trees remained standing in 1975 (figure 28). The westernmost of the two tracks had also disappeared by 1975, and the plantation around the kennels had been replanted with conifers. By circa 1978 (figure 29), an agricultural barn had been erected adjacent *Kennel Wood*, and a new surfaced track led down to *Barton Court* farm.

Condition

Lower *Barton* is improved pasture, tenanted and managed by *Home Farm* under Higher Level Stewardship and grazed by sheep and cattle. The *Grove* has been replanted as a plantation belt, a track and adjacent drainage ditch laid out alongside, and the whole separated off from the rest of Lower *Barton* by a modern bank. The remains of a derelict steel palisade fence runs along the northern boundary of the *Grove*, following the line of Miss Chichester's 1934 *nature reserve* boundary. A public footpath continues to follow the *Barton Court* track, and a second public right of way runs along the eastern boundary of Lower *Barton*. Both semi-circular clumps remain, as does the in-field Austrian pine, although the southern clump is grazed through, the eastern clump has a fine veteran boundary sycamore.

Kennel Wood forms part of the pleasure grounds owned and managed by the Trust. The pre 1886 estate buildings at the northern end are partly used as Trust offices and an adjacent surfaced area provides a staff car park. The kennels have been converted to cottages and are let by the Trust. The curved plantation boundary consists of an overgrown boundary bank and an adjacent drainage ditch. The 1970s barn is functional and still in use for over-wintering livestock, but has become surrounded by unsightly fencing and redundant farm machinery. *Kennel Wood* is a Norway Spruce plantation to the east, with sycamore and a ground flora of ferns, brambles, ivy and holly to the west.

Significance

Lower Barton lies within the Registered landscape, but, unlike *Gratton*, did not form part of the Georgian or Victorian landscape park, as plotted on the historic maps. Nevertheless, *Lower Barton* was designed to have parkland character and act as a visual extension of the main parkland. The same character, of improved land enclosed by a generous belt, extends to the west and south as the setting of the Registered landscape. The whole area forms part of the Arlington Gardens County Wildlife Site, valued for its bat and lichen interest.

Vulnerability

The aesthetic quality of *Lower Barton* is reduced by the untidiness around the modern agricultural barn. Separating off the Grove with a new track and bank has also reduced the visual qualities of this feature as a grazed parkland belt.

Proposals

- i. Seek to remove wastes and derelict machinery around the modern barn, so that it stands tidily in a corner of the park.
- ii. Selectively thin Keeper's Wood to initiate understorey regeneration, so that the next generation of trees becomes established.
- iii. Lightly thin the eastern clump, to establish mixed ages, and re-fence the southern boundary of the southern clump, so that beech regeneration can become established.
- iv. Replant the clump immediately west of Barton Court, using beech.

As a lower significance area, these proposals are not considered to be top priority.

7.9 **Town Meadow**

History

Farmland in 1804, lying between the New England and Arlington roads (figure 9). When the road to Arlington was diverted in 1828 (figure 10), the area was identified as *Hungerwell Field*. By 1844, it had been renamed *Town Meadow* and was managed in hand (figure 14). The field had an entrance in the northeast corner, opposite the New England cottages. By 1886 (figure 18), this entrance appears to have been closed up and two in-field trees were plotted. Photographs taken of the house from Town Meadow, probably in the early 1900s, show the meadow enclosed with a low-visibility, drawn wire and iron post fence (appendix 2). Town Meadow appears to

have remained unaltered until the 1950s, when the new visitor entrance path was laid out across its western side. The visitor centre building followed in 1971 and was extended in the 1990s.

Condition

Town Meadow is fenced, improved pasture, managed by the Trust under HLS, and grazed by Jacob sheep. Three mature in-field limes form a clump in the centre (planted pre 1886), and several additional in field trees have been planted. A small play area has been created to the west of the visitor entrance path. This western strip is separated from the rest of the pasture by a sawn timber rail fence. Town Meadow has therefore been reduced in area from the north, west and south.

Significance

The meadow is included within the Registered landscape and, since 1828, has formed part of the pleasure grounds area around the main house. The visitor centre and entrance path are critical for the operation of the property, providing a link to the car park and a pay barrier, but generate a modest intrusive impact on the historic landscape. The whole area forms part of the Arlington Gardens County Wildlife Site, valued for its bat and lichen interest.

Vulnerability

Mature shrubberies, trees and the modern fencing around the Meadow have reduced its visual connectivity with the rest of the pleasure grounds, as suggested in photographs of the early 1900s. As a result, it is increasingly becoming an isolated paddock, neither parkland nor pleasure ground in character.

Proposals

- i. Should the visitor entrance be re-directed via Lodge Plantation or via Home Farm at some stage in the future, seek to reinstate the original extent and character of Town Meadow, perhaps quartered by parkland railings to provide paddocks for the long tradition of pet ponies and sheep at Arlington.
- ii. In the meantime, prune the basal sprouts and graze around the limes.
- iii. Consider thinning and grazing through the northern infill, and reinstate the historic, gently curved livestock fence with parkland railings.

- iv. Provide concise interpretation on Miss Chichester's livestock, and why this is *Town Meadow*, to distinguish it from the farmland away from the manor house and church, and associated with the village, Arlington Beccott (see 5.2).

These proposals are essentially long term, aspirational proposals, and not of top priority.

8.0 PRIORITISATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Setting out the rationale for the priority programme of works, with recommendations for monitoring and review of the Parkland Plan.

8.1 Overall Approach

The divided management of the parkland at Arlington between the Trust and the tenant of Home Farm, inevitably limits what can be achieved over the next ten years in terms of parkland restoration and wildlife habitat enhancement. However, management of the whole area under Higher Level Stewardship helps support good management. The Trust needs to meet its two key objectives of long-term conservation and visitor enjoyment.

Due to the complexities of this property, we would recommend the following course of action:

- First Priority – continue to manage the historic park under the current high levels of conservation management, seeking a balanced approach that enhances both the high ecological significance and the aesthetic values of the designed landscape, reopening views and reintroducing seasonal grazing to areas where lichen interest is being lost to shading, to prevent any immediate loss.
- Second Priority – commission a feasibility study that assesses the options for the future of the lake, as this will take time to lead to action.
- Third Priority – encourage the Home Farm tenant to enhance parkland habitats by grazing more of the parkland with a mix of sheep and a smaller herd of cattle.
- Fourth Priority – progressively enhance habitat connectivity and the historic landscape pattern by restoring former field boundaries and grazing units.

8.2 Individual Work Schedules

Appendix 8 sets out a detailed breakdown of the individual proposals for the parkland, based on sections 6.0 and 7.0, in the format of a Higher Level Stewardship agreement and subdivided into the in hand and Home Farm land. Within each schedule, the overall priorities for restoration and management of the landscape have been based on the following criteria:

- a. Need, in terms of threats to the survival of the physical historic fabric of the landscape and/or its historic character
- b. Opportunity, to attract grant aid from Natural England

- c. Opportunity, the Trust having the resources, skills and land rights to deliver the proposal
- d. Longer term benefits of higher value for the sustainability of the property

In summary, first priority proposals include:

- Replanting parkland trees which will take many years to grow, and managing the parkland under HC13, to protect surviving trees.
- Bringing replanted clumps and overgrown valley meadows into parkland management to enhance wildlife habitats and reinstate historic parkland landscapes.
- Negotiating enhanced management regimes with tenant farmers.
- Initiating feasibility studies to examine the options for the lake.

Second priority items are:

- Restoring hedgerows and historic field boundaries for wildlife value and landscape restoration.
- Implementing an agreed and viable management regime for the lake, primarily because the feasibility studies for this will take several years to commission and secure agreement upon.

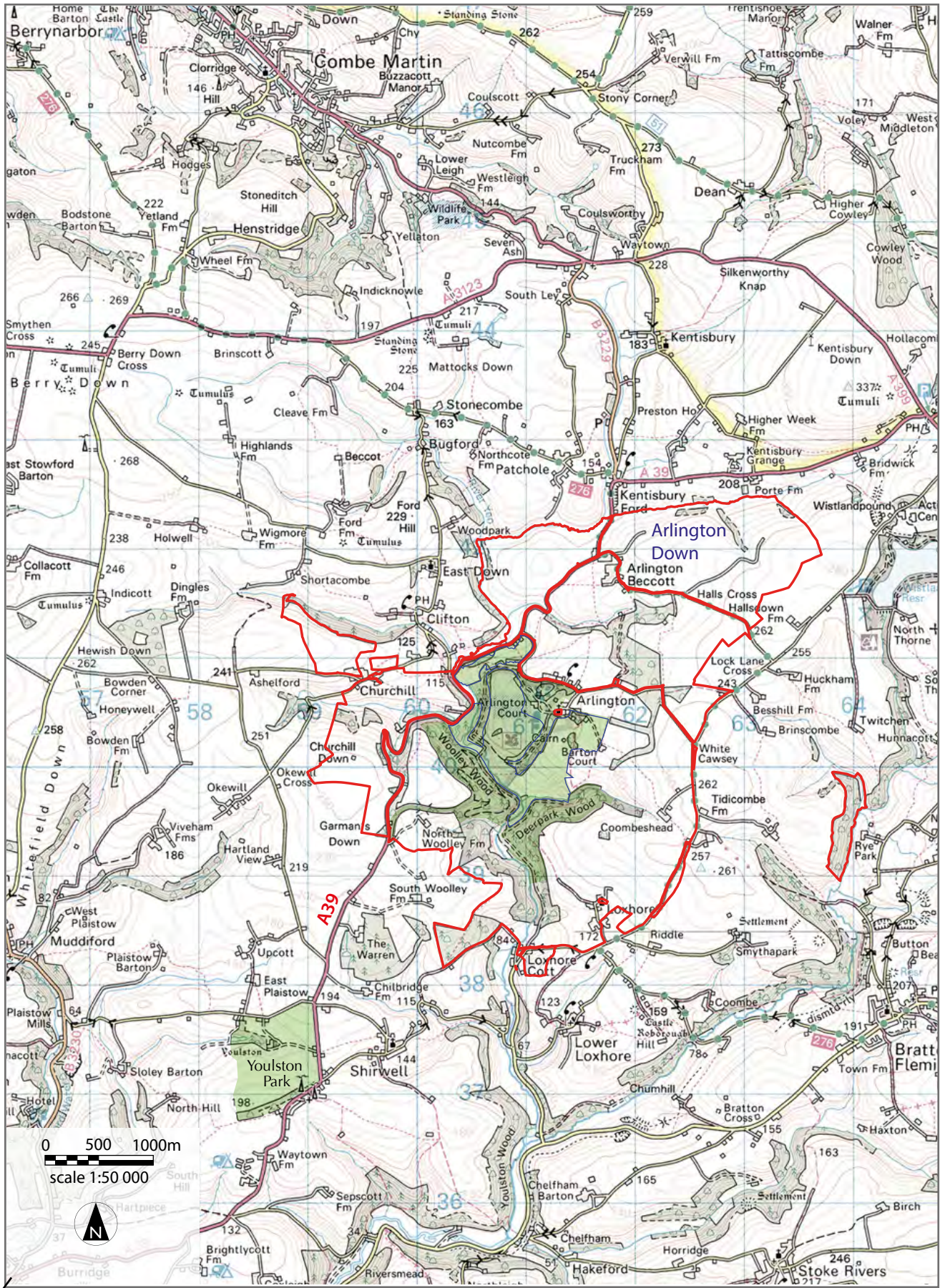
8.3 **Monitoring**

Monitoring the implementation of this plan will be carried out by the National Trust Ranger, reporting to the Property Manager and, in turn, to Natural England.

8.4 **Review**

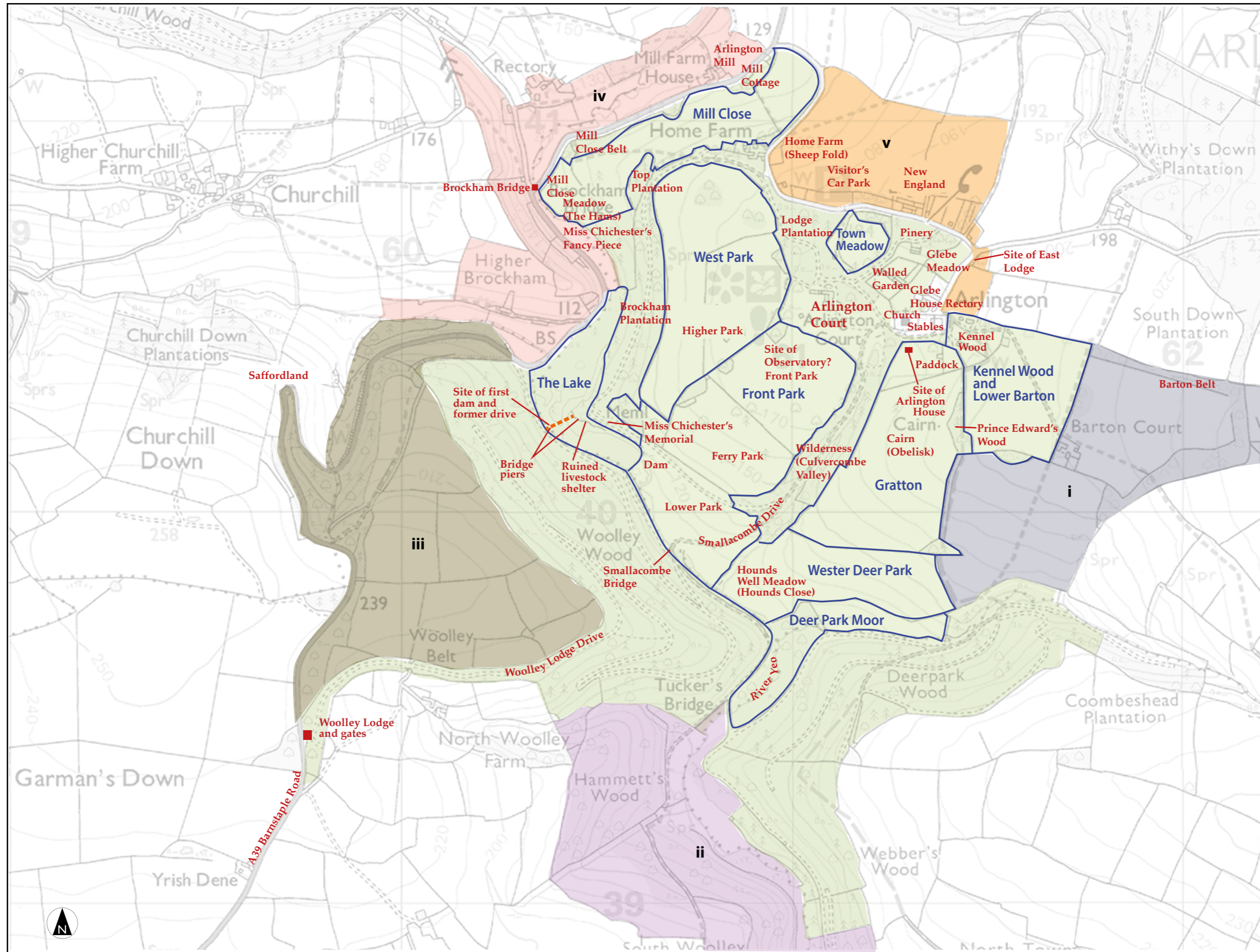
This plan is to be reviewed at a mid point in 2019, and twelve months prior to the end of the plan in 2024, enabling an updated plan to be prepared for the next ten-year period. The review will be informed by new information, surveys, changes in circumstances and further research arising from the ongoing conservation management and other works.

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- ▬ National Trust Ownership boundary
- English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Exmoor National Park boundary

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 1: Location Plan

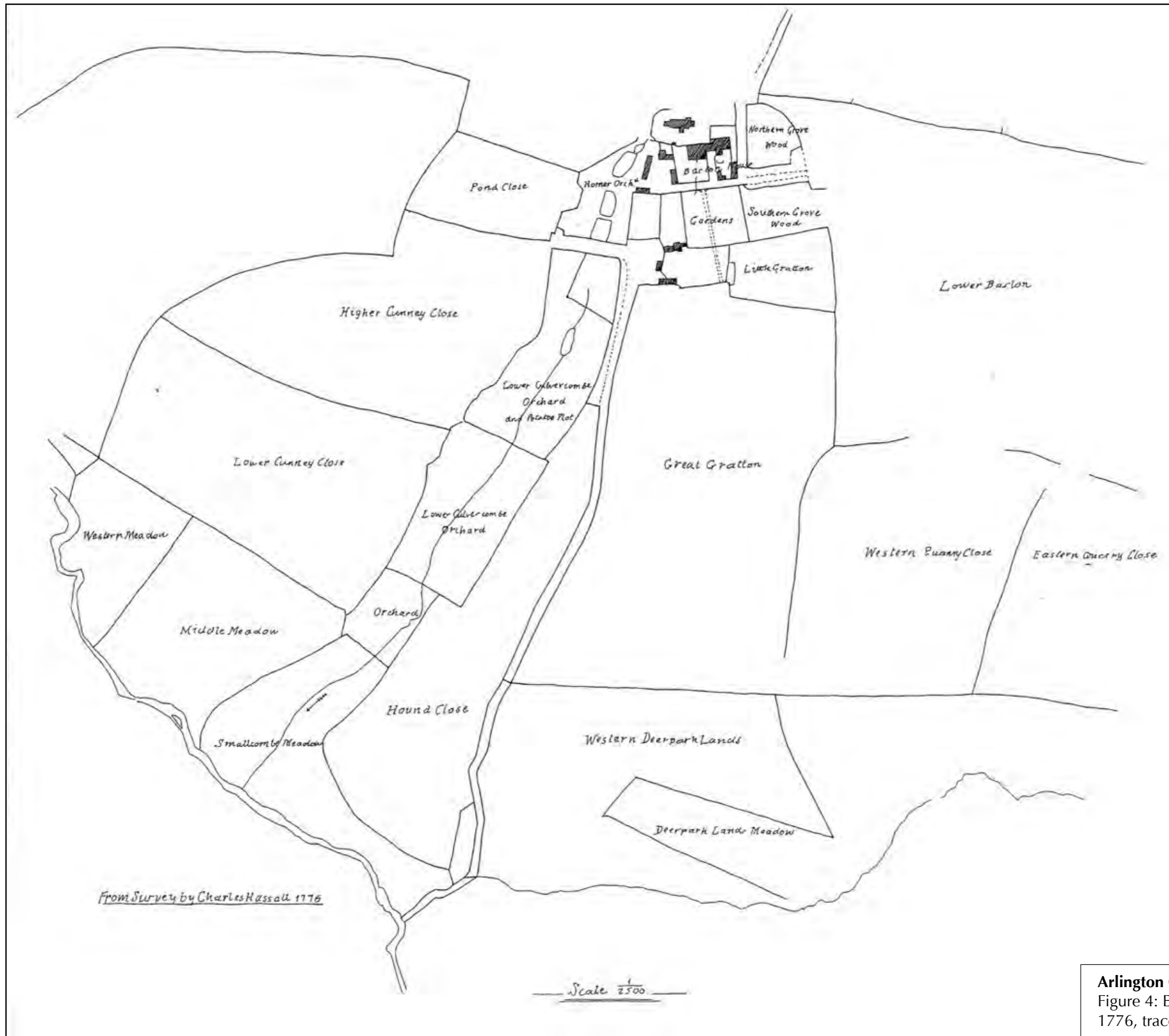


- Study Area
- English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Core Setting Areas
 - i Barton Court
 - ii Loxhore Drive and South Woolley Woods
 - iii Woolley Farm North
 - iv Brockham Valley and Arlington Mill
 - v New England

Mill Cottage Field names and features referred to in the text. Additional or former names given in brackets.

to Loxhore

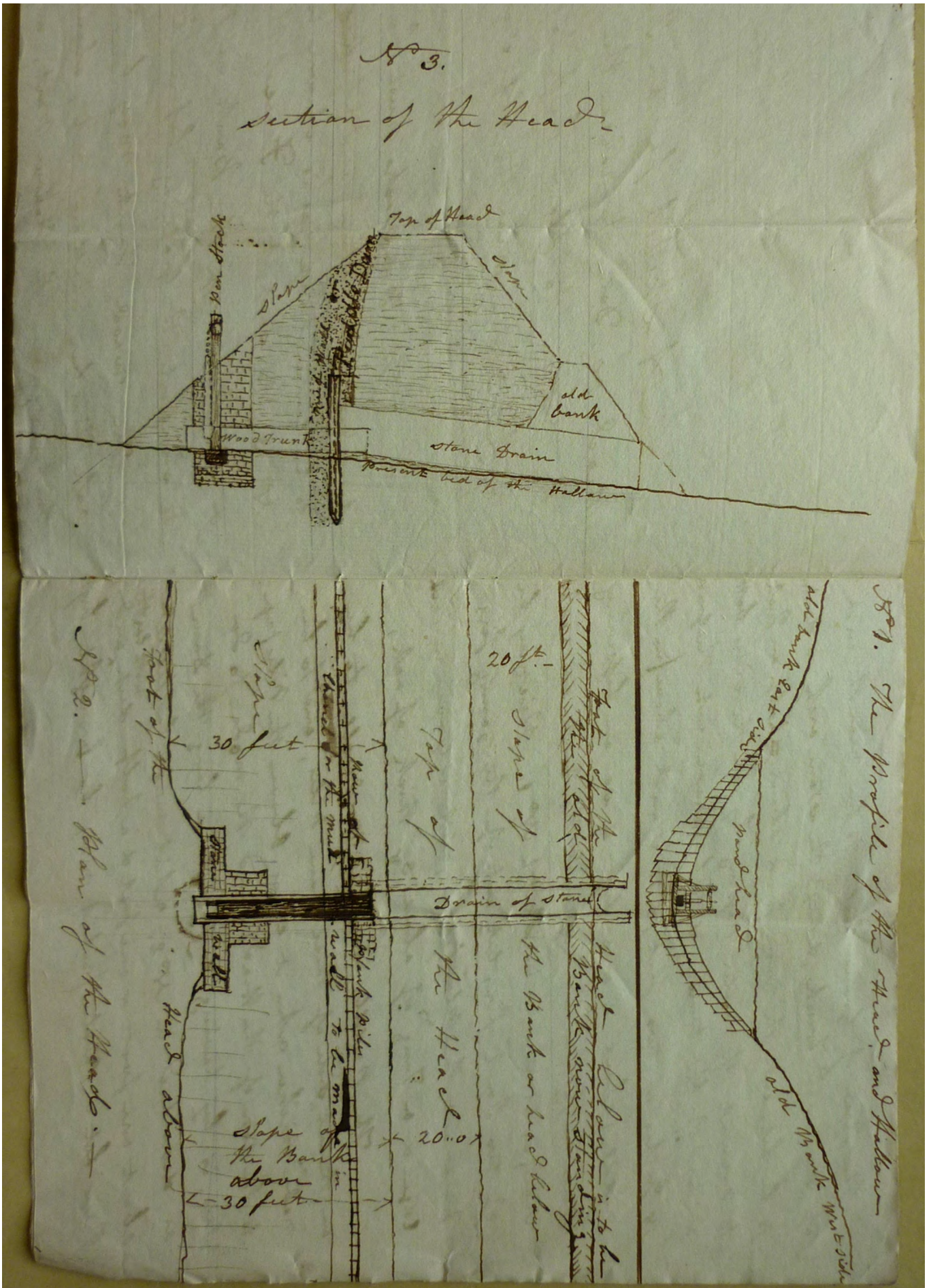
Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 2: Study Area and Site Description Areas



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 4: Estate map, C Hassall,
1776, traced by Dr Nick Berry



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 6: A map of North Wooly,
 late 1700s



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 7: A sketch for an intended Head or Dam..., J. Hodgkinson, 1792



Three paintings of Arlington by Maria Pixell, c. 1797 on display in Arlington Court.



Arlinton House, John Chichester Esq. Attributed to John Keast source (58) (Devon Heritage Centre DEV/1820/LAN*)

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 8: Arlington, Maria Pixell, c. 1797
 and *Arlinton House...*, c.1800



1804 Ordnance Survey surveyor's drawing

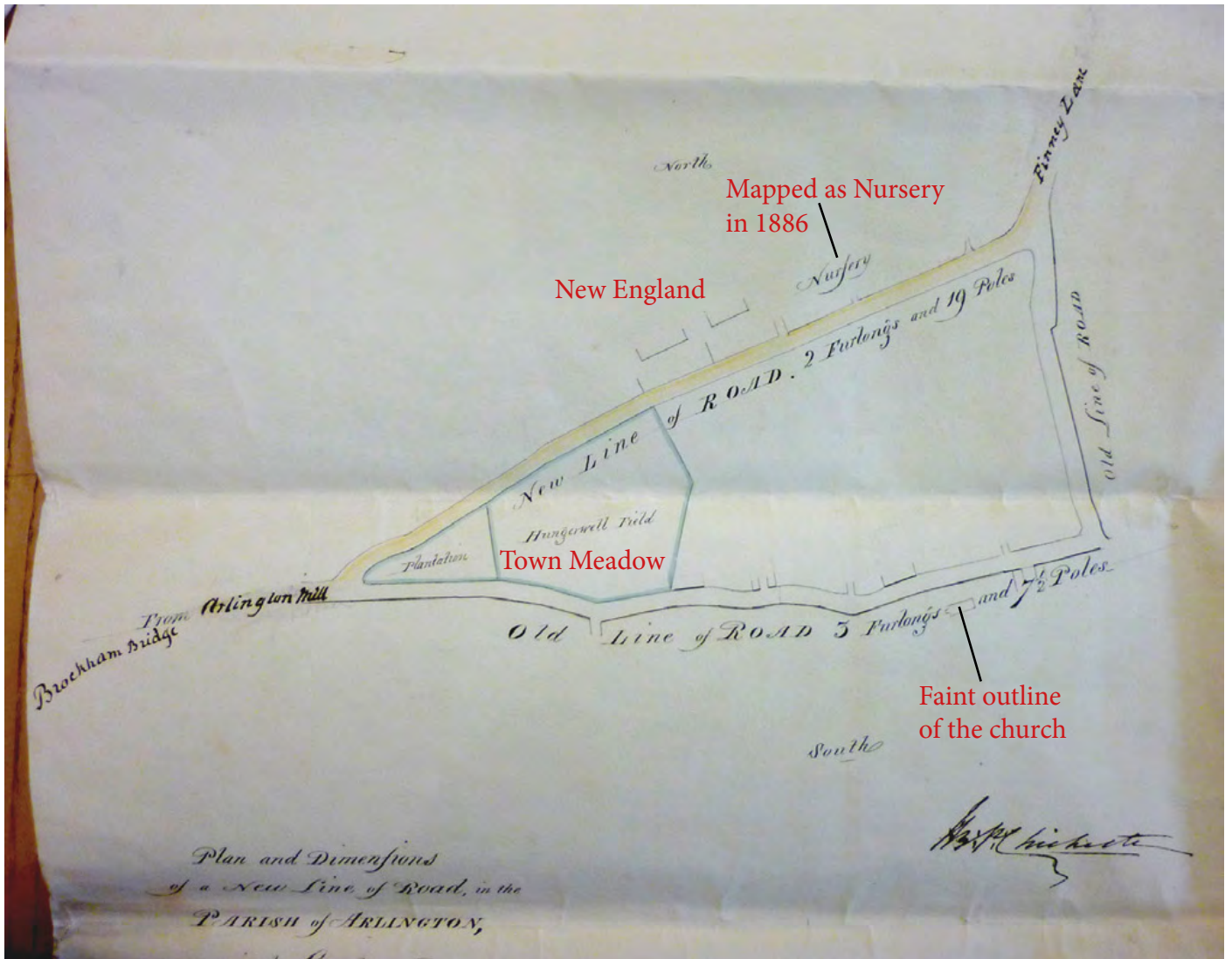
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1809 Ordnance Survey Old Series



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 9: Ordnance Survey maps
 1804-09



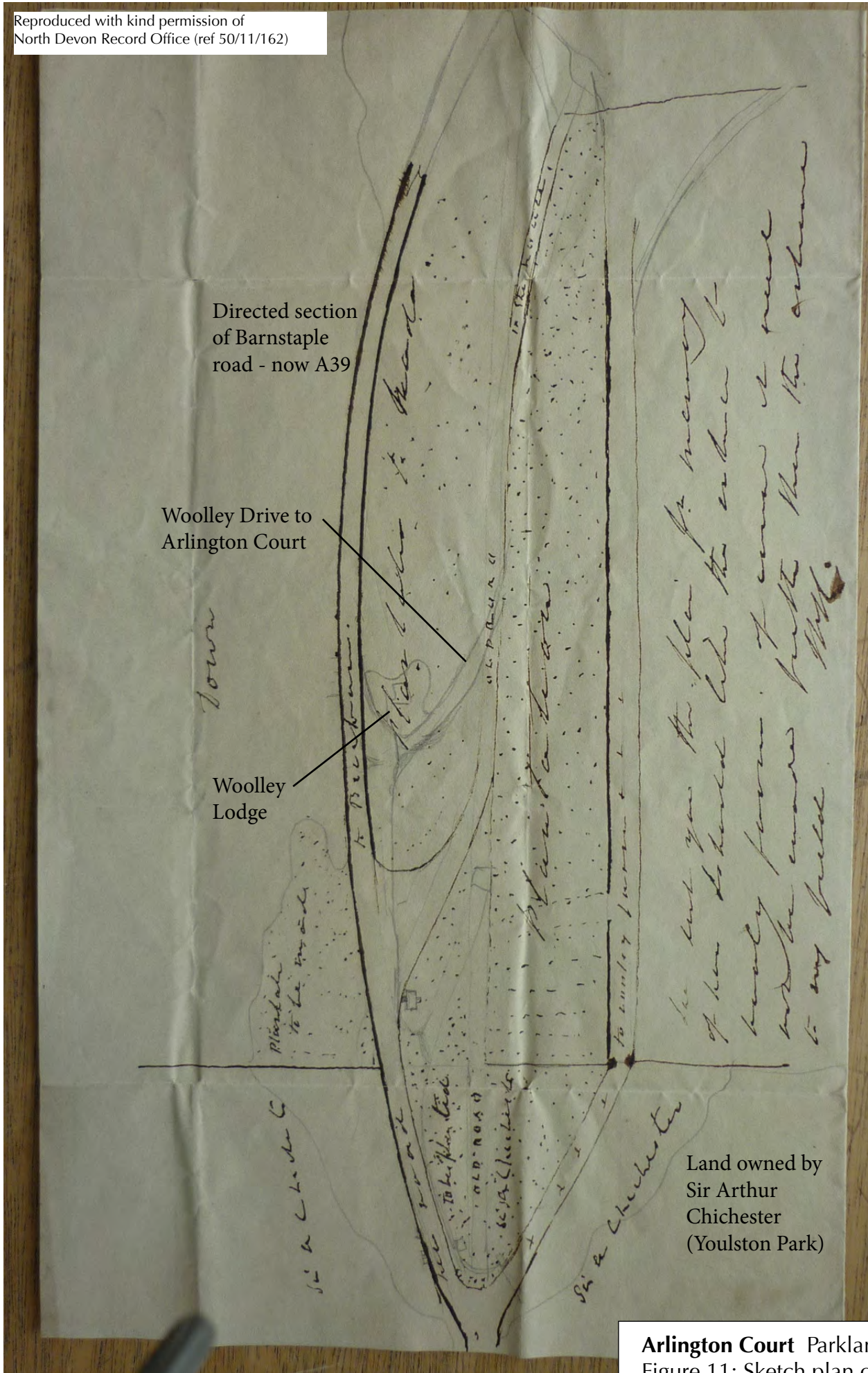
1828

Reproduced with kind permission of Devon Heritage Centre (ref Devon Q/S 113A/6/1)

This plan shows the realignment of the road to the north of Arlington House. The diversion allowed the private grounds around the house to be extended.

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 10: *Plan and Dimensions of a New Line of Road...*, 1828

Reproduced with kind permission of North Devon Record Office (ref 50/11/162)



Directed section of Barnstaple road - now A39

Woolley Drive to Arlington Court

Woolley Lodge

Land owned by Sir Arthur Chichester (Youlston Park)


Arlington Court Parkland Plan Figure 11: Sketch plan of a highway diversion, 1834

Plan showing the diversion of the Barnstaple Road (A39) and the creation of the New Woolley drive to Arlington Court.

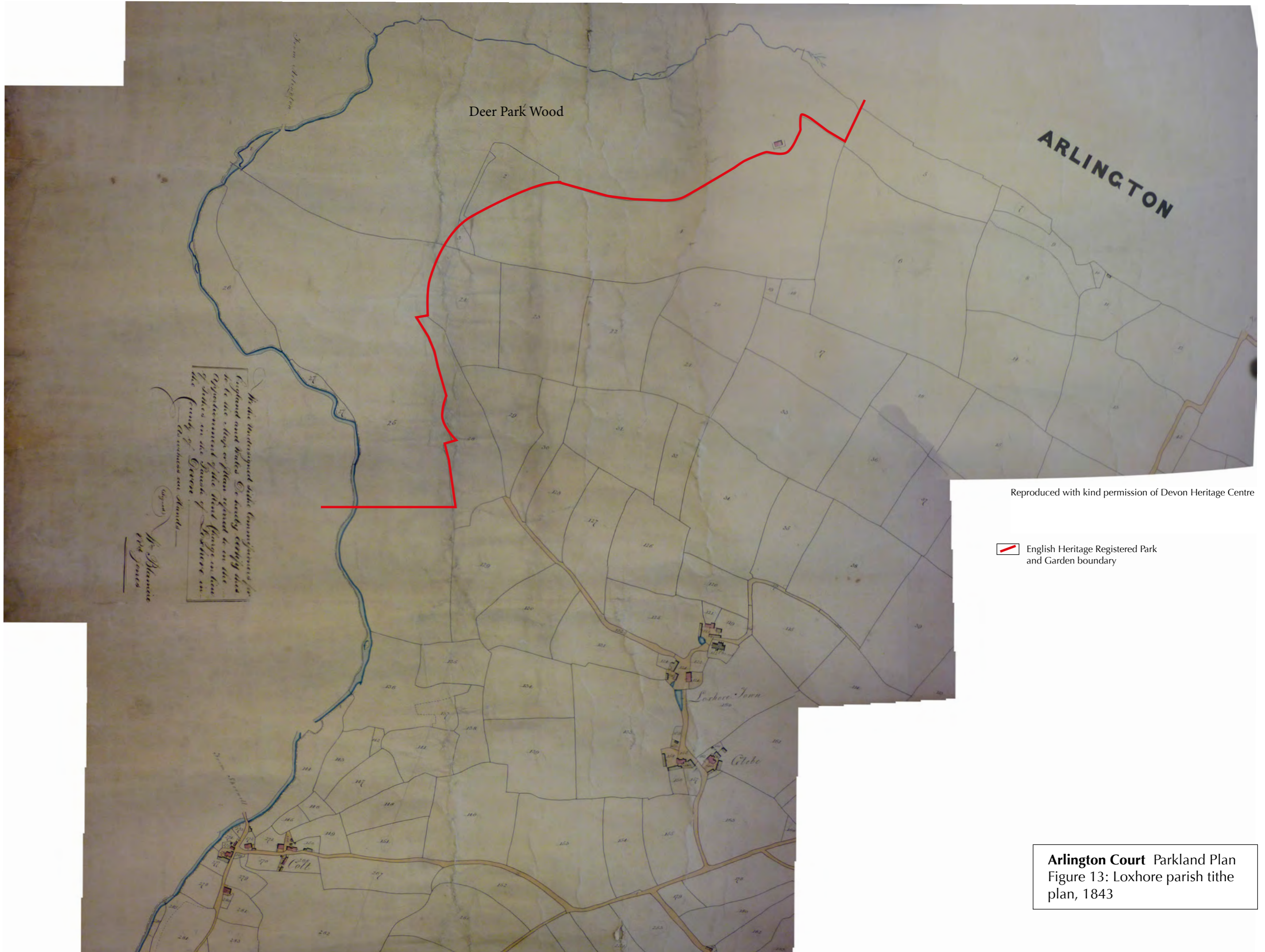


Apportionment in appendix 2

Field names as stated in the tithe apportionment (1843). All named fields are meadow or pasture unless otherwise specified.

 Parkland circuit drive.

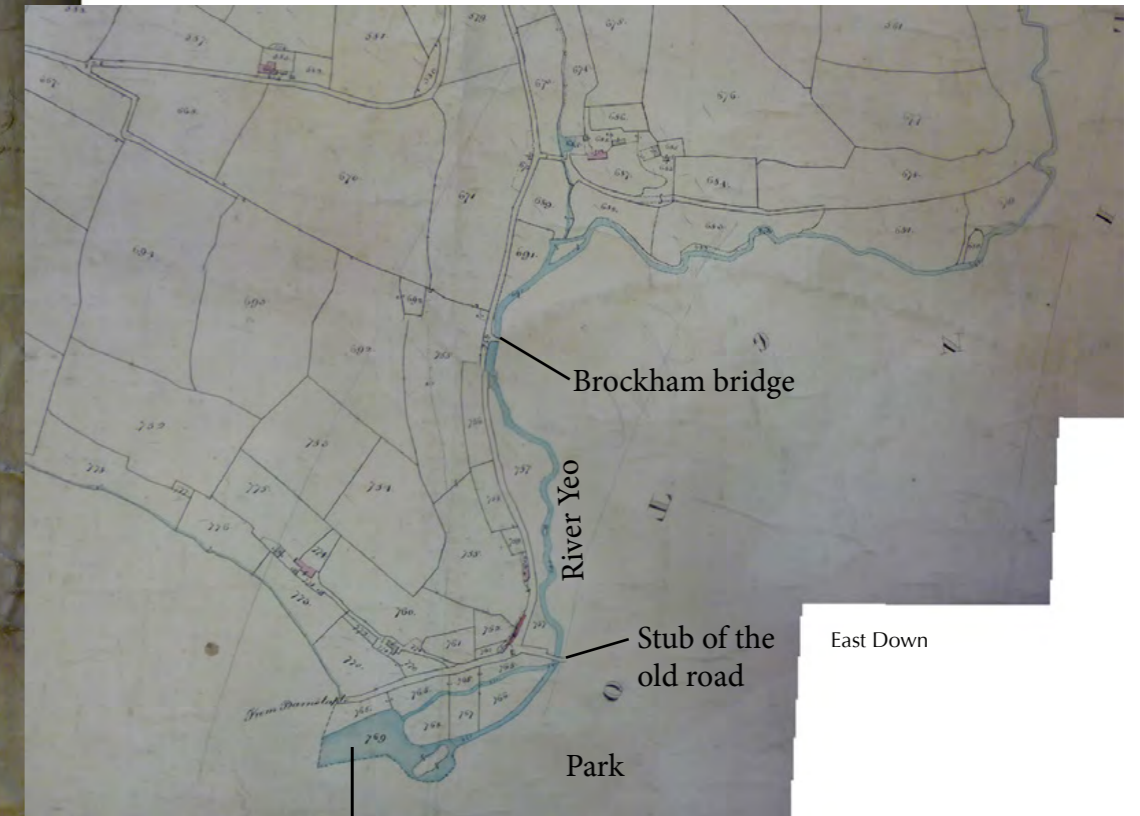
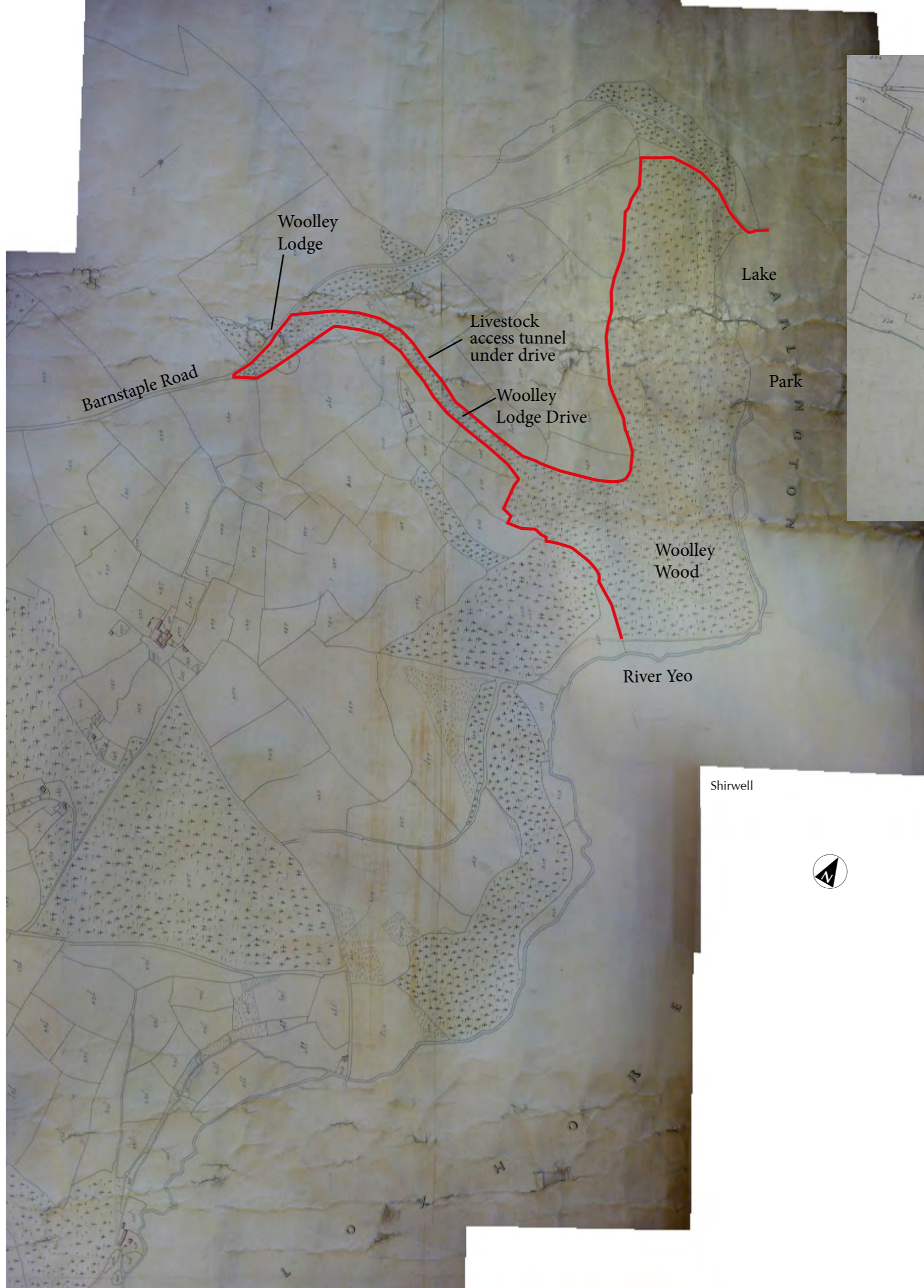
Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 12: Arlington parish
 tithe plan, 1844



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 English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 13: Loxhore parish tithe plan, 1843

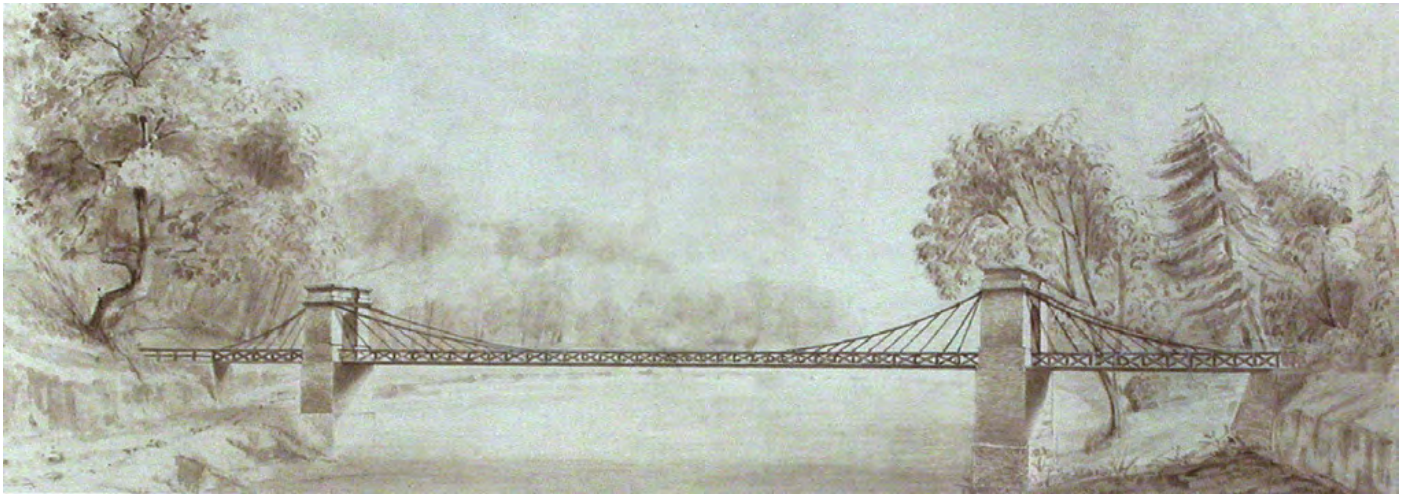


Part of the lake that lies in the parish of East Down

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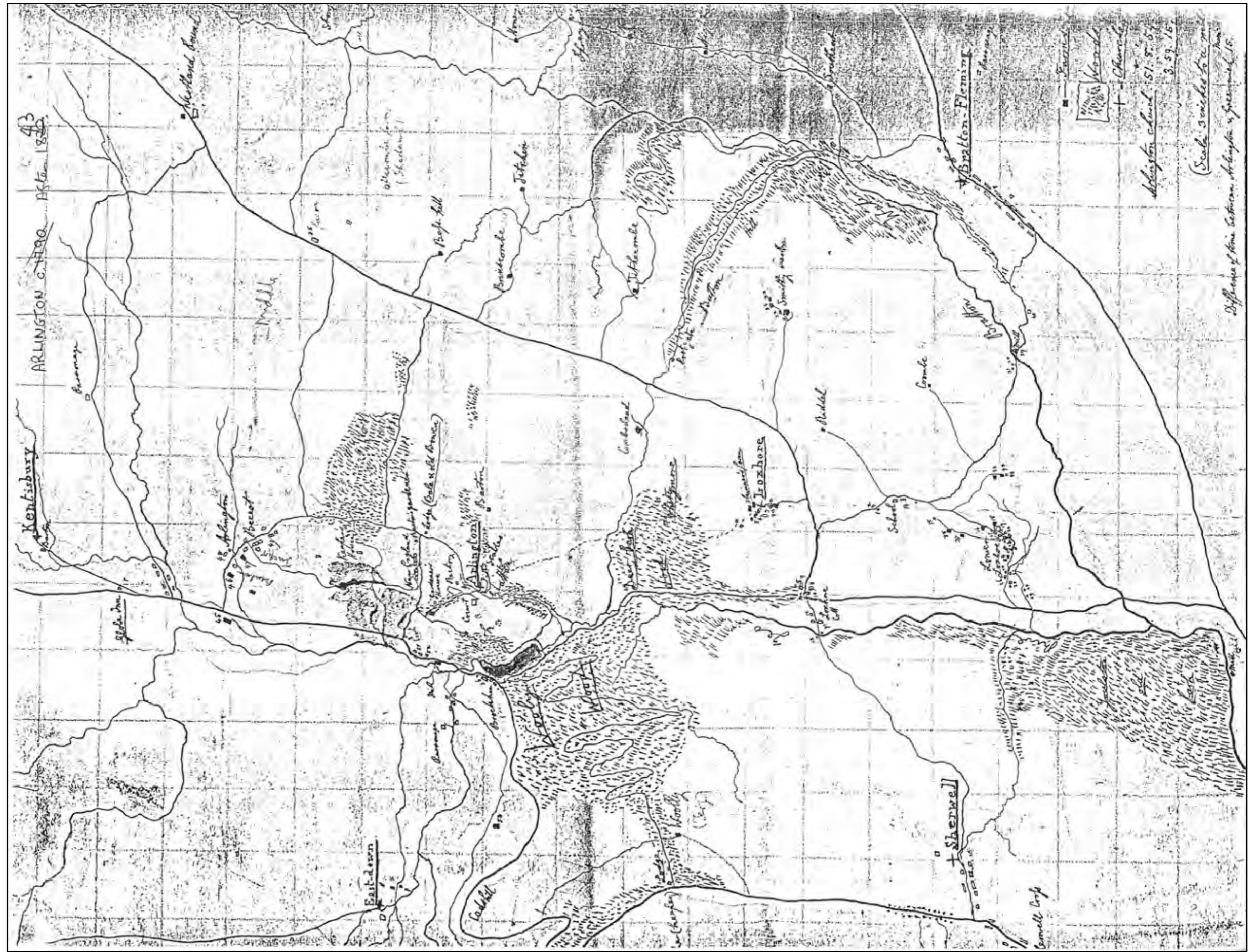
 English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 14: Shirwell and East Down parish tithe plan, 1838



Drawing on display in Arlington Court

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 15: Sketch of the intended
suspension bridge, W. Dredge 1849



From: Berry (2012)



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 16: Undated hand-drawn
 map, c. 1860s

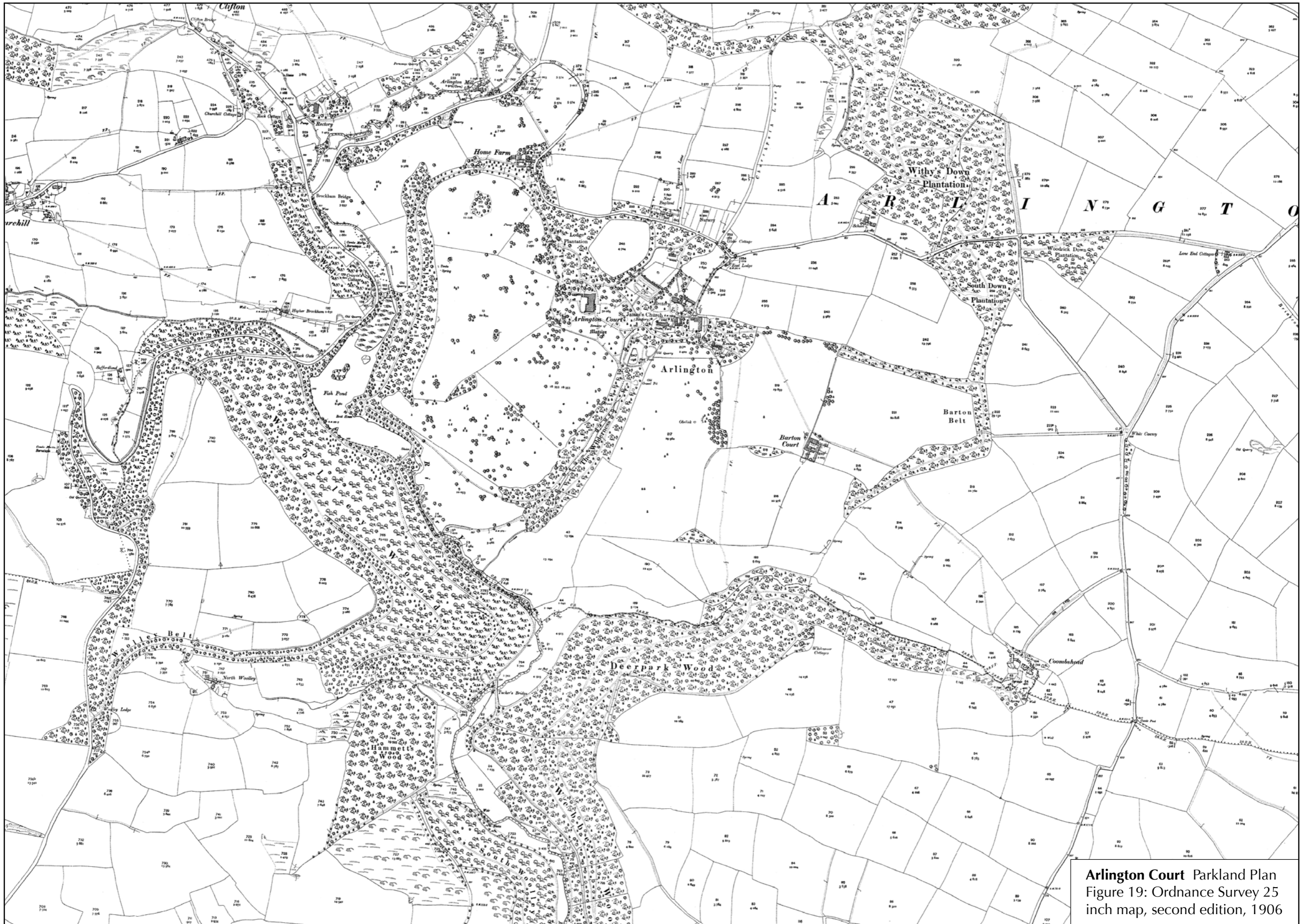


Map held by National Trust at Arlington Court.

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 17: Map showing Woods and Plantations on the Estates of Miss Chichester..., 1884



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 18: Ordnance Survey 25
inch map, first edition, 1886



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 19: Ordnance Survey 25
inch map, second edition, 1906



NT Arlington Box 82

Summer view, no date



NT Arlington Box 8

no date



NT Arlington Box 41

The Lawn, 1877



2014



2014



2014



NT Arlington: Miss Chichester's Album IV (RCC IV)

c. 1889



2014



NT Arlington Box 55

1890-97

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 20: To and from Gratton,
late 1800s to early 1900s



NT Arlington Box 9



1902-3

NT Arlington Box Assorted loose photographs

no date



2014



NT Arlington Box 12

1880s



NT Arlington Box 57

1903-4



2014

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 21: River Yeo and Bridges,
late 1800s to early 1900s

11/2/2015



NT Arlington: Miss Chichester's Album II (*Photographic Scrap Book*)
no date



2014



NT Arlington: Miss Chichester's Album IV (*RCC IV*)

no date



2014



NT Arlington: Miss Chichester's Album II (*Photographic Scrap Book*)

no date



2014



NT Arlington Box 73

The Lake no date



2014

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 22: The Lake, late 1800s to
early 1900s



NT Arlington Box 82

no date



NT Arlington: Miss Chichester's Album I and IV

no date



NT Arlington Box 55

1890-97



NT Arlington Box 12

1880s



2014



2014



NT Arlington Box 9

1902-3



2014

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 23: The Park, late 1800s to
early 1900s



NT Arlington: Miss Chichester's Album II (*Photographic Scrap Book*)

no date



NT Arlington Box 82

The Farm no date



2014



NT Arlington Box 42 and 45

Miss Chichester's watercolour sketches 1919-22



2014

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 24: Home Farm,
late 1800s to early 1900s



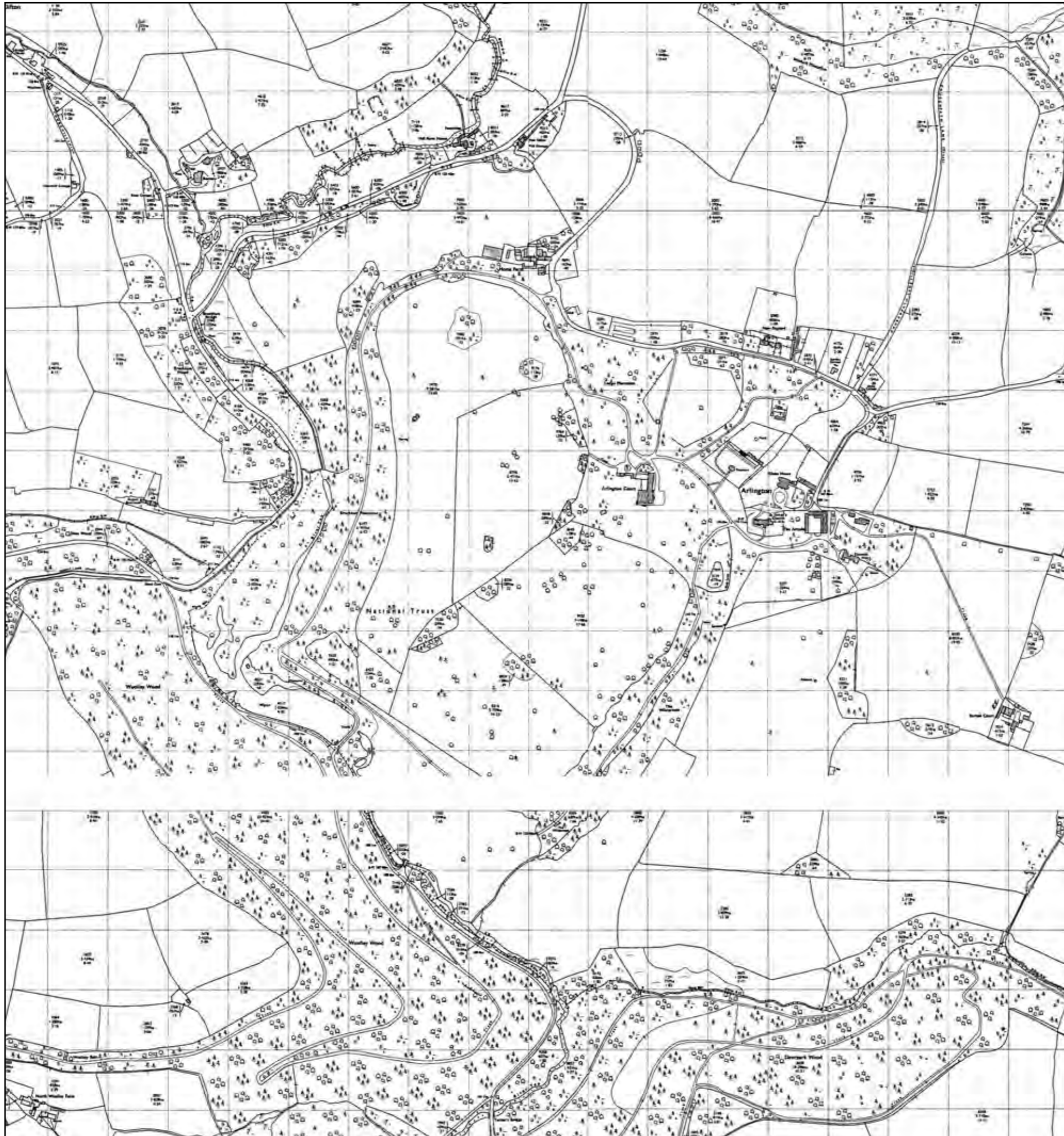
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Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 25: Aerial photographs,
c. 1930s



Reproduced with kind permission of National Trust (Killerton)

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 26: Planting Plan, 1969-73



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 28: Ordnance Survey
25 inch map, 1975



Reproduced with kind permission of National Trust
(Killerton)

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 29: Aerial photographs,
c. 1978



Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 30: Modern aerial
photograph

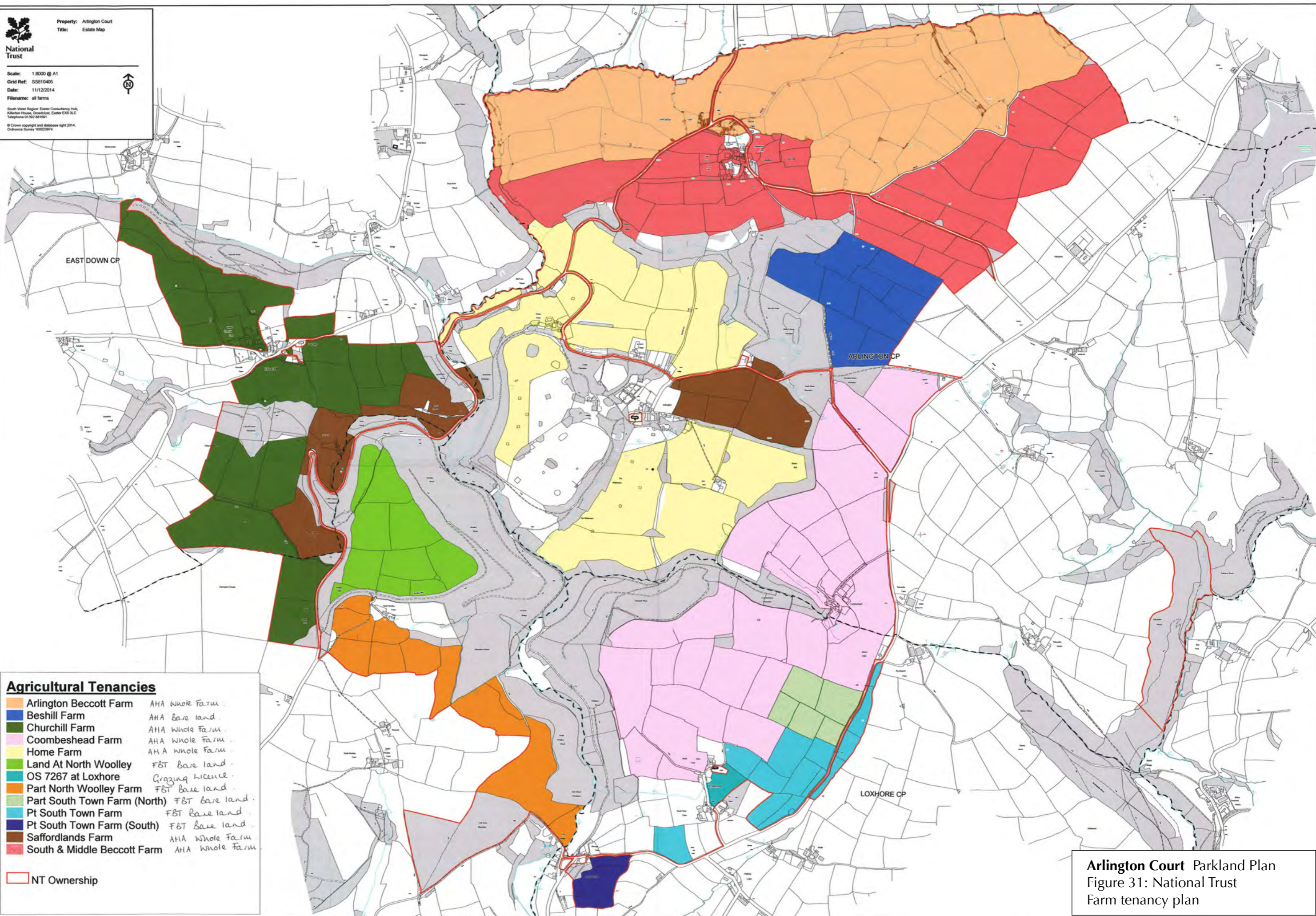


Property: Arlington Court
Title: Estate Map

Scale: 1:3000 @ A1
Grid Ref: S5610405
Date: 11/12/2014
Filename: all farms



South West Region, Exeter Consultancy Hub,
Kilberton House, Broadford, Exeter EX3 3LE
Telephone 01392 261991
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Ordnance Survey 100023874

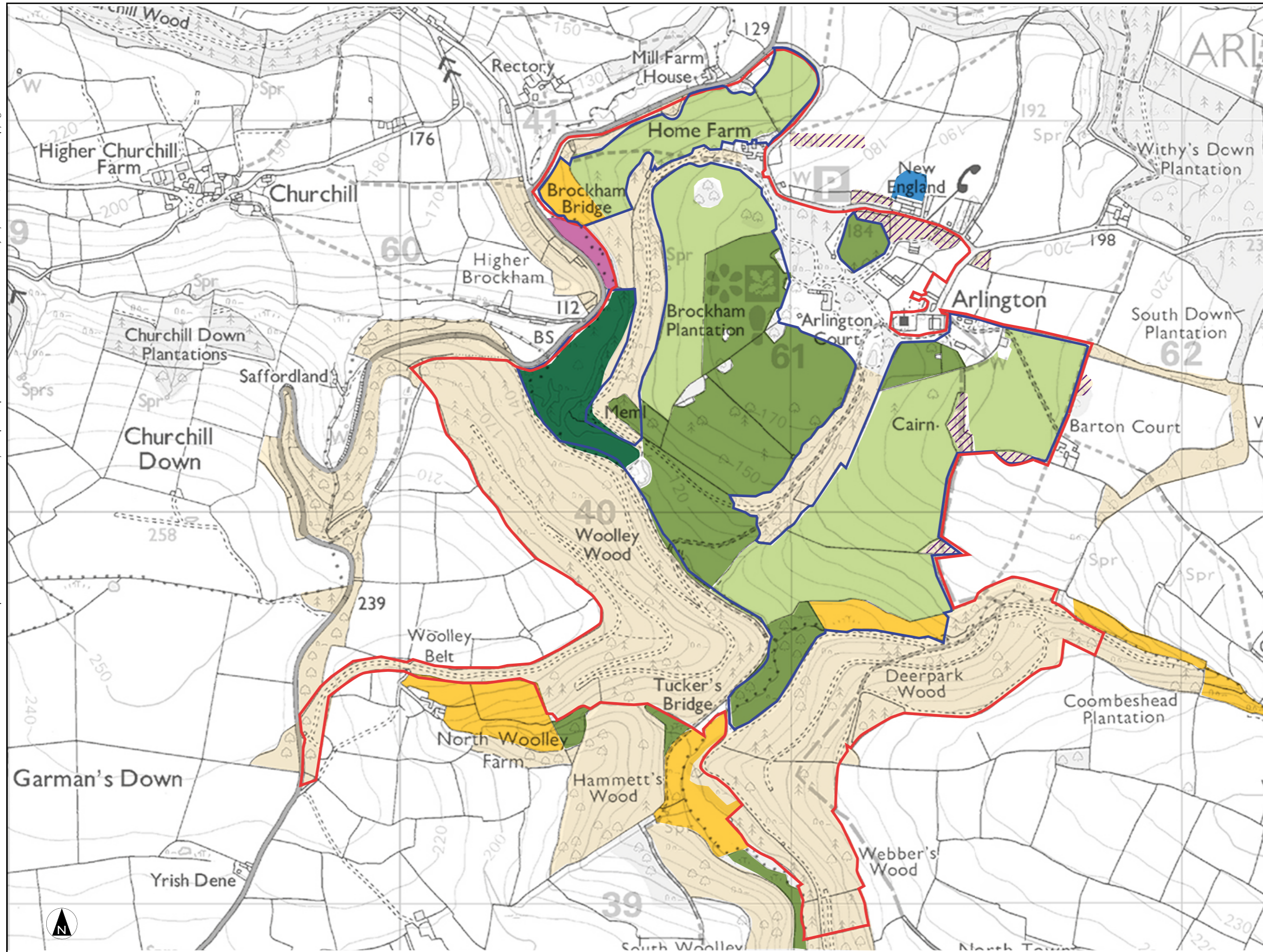













Agricultural Tenancies

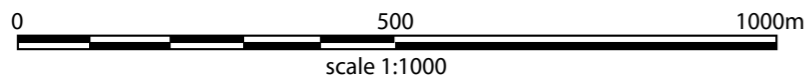
- Arlington Beccott Farm AHA Whole Farm
- Beshill Farm AHA Base land
- Churchill Farm AHA Whole Farm
- Coombeshead Farm AHA Whole Farm
- Home Farm AHA Whole Farm
- Land At North Woolley F&B Base land
- OS 7267 at Loxhore Grazing licence
- Part North Woolley Farm F&B Base land
- Part South Town Farm (North) F&B Base land
- Pt South Town Farm F&B Base land
- Pt South Town Farm (South) F&B Base land
- Saffordlands Farm AHA Whole Farm
- South & Middle Beccott Farm AHA Whole Farm

NT Ownership

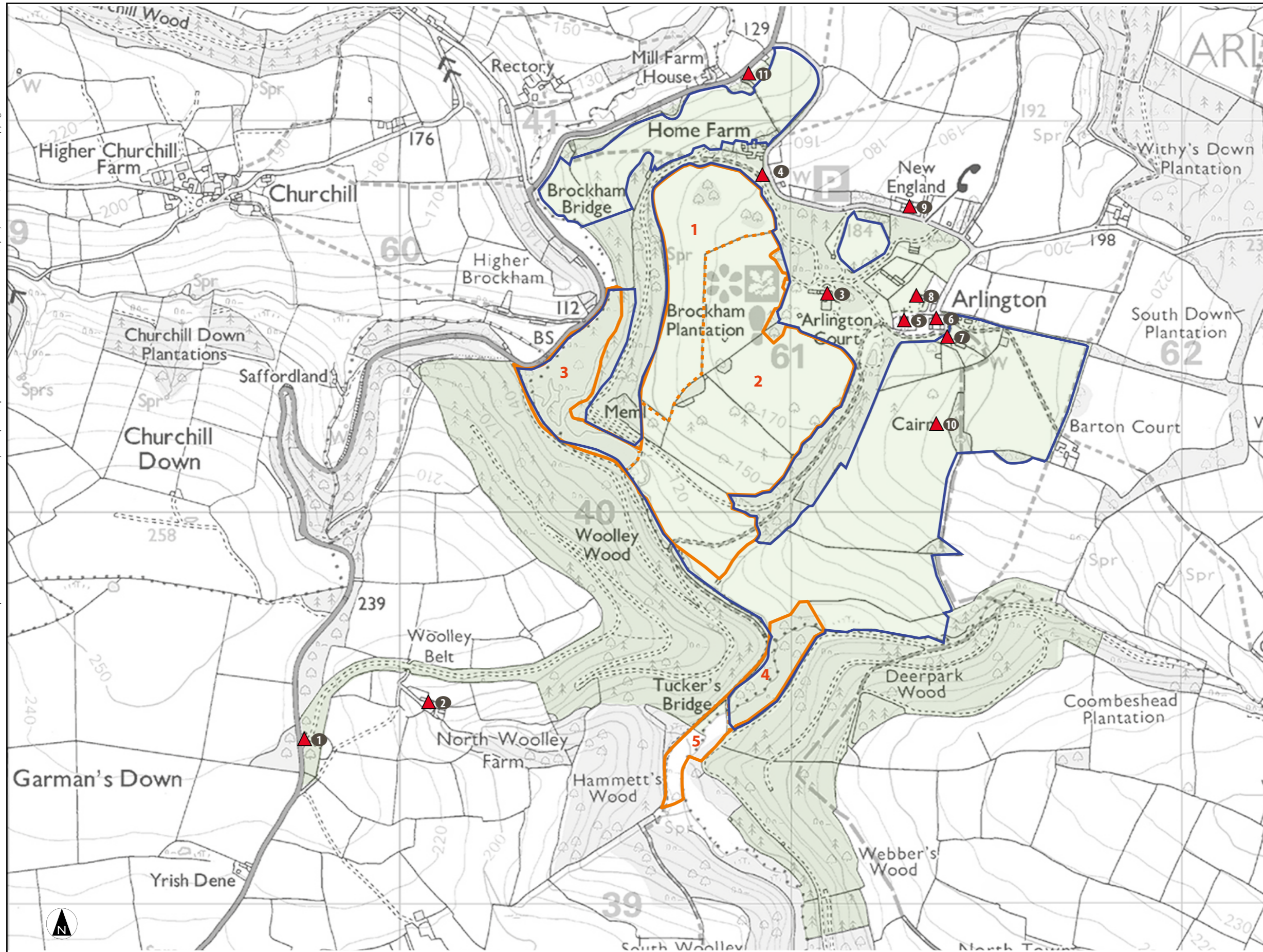
Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 31: National Trust
Farm tenancy plan



-  Study area
-  English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary
-  National Trust Higher Level Stewardship Agreement on in-hand Land (AG00446642)
-  HC12 Maintenance of wood pasture and parkland
-  HK7 Restoration of species-rich, semi-natural grassland
-  HC8 Restoration of woodland
-  HC18 Maintenance of high-value traditional orchards
-  Home Farm Higher Level Stewardship Agreement (AG00470951) within the study area
-  Entry Level Stewardship Agreement (AG00471051)
-  English Woodland Grant Scheme (commenced 2009)
-  Felling Licence Agreement only



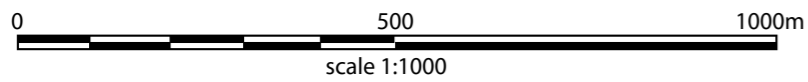
Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 32: Existing Management Agreements



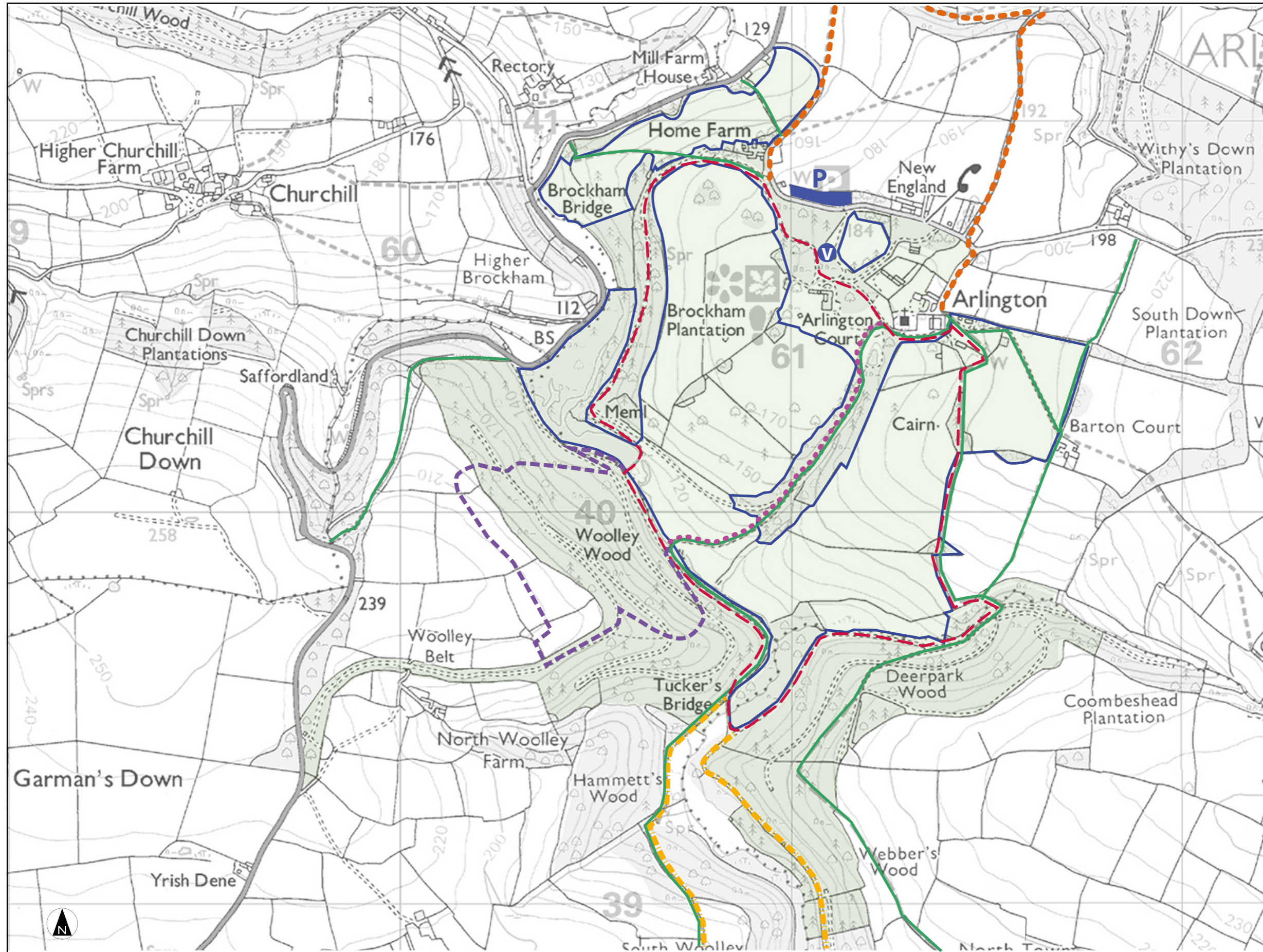
- Study area
- English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Arlington Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Arlington SSSI Units 1-5






Units 1 and 3 are in unfavourable condition units 2, 4, and 5 are in favourable condition

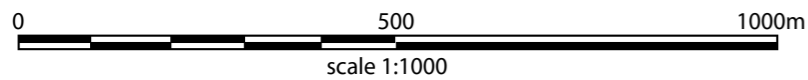
- Listed buildings
- 1** Woolley Lodge (grade II) and Railings, gates and gatepiers (grade II)
- 2** North Woolley Farmhouse (grade II)
- 3** Arlington Court (grade II*)
- 4** Gate piers (grade II)
- 5** St James's Church (grade II*) and several listed monuments
- 6** Stable block and Coachman's house (grade II)
- 7** Granary (grade II)
- 8** Glebe House (grade II*)
- 9** New England Cottages (grade II)
- 10** Cairn (grade II)
- 11** Mill Cottages (grade II)



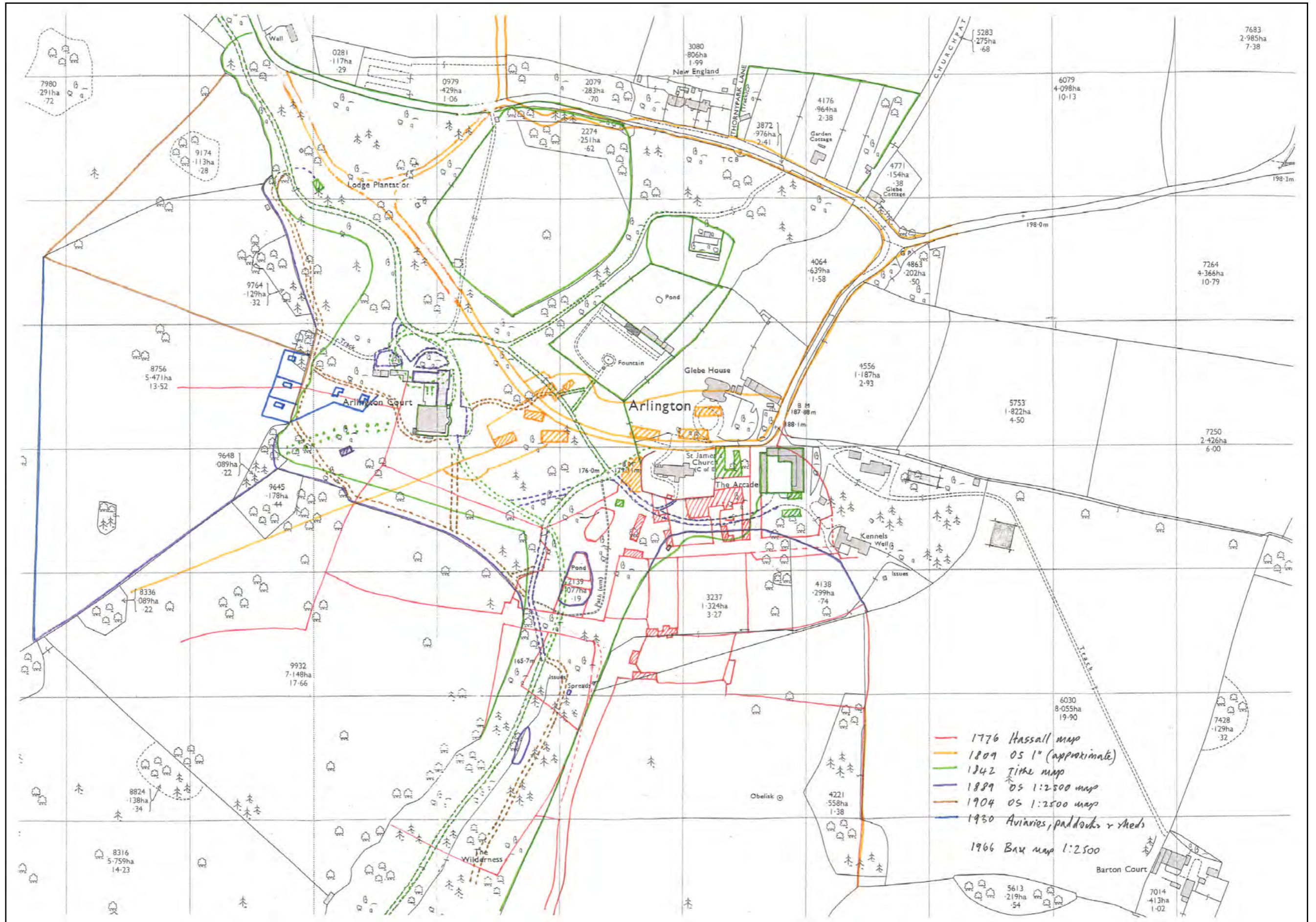
Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 33:
 Conservation Designations



-  Study area
-  English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary
-  Public rights of way
-  Visitor entrance
-  Car Park
-  Deer Park Walk
-  Lake Walk and Children's Play Trail (returns along Deer Park Walk)
-  Centenary Walk (Starts along Lake Walk, returns along Deer Park Walk)
-  Cott Brake Walk (starts along Deer Park, leads to the southwest corner of Cott Down Plantation, returns along Lake Walk)
-  Winford Valley Walk (returns along Deer Park Wood)

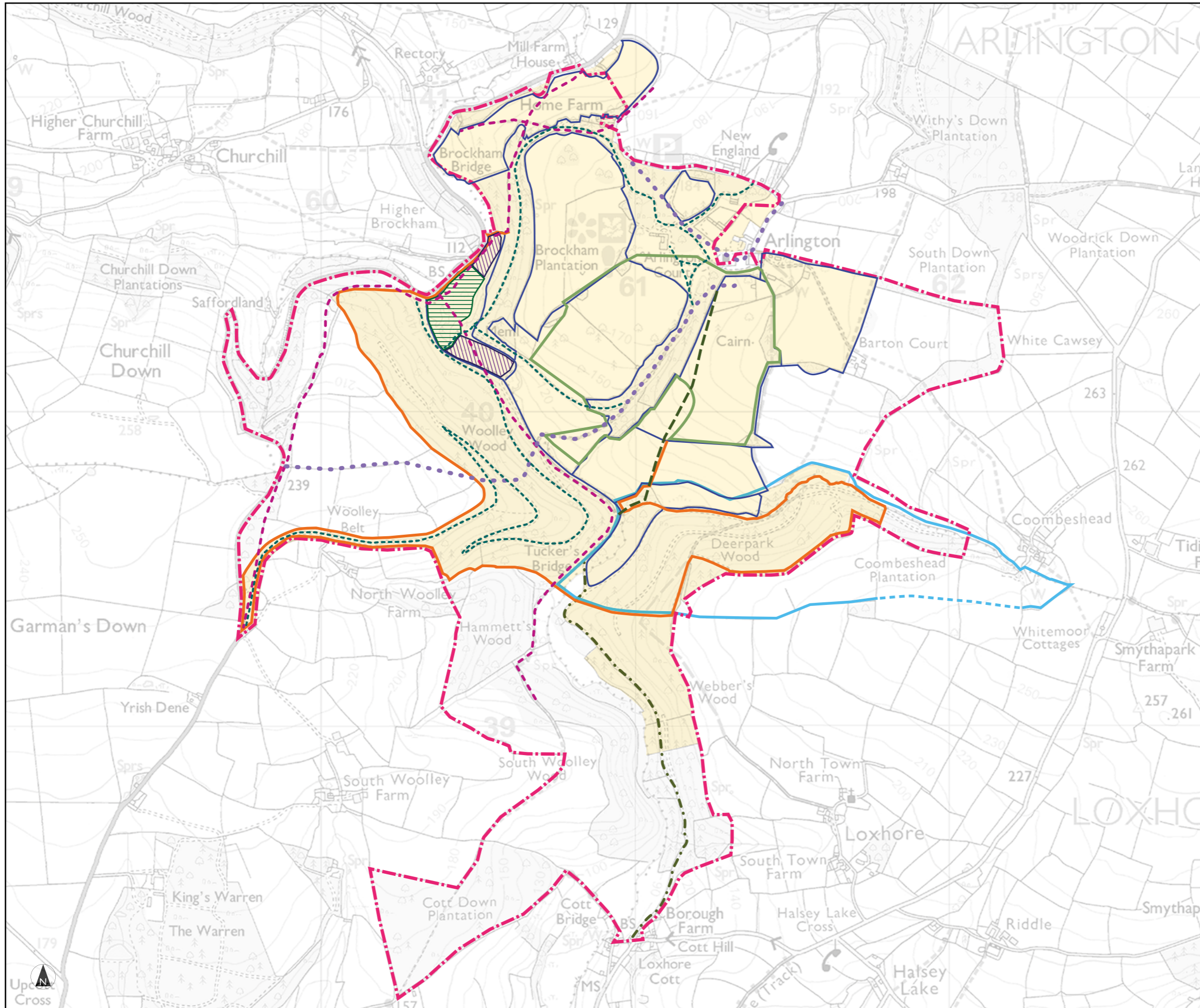


Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 34: Access



A provisional plan of archaeological interpretation of Arlington by Nick Berry.
 Source: Arlington Court Conservation Statement - January 2009: Historic Information File.

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
 Figure 35: Historic Landscape
 Analysis, Dr Nick Berry (2008)



- Study area
- English Heritage Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Medieval deer park boundary c. 1345
- Miss Chichester's Reserve, 1934
- Parkland mapped in 1804/1809
- Additional Parkland, landscape and rides mapped in 1844

The Lake

- Phase 1, late 1830s
- Phase 2, late 1840s extensions

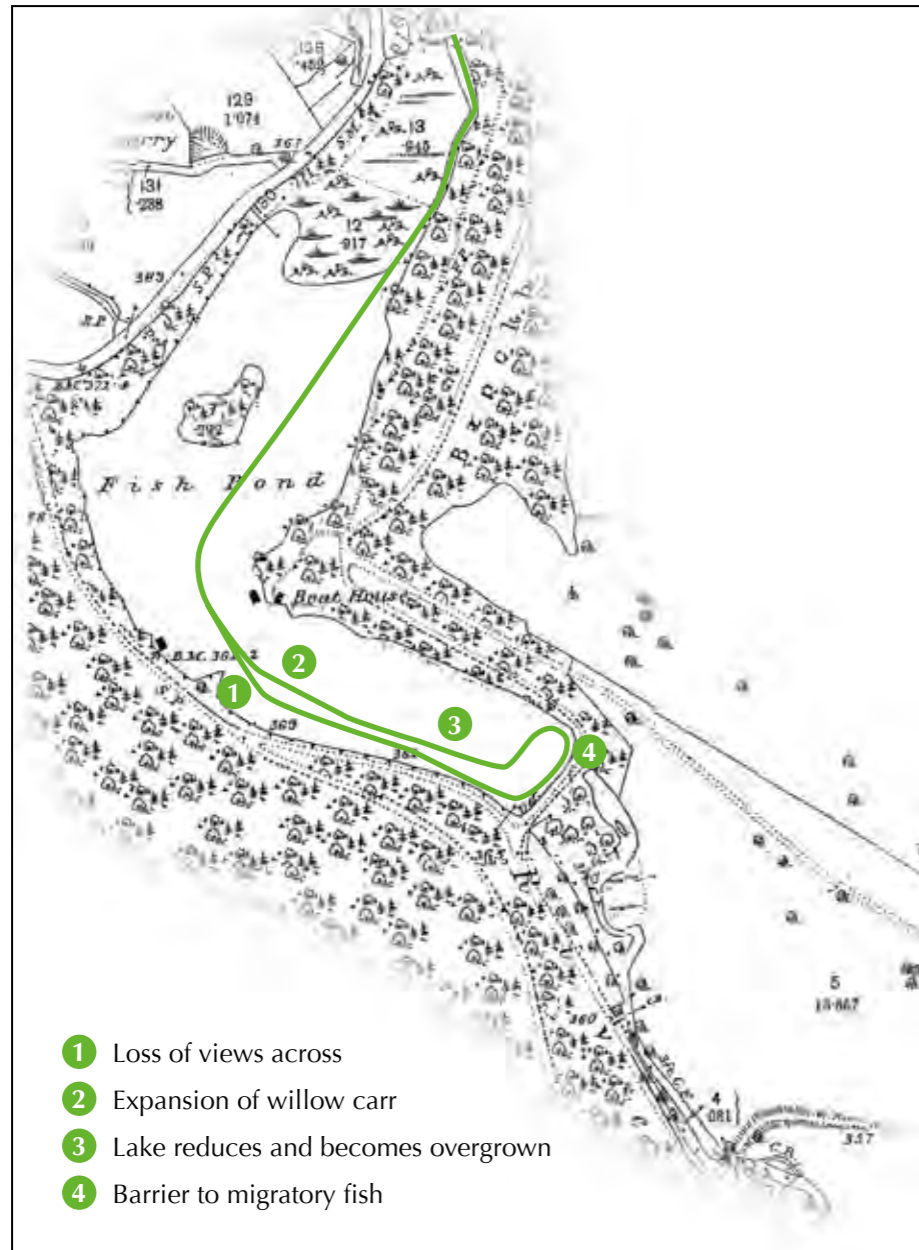
Drives and roads

- Conjectured route of road to Arlington House mapped in 1776 (partially remains as an earthwork)
- Conjectured route of c. 1800 drives to Arlington House (based on 1804-09 map evidence)
- Conjectured route of c. 1800 public roads around Arlington (based on 1804-09 map evidence)
- Pre 1840 drives (based on tithe map evidence)
- Loxhore Drive, prior to 1884

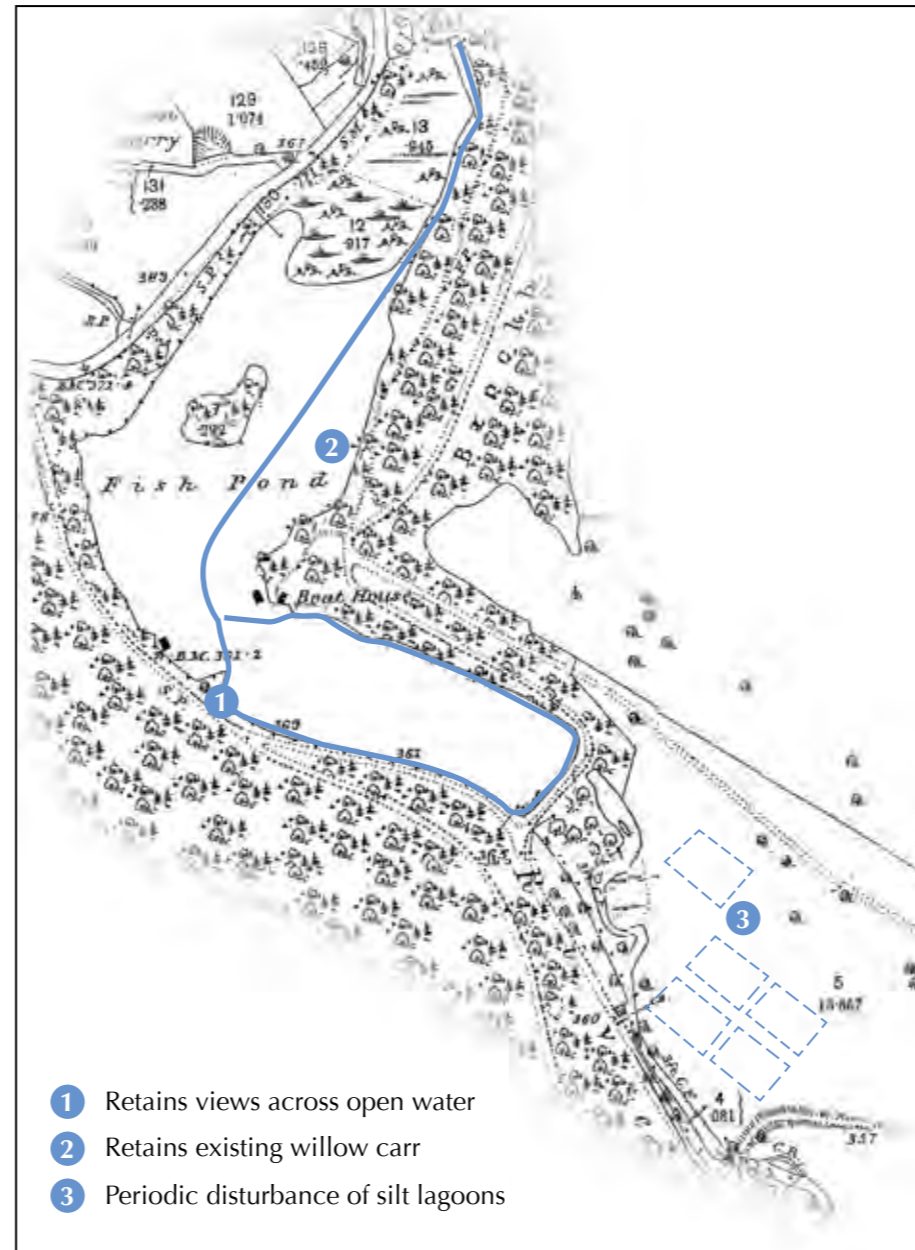
Designed views are shown on the Parkland Plan, appendix 9.

Arlington Court Parkland Plan
Figure 36: Historic Landscape Analysis

Option 1: Do nothing



Option 2: De-silt every 20 years



Option 3: Drawdown

