

## Appendix E

### Ancient and special trees in the Parish of Wooburn and Bourne End

Section 8.3. of the Neighbourhood Development Plan provides outlines of the Ancient Woodlands and Special Trees in the Parish, with links to Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Web sites, which also link to the Chilterns Woodland Project - see... [www.chilternsaonb.org/woodlands-project.html](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/woodlands-project.html)

This Appendix provides further details, mainly extracted from those sites for easy reference.

#### 1. Ancient Woodlands

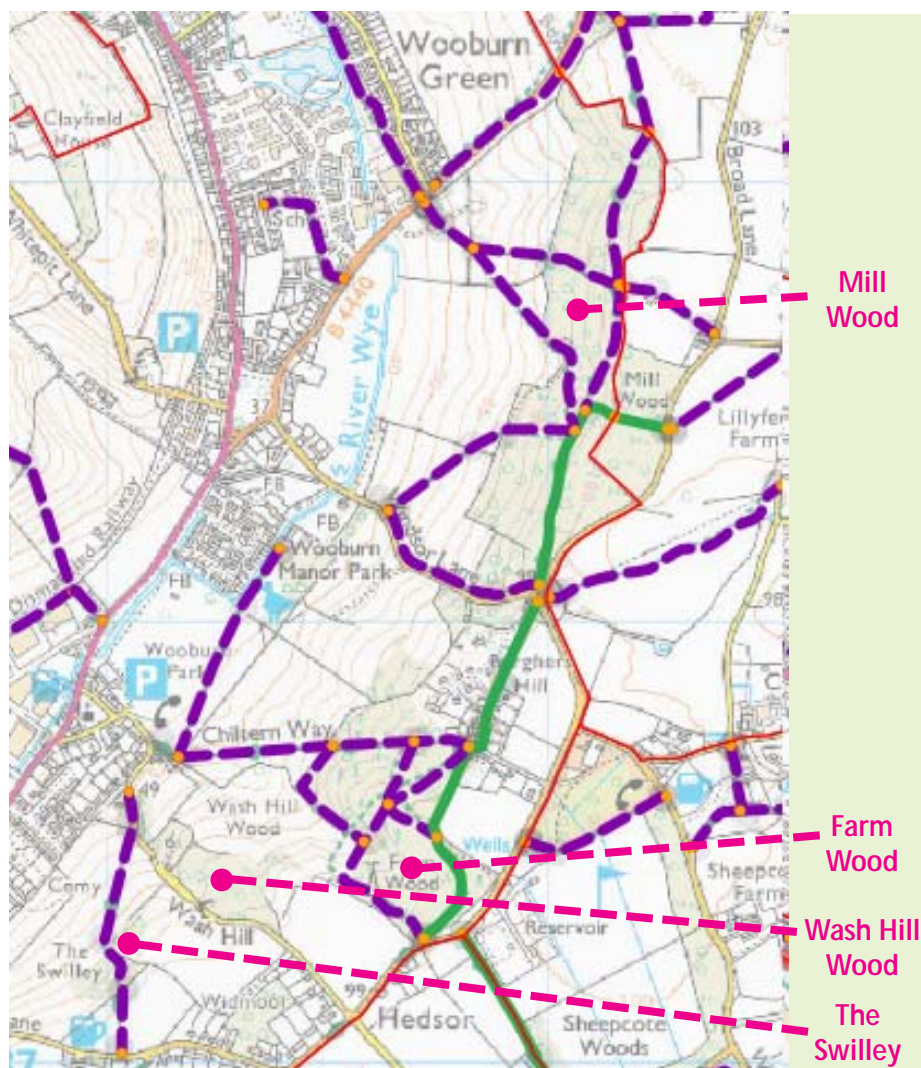
##### Definition

English Nature (now part of Natural England) defines ancient woodland as: "**An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD10 . Ancient woodland is divided into ancient semi natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites. Both types of stand are classed as ancient woods.**"

- Although a wood may have been cut, felled or coppiced since 1600, as long as the area has re-grown or been replanted shortly afterwards then it remains ancient. Ancient woodland therefore does not necessarily contain old trees.

##### Locations in the Parish

The Wycombe District Council's map of Ancient Woodlands, see page 2, is from a **Chiltern Woodlands Project** survey, showing the **four Ancient Woodlands** in our Parish in the South-West corner. 



##### How to find them

A WDC-edited extract from an Ordnance Survey map - see left - shows the location and coverage of the woods in more detail, with the registered **footpaths** and **bridleways - (Rights of Way)** - which run through three of them...

- Farm Wood
- Mill Wood ... and ...
- the Swilley.

These are all well used by both residents and visiting walkers.

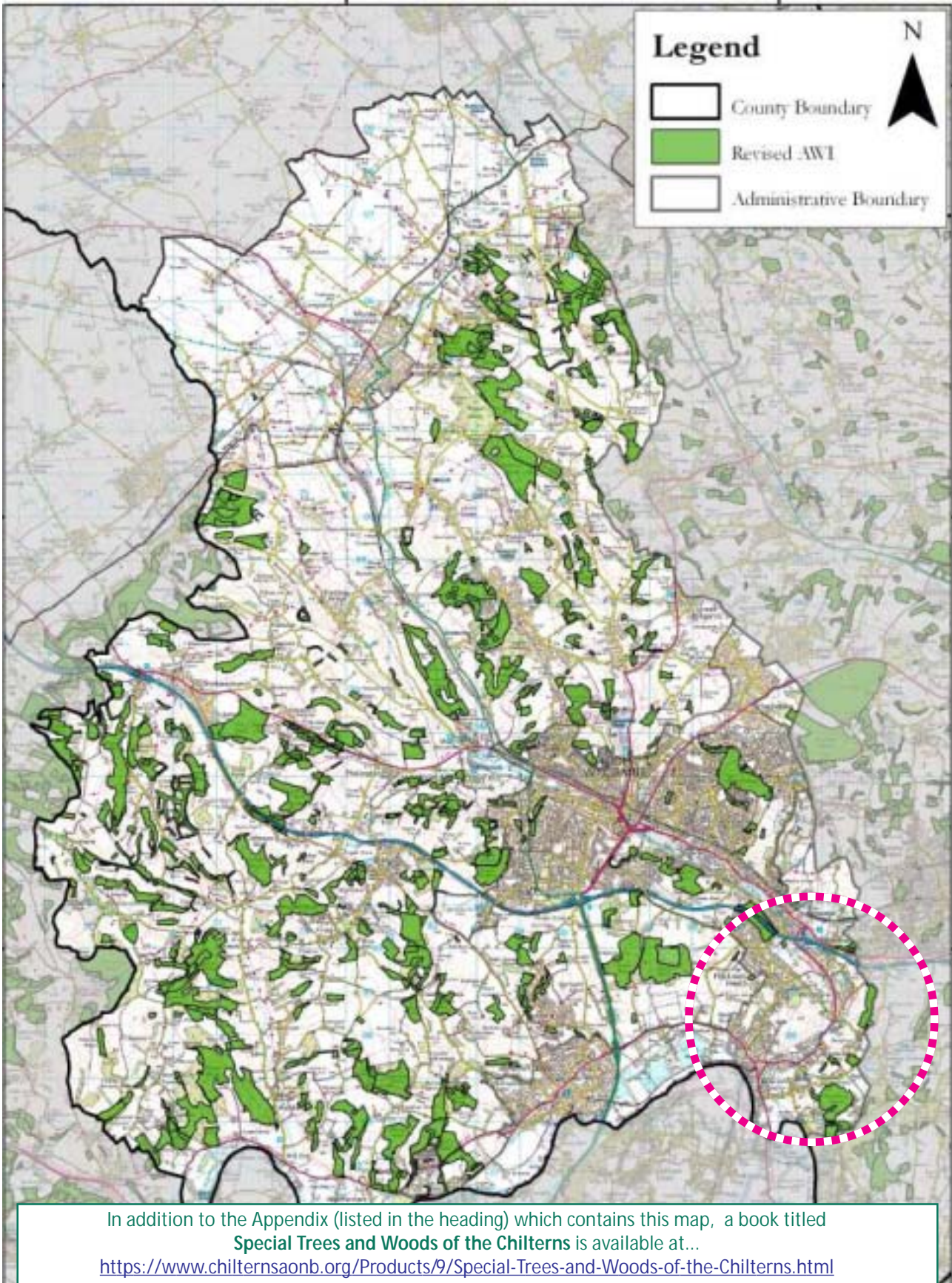
- Wash Hill Wood is privately owned with no registered Rights of Way.

As can be seen, the Parish has an extensive network of Rights of Way, with several other well used "link" paths not yet shown.



Map 2: The Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory for Wycombe District  
Ancient Woodland - Inventory for the Chilterns Appendix - Wycombe District - an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
CONSERVATION BOARD - WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

[http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/AboutTheChilterns/Woodlands/ANCIENT\\_WOODLAND\\_2012\\_APPENDIX\\_wycombe.pdf](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/AboutTheChilterns/Woodlands/ANCIENT_WOODLAND_2012_APPENDIX_wycombe.pdf)



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## 2. Special Trees

### In the Chilterns... and the Parish

The information which follows comes from [The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#) Web site, in which the Wooburn Parish is covered in...

[https://www.chilternsaonb.org/about-chilterns/woodlands/special-trees-woods.html#id\\_574](https://www.chilternsaonb.org/about-chilterns/woodlands/special-trees-woods.html#id_574)

Special trees and woods are found throughout the Chilterns - on village greens, local parks and commons and in the fields, hedges and woodlands of the wider countryside.

- The **Special Trees and Woods Project** ran for four and a half years. During this time a team of volunteers identified and recorded the special trees and woods in the Chilterns Natural Area, which includes all the AONB. The volunteers discovered where the trees are and researched the stories and social history behind them which make them special.

The Project's report on this Parish included...

#### 1. Palace Plane

This inspiring tree has a girth of 8.75m making it the largest London Plane in Buckinghamshire and the Chilterns.

- **As a 'champion', the biggest in Bucks, this tree is also listed by the Tree Register of the British Isles (TROBI).**

The tree gets its name from local history.

- The playing fields, and some of Wooburn Manor Park, are on the site of what was known as Wooburn Bishops Manor. A small Manor held by the Bishops of Lincoln, it reverted to the main Manor in 1547. One of the Bishops who held this "**Palace**" was a member of Henry VIII's privy council.
  - The tree post-dates the Bishops Manor which was actually demolished in 1750.

Other trees in the area still survive from this planting scheme.

This champion plane tree is cherished by its owners, Mr and Mrs Vinter who are pictured along with Liz Manley and special tree project volunteer, Janet Pullen.

- The tree is visible from Wooburn recreational ground - [see more photos on the next page](#).

#### 2. Other trees in the Parish

The **Project** identified a variety of other trees of note, which are listed briefly below. **(Photos are by Janet Pullen, a Project volunteer.)**

##### • Wooburn Manor Park Cedars

Standing at the heart of Wooburn Manor Park this beautiful blue atlas cedar (on the right) rises to 25m and has a girth of 5.2m.

Close by, on the open land where it grows, is a younger specimen which one day may replace the older tree. In the early days of telegraphy this handsome tree supported wires from the Manor to the outbuildings. An insulator can still be seen on its trunk.



Photo by David Alderman, TROBI  
(Tree Register of the British Isles)  
<https://treeregister.org/>



## More about the Palace Plane in Wooburn Manor Park



This ancient tree can be found at the south-western edge of Wooburn Manor Park, on the bank of the river Wye, in the garden of a private house.

In the top photo, it can be seen clearly from Wooburn Park, (which is named "Wooburn recreational ground" by the Special Trees and Woods Project), behind the Park's cricket pitch.

Although it towers above them, the Plane's base is obscured by other trees and bushes in front of it in the Park, precluding clear full height, single photos.



The other photo was taken from among the trees and bushes and show the Plane's trunk and lower branches, with the river Wye at its base.

The lower trunk no longer displays any "flaking bark" - a characteristic of Plane trees, but is covered in a mass of shoots.

However, flaking can be seen clearly on the higher level branches.

Local reports suggest that in the recent past, the Palace Plane needed attention which was arranged by the house owners.

Any residents who have further information about the Plane's recent history would be welcomed by the Clerk to the Council - please call... 01628522827

### A note on the Chestnut Trees in the Warren

Although not mentioned by the [Special Trees & Woods Project](#), another [Bucks CC](#) Web site states...

Warren Nature Reserve is a delightful place if you're looking for peace and quiet.... There used to be a **manor house** where the Warren is now. In 1648 it was owned by Philip the 4th Earl Wharton. He laid the park out with **Chestnut Trees either side of an avenue**, and you can still see the trees where the path is today. Flowing along the side of the reserve, the river Wye provides the perfect habitat for many British water birds... *and other wildlife* .... making their homes among the woodland trees. See more in...

<https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/service.page?id=iPo1NgCfoMU>

Today, there are numerous Chestnuts spread throughout the Warren.

- Some - notably two close to the Wooburn Manor Park gate to **Dalton's Path** - are very old and rival the Palace Plane in girth.



**Wooburn Manor Park Cedars - *continued...* Note:**

Along with the **Palace Plane**, the cedar may be part of the planting scheme undertaken 300 years ago by Thomas Marquis of Wharton, who was then the Lord of Wooburn Manor. The story goes that he set out to plant all the trees mentioned in the Bible.

Thomas was a wealthy and important man who spent £30,000 on the manor house and gardens at the beginning of the 18th Century. There are other trees to be seen here which might be part of this scheme.

- Sadly, if he actually fulfilled this ambition, most of the evidence was probably bull-dozed in 1963 when Wooburn Manor Park was built.

**Cut-leaved Walnut**

At 12m tall and with a girth of 1½m you might be forgiven for overlooking this treasure.

Experts date it as being the same age as the Palace Plane (300 years old) and a walnut is mentioned in the Bible.

Its importance lies in its rarity - there is no reference to another one on the web! This tree is in a private garden but can be seen from the roadside.



**Mulberry**

Another Biblical tree, this specimen is in the recreation ground behind the Palace Plane. It is a thriving example of the black mulberry tree, imported to the UK at the command of James I in 1608. He ordered 10,000 to be imported in the mistaken belief that they would form the basis of a home-grown silk industry. Sadly, silk worms only like white mulberry trees.

At only 7m tall and 1.4m round this tree is not exceptionally large, but it is fruitful.



**Poplars**

On the edge of the recreation ground, a little south-east of the plane tree, there are two poplars.

These white poplars are not as young as they seem and as poplars appear in the Bible they may have been part of the 18th Century scheme.

The story goes that these two are the re-grown stumps at the beginning of an avenue which went all the way to the church across what is now the cricket pitch and the recreational ground.



**Holly or Holm Oak**

This evergreen beauty is the sixth example of a tree which appears in the Bible. Holly Oaks do not grow as fast as plane trees so, with a girth of 3.5m, there may be no difference in age between the two.

This tree bears small pointy acorns and keeps its leaves throughout winter, shedding them when new ones come.

The tree dominates a back garden and is best viewed from Wooburn Mews.



- **Ancient Ash**

Probably the oldest tree in the area, this veteran has a girth of more than 5m and is 16m high.

Its position near a field boundary may have ensured its survival to date and it probably planted itself.

It looks like Enid Blyton's Magic Faraway Tree and as she lived in Bourne End for a while, who knows? It may have inspired her popular story.

- **Copper Beech**

Over-shadowed in majesty by the neighbouring cedar (see top), this is still a grand tree. Not a biblical tree, and probably not as old as the cedar, it was planted nearer the manor house by a later generation.

It grows in a private garden but is best viewed from a short distance away.

- **Giant Redwood or Wellingtonia**

This is the tallest of them all in Wooburn. It was planted later than the Biblical trees and is actually in a private garden on Manor Gardens but it can be seen from most parts of Wooburn Manor Gardens.

The name Wellingtonia was given to it when it was first imported, in 1853, in honour of the Duke who had recently died. This Wooburn tree also has a telegraph wire holder embedded in its trunk.

- **Great Ginkgo**

This exotic tree species is known as a living fossil as it existed 270 million years ago. Now, the Ginkgo biloba is very much an endangered species, as there are thought to be none growing in the wild.

These trees are dioecious, with different trees having male or female flowers. This specimen, next to the gate at Dalton's Path, is a very good size, being 12m high with a girth of 2.23m and it is female which is rarer than the male.

- Males are deliberately selected to eliminate the problems associated with Ginkgo fruit - they are extremely smelly and have been likened to "a sewage works on a hot day"! Fruit production varies from year to year and in September 2007 special trees volunteer, Janet, could find only one, small marble-sized fruit to confirm the sex. As well as its 'fragrant' fruit, the ginkgo also produces glorious yellow leaves in the autumn.

Female trees can fruit within 50 years but males do not produce flowers for 150 years, so the chances of the fruit on this tree being fertile is very low indeed (unless you know of a male Ginkgo nearby, more than 150 years old).

There are many medicinal uses of this tree. The ginkgo is not mentioned in the Bible so doesn't fit as part of the biblical planting supposedly done in the area - though some say it might actually be the "Tree of Life", it certainly has wicked fruit!

- **Ginkgos are regarded in Japan as 'the bearers of hope' because four of them, growing within 2km of Hiroshima, not only survived the 1945 atomic bomb but live on. Later re-building has been moulded around them.**



Giant Redwood



Ginkgo