



Northamptonshire
County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

**Archaeological Walkover Survey
at Wardley Wood
Rutland
April 2008**



Carol Simmonds

April 2008

Report 08/86

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OASIS REPORT FORM

| PROJECT DETAILS | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Project name | Archaeological Walkover Survey at Wardley Wood, Rutland | |
| Short description | In April 2008, Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by the Forestry Commission to carry out a walkover survey in Wardley Wood, Rutland. A number of features were noted, including a well-preserved mound, a series of woodland earthworks, drainage ditches, and an area of ridge and furrow. | |
| Project type | Walkover Earthwork Survey | |
| Site status | None | |
| Previous work | Walkover survey (Hartley 2005) | |
| Current land use | Woodland (mixed) | |
| Future work | Unknown | |
| Monument type/ period | Undated mound and linear earthworks, medieval to post-medieval woodland and coppice boundaries, ridge and furrow and woodland drainage | |
| Significant finds | N/A | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | | |
| County | Rutland | |
| Site address | Wardley Wood, near Uppingham, Rutland | |
| Study area | 65ha | |
| OS Easting & Northing | 484000 299980 | |
| Height OD | 85m-155m | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | |
| Organisation | Northamptonshire Archaeology | |
| Project brief originator | Forestry Commission | |
| Project Design originator | | |
| Supervisor | Carol Simmonds | |
| Project Manager | Adam Yates Northamptonshire Archaeology | |
| Sponsor or funding body | Forestry Commission | |
| PROJECT DATE | | |
| Start date | 21/4/08 | |
| End date | 24/4/08 | |
| ARCHIVES | Location | Content |
| Physical | N/A | N/A |
| Paper | OAKRM:2008.46 | 1 archive box of site records and hard copy of report |
| Digital | OAKRM:2008.46 | Digital Adobe 'pdf' of report, 1 CD of digital photographs |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report | |
| Title | Walkover Survey at Wardley Wood, Rutland | |
| Serial title & volume | Report 08/86 | |
| Author(s) | C Simmonds | |
| Page numbers | 7 text, 7 figs, 4 plates | |
| Date | May 2008 | |

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION..... 1

2 OBJECTIVES 1

3 BACKGROUND 2

4 METHODOLOGY..... 3

5 ASSESSMENT OF GROUND CONDITIONS 3

6 WALKOVER SURVEY RESULTS..... 3

7 DISCUSSION 5

BIBLIOGRAPHY 7

Tables

Table 1: Coppice Enclosure measurements

Appendices

Appendix 1: Historic Environment Record data

Appendix 2: Listed Buildings

Figures

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Site topography, 1:15,000

Fig 3: Historic Environment Record (HER) data, 1:15,000

Fig 4: Detail of 1st edition 1887 Rutland Ordnance Survey map

Fig 5: Survey visibility, 1:7500

Fig 6: Survey results, 1:5000

Fig 7: Mound F7, linear bank F10 and ridge and furrow, 1:1500

Plates

Cover: General view of Wardley Wood from the north-west

Plate 1: General shot of Wardley Wood, with coppice enclosure 1 on the left, looking south-east

Plate 2: General shot of Wardley Wood with coppice enclosure 3 on the right, looking south-west

Plate 3: Woodland boundary with stream, in sub-compartment b BE?AH?RC?~65/65/65/~, looking south

Plate 4: Ridge and furrow, looking north-west

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WALKOVER SURVEY
AT WARDLEY WOOD,
RUTLAND
APRIL 2008**

Abstract

In April 2008, Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by the Forestry Commission to carry out a walkover survey in Wardley Wood, Rutland. A number of features were noted, including a well-preserved mound, a series of woodland earthworks, drainage ditches, and an area of ridge and furrow.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by the Forestry Commission to undertake a walkover survey encompassing 65ha at Wardley Wood, Rutland (Fig 1; site centred on NGR 484000 299980). The site is situated on undulating ground west of the town of Uppingham.

The woodland is managed by the Forestry Commission and is divided into several stock management compartments and sub compartments defined by rides, tracks or fencelines. It was once part of the historic Rutland or Leighfield Forest.

2 OBJECTIVES

The overall objective, as defined by the Forestry Commission Northamptonshire Forest District, was to aid and inform the Commission's long term management of Northamptonshire Forest District woodlands through a programme of rapid documentary research and field survey. This included the identification of the location, extent, nature, importance and management requirements of visible archaeological and historic remains.

The specific objectives were:

- to provide a survey of all archaeological sites within Wardley Wood
- to interpret these features within their local, regional and national context
- to accurately map the location and extent of the remains
- to provide recommendations for the future preservation and management of significant remains.

3 BACKGROUND

Topography and geology

Wardley Wood is located to the south of the A47, approximately 2.5km west of Uppingham and 0.8km to the east of the village of Wardley, Rutland.

The wood is situated on the south and south-east facing slope of a small tributary valley which leads into the principal valley of the Eye Brook to the south-west (Fig 2). A small stream skirts along the south-east edge of the wood and flows into Eye Brook

The ground descends from *c* 155m at the northern edge of the wood to *c* 100m to the south-east, where the tributary stream flows along the edge of the wood, and *c* 85m south-west, where the wood extends towards Eye Brook.

The geology of the area comprises Lias Clays and Oolite limestones (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

Previous archaeological work

An archaeological walkover survey, undertaken in 2005, identified a number of archaeological features including ridge and furrow from medieval field cultivation and a possible fishpond in the north of the woodland (Hartley 2005).

Historic Environment Data

A baseline survey of the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) with Listed Buildings and digital copies of early Ordnance Survey mapping was undertaken (Figs 3 and 4). Sites located within a radius of 1.5km from the centre of the wood were requested.

A survey of the available digital versions of early Ordnance Survey mapping indicated the number of tracks and rides or possible drains in the woodland (Fig 4). No earlier archaeological sites are noted on the map.

The HER data and listed building designations include 39 sites and six buildings ranging from prehistoric find spots and features to medieval and later village earthworks (Appendices 1 and 2; Fig 3). No sites were identified within the survey area.

The area surrounding Wardley Wood is rich in archaeology from the prehistoric period onwards. There are concentrated areas of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint scatters (MLE65019, 7100, 7297, 92, 93, 96). Prehistoric features include two potential Bronze Age ring ditches or barrows on high ground to the north of the wood (MLE5869/70) and a potential Iron Age enclosure to the south, near King's Hill Lodge (MLE69271). The only recorded Roman activity in the area was two find spots located around the village of Wardley (MLE8127/8).

From the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods there are find spots, earthwork remains, cropmark and documentary sources. These detail the historic village core and closes of Wardley, windmill mounds, fishponds, the church and a hermitage. In the 12th century a motte and bailey castle (Uppingham Castle, MLE5047) was constructed on a ridge of high ground approximately 400m north-east of Wardley Wood (Fig 3). It was reportedly constructed during the civil war between Stephen (reigned 1135-1154) and Matilda. In the 13th century the tenants of the manor of Wardley were granted trees and deer from the Forest of Leighfield (Page 1935). Deer were probably stocked in parks such as the royal hunting park at Uppingham and the baronial park at Ridlington (MLE5049, MLE5659). The sole record for the modern era dates from the Cold War,

with an underground monitoring post near King's Hill Lodge (MLE16014).

4 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological walkover survey was undertaken in April 2008 to allow for suitable visibility of the woodland landscape prior to late spring and summer growth. Surveying conditions were generally fair, although there were areas of impaired visibility due to heavy undergrowth or impassable ground (Fig 5).

The methodology for the walkover survey followed the general technique developed for the Salcey Forest Survey and other woodland surveys in Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Peterborough and Milton Keynes (Hall 1996, 2001; Simco 2003).

Each section of the woodland, as defined by present ridings, paths or woodland stock management areas, was walked in transects of approximately 50m intervals. Earthworks and other features were sketch plotted and located onto a series of base maps, with an indication as to preservation and condition. Where possible and where earthworks were identified the full outline was measured and plotted.

A qualitative record of the tree and vegetation cover of each section was made by allocating each section to one of four categories- 'good', 'fair', 'poor' and 'not surveyed' as undergrowth was so thick that walking was impossible. This indicated where the undergrowth was so thick that walking was impossible, and also recording 'good', 'fair' and 'poor' categories (Fig 5).

General photographs of each woodland area and potential features were taken using a digital camera from a variety of directions. A record of photographs taken was entered on a cross-referenced index sheet.

5 ASSESSMENT OF GROUND CONDITIONS

In general, the surveying conditions were fair to good with mixed surface visibility (Fig 5). An area comprising 13.30ha in the centre of the survey area was not recorded due to the presence of stock fencing and dense undergrowth. In particular, part of compartment 1001 was impossible to survey for these reasons. As the Forestry Commission continues to clear and manage the woodland, it is likely that the areas which were not surveyed may be looked at in the future.

6 WALKOVER SURVEY RESULTS

The survey indicates the presence of various topographic features including natural valleys in the centre of the wood, with streams draining water into the tributary stream and the Eye Brook. The ground slopes away from the north with the bulk of the survey area on an area of level ground to the south and west. Towards the southern and eastern boundaries the surface began to slope down on a more gradual incline.

A woodland boundary defined by a bank and/or ditch, encloses the entire site (Fig 5). Its overall condition is good with well-defined earthworks particularly along its south-

western corner where there is a deeply-cut stream. Elsewhere along its northern boundary a bank delineates the extent.

A network of rides and tracks and associated drainage ditches divide the wood and are listed where pertinent.

Mound

A sub-circular mound was recorded in compartment 1002 (F7; Figs 6 and 7). It is aligned north-south and measures 23.5m long by 21.0m wide by 1.0m high. The mound has a clearly defined gradual slope and a flat top and is located on a ridge of high ground between two natural valleys. It overlooks a tributary of the Eye Brook to the south-west.

Linear features

Eight linear features were recorded in the woodland (F1-4, F6, F8 and F10-11, Fig 6). With the exception of F1 and F11 they do not appear to enclose or define areas but may indicate remnants of earlier field or coppice systems and later drainage.

Feature 1 (F1), is located in the south-western corner of the wood and is a curvilinear ditch measuring 3m wide and 0.30m deep with a total length of 200m. It projects south-east to north-west and then curves round to the east, enclosing an area of approximately 1.7ha. It was not seen in the overgrown area to the east.

Feature 2 (F2), located in the east of the wood, is a well defined linear bank aligned north to south. It measures 40m long by 3m wide by 0.30m high.

Feature 3 (F3) is a curvilinear bank by overlooking a small valley with a stream and measures 80m long by 3m wide and 0.30m high.

Feature 4 (F4) is a linear bank measuring 20m long by 4m wide and 0.20m high.

Feature 6 (F6) is a curvilinear bank measuring 40m long by 2m wide and 0.30m high.

Feature 8 (F8) is a linear bank measuring 50m long by 2m wide and 0.20m high.

Feature 10 (F10) is a linear bank, aligned north-west to south-east and measuring 250m long by 3m wide and 0.40m high. To the south lies an area of ridge and furrow and it is possible that F10 was a medieval field boundary as the ridge and furrow respect it.

Feature 11 (F11) is a bank and ditch measuring approximately 224m long and 6m wide. It is aligned south-east to north-west and turns to the north-east approximately 153m along its line. The shallow ditch is located to the west of the bank. The bank is cut to the south by the ditch for coppice enclosure 2.

Other features

Two features (F5 and F9) located in the northern part of compartment 1002 are depressions on level ground between slopes.

Feature 5 (F5) is a sub-circular depression which measures 20m in diameter and 1m deep. It is located on a narrow ridge of level ground between slopes. No associated earthworks were recorded adjacent to the feature.

Feature 9 (F9) is a sub-ovoid depression measuring 13m by 11m and 0.75m deep. It is located on a broad ridge of level ground between slopes. No associated earthworks were recorded adjacent to the feature.

Ridge and furrow

Ridge and furrow had been identified during a previous survey (Hartley 2005). In general terms, the strips are aligned north-west to south-east and are spaced roughly 3m apart (Fig 7 & Plate 4). Their condition was judged to be very good.

Coppice earthworks

Seven coppice bank and ditch earthworks were recorded during the survey (Plates 1 & 2). Within the woodland boundary are an extensive set of coppice enclosures, defined by ditches and banks (C1-C7; Fig 6). Unless otherwise stated, the ditch is on the outside of the enclosure with the bank immediately within it. On average the ditches have a gradual to steeply-sloped profile with a sharp break of slope and are between 0.5m-2.0m wide. The banks have rounded profiles and average between 2m and 3m wide. Coppice Enclosures 1 and 2 are located in the north-eastern end of the wood in compartment 1002. Coppice Enclosures 3-7 are located in the middle and south-western part of the wood in compartment 1001.

Table 1: Coppice Enclosure measurements

| Coppice Enclosure no. | Area enclosed (ha) | Length (metres) | Width (metres) | Overall condition | Comments |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|---|
| 1 | 12.40 | 500 | 240 | good | Only ditch along south-eastern boundary |
| 2 | 17.41 | 470 | 187 | good | |
| 3 | 4.5 | 200 | 330 | good | |
| 4 | 3.7 | 400 | 140 | fair | |
| 5 | 11.25 | 400 | 270 | fair | |
| 6 | 4.8 | 390 | 180 | fair | Only ditch along eastern boundary |
| 7 | 7 | 350 | 280 | fair | Only ditch along eastern boundary |

Woodland drainage

In general, the woodland drainage system respected the natural topography or defines rides or tracks (Plate 3).

7 DISCUSSION

Survey results

The walkover survey at Wardley Wood identified a relative chronology for the area, with earlier earthworks, comprising linear features and a sub-circular mound, existing prior to the establishment of the current woodland. No absolute dating was possible.

The mound located in the eastern part of the wood has not been recorded before and its location on high ground overlooking a valley may indicate a prehistoric barrow similar to those recorded in the HER to the north of the A47. It could be ascribed to having

regional importance, at least in terms of its excellent preservation and clearly defined nature (standing to a height of 1m).

The function and date of the majority of the linear features are unknown although some, such as feature 11, may represent earlier boundaries of the coppice enclosures. Feature 1 to the south may represent an earlier field boundary which has not been recorded in cropmark data. Of the two depressions in the north of the woodland, one had been identified by Hartley (2005) as a possible medieval fishpond. However, it is also likely that they may represent tree throw hollows left when trees uprooted and decayed. As there is uncertainty over the function and true extent over many of these features it is difficult to ascribe importance to them. If the hollows are fishponds then they would certainly be of local importance in terms of the local medieval manor and the management of land within the medieval forest.

An area of ridge and furrow was defined by a series of linear south-east to north-west aligned banks. Ridge and furrow earthworks, as part of the open field system, can often represent the most tangible sign of the medieval landscape, simply because they can be the most visible and extensive in terms of current survival. There are no known examples within the vicinity (*c* 1.5km) of the woodland. Its presence within the woodland indicated that at some point during the medieval period this part of the woodland had been farmland.

The woodland boundary is likely to be of importance to the local and regional landscape in terms of how the land was defined/managed within the Forest of Leighfield.

Of the coppice enclosures it is likely that they post-date the medieval ridge and furrow and are pertinent to the understanding of how the local woodland landscape evolved and was managed in the post-medieval and modern periods.

Further work

Recommendations for further work comprise a mixture of further earthwork survey, documentary survey and investigative work. The fact that not all of the woodland was accessible should be borne in mind. If circumstances allow, walkover survey of the areas which were not surveyed could be undertaken.

Of interest is the sub-circular mound located to the east of the wood and the possible fishponds or tree hollows located on the sloping ground to the north. The mound would benefit from further detailed survey given its excellent state of preservation. The depressions to the north may require more intrusive work as well as documentary survey of any manorial or forest records indicating the location of fishponds within the woodland.

An indication as to when the woodland was created and managed could be achieved if a thorough archive search comprising map regression was undertaken. This would help to understand how the local manor related to the medieval forest.

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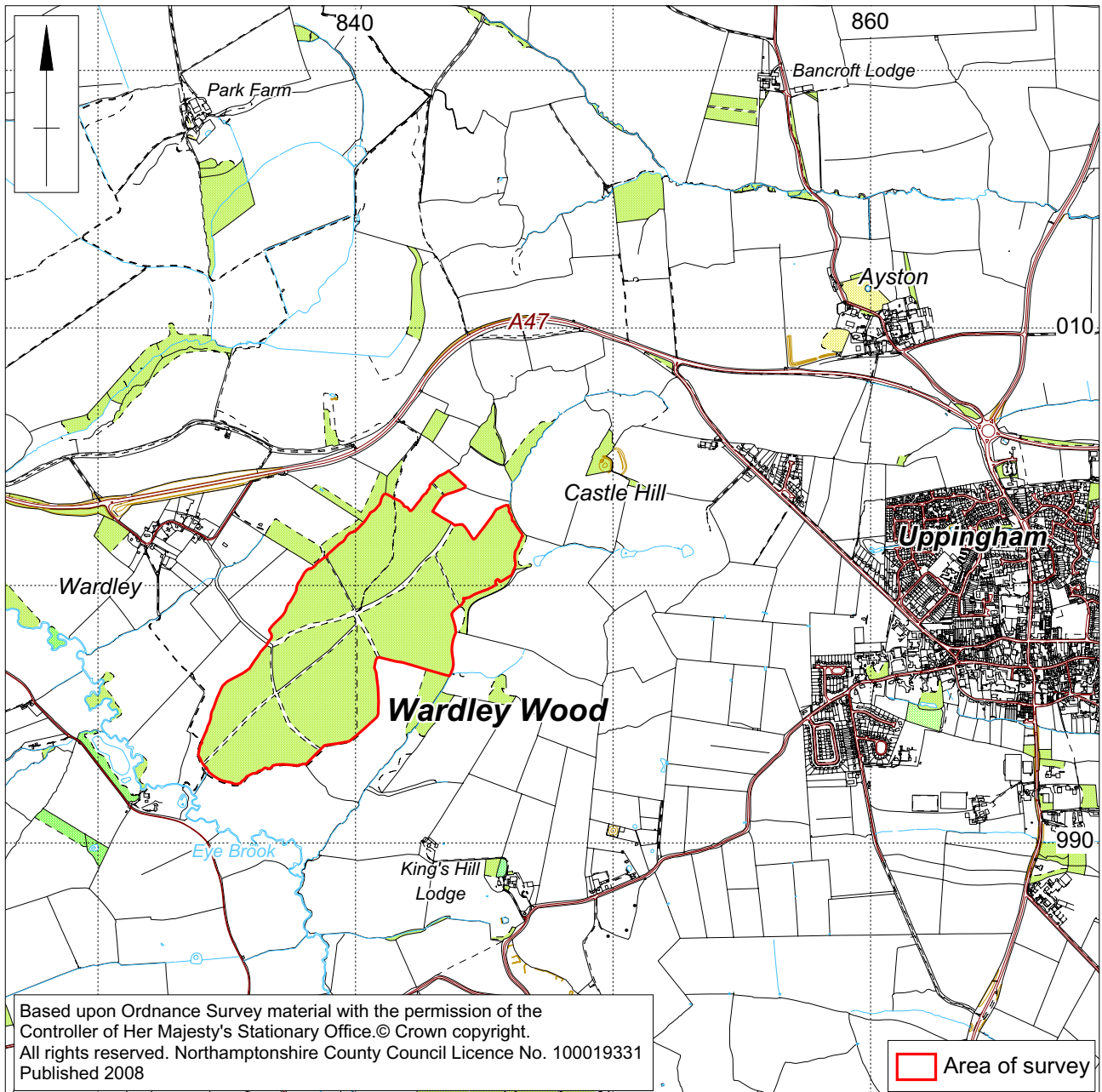
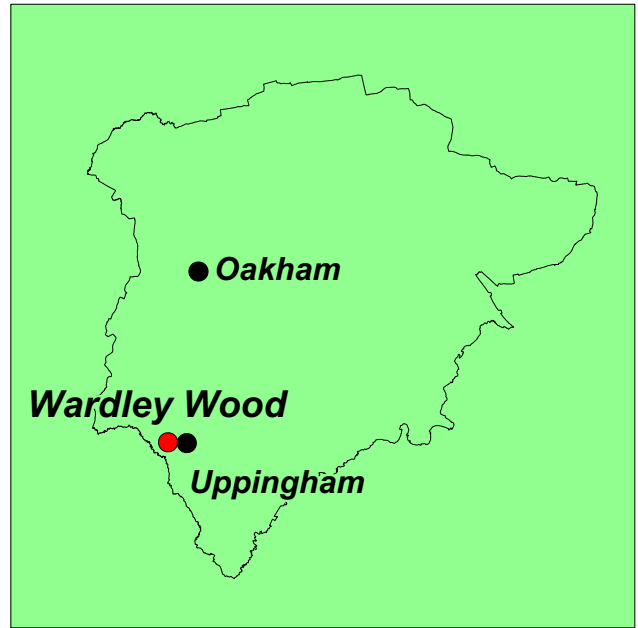
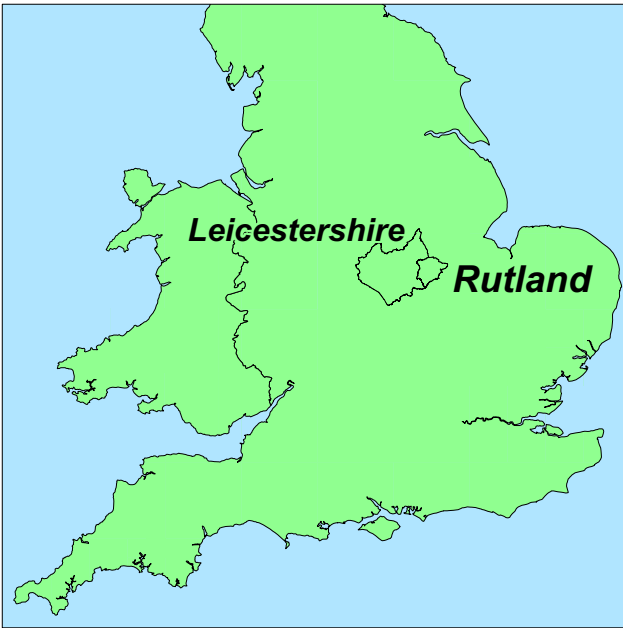
Appendix 1: Historic Environment Record data

| ID | Name | Type | Period | easting | northing | Grade |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| MLE5017 | North-west of Castle Hill | mound, windmill | medieval to post-medieval | 484500 | 301100 | |
| MLE5019 | OS plot 6200 | flint scatter | Mesolithic | 484500 | 301000 | |
| MLE5047 | Uppingham Castle, Castle Hill | motte and bailey | medieval | 484900 | 300400 | SAM 17011 |
| MLE5049 | Uppingham Park | deer park | medieval | 484000 | 299000 | |
| MLE5659 | Ridlington Park | deer park | medieval to post-medieval | 483600 | 301800 | |
| MLE5668 | south south-east of Quakers Spinney | fishpond | medieval to post-medieval | 483700 | 300900 | |
| MLE5844 | south of Gower Lodge | wall | undated | 485000 | 300500 | |
| MLE5867 | north of the Church | village closes- earthworks | medieval | 483200 | 300300 | |
| MLE5868 | "Chappell Close" | hermitage | medieval | 483700 | 300500 | |
| MLE5869 | north-west of Castle Hill | round barrow? | Bronze Age | 484200 | 300800 | |
| MLE5870 | north-west of Castle Hill | ring ditch | Bronze Age | 484300 | 300900 | |
| MLE5871 | St. Botolph's Church | Church | medieval | 483100 | 300100 | |
| MLE5872 | west north-west of the Church | metal working site | unknown | 482800 | 300200 | |
| MLE5973 | west north-west of the Church | findspot | medieval | 482800 | 300200 | |
| MLE6248 | north-west of the Church | findspot | middle Anglo-Saxon | 483050 | 300170 | |
| MLE6428 | west north-west of the Church | findspot | Early Bronze Age | 482800 | 300200 | |
| MLE6963 | north-west of the Church | findspot | medieval | 483100 | 300200 | |
| MLE6964 | north-west of the Church | findspot | medieval | 483100 | 300300 | |

| ID | Name | Type | Period | easting | northing | Grade |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| MLE7100 | Uppingham Castle Golf Course | flint scatter | Mesolithic | 484700 | 300100 | |
| MLE7297 | OS plot 6200 | flint scatter | Early Neolithic | 484500 | 301000 | |
| MLE7638 | Uppingham Castle Golf Course | findspot | prehistoric | 484700 | 300100 | |
| MLE7655 | west north-west of the Church | findspot | prehistoric | 482800 | 300200 | |
| MLE8127 | north-west of the Church | findspot | Roman | 483100 | 300100 | |
| MLE8128 | north-west of the Church | findspot | Roman | 483100 | 300300 | |
| MLE8276 | OS plot 6200 | findspot | unknown | 484500 | 301000 | |
| MLE9271 | south-east of King's Hill Lodge | cropmark enclosure | Iron Age? | 484800 | 298600 | |
| MLE9337 | south of King's Hill Lodge | metal working site | unknown | 484500 | 298600 | |
| MLE9752 | north of the Church | village closes- earthworks | medieval | 483200 | 300200 | |
| MLE9753 | west of the village | findspot | Anglo-Saxon | 482700 | 300000 | |
| MLE9754 | west of the village | findspot | early medieval | 482800 | 300000 | |
| MLE9755 | west of the village | findspot | post-medieval | 482800 | 300000 | |
| MLE9756 | Wardley | village core | medieval | 483200 | 300200 | |
| MLE16014 | north of Stockerston Road | underground monitoring post | modern | 485000 | 299000 | |
| MLE16790 | north of Stockerston Road | findspot | prehistoric | 484000 | 298500 | |
| MLE16791 | south of Stockerston Road | metal working site | medieval | 484700 | 298600 | |
| MLE16792 | south of Stockerston Road | lithic scatter | prehistoric | 484700 | 298600 | |
| MLE16793 | north of Stockerston Road | lithic scatter | prehistoric | 484400 | 298500 | |
| MLE16794 | north of Stockerston Road | artefact scatter | medieval | 484400 | 298600 | |
| MLE16796 | north of Stockerston Road | flint scatter | prehistoric | 484800 | 299000 | |

Appendix 2: Listed Building

| Designated ID | Type | Name | Grade | Easting | Northing |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| DLE6622 | Listed Building | Beaumont Chase Farmhouse | II | 484561 | 298844 |
| DLE5941 | Listed Building | Church of St Botolph | II* | 483192 | 300193 |
| DLE6566 | Listed Building | Farmhouse | II | 483348 | 300271 |
| DLE5399 | Listed Building | Graveyard memorial at Church of St Botolph | II | 483178 | 300186 |
| DLE5400 | Listed Building | Main Street | II | 483227 | 300233 |
| DLE5943 | Listed Building | Main Street | II | 483214 | 300154 |

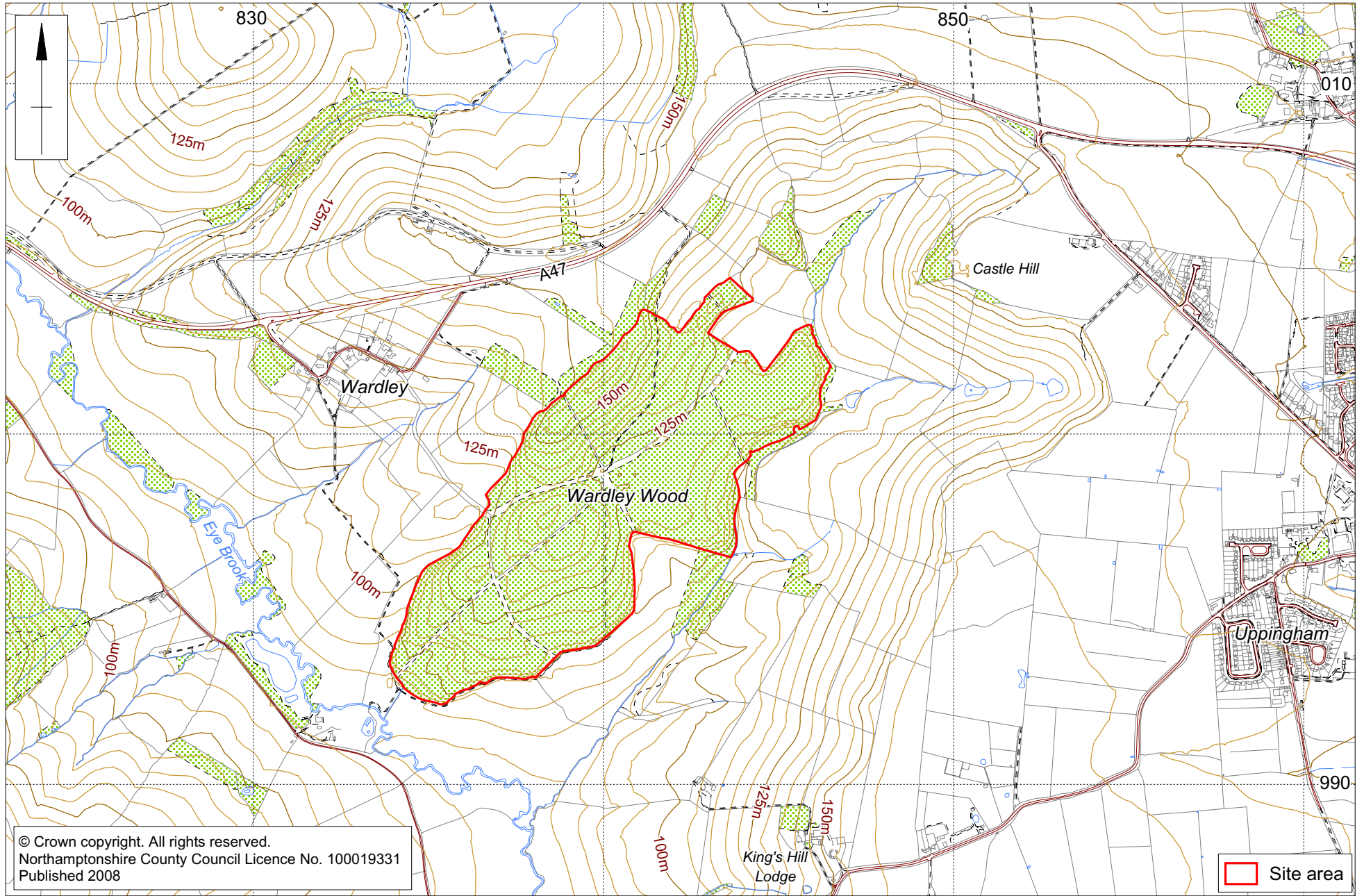


Scale 1:25,000

Site location Fig 1

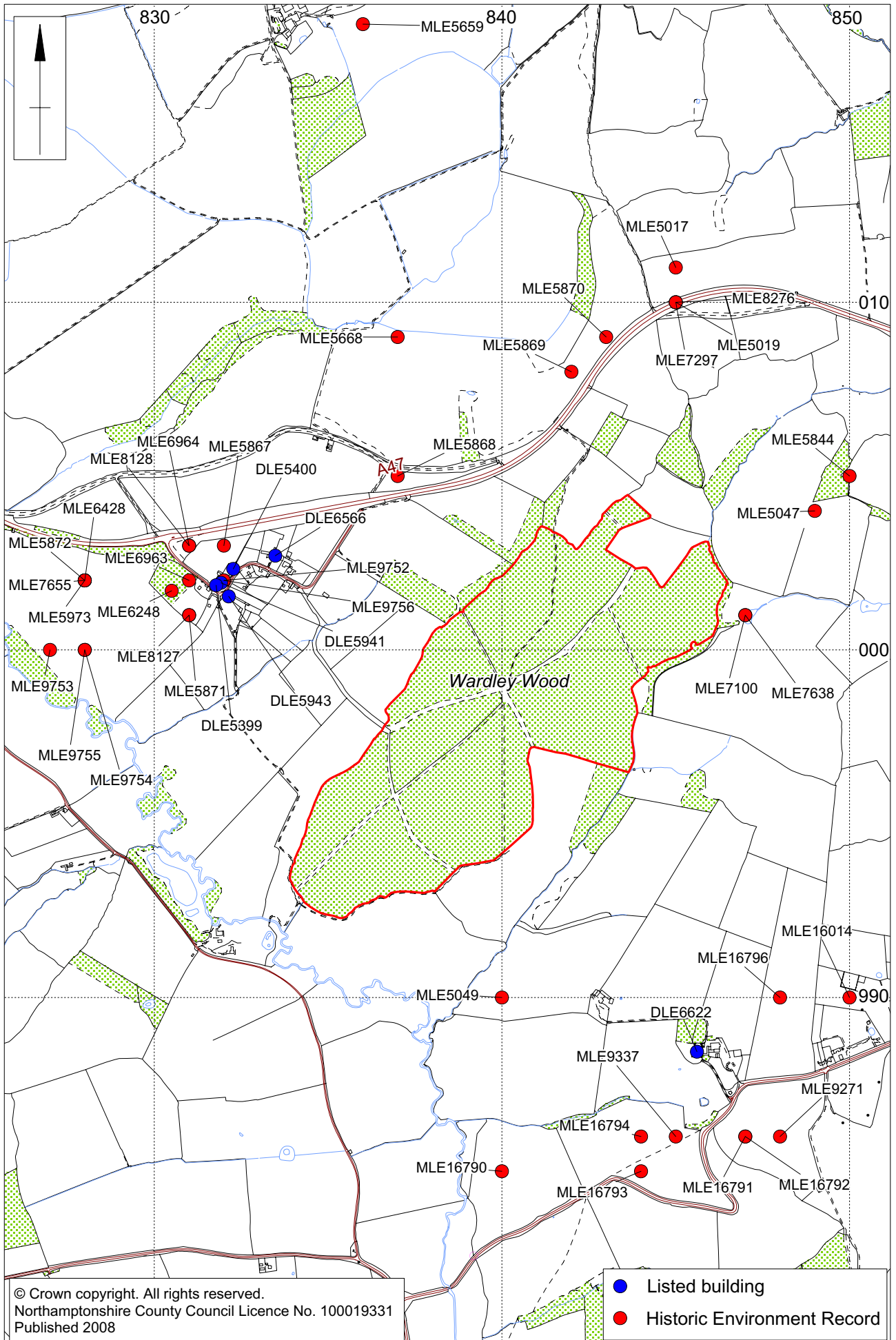
Scale 1:15,000

Site topography
Fig 2



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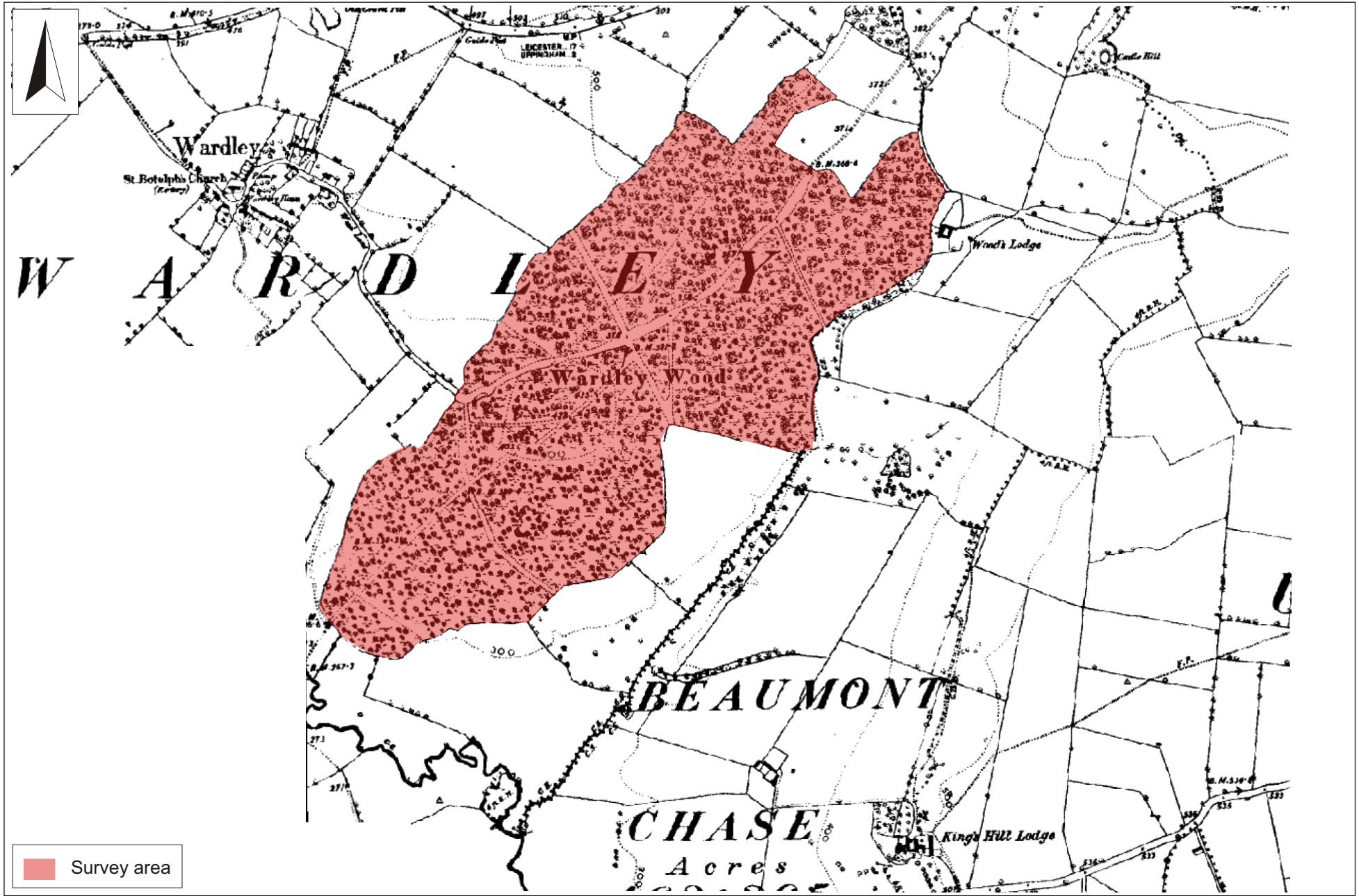
Site area



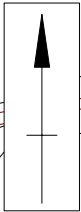
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Historic Environment Record (HER) sites Fig 3

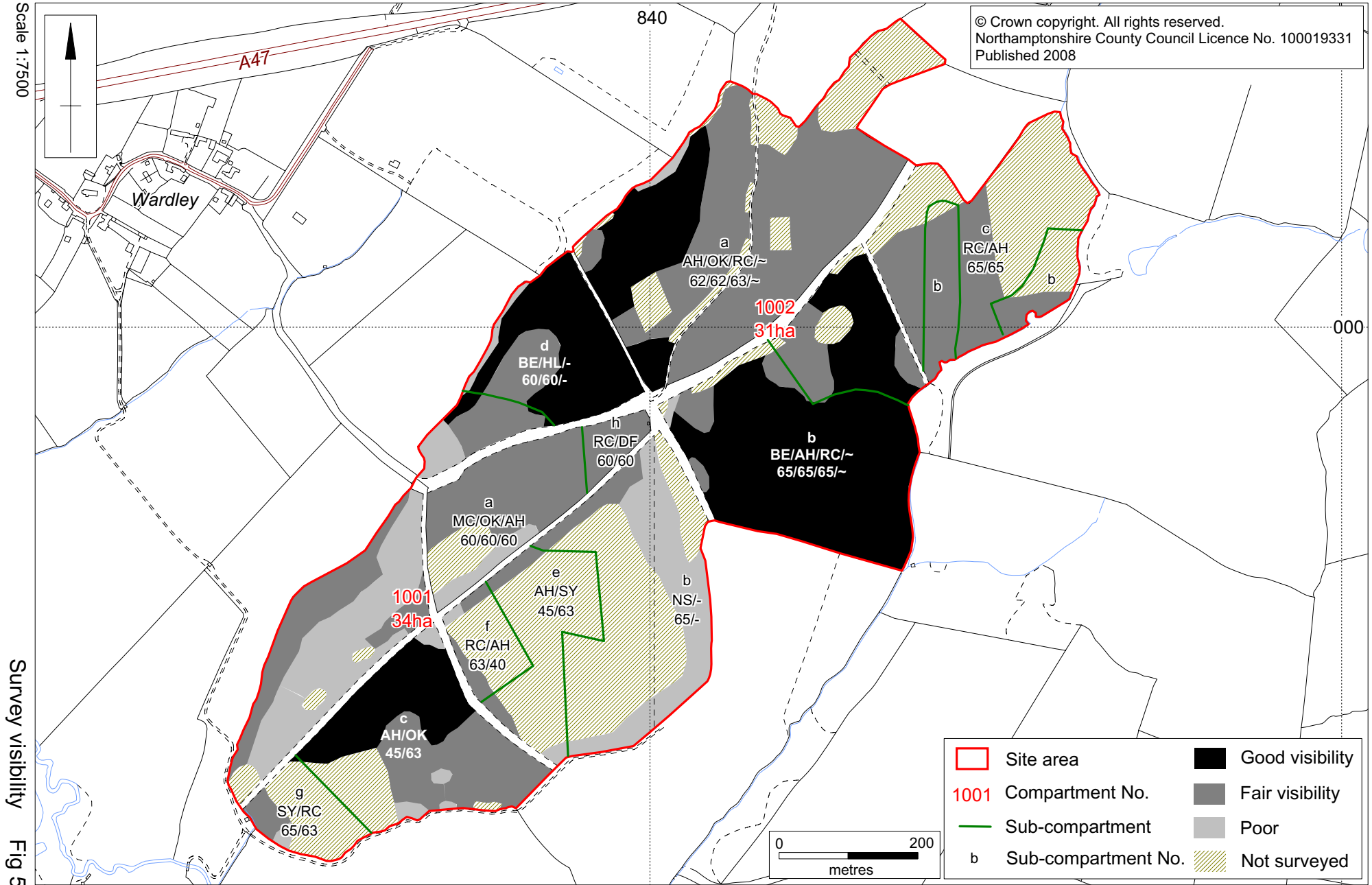
Detail of 1st edition 1887 Rutland Ordnance Survey map Fig 4



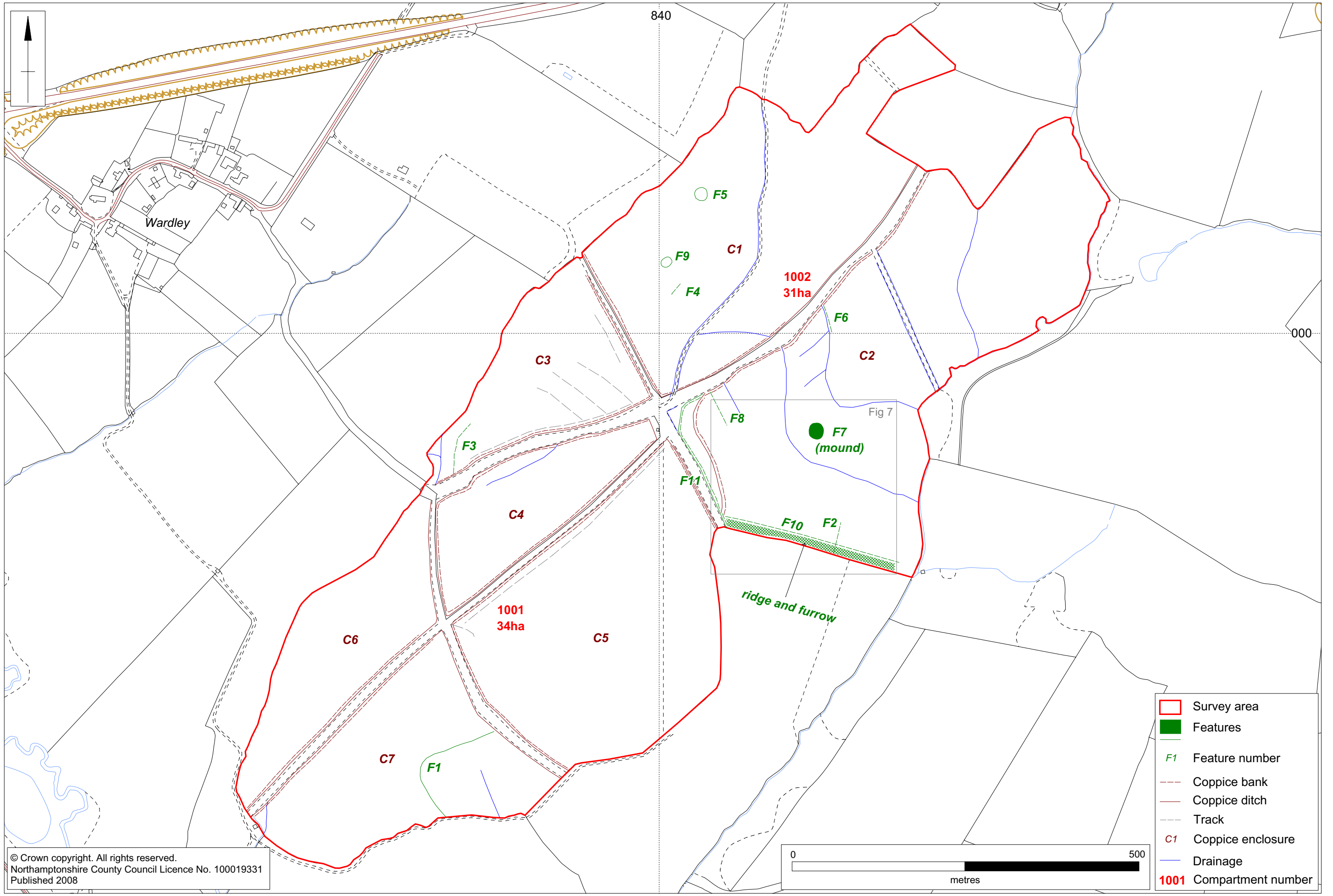
Scale 1:7500



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Survey visibility Fig 5



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Scale 1:5000

- Survey area
- Features
- F1 Feature number
- Coppice bank
- Coppice ditch
- Track
- C1 Coppice enclosure
- Drainage
- 1001 Compartment number

Survey results Fig 6

Scale 1:1500

Mound F7, linear bank F10 and ridge and furrow

Fig 7

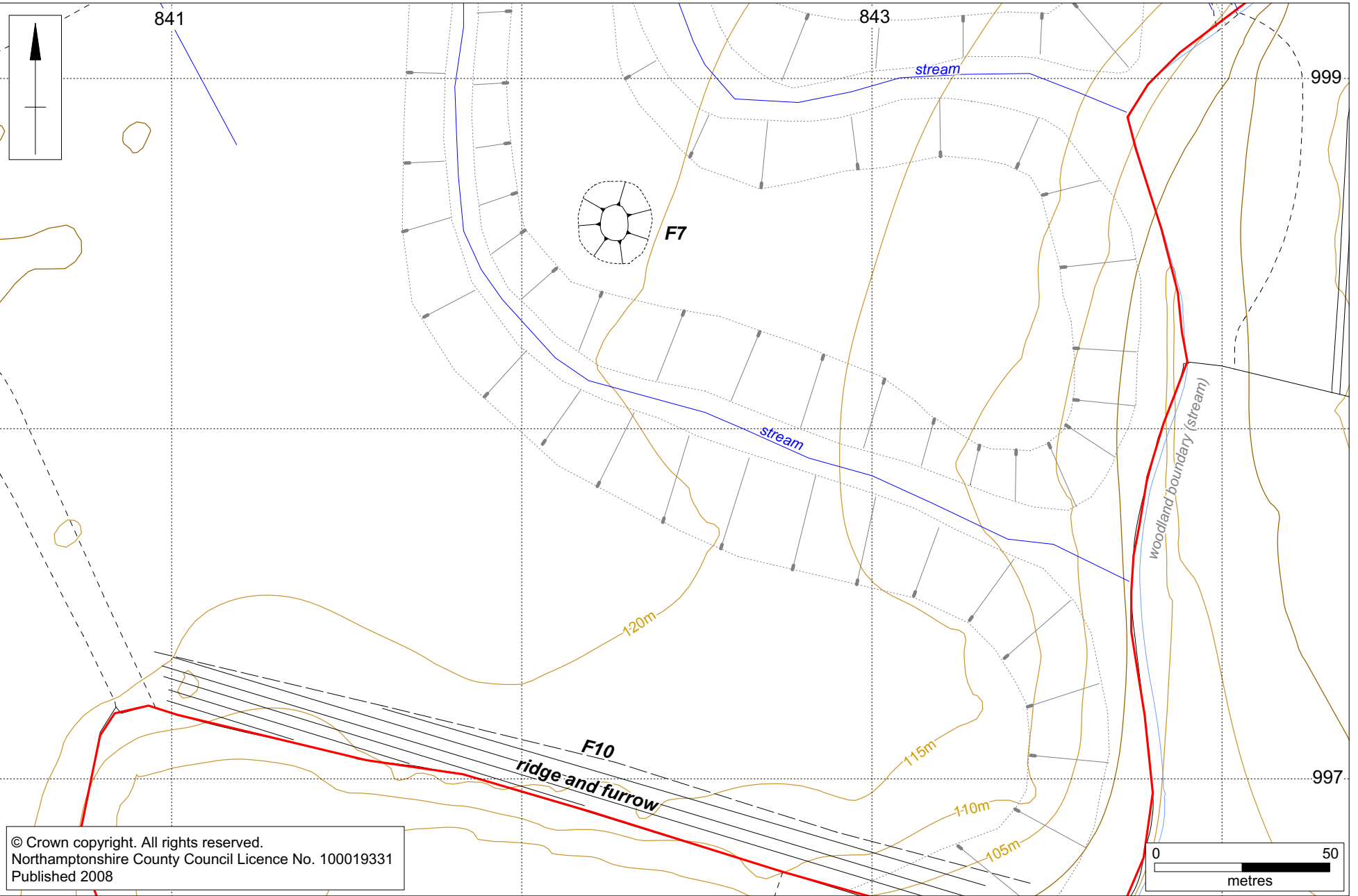




Plate 1: General shot of Wardley Wood, with coppice enclosure 1 on the left, looking south-east



Plate 2: General shot of Wardley Wood with coppice enclosure 3 on the right, looking south-west



Plate 3: Woodland boundary with stream, in sub-compartment *b* BE/AH/RC/~ 65/65/65/~, looking south



Plate 4: Ridge and furrow, looking north-west