

# TECHNICAL NOTE

<b>DATE:</b>	04 January 2022	<b>CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	Public
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	University of Kent, Canterbury Campus Ancient Woodland Research		
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## INTRODUCTION

WSP has been appointed by the University of Kent to provide transport and environmental advice for the development of proposals on land at their Canterbury Campus that has been identified as being surplus to requirement.

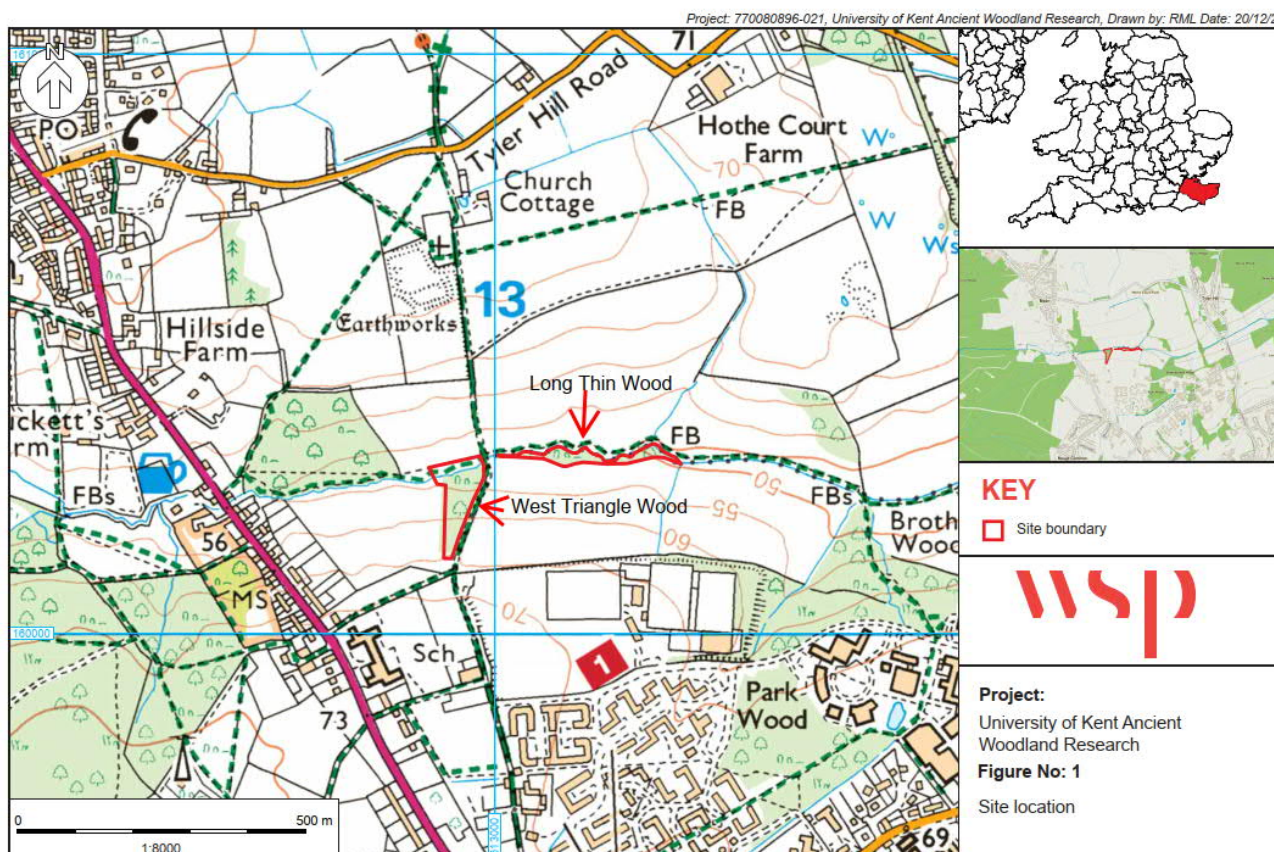
Disposal Sites BCD lie to the immediate north of the University Campus with vehicular access currently provided from Tyler Hill Road, a rural single carriageway road that connects Blean and the A290 in the west with Tyler Hill and Canterbury Hill in the east.

This Technical Note provides a summary of historic maps research carried out with regard to the possible ancient woodland ('the site') to the north of the University of Kent's Canterbury Campus. This note has been prepared to sit alongside further arboriculture work being undertaken that is scheduled to be complete in January/February 2022.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research were to establish, if possible, whether a couple of small woods ('the site') to the north of the University of Kent's Canterbury Campus have existed since at least AD1600 and would therefore meet the definition of Ancient Woodland.

The woods in question are shown within the redline site boundary on **Figure 1** below. The area in the west that has a north-south axis is known as West Triangle Wood whilst the area in the east, which is aligned with the watercourse is referred to as Long Thin Wood.



## SCOPE

The historic maps research comprised consulting three record offices/libraries:

- The National Archive in Kew;
- The Kent History and Library Centre in Maidstone; and
- The Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library.

The online catalogues for each of these record offices was consulted to identify relevant historic mapping pre-dating the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6":mile map of 1873 (relevant Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition to the present day had already been obtained from Groundsure for the Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Constraints and Opportunities Appraisal produced by WSP for the University of Kent in May 2021). The archives were then visited by a member of the WSP Cultural Heritage & Archaeology team in December 2021. During these visits, relevant sections of early historic maps of the area were photographed to try to establish how long the woods in question have been in existence (or rather how long woodland has been in that same location). The Ordnance Survey First Series 1":mile map for Canterbury, surveyed in 1789–99, was also consulted online at <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk>.

Note: Most detailed maps do not go back as early as 1600. While the very first Ordnance Survey mapping (the First Series) was published in around 1801, most 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps were not published until the 1860s–1880s. Other than tithe maps (1830s/40s) and, where they exist, inclosure maps (generally late 18th century/early 19th century) most earlier maps are usually not detailed enough to show individual woods or not accurate enough to locate an individual wood.

The following detailed maps were examined as part of this research:

- Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition to the present day (Groundsure);
- Tithe map of Saints Cosmus and Damian in the Blean parish, 1838 (National Archive ref: IR/30/17/93);
- Canterbury and Whitstable Railway map, 3 May 1830 (Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, ref: CCA – 10/2266 L/W.1);
- Ordnance Survey First Series 1":mile map of Canterbury, surveyed in 1798–99 (<https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk>);
- A map of the Hundreds of Westgate, Whitstable, Blengate and Preston, in E Halstead, 1797, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Volume 3* (Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, ref: DA 1001.K4);
- Andrews, Drury and Herbert topographical map of the County of Kent, 1769 (Kent History and Library Centre, ref: EK/U20)';
- Map of Kent c 1625 (Kent History and Library Centre, ref: U442/P105).

During the course of this research, however, additional avenues of research were identified which might warrant further investigation at a later date:

- Original research documents relating to the ancient woodlands of the Blean was recently deposited at the Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, but not yet catalogued. This may contain information of relevance, but our researcher estimates that it could take another two days at the archive to investigate them all;
- Blean Heritage & Community Group, 2009, *The Blean: Canterbury and Swale's Ancient Woodlands*; and
- A Wheaton, 1999, *Ancient Woodlands of the Blean – the Blean Project 1998/1999*.

The latter two publications are available at the Canterbury Library (local studies collection) which could be considered as part of further review.

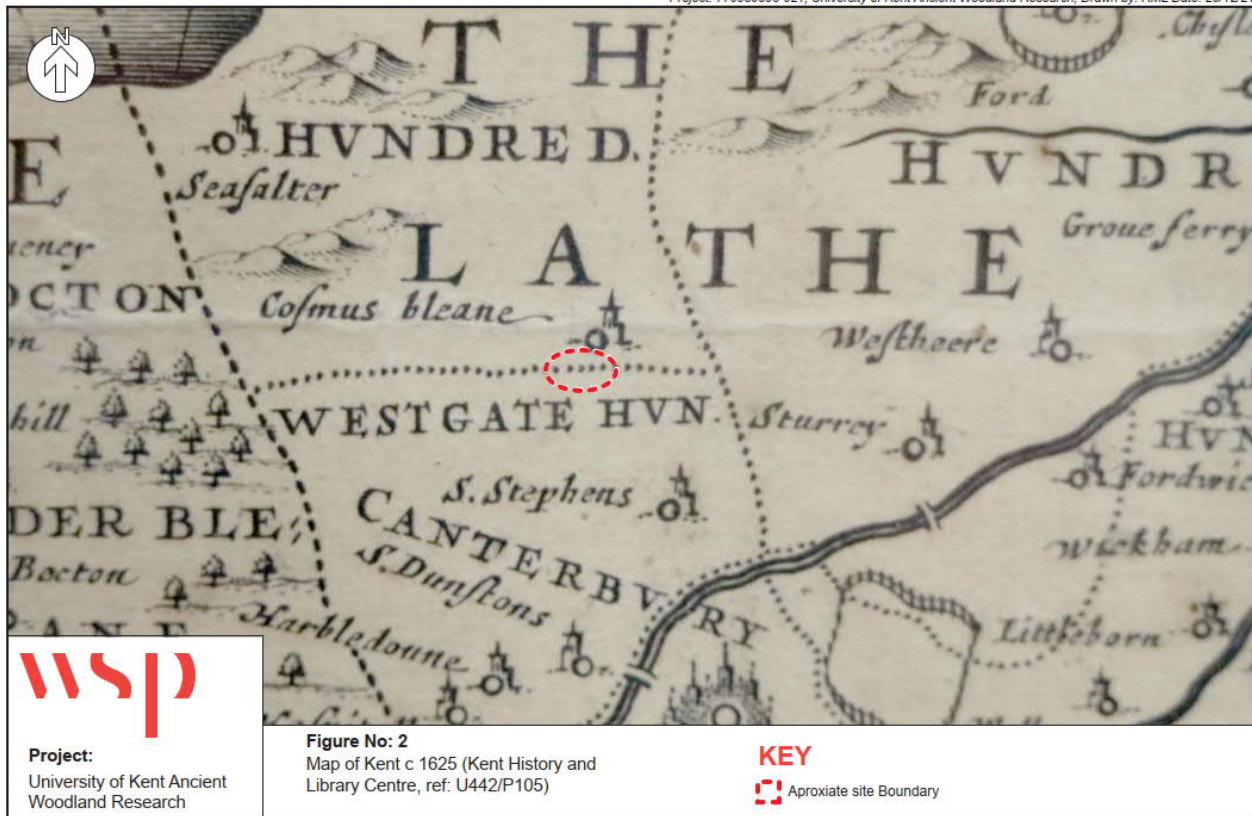
## KEY FINDINGS

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The earliest map consulted was a map of Kent dated to around 1625 (**Figure 2**). This is not a very detailed map, however, and nor is it drawn to scale. It clearly shows the Church of St Cosmus and St Damien (simply named 'Cosmus bleane' on the map) to the north of Canterbury and well as the divisions between the different hundreds<sup>1</sup>. The later 1769 map of Kent by Andrews, Drury and Herbert (**Figure 3**) shows that the existing stream which bounds the eastern part of the site and runs through the western part of the site marked the boundary between the Whitstable Hundred, to the north, and the Westgate Hundred to the south. No indication of any woodland is shown in this location, however; the only woodland indicated being to the west, within the Bocton under Bleane Hundred, where large areas of woodland still exist (to the west of the A290). However, this does not necessarily mean that woodland did not exist within the site; it may simply be that it was not thought large enough to be worthy of mapping.

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<sup>1</sup> A unit of English local government and taxation, intermediate between village and shire



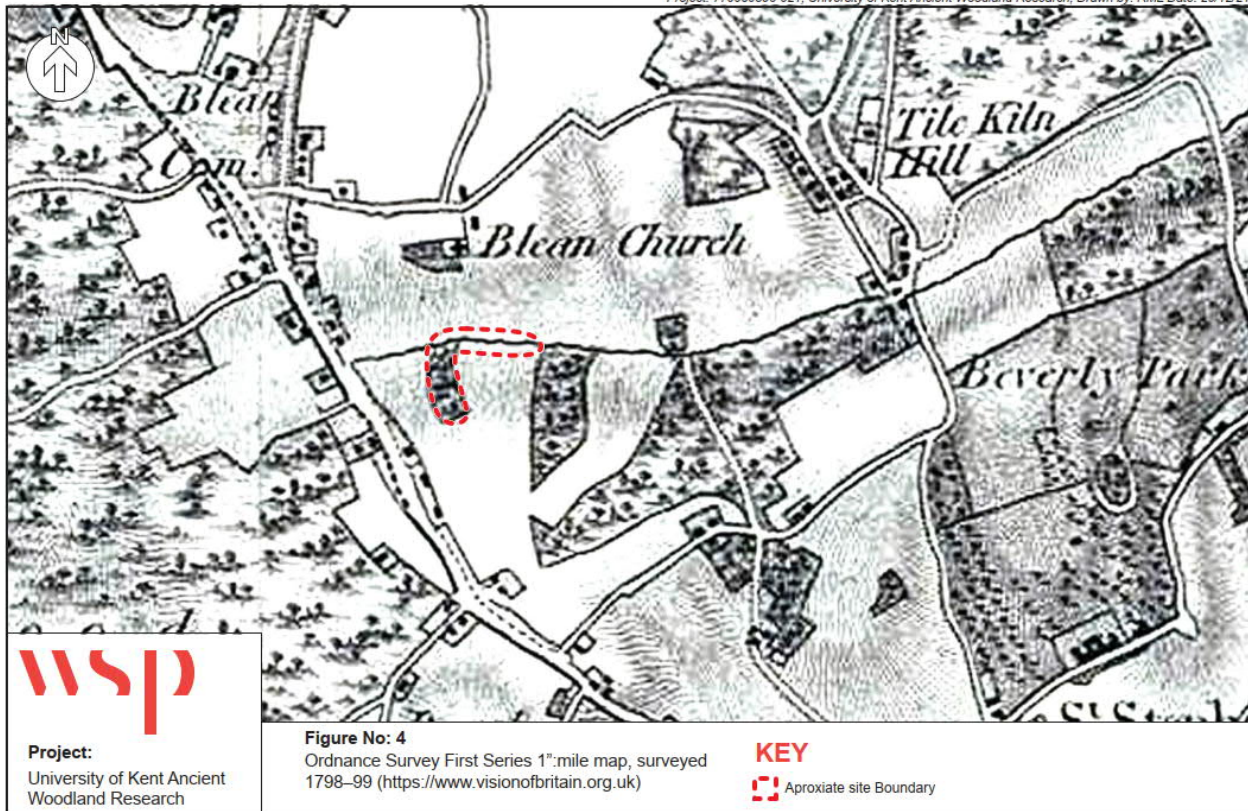
No further detailed maps of the site and surrounding area were identified until the late 18th century. The rather more detailed 1769 map of Kent by Andrews, Drury and Herbert (**Figure 3**) enables one to pinpoint the approximate location of the site more closely since it shows the stream which runs adjacent the north edge of the eastern part of the site and through the western part of the site.





By the Ordnance Survey First Series 1":mile map which was surveyed in 1798–99 (**Figure 4**), a rectangular piece of woodland is shown in the rough location of West Triangle Wood, and it seems likely that they are one and the same wood, even if the shape of the wood has changed a little since then. However, there is still no woodland shown in the eastern part of the site (Long Thin Wood) which suggests that no woodland was present in that location.

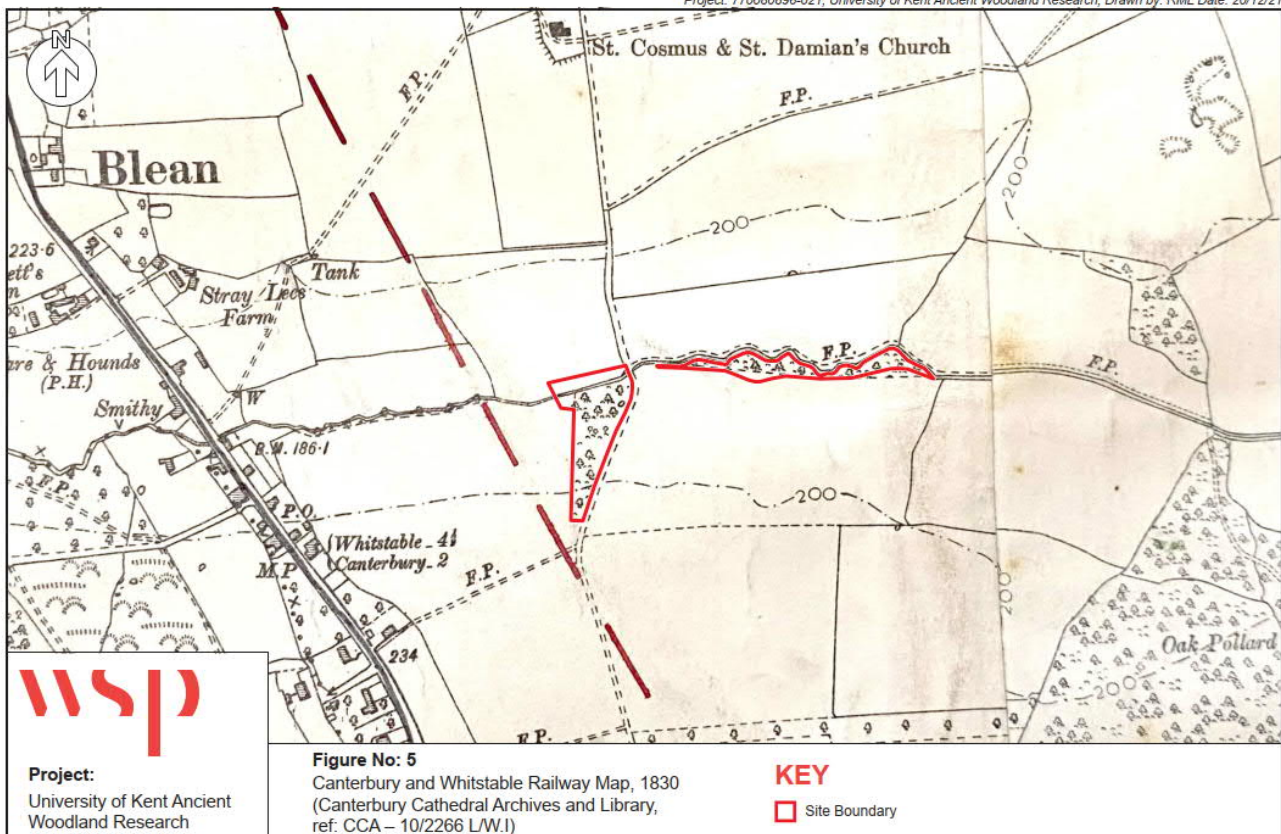
Like the 1625 map of Kent (**Figure 2**), though, no woodland is shown in this location. The existing large area of woodland to the west of the present A290 is still shown, as is a smaller area of woodland approximately 200m to the north-east of the site. The same is true of the slightly later map of the hundreds of Westgate, Whitstable, Blengate and Preston in 1797 (not reproduced).



By the 1830 map of the Canterbury & Whitstable Railway (**Figure 5**) both Long Thin Wood and West Triangle Wood within the site are clearly shown, though the area they now cover is slightly larger than it is depicted on this map and on subsequent mapping up to and including the Blean tithe map of 1838 (not reproduced) and the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 scale map of 2010 (not reproduced). West Triangle Wood today extends slightly further north and west, such that the stream now runs through the northern part of this wood rather than adjacent to the northern edge as it does in the 1830 map, while Long Thin Wood now extends slightly further south in one small area.

By the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 scale map of 2021 (not reproduced) the two woods within the site have reached their current extent.





## CONCLUSIONS

Based on this historic mapping research it seems highly likely that the existing woodland on the eastern side of the site (Long Thin Wood) was not present before the early 19th century as it is not shown on the Ordnance Survey First Series 1":mile map of 1798–99 (**Figure 4**). On the same map, there does appear to be a wood in the location of West Triangle Wood. None of the earlier mapping shows Long Thin Wood but this does not absolutely rule out the earlier presence of this wood, since it is possible that it was not large enough to warrant reproduction. The date at which this wood was first established is therefore not certain.

In conclusion, this review has not identified information that would confirm the presence of woodland in the location of Long Thin Wood since 1600AD (the definition of ancient woodland).