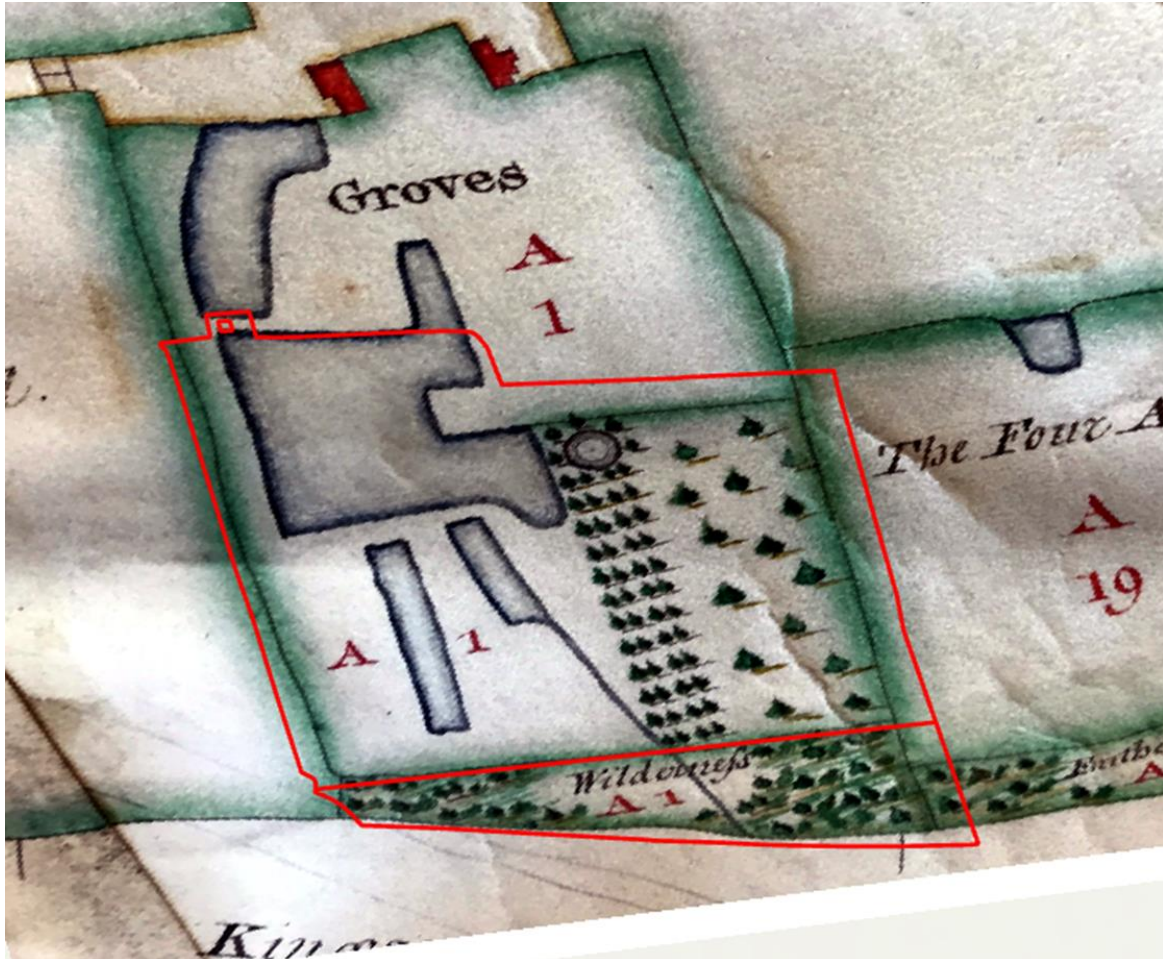


The Wilderness, South Ockendon, Essex, grid ref: TQ5998883931, Evidence Review 14/11/23.

Dr Marion Bryant Woodland and Trees Specialist and Clare Durose Geospatial Information Analyst, Natural England.

Map evidence: Please note that the maps are copyrighted and only used here for the purposes of evidencing the ancient woodland inventory and should not be reproduced without permission.

Key: the red outline overlay on the maps shows current woodland extent.



The survey map of the estate of John Goodere dated 1767 Essex Records Office Ref [D/DBE](#):

“Shows woodlands (*likely the wilderness to the south*), layout of gardens (*Likely the scattered tree section*) (including 'The Long Walk' (*likely the plantation section*) and ornamental lakes at 'Groves'), 'South Ockendon Green', 'Stifford Bridge', 'Red Bridge', mill-mound, ponds and parish boundaries.” –

Description given from 1767 map

1767 is the first mapped occurrence of the Wilderness, with the northern section showing plantation/avenue and scattered trees to the east, with no trees to the west with ponds and drainage; and the labelled 'Wilderness' to the south clearly marked as a separate area showing woodland.

It appears in this timeframe, the Wilderness to the south was a separate wood which was established pre 1760s. The northern section, known as the Groves, appears to be planted estate grounds.



South Ockendon Tithe Map 1839/40: The southern section of the site is shown as wooded and separate to the estate grounds area to the north. The tree cover in the northern section is depicted as scattered trees across the entire area, which could denote further stages of planting or abandonment of the formal gardens and regeneration of woodland.



Sale Catalogue for Groves Manor (Cole Carters) in 1867. Essex Record Office.

Despite the slight georeferencing difference the wilderness/grove boundaries are clear.

The Groves Wilderness in the north now appears to be an established woodland in 1867 but still a separate area to the southern Wilderness.



LiDAR 1m coverage still separates the Groves and The Wilderness



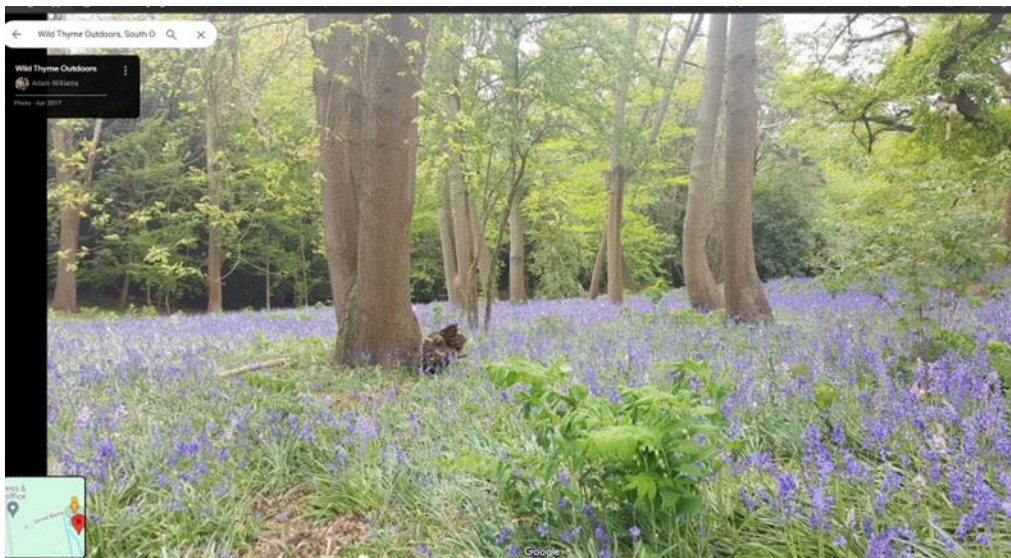
LiDAR (hillshade) coverage still separates the Groves and The Wilderness and clearly shows the water features and stream.



OS Epoch 1 1:2500 map c. 1845: From the 1850s onwards the wood is classed as one place on maps and shows as continuously wooded throughout until present day.



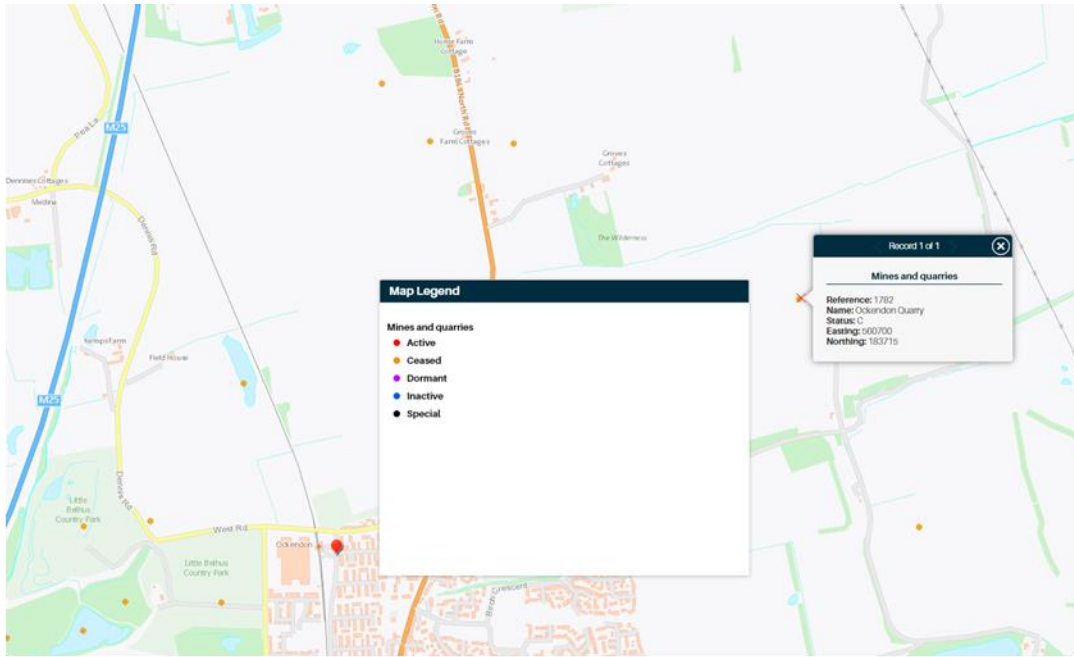
1940s aerial photograph showing the whole site as woodland.



Non-map data: There is a small business known as “Wild Thyme Adventures” that hosts a forest school in the woodland. The ground flora in the photograph showing a carpet of bluebells and Solomon’s seal in the foreground highly indicative of ancient woodland.



Google street view and recent aerial photograph (2021) showing a slight “dip” in the canopy that separates the Wilderness from the Groves.



However, it can be seen next to a quarrying site (180 meters or so).

Ockendon Gray's quarry area 3 used for extraction of clay and shale, run by Lafarge cement UK now labelled as ceased usage on brit pits data, but only recently.

[Ockendon Area II & III Landfill – WikiWaste](#)

Other Data noted:

Forest Inventory- All the wood classed as one area classification as Broadleaved.

OS Mastermap- Classification of the wood as one area as Non coniferous trees, with two significant ponds and a small stream running through.

BSBI- has noted a good survey coverage ranging from 1-26 species (however it is split up over 4 monad areas, meaning the data cannot be tied to the site).

Land use for the whole wood classed as a broadleaved wood.

Soil structure is noted as Sand and Gravel.

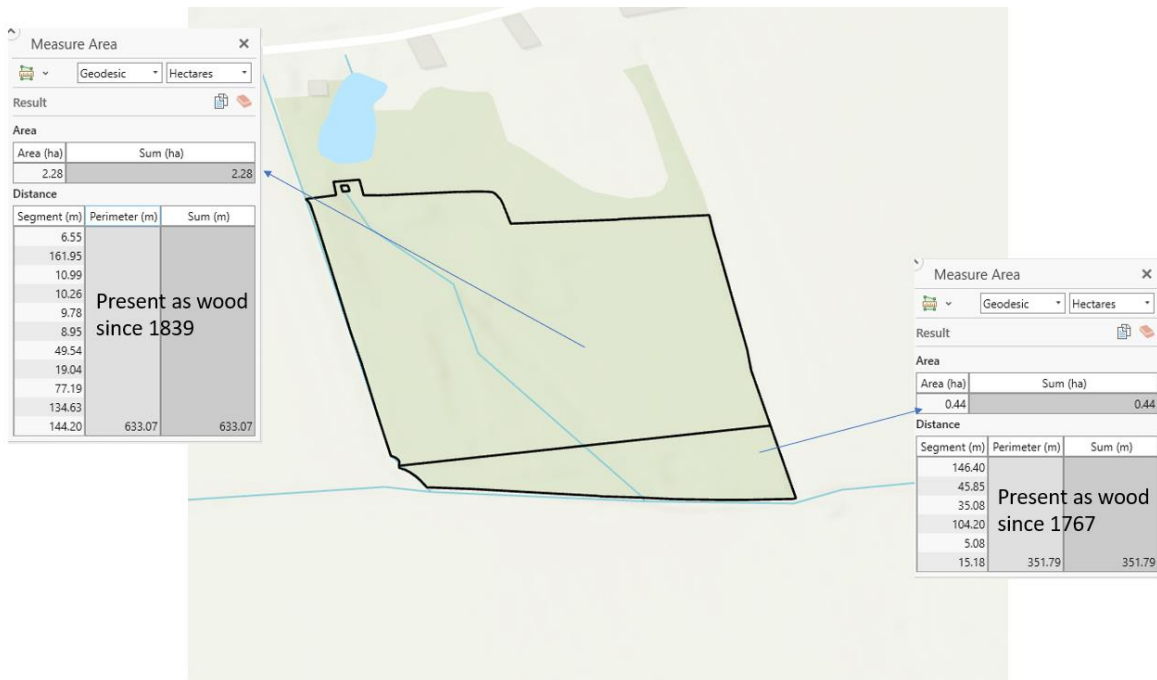
The landfill site is roughly 180 metres from the closest edge of the woodland.

Species found within 1km² to the wilderness:

Last Recording: 2015

Monads- TQ5983, TQ5984, TQ6084, TQ6083

- Red campion
- Guelder rose
- Goat Willow
- Yew
- Yellow Iris
- Wood Forget-me-not
- Wood Dock
- Wood Burdock
- Wild Cherry
- Stinking Iris
- Perforate St John's wort
- Hornbeam
- Honeysuckle
- Holly
- Herb Robert
- Hazel
- Gypsywort
- Great Horsetail
- Field Maple
- Dewberry
- Crab apple
- Columbine
- Broad Leaved Willow



Conclusion:

The wilderness should be split up into TWO sections:

- The southern section, will be known as “The Wilderness” which has shown consistent woodland coverage since pre 1760s.

The remaining section “The Wilderness (Groves)”, which was shown as part open grassland, part scattered trees and part plantation in 1760s and shows as a dense woodland from 1839 onwards.

The northern section (Groves) has shown presence of plantation and gardens grounds in 1767, and then shows as an established woodland (separate to the wilderness) from 1839.

The southern section is classed as ASNW ancient semi-natural woodland; the northern section is classed as LEW long established woodland.

The polygon will be split and added to the pending Ancient Woodland Update layer.



Useful info:

<https://www.remotelondon.com/south-ockendon-landfill/>

[Woodland and open space plan for contaminated South Ockendon quarry site | Local News | News | Thurrock Nub News | by Neil Speight](#)

<https://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/documents/s14512/1701435CV%20South%20Ockendon%20Quarry%20and%20Landfill%20Site%20Medebridge%20Road%20South%20Ockendon%20Essex.pdf>

[The Wilderness - Ancient Woodland - Thames Crossing Action Group](#)