The SWINFORD CHARTER

(S579) of AD 951-9

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The Swinford Charter (S579) of AD 951-9:

A new interpretation of the boundary clause and thoughts on the origin of Oldswinford and Pedmore parishes

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The Swinford charter represents the grant of a parcel of land, by King Eadred (or, arguably, Eadwig or Edgar) to his minister Burhelm. The charter estate (i.e. the land granted to Burhelm) was carved out of a larger area called Swinford, which encompassed the present-day centres of Kingswinford, Stourbridge, Lye, Wollescote, Oldswinford, Norton and Pedmore.

The bounds of the land conveyed to Burhelm are described in the charter's boundary clause by means of a series of waypoints or landmarks. Together these seem to represent an area which is approximately coincident with (most of) the ancient parish of Oldswinford and which may, arguably, extend eastwards and southwards to encompass parts of Cradley and Pedmore as well.

The charter (no. 579 in Professor Peter Sawyer's catalogue of 1968) is written in a mixture of Latin and Old English (OE), with OE being used primarily for the boundary perambulation. Bridgeman (1916) was the first to translate the entire charter, but he did not attempt to trace the boundary clause. As many of the landmarks referenced therein no longer exist today, analysis presents a number of difficulties. Grundy (1928), Chambers (1978), Hooke (1990), Richardson (1997) and Pritchard (1997+) have published their own interpretations of the boundary clause, and two of these (Grundy and Hooke) have provided new and original translations from OE. In some important respects there is little consensus between these researchers on the exact course of the boundary, particularly along its southern edge.

The present proposal for the route of the charter bounds is based upon many of these researchers' published notes (particularly the translation provided by Hooke, 1990) as well as some additional observations from new map and field work. Several new conjectural landmark identifications are described. These correspond well with the available landscape evidence, and result in a continuous and logically explainable boundary route that deviates significantly from the pattern of later parish boundaries.

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Introduction

The charter's boundary clause describes a route that apparently circumnavigated the estate granted to Burhelm. The route consists of twenty eight separate segments, each segment ending in a specified landmark (or waypoint). Modern English translations and interpretations of each of these segments are listed in the next section, *Translation of the Boundary Clause*.

It is widely agreed that the charter's boundary *partially* matches the bounds of the ancient parish of Oldswinford. However, there are differing views on the degree of correspondence between the two and, consequently, on whether the charter takes in any part of the surrounding estates and parishes as well.

Local parishes and estates

Until the 19th century, the primary land divisions in the vicinity of the charter estate consisted of county, diocese and parish boundaries. The parishes were generally composed of (and probably derived from) one or more estates or manors with which they shared their outline boundary pattern. The origin of the local manors and parishes is still uncertain in terms of both dates and the mechanisms of their formation. It is believed, however, that many English parishes were established in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, although some parishes seem to have been formed considerably later. Often the parishes were, at least partially, based upon an earlier pattern of landholdings and *parochiae* of early minster churches. In some cases these (generally larger) landholdings can be traced back to the time of the Anglo-Saxon charters (i.e. the eighth to eleventh centuries) and, indeed, they may have derived from much earlier territories—even Roman *pagi* and Iron Age (sub-)tribal regions.

One such territory was that of Husmere. This was first mentioned in a charter of AD 736 (see Hooke, 1990) and, even at that early date, it appears to have been of some considerable age, possibly representing an ancient (probably Dobunnic) sub-tribal region. Its extent is unknown, but it seems to have occupied at least the area around Kidderminster. Hooke (1985) suggests that it might also have encompassed land as far east as Kings Norton, but evidence for this—i.e. that the territory extended past the natural boundary provided by the Lickey-Clent-Wychbury line of hills—is circumstantial. The region was probably named after a moot site (meeting place) in the vicinity of what is now Ismere in Wolverley.

The Swinford charter estate seems to have resided wholly within Worcestershire, although it is not entirely clear which of these land units was established first. The earliest documentary sources mentioning Worcestershire were written in 1038, but there are indications from a tenth-century document known as the "Burghal Hidage" that an early form of the county may have arisen more than century before. There is little doubt that the Mercian shires were designed as an administrative framework for raising military resources to expel the Danes; and it is possible that the county of Worcestershire developed over a period of time, beginning in the early tenth century as an assemblage of 1200 hides to support the burh (fortified town) of Worcester, gradually adjusting its form and administration to embrace fiscal and judicial functions as well as changes of ownership of its component parts.

Ownership and affiliation played important roles in determining which estates became incorporated into a county; and, as a result, detached parts of shires (i.e. portions of one county completely surrounded by the land of others) were not uncommon. Examples in the local area included Dudley (part of Worcestershire embedded within Staffordshire), Halesowen (part of Shropshire surrounded by Worcestershire and Staffordshire), and Clent (part of Staffordshire surrounded by the land of Worcestershire and Shropshire). At Domesday, Clent (which included Broom and Rowley Regis as unnamed chapelries) and Tardebigge were in Worcestershire, though (for reasons which we will come back to later) they were fiscally linked to Staffordshire. Soon after 1086 they were transferred entirely into Staffordshire, though part of Tardebigge was eventually transferred into Warwickshire in 1266.

Worcestershire seems to have shared large parts of its western and northern boundaries with the earlier diocese of Worcester, which had been formed some time between AD 663 and 680 to serve the kingdom of the Hwicce (which later become a sub-kingdom or province of Mercia). The diocesan boundaries probably followed those of the Hwiccan kingdom, which was founded by Penda, King of Mercia between (approx.) AD 632 and AD 655 to administer the people and lands of several existing British tribal regions—perhaps including the Husmerae—as well as relatively small numbers of early Anglo-Saxon settlers (Zaluckyj, 2001).

According to Hooke (1985) the northern limit of the Worcester diocese probably corresponded closely to the northern boundary of Worcestershire; and King (1996) postulates that the northern boundary of the Hwicce (and by implication, the early diocese) probably extended a few miles further north and west than the post-Domesday county, thereby encompassing Enville, Kinver, Kingswinford, Dudley and Rowley Regis. Hooke (1985) suggests that the boundary had gradually migrated northwards and may have originally lain as far south as the Lickey Hills.

In the vicinity of Swinford, the post-conquest shire boundary followed the course of the River Stour until 1974, splitting Oldswinford parish between Worcestershire and Staffordshire. As illustrated in figure 1, the southern part of the parish—which according to Chambers (1978) seems to have been coextensive with Oldswinford *manor*—lay in Worcestershire while the northern part (Amblecote manor) resided in Staffordshire. Despite being divided by the county boundary, the whole of Oldswinford parish belonged to the Worcester diocese. Of the neighbouring ancient parishes, Pedmore and Hagley lay in Worcestershire, while Kingswinford (including Ashwood Hay) and Kinver resided in Staffordshire. To the east, the estates of Cradley and Lutley (both in Worcestershire and part of the Worcester diocese) belonged to Halesowen parish (originally in Worcestershire) until the 18th and 19th centuries respectively. During those centuries, the county and parish boundaries were, of course, documented precisely upon detailed Enclosure, Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps. The parish bounds would, no doubt, have been subject to occasional minor revision over the centuries since their inception, but it is probably safe to assume that their 18th and 19th century outlines are broadly representative of the parishes' original form and, thus, of the bounds of the manors from which they were, presumably, derived.

As already indicated, there is very little known about the origin of the local manors and parishes, and it is hoped that a detailed study of the Swinford charter's boundary clause might throw some light upon this important question.

The extent of Kingswinford

Figure 1 depicts a divided Kingswinford. The red boundary line represents the whole of Kingswinford ancient parish (as documented in the nineteenth century), but there have been some boundary changes in this vicinity over the centuries.

As detailed in Appendix A, the western section of Kingswinford parish, Ashwood, seems to have been a separate estate named Haswic in the Domesday Survey and Eswich in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Its boundary may have differed slightly from that of the modern Ashwood Hay, but it's most likely extent is shown in figure 1.

The eastern boundary of Ashwood in the tenth century (then termed Eswich) probably coincides with the western boundary of the pre-charter Swinford. Its location isn't proven but it seems likely to have followed the ridge of high ground that today is marked by Ridgehill Wood, Friar's Gorse and Mountpleasant Covert in Kingswinford.

Previous interpretations of the boundary clause

Some previous interpretations of the boundary clause appear to have assumed at the outset that the estate conveyed was a precursor of either Oldswinford parish or Oldswinford and Pedmore parishes combined (excluding Amblecote in both cases). They have thus tended to follow the known boundaries of the relevant ancient parishes quite closely, with only minor deviations here and there. This approach seems to provide a good fit to the charter estate's northern and western boundaries, which coincide with prominent geographical features (e.g. the River Stour). However, the eastern and southern boundaries are more problematic. It is important to note that all researchers report difficulties in identifying several key landmarks in the southern boundary; and it seems that two features in the later landscape (i.e. the 19th century Oakleigh House and the Wallcroft field marked on Bach's 1699 map) might have misled some researchers into believing the charter estate corresponded approximately to the outline of Oldswinford parish. I make that statement with the greatest of respect for those researchers because these place names do, on the face of it, seem to provide a clear match to two of the charter's landmarks. We will see later, however, why these attributions may have been questionable.

Dr CGO Bridgeman in 1916 was the first to translate the charter into modern English. Bridgeman identified the charter estate as representing either Kingswinford or Oldswinford, although he did not attempt to trace the boundary clause.

In 1928, Dr GB Grundy (who did not cite Bridgeman's work) provided a more extensive translation. He also recognised that the boundary clause represented an area in the general vicinity of Oldswinford parish. This was clearly a fundamental step, as were several of his waypoint identifications. However, there do seem to be a few shortcomings in Dr Grundy's conclusions, or at least in his explanation of how he arrived at them. Lack of fine detail is perhaps to be expected in his article because it covered a large number of charters spanning the whole county of Worcestershire. Nevertheless, as the first academic to analyse the Swinford charter's boundary clause, his work forms the background (and perhaps a starting point) for subsequent investigations, so it is important to understand its potential limitations.

Specifically, Dr Grundy appears to unequivocally assign locations near to the Oldswinford parish boundary to about half of the charter's waypoints, yet in most of these cases he does not provide much evidence for his assertions, nor does he explain in any detail his reasons for making them. It would seem that his primary source of landscape information was 19th century OS mapping. No other cartographic sources are cited in his article; and it is implied within his paper that he may not even have visited the locations he assigned to the charter's waypoints. Moreover, it is difficult to understand Dr Grundy's interpretation of the final three waypoints, which exclude Wollaston from the charter. In all probability, the perfectly straight boundary line on which he says these waypoints lie was established many centuries after the charter, and possibly even as late as 1780. This point was also noted by Chambers (1978). Figure 2 illustrates the boundary and waypoint locations envisaged by Grundy. Notice the omission of Wollaston and the cluster of waypoints near the middle of the southern boundary.

Overall, it seems that, having recognised the correspondence between *a few* of the charter's waypoints and the Oldswinford parish boundary (or 19th century subdivisions thereof), Dr Grundy assumed that the charter represented the estate or manor that formed the template for the whole of Oldswinford parish (except Amblecote). However, difficulties in matching waypoints 16, 17 and 18 (see the next section, *Translation of the Boundary Clause*) to the parish boundary caused him to conclude that there had probably been "some modification in the boundary" along its southern edge.

Chambers (1978) believed that this was "a good deal of understatement of the truth". In an attempt to address this difficulty he tentatively suggested a short detour from Grundy's route. This took him briefly northwards along the Clatterbatch to exclude a fraction of Oldswinford from the estate. Mr Chambers noted significant uncertainties in this part of the boundary clause, as well as in Grundy's interpretation of the north-western corner of the boundary (which Chambers nevertheless followed). Figure 3 illustrates the boundary suggested by Chambers (1978) which he based largely upon Grundy's observations. Note the unfeasibly

close grouping of waypoints in the region of his "Oldswinford detour", which suggests that the detour may be too short in extent.

The Clatterbatch aka Kowbatch aka Swin Brook aka Swinford Brook

Following the usage employed by Hemingway (2005-6), the name Clatterbatch has been adopted throughout this article to refer to the stream which flows from Wychbury hill, past St. Mary's church Oldswinford and on to join the River Stour near Stepping Stones. However, the applicability of this term is in considerable doubt—see James (2016). Indeed, two alternative names, 'Kowbatch' (which appears on Google Maps) and 'Swin Brook', are almost certainly also wrong, the former being a modern misattribution, and the latter an eighteenth century invention. The correct ancient name for this stream is unknown. 'Swinford Brook' would seem to be the most appropriate proposal, although it is probably no more ancient than 1832 when William Scott first published this suggestion.

A note on the maps

Figure 2 (as well as figures 3, 4, 5 and 7 which follow) uses as a base map, the first edition of the 6-inch OS County Series map of Worcestershire published in 1888 (surveyed 1882). This has been chosen because it can be easily compared with today's landscape, yet it also depicts many ancient landscape features, some of which undoubtedly date back to the Anglo-Saxon period and before. In particular, the OS map shows several brooks and streams that have since been obscured by 20th century development.

For reference, the 19th century boundaries of Oldswinford parish and Pedmore parish have been outlined in red on each figure. The bounds of the charter estate proposed by each of the researchers are defined by the areas tinted green, cyan, blue, pink or yellow.

In all of these figures, the pointers represent the waypoints of the charter's boundary clause according to the numbering scheme used in the present document. Note that this is the same as used by Hooke (1990), but differs slightly from the numbering schemes used by some other researchers.

Hooke (1990) provided new translations of some elements of the boundary clause as well as several key waypoint identifications (which we will come back to later). These led her to suggest a new course for the southern boundary (figure 4). She began by following the Oldswinford parish boundary and then, to accommodate the "awkward" section in the middle of the southern boundary, proposed a route that runs south towards Wychbury Hill and Pedmore. Richardson (1997) also followed a similar route. By including part of Pedmore in the charter estate, Dr Hooke suggested that this might help to overcome a discrepancy between the manse and hideage assessments quoted, respectively, in the charter and in the 1086 Domesday survey. (Again we will discuss this discrepancy in more detail later.)

Perhaps partly because of this discrepancy, Pritchard (1997+) favoured a boundary that takes in almost the whole of Oldswinford and Pedmore parishes combined (see figure 5). In spite of this, she still encountered significant difficulties in matching the charter's boundary clause to the Pedmore parish boundary in the middle of its southern edge. Using much the same reasoning, Peacock (2014) envisaged a similar route, but noted that the "southern section [of the boundary] ... is not so clearly identified".

Generally speaking, it is possible to find plausible candidates for some of the waypoints near to the parish boundaries, but attempting to fit *all* of the waypoints into a coherent parish-based pattern produces a less-than-convincing result.

A new interpretation of the boundary clause

Because of the difficulties faced by previous researchers in matching the charter to 18th and 19th century parish boundaries, it is sensible to question whether the bounds of the charter estate really were the direct precursor of the local manor and parish boundaries, or whether the pattern of local parishes resulted from some later planned revision of estate boundaries.

One only has to look at the boundary lines depicted in figure 1 to gain a sense of planning in the layout of Oldwsinford, Pedmore and Hagley parishes and the estates that made up Cradley and Lutley (both formerly in Halesowen parish). The shape of the parishes; the continuity of the southern boundaries of Oldswinford parish and Cradley; the continuity of the eastern and western boundaries of Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley parishes; the fairly uniform size of the parishes, and the fact that the parish boundaries divide in two several major landscape features (Oldnall, Foxcote and Wychbury hill fort) are all suggestive of a degree of planned and authoritative land allocation rather than of mere piecemeal granting of estates. To presume at the outset that the charter bounds entirely describe the later parish boundaries would seem to be an unwarranted assumption. For this reason, the following proposal—an earlier, and now superseded, form of which is outlined in James (2013a, 2013b and 2014)—makes no attempt to adhere to parish boundary lines (except where such a correspondence is virtually beyond doubt). It is, instead, based solely upon the match between the charter's boundary clause and probable elements of the Anglo-Saxon landscape.

Figure 6 depicts the topography and watercourses of the area together with likely Anglo-Saxon settlement sites and roads. The principal east-west (Kinver-Halesowen) route is shown, as is the ancient north-south salt-way (along the line of the modern A491), which appears to date back to the Iron Age or earlier. The figure also shows other tracks that would probably have existed, in some form, at the time of the charter. Bear in mind that the routes shown are based upon the assumption that their locations had persisted with little change until the 1882 OS survey (from which the 1888 six-inch maps were derived), which of course might not be an entirely valid supposition. Figure 6 should not, therefore, be taken as a full and accurate representation of the Anglo-Saxon route-ways. Indeed, there were undoubtedly many other minor roads and tracks (not shown in figure 6) running between the settlements of the area, as well as tracks linking them to various important features of the local landscape. Of more relevance would have been the contours, streams and areas of marsh-land represented in figure 6. These would have strongly influenced the early pattern of land use and settlement as well as the course of the charter estate's boundary; and for this reason, careful scrutiny of these features is potentially useful in matching the landscape to the various waypoints of the boundary clause.

The new boundary proposals are illustrated in figure 7 which, like figures 2 to 5, is plotted on the 6-inch OS base map of 1888. Several relevant landscape features and field names from other maps and documentary sources (notably 19th century tithe maps and Bach's 1699 plan of the Parish of Oldswinford) have also been transcribed onto figure 7.

The figure shows two alternative routes for the eastern boundary: one which follows the parish boundary, and a conjectural route (supported by equally persuasive landscape evidence) that deviates along the *eastern* arm of the Salt Brook into Cradley to encompass most of Oldnall hill.

The southern boundary illustrated in figure 7 is also somewhat different from previous interpretations. It encompasses much of the (later) Oldswinford and Pedmore parishes, while *excluding* their settlement centres and agricultural land. This is certainly at odds with the presumption that the charter estate and Oldswinford parish are coincident and coextensive, yet it does possess a degree of logical self consistency; fits the landscape evidence well;

provides a plausible solution to the difficulties encountered by Grundy (1928) and Chambers (1978), and circumvents the apparent need to accommodate seven waypoints within just a ¾ mile stretch of the parish boundary.

Indeed, only relatively short segments of the charter boundary seem to coincide with the later parish bounds. This occurs primarily along major pre-existing boundary features where boundary reuse is not unexpected. Elsewhere however, the boundaries of the charter estate and the parish seem to be markedly different. If the present interpretation is correct, it might tell us something about the nature of the King's gift. Either he wished to retain Oldswinford and Pedmore settlements (and their agricultural lands) as sources of income within his own estate (together with Wychbury Hill and perhaps Hagley and an area of valuable oak woodland), or these assets had already been granted away to some unknown beneficiary before the date of the charter. More interestingly, the proposed charter bounds may even be indicative of local territorial divisions that pre-dated, or coexisted with, the charter estate.

The following pages describe this new interpretation of the charter's waypoints, but first I will list them in sequence together with their translations from Old English.

Translation of the Boundary Clause

Reproduced below are the individual boundary segments listed in the charter's boundary clause. The original Old English (OE) form is followed by the translation into modern English as quoted by Hooke (1990). There are also a few additional notes on translation and interpretation from other sources. The numbered markers shown in figure 7 correspond to the end (destination) points of each of these boundary segments.

1. *Ærest on sÞynford*
   [First to Swine Ford]

2. *of sÞynforda on pecges ford*
   [from Swine Ford to Pecg's Ford]
   According to Perry (2000), Pecg's Ford means Pig's ford.

3. *of pecgesforda on ðeonfanforð*
   [from Pecg's Ford to (the) Robbers' Ford (or Deep Ford)]
   ðeonfanforð, pronounced theonfanford, is translated as thieves' or robbers' ford. Alternatively, *ðeonfan* might be a corruption of *deop(an)*, meaning deep.

4. *of deonfanforda in deonflincford*
   [from Robbers' Ford (Deep Ford) to Deonflinc Ford]
   Pritchard (1997+) quotes a translation of *deonflincford* as "Deon's Bank Ford".

5. *of deonflincforda in holan bæce*
   [from Deonflinc Ford to (the) hollow batch]
   The term "hollow batch" may refer to a valley or a small stream.

6. *of holan bæce in eorh brycge*
   [from the hollow batch to the earth bridge (or causeway)]

7. *of eorth brycge in tigÞellan*
   [from the earth bridge to (the) *tigwellan*]
   The name *tigwellan* may be derived from OE *tigel* meaning crock or tile. Smith (1956b) states that in place names *tigel* is usually an allusion to a place where tiles are made. Grundy (1928), Chambers (1978) and Pritchard (1997+) translate *tigwellan* as "tile (or potsherd) spring".

8. *þ sþa in ymman holig*
   [then thus to Ymma's holly]

9. *of ymman holigne in cudan dene*
   [from Ymma's holly to Cuda's valley]

10. *of cudan dene on ða ðic bufan foxcotun*
    [from Cuda's valley to the dyke above Foxcote]
    Cuda may have been the name of a pagan (Dobunnic) goddess (Yeates, 2008), but in this instance it probably represents a personal name.

11. *ꟻlong dices to þam broce*
    [along (the) dyke to the brook]

12. *to þam stangedelfe*
    [to the stone-digging]
    According to Smith (1956a) *(ge)delf* usually refers to a "an excavation where stone and minerals were obtained", and *stangedelf* to a stone quarry.

13. *of tham stangedelfe be þære efese to Þalacrofte*
    [from the stone-digging by the eaves (of a wood) to Welshmen's croft]
    Hooke (1990) states: *wala* (*Þala*) is the genitive plural of OE *walh*, meaning "a Welshman"; and relates this to the field names Wall Croft, and Lower & Upper Wall Ridding recorded on the 1846 Tithe Map of Pedmore. An alternative translation given by Grundy (1928) is: "from the stone-digging by the hill-foot to ... croft".

14. *of Þalacrofte in þone suðeran holan bæce*
    [from Welshmen's croft to the southern hollow batch]

15. *ꝛlong bæces Þið neoþan eostacote*
    [along the batch to below *eostacote*]
    eostacote may be a misspelling of *Preosta Cote*, priest's cottage. Pritchard (1997+) quotes an alternative translation of *eostacote*: East Cottage.

16. *ꝛlong dices in grendels mere*
    [along the dyke to Grendel's mere]
    grendels mere might refer to "the pond of the gravelly stream", but is probably an allusion to the mythical character in the story of Beowulf. Grundy (1928) and Chambers (1978) use a different translation of *grendels mere*: Green Lea Pond.

17. *of grendels mere in stancofan*
    [from Grendel's mere to (the) stone chamber]
    Grundy (1928) suggests stone cove(s) as the translation for *stancofan*.

18. *of stancofan ꝛlong dune on stiran mere*
    [from (the) stone chamber along (the) hill to *stiran mere*]
    The name "*stiran mere*" may be "sturgeon's mere" from OE *styr(g)an*, meaning sturgeon.

19. *of stiran mere on þa strete*
    [from *stiran mere* to the street]
    Though street (*strete* or *stræte*) often refers to a Roman road, it was frequently used in the late Anglo-Saxon period to describe any paved or urban road (Smith, 1956b).

20. *ꝛlong stræte on þa stapelas*
    [along (the) street to the posts]

21. *of þan stapulum on Þindofer*
    [from the post to Wind Edge]
    In this context, "Edge" probably means a "flat topped ridge" or "the tip of a promontory" (Hooke, 1990). Grundy (1928) and Chambers (1978) translate this as Wind Bank.

22. *of Þindofere in acleg*
    [from Wind Edge to oak lēah (wood)]

23. *of aclea to lusdune*
    [from oak lēah to *lusdune*]
    The OE translation of *lus-* is louse, so previous investigators have suggested "louse hill" for *lusdune*. Chambers (1978) tentatively suggests that *lusdune* could be a misspelling of *lusðune*, which might be translated as "lus-thorn" or spindle tree. A more likely interpretation is that *lus-* is used here in the sense of something small of insignificant (Smith, 1956b), thus *lusdune* is a small hill.

24. *of lusdune on sicanbyrig*
    [from louse-hill to ?Sica's fortification]
    Alternatively, *sicanbyrig* might refer to a fortification near a dry stream bed. According to Brown (2015), the OE word *sic* means a small stream, often dry in summer.

25. *of sicanbyrig on þa stræte*
    [from ?Sica's fortification to the street]
    The street (*stræte*) is a paved, probably Roman, road.

26. *et long stræte to meredic*
    [along (the) street to (the) boundary dyke]

27. *of mæredice on sture*
    [from (the) boundary dyke to (the) Stour]

28. *⁊long sture þ eft on SÞinford*
    [along (the) Stour so that [it comes] back to Swine Ford]

Note that several OE characters are reproduced in the foregoing quotations from the boundary clause; and the reader is referred to table 1 for a basic guide to their pronunciation and meaning.

Table 1. Pronunciation of Old English characters

Character	Name	Pronunciation / Meaning
⁊	Tironian nota	Vernacular shorthand for Latin "et" / English "and"
þ	Thorn	Hard "th" as in "that"
ð	Eth	Soft "th" as in "thistle"
æ	Ash	Hard A sound, as in "bat"
Ƿ	Wynn	W sound as in "well"

Proposed Boundary Route

The northern boundary (waypoints 1 to 5)

While there is some uncertainty over the exact locations of most of these waypoints, all researchers seem to agree that the northern section of the estate's boundary coincides with the River Stour. As Perry (2001) says, it is likely that the fords referred to in the boundary clause were located near to the points where roads cross the Stour today. Two alternative interpretations of the northern boundary (interpretations A and B) are listed below.

Northern boundary interpretation A - Beginning at the A491

It is generally assumed that the first ford listed in the boundary clause—the Swine Ford—was sited near to the crossing point of the A491 Stourbridge-to-Kingswinford road. This road was part of an ancient salt route that ran north from Droitwich, via Pedmore, Oldswinford, Stourbridge High Street and Lower High Street, Wordsley and Kingswinford, and would have been a major feature of the Anglo-Saxon landscape. As the area was named after one of its fords, it is likely to have been the most used or well-known one—i.e. the ford on the main through route—so it seems reasonable to believe that this ford is the charter's Swine Ford.

1a. First to Swine Ford

As indicated above, it is probable that the Swine Ford would have been located on the Stour at, or near, the point where the present-day A491 Stourbridge-to-Kingswinford road bridges the river.

2a. From Swine Ford to Pecg's Ford

Pecg's Ford might have been sited in the section of river overlooked by the ridge on which Bedcote settlement was located (i.e. opposite the present-day Stepping Stones and Bedcote Place, near the confluence of Clatterbatch Brook and the Stour). A bridge is shown in this vicinity on the Amblecote Estate Plan of 1769 and the 1782 survey by Court and Blackden. The 1921 6-inch OS map shows a ford in this location, and a modern footbridge exists about 100m west of Stamford Road today.

3a. From Pecg's Ford to (the) Robbers' Ford [Deep Ford]

As proposed by Grundy (1928), this may have been located near to where today's Bagley Street bridges the Stour. Pritchard's (1997+) alternative translation of *ðeonfanforð* as Deep Ford leads her to favour Chambers' (1978) suggestion of Dudley Road at Lye because of the greater depth of the river at that location.

Northern boundary interpretation B - Beginning at Wollaston

It is interesting to note that the final waypoint (28) seems to return us from Dividale Common (waypoint 27) all the way along the Stour back the starting point without mentioning any further fords. Yet there would probably have been one or more fords in the stretch of river between Dividale Common and the present-day A491 (waypoint 1a). A ford near to the confluence of the Dividale Brook and the Stour is implied in the 1733 boundary perambulation of Oldswinford parish (reproduced with interpretation by Chambers, 1978 and Cochrane, 2005); and there was probably also a ford near to the settlement of Wollaston. Indeed, one might expect the latter ford to have been of sufficient importance to be mentioned in the boundary clause and, for this reason, an alternative starting location is suggested below.

1b. First to Swine Ford

This ford might have been located close to the settlement of Wollaston, which was originally built around the eastern end of Vicarage Road—see Perry (2001). It would have provided direct access to the Oldswinford-Kingswinford road (part of the ancient salt route and now the A491) as well as to the settlement of Amblecote. The ford would probably not have been far from Wollaston Hall. The latter stood near the northern end of the present-day Apley Road until 1927. According to the History of Wollaston Group (2004), there is a reference to Wollaston Hall (probably on the same site) in a "deed of sale of the reputed Manor of Wollaston...which is dated c1230". It is conceivable the site is somewhat older than this, perhaps being occupied in the late Anglo-Saxon period. The name Wollaston certainly seems to be of Anglo-Saxon origin. Plans by Bache (1699), Court and Blackden (1782) and Whitworth (1774), as well as a 1766 canal plan by James Brindley (reproduced by Langford, 1992), all show a bridge a little way to the north of Wollaston Hall, near the line joining Apley Road with Coalbourn Lane, and this might have replaced an earlier ford.

Photograph 1, from Google Maps (http://maps.google.co.uk/), indicates the site of the early Wollaston settlement and of Wollaston Hall, together with the probable location on the Stour where it was forded by a track linking Wollaston to the Oldswinford-to-Kingswinford road.

2b. From Swine Ford to Pecg's Ford

If waypoint 1b is correct, Pecg's Ford would probably have been located near to the crossing point of the present-day A491 Stourbridge-to-Kingswinford road. Perry (2001) states that Pecg's Ford means simply pig's ford; and if that is the case one wonders to what extent the names Swine Ford and Pecg's Ford might have been used interchangeably by the area's Anglo-Saxon inhabitants, and what degree of precision (or ambiguity) should be attributed to the use of these names in the charter's boundary clause.

3b. From Pecg's Ford to (the) Robbers' Ford [Deep Ford]

As waypoint 2a—i.e near Bedcote.

Northern boundary - The remainder

The site of the remaining ford on the Stour (waypoint 4) is also uncertain. Fortunately, the location of the final waypoint (5) of the northern boundary is more clearly identifiable.

4. From Robbers' Ford [Deep Ford] to Deonflinc Ford

Deonflinc Ford is possibly where the A4036 Dudley Road now crosses the Stour at Lye.

5. From Deonflinc Ford to (the) hollow batch

The meaning of Deonflinc is uncertain. The only suggestion that can be offered here is that it might derive from a mis-spelling of the OE *denu* (a valley, probably that of the Stour) and *hlinc* (a ridge or bank) or *hlenc* (a hill side or ledge of rock).

There is little doubt, however, that the hollow batch is the Salt Brook, the course of which lay partly on the eastern boundary of Oldswinford parish and partly within the (possibly later) estate of Cradley. The brook is now largely hidden from view by 19th and 20th century development.

Hooke (1990) refers to a field named Dean Ford shown, on the 1843 Tithe Map of Cradley, approximately 250m north-east of the confluence of the Salt Brook and the Stour. She suggests that this field name might be linked to the charter's Deonflinc Ford. To reconcile the difference in location between the two, Pritchard (1997+) suggests the Salt Brook may have

followed a different course in the Anglo-Saxon period, but this seems unlikely given the topography of the landscape shown in figure 6. A more probable explanation (if Deonflinc Ford, the Salt Brook and Dean Ford are, indeed, related) is that the area from which the 1843 Dean Ford field takes its name might have extended further west to the Salt Brook at the time of the charter, and that this area had subsequently been divided up and partially renamed.

The eastern boundary (waypoints 6 to 10)

Hooke (1990) and others have suggested that waypoints 6 to 8 lie along the boundary between Oldswinford parish and Cradley. Given the available topographical and place-name evidence, this is entirely plausible, but the same evidence could, just as convincingly, be interpreted as describing a route that ventures some way into Cradley to encompass Oldnall hill and most, or all, of the agricultural land that may have lain upon it. Accordingly, two possible routes are presented below.

Photograph 2, from Google Maps (http://maps.google.co.uk/), illustrates, on a modern aerial image, the course of both arms of the Salt Brook, together with two options for waypoint 6, the earth bridge, and waypoint 7, the tigwellan.

Eastern route A - Following the parish boundary

This route, which follows the eastern boundary of Oldswinford parish, is almost identical to that suggested by Hooke (1990) and other researchers.

6a. From the hollow batch to the earth bridge [or causeway]

The location of the earth bridge is unknown. It is shown in figure 7 at a point where there is a narrowing of the stream valley, which seems a logical place for such a construction. Alternatively, the earth bridge might have been a little way to the south of this marker, perhaps a few metres east of where the present Hayes Lane meets the Lye-to-Halesowen road. Clearly some sort of bridge or causeway would have been useful along the Anglo-Saxon predecessor of this road. Although the exact location of the early road is not known, it is likely, given the local topography and the position of stream valleys and springs, that it ran close to the line of the present Lye-to-Halesowen road.

7a. From the earth bridge to (the) *tigwellan*

The contours of the land suggest that a spring, draining into the Salt Brook, might have existed near the point indicated. The boundary perambulation of Oldswinford parish recorded in 1733 notes a Well Leasow just a few tens of metres south of marker 7a; and The Moors, a field name recorded on the 1843 Tithe Map of Cradley, also indicates a watery site in the vicinity. The geology of the area is compatible with tile and brick making, with marls, sandstone, fireclay, glacial sand deposits and a thick coal seam all present within a 100m radius. Indeed a brick works, clay pit and mine shafts are shown within this area on the 6 inch OS County Series map of 1888.

8a. Then thus to Ymma's holly

The location of Ymma's holly is not known. As holly trees are fairly transient entities in the landscape, and there is no other documentary evidence to help, the positioning of this marker on figure 7 is purely speculative. However, if we assume that the charter estate and (later) parish boundaries roughly coincide along this eastern edge, one might expect a waypoint near to the indicated location in order to mark the abrupt left turn in the boundary.

Eastern route B - Encompassing Oldnall hill in Cradley

There is evidence of occupation over several millennia in the area around Oldnall and Foxcote. Artefacts and crop marks suggest Romano-British settlement and agriculture here. Although there is no direct evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation, it seems likely that an area which had proved attractive to both Roman and medieval farmers would have been in continual use throughout the intervening period.

Perry (2001) suggests that Oldnall might derive from the Saxon name 'Oldenhall' and, thus, could have been the site of an Anglo-Saxon chief's stronghold. If Oldnall was, indeed, an important Anglo-Saxon residence or farmstead, it seems logical that the charter estate would include or exclude all of it, rather than dividing it in two as the parish boundary appears to do.

However, Perry's alternative suggestion—i.e. that Oldnall derived from OE 'olde' and 'halh'—seems a more plausible one. I would, nevertheless, disagree with his interpretation of 'halh' as meaning (in this instance) a long narrow valley. Whilst it is true that 'halh' (related to 'hollow' and meaning 'nook') was often used for valleys (Smith, 1956a), those examples tended to be relatively small depressions; and of course Oldnall is situated on a hill, not in a valley. Watts (2010) points out that Codsall, which also derives from OE halh, is located upon a hill—i.e. geographically isolated from its surroundings.

Assuming that Eastern route B (described below) is correct, an alternative meaning for 'halh' listed by Gelling (1984) might be a more credible source for the name Oldnall. According to Dr Gelling, there is clear evidence that 'halh' was sometimes used in an administrative sense to mean a 'piece of land projecting from, or detached from, the main area of its administrative unit'. It could be argued that route B (which encompasses most of Oldnall hill) delineated such a projection at the time of the charter. Moreover, some decades later, the greater part of this projection would have been excluded from Oldswinford manor (which seems to have superseded the charter estate as the principal land unit here—see Discussion). It is thus conceivable that the name of this early 'halh' might have been prefixed by 'ealden' (or more probably the Anglian variant 'aldan'), meaning old. The dative singular case of 'halh' is 'hale', and so the name would, eventually, have mutated to Oldhale or Oldenhalle (as recorded in 1488-9 and 1569 respectively), then to 'Oldenhall' (as depicted on 19th century maps) and, finally, to today's 'Oldnall'.

The suggested route B for the charter estate's eastern boundary would neatly separate the cultivated land around Oldnall and Foxcote from the field systems belonging to Cradley's other three early settlements: Overend, Netherend and Cradley / Lyde (perhaps originally called Middlend—see Hemingway, 2005). Route B is described in detail below.

6b. From the hollow batch to the earth bridge [or causeway]

Before being hidden by 19th and 20th century development, the principal arm of the Salt Brook extended past (i.e. south of) the line of the (present day) Lye-to-Halesowen road where an earth bridge or causeway might have been sited. The abrupt change in gradient here might explain why the road (and perhaps the earth bridge) developed at this point on the brook: it was sufficiently far up the stream valley for the latter to have narrowed enough to cross, yet the road was at a low enough elevation for its lateral gradient to permit easy transit.

7b. From the earth bridge to (the) *tigwellan*

The 6-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1888 shows a spring in the location indicated on figure 7, near the top of Tanhouse Lane. The spring undoubtedly fed the Salt Brook via a streamlet running down the western side of the lane. This might be of some significance as the whole watercourse would have provided a continuous demarcation feature between waypoints 5, 6b and 7b (see figure 6). With regard to the site's suitability for tile making, its geology consists of grey clays and coal seams; with further deposits of marls, fireclay and thick coal seams located nearby.

8b. Then thus to Ymma's holly

There would probably have been many holly trees in the landscape, so in order for Ymma's holly to be a meaningful waypoint, it is likely that it would have been a distinctive or well-known tree. Familiarity with this landmark would have been more likely if the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of the area had encountered it regularly, which suggests it was probably located in a prominent or public place. A position on, or near, a well used road or track is one possibility; and, indeed, Hooke (2011) points out that holly trees referenced in the charters by means of a personal name (such as Ymma) were often located in a road-side position. With this in mind, a site near the main Kinver-Oldswinford-Halesowen road (Oldnall Road) is suggested—perhaps somewhere close to, or just east of, the present-day Whynot Street (i.e. the hamlet of Parkside shown on the 6-inch 1888 OS map).

Eastern boundary - The remainder

The next two waypoints are common to routes A and B, and complete the charter estate's eastern boundary.

9. From Ymma's holly to Cuda's valley

It is probable that this waypoint represents the stream valley now named Lutley Gutter. *Cuda* seems to have been a personal name, but not one of Anglo-Saxon origin. According to Yeates (2008) it is the name of an ancient British goddess (of the late-Iron-Age Dobunni tribe) that was associated sometimes with watercourses. The valley of Lutley Gutter actually extends much further east (downstream) than the marker on figure 7, as well as a little further west towards a spring near Foxcote. It is not known how far up or down the valley waypoint 9 might have been. Near to the parish boundary the land is flatter and the stream is more akin to what has been termed elsewhere in the charter a hollow batch (*holan bæce*) rather than a valley (*dene*). This implies the waypoint could have been some way to the east where Lutley Gutter becomes more valley-like.

Waypoint 9 might even have been near to Fatherless Barn. This is the site of an ancient farmstead (demolished in the mid twentieth century) that, according to local belief, was the site of an Anglo-Saxon hall occupied (in the mid-eleventh century) by Wigar, Cradley's 'last Saxon lord'. This is, however, doubted by local historians (Bradley, 2016); and the present author is unaware of any supporting archaeological or documentary evidence. If such a high-status building had existed here at the time of the charter, any accompanying holly tree would probably have been familiar to the local population.

The field names "The Meers" and "The Skirts"—both indicative of boundary locations—are recorded on the 1843 Tithe Map of Cradley, abutting the parish boundary north west of waypoint 9 (see figure 7). One might wonder whether "The Meers" relates to an estate boundary, perhaps even that of the charter estate, as it probably derived from the OE *gemǣre* which refers to an estate or territorial boundary or to a field abutting such a boundary. It is true that this name is often used for a field near a parish boundary (Field, 1972 and 1993); but according to Hemingway (2005) the fields in this region date from the 13th century, so it is unlikely such a field name would be indicative of a nearby tenth-century charter boundary.

10. From Cuda's valley to the dyke above Foxcote

Most of the previous researchers turn west at this point to follow the Oldswinford-Pedmore parish boundary. This decision seems puzzling if one takes the word "above" in the charter's translation at face value. The land does not rise significantly to the west. The only nearby land that is appreciably higher than Foxcote is to the south, lying along the eastern end of the Pedmore-Hagley parish boundary. As illustrated in photographs 3 and 4, field boundaries still run east to west along the ridge of high ground towards Hodge Hill. It is unknown whether they date back to the Anglo-Saxon period. They are clearly of some antiquity; but they have obviously been repaired and renewed in much more recent times, and it is impossible to know their age without firm archaeological evidence.

The southern boundary (waypoints 11 to 25)

The southern boundary of the charter's estate seems to have engendered the greatest disagreement between researchers. The boundary route suggested here follows a sequence of waypoints around Oldswinford settlement and its cultivated land. This area would, thereby, have been excluded from the estate, together with Pedmore and its agricultural land, and Wychbury Hill fort. Photograph 5 shows the principal waypoints of the southern boundary superimposed upon a modern aerial image from Google Maps (http://maps.google.co.uk/).

11 (a & b). Along (the) dyke to the brook

It is not known how far the dyke ran, or indeed which brook is referred to. There are two possibilities. If, at the summit of Hodge Hill the dyke turned south west along the shallow slope of Hodge Hill to marker 11a, it is probable that the brook in question is the one running through Hodge Hole Dingle, eventually emptying into Ludgbridge Brook. Alternatively, if the dyke terminated near the summit of Hodge Hill, it is likely that the brook referred to is a lesser one running to the east of Hodge Hill Farm (on the 1888 6-inch OS map) and which is fed by a spring near marker 11b. This brook is now hidden underground and runs along the line of Hodge Hill Avenue before joining Ludgbridge Brook at the bottom of Brook Holloway.

12. To the stone-digging

The exact location is unknown. Regardless of whether interpretation 11a or 11b is correct, it is likely that the stone-digging lay near to marker 12 in figure 7. Outcrops of red marls and sandstones lie close to the surface on the hillside west of the brook here. A field named Quarry Field is depicted on the 1846 Pedmore Tithe Map at this point. The quarry was, according to Scott (1832), still in use and producing a "calcerous breccia" during the 19th century; and stones (perhaps waste from the quarrying process) still litter the ground today.

13. From the stone-digging by the eaves (of a wood) [or hill-foot] to Welshmen's croft

Hooke (1985 and 1990) suggests that a wood probably existed in the area during Anglo-Saxon times, and might have reached as far south as Quarry Field (waypoint 12) and another field to the west named Wall Croft on the 1846 Tithe Map of Pedmore (waypoint 13).

Route A suggested by Pritchard (1997+) follows the same line between waypoints 12 and 13, but for a different reason: the translation of "... *be þære efese*..." as "...by the hill-foot...". The hill referred to would have been the ridge joining Hodge Hill to Wychbury Hill.

Both routes terminate near Pedmore's Wall Croft field. This name probably derives from *Þalacrofte* in the boundary clause (pronounced walacroft), meaning Welshmen's croft or farm. The Pedmore Tithe map of 1846 also shows, immediately to the north, fields named Upper and Lower Wall Ridding, whose names almost certainly share the same derivation as Wall Croft. Ridding derives from the Old English word *ryding* (Field, 1993), or *rydding* (Smith, 1956b), which means a clearing in woodland or land assarted from adjacent waste.

A possibly related field, spelled Wallcroft on Bach's 1699 plan of Oldswinford parish, is located a few hundred metres to the north. Some researchers have (I believe, erroneously) assumed that this field, rather than Pedmore's Wall Croft field, is the one referred to in the charter, presumably because it lies close to the parish boundary.

14. From Welshmen's croft to the southern hollow batch

The term "hollow batch" refers to a stream valley, and in this case it is likely to have meant the southern—or more accurately, the south-western—arm of the brook running through Ham Dingle. This brook starts at a spring on the northern edge of Wall Croft field and, as shown in figure 6, drains northwards through a small, but steep sided, valley.

Directional skew in some tenth-century place references

The southern hollow batch actually lies to the south-west of its counterpart. This apparent directional imprecision might be explained by a short-lived tendency for directional references to be rotated clockwise by about 45º in some tenth-century place names, whereby, for example, a place called Norton (north tūn) would actually be located to the north-east of some primary reference point. According to Jones (2012) the directional rotation seems to have been particulary prevalent where the names had been imposed by officialdom or the elite; and one might, perhaps, expect it to have been applied in official documents such a royal charter. If this does indeed account for the reference to the 'southern hollow batch', it is interesting that the rotation was applied to certain minor names as well as major settlement names.

15. Along the batch to below *eostacote*

Grundy (1928) states that *eostacote* has no meaning, and interpreted this word as a misspelling of *Preosta Cote*, meaning priest's cottage. It does, however, seem an unlikely mistake to make: omission of a vowel or consonants from the middle of the word might be explicable, but it is harder to believe that a scribe would accidentally *omit* the initial consonants of a word. If the intention really was to refer to a priest's cottage, this might have been located at the top of Chawn Hill, near to the site of the later Prescot House. Until it was demolished in 1965, Prescot House stood at the junction of Chawn Hill and Grange Lane (the A4036). The location is named Prescott on Brettel and Davies' 1827 plan of Oldswinford, but it is not named on earlier plans by Bach (1699) or Court and Blackden (1782). The distance of Prescot from the Clatterbatch (about 500m) led Grundy (1928) to propose that the supposed *Preosta Cote* might have existed somewhere on Doctors Hill rather than on Chawn Hill. Peacock (2014) dismisses Prescot because, he says, "there was no priest [there] at that time and the minster serving Clent Hundred was at Halesowen".

Another possibility is that the word *eostacote* is related to *Eostre*, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, though this derivation seems a little unlikely. Alternatively, *Eota* refers to Jutland, and it is conceivable that a building belonging to a person of Jutish descent represents the (misspelled) origin of *eostacote*. Pritchard (1997+) refers to a more plausible interpretation of *eostacote* as meaning "East Cottage" (from *éast cote* or *éastan cote*). This would again represent a misspelling, though of a more likely kind. If this interpretation is correct, East Cottage might have been located near the eastern edge of the Oldswinford settlement: south of Chawn Hill, perhaps near Ham Farm (shown on the 6-inch OS map of 1888).

Whichever location we assume here for *eostacote* (or *Preosta Cote*), we would have to depart from the "hollow batch" at some point adjacent to the section of Ham Lane (today called Old Ham Lane) that runs roughly east-west. The most easterly of these departure points (indicated by marker 15 on figure 7) would result in the boundary cutting across to Old Ham Lane near the present-day White Leys Close.

The Hamm

It is likely that site of Ham Farm was occupied (or at least used for some agricultural purpose) in the Anglo-Saxon period. The names Ham Farm and Ham Lane are probably derived from the OE word 'hamm', which refers to an area of agricultural land enclosed by features such as streams, rivers, steep slopes or moorland. This place-name element is most often found in association with bends and loops in watercourses, and in such a context it often refers to a water-meadow (Smith, 1956a; Gelling, 1984).

The topography around Ham Farm is certainly consistent with the most common usage of 'hamm'. The area is enclosed on its southern and western sides by the Clatterbatch (brook), and on its northern side by a minor tributary of the Clatterbatch. Its eastern side is enclosed by the steep slope of Chawn Hill, the foot of which was probably delineated by the dyke referred to in the following waypoint.

On the 1814 OS surveyor's drawing for Stourbridge, a building near the site of Ham Farm is labelled 'The Ham House', which perhaps implies that the area was known as 'The Ham' (or the 'hamm') prior to the nineteenth century.

It has previously been suggested (Haden, 1999) that the name Ham Lane could have been derived from the OE 'hām', which means a dwelling place, place of safety or home, and tends to refer to a single dwelling or small cluster thereof. This seems unlikely as, according to Smith (1956a), Gelling (1984) and Gelling and Cole (2014), 'hām' is never used to form simplex names: it always appears compounded with more descriptive elements (presumably because 'hām' was such a common term that, on its own, it was insufficient to identify any particular dwelling).

16 (a & b). Along the dyke to Grendel's mere

Hooke (1990) and Richardson (1997) turn south at this point. By proceeding southwards though, it is very difficult to make subsequent waypoints fit the landscape, and many southerly routes end up dividing Pedmore and/or its agricultural land in two. However, a route north *around* the settlement and agricultural land of Oldswinford seems more promising. It is not known with certainty where the dyke ran, but Bach's 1699 map of the Parish of Oldswinford shows a sweeping curved boundary that starts just north of Ham Farm (near the southern end of the present-day Shaftesbury Avenue). The boundary feature extended north-west for about 650m, towards the lower (western) end of Chawn Hill, passing just north of the present-day Halfcot Avenue. This feature terminates the adjoining field boundaries and is somewhat longer and more continuous than the latter. These characteristics are all sometimes indicative of a greater age. It is, therefore, conceivable that this long boundary feature represents the dyke referred to in the charter (or perhaps some artefact thereof). According to Aston (1985), long field boundaries or dykes in the landscape can often represent the edges of settlements or vills, and it seems possible that this waypoint's dyke marked the eastern boundary of Oldswinford settlement.

The boundary feature ran roughly parallel with the Clatterbatch (brook) and gradually veered towards it at its northern end. By the time of the OS County Series survey in 1882, only the southern third of the boundary feature remained, but in 1699, its northern terminus lay in the vicinity of the present-day Church Road, Castle Grove and Stourbridge Junction railway station; and it is conceivable that in earlier times the dyke might have run further north towards Red Hill School's playing fields and the medieval boundary of Bedcote manor. The topography of the land in this vicinity would have made it ideal for damming the brook to form large fish ponds (see figure 6). Indeed, several fish ponds existed along this stretch of the Clatterbatch until at least the 1950s, one being recorded in the area now occupied by Red Hill School on the 1814 OS surveyor's preliminary drawing of Stourbridge (British Library Online Gallery, 2014). It is conceivable that irregular field boundaries recorded in these locations on the plans by Bach (1699) and Court and Blackden (1782) might represent the fingerprint of other, more ancient, fish ponds. For this reason, it is suggested that Gendel's mere was located somewhere along this section of the Clatterbach (brook) between markers 16a and 16b on figure 7.

Photograph 6 shows the southern end of Stourbridge Junction railway station in around 1907, or a few years earlier. It is taken from the south-west (looking north-east) with Chawn Hill in the background. There is, of course, no sign of the supposed dyke at this date, but it would have run from right to left behind the railway track, part-way up the slope of the hill, getting

closer to the track as it reached Chawnhill House (the large building behind the station). A pathway runs underneath the embankment, with the Clatterbatch (brook) beside it. The brook continued to the left of the photograph towards a fishpond located in the grounds of "The Castle" (now a cul-de-sac named Castle Grove). The Castle and the pond are depicted in photograph 7 (also taken around 1907) which looks north-westwards across the pond.

Hooke (1990) refers to another (she says, dubious) translation of g*rendels mere* as "the pool of the gravely stream". In this context it is interesting to note that an "Old Gravel Pit" is marked on the 1888 OS map about 350m from the stream. It is, however, difficult to say whether any of the associated deposits would have found their way into the stream, as the geology in the area is very fragmented (British Geological Survey ,1975), with the stream passing through a variety of different marls and sandstones.

17 (a & b). From Grendel's mere to (the) stone chamber

The location and nature of the "stone chamber" are not known. Previous researchers have suggested that it might have been the remains of a prehistoric (probably bronze age) burial chamber, or an Iron Age guard house on Wychbury Hill. However, no such features are visible today and there is no direct evidence for them being the charter's "stone chamber". Regrettably, the present suggestion is supported only by circumstantial place-name evidence, but it does result in a boundary pattern that can be explained in a meaningful way, and which fits very well with the route suggested by the neighbouring (more evidence-based) waypoints. No route from Grendel's mere to the stone chamber is specified in the charter, so it is likely that the direction to take was clear at the time, perhaps following an established track or roadway. An obvious candidate for this is the ancient road between Kinver and Halesowen. Glasshouse Hill and Heath Lane form parts of this route today, but as Bach's 1699 plan shows them cutting across Oldswinford's medieval open-field system, they must be post-medieval (or at least late medieval) in origin. It is probable, therefore, that the tenth-century Kinver-to-Halesowen road lay slightly further north—perhaps near the southern boundary of the 1366 Bedcote manor.

For reasons that will become clear when we discuss waypoint 18, it seems likely that the stone chamber lay somewhere on the sandstone escarpment extending south from Hanbury Hill and along Pepper Hill and Love Lane. Its western gradient is steep—probably steeper, in parts, during Anglo-Saxon times than it is now. Photograph 8 (taken in Mary Stevens Park) illustrates how steep parts of this escarpment might have been.

We do not know what form the stone chamber took. The word chamber implies an enclosure open, perhaps, on only one side; and structures such as a cave or rock cutting are obvious possibilities. Grundy (1928) suggests a slightly different translation: cove(s), which might imply a less enclosed structure such as a nook or natural recess in a rock face.

One possibility is that the stone chamber was some form of shelter cut into the escarpment near the forerunner of Heath Lane. This would be consistent with Smith (1956a) who states that one of the more likely meanings for the place-name element *cofa* (used in the waypoint's *stancofan*) is a shelter. The bedrock here consists of Triassic Lower Keuper sandstone overlying Bunter Series mottled sandstones, both of which would have been relatively easy to work: these very same strata were quarried at Hanbury Hill; and similar sandstone outcrops have been worked further south along the same escarpment (in Pedmore parish) as well as at other local sites to produce the iron-makers' caverns at Wolverley, the Wain House at Caunsall, Kinver's Holy Austin Rock Houses, and the now-obliterated caverns at Holloway End (Scott, 1832).

Turning to the alternative translation proposed by Grundy (1928), it is also conceivable that a natural recess or "cove" existed on the face of the escarpment. It is clear from the escarpment's profile that the Keuper sandstone at the top of the escarpment is responsible for the steepest part of the rock face. These rock strata dip away to the NNW at an angle of about 10 degrees, and the edges of the Keuper sandstone beds might have formed a small cliff face in places along the escarpment. The British Geological Survey's *Solid and Drift Map* of 1975 shows a clear V-shaped notch in the western edge of the Keuper beds, the apex of

which is located just a few metres north of the junction of the present-day Heath Lane and Love Lane, near marker 17a. Assuming this is a purely natural feature (and not a man-made post-Anglo-Saxon artefact) this rock formation may well have given rise to a similarly shaped recess in the cliff face. Perhaps this was the "cove" referred to in the charter. It is, of course, conceivable that a natural feature of this type might have been enlarged by Anglo-Saxon, or earlier, inhabitants of the area to form something more akin to the "chamber" in Hooke's (1990) translation.

There are also two further, and perhaps more plausible, possibilities for the identification of the stone chamber or stone coves along the line of the Keuper sandstone escarpment. Both of these would indicate a site close to Hanbury Hill (spelled Ambry Hill in 1709—see Haden, 1988), near marker 17b on figure 7.

The first possibility is that the stone coves might have been the remains of an early phase of the aforementioned quarrying at Hanbury Hill. In that case we might infer that, at the time of the charter, the quarry had become temporarily disused, otherwise the waypoint would probably have been referred to as *stangedelfe*, as in waypoint 12.

The second possibility arises from an early alternative name for Hanbury Hill. Until the 19th century, it was also known as Yearnebarrowe Hill or some variant thereof (see Wood, 1837; Chambers, 1978; Haden, 1988 and Perry, 2001). "Yearne" might derive from OE *earn*, meaning eagle, or *ēaren*, meaning gravelly (which seems less likely given the local geology), but the ending *barrowe* is perhaps of more relevance here. According to Gelling (1997), the term often referred to a natural hill, but in some instances *barrowe* was used to mean a man-made (often ancient) mound. This could, therefore, indicate the presence of a prehistoric barrow or tumulus on the high ground between Hanbury Hill and Heath Lane; and such a barrow, if opened, might reveal some form of stone chamber.

It should also be noted that the name Hanbury might derive from OE *hēan* (high) or *hān* (stone) and *burh* (fortification); and it is not inconceivable that a mound upon the hill had been interpreted at various times as either a barrow or the remains of an ancient fortification.

Hanbury Hill: the site of a boundary marker?

The possible use of hān in this location is interesting. According to Smith (1956a), this place-name element was used (usually in charters) for a stone that marked a boundary (although not all examples of hān now mark known boundaries). Hanbury Hill, however, certainly lies upon the boundary of the 1366 sub-manor of Bedcote (and perhaps upon an earlier township boundary as well). This portion of the boundary may also have coincided with that of the Swinford charter. The evolution of local boundaries is discussed further in the section 'What became of the charter estate?' later in this article.

There is additional indirect evidence to support the hypothesis of a barrow near this location. Barrows were sometimes used as community meeting places or places of worship by pagan Iron-Age and Romano-British people; and pagan religious sites were frequently adopted for Christian worship in the mid-Saxon period (see Yeates, 2008). According to Aston (1985), such hill-top sites then tended to be re-named after either St Michael or St Catherine and "proximity to significant springs or wells may also indicate an early [previously pagan] site". Interestingly, there was, indeed, a nearby spring named St Catherine's Well (the name surviving on later documentary sources as Cafferwell Close, Catherwell Field, Catherwell House and Catherwell Saw Mill—all in the vicinity of Union Street, near Hanbury Hill). The combination of "-barrow" and "St Catherine's" place names might be indicative of a reused prehistoric barrow (perhaps incorporating a stone chamber) upon Hanbury Hill, but there is, unfortunately, no hard archaeological evidence to substantiate this hypothesis.

If the stone coves (or chamber) were, for whichever reason, sited on Hanbury Hill, it might be that Grendel's mere (waypoint 16) was located near the northern end of the range envisaged

previously—perhaps near the present-day Red Hill Close or Red Hill School's playing fields (marker 16b). Like Hanbury Hill, Grendel's mere may even have abutted the later (1366) boundary of Bedcote manor (a sub-manor within the manor of Oldswinford), perhaps indicating continual use or reuse, in the 14th century, of a then 400 year old boundary.

It is interesting that this hypothesis is supported by place-name evidence which appears to link land in this vicinity to Pedmore. Indeed, this evidence could be highly significant, as it would seem to offer a plausible explanation for the shape of the *entire* southern boundary of the charter estate!

It is generally accepted that Pedmore (written Pevemore in 1086; Pubemora in 1176; Pebbemore in 1291 and 1346, and Pebmore from 1297 to 1327—see Ekwall, 1960 and Watts, 2010) derives from the OE *mōr*—meaning a barren upland (usually wet), a moor or a marsh (see Gelling and Cole, 2014)—and the personal name Pybba. Pybba (also written Pypba or Pyppa in some sources) was the name of a late-sixth-century Anglian king (c593-c600) who belonged to the dynasty that ruled Mercia during its westwards expansion into what would later become Worcestershire and the West Midlands. In the wider south-west midlands there is an exceptionally high concentration of places incorporating royal names from this dynasty: e.g. Creoda, Penda, and Pybba. It is likely that these personal names grew popular during, and shortly after, each of these kings' reign, and that various locations had acquired their names from more lowly settlers who happened to bear these royal appellations. Pedmore's Pybba may well have been the person—perhaps the head of an Anglian family or clan—who, in the first half of the seventh century, drained and settled a tract of land in the vicinity of the present-day village.

Other nearby examples of place names in Pybba include: Pepwell (Pybba's spring), a farm in Hartlebury; Pepper Wood (Pybba's wood or clearing) near Belbroughton; and Peplow (Pybba's Hill) near Hodnet in Shropshire (see Zaluckyj, 2001). That today's "Pep" or "Pepper" elements are derived from the name Pybba is interesting as there might also be an example of this descent close to Hanbury Hill: i.e. the route-way now called Pepper Hill. This was the name of a footpath extending south from Hanbury Hill along the sandstone escarpment to the junction of Love Lane and Heath Lane, and was probably also the name of the adjoining summit (which now lies within the Oldswinford Hospital School's playing fields). The northern section of the footpath was widened to form a residential road in the 1970s, and this road still retains the name Pepper Hill. There is no known modern source for this name; and, in his very comprehensive survey of the street names of Stourbridge, Haden (1988) also considers the possibility that Pepper Hill could be derived from the Anglian name Pybba.

It is possible that the name could derive from pepper processing or from plants such as peppermint or pepperwort growing upon the hill, but if Pepper Hill *does* derive from the same Anglian royal name as Pedmore, this might indicate a very early (perhaps seventh-century) link between these two places. They might even have both been parts of the same land holding, centred upon the ancient Droitwich-to-Stafford salt way (now the A491). If so, this might explain why, some three centuries later, the Swinford charter bounds seem to have circumnavigated all of the land between Pedmore (*Pybba's mōr*) and Pepper Hill (presumably *Pybba's hyll*).

Pybba's infield

This early period of Anglian settlement might even have produced the oval road pattern (described today by Pedmore Lane, Pedmore Hall Lane and the A491), which, given its size and juxtaposition with Pedmore Farm, St. Peter's church and the radiating network of peripheral roads, seems highly characteristic of the fingerprint left by Anglo-Saxon infield systems—cf. Rippon (2002). The configuration of any associated outfield is difficult to discern today, even from the oldest maps of the area, as all visible remnants of such a system have probably been obliterated by later phases of Pedmore's medieval open-field (and subsequent) agriculture.

Although there is no direct evidence to indicate the exact site of the stone chamber, there is good reason to believe that it was located on the sandstone escarpment between Hanbury Hill and the present-day junction of Love Lane and Heath Lane. It is probable that such a location, in conjunction with neighbouring waypoints, would be consistent with the charter estate excluding (as one unit) the settlement of Oldswinford *and* its agricultural land. Even by 1699, Oldswinford's fields had extended little further west than the bottom of the Love Lane escarpment. More tellingly, Bach's 1699 map provides clear evidence of medieval strip cultivation in the fields east of Love Lane (i.e. nearer to Oldswinford's centre), whereas most of the fields which had developed west of Love Lane showed no sign of strip farming and are, therefore, more likely to be post-medieval in origin. For this reason, it is probable that the proposed boundary line (waypoints 16 to 18) would have excluded most, if not all, of Oldswinford's cultivated land from the charter estate.

18. From (the) stone chamber along (the) hill to *stiran mere*

Some previous boundary interpretations have tended to assume that the hill in question is Wychbury Hill. This is roughly circular in plan; and the difficulty one faces with this assumption is deciding upon the direction meant by the phrase "along the hill".

There is less ambiguity in the present interpretation because the hill in question is a linear feature: the escarpment extending from Hanbury Hill and Pepper Hill southwards, and running immediately to the west of the modern-day Love Lane. (Linear hill features and the phrase *ƿlong dune*, meaning along the hill, are relatively common in Anglo-Saxon charters, particularly those of the former Hwiccan region—Stokes, 2011). As already indicated, this escarpment delineates the Keuper Sandstone beds of Oldswinford from the Bunter Series mottled sandstone and pebble beds of the low lying heath-land to the west (now occupied by Mary Stevens Park, Bigmoor playing field, the western half of Stourbridge Golf Course and much of Norton).

The assumed line of the charter boundary follows Love Lane southwards along the top of the scarp. The fall to the west is around 20m and, even today, the escarpment is a very noticeable feature of the landscape. Moreover, moving "along the hill" (south along Love Lane) brings us directly to a lower lying marshy area containing a fish pond. Photograph 9 shows the pond which, today, abuts a house in Peartree Drive. The pond has clearly been enhanced by damming and small-scale quarrying, but it is quite possible that a smaller pool existed in this location during the Anglo-Saxon period, only being enlarged in more recent times. The pond lies just within Pedmore parish, but it is shown (though apparently smaller than today) on Brettel and Davies' 1827 plan of Oldswinford. The 1814 OS surveyor's drawing for Stourbridge actually shows three small ponds in this location.

The present-day pond lies on the eastern edge of an extended and (until it was drained in the 20th century) boggy plain crossed by numerous small streams. The whole area was referred to as The Moor in the 1733 Oldswinford boundary perambulation. Big Moor and Landing Moor fields are shown close to the fish pond on the 1846 Tithe Map of Pedmore; and (as mentioned above) "Bigmoor" survives here today as the name of a (now drained) playing field. Three hundred metres downstream the pond's outflow was sufficient in the 14th century to power Rotherford Mill (Dudley Historic Environment Record, 2014). A small pond is shown here on the 1888 6-inch OS map. A further succession of dammed ponds existed just 320m to the west in the 18th century (see Court and Blackden, 1782 and Hemingway, 2005). If the present pool does not, itself, represent *stiran mere*, it seems highly plausible, because of the watery nature of the surrounding area, that *stiran mere* was located very close by.

In OE, the waypoint uses the term *dūn* for the hill along which we pass on the way to *stiran mere*; and this may lend to support to the above-mentioned interpretation. Gelling and Cole (2014) point out the association of place names in *dūn* with both habitation *and* a hill; and it may be that the habitive element here was the settlement and fields that ultimately developed into Oldswinford village. In the later medieval period the open field sitting atop the Love Lane escarpment was termed Old Field (Peacock, 2014), which might indicate that this area had been the first of Oldswinford's lands to be brought into community cultivation, perhaps being present at the date the perambulation was compiled.

19 (a & b). From *stiran mere* to the street

Anglo-Saxon usage of the word *strete* or *stræte* (modern "street") usually indicates a paved or surfaced road, (rather than a mud track), so the "street" referred to here must have been an important route at the date of the charter. In the present analysis, there are two candidates for this street: the B4187 (formerly A450) Worcester Lane (marker 19a) and the A491 Hagley Road (marker 19b).

The latter road seems to represent the (approximate) course of an Iron Age, or earlier, salt way. It would probably have been paved by the tenth century as it formed part of an important route between the salt-producing town of Droitwich and the Mercian centres of Penkridge and Stafford. As such, it may well have been the street referenced in the charter.

On the other hand, we should not entirely discount Worcester Lane. Its modern course passes close to the supposed *stiran mere*, but the road's importance at the time of the charter—and, therefore, the likelihood of it being paved—is doubtful. If it existed at all in the tenth century, Worcester Lane might not have been a through road to Worcester, the main Worcester route then probably being along Hagley Road, part of Bromwich Lane and along a now lost section of road to join Worcester Road at the Pedmore-Hagley boundary (see *The course of Worcester Lane: southern section* under waypoint 22 below). Indeed, the tenth-century Worcester Lane might have existed only as an access road that serviced an area of managed woodland to the south—i.e. the oak *lēah* of waypoint 22.

Assuming that this picture accurately reflects the situation in the tenth century, could there be another reason why Worcester Lane might have been described in the charter as a made road (*strete*)? Possibly. Urban roads were sometimes referred to as *stretes* at this time. But even if the road only served as an access route to the woodland, some form of built-up surface would certainly have been beneficial to the carts and other traffic that would have been frequently needed to convey timber and other woodland resources towards Oldswinford and beyond. Such a service road, stretching between the settlement of Oldswinford and oak lēah (which later lay in the parish of Pedmore) would not be inconsistent with Oldswinford (settlement) and oak lēah belonging to the same estate in the tenth century, as seems to be implied by the course of the charter boundary.

Notwithstanding the arguments presented under the description of waypoint 22 below, there is also a possibility that, by the time of the charter, Worcester Lane had been extended south through the woodland (oak lēah) to form the main route to Worcester that we know from eighteenth-century and later maps. Such a route certainly existed in some form in the tenth century (at least in the vicinity of Mustow Green and Hartlebury, where it is referenced in a charter for Whitlinge dated AD 969), and is likely to have been an important and well used road. Worcester was, of course, the diocesan centre and the later shire town, so a road leading there would have been of some importance and might well have been paved, at least in the vicinity of population centres like Oldswinford and Pedmore.

The course of Worcester Lane: northern section

It is not known whether Worcester Lane followed its present-day course at the date of the charter. It is conceivable that, at one time, it did not deviate so sharply towards Hagley Road, but instead followed a straighter route, across what was to become Oldswinford's open fields, towards the top of Rectory Road (as tentatively depicted in figure 6). As Worcester Lane now joins Hagley Road at the Oldswinford parish boundary, the deviation might have come about soon after the parish boundary was established—presumably some years later than the date of the charter.

The exact point at which the charter boundary might have joined Worcester Lane is unknown, but if (as suggested here) the purpose of the boundary's circuitous route was to exclude the agricultural lands of Oldswinford and Pedmore, it is conceivable that the boundary intersected

Worcester Lane somewhere near the point shown by marker 19a in figure 7. It is also possible, of course, that the route to the "street" followed a line WNW up a small valley, along the later parish boundary (i.e. between the houses of the present-day Alderlea Close and Peartree Drive and then along Oakleigh Road) to join either Worcester Lane or Hagley Road near their present-day junction (marker 19b).

20 (a & b). Along (the) street to the posts

Whether the posts were indicators of distance, direction or ownership, it is clear from the present context that they were located somewhere on Worcester Lane or Hagley Road in Pedmore. No evidence of the posts' existence remains on the ground today, but if the interpretation of waypoint 21 (below) is correct, the posts would probably have been located near the junction of Worcester Lane with Racecourse Lane (marker 20a) or Hagley Road with Redlake Road (marker 20b). The posts are referred to as *stapelas* in the charter; the OE root of this word is *stapol* and, according to Smith (1956b), its use in place names might indicate a post at a boundary, meeting place or a ford. The latter is perhaps of most relevance here as the roads at both of the aforementioned junctions would have forded streams that drained into the supposed *stiran mere*. The charter suggests this waypoint possessed two or more posts, and these might have marked the fords as well as the road junction in question.

21. From the post to Wind Edge [Wind Bank]

The charter refers to this waypoint as *Þindofer*. Hooke (1990) favours "flat topped ridge" or "tip of promontory" as the translation of *ofer*; and the location suggested here fits that description perfectly. A north-facing promontory (or end of a ridge), now known as Rock Mount, protrudes from the side of a 20m high escarpment near the junction of the present-day Ounty John Lane and Racecourse Lane (see figure 6). The promontory is, indeed, flat-topped; and it occupies an exposed position: westerly winds blow almost unimpeded across the low-lying former heath- and moor-land to the west, and are then funnelled and intensified by the escarpment. Photograph 10, taken from just half-way up the side of the promontory and looking NNW over its shallower tip (now part of Stourbridge Golf Course), illustrates the height and exposed nature of this position.

22. From Wind Edge to oak lēah (wood)

According to Hooke (2011), lēah generally refers to a wood. Its use in the charters might not always indicate the presence of contemporary woodland (land use may have changed since lēah had become incorporated into an earlier place name), but where the word is compounded with a tree species it does seem to indicate the existence of a wood at the time of the charter. In the present context, at least, Hooke (1990) prefers the latter interpretation. We can only speculate upon the nature of this oak wood. It would probably have been managed woodland rather than a residual patch of wild wood. Indeed, it might have been some sort of wooded pasture, which would have been an important resource in the Anglo-Saxon period.

The 6-inch OS map of 1888 shows an Oakleigh House near to the Oldswinford-Pedmore parish boundary, and this has led some researchers to believe that it represents the location of oak lēah (waypoint 22). However, according to Haden (1988), this house was not built until 1870, and no earlier reference to its name is known. As house names could sometimes be prone to a little fanciful invention (particularly during the Victorian era and thereafter), it is doubtful whether Oakleigh House can be considered reliable evidence of the Anglo-Saxon landscape. More importantly, Oakleigh House was sited upon a former open field (Bach, 1699) that might well have been in existence at the time of the charter, which means, of course, that it could not have been the site of an oak wood at that time.

As Hooke (1985, 2008 and 2011) and Gelling (1992) point out, woodland (some of it oak) may have been extensive in the region at the date of the charter. Large areas remained, as part of the Norman Kinver Forest, for several hundred years, and Oveley Wood is shown within

about one mile of this waypoint on John Speed's 1610 map of Worcestershire. The woodland has been intermittently cleared since the Anglo-Saxon period; and by the time of the first County Series OS survey of north Worcestershire (in 1882) only isolated areas survived—mainly in Pedmore and Hagley parishes. Because of the early extent of woodland, the "oak lēah" waypoint is not particularly helpful in establishing a precise location. Yet, there are a number of clues to be found in 19th century maps of the area. Hooke (1990) makes reference to a field named Oak Leasow (in Pedmore) as a possible candidate for "oak lēah". In addition, a field named Barkers Oak (on the 1846 Tithe map of Pedmore) abuts the boundary between Pedmore and Hagley parishes. A barker was a person who collected oak bark for tanning, so the name might indicate the presence of a significant number of oak trees in the vicinity. It is not inconceivable that oak woodland extended between the two fields mentioned and perhaps some way to the north and south as well. Some of the longer (and probably older) field boundaries and tracks in the vicinity might even represent a fingerprint of the woodland's extent in the late Anglo-Saxon period (woodland was often hedged at the time of the charter), but in the absence of precise dates for the field boundaries this is just conjecture.

If we suppose that the area of woodland extended northwards as indicated by the diffuse green region on figure 7, the charter boundary would come into contact with the edge of the oak woodland on its way to the next boundary marker. This is consistent with the wording of the charter's boundary clause. It does not indicate a route through or along the edge (eaves) of the wood, but instead simply says "...to oak lēah", which probably implies that the boundary makes contact with the wood at just one well-defined location.

One other piece of evidence supports the putative location of oak lēah. Its supposed northern boundary intersects Worcester Lane at a point exactly one mile by road from St Mary's church at Oldswinford; and this intersection lies adjacent to a field named Mile Oak (on the Pedmore tithe map). This might reflect the post-charter name of oak lēah, but more probably indicates that an oak tree surviving on the edge of the former woodland gave its name to Mile Oak field.

Photograph 11 shows, in a green tint, the area assumed to have been occupied by the southern part of this woodland. The photograph was taken from the Long Buckbury field on the Pedmore parish boundary (see figure 7), looking east towards Wychbury Hill.

The course of Worcester Lane: southern section

Did Worcester Lane (now the B4187) *run through oak lēah at the time of the charter? Woodland was a valuable resource and was often hedged to control access by both humans and animals, so it seems unlikely that a main road such as Worcester Lane would pass through oak lēah. Indeed, the Pedmore Tithe map and early OS maps hint that the route from Oldswinford settlement to Worcester might, at one time, have followed a more easterly course around the woodland. Aligning perfectly with the short north-south stub of Bromwich Lane near its junction with Hagley Road (the A491), we see a long field boundary extending southwards. The field boundary could, perhaps, mark an earlier southerly spur of Bromwich Lane as indicated in figure 8.*

At the parish boundary—which may also have been the southern limit of oak lēah—there is, even today, a noticeable kink where Worcester Lane (in Pedmore) flows into Worcester Road (in Hagley). At that point the road widened and a corresponding discontinuity in the parish boundary line is marked on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century OS maps. Indeed the parish boundary line seems to be a continuation of the south-eastern edge of the roadway here, as though the boundary had once been delineated by an easterly extension of Worcester Road.

It is, therefore, conceivable that in earlier times Worcester Road (which, on its way north, had already circumnavigated one of Hagley's open fields) deviated to the east and then north to join up with Bromwich Lane. Circumnavigating oak lēah, this track may have formed the main route from Worcester to Oldswinford and Pedmore.

23. From oak lēah to *lusdune*

The "-*dune*" element of this waypoint means hill or down, and the only feature in the vicinity that it could possibly describe is Burys Hill, located near the southern end of Ounty John Lane. Relative to the already elevated landscape, Burys Hill is a low and shallow sided peak lying about 300 metres west of the supposed oak lēah. Photograph 12 was taken from Racecourse Lane, looking south. It shows the broad, flat-sided slope of Burys Hill (the assumed *lusdune*) in the distance. The hill's summit is just right of centre, and Ounty John Lane runs along the top of the tree-covered escarpment to the left.

The OE word *lus* means louse, but according to Smith (1956b) it could have other meanings. In place names, it might represent a personal name, and, occasionally, it was used to describe something small or insignificant. The latter sense is most frequently to be found in the context of a hill or barrow. This adjective certainly describes Burys Hill quite accurately and seems to be a more likely etymology than the literal interpretation of "*lus*-" assumed previously. Indeed, according to the Pedmore Tithe Plan (1846), the term "Little Hill" survived as the name of the field which then enclosed the hill's summit. Its eastern boundary has since been removed and Little Hill field subsumed into its neighbour Burys Hill.

Further examples of 'lus-' place names

This meaning of 'lus' is not common, but examples of derived place names are known: Loosebarrow in Dorset and Luscott in Devon (Smith, 1956b). According to The University of Nottingham (2013) this usage of 'lus' might also underlie the name of a village near Leominster in Herefordshire called Luston. It is conceivable that it is also related to the settlement name Lusbridge (the pre-twentieth-century form of Ludgbridge at Wollescote) and might even have played a role in the derivation of the name of Lousy Wood, a narrow strip of woodland just north of the Stour near Prestwood, Staffordshire.

Other interpretations have been proposed for *lusdune* however. Pritchard (1997+) has tentatively suggested that "lousy" might refer to land with a pig sty (after Field, 1989), or that the hill in question could have been louse shaped. The former suggestion might be consistent with the idea of the nearby oak lēah (waypoint 22) being a wooded pasture (although it is more likely that the sense of "pig-sty" in certain place names derives from OE *hlōse* rather than *lus*—see Gelling, 1984). It is also interesting that the terms "ount" (as in the name "Ounty John Lane"; Haden, 1988) and "louse" have both been used locally to refer to a mole. The reader may wish to draw their own conclusions from this.

24. From *lusdune* to ?Sica's fortification

Most researchers agree that a likely site for this waypoint is on the high ground to the south of Burys Hill, near the fields named Great Buckbury, Barn Buckbury, Lower Buckbury and Long Buckbury on the 1846 Tithe map of Pedmore parish. The name ending "-bury" in "Buckbury" probably derives from OE *burh* (dative *byrig*) meaning a defended place (this is the reason for the translation of *sicanbyrig* to "Sica's fortification"). Place names with a "-bury" ending sometimes, but not always, refer to a fortification on a hill.

The geography of the vicinity would seem to make this a favourable location for a fortified settlement. The land falls away steeply to the south of waypoint 24, and this site also has access to a potential water supply: a steep stream valley begins a few metres away from this waypoint and eventually drains into the pools of Brake Mill Farm some 1200m to the south. Indeed, it is possible that this stream, rather than the postulated personal name *Sica,* is the origin of the waypoint's name. The OE *sic* means a small stream which is often dry in summer (Brown, 2015). Its derivatives sike and sitch are still used today; and a local example of the latter was, until the 20th century, to be found in Ravensitch. This settlement, on the southern slope of Amblecote Bank, was undoubtedly named after a small stream that flowed down the steep hill-side near the present-day Waterfall Road.

A "D" shaped feature (probably a mound with trees growing upon it) is depicted on the earliest County Series 6-inch OS map of the area (Worcestershire sheet 9.NW, 1885) within Long Buckbury field as shown in figure 9. The feature is approximately 12m x 12m in size and is located about 95m from the field's western boundary and 45m from its southern boundary. It is conceivable that it represented the remains of an earlier man-made structure—perhaps *sicanbyrig* itself. Presumably, generations of farmers had found it too difficult to remove this mound from the field, but by the twentieth century it may have become feasible for powered agricultural machinery to dig or plough it out, as the mound is not shown on OS maps of 1921 and later. The site now consists of smooth, though undulating, ploughed land (Photograph 13). The mound originally lay on what is now a small plateau near a break of slope to the ESE and also near a much more significant declivity to the south, close to the head of the above-mentioned stream valley.

Additionally, cropmarks were noted on aerial photographs of the "Buckbury" fields area in 1989 (see Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's Historic Environment Record (HER), entry no. 10602). They are described as having an elongated "D" shape with the flat side to the west and a sub-circular enclosure to the north-east. The HER states that the cropmarks are located "south of Burys Hill", but according to Mark Mather (2014) they lie within the field immediately east of the waterworks reservoir site (i.e. the field named Light Acres on the 1846 Tithe Plan of Pedmore). They are thus very close to the four "Buckbury" fields.

While these archaeological remains *might* be related to the *sicanbyrig* waypoint, evidence is purely circumstantial; and both the mound and the cropmarks remain undated. It is interesting that a group of fields bearing the name Compton is shown immediately east of the cropmarks on the 1846 Pedmore tithe map. The most common source for this name, OE *cumb* (valley), is certainly not applicable to these fields. The name Compton might instead derive from the OE words *camp* and *tūn*, referring to a settlement within, or near, an enclosed piece of land; and such a structure could be responsible for the cropmarks noted in the HER.

The Swinford Charter is probably not the only reference, in the historical literature, to this fortified site. Compiled some three-and-a-half centuries after the charter, the Great Perambulation of royal forests (dated AD 1300) includes a description of the bounds of Kinver Forest which was said to have included parts of Oldswinford and Pedmore manors (British History Online, 2014). Appendix B describes the perambulation of Kinver Forest's eastern boundary, which passes south along Wollaston Ridge to *Wolfeswrosne* (the raised hillocks, or drumlins, of glacial sand and gravel near Norton Covert) and then to *Feckebury* before again turning south towards *Ovemaste mere* (either the pools of Brake Mill Farm or Windmill pool near Blakedown). Though not independently identified, *Feckebury* would appear to have lain in the general vicinity of *sicanbyrig* and, in view of its "-bury" ending, it may well have represented the same structure. Indeed, the two names have certain additional similarities. If one accepts the "dry watercourse" meaning of *sicanbyrig*, substitution of an *-e-* for an *-i-* seems easily possible: OE *sic* sometimes mutated to (now archaic) forms such as seech, seek or seyke (Brown, 2015). It is also conceivable that confusion between a long (medial) 's' ('ſ') and the letter 'f' in early manuscripts, might go some way to explaining the different initial letters in *Sica-* and *Fecke-*.

25. From ?Sica's fortification to the street

Here, "the street" is undoubtedly a reference to the Roman road running NNW from Droitwich to Greensforge and Wroxeter. This forms the western boundary of Pedmore parish and part of the western boundary of Oldswinford. As the Roman road is an extended feature, the main question here relates to the route taken from Sica's fortification to "the street". A route close to the Pedmore-Hagley parish boundary seems most likely, as this follows a natural boundary feature, along a gently sloping ridge down to the Roman road.

The tithe maps for Pedmore (1846) and Hagley (1838) both show fields in this vicinity that spanned the parish boundary. Whilst their northern ends reside in Pedmore, they appear to have belonged to Hagley parish. The boundaries of these fields are straight, which probably indicates they are the product of eighteenth century enclosures, and as the parish boundary line (which is also perfectly straight) bisects these field boundaries, it is possible that it

represents an even later realignment. Whether the field boundaries that run roughly parallel to the documented parish boundary reflect an earlier division between Pedmore and Hagley parishes, or even date back to the time of the charter, is unknown.

The western boundary, back to the start (waypoints 26 to 28)

The remainder of the boundary clause appears to follow part of the Roman road and then the ridge of high ground west of Norton, then to the Stour north of Wollaston, and finally along the river back to the starting point. The charter boundary seems to have run close to that of the modern parish and county, although it is likely that some minor adjustment of the boundary has taken place.

26. Along (the) street to (the) boundary dyke

Following a line roughly NNW, the first 850m of the Roman road ("the street") is now occupied by County Lane and a bridleway named Sandy Lane. At the northern end of the bridleway, the Roman road intersects the junction of the present-day Broadway, Sugar Loaf Lane and Greyhound Lane. As illustrated in photograph 14, the Oldswinford parish boundary then takes a more northerly direction than the Roman road, which continues on towards Greensforge in an almost straight line.

Misleading road names

The names given to roads and tracks in this area can be confusing. The sandy track named Roman Road, which runs alongside Clent View Road, does not actually follow the line of the real Roman road. It is, in fact, the remains of an 18th century toll road and lies at an angle of about 12 degrees east of the first-century Roman road.

Roman Road (i.e. the 18th century toll road) is also known as Sandy Lane. This should not to be confused with the bridleway called Sandy Lane mentioned above, which is also erroneously named County Lane on some maps. Unlike Roman Road, both (the real) County Lane (i.e. south of the A451) and Sandy Lane (north of the A451) do run along the line of the first-century Roman road.

It is instructive here to examine the parish boundary in the region between Sugar Loaf Lane and Dunsley Road. The 1888 boundary line (on the 6 inch OS map) is coincident with the modern county and parish boundary. However, it differs slightly from the boundary courses depicted on both Court and Blackden's 1782 map and Brettel and Davies 1827 map. It is also worthy of note that, with the exception of a few tens of metres at its northern and southern extremities, this 1.5km stretch of the parish boundary is completely straight. The northern end of the straight section joins the southern boundary of Wollaston township, which is also perfectly straight and, on the 1888 OS map, runs ENE past High Park Farm.

Straight boundaries are often a characteristic of 18th century re-planning; and the linearity of the abovementioned stretch of the parish boundary (together with the fact that it bisects several otherwise continuous 18th century field boundaries) is suggestive of a fairly late origin. (This part of the parish boundary might even be contemporaneous with the Wollaston township boundary defined in 1780, although no direct evidence for this is known.)

North of Dunsley Road, however, the parish boundary is more sinuous and follows the crest of Wollaston Ridge (also known as High Park Ridge). Photograph 15 shows substantial earthworks here that extend between Dunsley Road and Bridgnorth Road: a pair of banks and ditches, separated by about 20 metres, stretch along the top and western flank of the ridge. Even today the eastern bank stands 2 to 5 metres above the partially filled eastern ditch. Although the earthworks are substantial, they are masked by dense woodland, are yet to be recorded by English Heritage, and do not appear in the Dudley HER.

This system of banks and ditches is very likely to be the charter's boundary dyke (*meredic*); and if this is the correct attribution the modern parish (and county) boundary line here must also represent that of the charter estate. The ridge extends north of Bridgnorth Road, but any

earthworks in this vicinity have been all but obliterated by the later Wollaston Ridge Quarry (now a SSSI with limited public access).

As illustrated in Photograph 14, the ridge of high ground also extends some distance south of Dunsley Road (although it is somewhat less pronounced, and less linear, in places). Whilst it is conceivable that the boundary dyke also extended along this part of the ridge to the present-day Westwood Avenue, or possibly even further south onto the Norton housing estate, no sign of earthworks exists in this region today. As the southern limit of the dyke is unknown, this begs the question of exactly where the charter boundary left the Roman road (*strete*) for the boundary dyke (*meredic*)—i.e. the location of waypoint 26. Brettel and Davies' 1827 map indicates that the parish boundary ran along the Roman road and present-day field line to the west of the modern boundary until it intersected Swinford Lane, at which point it veered east towards the ridge top. Court and Blackden's earlier map (1782) shows a broadly similar course.

Given the topography of the land and the proximity of the ridge lines to the Roman road, there would appear to be three options for the location of waypoint 26: near the end of Sugar Loaf Lane (marker 26a); close to Westwood Avenue (marker 26b), or near Dunsley Road (marker 26c), with the first option seeming the least likely.

Clearly, at the time of the charter, the dyke was already an established boundary feature, and this might indicate that it represented the western edge of Swinford or of an older estate to which Swinford once belonged.

The origin of the Wollaston Ridge dyke

The dyke's age is unknown, but it is conceivable that even in the tenth century it was of considerable antiquity. It was clearly a significant structure—both structurally and functionally—and at the time of the charter, it was evidently used as a boundary marker. Indeed, the probable line of the dyke has served to mark the parish and county boundaries for a millennium; and, if the present identification is correct, the same boundary line forms part of the western edge of the Dudley Metropolitan Borough today.

Prior to the eighteenth century, the area around Wollaston Ridge seems to have been unenclosed heath land, so it is unlikely that the dyke began life as a mere field boundary. A pre-charter estate boundary is more probable; but, without hard archaeological evidence, it is impossible to say whether this might date back to the early sub-Roman or Romano-British periods or even to the Iron Age. Indeed, the bank and ditch system here seems so substantial that one can't help but wonder whether it originally served some sort of defensive function—especially as it lies within an ancient borderland that appears to have divided the iron age Cornovii and Dobunni tribes (see King, 1996; Cunliffe, 2002, and Webster, 1991).

The dyke and underlying sandstone ridge is roughly co-linear with a similar ridge in Kingswinford parish which is supposed by Hooke (1983) to have defined the course of the tenth-century Eswich boundary dyke (see Appendix A and 'Local parishes and estates' in the Introduction). Though no sign of the latter dyke survives on Kingswinford's ridge today, it is tempting to view the juxtaposition of two potentially similar dykes as representing a single larger feature such as the boundary of an important early tribal territory—perhaps belonging to the Husmeræ, Hwicce or the Dobunni—or of an Anglo-Saxon royal estate.

At less than 1km long, the dyke on Wollaston (High Park) ridge is short by comparison with many others in Britain. Bell (2012) suggests that some of the shorter dykes might have been intended "to control and to tax movement of people or goods, by forcing them to use designated routes". Dunsley Road, which lies adjacent to the (apparent) end of the dyke, seems to be an ancient route from Kinver, Whittington and Stourton (Perry, 2001); and a connection between this road and the dyke is one possibility.

Alternatively, the dyke could have served a similar purpose with respect to the nearby first-century Roman road. In a few locations in the Midlands (i.e. Derbyshire and Shropshire) and in Wales, dykes have been recorded which join or cross Roman roads. They consist typically of a single bank and ditch, vary from several hundred metres to a few kilometres in length, and appear to date from the late Roman, sub-Roman or early Anglo-Saxon periods. The geography in the vicinity (see figures 6, 7 and 9) would certainly have been amenable to such a use, but there is no known archaeological evidence to indicate whether this was the case.

27. From (the) boundary dyke to (the) Stour

Because the boundary clause (as translated by Hooke, 1990) uses the word "from" rather than "along", this would seem to indicate that the dyke stopped some distance short of the Stour, perhaps near the junction of the present-day Hyperion Road and Vicarage Road (see photograph 16), where the Wollaston ridge gives way to Dividale Comon and the stream valley of the Dividale Brook. The former is now farmland and the latter is hidden behind the houses on the western side of Kingsway.

28. Along (the) Stour so that [it comes] back to Swine Ford

This waypoint is not shown on figure 7, but it clearly returns us to the starting point of the boundary clause.

Accuracy of the Proposed Boundary Route

Despite a few similarities with Chambers' (1978) and Hooke's (1990) interpretations, the boundary route proposed above differs markedly from those which have been published before. Consequently, the present proposal can only be justified by a high level of correspondence between the charter's boundary clause and the evidence available for each waypoint (i.e. field names, mapped field boundaries, geological, geographical and ancient man-made features on the ground).

One consequence of the present boundary interpretation is that (unlike in some previous proposals) the waypoints plotted in figure 7 are spaced at quite regular intervals. This is encouraging. Closely, or unevenly, spaced waypoints would have been regarded with some suspicion, unless there happened to be a small and obviously important (perhaps valuable) landscape feature to be circumnavigated. While the uniformity of the waypoint spacing is reassuring, it is not, of course, proof of overall correctness or of the accuracy of any individual waypoint.

To assess the accuracy of the interpretation as a whole we must consider how closely each waypoint conforms to the various evidential sources, as well as the number of consecutive waypoints that are well supported by the available evidence. A rudimentary, and somewhat subjective, comparison is facilitated by simply totalling the number of descriptive elements in the boundary clause that are consistent with at least one piece of landscape, place-name or geological evidence along the proposed course of the boundary. For the southern boundary alone, the present proposal is consistent with seventeen independent descriptive elements. This compares with eight consistent elements in the routes proposed by Grundy (1928) and Chambers (1978), and ten in the cases of Hooke (1990) and Pritchard (1997+). Indeed, in the present interpretation of the southern boundary, there is only one waypoint (20 "Along the street to the posts") for which evidence is weak and circumstantial. Evidence for the remaining points on the southern boundary is generally good and, in most instances (points 10-14, 16, 18, 21-25), the suggested locations fit the boundary clause very well indeed.

The alternative eastern boundary route (Route B) is perhaps better supported by the landscape evidence than is the conventional "parish-boundary" route (Route A), although the difference in evidential quality here is insufficient to justify any firm conclusions.

Because of the large number of waypoints that are well supported by the available evidence; because the waypoints are distributed evenly; because most of them mark directional or topographical changes along the course of the boundary, and because there is a credible explanation for the resulting shape of the charter estate, I believe the proposed boundary route (summarised below) can be regarded with, at least, a small degree of confidence.

Preferred Boundary Route

Based upon this author's subjective assessment of the accuracy of each proposed waypoint, the following boundary route is suggested as being the most likely:

Northern Boundary	Waypoint allocation A, starting at the intersection of the A491 and the Stour.
Eastern Boundary	Route B, encompassing the whole of Oldnall hill.
Southern Boundary	Route via waypoint 11a, then around Oldswinford settlement and Pepper Hill via waypoints 16b, 17b, 18, 19b and 20b.
Western Boundary	Via waypoint 26c.

Figure 10 summarises the preferred boundary route. Other researchers may, of course, come to different conclusions, but I hope the suggestions presented here will make a useful contribution to the debate.

Discussion

Before examining what the charter bounds might be able to tell us about the tenth century pattern of land use and ownership in the area, it is useful to consider a few additional details about the charter's designation and origin.

The name of the charter estate

The charter estate was carved out of a larger area called Swinford (or Suineford). The modern names Oldswinford and Kingswinford almost certainly derive from "Swinford" (although other theories have been put forward). At the time of the Domesday survey, the charter estate—or, more probably, a modified variant of it—was still known as Swinford (Suineford); and it was not until the late-medieval period that documentary sources began to use the name Oldeswyneford (or variants thereof) for the parish, manor and settlement centre. Similarly, that part of Swinford north of the Stour which had been retained by the crown in AD 951x959 was referred to as Swinesford in 1086 (though the name was prefaced with the words "Rex tenet", The King holds). This area eventually became known as Swinford Regis then Kingswinford.

The name of the village we now know as Oldswinford is unusual. Whereas most other local Anglo-Saxon settlements are named after something that existed at the settlement site itself (e.g. a *cot* or a *tūn*), Oldswinford's name is clearly derived from the name of a much wider area: the manor. This would seem to indicate that the village received its name some time after the manor was formed; and it raises the question as to what the settlement's Anglo-Saxon precursor was called. Unfortunately we can only speculate upon whether it was originally part of Pybba's putative land holding—perhaps having a name that reflected this—or whether it originally possessed a much older British name, or indeed whether the settlement existed at all before the manor was established.

It is conceivable that the settlement eventually became known as Upper Suineford in order to distinguish it from the original Suineford, the focus of which lay on lower ground nearer to the Stour. "Upper Swinford" is used in a 1733 boundary perambulation but it the name might have a much earlier origin. By the nineteenth century Upper Swinford referred to that part of Oldswinford village extending from the main north-south through route (the A491) west towards Norton, while the term Lower Swinford referred to the low-lying land near the ancient settlement centre—i.e. around St Mary's Church, the Clatterbatch and Brook Road (see Scott, 1832, and Bentley's Directory, 1841).

The charter itself doesn't have a formal title. It is usually referred to in the literature as being a charter for "Upper Swinford", "Oldswinford" or "Old Swinford". However, to describe the charter in such terms seems inappropriate: the original Anglo-Saxon document mentions only the name "Swinford"; and all three of the afore-mentioned place names probably post-date the charter by many years. More importantly, using the designations "Oldswinford Charter" or "Old Swinford Charter" (as some researchers have done) might appear to pre-judge the question of whether the charter estate encompassed the Anglo-Saxon precursor of Oldswinford *village*. As we have seen, the charter bounds appear to exclude this settlement.

Which king? What date?

The PASE database (2010) indicates that there is some doubt over the identity of the king who made the grant to Burhelm. The Swinford charter refers (in latin) to the grantor being: *Eadred, king of the English and gubernator and rector of the surrounding peoples*. However, some academics believe the charter might actually have been issued by one of Eadred's successors: Eadwig or Edgar. Eadred's name appears to have been substituted for Eadwig's in at least one other Anglo-Saxon document; and the witnesses listed at the end of the Swinford charter seem to belong to the reign of King Edgar.

Eadred reigned as King of the English from AD 946 until his death in AD 955, when he was succeeded by Eadwig. Following insurrection in Northumbria and Mercia, Eadwig's brother Edgar acceded to the kingdom there, becoming King of the Mercians in AD 957. Two years later Eadwig died and Edgar became King of all the English.

The uncertainty over the grantor's identity leaves us with a corresponding uncertainty over the date of the Swinford charter. PASE (2010) quotes a broad potential date range of AD 951-9, but notes that one authority dates the Swinford charter to AD 958-9—i.e. within the reign of King Edgar.

Acreage and hideage assessments

One of the most useful inferences we can draw from the present boundary interpretation (if indeed it is correct) is that the settlement of Oldswinford and its agricultural land probably extended to about 180 acres (approx. 1½ hides) at the date of the charter. Pedmore may have been a similar size or slightly smaller.

There has been some discussion of the hideage assessments quoted in the charter and in the Domesday book entries for Oldswinford and Pedmore. Before commenting further on this, it is useful to review the meaning of a "hide" and compare this with the approximate areas of the land associated with local estates and parishes.

The hide

A hide was originally a unit of cultivated (or ploughable) land area used as the basis for assessing tax liability. Introduced by the mid-Saxon period, it was supposedly the amount of land that could support one (extended) household and which could be cultivated by a single team of eight oxen in a ploughing season. It was not an absolute measure of land area and, for a number of reasons (i.e. the quality and fertility of the land being ploughed, as well as local custom), the number of acres in a hide tended to vary between about 48 and 240.

For the purpose of this comparison, we can assume that a hide is approximately 120 acres, but it should be noted that, whatever the assumed size of a hide (or of the supposedly equivalent *mansæ*), the *manse* and hideage assessments given in the charter and in the Domesday book represent only a small fraction (of the order of one tenth) of the total land of each estate. This is evident from a comparison of the acreages in table 2 with the Domesday book hideage assessments of the related estates: (King)Swinford - 5 hides; Amblecote - 1 hide; (Old)Swinford (not including Amblecote) - 3 hides; Pedmore - 3 hides.

Table 2. Total acreage of local parishes (and parts thereof) calculated from 19th century Ordnance Survey mapping

Parish or land unit	Area / acres
Kinswinford (incl. the later Quarry Bank and Brierley Hill UD)	7372
Amblecote (part of Oldswinford parish)	665
Oldswinford (whole parish, including Amblecote)	3369
Oldswinford parish south of The Stour only (i.e. excluding Amblecote)	2704
Pedmore parish	1510
Hagley parish	2431

The charter specifies that the estate conveyed to Burhelm contained six *mansæ;* and this has led some researchers (e.g. Hooke, 1990; Pritchard, 1997, and Peacock, 2014) to suggest that the estate granted would have included most of the area enclosed by the manors of Oldswinford and Pedmore (as documented in 19th century maps). This seems an obvious assumption, but there are several problems associated with this line of reasoning.

Apart from the fact that it is difficult to match scattered hideages with the boundaries of more extensive estates and manors, one must take account of the fact that some 130 years had elapsed between the charter grant and Domesday. This period encompassed a time of widespread administrative change that included the development (if not the inception) of the Hundred and Shire systems as well as open (common) field agriculture in the midlands. More significantly, perhaps, the final twenty years of this period (after the Norman conquest) saw widespread unrest and turmoil which undoubtedly resulted in a degree of depopulation and diminished agriculture. Quite how far this affected the region around Swinford is unknown, but the Domesday survey records a reduction in monetary value of Oldswinford and Pedmore manors (combined) of almost 50% between 1066 and 1086. It also records a deficiency in Pedmore's plough teams, noting that there was land for three more ploughs than the manor actually possessed. This, of course, suggests a fairly recent reduction in its arable production. Whilst external factors could have contributed to Oldswinford and Pedmore's falling monetary value, the loss of a few hides prior to 1086 is certainly not inconceivable.

This possibility tends to undermine the argument that the charter estate's six *mansae* must have corresponded to the combined hideages of Oldswinford and Pedmore some 130 years later. A more likely scenario is that the total hideage within the area of these two (probably later) manors gradually increased in line with agricultural developments during the century after the charter grant, and then fell markedly in the twenty years that preceded the Domesday survey,

A very crude analysis illustrates this point. On the basis of the Domesday valuations it is probably reasonable to conclude that, in 1066, the combined agricultural area of Oldswinford and Pedmore manors was somewhat greater than their six hides recorded in 1086. We can only guess at the exact figure, but two or three additional hides (making eight or nine hides in total) in 1066 does not seem unrealistic. We have seen from the charter bounds that the agricultural land around Oldswinford *settlement* probably extended to around 1½ hides in the mid tenth century. Pedmore might have been roughly the same size or a little smaller. These two settlements seem to have been the only constituents of the 1066 combined hideage that lay outside the tenth-century charter estate, which leaves about 5½ to 6 hides enclosed by the charter estate's boundary. Such a close correspondence with the six *mansae* specified in the charter is certainly not proof that the boundary suggested here is correct, but the plausibility of this scenario does illustrate that the documentary evidence we have is insufficient to lend any weight to the counter-argument—i.e. that the charter estate must have occupied the entire area of both of the later manors.

The key question here is whether the various settlements within the proposed bounds of the charter estate (i.e. Wollaston, Bedcote, Wollescote, The Lye, Foxcote, and perhaps Oldnall and other smaller settlements and farmsteads which probably existed at the time—e.g. *Welshmen's Croft*) could have made up the estate's six *mansæ.* It certainly seems plausible: presumably each settlement was occupied by at least one extended household and was more-or-less self sufficient, so would (by definition) account for about one hide (or *manse*) each.

Notwithstanding the above analysis, it should be remembered that, we might not even be comparing like with like. Earlier in the Anglo-Saxon period, a hide (and presumably a *manse*) was a measure of arable land on which tax assessments were based. But there is a great deal of evidence that the hideages recorded in the Domesday survey did not accurately reflect the productive agricultural land of a manor (Darby and Terrett, 1971). Instead, the figures seem to have represented a notional amount of land on which taxes *could* be levied rather than an actual tax liability or a physical land area.

Ownership of the land excluded from the estate

This is an interesting issue, and one that goes hand-in-hand with the question of whether the charter estate's bounds reflect an earlier, or co-existing (e.g. neighbouring), territorial division.

The estate gifted to Burhelm would, it seems, have included Bedcote, Lye, Foxcote, Wollescote, Wollaston, perhaps Oldnall, and possibly a few other minor settlements and farmsteads, as well as large areas of uncultivated heath and moorland in the west.

We know, of course, that the area of Swinford north of the Stour (i.e. Kingswinford) was retained by the crown. And, if the proposed extent of the charter estate is correct, it seems the settlements of Oldswinford and Pedmore, their associated agricultural land, plus Wychbury Hill, its fort and (possibly) an area of oak woodland south-west of Pedmore were also excluded from the estate. It is not immediately obvious who owned these assets at the time, but much of the surrounding area appears to have belonged to the crown.

During the reign of King Ethelred (AD 978/9-1016), Kingswinford (together with the manors of Clent and Tardebigge) were sold to Ægelsius, Dean of Worcester, by the King, so they were clearly all royal land prior to this sale.

Indeed, there appears to have been long-standing royal links between these three vills. Apart from the abovementioned simultaneous transfer to Ægelsius, the Domesday book records that the renders for Clent and Tardebigge were paid at Kingswinford. The most probable reason for such a practice is that they were all, at one time, in common ownership. It is possible that there are much more ancient links between Clent, Tardebigge and Kingswinford, and hence the pre-charter Swinford. These land units may, at one time, have been parts of a much larger (and probably quite ancient) estate that started to break up many years before the date of the charter, the charter representing only one step in the extended process of fragmentation.

As the pre-charter Swinford was in royal ownership it seems very likely, in light of the foregoing observations, that Clent was also owned by the crown at the time of the charter. It was certainly a royal manor at the time of the Domesday survey. It was also the *caput,* or principal manor, of the Worcestershire hundred of Clent, which probably dates back at least to the mid-tenth century. Additionally, according to Currie (1998), Clent appears to have been the location of an early minster church (with dependent chapelries at Broom and Rowley Regis). Such churches were commonly sited within royal estates during the mid-Anglo-Saxon period. The evidence would therefore seem to imply that, by the time of the Swinford charter, Clent had been a royal land-holding for several hundred years.

But what was the status of the land sandwiched between Swinford and Clent (i.e. Hagley and those parts of Pedmore that appear to have been excluded from the charter estate)? Was this land owned by the crown (indeed was it part of the pre-charter Swinford) or was it a separately held estate? Royal possession seems the most likely scenario, particularly when one considers Hemingway's (2005) speculation on the bisection of Wychbury hill fort by the, presumably later, parish boundary: "*Perhaps Pedmore and Hagley to the south had been royal land given the division of the* [Wychbury] *hill fort between the two*". This "royal land" may well have consisted of several discrete holdings, vills or estates—Pybba's Moor (Pedmore) and the putative Pybba's Hyll (Pepper Hill) perhaps belonging to one of them (see the discussion of waypoint 17 previously).

The idea that the area south of the charter estate was owned by the crown is supported by the fact that the later manors of (Old)Swinford, Pedmore, Hagley, Clent (including its dependencies Broom and Rowley Regis), Lutley, Cradley, Dudley, Warley, and Halesowen formed one of two discrete blocks of land that made up the Clent Hundred. The boundary of this block coincides with the northern part of Kidderminster Rural Deanery, an early ecclesiastical division which (according to Hooke, 1985) may have derived from an even earlier sub-tribal territory. Evidence for the origins of this land unit is patchy, but the indications are that many or all of the estates within it—perhaps together with Kingswinford, Ashwood and Kinver (see King, 1996)—had once been in common ownership; and it is

known, of course, that several of these estates were, at one time, royal manors. Indeed it is known from other parts of the country that Hundreds (which are thought to have been created some time during the tenth century) sometimes corresponded to ancient royal estates.

There is, however, evidence that Kinver and Ashwood might not have been part of the royal estate which spawned the Hundred of Clent. The system of dykes that run along Wollaston ridge, and which seem to have continued north along Kingswinford ridge in the tenth century (see Appendix A), clearly separate Kinver and Ashwood from Swinford. Hoskins (1955) points out that, because of the labour involved in constructing such dykes, they tend to"*represent the boundaries of the more important estates*"; and it may well be that these dykes marked not only the boundary of Swinford, but also partially delimited of the early Clent Hundred.

Assuming the land between Swinford and Clent was, indeed, royal land at the time of the charter, the king must have considered the settlements now known as Oldswinford and Pedmore to be sufficiently valuable (either financially or politically) to retain them within his own estate. Whether these areas (and indeed Lutley, Cradley and Hagley) were also components of the original Swinford must remain an unanswered, though interesting, question.

Relationship of the charter estate to the documented Oldswinford and Pedmore manors and parishes

There are clear similarities between the bounds of the charter estate and those of Oldswinford manor and parish. However, if the boundary analysis presented here is correct, there are also important differences in the southern, and perhaps eastern, boundaries; and we should consider whether these differences can tell us anything useful about the origin of the manor and parish.

The most obvious question is whether the manor and parish date from before the charter, or whether they are later developments. It seems most likely that Oldswinford manor (or, at least, the form of the manor that we recognise today) dates from after the charter. If it had been in existence before, it is hard to see why a new estate (i.e. the charter estate) would include every part of the manor other than its main settlement centre, and why it might have included part of a neighbouring estate (Cradley) as well. And, of course, there is no mention of the manor or parish boundary in the charter itself—unless *meredic* in waypoint 26 can be construed as such. This is, of course, consistent with evidence from other parts of the Midlands and elsewhere that many parishes came into existence after about AD 1000—in some cases several hundred years after.

So if Oldswinford and Pedmore manors and parishes *are* of a later date, one or more boundary changes must have occurred in order to yield the manor outlines that are familiar from 19th century mapping. Two new boundary lines would have to have been drawn to separate Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley; and the settlement now known as Oldswinford would, by this means, have been placed within its own manor.

But when and how did such changes come about, and how are the charter estate's boundaries related to the documented 18th and 19th century boundaries of Oldswinford and Pedmore manors and parishes?

The charter estate and surrounding land must have seen several changes of ownership in the century or so leading up to the Norman invasion: the beneficiary of the charter (in AD 951 to 959) was Burhelm; and prior to 1066, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, (Old)Swinford manor was owned by Wulfwin; Pedmore by Turgar (or Thorger); Amblecote by two individuals of Earl Alfgar; Hagley by Godric (a royal theign), and Kingswinford by King Edward himself. There is clearly some scope for adjustment of estate boundaries along with the various changes of ownership that took place during this period; and clearly by the time of the Domesday book (1086), Oldswinford, Pedmore, Amblecote, Hagley and Kingswinford

were distinct and separate manors. It seems that the manorial boundaries of Oldswinford and Pedmore could not have existed in their familiar form until after the date of the Swinford charter, implying a date range of c950 to 1086 for the formation of the local manor boundaries.

The associated parishes reside within a very similar boundary pattern, but their date of origin is less certain. We noted earlier that the regularity in the shape and size of Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley parishes might imply that their layout reflects a degree of authoritative planning rather than piecemeal evolution of their constituent land units. Indeed it seems that the strip-like layout of Clent, Hagley, Pedmore and Oldswinford was contrived to give each manor a share of available soil types and of upland and lowland landscapes, while maintaining central access to the ancient (and still important) Droitwich-to-Penkridge saltway. Similar patterns are seen elsewhere in the country, often abutting rivers or escarpments (Hooke, 1988 and 1989), with individual manors linked by major roads such as the saltway.

This type of boundary pattern seems to have arisen from division of a larger land unit. The processes of estate fragmentation (sometimes leading to regularities in the boundary pattern) had begun in the mid-Anglo-Saxon period (Hooke, 1985 and 1988), but some *planned* land divisions seem to belong to a much later period. Winchester (2008) points out that regular boundary patterns, such as that around Oldswinford, tend to date from the late Anglo-Saxon or very early Norman period when, in many parts of England, "the territorial framework of the countryside was [being] rewritten". Indeed, the tenth and early eleventh centuries saw great changes in administrative boundaries being introduced in response to the Danish threat. The Mercian shires gradually developed (probably in form as well as function) from an earlier network of hundreds and proto-shires, the latter having been introduced in the early tenth century to support the fortified burhs built by Edward the Elder and Lady Aethelfaed.

For the most part, the shires were planned according to an administrative ideal, whereby the new counties became the top level in a hierarchy of land units. It seems that each shire was designed to contain a multiple of 600 hides (typically 1200 or 2400, although Staffordshire and Warwickshire are exceptions); and the shire's hides were divided into blocks of 100 known, logically enough, as *Hundreds.* On a smaller scale, these same hides were distributed between the hundred's various estates or manors. It is not possible to reconstruct the initial hidage pattern exactly for all counties, but the totals apparent in the Domesday survey often come very close to the ideal.

Although the individual estates and manors possessed different numbers of hides, it has been noted that, in many cases within the local shires, hideages tend to conform to yet another underlying pattern of organisation: adjacent estates seem to be arranged in blocks containing multiples of five hides. This was first reported by Round (1895) and has since been studied by a number of other academics (see Darby and Terrett 1971, for a comparative overview). Whether the five-hide pattern was a deliberate feature of shire planning or of Domesday assessment, or simply an artefact of earlier land grants and estate fragmentation is not known. But what is very clear is that the taxation and administrative land requirements of the shire (i.e. its hidation) bore little relation to the aereal distribution of agricultural land or the estate-ownership patterns which had hitherto evolved. It was clearly desirable to have each lords' landholding falling within a single hundred or county. But it could not always have been possible to match the shire's administrative ideals to pre-existing land units, and it seems that in some places the new county boundaries were laid through existing estates. Many of the detached county fragments near the northern and southern boundaries of Worcesterhire probably resulted from efforts to reconcile such conflicting requirements.

And on a more local scale, land use within each manor was changing: the development of open-field agriculture and the advent of village nucleation may also have been factors influencing boundary change. Though both processes may have been ongoing for some time, the reallocation of agricultural land would undoubtedly have altered hidage and settlement patterns and, ultimately, may have created a desire for rationalisation of the local boundaries. This is most likely to have occurred where adjacent estates were held by a common lord or by the Crown.

Any one of the abovementioned changes in land use and administration (or, more probably, a combination of two or more of them) could have resulted in the redrawing of the local boundaries and ultimately in the creation of Oldswinford and Pedmore manors.

A clue to the origin of Oldswinford *parish* might be obtained from the events that followed the death of King Ethelred in AD 1016: those parts of the pre-charter Swinford north of the Stour that had been retained by the crown (i.e. Kingswinford, probably including Amblecote) saw an abrupt change of ownership. They were seized—together with Clent (presumably including Broom and Rowley Regis) and Tardegigge—by Ævic, Sheriff of Staffordshire, from Ægelsius*, the Dean of Worcester, after the death of both Ethelred and Ægelsius* in 1016. As a result, Kingswinford, Clent and Tardebigge subsequently became parts of Staffordshire.

When Hemming of Worcester documented these events in c1095, he did not mention Amblecote explicitly. But as Amblecote also became part of Staffordshire, it seems likely that it was amongst the lands seized by Ævic, probably being, at that time, an integral part of Kingswinford. Presumably the manor of Amblecote was then carved out of Kingswinford some time after 1016.

Despite the 1016 seizure, Amblecote remained in the Worcester diocese (which had been formed some time between AD 663 and AD 680). Indeed, the manor has resided within Oldswinford parish (part of the Worcester diocese) for most of its history; and it is tempting to speculate upon whether Amblecote's apparent separation from Kingswinford was somehow related to its ecclesiastical connections. This possibility raises the interesting question of whether the postulated division of Amblecote from Kingswinford was linked to the foundation of Oldswinford parish. If it was, that would probably put the date of the latter's formation—and perhaps also the boundary changes which gave rise to the neighbouring Pedmore parish—at some time after AD 1016. This might also be indicative of the dates at which the parish churches of St Mary's, Oldswinford and St Peter's, Pedmore were established (although it is quite possible that these churches developed from earlier religious sites, only becoming official parish churches after 1016).

Peacock (2014) suggests that St Peter's church in Pedmore might originally have been a daughter church, or dependent chapel, of St Mary's in Oldswinford, although only limited evidence survives to support this hypothesis (Peacock, 2015). Nevertheless, if this is a correct assessment of the relationship between the two churches, St Mary's would almost certainly have been the first to be established. It would also imply a historical link between the geographical areas served by the two churches, perhaps indicating that the vills of Oldswinford and Pedmore had once belonged to the same estate—precisely as the Swinford charter's circuitous southern boundary would seem to indicate. It is not uncommon for parish churches to have been built upon earlier religious sites. That might have been the case with St Mary's (especially if it was, indeed, the original parish church of the locality), but there is, unfortunately, no direct evidence of such a chapel serving the putative seventh-century "Pybba's estate" (see the discussion of waypoint 17).

Even if it were possible to accurately date the local manors and parishes, one should not assume that every metre of their boundaries also shares the same origin. Some parts are probably much older, being inherited from larger parent estates (e.g. Oldswinford's western boundary). And indeed some parts might be considerably younger: it is probable that, throughout their history, the parish boundaries will have been subject to occasional disagreement and revision (as evidenced, for example, by the 1733 Oldswinford boundary perambulation where two such disagreements are noted), finally resulting in the boundary forms recorded on the 19th century Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps.

With regard to these maps, it is interesting to observe that several small L-shaped steps exist in parts of the southern boundaries of Oldswinford and Pedmore parishes (see figure 7). Their shape obviously results from the parish boundaries following the edges of headlands and furlongs in each community's cultivated fields, and it almost certainly indicates that the agricultural lands of Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley abutted each other at the date(s) that the *L-shaped portions* of the boundaries became established.

* PASE (2010) refers here to: Æthelsige, "deacon" of Worcester church and "one of the King's counsellors".

What became of the charter estate?

So far we have implicitly assumed that its boundaries were somehow modified to form the manors of Oldswinford and Pedmore, but we have no way of knowing whether that is correct. Perhaps the charter estate was dissolved completely or perhaps one or more fragments of the estate remained as identifiable land units within the new manor of Oldswinford. If the latter occurred, that begs the question of what happened to those fragments and what status they held within the manorial system.

Many of the Anglo-Saxon charter estates were undoubtedly the direct precursors of entire medieval manors and parishes; and often the mutation from one to the other appears to have involved little in the way of boundary change. Clearly, that is not what happened in the case of the Swinford charter estate. An alternative scenario is exemplified by a small number of the Worcestershire charters which seem to represent estates that became subunits of later manors or vice versa; and one wonders whether something similar might have taken place here. What follows though is pure conjecture, but it represents an interesting possibility nonetheless.

As we have seen, the settlement of Oldswinford was not included in the Swinford charter estate. Instead, the latter's main settlement and agricultural centres would most likely have been Bedcote (near the present day Stourbridge town) and Foxcote. The name of the estate (or a subsequent fragment of it) might well have reflected this; and interestingly there is a reference in the historical documents to an area called *Bettecote & Foxcote*. This appears in a legal document (a *Finalis Concordia*) detailing the conveyance of a single messuage and ⅓ carucate of land to a gentleman named Geoffrey de Kynesdele in 1290. Chambers (1978) interprets this reference to *Bettecote & Foxcote* as evidence that the lands belonging to these settlements were contiguous in the late thirteenth century—i.e. that a tract of land must have stretched between these two settlement centres (perhaps including Lye and Wollescote) and that this tract was known (at least locally) as *Bettecote & Foxcote*. Though its status is unknown, it was obviously a clearly identifiable land unit and of sufficient relevance in 1290 to be referenced in an important legal document.

Until the early 14th century Wollaston had been enclosed within Kinver forest. It would have been subject to strict forest law and probably developed relatively slowly. Consequently, this vill and the heath and moorland of Norton may have been regarded as somewhat separate elements of Oldswinford manor. They might have seemed relatively unrelated to the main agricultural regions further east, and one can see why the latter might well have been regarded simply as *Bettecote and Foxcote*.

According to Perry (2001), the sub-manor of Bedcote was formed in 1366, but its extent at that time is not recorded. The first description of its boundary was compiled by Bishop Lyttelton (in 1754) from depositions made during a court case of 1622.

Bishop Lyttelton's perambulation indicates that the 1622 boundary was very similar to those of the 1699 township of Stourbridge and the 1866 civil parish of Stourbridge (indicated respectively on Bach's 1699 plan of Oldswinford and the 1888 edition of the OS 6-inch County Series map). The major difference in the case of the 1622 boundary is that Bedcote manor's eastern limit extended significantly further towards Lye and Foxcote at that date. Chambers (1978) saw the apparent boundary change between 1622 and 1699 as part of a longer term process of fragmentation in which the 1622 Bedcote manor had been cleaved (perhaps when it was formed in 1366) from the larger *Bettecote and Foxcote* of 1290.

Extrapolating this hypothetical process further back in time, it is easy to imagine that the 1290 *Bettecote & Foxcote* might itself have been produced by fragmentation of a larger land unit, perhaps even the estate documented in the Swinford charter.

The process of fragmentation, tentatively illustrated in figure 11, might not be as unlikely as it first seems, because there would appear to be important similarities in the relevant boundary patterns. Firstly, the manorial centre of Oldswinford (i.e. the settlement itself) probably did not

lie within the 1290 *Bettecote & Foxcote*; and, if the present boundary analysis is correct, it had also lain outside the charter estate.

Moreover, the course of the charter estate's boundary between the settlements of Bedcote and Oldswinford appears to be very similar to the boundary line of the 1866 parish of Stourbridge, the 1699 Stourbridge township, the 1622 Bedcote sub-manor, and in all probability the 1290 *Bettecote & Foxcote*. We have already noted that the charter boundary might have followed a more northerly precursor of Heath Lane and Glasshouse Hill between waypoints 16 and 17 (i.e. Grendel's mere and the stone chamber), perhaps running very close to the southern boundary of the later Bedcote sub-manor (i.e. between markers 16b and 17b on figure 7). The marking out of the charter boundary might even have led to the supposed boundary stone (OE *hān* - see the discussion of waypoint 17 previously) being sited upon Hanbury Hill. However, it is entirely possible that this part of the boundary ante-dates even the Swinford charter, perhaps being an earlier dividing line between the townships of Bedcote and Pedmore.

When the new Oldswinford and Pedmore manorial boundaries were eventually imposed upon the landscape (some time after the mid-tenth century), severe damage must have been done to the integrity of the charter estate; and, given the distribution of settlements and natural boundary features within the latter, a fragment encompassing the two main settlements (Bedcote and Foxcote) would seem to be a likely consequence. Whether this fragment had any official standing or administrative purpose, or whether its name (used in the 1290 *Finalis Concordia*) was just a colloquial term for a locally-recognised area within the manor is a matter of conjecture.

Concluding Summary

The new analysis of the charter bounds yields several interesting results. Firstly, the paved road (*strete*) in waypoints 19 and 20 *might* have been Worcester Lane (i.e. the B4187, formerly A450). If it was, the boundary perambulation indicates that a paved section of Worcester Lane extended at least as far south as its junction with Racecourse Lane in the mid tenth century. There is, however, contradictory evidence to suggest that this *strete* was instead the A491 Hagley Road (as suggested by some previous researchers) and that Worcester Lane was not a through road in the tenth century, at that time serving only as an access road between Oldswinford settlement and an a large area of managed oak woodland (oak lēah).

The western boundary of the charter estate appears to have corresponded closely to the later parish and county boundaries, although some minor differences are probable.

Of more significance is the finding that the charter estate's southern, and perhaps eastern, boundaries deviate considerably from those of the local manors and parishes. This is not inconsistent with the view that Oldswinford manor and the associated parish developed some years after the date of the charter (AD 951x959). Where the charter and parish bounds *do* coincide (i.e. where boundary lines appear to have been stable or reused) they tend to follow prominent landscape features such as the Stour, ridges of high ground and pre-existing boundary dykes.

Surprisingly, the charter's boundary clause appears to have excluded the settlement centre of Oldswinford and its cultivated fields. It had been formerly thought that the Swinford charter represented a direct precursor of Oldswinford manor and parish, but its markedly different boundary pattern indicates that the developmental links between them may be more complex than first envisaged. Clearly a significant degree of restructuring must have taken place in order to yield the documented (i.e. eighteenth and nineteenth century) outline of the parish.

Amongst the Worcestershire charters, there are a few instances where charter estates seem to represent sub-units of later manors or *vice versa* (Bickmarsh and Ullington, S 751, and Cofton Hacket, S 1272, in Hooke, 1990), but it is thought unusual for charter bounds to cut markedly across manor boundaries unless they are outlining entire, perhaps pre-existing, sub-units of land or townships (Hooke, 1985). It is not known with any certainty why the outline of Oldswinford manor differs so significantly from the Swinford charter bounds, but (if the solution presented here is correct) the evident realignment of the Oldswinford-Pedmore boundary clearly indicates a link between the foundation, or development, of these two manors. Moreover, the apparently planned nature of the local boundary pattern (figure 1) seems to imply a close connection with Hagley, Cradley and Lutley, and might even indicate that all five land units shared a common mechanism, or date, of origin.

The apparent form of the charter boundary probably reflects a combination of earlier territorial divisions and co-existing (neighbouring) ownership or tenure. The western boundary almost certainly represents an earlier division; and, indeed, waypoint 26 refers explicitly to a pre-existing *meredic*, or boundary dyke which, the charter implies, stretched along the ridge of elevated heath land west of Wollaston and (perhaps) Norton.

To the south, the charter estate's boundary circumnavigated a "finger" of land that included Wychbury hill fort, the cultivated fields of Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley, and an area of oak woodland (the *acleg* of waypoint 22); all of which were distributed along the roads linking the ancient centres of Worcester and Droitwich to Penkridge and Stafford (now approximated in this region by the A491 Hagley Road and the B4187 Worcester Lane). Both roads appear to have been major and well used routes: the former being an iron-age (or earlier) salt-way. King (2006) noted that "in the vicinity of Oldswinford, Stourbridge and Kingswinford, the field patterns seem to conform to the [Worcester-Stafford] road, as if they formed around it". Indeed, it is likely that both roads played a central role in the development of settlements and estates along their route. It is conceivable that all three of the abovementioned settlements, as well as Wychbury hill fort and possibly *acleg*, belonged to a single land unit established around this ancient road network—perhaps Pybba's putative seventh-century land holding

(discussed under waypoint 17)—extending as far north as Pepper Hill. Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley may even have belonged to the pre-charter Swinford—perhaps being omitted from the charter estate because of the relatively high density (and hence value) of their agricultural land—but there is no documentary evidence to clarify their status or ownership at this time.

The course of the charter bounds around the settlement of Oldswinford suggests the extent of the latter's cultivated land. As we have seen, Oldswinford's fields probably reached no further than the Love Lane escarpment in the west; and their eastern limit could well have been demarcated by the dyke referred to in waypoint 16. If that assessment is correct, Oldswinford's cultivated land would have extended to no more than about 180 acres (approximately 1½ hides) in the mid-tenth century. The correspondence between the charter bounds in this vicinity and the outline of Oldswinford's open fields (inferred from 17-19th century maps) would seem to indicate that the move to open-field agriculture had already taken place (or, at least, had started to take place) here by the mid-tenth century.

In view of the apparent lack of correspondence between the bounds of Oldswinford parish and the charter estate along the latter's southern edge, there is no obvious reason to expect a correspondence elsewhere (apart from where the River Stour, ridges of high land and pre-existing dykes offer significant potential for boundary reuse). Thus, it seems prudent to regard the parish boundary as having no evidential value in itself; and an analysis based upon only landscape, place-name and geological evidence indicates two possible courses for the charter's eastern boundary: route A that follows the western arm of the Salt Brook (and the parish boundary); and route B, which traces the Salt Brook's eastern arm to encompass all of Oldnall hill.

The parish boundaries in this eastern region clearly respect the edges of pre-existing fields, resulting in "dog-legged" boundary lines where Oldswinford and Pedmore parishes meet the estates of Cradley and Lutley. Similarly, both parishes' southern edges exhibit numerous L-shaped steps around the furlongs and headlands that lay between the settlement centres of Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley; and this almost certainly indicates that the cultivated lands of each settlement abutted each other at the date the *L-shaped portions* of the boundaries became established. Whilst it should not be assumed that this date equates to the parishes' (or corresponding manors') date of origin, such a possibility should not be ignored. Hooke (1985) remarks that "*a considerable number of [L-shaped boundary segments] occur where the charters also record interlocking arable lands*"; and an early origin for such segments locally would certainly be consistent with the evidence (noted earlier) that open-field agriculture had begun around Oldswinford and Pedmore by the mid-tenth century.

With this in mind, it is interesting to note that L-shaped steps occur primarily in those sections of the Oldswinford and Pedmore parish boundaries that deviate from the outline of the charter estate. The charter bounds were, it seems, routed around settlements and their associated fields, whereas the parish (and manor) boundaries appear to have been designed to divide in two the field systems at Oldnall, Foxcote and *Walacrofte and* that between Oldswinford and Pedmore, as well as bisecting other important elements of the landscape such as Wychbury hill fort. This apparent division and re-allotment of early farm-land is most probably related to the continuing development of open-field agriculture in the area. The precise mechanism involved and the speed of change are, however, far from clear.

The pattern of local manors and, perhaps, parishes may have developed in the late tenth or the eleventh century as a result of some form of local territorial restructuring overseen from a position of high authority. This clearly resulted in the major settlements—i.e. Oldswinford and Pedmore (and perhaps Hagley)—being assigned their own share of the local landscape (terrain, soil types and road access). The intent might have been to roughly equalise each territory's size and value; and it is conceivable that Amblecote and the settlement of Oldswinford were added to the charter estate at this time in order to compensate for the loss of land in (the later) Pedmore parish and (possibly) in Cradley. The division of Oldnall and Wychbury hill fort by the local parish boundaries might be evidence of a distribution of resources or of some compensatory element in the restructuring process.

The apparent omission of Oldswinford settlement from the charter estate raises a number of important questions: when did Oldswinford settlement become separated from Pedmore; was the eventual division of land here related to the formation of the parish(es); was it the result of a single boundary modification or a process of gradual evolution; and precisely what territory is represented by the Domesday entries for Oldswinford (Suineford) and Pedmore (Pevemore).

Evidently, the story of Oldswinford's origin is a convoluted one, and there are many outstanding issues to address, but it is hoped that the present study might offer some insight into the early development of this complex former region of north Worcestershire.

Appendix A

Swinford's Western Edge: The Eswich Perambulation

The area referred to as Swinford in the charter seems to have encompassed much of the ancient parishes Oldswinford and Pedmore as well as Kingswinford in the north. It is likely however that the western part of Kingswinford—known as Ashwood Hay—lay outside the pre-charter Swinford.

Recent Boundary Changes

For many centuries until 1935 Ashwood had been an integral part of the manor and parish of Kingswinford.

In 1935, the boundary between Kingswinford and Kinver parishes—which had, until then, followed the course of the Smestow Brook—was moved eastwards to bring the whole of Ashwood Hay within Kinver parish. The new boundary was re-sited along the ridge of high ground that is today occupied by Ridgehill Wood, Friar's Gorse and Mountpleasant Covert.

Both Kingswinford and Kinver (now including Ashwood) remained in Staffordshire until 1974 when Kingswinford became part of Dudley Borough. The new county boundary followed much the same line as the post-1935 Kingswinford-Kinver parish boundary (i.e. along the ridge of high ground separating Ashwood Hay from Kingswinford).

Domesday Haswic

Before the changes of the twentieth century, Ashwood Hay had been a component of Kingswinford for several centuries. It is not known precisely when this association began, but in the Norman period and before, Ashwood appears to have been a discrete manor under separate ownership from Kingswinford.

The Domesday book lists a vill named Haswic which is believed by some scholars to have been roughly coincident with Ashwood Hay. The main evidence for this is the similarity between the two place names: the prefix 'Has-' probably derives from OE *aesc* meaning ash tree. There is no obvious evidence on the ground of a deserted settlement near Ashwood today, but if Haswic was at or near that location it may have been a very ancient settlement, possibly being contemporary with the Roman marching camp at the nearby site of Greensforge, or perhaps even with a nearby (supposed) Iron-Age field system indicated by pit alignments seen in crop marks on aerial photographs (English Heritage monument number 1571809).

By 1086, Haswic seems to have been abandoned, being listed in the Domesday book as waste "because of the King's Forest". That forest would have been the Norman forest of Kinver, the area around Ashwood (i.e. Ashwood Hay) being a hedged part of the royal hunting ground. The word Hay refers to such an enclosure.

Anglo-Saxon Eswich

Further evidence for Ashwood Hay representing a discrete early land unit appears in a charter (s1380) dated AD 996—but thought to actually date from AD 994—which details a grant of several estates "by the lady Wulfrun to Hamtun monastery" (Bridgeman, 1916). Hamtun became known as Wulvrenehamptonia by the late eleventh century, and this, of course, grew into the present-day town of Wolverhampton. Twelve separate estates were granted in Wulfrun's charter, one of which was named Eswich (or Eiswich).

The charter's boundary perambulation for Eswich lists waypoints that not only correspond to the topography around Ashwood Hay, but they also refer, by name, to two local watercourses: the Stour and the Tresel (Smestow Brook). It seems likely, therefore, that Eswich, Haswic and Ashwood Hay represent the same land unit (with perhaps some relatively minor boundary modifications over the centuries.)

In the tenth century, the eastern boundary of Eswich must have coincided with the western boundary of Swinford, so it is worthwhile examining the former estate's perambulation in detail. Bridgeman (1916), Hooke (1983) and PASE (2010) provide transcripts and translations that include the following waypoints:

1. *Erest of .... ebles bece*
   [First from *ebles* back (brook)...]

2. ...*in ða dic.*
   [...to the dyke.]

3. ⁊ of *ða dice on Sture*
   [and from the dyke to the Stour]

4. *dun efter into Tresel.*
   [down along it into the *Tresel*]

5. *up efter Tresel in Scakeresford.*
   [up along the *Tresel* to *Scakeresford*.]

6. ⁊ *of ða ford on ðat sic.*
   [and from the ford to the sitch (watercourse).]

7. *on lang sices upward....in Belstowe.*
   [along the sitch (watercourse) upward to *Belstowe*.]

8. ⁊ *of Belstowa in Tresel.*
   [and from *Belstowa* to the *Tresel*.]

Interpretation

The western boundary of the later Ashwood followed the Smestow Brook, but waypoints 5 to 8 of the Eswich perambulation describe a deviation from this course along a tributary of the Smestow. Unfortunately, the tributary is unnamed, and given the limited evidence available, it seems that there are two equally likely courses for this section of the Eswich boundary. These are denoted by the suffixes "a" and "b" below and in figure A1. The first course would result in Eswich incorporating additional land to the west of the Smestow whereas the second would indicate that a portion of the later Ashwood Hay was excluded from Eswich.

1. First from .... ebles back (brook)...

It is likely that this represents Holbeache Brook which delineates the northern boundary of Ashwood and Kingswinford today. It is not known how far along the brook this waypoint was located, but the most likely starting point for the perambulation would probably be at the confluence of Holbeache Brook and the more major watercourse of the Smestow Brook at Hinksford.

2. ...to the dyke.

The dyke clearly began near the *ebles bece* at the northern end of the estate and ended close to the Stour in the south. Its course is unknown, but Hooke (1983) assumes that the dyke was located upon the same ridge of high ground that, since 1935, has marked the boundary of Kingswinford parish. While this ridge would, indeed, seem to be the most likely course of the boundary dyke, other routes are possible. It is conceivable that the boundary dyke (which separated Eswich from Swinford in the tenth century) was located several hundred metres to the east of the ridge, near the edge of Kingswinford's medieval open field system. According to nineteenth century maps, this seems to have extended no further west than Cot Lane—although such a limit might have actually have been due to the proximity of Kinver Forest.

3. And from the dyke to the Stour

Again the precise route is uncertain, but it would probably have run very close to the post-1935 boundary, intercepting the River Stour near the southern end of Bells Lane.

4. down along it into the *Tresel*

Tresel refers to a watercourse that has been identified from other charters as being the Smestow Brook. The linguistic links between the two names are uncertain. *Tresel* seems to be an ancient British name deriving from *tres*, meaning work, whereas Smestow is composed of two Old English (Anglo-Saxon) components: *smeðe* and *stow*. According to Smith (1956b) the former means either "smooth, level" or a "smithy"; and the latter denotes a "place, place where people stand, or a (religious) assembly place". *Tresel* seems to have the same root as Trescot, the name of a small settlement on the bank of Smestow Brook. Trescot is, perhaps coincidentally, located on a relatively flat and level expanse of ground to the west of the brook.

The boundary of *Eswich* undoubtedly follows the River Stour until it joins the Smestow Brook at Stourton.

5a. up along the *Tresel* to *Scakeresford*.

Hooke (1983) translates *Scakeresford* (waypoint 5) as "robber's ford". It is not known where this ford was located; and there are several sites along the Smestow that appear from early OS mapping (1834) to have been crossing points for roads and tracks. One ford may have been recorded in the place name Rumford Hill, which lies to the south-west of the confluence of the Spittle and Smestow Brooks. It is possible that this was the tenth-century *Scakeresford*, although other sites cannot be discounted. The boundary perambulation seems to imply that Scakeresford lay close to the *sitch* (see below).

6a. from the ford to the sitch.

The sitch in waypoint 6a is interpreted as the Spittle Brook, which flows into the Smestow from the west.

7a. along the sitch upward to *Belstowe*.

We then travel westwards along the Spittle Brook to *Belstowe*. According to Hooke (1983), *Belstowe* may be derived from the OE words *bæl* and *stow*, the former referring to a fire or funeral pyre. With *stow*'s likely meaning of a religious assembly place, *Belstowe* could have been a funerary site. Little is known about the places where such rituals were performed, but it is conceivable that a small enclosed valley or grove might have been appropriate. Such a valley exists where yet another small stream flowed into the Spittle Brook just north of what is now named the "Old Pool" at Checkhill Farm. Coincidentally perhaps, this valley terminates at a location labelled "Worlds End" on the OS 1 inch map of 1834. Hooke (1983) suggests a second possible meaning of *Belstowe*: "a place where a bell was cast", but unfortunately this doesn't provide any additional clues to clarify the location of this site.

8a. and from *Belstowa* to the *Tresel*.

Finally we return to the Smestow Brook via a narrow road to Greensforge, which also delineates the Wombourne parish boundary.

Alternative route: waypoints 5b to 8b

This alternative route follows Dawley Brook to the east, rather than the Spittle Brook. Deviating to the east the Eswich boundary would probably have omitted the area around Greensforge, meaning that the entire multi-phase complex of Roman marching camps here would have resided in the neighbouring estates of Kinver and Wombourne. The extent of such a deviation from the Smestow is unknown, and likely locations for *Belstowe* in this route have not been identified. The boundary must, however, have returned to the Smestow Brook somewhere south of Hinksford, thereby completing the circuit of Eswich.

Appendix B

Partial Interpretation of the Kinver Forest Perambulation of AD 1300

The extent of the Norman forest of *Kynefare* (Kinver) was documented during AD 1300 in what is known as the Great Perambulation. The term 'forest' should not be confused with 'wood'. Whilst it is certainly true that large tracts of the Norman forests were heavily wooded, there were also large clearings and significant areas of heath-land within the forests. The designation of areas as 'Forest' simply meant that they was reserved for the King's sport, and very specific laws applied within them. Harsh restrictions were placed upon commoners with regard to hunting and other activities within the forest bounds: people caught breaking the laws were liable to receive severe, and often brutal, punishment.

The eastern boundary of Kinver Forest is of particular interest in the present context because it appears to have impinged upon the area previously known as Swinford, and at least one of the forest perambulation's waypoints may also have been referenced in the Swinford Charter's boundary clause.

Interpretation of the Eastern Boundary

The forest boundary was said to have enclosed: ...*a part of Humeleleye, a part of the land of Kingeswyneforde, a part of the land of Amelecote, the vill of Wolaston, a part of Swyneford, of Pebbemor, of Haggeleye, of Brome, the vill of Chirchehull...* Thus parts of the manors of Kingswinford, Amblecote, Oldswinford, Pedmore and Hagley and the vill of Wollaston were within the forest in AD 1300. The perambulation provides further details of the course of the whole of the forest boundary, but here we are interested in only the eastern section. The perambulation was compiled in French. A translation, first published in the Staffordshire Historical Collections of 1884 and made available on the British History Online web site (2014), is used in the following interpretation.

1. ...the bounds of the said Forest of Kynefare begin at the water of *Smethestall*,

Smethestall is probably Smestow (see Ekwall, 1960); and this waypoint must lie upon the *Tresel* brook, which is now known as Smestow River (formerly Smestow Brook). This waypoint is probably near Smestow Bridge at SO 854925.

2. and so descending by the *Tresel* water as far as the *doit* of *Hinkesford*,

A *doit* is a brook; and this waypoint clearly takes us south along the Smestow River to its confluence with Hinksford Brook (SO 865899).

3. and thence ascending as far as the high road to *Holebache*,

Along Hinksford Brook to the A449 (Stourbridge Road) near Holbeche House (SO 883905).

4. and then by the said road as far as a *doit* which is between the vill of *Amelecote*, and the vill of *Kyngeswyneford*,

The *doit* might refer to one of three brooks which intersect the A449: Wordsley Brook, Audnam Brook and Coalbourne Brook. However, in order for the forest boundary to enclose part of Amblecote manor and the vill of Wollaston, this doit can only be the last of these: i.e. Coalbourne Brook in Amblecote.

5. and then descending from this *doit* as far as the old ford,

Along the Coalbourne Brook to its confluence with the Stour. The location of the old ford is now lost, but in order for the forest boundary to enclose Wollaston it is likely that the ford lay a short distance south of the Coalbourne Brook.

6. and then ascending as far as the *Ruggesende*,

Ruggesende probably means Ridge's End (see Smith, 1956b), and here it refers to the nothern end of Wollaston Ridge. The route from the old ford to *Ruggesende* must have taken a generally westerly direction, passing south of Wollaston's original centre at the eastern end of Vicarage Road).

7. and then ascending by a footpath (*sente*) as far as the *Croked Apeltre*,

The footpath would have run in a generally north-south direction, on to, and then along, the top of the ridge. The location of the *Croked Apeltre* (crooked apple-tree) is now lost, but it must have lain somewhere on the ridge top.

8. and thus as far as *Wolfeswrosne*,

Continue south along the ridge west of Norton towards the cluster of small rounded hillocks near Sandy Lane, Norton Covert and County Lane. These features are actually mounds of sand and gravel that were deposited by retreating ice sheets many millennia before the arrival of modern humans. (Norton Covert itself now occupies the quarried-out remains of one such mound or drumlin.) The second element of the name *Wolfeswrosne* seems to be derived from the OE *wrāse* or *wrāsen* which referred to broken, contorted ground, hills or knolls (Smith, 1956b).

9. and then ascending as far as *Feckebury*,

Feckebury clearly resides on higher ground than *Wolfeswrosne* and must lie along the course implied by subsequent waypoints—i.e. roughly to the south or south-east of *Wolfeswrosne*. The name's *-bury* ending seems to indicate a fortified site. This further suggets an elevated site for *Feckebury*, only two of which are plausible: near Iverley or Bury's Hill. As the perambulation explicitly states that part of Pedmore and Hagley manors were enclosed by the forest, the latter seems to be the most likely location. Indeed, *Feckebury* could well be the same fortified structure as the Swinford charter's *sicanbyrig*. It is interesting that the two documents, compiled some 350 years apart, might both refer to the same structure. The obvious similarities in these names supports the notion that they represent the same landmark, and hence the present geographical interpolation. It is also worthy of note that the fortification here must have been strong enough to survive for at least this 350 year period.

10. and so as far as *Beefold*,

This waypoint is unidentified. It probably referred to an enclosure for bee hives, but no known evidence of this survives in the landscape today.

11. and thence to *Ovemaste mere*,

The first place-name element of *Ovemaste* might derive from OE *yfer*, the same root as *Iver* in Iverley. According to Gelling (1984), *yfer* seems to be related to the OE words *ofer* (meaning above, across or over) and *ufer* (meaning upper or higher). The second component, *-maste*, might be taken to refer to an oak woodland where pigs were fed; and it is quite likely that *Ovemaste* was a large wooded pasture extending across the high ground of Iverley south-east towards West Hagley. Indeed, John Speed's 1610 map of Worcestershire depicts a wood, known then as Oveley Wood, in precisely this location. The second word, *mere,* indicates a pool, which must have existed in the lower-lying stream valleys near the south-

eastern extremities of the wood. Two locations are possible for *Ovemaste mere*: the pools now lying near Brake Mill Farm, or a site close to Windmill Pool near Blakedown.

12. and then ascending as far as *Wheldon hulle*,

Ascending southwards along the course of the first-century Droitwich-to-Greensforge Roman road to the hill near Sion House Farm south of Yieldingtree (SO 898767). Use of the Roman road in this 1300 perambulation would appear to indicate that it was still visible in the landscape some 1200 years after its contruction.

13. and thus to *Durhull*,

This is probably the hill south east of Chaddesley Corbett near to where the Roman road now intersects the A448 to Bromsgrove-to-Kidderminster road (SO 897728).

14. and then as far as *Doune Coppe*

This seems to be the hill-top near Mustow Green (SO 868743).

15. and then ascending as far as Furslades...

Slade probably derives from OE *slæd*, which means a valley or a dell, and Furslades was possibly the stream valley near Heathy Mill.

The perambulation continues through another 26 waypoints which, together, describe a circuit that includes parts of Wannerton Farm, Yieldingtree, Chaddesley, Hurcott, north-east Kidderminster, Dunclent, Wolverley, Kingsford, Arley, Enville, Morfe, Lutley, and Bobbington. For further details of the perambulation see British History Online (2014).

Summary

It is clear from the foregoing interpretation (summarised in figure B1) that in AD 1300 Kinver Forest included much of Ashwood as well as land in Kingswinford manor lying west of the A449. Those parts of Amblecote manor lying north of the Coalbourne Brook were also within the Forest, as were Wollaston and the south-west corners of Oldswinford and Pedmore manors.

Apart from the possible correspondence between *Feckebury* and *Sicanbyrig* noted under waypoint 9, the most interesting element of the perambulation concerns Wollaston. This vill appears to have been entirely enclosed within Kinver Forest, and its development and economy must, therefore, have been governed to some degree by forest laws. This might eventually have led to Wollaston being seen as separate and distinct from the rest of Oldswinford manor. Indeed such a separate identity could underpin an explanation for various documentary sources between 1442 and 1676 implying that Wollaston was a separate (sub-) manor, even though no court books, manor rolls or other hard evidence of its supposed manorial status actually survive. In the 1300 Kinver Forest perambulation it was, of course, described explicitly as a vill, which contrasts strongly with the terminology used to describe land units that are known to have been medieval manors.

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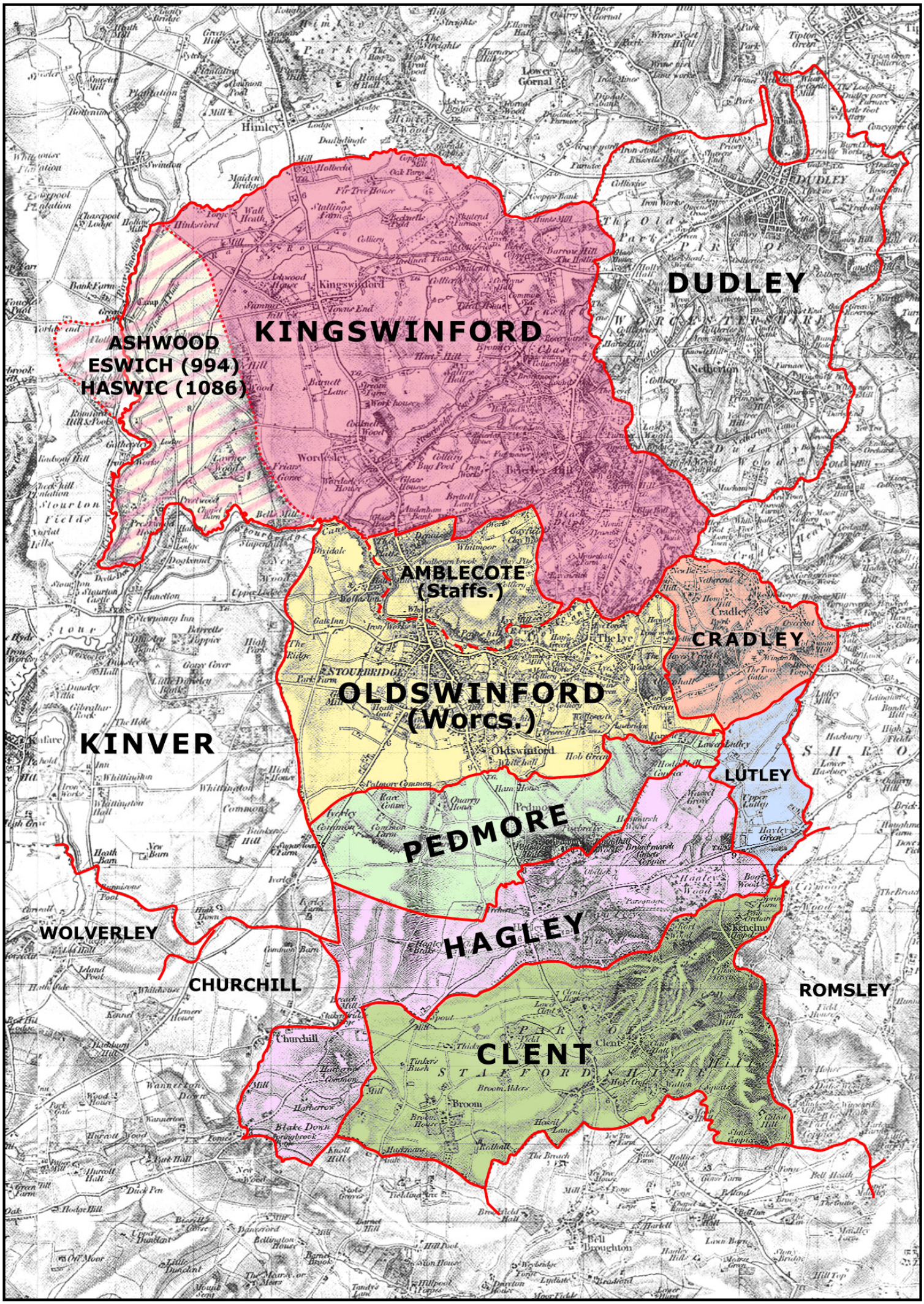


Figure 1. Ancient parishes and estates in the vicinity of Swinford

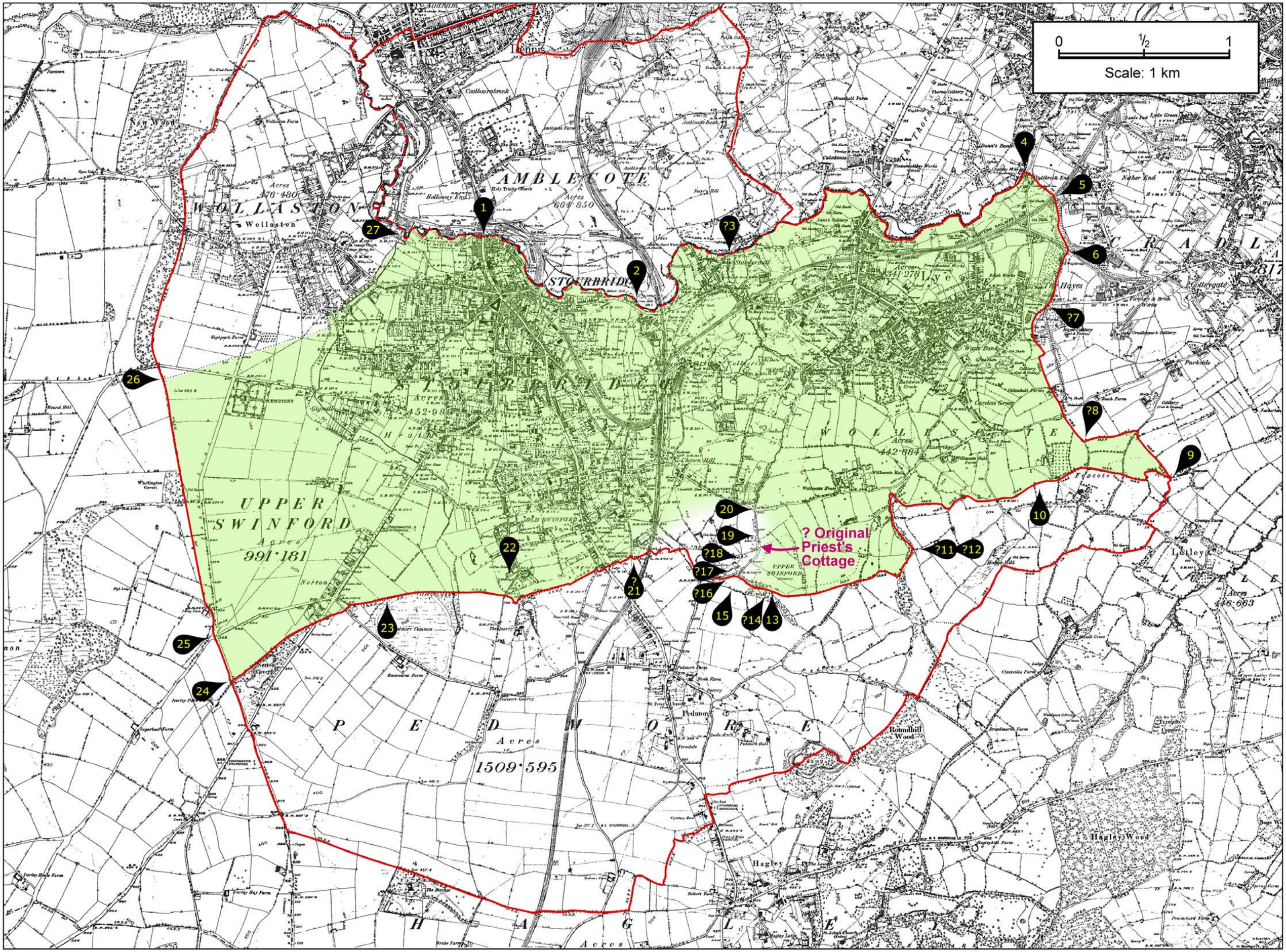


Figure 2. 951-9 AD Swinford Charter bounds with waypoints proposed by Grundy (1928) re-plotted on the 6-inch 1888 OS map

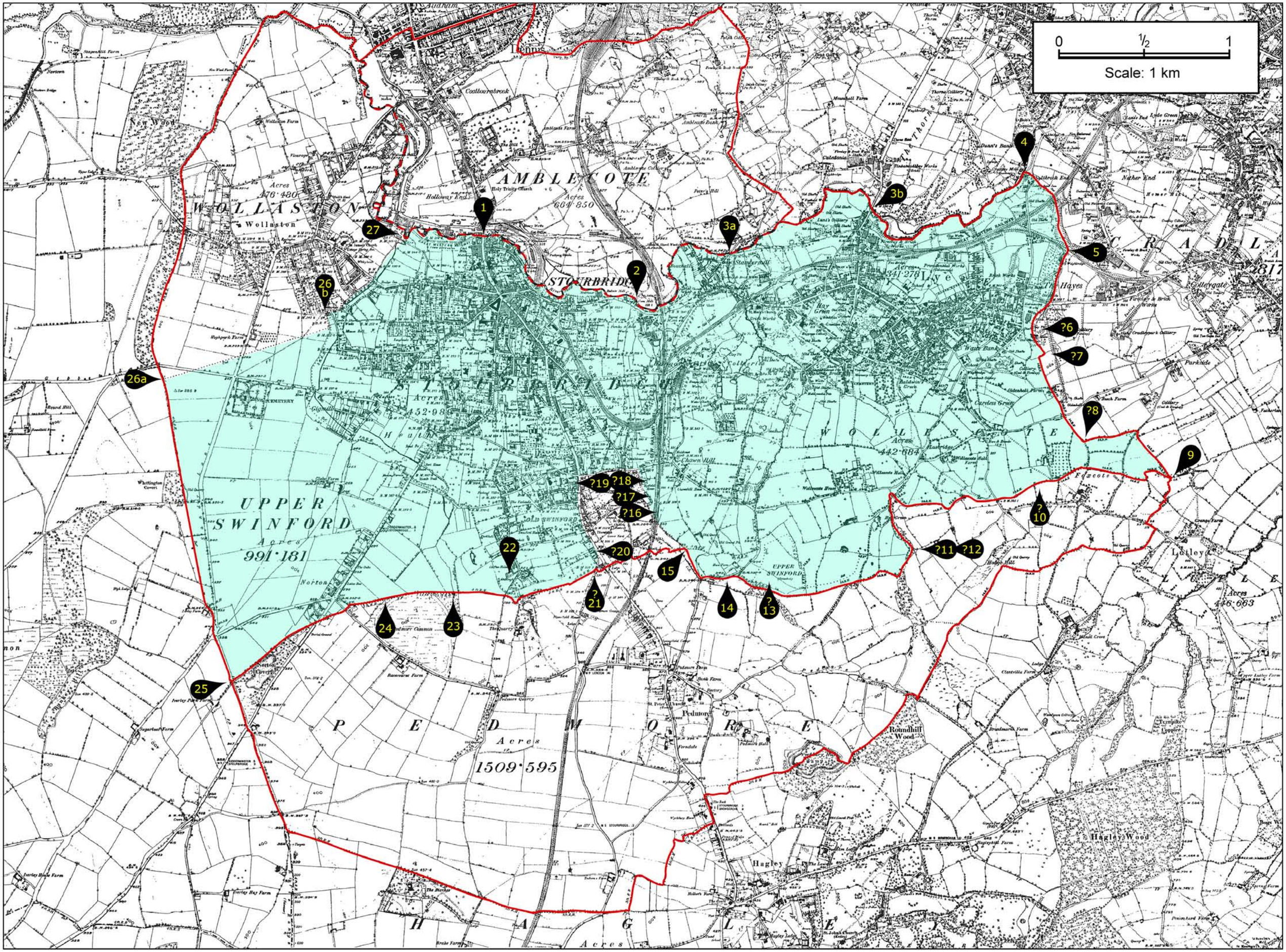


Figure 3. 951-9 AD Swinford Charter bounds with waypoints proposed by Chambers (1978) re-plotted on the 6-inch 1888 OS map

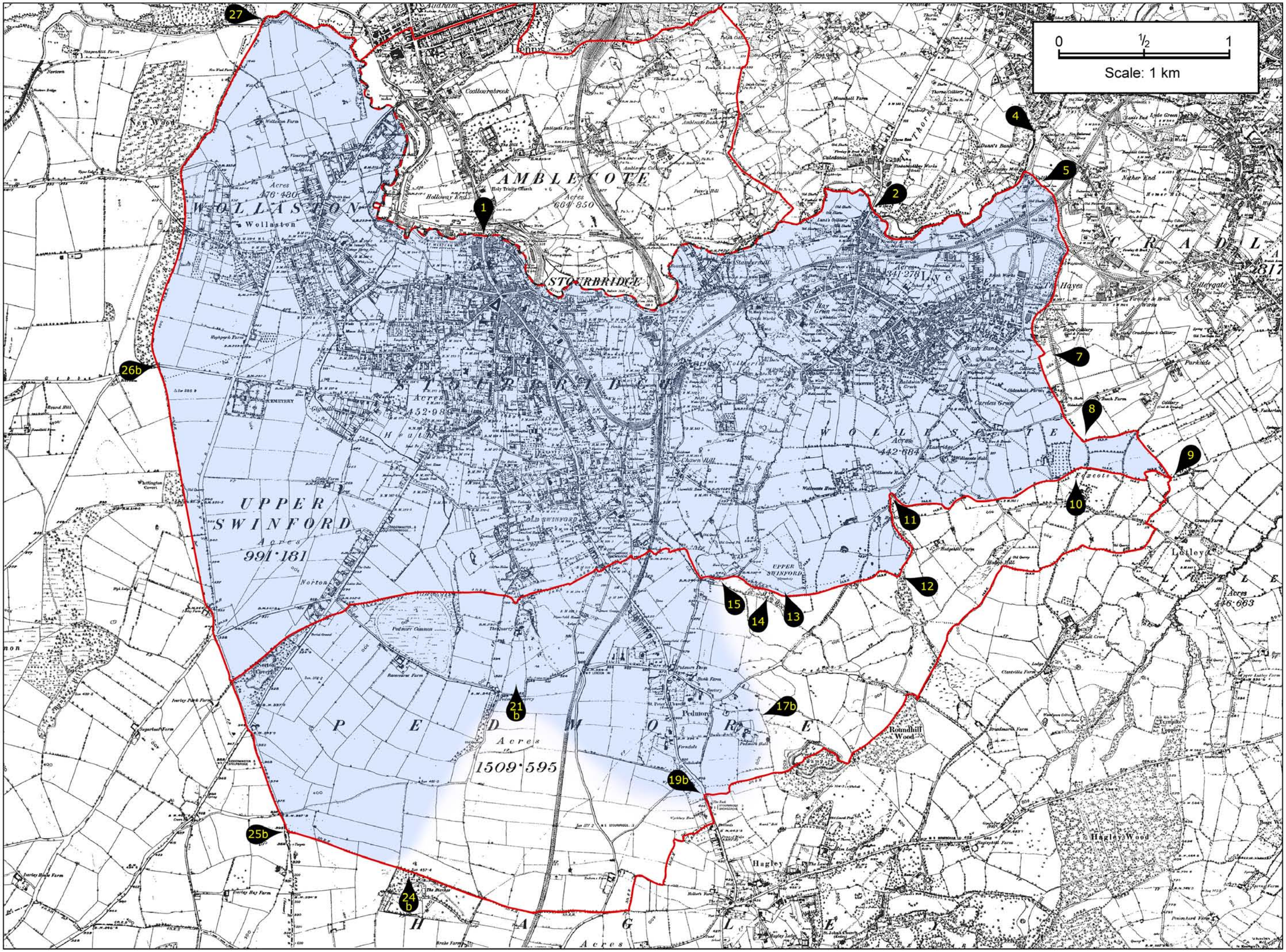


Figure 4. 951-9 AD Swinford Charter bounds with waypoints proposed by Hooke (1990) re-plotted on the 6-inch 1888 OS map

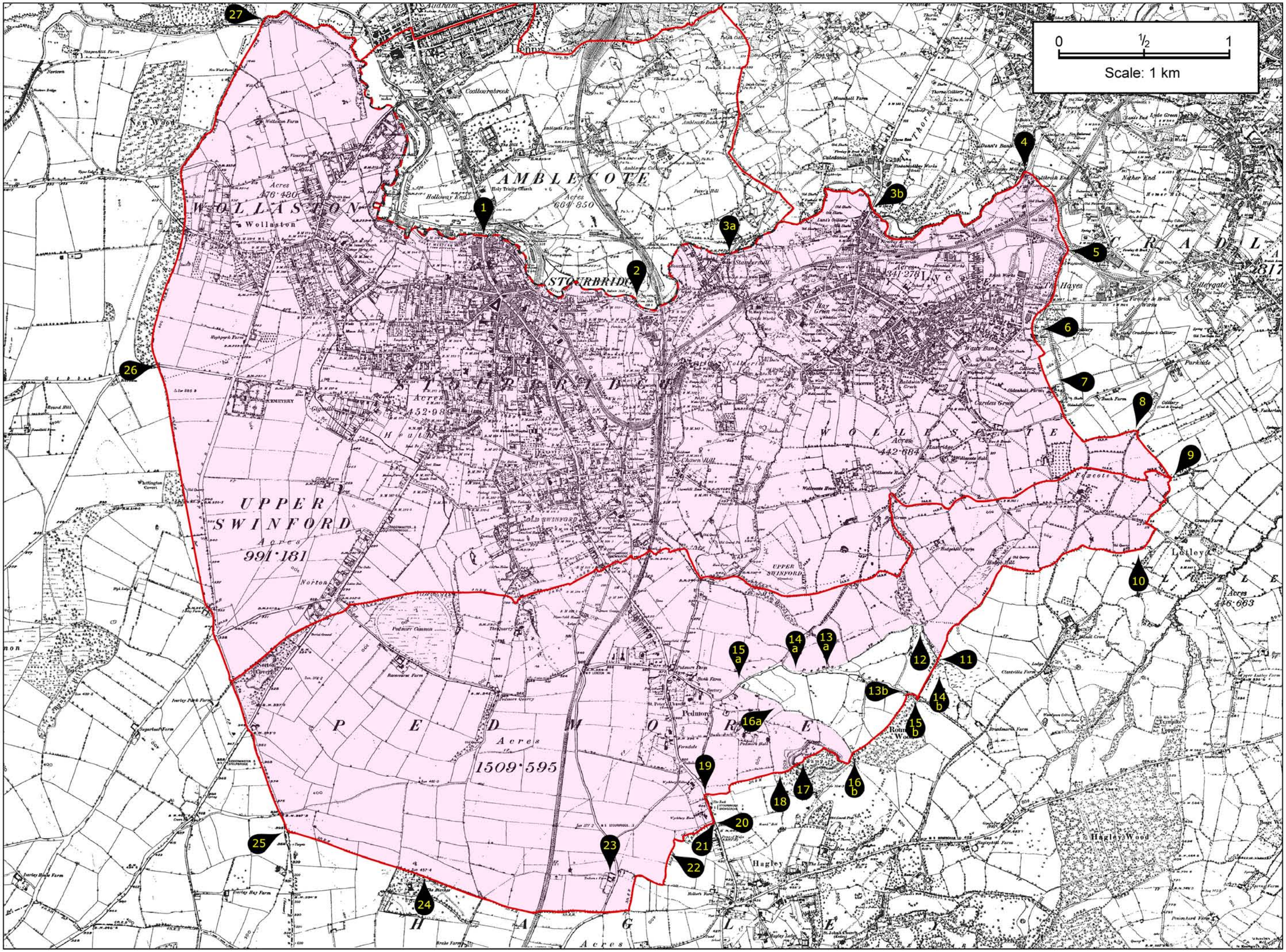


Figure 5. 951-9 AD Swinford Charter bounds with waypoints proposed by Pritchard (1997+) re-plotted on the 6-inch 1888 OS map

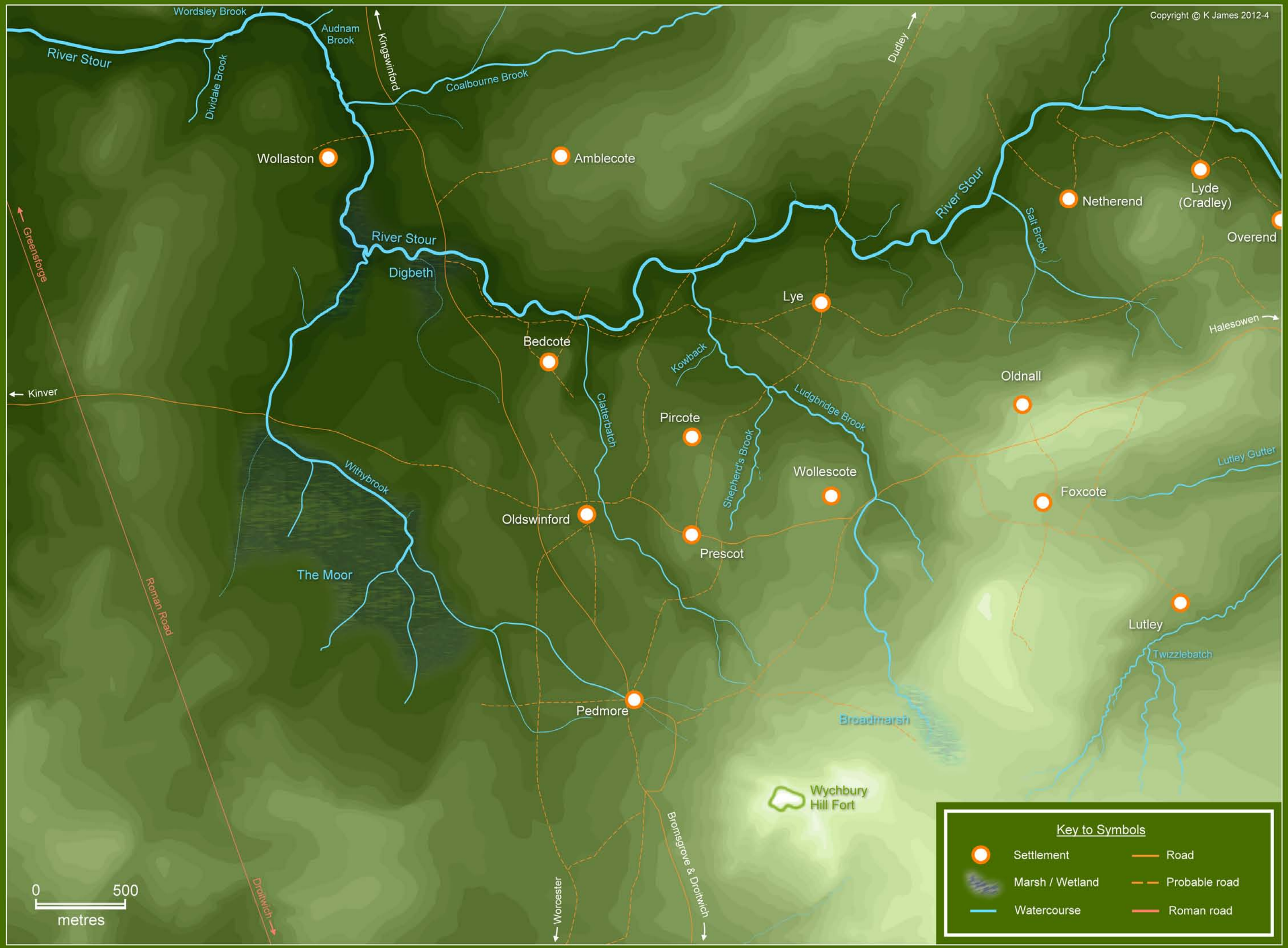
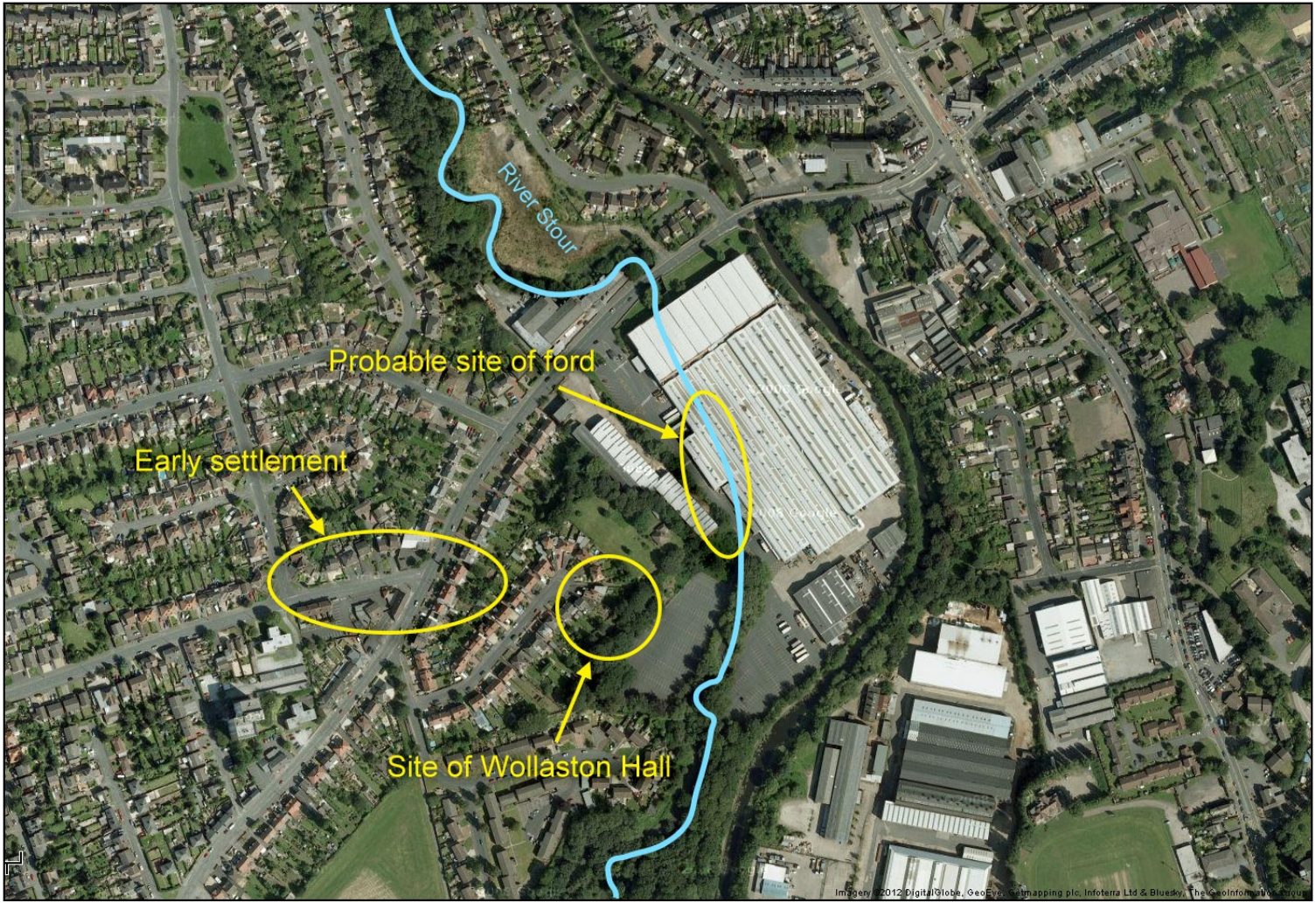
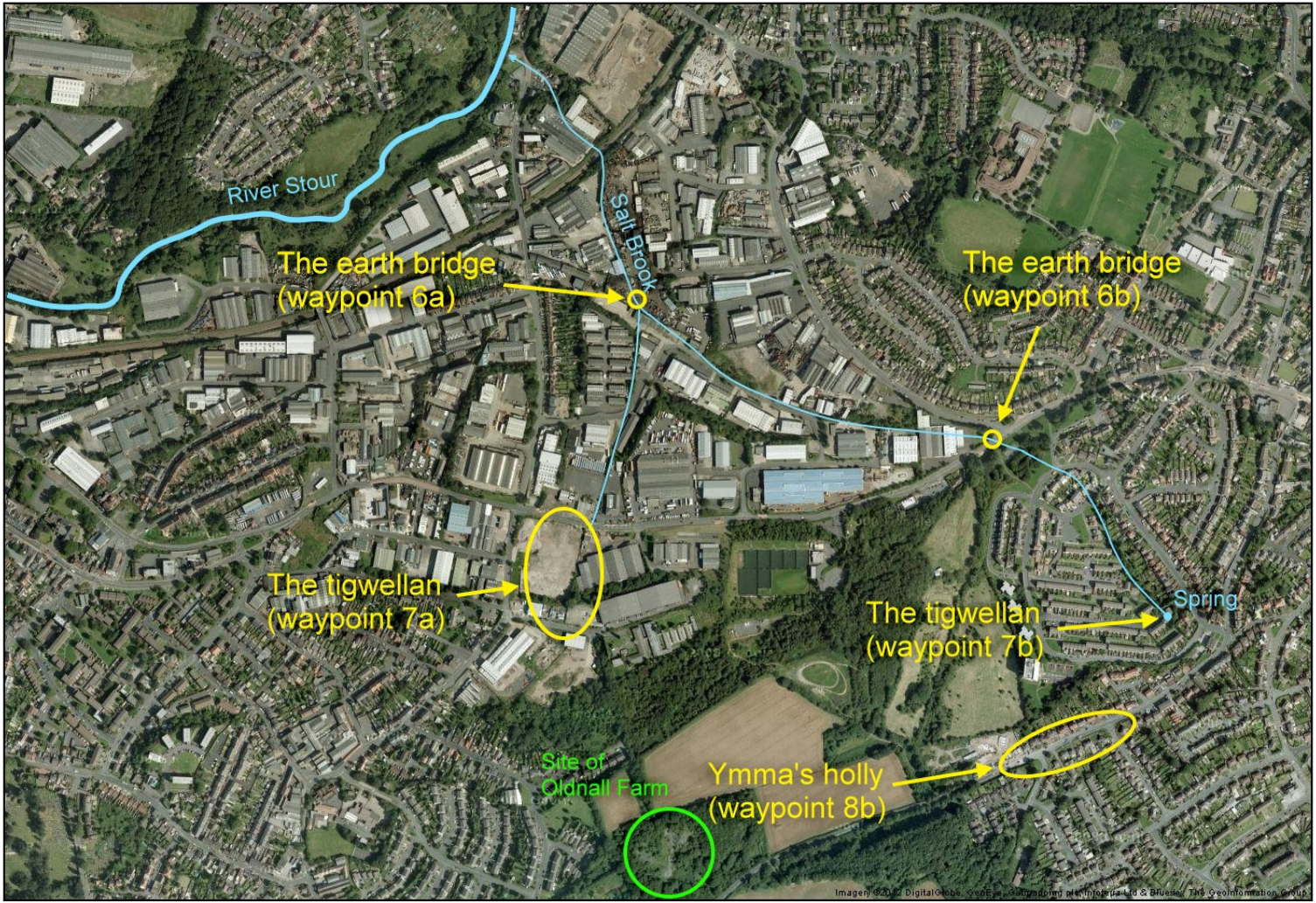


Figure 6. Principal tenth-century landscape features (excluding woodland and cultivated fields) of the area around Oldswinford settlement

Figure 7. Proposed bounds of the 951-9 AD Swinford Charter estate (yellow), with waypoints and relevant field names and boundaries, plotted on the 6-inch 1888 OS map

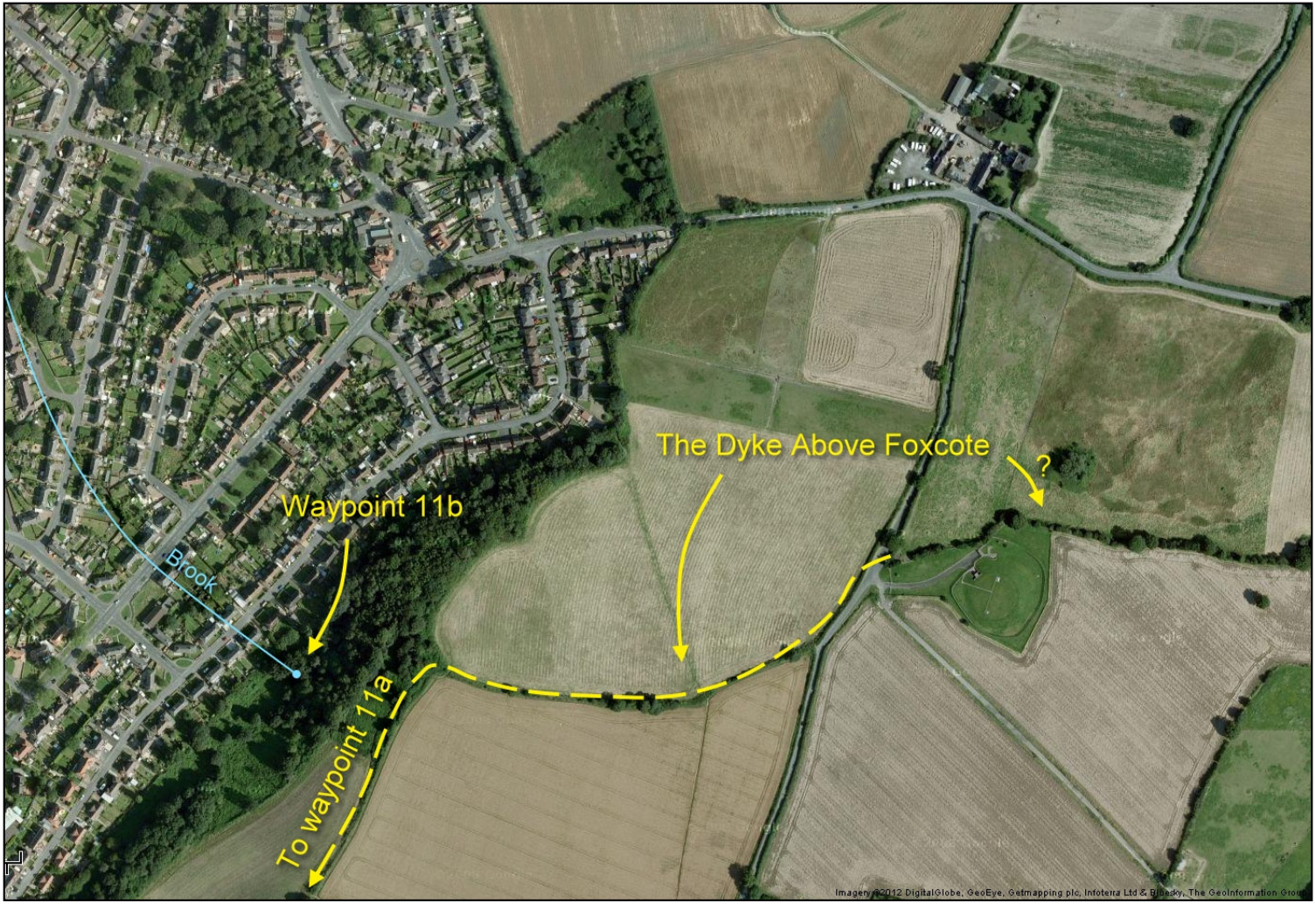


Photograph 1. Site of probable ford at Wollaston



Photograph 2. Waypoints near the Salt Brook

Photograph 3. The dyke above Foxcote



Photograph 4. The dyke above Foxcote

Photograph 5. Principal waypoints of the central section of the southern boundary

Photograph 6. Postcard from 1907. Chawn Hill behind rail station; path and stream in front.

Photograph 7. Postcard from 1907. Fish-pond in the grounds of The Castle, Oldswinford.

Photograph 8. View from the Love Lane escarpment, looking westwards down its wooded slope into Mary Stevens Park

Photograph 9. The mere in Peartree Drive. The dam runs along the back edge of the pool in this photograph.

Photograph 10. View from the side of the supposed Wind Edge.

Photograph 11. Extent of the supposed Oak Leah (tinted green). Looking ENE from Long Buckbury field on the S Pedmore boundary.

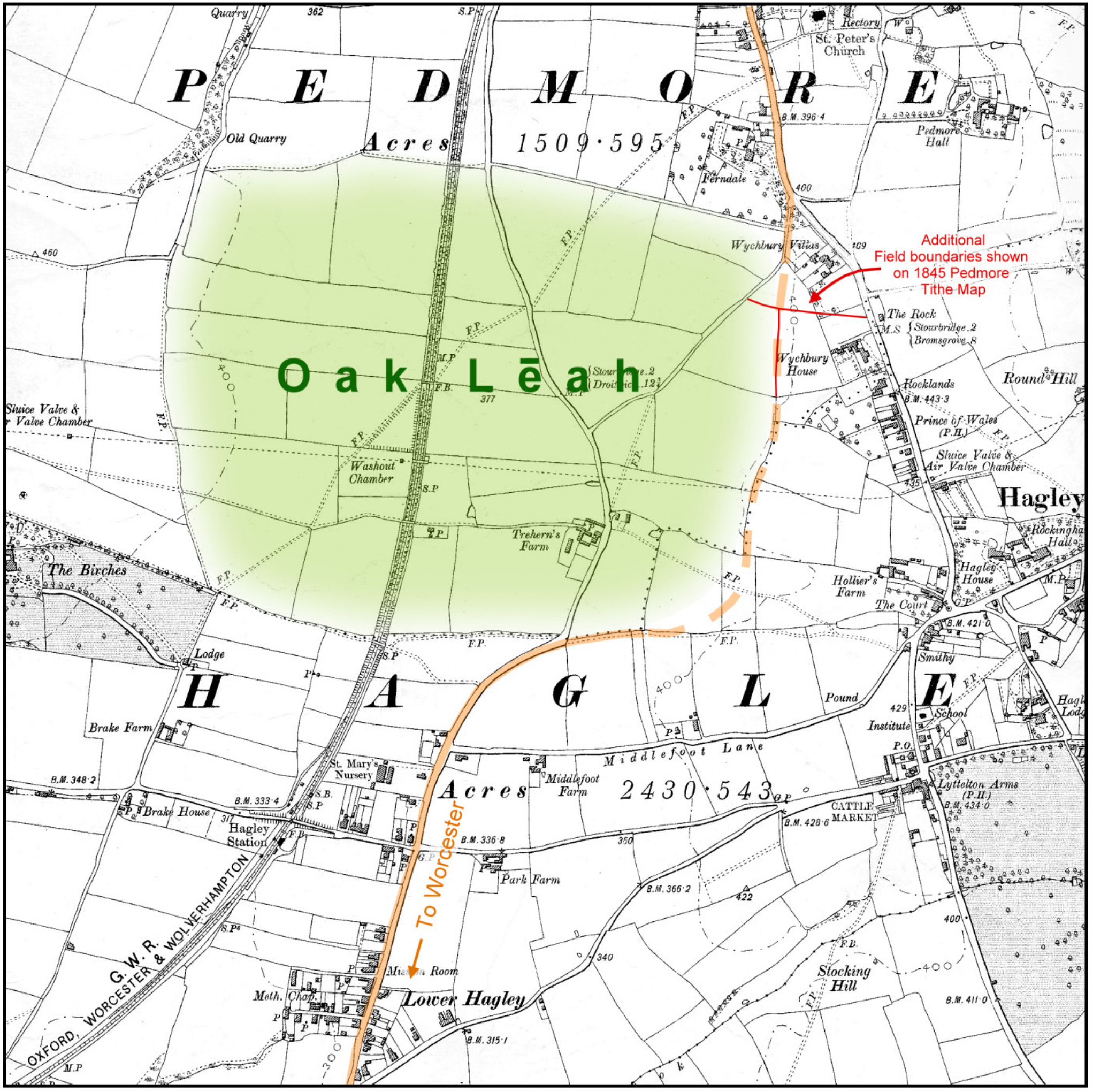


Figure 8. Conjectural tenth-century road circumnavigating oak lēah (on 1901 6-inch OS base map).

Photograph 12. Burys Hill (the supposed *lusdune*) right of centre, looking south from Racecourse Lane. Ounty John Lane lies on the wooded escarpment to the left.

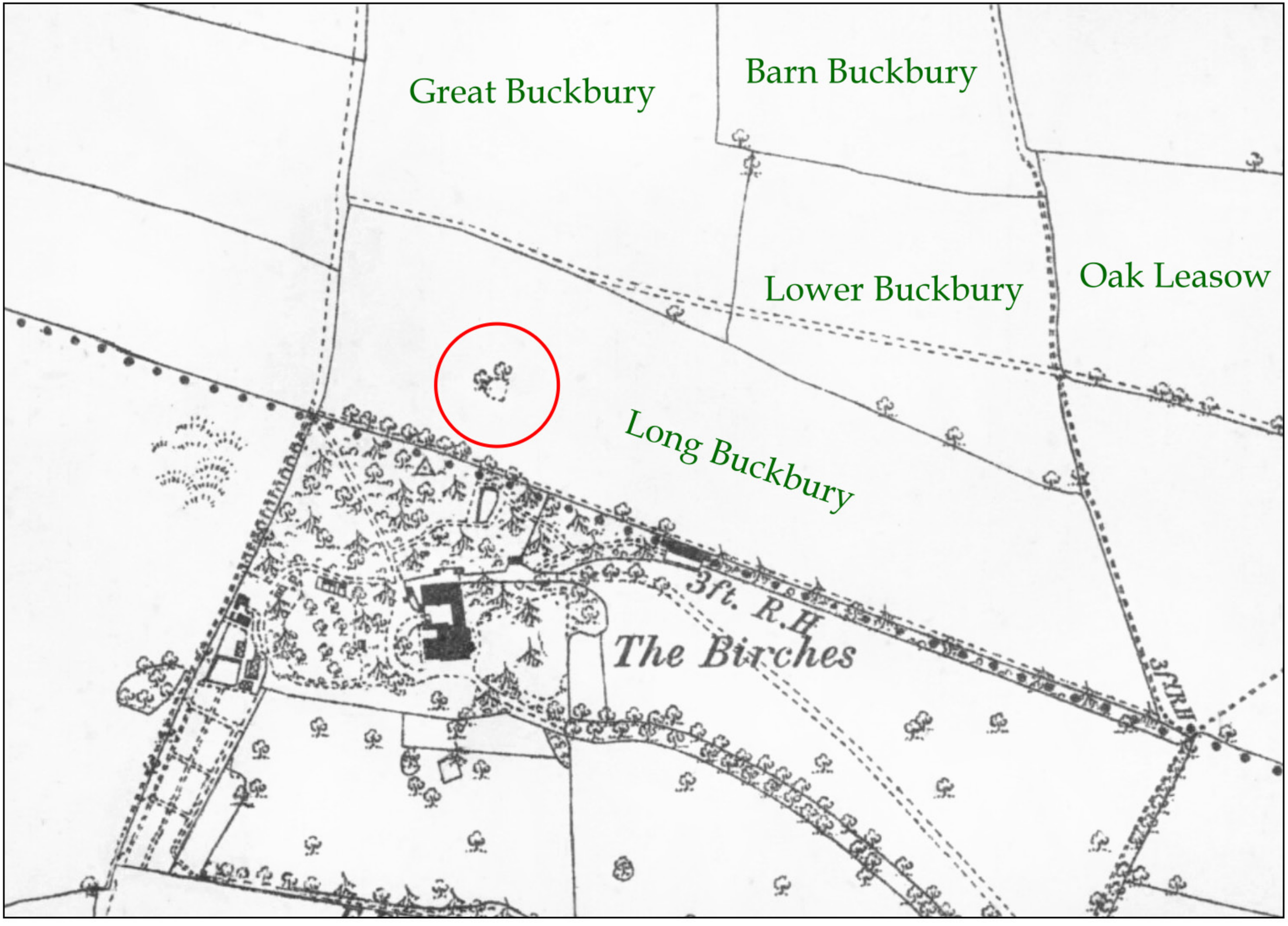
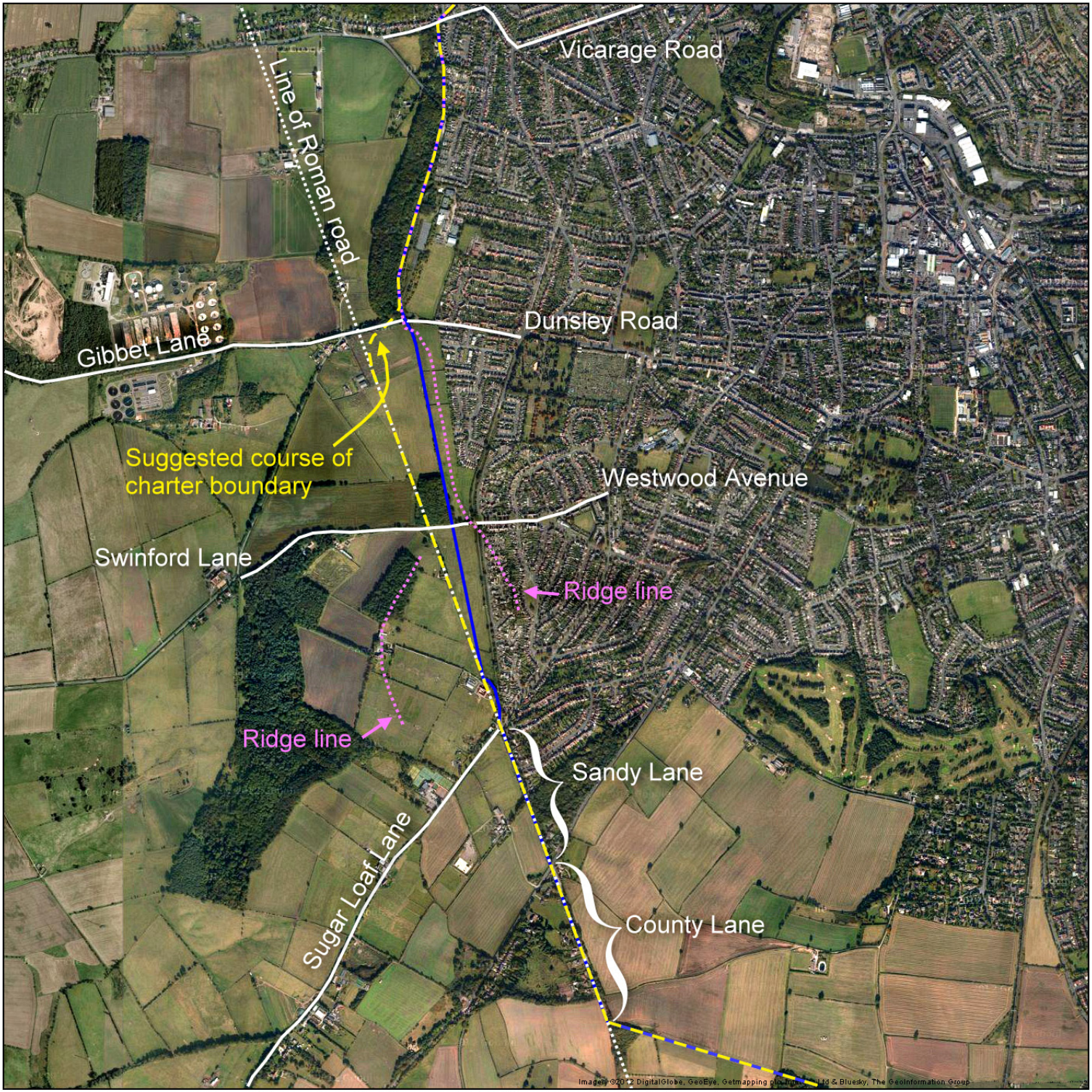


Figure 9. Possible location of *sicanbyrig*. 'D' shaped mound or feature (circled in red) in Long Buckbury field as depicted on OS 6 inch Worcs. Sheet IX.NW, 1885

Photograph 13. Candiate for *sicanbyrig* site in Long Buckbury field. Area circled is the approximate location of a D shaped feature on the 1885 OS map (see text).



Photograph 14. The Roman road linking the southern boundary to the western boundary dyke.

Photograph 15. The supposed *meredic* on High Park Ridge. The eastern bank is on the left and the western bank can be seen through the trees on the right.

Photograph 16. The route from the western boundary dyke to the River Stour via Dividale Brook.

Figure 10. Proposed charter bounds in yellow overlaid upon the principal tenth-century landscape features of the area around Oldswinford settlement

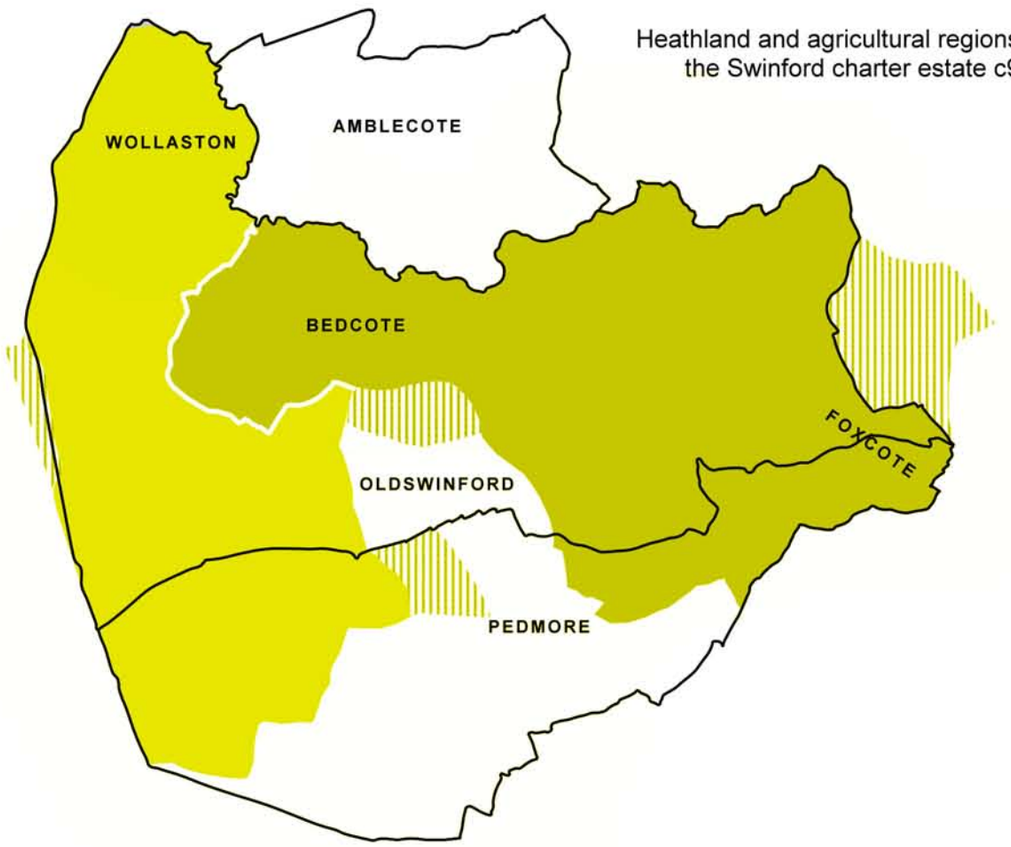


Figure 11. Principal land units involved in the conjectural development of the charter boundaries into those of Bedcote manor and the township and parish of Stourbridge.

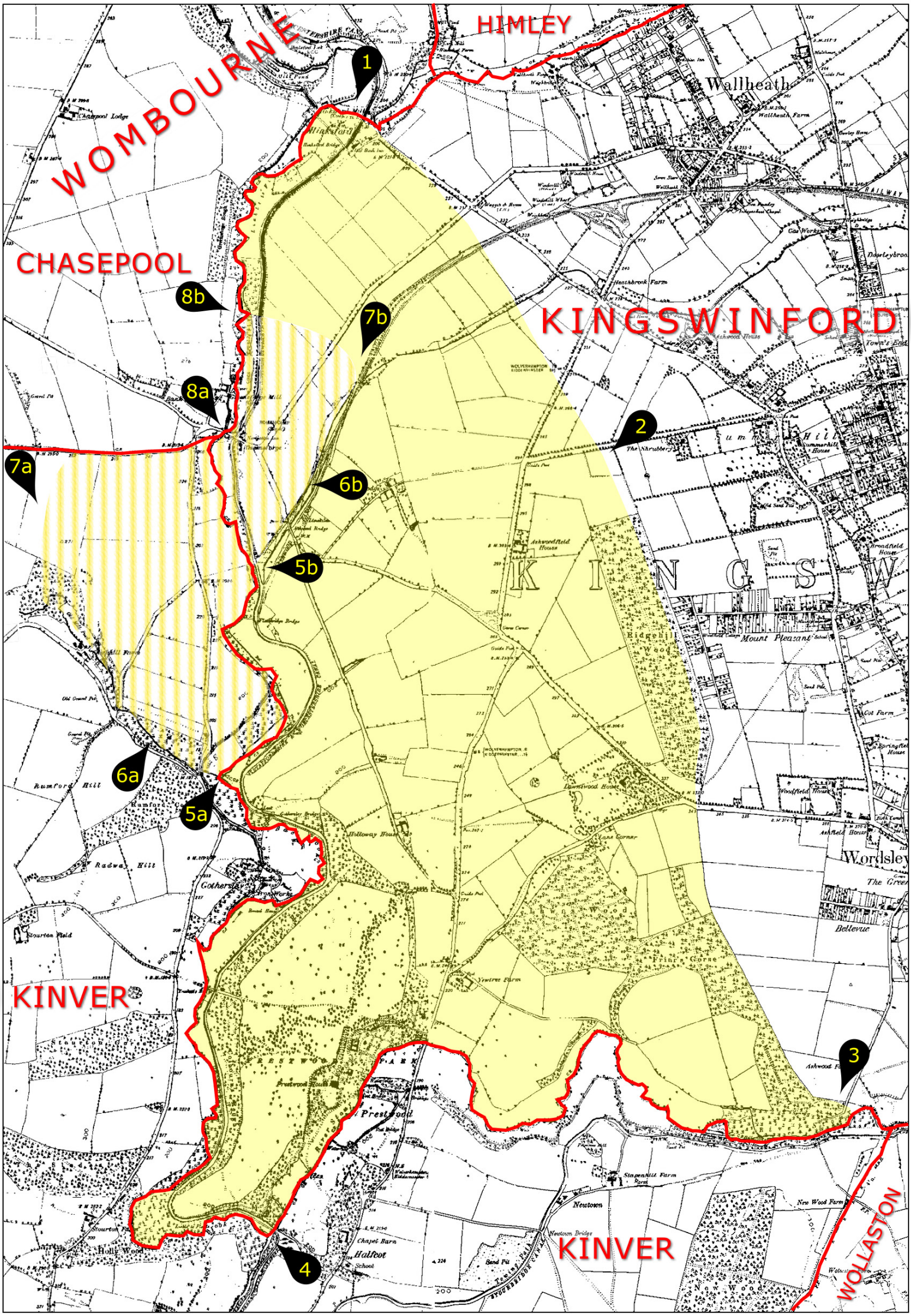


Figure A1. Interpretation of the AD 994 Eswich boundary perambulation

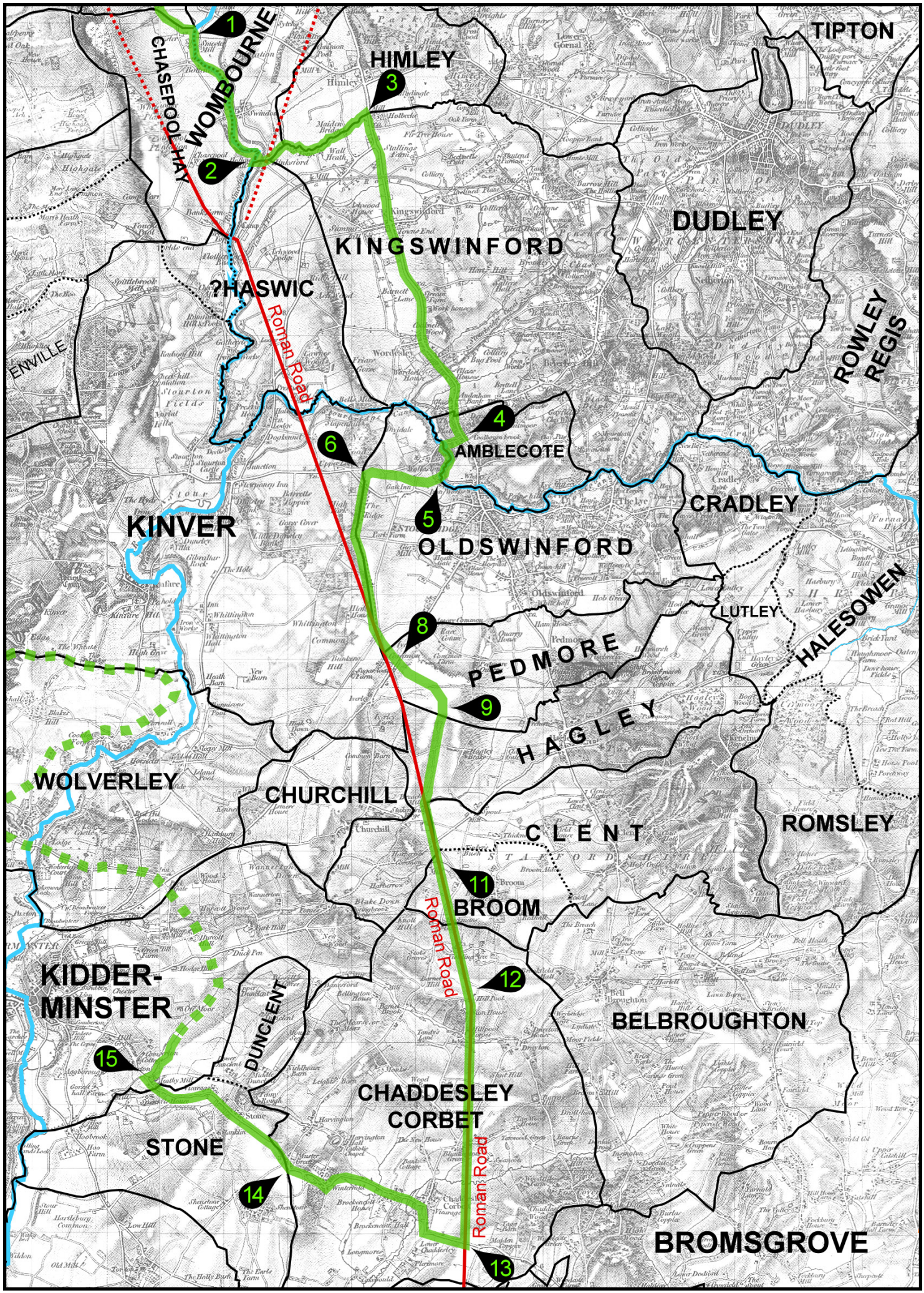


Figure B1. Partial interpretation of the 1300 AD perambulation of Kinver Forest

Digitally signed by Dr Kevin James