

**AREA 3: NEW CLOSE and THE GROVE (Parish of Binley Woods) and BIRCHLEY (Parish of Brinklow):
WOODS 15/47 and OLD POOLS 72/47 no LIDAR (Parish of Coombe Fields)**

Sources of information are:

- 1. Ecosite notes (HBA)**
- 3. Local Record Office 2017/8 (RM)**
- 4. Wager 1998 Woods, Wolds & Groves (Ph.D thesis)**
- 5. D.R. Morfitt 2000 The Historical Ecology of the Woods of Binley, Warwickshire (Ph.D thesis).**

ECOLOGY (Source 1)

New Close and the Grove and Birchley ancient wood dominated by birch and mature oak with small leafed lime. Nightingales in the past. General absence of really mature trees. Alder and hazel coppice with oak standards neglected. Ground flora in Birchley is poor due to dense canopy.

Old Pools small strip of fairly open mixed woodland. An avenue of old lime coppice, also oak, ash and birch standards. Understorey of hawthorn and hazel. Ground flora varied with red campion. Management is not in evidence.

HISTORY

This is medieval, possibly earlier, managed woodland, with wood banks, some dated. It is unusual to be able to date woodbanks and evidence from these woods may help the dating of other wood banks in the area **(source 4)**.

- **New Close Wood** is almost entirely surrounded by a 8m almost sinuous wood bank , prob constructed 1355/6, replacing an earlier bank **(Source 5)**.
- **The Grove:** outer wood bank also of this date, although has an inner probably earlier oval enclosure; much of the grove has a complexes of pits and ditches which may be brickworks undated **(Source 5)**.
- **Birchley Wood** has a flatter and smaller wood bank, constructed 1300/1 to make a coppice of the wood **(Source 5)**.

There are possible early brick works and evidence of ancient coppicing **(Source 4)**.

Recorded since 12th C. when all woods seem to have been subject to common grazing rights. Progressively enclosed for **coppicing from 14th C.** as grazing rights were restricted or abolished **(Source 5)**.

- **Birchley** (Bosco de Burlegh) was given to the Abbey at Coombe in 1150, separated by the heath (Brinklow?) from the wood and heath of Brandon. **In 1501** Coombe Abbey agreed that part of Birchley Wood near the Abbey's Grange (northern edge of New Close and Birchley Woods) could be enclosed and made into a coppice **(Source 4)**.
- **'Burchley' Wood** : the reconstructed award for the **parish of** Brinklow (enclosed 1742) shows the boundary of Birchley Wood and marked 'in lordship of Comb'. Terrier and survey 1838 shows area as 106 acres. Map of Leigh estate farms of 1767 shows strip of land north-west of B Wd was also in Comb lordship although in parish of Brinklow. **(Source 3)**.
- **New Close Wood** was a wood or copys in the parish of Binley 1538 in the Wood Grange by Brandon Heath **(Source 4)**.

By 18th C. all were conventional coppice woods, although the Grove may have produced timber only. From mid late 19th C. all woods were coppice **(Source 5)**.