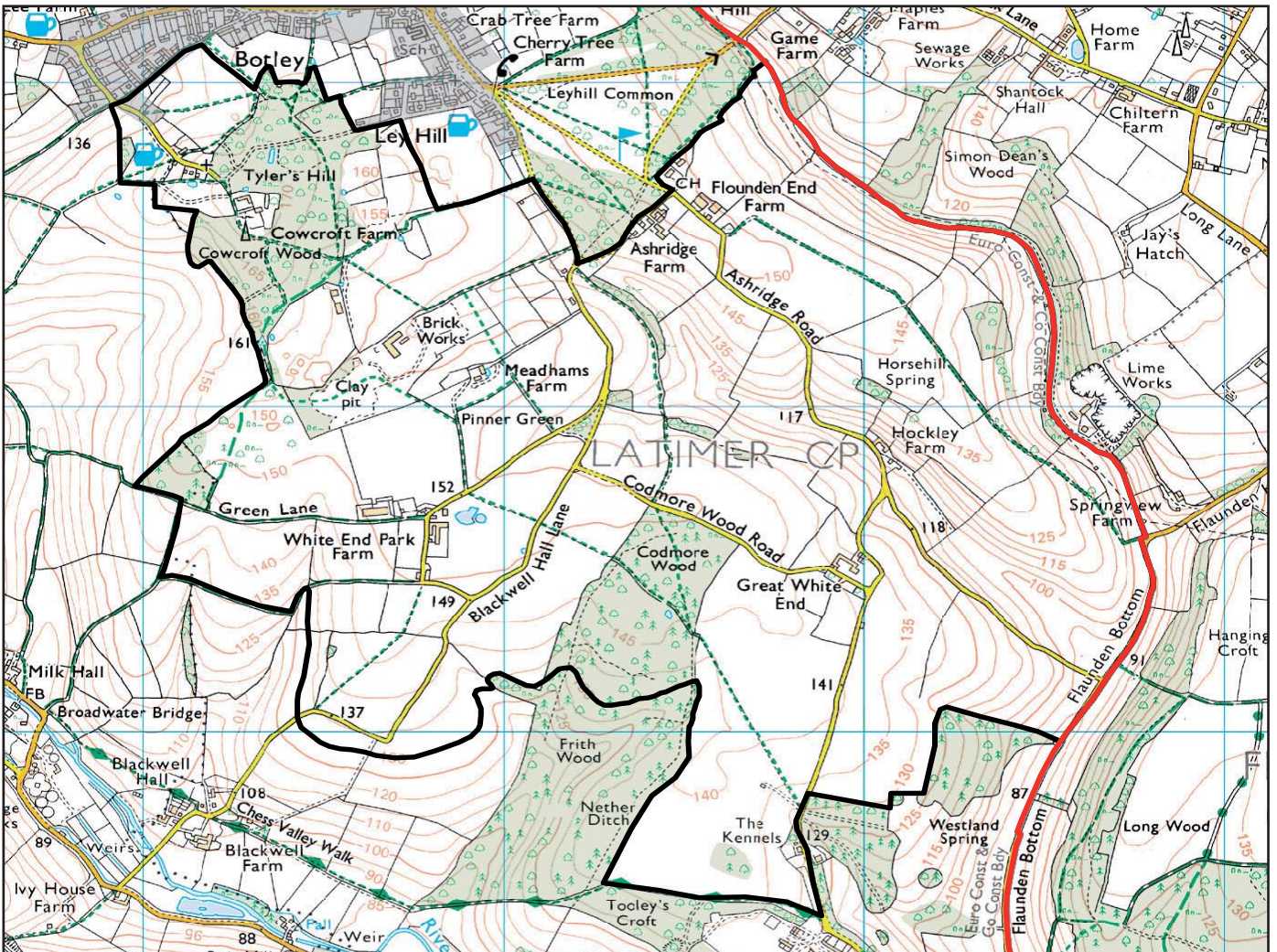
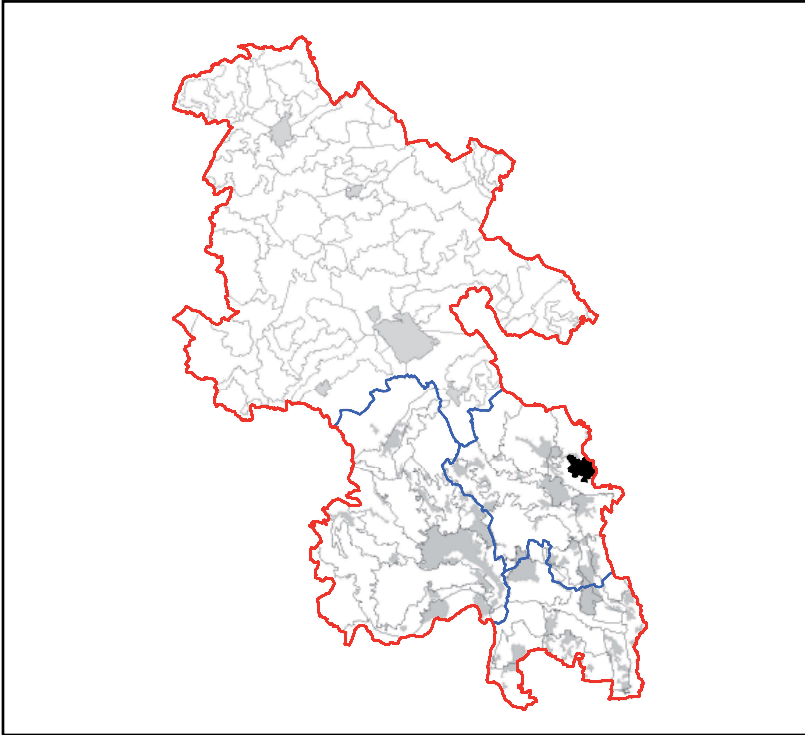


# LCA 18.4 CODMORE ROLLING FARMLAND



## LCA 18.4 CODMORE ROLLING FARMLAND

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- A varied geology of predominantly chalk bedrock capped with Clay with Flints with exposed bands of Upper/ Middle Chalk which give rise to a rolling topography.
- London Clay occurs at Tyler's Hill where the landform rises to 170m AOD.
- An area of arable and rough grazing farmland, interlocked with small blocks of woodland.
- Hedgerow field boundaries are often tall and enclosing along roads. Hedgerow trees and scattered field trees provide structure.
- A very low density of dispersed settlement, comprising individual farmsteads/properties and the small hamlet of Tyler's Hill.
- A history of brick and tile making with a brick works and clay pit at Tyler's Hill, relating to the London Clay.
- Broadleaved, mixed and coniferous woodland, including ancient woodland (Codmore Wood and Cowcroft Wood).
- Green lanes (Green Lane and Bunn's Lane) and connecting hedgerows contribute to biodiversity.
- Small winding rural roads and lanes, with little traffic and boundary hedgerow creating an intimate enclosed character.
- Varying field enclosures, with pre 18<sup>th</sup> century irregular, regular and sinuous systems, parliamentary enclosure and large areas of extended fields, with extensive field boundary loss relating to arable farmland.
- A peaceful and rural landscape with views often enclosed by woodland and hedgerows but occasionally opening up to allow sweeping views across farmland.

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### DESCRIPTION

**Location and Boundaries:** *Codmore Rolling Farmland* lies wholly within Chiltern District, on its western edge. It occupies the higher ground above the Chess River Valley. The lower landform and lack of settlement distinguishes this landscape from the higher, settled landscape to the north. Boundaries broadly relate to the 135m AOD contour and enclosing woodland above the Chess Valley.

**Landscape Character:** A landscape with a varied geology of Clay and Flints and exposed chalk, giving rise to a rolling landform with highest ground at Tyler's Hill underlain by London Clay. A mosaic of farmland and small woodlands, comprising rough grazing/pasture with some larger arable fields. Larger areas of ancient woodland occur at Tyler's Hill and Codmore Wood. Settlement density is low, with highly dispersed isolated farmsteads, and the small hamlet of Tyler's Hill. The area has a history of brick and tile making, relating to its geology and a clay pit and brick works lie to the south of Tyler's Hill. Rural roads are quiet and winding often contained by hedgerows (e.g. green lanes at Green Lane and Bunn's Lane). Field enclosures vary with pre 18<sup>th</sup> century irregular, regular and sinuous systems, parliamentary enclosure and large areas of extended fields, with extensive field boundary loss relating to arable farmland. A peaceful and rural landscape with views often enclosed by woodland and hedgerows but occasionally opening up to allow sweeping views across farmland.

**Geology:** Predominantly chalk bedrock capped with Clay with Flints with exposed bands of Upper and Middle Chalk which creates a rolling topography. Lambeth Group and London Clay Formation occur at Tyler's Hill where the landform rises to its highest point (170m AOD). The geology gives rise to slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage and freely draining lime-rich loamy soils over chalk.

**Topography/Landform:** An undulating and rolling landscape. The heads of dry valleys associated with the Chess create undulations in the south east of the area with lowest ground at Flaunden Bottom 95m AOD. In contrast, Tyler's Hill rises to 170m AOD in the north of the area.

**Hydrology:** There are no discernable watercourses however there are occasional ponds within the area associated with farms or occurring in woods.

**Land Use and Settlement:** A mixture of arable farmland, occurring in larger fields, and rough grazing/pasture. Small blocks of woodland are scattered through the area with larger areas of woodland at Tyler's Hill and Codmore Wood. Hedgerows form field boundaries and often enclose the roads and lanes.

There is a very low density of settlement with individual properties and farmsteads dispersed along winding rural roads. Tyler's Hill is a small hamlet in the north of the

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area the name relates to the past tile making industry here, using London Clay. The area also has a history of brick making and a brick works and clay pit occur south of Tyler's Hill. Red brick is a common building material with some white render.

A number of footpaths and bridleways cross the area some connect to the Chess Valley Walk in the adjacent Chess Valley landscape.

**Tree Cover:** Small pockets of woodland occur along field boundaries with larger areas of ancient woodland at Codmore Wood and Cowcroft Wood on Tyler's Hill. Codmore Wood is mixed woodland with a coniferous centre and Cowcroft Wood is semi-natural broadleaved coppice woodland with Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) being the dominant tree species. Woodland often provides a backdrop to fields, creating a wooded character, hedgerow trees and some scattered trees within fields also occur. There are some small areas of scrub woodland around the brick works.

**Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape:** A rolling landform with a simple pattern of farmland interspersed with woodland creating a uniform character. The pockets of woodland and tall hedgerows create intimacy and enclosure providing a backdrop to views and containing roads. Some attractive sweeping views are afforded across farmland and down dry valleys. There are also some views down towards the Chess Valley. The quiet lanes, farmland and woodland cover coupled with the lack of settlement and main road makes this a peaceful and rural landscape.

**Biodiversity:** Woodland provides a valuable habitat throughout this area connecting to hedgerows to provide wildlife corridors. Broadleaved, mixed, and beech and yew woodland occur with some pockets of coniferous plantation. Cowcroft Wood is a Local Wildlife Site as well as Green Lane and Bunn's Lane which are green lanes which continue down into the adjacent Chess Valley. There are no priority BAP habitats in this character area.

**Historic Environment:** Extended fields with extensive boundary loss correspond to the areas of arable landcover. An area of parliamentary enclosure occurs around the brick works and at Tyler's Hill. Pre 18<sup>th</sup> century irregular, regular and sinuous fields occur on steeper slopes. There is also some 20<sup>th</sup> century enclosure. An area of Mesolithic flints occurs at Tyler's Hill.

### Designations:

- Chilterns AONB
- Archaeological Notification Sites: 1 No.
- Biological Notification Sites: 2 No.
- Local Nature Reserves: No.

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- Local Geological Sites: 1 No.
- Local Wildlife Sites: 4 No.

### EVALUATION

#### Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Potential landscape and visual sensitivities are:

- The open farmland and woodland cover (large areas of ancient woodland) which provides enclosure, a backdrop to views and biodiversity value.
- The occasional sweeping open views across rolling farmland which contrast to the enclosed rural lanes.
- The very low density of settlement with farmsteads and individual properties occurring occasionally along quiet, winding rural roads.
- The green lanes which contribute enclosure, are of historic interest and provide biodiversity value.
- The rural and peaceful character which arises from the mix of woodland and farmland and lack of settlement and main roads.
- The visual unity of the landscape, and organised, well balanced character.
- The history of brick and tile making which relates to local geology and is evident in building materials.
- Varying field enclosures, with pre 18<sup>th</sup> century irregular, regular and sinuous systems and parliamentary enclosure.

**Strength of Character/Intactness:** The strength of character and intactness of the *Codmore Rolling Farmland* is **strong**. Key characteristics are prominent within the landscape and the lack of intrusive features makes this a physically and visually intact landscape.

**Strategy/ Vision:** To conserve the mosaic of woodland, and farmland and the rural, peaceful character of *Codmore Rolling Farmland*.

#### Landscape Guidelines:

- Conserve and manage the mosaic of woodland and farmland.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, to help generate a wildlife rich habitat, and visually attractive landscape.
- Conserve the areas of woodland and manage to enhance biodiversity value.
- Conserve sweeping open views across farmland.
- Conserve the character of the rural roads.
- Manage green lanes appropriately as a wildlife corridor and historic feature. Conserve connectivity of habitats through hedgerow management.
- Conserve the intact, remote and peaceful character which is formed by the farmland and woodland cover, lack of modern development and lack of busy main roads.

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- Ensure that any new building and development is sensitively integrated into the landscape through careful siting and design.
- Conserve and restore early field enclosures on steeper slopes, which provide evidence of past use of the land.

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Rolling pastoral farmland, with interspersed small woodland blocks.

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Pockets of woodland and tranquil and enclosed character (such as at Cowcroft Wood).

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Strong rural character, with tall hedgerows and trees creating intimacy and enclosure.

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Farmland with low density of housing and scattered farm houses

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