

July 2007

# **Breckland District Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment**

**Final Report for  
Breckland District Council  
by  
Land Use Consultants**



**BRECKLAND  
SETTLEMENT FRINGE:  
LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**

**Prepared for  
Breckland District Council**

**by  
Land Use Consultants**

**July 2007**

43 Chalton Street  
London NW1 1JD  
Tel: 020 7383 5784  
Fax: 020 7383 4798  
[luc@london.landuse.co.uk](mailto:luc@london.landuse.co.uk)



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The project was directed by a steering group comprising David Spencer (Planning Policy Officer, Breckland Council), Phil Mileham (Planning Policy Assistant, Breckland Council), Nick Vass-Bowen (Senior Planner – Thetford Growth Point, Breckland Council) and David Yates (Landscape Architect, Norfolk County Council).



## **PART I: OVERVIEW**



# I. INTRODUCTION

---

## BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

- I.1. Land Use Consultants was commissioned by Breckland Council in October 2006 to undertake a two part Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of Breckland District:
- i. District wide LCA at 1:25,000 scale;
  - ii. Local level LCA of 17 identified settlements within Breckland District (Market Towns and Candidate Local Service Centre Villages), considering their landscape setting at 1:10,000 scale.
- I.2. This study forms part two of the LCA and builds on the District wide Landscape Character Assessment, providing a greater level of detail about the landscape of the settlement edge and their sensitivity to change, notably to settlement extensions.

### Study Purpose

- I.3. The study will form part of the evidence base for the Breckland District Local Development Framework (LDF) and will inform future policy and development control decisions affecting the landscape setting of the identified settlements. It has defined inherent sensitivities to development, as well as setting out detailed considerations in respect of landscape management and design principles for future development. In light of Thetford's Growth Point Status, the Area Action Plan and supporting Green Infrastructure Study, this study is a timely exercise and will inform the Green Infrastructure work and opportunities for enhancement of and connections to the wider Breckland landscape.

### Report Structure

- I.4. This report is set out as follows:

#### Part 1:

1. Introduction (this section)
2. The study area - settlements
3. Study Methodology
4. Relationship to the District LCA

#### Part 2:

This is the main part of the report and comprises the detailed LCA – characterisation, evaluation and guidelines of the fringes of 17 settlements.



## 2. STUDY AREA - SETTLEMENTS

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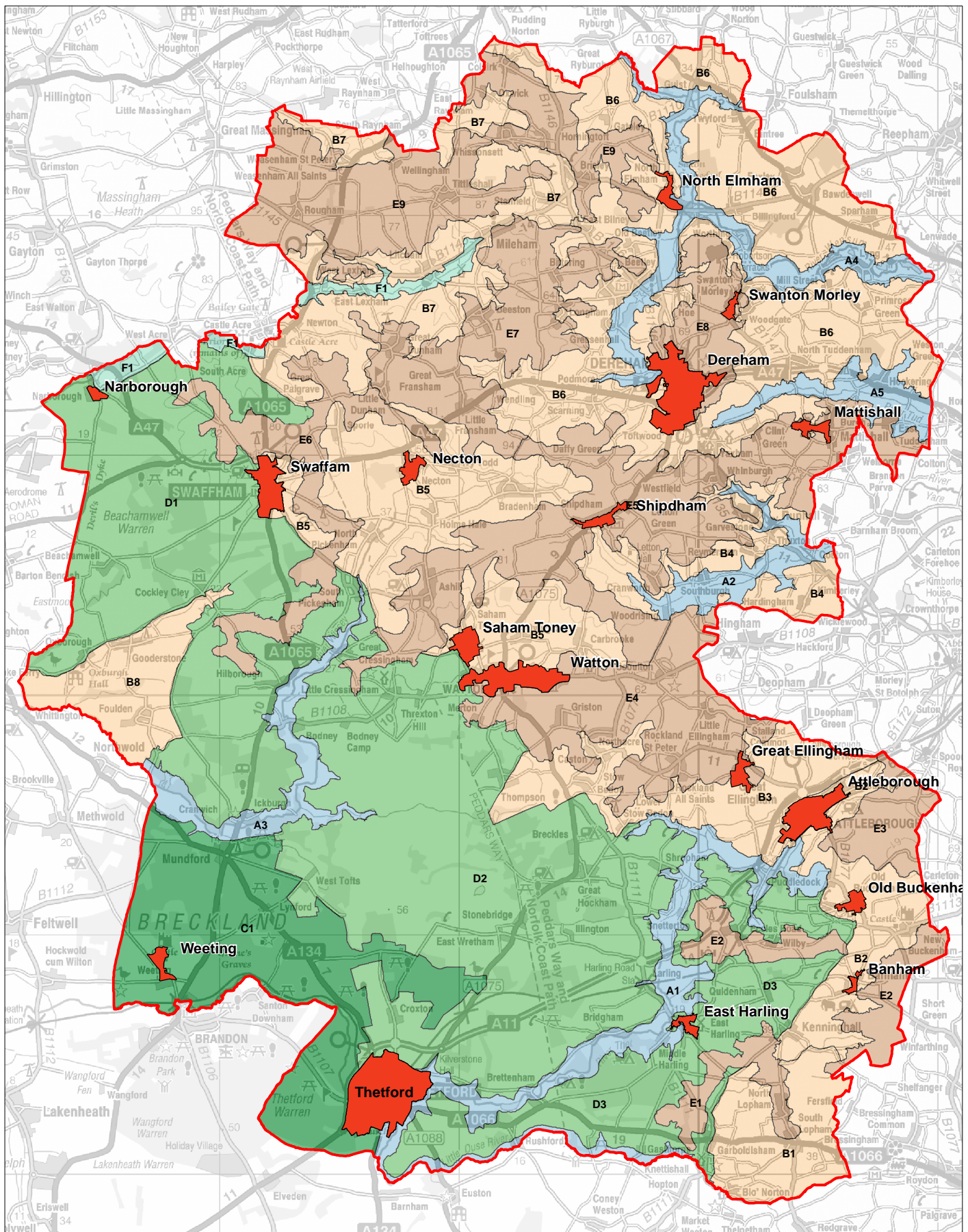
- 2.1. The study is based on seventeen settlements. Thetford a market town awarded Growth Point Status, four additional market towns and 12 candidate local service centre villages. These are set out in **Table 2.1** below and illustrated overleaf at **Figure 2.1**. This figure shows the settlements in the context of the Breckland District LCA Landscape typology.

**Table 2.1: Settlements**

<b>Growth Point</b>
Thetford
<b>Market Towns</b>
Attleborough
Dereham
Swaffham
Watton
<b>Candidate Local Service Centre Villages</b>
Banham
East Harling
Great Ellingham
Mattishall
Narborough
Necton
North Elmham
Old Buckenham
Saham Toney
Shipdham
Swanton Morley
Weeting

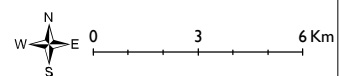






## Breckland Phase 2 LCA

Figure 2.1 Settlements in Context of Breckland District LCA



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: red;">■</span> Urban Rural Fringe Settlements</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Breckland Boundary</li> <li><b>Landscape Character Areas</b></li> <li><span style="background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> <b>A - River Valleys</b></li> <li>A1: River Thet</li> <li>A2: Upper Yare</li> <li>A3: River Wissey</li> <li>A4: River Wensum and Blackwater</li> <li>A5: Upper Tud</li> <li><span style="background-color: #D2B48C; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> <b>B - Settled Tributary Farmland</b></li> <li>B1: Little Ouse Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B2: The Buckenham Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B3: River Thet Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B4: River Blackwater Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B5: River Wissey Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B6: River Wensum and Tud Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B7: River Nar Tributary Farmland</li> <li>B8: Gooderstone to Oxborough Tributary Farmland</li> <li><span style="background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> <b>C - The Brecks - Plantations</b></li> <li>C1: The Brecks of Thetford Forest</li> <li><span style="background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> <b>D - The Brecks - Heathland with Plantation</b></li> <li>D1: Swaffham Heath</li> <li>D2: Stanta Heath</li> <li>D3: Harling Heathlands</li> <li><span style="background-color: #D2B48C; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> <b>E - Plateau Farmland</b></li> <li>E1: Lophams Plateau</li> <li>E2: Snetterton Heath Plateau</li> <li>E3: Old Buckenham Plateau</li> <li>E4: Wayland Plateau</li> <li><span style="background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> <b>F - Chalk Rivers</b></li> <li>F1: River Nar Valley</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E5: Central Breckland Plateau</li> <li>E6: North Pickenham Plateau</li> <li>E7: Beeston Plateau</li> <li>E8: Dereham Plateau</li> <li>E9: Whissonsett Plateau</li> </ul>	<p>Source: Land Use Consultants</p> <p>Date: 12/07/2007</p> <p>Revision: B</p>
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## 3. METHOD STATEMENT

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### INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

- 3.1. The approach to this study followed best practice as promoted by Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) in the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* (2002) and, specifically, the approach to assessing landscape sensitivity in the associated *Topic Paper 6*. The detailed method was developed in discussion with the steering group, in order to meet the study objectives and refined through a pilot field survey. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was used throughout the study as the tool for collating, manipulating and presenting data. The study was undertaken and recorded at a scale of 1:10,000.
- 3.2. The study was undertaken within the framework of the existing district scale LCA, and therefore fits within the regional and national landscape character assessment context. The study provides a characterisation and assessment of the landscape setting of the 5 principal market towns within Breckland (Thetford, Dereham, Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton) and 12 identified local service centre villages (Banham, East Harling, Great Ellingham, Mattishall, Narborough, Necton, North Elmham, Old Buckenham, Saham Toney, Shipdham, Swanton Morley and Weeting).

### CHARACTERISATION

#### Desk Study/Review

- 3.3. A desk review of existing baseline information was undertaken to provide a basis for subdivision of the 1:25000 scale character areas identified in the District LCA. This included the following digital datasets:
  - OS Landform Panorama data 1:25,000 (topography);
  - British Geological Survey 1:50,000 solid and drift geology mapping;
  - Norfolk County Council Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) – where available;
  - Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk;
  - Designation Data – Cultural: Scheduled Ancient Monuments/Historic Parks and Gardens;
  - Designation Data – Natural: SSSI, Ancient Woodland, CWS.
  - Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan and Ecological Network Mapping Project Report.
- 3.4. In addition, historic mapping was purchased for each settlement including first edition/early Ordnance Survey Mapping. This was used to trace the urban

morphology and historic growth patterns/processes that have informed the present settlement character in terms of form, pattern and density.

- 3.5. The results of the desk study were brought together to develop a draft characterisation at 1:10,000 scale, for testing in the field. The characterisation followed best practice as outlined in the 2002 Guidance and developed a nested sequence of local landscape types and local landscape character areas derived from the types and character areas identified in the District LCA.
- 3.6. Parameters for the study were defined by a 3km radius from the urban edge in the case of the market towns and a 1.5 km radius for the rural service centre villages.

### **Field Survey**

- 3.7. The field survey included a pilot study to test the methodology at a number of sites agreed with the client steering group. Its purpose was to define the detailed study area, confirm the landscape units and collect additional information as a basis for assessing landscape and visual sensitivities and defining an appropriate landscape management strategy for the local landscape character units. A targeted field survey form tailored to the specific objectives of the study was used to record information, and this is shown at Appendix I.

- 3.8. Information collected and confirmed through field survey included the following:

- Location and boundaries;
- Landscape elements including landform, landuse and landcover;
- Cultural and historic attributes including evolution of urban form, settlement pattern, local vernacular, stylistic idiom and land marks/town marks;
- Nature of the settlement-landscape interface including density variation, porosity and spatial relationships;
- Key views in and out, recorded through photographs and indicative field of vision/visual envelopes;
- Key gateways and nodes, and
- Perceptual characteristics.

### **DESCRIPTION**

- 3.9. The above information was brought together to develop the classification and description of the local landscape character areas. The description contains the following information:

## **Location and Summary**

- 3.10. This describes the location of the character area in relation to the town/village, and summarises key elements of landscape character.

## **Representation of District LCA character area**

- 3.11. Considers the local character area in relation to the key characteristics exhibited by the wider landscape character area.

## **EVALUATION**

- 3.12. A robust and objective approach to landscape and visual sensitivities, tested through a pilot field survey

## **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- 3.13. The assessment of landscape character sensitivity is based on the following criteria:

**Landscape Quality and Condition:** A statement on the physical state of the landscape including intactness as a whole and state of repair of individual elements, and the presence of detracting elements.

**Sensitivity of Individual Elements:** The sensitivity of individual elements within the landscape to development. This statement is subdivided where appropriate into:

- natural (e.g. structural vegetation, land cover and sites designated for nature conservation interest) ;
- cultural including cultural pattern, historic landscape and built/architectural elements (buildings of historic interest, Conservation Areas and built vernacular);
- aesthetic/perceptual factors, such as scale, tranquillity, texture and containment.

**Character of the Settlement:** Consideration of the type (type, scale density) of development on the existing settlement edge and its accessibility/permeability/integration with the landscape, including key gateways and nodes or junctions. This also considers the nature of the settlement-landscape interface including density variation, porosity and spatial relationships, in addition to important urban edges to be conserved and edges offering potential for landscape enhancement. These criteria are particularly useful for considering green infrastructure opportunities in light of Thetford's Growth Point Status and the Brecks Partnership Initiative and also for the assessment of design principles to inform potential new development.

## **Visual Sensitivity**

- 3.14. The assessment of visual sensitivity takes into account the following factors:
- General Views – considering nature of the landform, extent of tree cover and important landmarks/foci;
  - Intervisibility with the settlement edge, including key views to/from the settlement (including any landmark features within the settlement);

- Mitigation potential – considering the existing character in terms of vegetation and the extent to which new landscape mitigation can be accommodated without altering character.

### Sensitivity Judgement

- 3.15. The information set out under the criteria above, allows an overall judgement on sensitivity to be determined. This judgement is on a five point scale: High, Moderate-High, Moderate, Moderate-Low and Low. A definition of the sensitivity scale is provided below:

**Table 3.1: Definitions of Sensitivity**

<p><b>High Sensitivity:</b> Key features that make up the landscape are likely to be affected by introduction of development on the settlement fringes, which may lead to substantial change in landscape character. A highly valued landscape or containing highly valued components. A landscape and settlement edge in good condition/of high quality, with characteristics or elements that make a strong positive contribution to landscape character. Containing landscape characteristics/elements that would be irreplaceable or difficult to replace. The aim should be to conserve the landscape setting of the settlement.</p>
<p><b>High-Moderate Sensitivity:</b> Many of the key characteristics of the landscape would be adversely affected by development on the settlement fringe. A valued landscape in moderate or good condition/or of good quality. The proposed change would result in a noticeable alteration to the character of the settlement fringe and its landscape setting.</p>
<p><b>Moderate Sensitivity:</b> Some key features/characteristics that make up the landscape/settlement edge are likely to be affected by introduction of development on the settlement fringe. A moderately valued landscape or containing moderately valued or some valued elements. A landscape in moderate/good condition whose characteristics or elements make some positive contribution to wider landscape character. Containing landscape characteristics/elements that are likely to be replaceable to some extent. In considering any change, design and mitigation guidance should be followed.</p>
<p><b>Moderate-Low Sensitivity:</b> Few key characteristics of the landscape would be adversely affected by new development/change. The landscape may be able to accommodate proposed development. Note that elements of this landscape may be locally valued. In considering any change, design and mitigation guidance should be followed. Opportunities for enhancement or creation of new character should be considered in relation to any future change.</p>
<p><b>Low Sensitivity:</b> Key features/characteristics that make up the landscape are unlikely to be affected by introduction of new development /change. A landscape of limited/low value. A landscape in poor or declining condition whose characteristics or elements do not contribute positively to wider landscape character. Containing landscape characteristics/elements that are likely to be easily replaceable. Opportunities for enhancement or creation of new character and an enhanced settlement edge should be considered in relation to any future change.</p>

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

### General Landscape Management

- 3.16. A consideration of opportunities for landscape conservation, enhancement or renewal and for the enhancement of the settlement interface, taking into account such initiatives as the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.

### Principles in relation to development

- 3.17. Guidance on the nature and form for potential future development in terms of built vernacular, stylistic idiom, scale and massing.

### IMPORTANT NOTES FOR APPLICATION OF THE STUDY

- 3.18. A summary sensitivity map of the local character areas within the settlements follows the cover sheet which introduces the settlements in terms of historical evolution/urban morphology and edge character. **It is important that this is read in conjunction with the sensitivity analysis and overall sensitivity judgement within the text**, as these may refer to areas of locally higher or lower sensitivity.
- 3.19. Whilst the study area and landscape classification for each settlement considered a 3km radius from the edge of the settlement for the market towns and 1.5km for the candidate local service centre villages, **local character areas have only been written up where they directly adjoin a settlement edge or represented an obvious potential location for future growth**. Character areas indicated in grey on the respective cover sheets for each settlement are those which do not abut the settlement edge and which have therefore not been written up.

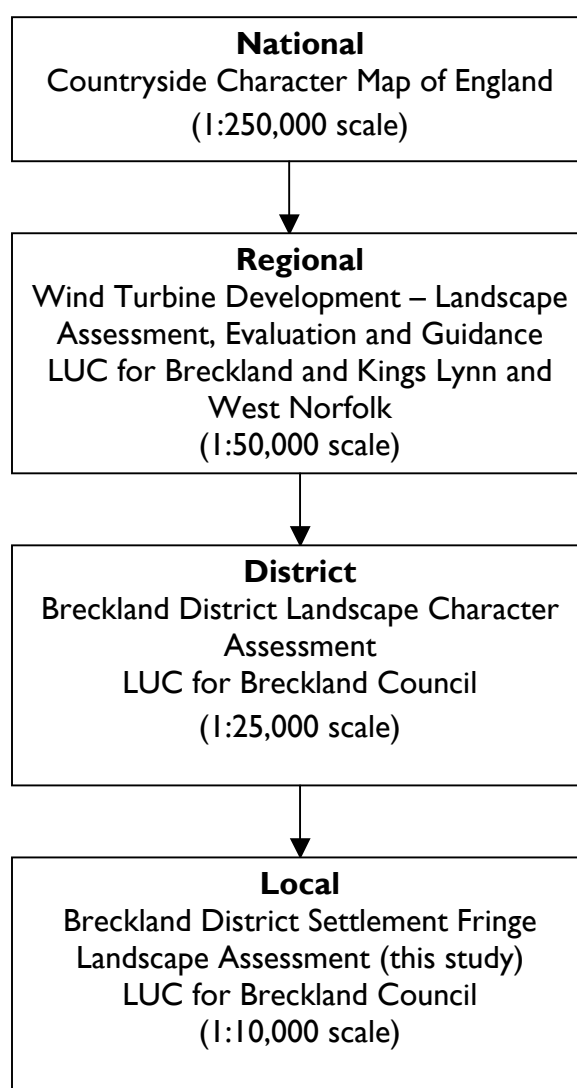




## 4. RELATIONSHIP TO BRECKLAND DISTRICT LCA

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- 4.1. This study builds upon the 1:25,000 scale Landscape Character Assessment of Breckland District. It uses the landscape classification and description as a basis for the local level landscape characterisation of the identified settlements at 1:10,000 scale. The two studies therefore sit within a nested hierarchy of landscape assessment work which is illustrated in **Table 4.1**:



- 4.2. This study builds on the characterisation, evaluation, strategic scale sensitivity judgments and landscape strategies identified within the District wide LCA. These were developed and refined through detailed field survey of the settlements to enable the formation of detailed sensitivity judgments, notably to settlement expansion, with associated landscape management and design principles. This study should therefore be seen as a 'companion volume' to the District LCA and should be read in the context of that document.



## **PART 2: SETTLEMENT FRINGE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**



## 5. SETTLEMENT FRINGE ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. The remainder of this report sets out the settlement fringe landscape assessment of the identified market towns and candidate local service centre villages. Thetford is described first, in light of its Growth Point Status, followed by the remaining market towns and then candidate local service centre villages.

### Breckland Settlement Fringe Study: Settlement Classification Table

Thetford	TH1: Thet Valley TH2: Lower Thet - Little Ouse Valley TH3: Thetford Warren TH6: Croxton TH7: Kilverstone TH8: Snare Hill Seven Hills TH9: Nunnery Stud
Attleborough	AT1: Attleborough Hall Tributary Farmland AT3: Attleborough, East
Dereham	DE1: Old Carr Wooded Valley DE2: Dillington Hall Tributary Farmland DE3: Northall Green Arable Plateau DE4: Old Hall Tributary Farmland DE6: Scarning Fen Tributary Farmland
Swaffham	SW1: Clarence Hills Open Tributary Farmland SW2: Washpit Drove Open Plateau Farmland SW3: Hilly Whins Plantation and Farmland
Watton	WA1: Watton Brook Tributary Farmland WA2: Watton Airfield Tributary Farmland WA3: Watton West/Thrextan

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Local Character Areas</b>
<b>Local Service Centre Villages</b>	
Banham	BA1: Banham Fringe
East Harling	EH1: Middle Harling Open Valley Floor EH2: East Harling Fen EH3: East Harling Heathlands
Great Ellingham	GE1: Bow Street Enclosed Arable Plateau GE2: Attleborough Hills Tributary Farmland with Woodland
Mattishall	MA1: Clippings Green Small Scale Tributary Farmland MA2: Mattishall Hall Small Scale Plateau Farmland MA3: Mattishall Burgh Large Scale Plateau Farmland
Narborough	NA1: Narborough Farmland and Plantation NA2: Narborough Estate Valley Floor
Necton	NE1: Sparham Hall Open Tributary Farmland NE2: Holme Hale Small Scale Tributary Farmland
North Elmham	NE1: County School Station Valley Floor NE4: Elmham Park Tributary Farmland
Old Buckenham	OBI: Old Buckenham Fringe
Saham Toney	ST1: Saham Toney South West ST2: Saham Toney North, West, East
Shipdham	SH1: Crows Hill and Thorpe Row Arable Plateau SH3: Letton Hall Arable Farmland with Parkland and Woodland
Swanton Morley	SM1: Northall Green Enclosed Arable Farmland SM2: Woodgate Enclosed Tributary Farmland SM3: Castle Farm Valley Floor
Weeting	WE1: Weeting Castle Plantation and Farmland

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Local Character Areas</b>
	WE2: Fengate Woodland and Wetland













## THETFORD

District Character Area	Local Landscape Type	Local Landscape Character Area
A1 River Thet	Rural River Valley	TH1: Thet Valley
A1 River Thet	Rural River Valley	TH2: Lower Thet - Little Ouse Valley
C1 Brecks of Thetford Forest	Plantation and Warren	TH3: Thetford Warren
C1 Brecks of Thetford Forest	Plantation	TH4: Ringmere Plantation
C1 Brecks of Thetford Forest	Plantation	TH5: Not used – outside Breckland District Boundary
D2 Stanta Heath	Heathland and Arable	TH6: Croxton
D2 Stanta Heath	Heathland and Arable	TH7: Kilverstone
D3 Harling Heathlands	Heathland with Plantation	TH8: Snare Hill Seven Hills
D3 Harling Heathlands	Heathland with Plantation	TH9: Nunnery Stud








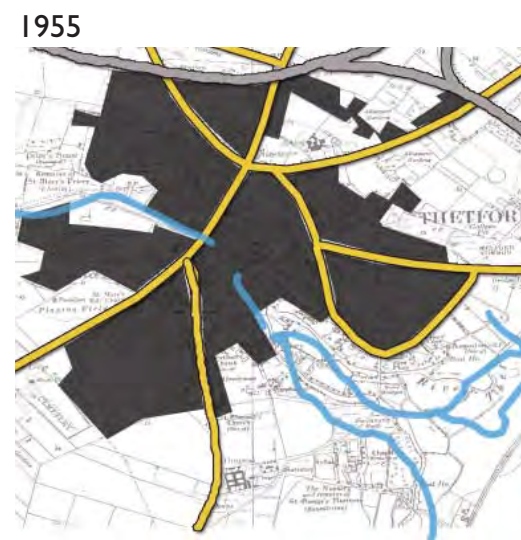
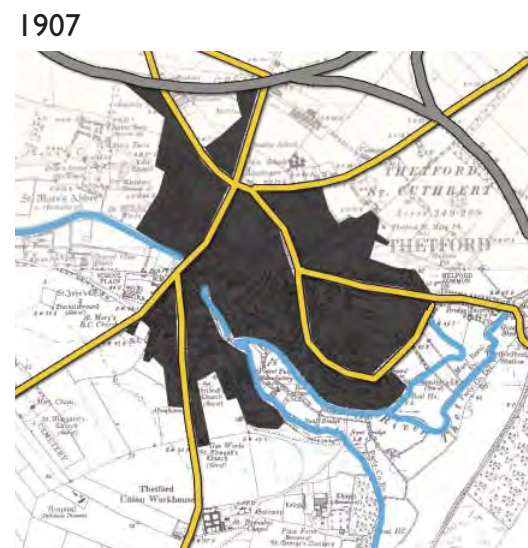


### Thetford Settlement Fringe Analysis

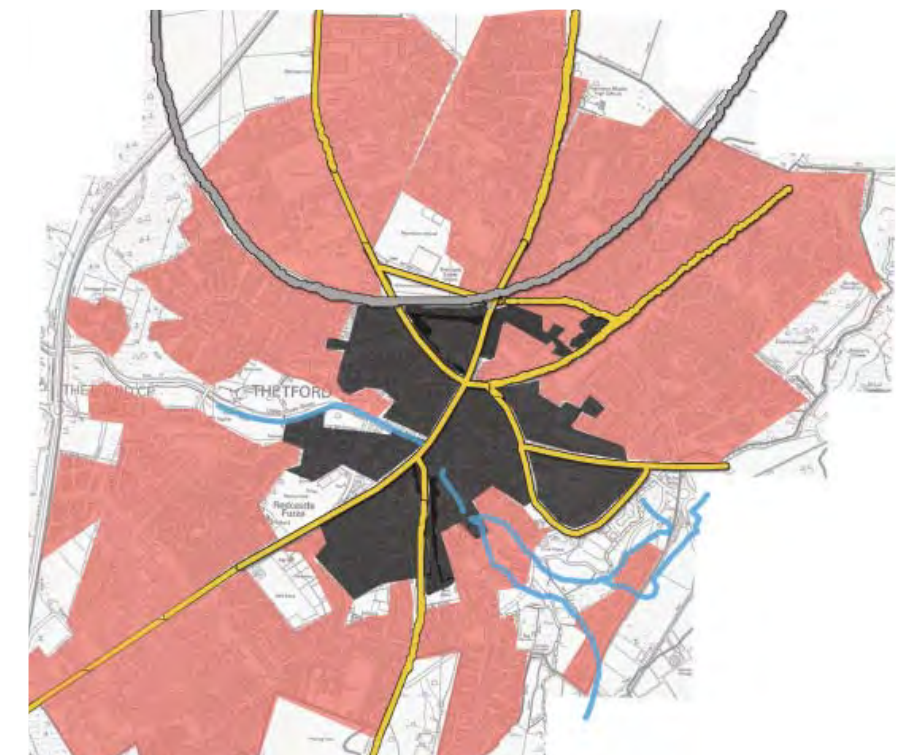
-  Structural landscape blocks
-  Partial screening
-  Key gateways
-  Exposed edge
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Agricultural fields
-  Common land

### Historic Growth of Thetford

-  River Thet
-  Railway line
-  1960-2000 housing
-  Road
-  Settlement (Historic core)











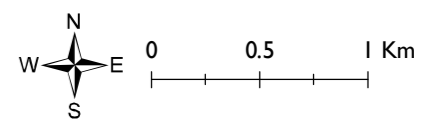
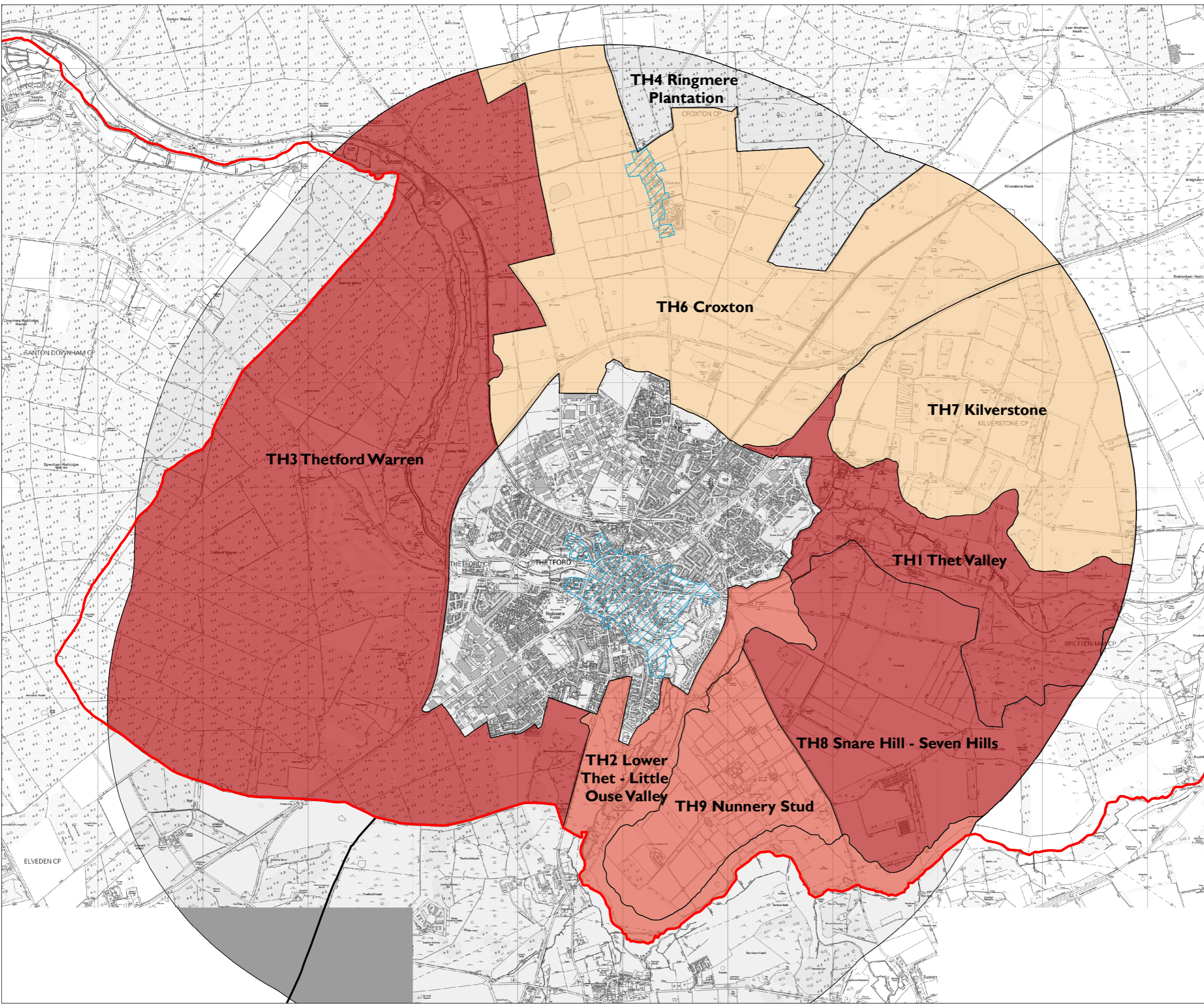
Post 1955





**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Thetford Landscape Character  
Area Sensitivity**

- Key**
-  Breckland Boundary
  -  Thetford 3 km Buffer Region
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
  -  Low / Moderate
  -  Moderate
  -  Moderate / High
  -  High
  -  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# THI: THET VALLEY

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

The character area considers the Thet Valley east of Thetford extending from the urban edge near Kilverstone to the 3km radius. The rural valley landscape includes the distinctive parkland landscape and flint buildings of Kilverstone Hall which are a prominent feature to the west and the plantation and woodland associated with Shadwell Park to the east. It is a very secluded rural valley landscape, with limited public access rights of way.

The river follows a natural meandering course within a shallow valley. The valley floor contains grazed pasture and areas of riparian woodland. Plantations and mixed woodland, some on former common land, are part of the estate landscape and dominate the gently sloping valley sides.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The valley is representative of the district character area. Key differences are the absence of settlement, dominant parkland/estate character and absence of mineral working and open water bodies.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
An intact rural river valley landscape, with a natural river channel and grazed pasture floodplain. Distinctive elements include the flint building associated with Kilverstone Hall (including the house, church, and stables) and Snarehill Hall and their associated parkland landscape. The mixed woodland plantations associated with the registered historic parkland landscape of Shadwell Park are present in the eastern part of the character area. It is considered that there are no detracting features.	This is a landscape in good condition and high quality. It should be conserved. These qualities would be highly sensitive to further expansion of Thetford which currently is contained west of the river. Residential development would impinge on the peaceful rural character of the river valley and the Kilverstone parkland landscape.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued elements are the natural river course, veteran parkland trees associated with the halls, grazed floodplain pasture, and the woodlands and plantations. A large number of CWS along the river course.	The aim should be to conserve and enhance the natural character of the valley. These features would be sensitive to further extension of Thetford/residential development.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The parklands and halls create a strong cultural landscape. The distinctive buildings at Kilverstone are an important feature – including the flint and brick hall, flint and decorative brick watertower and stables set around a courtyard. To the east is a round towered flint church.</p>	<p>The parkland landscape and setting of the distinctive buildings at Snarehill and Kilverstone Hall is sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A peaceful, quiet rural valley landscape. At the westernmost end of the valley (Thetford edge) there is some aural intrusion with traffic noise (A11/A1075) perceptible.</p>	<p>The peaceful, quiet river valley is sensitive to an increase in movement/activity and noise.</p>
<p><b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The settlement edge at Kilverstone Road includes a large scale retail development and garden centre. To the west of the river is a new residential estate of detached and semi detached houses. The development has retained an area of plantations woodland at Broom Covert/Sandpit Plantation which creates screening and a ‘green’ interface with the valley landscape. Elsewhere the edge is formed by back garden fencing – however the retention of mature trees within gardens creates a soft integrated urban edge.</p>	<p>This is a reasonably well integrated settlement edge with the rural valley landscape forming the immediate setting to development. This is an important feature and is considered that further development would impinge on the sensitive valley landscape.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The new residential estate has a permeable interface with the valley created by the retention of areas of mature vegetation within the development and routes out to a natural area of grassland, open water and reedbeds with permissive access.</p>	<p>The well integrated and permeable interface between the town and adjoining rural landscape is an important feature. It is considered that further development would intrude into the more open valley setting.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> In the past the river itself would have been an important Gateway. Today the area contains one Gateway to the town the A1075. This local route has been a focus for new residential development and for the most part this has been sensitively designed with retention of mature vegetation and verges and forms an appropriate entrance to the town. The large superstore is a prominent feature.</p>	<p>This local gateway is not highly sensitive and it is considered that further well designed and integrated development would not adversely affect the setting of the valley. There is an opportunity to enhance screening/setting of the superstore.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The cluster of flint and brick buildings at Kilverstone are an important node – and include the prominent landmarks of the water tower and</p>	<p>The setting of these buildings, particularly the associated parkland landscape is sensitive.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
church.	

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views within the landscape are channelled and contained by tree cover, with occasional glimpses to the river course/water on the valley floor.</p>	<p>The extent of tree cover and enclosure means that there is an opportunity for screening of new development. Long views to the edge of Thetford along the valley are not present</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views to the settlement edge are generally filtered and screened by tree cover (and locally reeds) as at the new housing development by Ashwell Homes. At Kilverstone there are filtered views to the garden centre/nursery and new superstore at the junction of Kilverstone Road/A1075 with glimpses of car parking and bright primary colours at odds with the muted rural valley landscape.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Trees and woodland filter views from into the valley creating a strong rural character on the immediate edge of the town.</p>	<p>The superstore development at Kilverstone indicates the potential for larger scale developments on the settlement edge to intrude on the valley landscape. These views are therefore sensitive. Generally the edge is small scale and screened by trees and woodland creating a strong rural framework. These rural views are sensitive to large scale urban development.</p> <p>Rural views from the settlement edge are sensitive and should be retained.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Plantation blocks, parkland trees and riverside copses are a feature of the valley.</p>	<p>The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting. Any new planting should be sympathetic to patterns with the valley including riparian planting and parkland plantation. There is an opportunity for creation of better screening at the retail development on Kilverstone Road.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

- 5.2. Overall the sensitivity of the Thet Valley to further expansion of Thetford is judged to be **High**. This judgement relates to the role of the valley in defining the settlement-rural edge to the north east part of Thetford. Currently development is contained west of the river and does not impinge on the valley landscape. Further development would necessarily need to bridge the river or occur on the floodplain which would be inappropriate in landscape and visual terms (and in terms of flood risk). The Thet valley is a very rural, peaceful landscape and currently this natural character extends right up to the edge of the town. The informal rural character of the Thet valley should be conserved.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve and enhance the natural river course, grazed pasture and wetland habitats along the floodplain.
- Manage the plantations, mixed and semi-natural woodland for historic landscape and biodiversity interest.
- Conserve the setting of Kilverstone Hall/Snarehill Hall and the associated parkland landscape.
- Consider opportunities to enhance recreational access from Thetford into the Thet valley, where this is compatible with other land management objectives.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure development is contained to the west of the river and does not impinge on the river floodplain or cross the river.
- Conserve the sensitive rural gap between the Superstore and Kilverstone Hall.
- Conserve and manage Sandpit Plantation/Broom Covert which provides the interface with the urban edge.
- Conserve the pools and wetland landscape in the Thet valley to the east of the new residential estate which provides sustainable drainage as well as an informal access and recreation space.

## TH2: LOWER THET - LITTLE OUSE VALLEY

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### DESCRIPTION

#### Location and Summary

The character area considers the lower part of the Thet and the Little Ouse Valley which forms the south eastern edge of the town. The river confluence at Nun's Bridges is within the town and not included within the rural urban fringe character area considered by this assessment. The river valley itself has provided effective containment and limited the south eastward spread of Thetford, although more recent development has occurred on the east bank of the river aligning the former railway line and now creates a new urban edge. In contrast to the rural Thet (TH1), this part of the valley includes urban infrastructure (the main A1066 and A1088 junction) and the route of a disused railway. Further distinctive features contrasting with the Rural Thet are the absence of plantations, presence of open water bodies – a legacy of former sand and gravel extraction, and the extent of informal recreational access. Nunnery Lakes is a mosaic of heathland, woodland, marshes, flood meadow and open water, with permissive access and forms an important recreational and biodiversity resource for the town. Barnhamcross Common is an area of typical Breckland grass heath extending into the urban area.

#### Representation of District LCA character area:

The area is representative of the wider district character area. Key differences are the presence of development associated with Thetford and the main road infrastructure.

### EVALUATION

#### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A landscape of variable quality and condition. Past mineral workings and a disused rail line have now regenerated to create an informal natural landscape of woodland, heathland open water and marsh at Nunnery Lakes. To the north the road infrastructure associated with the A1066 and A1088 is a dominant feature. Parts of the area have a strong historic character.	Sensitivity to change is variable – higher in those areas with strong historic qualities, for example at Barnhamcross Common and Thet river crossing. Sensitivity is lower where it has been influenced by piecemeal modern development which has extended out into the valley setting.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> The valley contains a number of important natural elements, notably the range of habitats at Nunnery Lakes (a BTO reserve) and the grass heath at	The aim should be to conserve and enhance the natural character of the valley. These features would be highly sensitive to further extension of Thetford/residential development.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
Barnhamcross Common (designated an SSSI/SAC) Much of the valley is within The Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA).	Thetford/residential development.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Important cultural elements – the Motte and Bailey Castle and Nunnery are associated with the confluence of the Thet and Ouse within the town. Barnhamcross Common is itself a remnant of a formerly more extensive heathland landscape. The old town bridge is a historic crossing of the river.	The commonland and historic crossing point are highly sensitive.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A landscape with pocket of rural tranquillity in very close proximity to the town – as at Nunnery Lakes and the area of commonland. Elsewhere urban influences are dominant.	The peaceful, quiet river valley is sensitive to an increase in movement/activity and noise.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The edge is comprised of piecemeal low-medium density residential development of various ages. A block of 1970's housing extends onto the commonland at Barnhamcross and forms a fairly abrupt urban edge. A new residential development at Arlington Way also forms a hard edge backing onto the sports/recreation ground at Nunnery Stud.	This is a new edge which is not always well integrated with the valley setting. There are opportunities for enhancement.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> There are numerous access opportunities and links between the residential development and the valley landscape.	The permeable interface and access links between the urban and rural landscape are an important feature.
<b>Gateways:</b> The rivers were formerly an important gateway to the town with the earliest settlement developing at the point where the Thet and Ouse join. The Icknield Way, a great trading route from the Cotswolds and linking to Norwich enters the town from the south, crossing the rivers at Nun's Bridges. The A1088 is formerly a main route from the south (London – Norwich, now superseded by the A11), with an historic crossing over the Thet and a modern road bridge alongside. Melford Common and horse chestnut avenue flanks the road into the town centre. To the west Barnhamcross common extends into the town along the minor local gateway of Bury Road.	The areas of common that extend into the town flanking the roads are an important and distinctive feature of this part of Thetford linking it to the rural hinterland and are judged to be highly sensitive.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views within the landscape are variable – in parts this is a low lying enclosed landscape with views filtered by trees and woodland. In other areas views are more open.</p>	<p>Generally views are not sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views to the urban edge are variable. On the floodplain trees and woodland filter views creating a very rural ambience with few views of the adjacent area. On higher areas such as the commons and recreation ground there are long range open views often to a harsh urban edge.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Views out are more limited with private housing forming the urban edge.</p>	<p>Views from the town to the commonland are sensitive. The rural character and ambience of the commonland, extending into the town is a key feature of this urban edge and should be retained and enhanced.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b></p>	<p>Woodland or extensive screen planting would be inappropriate on the historic commons or recreation land.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the *Lower Thet – Little Ouse Valley* to further expansion of Thetford is judged to be **Moderate - High**. Within this there are key features notably the commons and wetland nature reserve that are more sensitive and should be conserved and enhanced. However, unlike the area to the north (considered as part of character area TH1) development here has crossed the river with areas of new housing present at Arlington Way. Nevertheless, this is a very small character area and although sensitivity is judged to be moderate there is very limited capacity to accommodate further development apart from minor areas of infill. The presence of key sensitive sites and the residential character of the existing urban edge suggest that employment or industrial development would be inappropriate in this location.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the areas of common land, notably the distinctive grass heath at Barnhamcross Common.

- Conserve the function of the commons as the rural setting to the roads into the town and minimise urbanising influences/recreation infrastructure which would change the rural character.
- Conserve and enhance the mosaic of heathland, woodland, marshes, flood meadow and open water at Nunnery Lakes.
- Conserve and enhance informal and permissive access into the valley from the town.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Capacity for new development is limited, minor residential infill being the only option.

# TH3: THETFORD WARREN

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

The character area considers the plantation woodland west and south-west of Thetford extending to 3 km radius from the urban edge. It is dominated by dense mixed mature plantation woodland cover with small scale isolated areas of heathy grassland on clearings and along rides. Thetford golf course is a more open landscape of acid grassland and grass heath within the forest along Brandon Road. The A11 forms a hard boundary severing the forest from the adjacent urban area, although the plantation woodland to the east of the road has an important role in creating the setting for both the A11 and the town. Part of the forest, Thetford Rifle Ranges, is leased by the MOD for military training. Almost the entire area is designated as part of the Breckland Forest SSSI. The golf course is the only area of a once extensive tract of Breckland heath and is an SSSI and SPA. The former heathland was an important cultural landscape with evidence of medieval warrening at Thetford Forest Lodge (Scheduled Monument). The dense forest plantation creates a dark, enclosed, 'remote' empty character with a strong 'Breckland' sense of place. It is a valuable recreation resource for Thetford.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The area is highly representative of the district character area. The A11 is a visible and audible intrusion within the 'remote' empty landscape not perceptible as part of the wider character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The dense woodland cover of Thetford Warren and Warren Wood creates a strong sense of place. The managed plantation woodland is considered to be in good condition. Locally the traffic noise and cuttings associated with the A11 are an intrusion and detracting feature.	This is a landscape in good condition and has a strong sense of place. These qualities would be highly sensitive to further expansion of Thetford which currently is contained by the forest setting east of the A11.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Breckland Forest SSSI covers almost the entire area, west of the A11 with clear fell areas and plantations providing valuable breeding areas of woodlark and nightjar, rare vascular plants and an exceptionally rich	The aim should be to conserve and enhance the natural features of the Forest, namely the woodland cover, areas of heathland and associated species. These features would be sensitive to further extension of Thetford/residential development. The undesignated area to the east of the A11 is less



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
invertebrate flora and a small population of red squirrel. Warren Hill is an important geological site	sensitive, although has a value in creating a natural forest setting to the road.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Thetford Warren Lodge – a medieval fortified warreners’ lodge (flint with brick and stone dressings) is a scheduled monument. The Lodge is situated on a high point where the warreners could keep watch for poachers (pre forest cover). The area is a potentially rich archaeological landscape with an underlying surviving heathland character	The scheduled monument and its setting are sensitive to change. It would not however be affected by further development on the edge of Thetford, due to its distance from the town and the dense plantation woodland which contains views to the Lodge.  The archaeological and cultural landscape of the warren is sensitive to development.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> An enclosed contained character resulting from the dense woodland plantation. An empty, remote tranquil quality much valued for “recreation/fresh air/getting away from it all” (Stakeholder consultation workshop 18/1/07)). Close to Thetford these qualities are interrupted by the A11, although the road is contained by dense plantation and in part is in cutting and therefore has limited visual prominence. Traffic noise is perceptible and main road junctions are lit affecting dark night skies.	The remote ‘empty’ character is fundamental to the sense of place and is sensitive. It is less sensitive in the vicinity of the A11 on the existing urban edge, although lighting and noise from the road do have an impact on a wider area.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The settlement edge is composed of mixed development including large scale retail units/superstore, sewage works. East of the River Ouse the edge is formed by residential development part of the Abbey Farm Estate, a London overspill estate, built in 1967-72 and designed by London County Council Architects Dept. Some more recent development 1980 – 1990 has extended into the Forest. The boundary between the urban area with the forest setting is frequently fenced.	This is a well integrated settlement edge with Thetford Forest extending to the edge of the town providing containment and a forested setting to development. This is a key feature of the town contributing to the strong Breckland sense of place and should be conserved – it is sensitive to change and encroachment of development and creation of views to the urban edge.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The A11 severs the urban area from the wider Forest area. It is not a permeable urban edge. However, St. Edmunds Way is an important access route along the Little Ouse River extending from the town centre (passing beneath the A11) into the heart of the Forest.	The St. Edmund’s Way route and its immediate landscape setting are sensitive to development. The aim should be to conserve and enhance pedestrian links between the town centre and the Forest (St. Edmund Way). Consider opportunities to enhance the setting of this route where it passes through the urban area.
<b>Gateways and Nodes:</b> A principal Gateway is the A1075 London Road. Forming a junction with the A11, and	The gateway is the main route to Thetford from Cambridge and London. It is highly sensitive and is important in creating the local sense of place and

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>with associated road infrastructure and lighting being dominant.</p> <p><b>A1075 London Road:</b> This is a key gateway to the town from the A11 – the main route from Cambridge and London. Access into the town is through the retail park and industrial estate both being reasonably well integrated through tree planting, with mature trees retained within development. The retail park sign at is the first indication of the presence of the town when travelling along the A11.</p>	<p>sense of arrival/entrance to Thetford. At the A1075 London Road it is important to retain and enhance the mature woodland/forest framework. Signage for the retail park should reflect the forest setting.</p>

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views within the landscape are contained by woodland planting. There are some long views channelled along rides or along the Brandon Road – opening out at the grass/heath of Thetford Golf Course. In the more open area there are views to masts on the elevated land to the north east of Thetford.</p> <p>Along the A11 views are channelled along a densely forested corridor contrasting with the more open landscape to the north east of Thetford.</p>	<p>The extent and density of plantation woodland limits views. Generally views are not sensitive, although care will be needed in planning future felling, development or heathland creation to ensure that long range views to the edge of Thetford/ the A11 are not opened up. Similarly the forested A11 corridor is sensitive and care is needed not to open up further views to the development edge from the A11.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There are few views to the urban edge of Thetford. At the A11 junction with A1075 London Road – the Forest Business Park sign is a prominent feature with glimpsed views of large scale retail/business park development through the tree cover.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Views out are contained by dense plantation woodland cover creating a strong rural/urban transition, as for example at Elgin Way/Durham Way on the Abbey Farm Estate on the north east edge of Thetford.</p> <p><b>A11 Corridor:</b> For the most part the A11 Corridor runs through a densely</p>	<p>The views to a densely forested urban edge are sensitive. The aim should be to conserve and enhance woodland screening belts and avoid opening up views to development.</p> <p>Forest views from the edge are sensitive and should be retained.</p> <p>The forested setting along the A11 corridor is important in defining the edge of Thetford, screening urban development and contributing to the strong</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
forested setting with only glimpsed views of development on the edge of the town (retail development).	'Breckland' sense of place. It should be retained.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The dense forest character should be retained.	There are opportunities for mitigation through tree planting.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of TH3: *Thetford Warren* to further expansion of Thetford is judged to be **High**. This judgement relates to the value of the Forest as a whole for biodiversity, its unified character and strong 'Breckland' sense of place. The forest is sensitive to any small scale encroachment by development. Furthermore, noise, lighting and movement associated with development have the potential to effect special qualities of remoteness and dark skies which are valued features of the Forest. The area east of the A11 is not designated (SSSI) and provides the setting for edge of town development (retail park, sewage works etc). Sensitivity is lower in this area, however retention of a forested setting along the A11 corridor is vital.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### General Landscape Management

The Landscape Guidelines set out in the District assessment apply, notably to retain a sustainable forest cover, enhance recreational access and consider opportunities for heathland restoration/creation to link existing heathland sites.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Conserve a forested setting along the A11 corridor – avoid further development adjoining the road. Ensure active management of the forest plantation east of the A11 to sustain continuous woodland cover.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the A11/London Road Gateway to Thetford reinforcing the 'Breckland' character and sense of place and enhancing the sense of arrival to Thetford.
- Seek to ensure signage is appropriate to the forest setting – bright/colourful signs can appear garish in the subdued rural environment.
- Conserve and enhance the wooded setting to St. Edmund Way and conserve this route as a key recreational link between the Forest and the town centre.

- Consider the effect of future felling/heathland creation on views. Avoid opening up views to the A11/urban edge.
- Consider the effects of lighting schemes on the urban edge of the dark skies and sense of remoteness of the Forest landscape.



## TH6: CROXTON

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### DESCRIPTION

#### Location and Summary

*TH6: Croxton* forms a small part of the District character area *Stanta Heath*, on the northern edge of Thetford. It is defined by arable farmland interspersed with scots pine shelterbelt hedgerows and mixed plantation woodland blocks.

The local character area considers a 3km radius from the edge of the settlement boundary, with the extent defined also by the denser concentration of plantation woodland within the adjacent TH3 and TH4 character areas to the north and west, and by the A11 transport corridor to the east.

Long views are possible southwards from Croxton and to the crests of the Thet Valley, although Thetford is largely concealed from view due its valley floor location. Wooded skylines, both in the form of plantation blocks (often on former heathland sites) and the historic, contorted scots pine wind break hedgerows are a distinctive feature of the landscape. Green lanes are also apparent at Blakeney Farm. Areas of former heathland have been lost to afforestation and agriculture.

This is an exposed, large scale landscape of simple composition, with arable farmland interspersed with mixed, conifer dominated plantation, historic scots pine windbreaks and oak/elm dominated hedgerows. Some more urbanising influences, related to the industrial estates on the northern edge of Thetford, are apparent to the south of the A11 which bisects the character area in an east – west direction. These features include smaller scale ornamental tree planting and chainlink, barbed wire and steel palisade fencing. The steel clad sheds housing these premises are a prominent feature of the urban fringe to the south of the A11 as are a number of nearby telecommunications masts. Two storey residential development is also apparent adjacent to the Croxton Road.

The low density, historic linear settlement of Croxton is a distinctive feature of the character area, and includes a flint and dressed stone round towered church and a row of knapped flint cottages. The village is designated as a Conservation Area in its entirety. Little evidence of other settlement is apparent and the character area has a tranquil rural quality with the exception of the A11 corridor and the associated urban fringe land to the south.

#### Representation of District LCA character area

With the exception of the urban fringe influences such as the Industrial Estate to the north western edge of Thetford and the A11, the local character area is broadly representative of the wider *Stanta Heath* character area within the District LCA, comprising a rural landscape of large scale and simple elements, predominantly the arable field network, scots pine wind breaks and blocks of mixed plantation woodland. The absence of heathland is however not representative of the wider District landscape character area.

# EVALUATION

## Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The scots pine shelterbelt hedgerows create a sense of place and of localised enclosure. The influence of the urban edge is markedly more apparent to the south of the A11.	The land to the north of the A11 displays a relatively intact if unexceptional landcover and arable field boundary pattern defined by mixed outgrown hedges of scots pine, oak and elm. The remaining hedgerows and pine belts are distinctive elements which would be potentially sensitive to change, as are the wooded edge and network of field boundaries which is apparent to the north of the residential development off the Croxton Road. Landscape integrity and sensitivity is markedly lower around the A1066, characterised by eroded field boundaries and harsh fenced edges to the industrial estate developments.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<p><b>Natural:</b> To the south of the A11 there are few significant mature trees and the remaining oaks and pines and straggly scots pine shelterbelts are therefore significant features.</p> <p>There are no sites within the character area with nature conservation designations.</p>	The aim should be to conserve the remaining hedgerow trees and pine belts, which would potentially be sensitive to new development. There are opportunities for enhancing ecological interest, including heathland creation.
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is principally represented by the historic settlement pattern and church of Croxton.</p> <p>Croxton displays a strong vernacular character, with a range of building styles and materials, including flint, red brick, dressed stone and clay tile.</p> <p>In addition there is a Bronze Age significant archaeological site (Boudicca Site) to the south of the A11, which is identified as being of archaeological importance within the Local Plan.</p> <p>Historic drove roads and green lanes.</p>	<p>Historic drove roads to be conserved – note potential as access links from the town to the wider rural landscape.</p> <p>Croxton and its setting is sensitive to change, although it would not be affected by development to the northern edge of Thetford.</p> <p>The archaeological site is of significant importance and is therefore sensitive. Site – site and setting to be conserved and enhanced.</p> <p>Historic drove roads and green lanes are sensitive features and offer potential for enhanced recreational access.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> An exposed, large scale and generally tranquil landscape with a largely intact field boundary pattern, with the A1075 a “locally prominent” element (source: Stakeholder Consultation Workshop 18/1/07). Traffic noise is perceptible, associated with this road and the A11, as is lighting associated with roundabout junctions and</p>	The openness and exposed character is fundamental to the sense of place, as is the overriding tranquillity of the landscape. The landscape is less sensitive around the A11 and A1065 due to the urban fringe influences associated with these highways/the industrial estate.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
the industrial estate, affecting the dark night skies.	
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The A11 separate the settlement from the wider rural landscape.</p> <p>The edges comprise a range of development types including light industrial units and two storey residential development. Built form is characterised mainly by metal clad industrial sheds with areas of brown/red brick two storey residential development.</p> <p>There is a strong wooded edge to existing residential development within the fringe on the Croxton Road.</p> <p>Edges offering the potential for enhancement are those to the east and west of the A1066 and to the south of the A11.</p>	<p>This is generally a harsh and poorly integrated urban edge with large steel clad industrial sheds, car parking and service yards and chainlink/palisade fencing all evident, in addition to patchy and neglected field boundary hedgerows and structural vegetation. As such the urban edge adjacent to the industrial estate is of relatively low sensitivity, with opportunity for enhancement and softening to provide a better gateway and entrance to Thetford.</p> <p>The wooded edge adjacent to the Croxton Road provides physical and visual buffering to development within Thetford. It incorporates elements of historic field boundaries and is therefore of higher sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> With the exception of the St Edmund Way there are few opportunities for pedestrian access. Croxton Road, itself, is an important 'quiet' rural road connecting to Thetford and there are a number of former Drove Roads. The railway line is a further valued green link. The A11 acts as a physical and visual barrier.</p>	<p>The land to the south of the A11 is heavily influenced by urban fringe elements such as the industrial estate. The urban edge is poorly integrated with the wider landscape at this point. This area is less sensitive than the land to the north of the A11 and there are opportunities for landscape enhancement. Enhancing access between the town and rural area (Croxton Road, Drove Roads etc) and green links is a further opportunity.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The A1066 and the A1075 are the principal gateways within this character area. The Croxton Road forms a minor gateway to Thetford within the character area.</p> <p>The A1066 terminates in a large roundabout junction with the A11 and A134, with the industrial estate forming the backdrop to the south.</p> <p>The A1075 roundabout junction is flanked by 1970s/1980s medium-high density residential development and by a superstore.</p> <p>The Croxton Road forms a relatively low key semi rural gateway into the urban area.</p>	<p>The A1066 gateway has a degraded quality due to the presence of the Industrial estate and associated harsh frontages dominated by car parking/service yards and chainlink/palisade fencing, in addition to small scale ornamental tree species. Urbanising influences are similarly apparent to the A1075, with the presence of the superstore. The Croxton Road gateway is characterised by a wooded, more rural aspect, with a relatively intact field boundary hedgerow network. In view of its relatively intact rural character and landscape features the Croxton Road gateway is considered to have a higher inherent sensitivity than either the A1066/A1075.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The A11-A1066 roundabout junction forms the key node within this character area.</p>	<p>The junction and attendant highway/infrastructure works, lighting and signage create an urbanising influence as does the backdrop of the industrial</p>



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
character area.	estate, which decreases sensitivity.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Location on upper valley crests is open and exposed, with the potential for long views across the valley (south) and from land to the north</p> <p>Long views are possible from Croxton looking south across the character area although these are often framed by wooded skylines.</p> <p>Landmarks/townmarks are represented by the round towered church at Croxton and the telecommunications masts apparent in the vicinity of the industrial estate.</p>	<p>Due to the large scale and openness of the landscape these views are considered to be sensitive, although the wooded skylines provide an element of containment and filter views to the Thetford edge.</p> <p>Whilst Croxton Church is a sensitive vantage point this is largely outside the visual envelope of the urban edge and any development which may occur within the A11.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There are views to the industrial estate, with dominant steel clad sheds adjacent to the A1066/A11, although the urban area of Thetford is generally contained by its valley location.</p> <p>This elevated location on the edge of Thetford (valley crest) forms the skyline in views from the south.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> There are open views to the A11 and the associated scots pine windbreak field boundaries to the north. Filtered/intermittent views are available across the character area from the A11.</p>	<p>The potential for long views to an abrupt settlement edge within this very open landscape are sensitive. Structural vegetation which filters views, including oak trees and pine hedgerows, should be conserved and enhanced.</p> <p>Views to the upper valley crest from the area south of Thetford (Snarehill/ Nunnery Stud and the A1066 and A1088 gateways) are sensitive to any development which would create a harsh skyline feature.</p> <p>Views to the wooded skylines are sensitive and should be retained.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> A relatively large scale landscape, with structural vegetation forming a distinctive feature where apparent.</p>	<p>There would be the potential for mitigation within the character area, e.g. to reinforce and enhance existing hedgerows and pine belts and through new native hedgerow tree planting. Areas of mass woodland planting would not reflect landscape character.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The character area is considered to have a **Moderate** overall sensitivity, although this would be **Moderate-Low** in the area adjacent to the industrial estate and to the south of the A11, which is more strongly influenced by urban fringe development. These judgments relate to the sense of place provided by the hedgerow oaks and the remaining historic scots pine shelterbelts, which is offset by the degraded character of the land to the south of the A11 (e.g. the industrial estate and the gateways of the A1066 and A1075). Some parts of the character area are more intact in terms of land cover and character, e.g. to the north of the A11 and adjacent to the Croxton Road. Future development should respect this more intact character and create a porous wooded edge, in addition to enhancing the character of the key gateways, notably to the A1066 and A1075. The higher land and exposed open landscape also increases potential visual sensitivity of development in this area.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this local character area and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve remaining significant landscape features e.g. green lanes as at Blakeney Farm, pine lines and hedgerow oaks;
- Reinforce and strength landscape structure through new native field boundary hedgerow planting both to create sustained/long term cover and to enhance habitat connectivity;
- Consider landscape opportunities for reversion of areas of arable land/forestry plantation to heathland, to connect to existing sites;
- Conserve existing historic scots pine windbreaks. Consider opportunities to create new pine belts, particularly where they can provide a screening function.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Ensure any development is carefully designed to create a strong integrated edge to Thetford;
- Ensure development follows local topography and does not create an exposed edge in views from the open rural landscape to the north – avoid creating a hard solid edge adjoining the bypass;
- Consider effect in views to Thetford from the south -, for example skyline views along access routes to the town (A1066 and A1088) and the land around Snarehill and Nunnery Stud;
- Ensure that the A11 retains an unlit night time character;
- Conserve the site and setting of key historic features, notably the Boudicca site;

- Conserve and enhance key access routes between the rural area and Thetford town centre, notably the quiet rural road at Croxton and Drove Roads/Green Lanes;
- Seek opportunities to enhance access links between development on this edge and Thetford town centre;
- For employment development, ensure car parking and service yards are clear of road frontages, particularly to the A1066, to enhance this gateway;
- Retain existing significant field boundary/hedgerow trees when planning for new development;
- Use a simple, muted colour palette (based on sky/earth/predominant vegetation) for claddings for new industrial buildings;
- Ensure appropriate and sympathetic boundary treatments to key road frontages (e.g. A1066) within employment areas, using native hedgerow planting with fencing set behind;
- New residential development should retain and respect existing tree and field hedgerow structure and the enclosure provided by roadside hedges e.g. to the A1075;
- Ensure that new residential development responds to the scale of existing and makes reference to local vernacular/building materials;
- Ensure a transitional, porous urban edge to new residential development, using native woodland planting to enable filtered views in and out rather than introducing blanket woodland screening;
- New development should maintain dark night skies through carefully controlled lighting, especially to the development edge. Although note development edge in relation to A11.

# TH7: KILVERSTONE

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*TH7: Kilverstone* forms a small element of the wider *Stanta Heath* District Character Area, considering an area extending to 3km from the settlement edge of Thetford. Within the local character area, coniferous plantation woodland blocks are interspersed with farm coverts, arable fields, and scots pine lines which often define field boundaries. Part of the Brettenham Heath Nature Reserve falls within the eastern extents of the local character area.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Stanta Heath* Character Area is defined by large scale blocks of plantation woodland, scots pine trees lines to the arable field boundaries and areas of remnant heathland.

As such the local character area is considered representative of the wider character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The landscape is influenced by the minor estate of Kilverstone Park to the south, with blocks of coniferous and mixed plantation woodland and plantation belts, in addition to a small scale field network associated with estate farms. Part of the Brettenham Heath National Nature Reserve and SAC falls within the character area.	This is a relatively intact, high quality landscape in managed condition and is therefore considered to have an inherent sensitivity.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key natural elements include the plantation blocks, scots pine lines which mark the field boundaries and the acid heath at Brettenham Heath.	The structural elements of the landscape make a significant contribution to defining character and would take considerable time to replace if lost. Brettenham Heath is a SAC (Natura 2000) site and is therefore sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> These include the estate farm of Field Barn Farm and the associated small scale arable agricultural field pattern defined by scots pine tree lines.	These elements denote the historic character of the landscape. The scots pine tree lines are an essential part of the character of the Breckland landscape and are therefore sensitive.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Key aesthetic	The structural vegetation is an essential part of this

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>and perceptual elements include the scots pine tree lines which form skyline elements and which provide a sense of containment to the small scale field network.</p> <p>The A1075 and the A11 are apparent within the local landscape.</p>	<p>aesthetic character and would take considerable time to replace if lost. It is therefore inherently sensitive.</p> <p>The key roads locally affect the tranquillity of the landscape and also the character of the night time landscape in terms of lighting to junctions.</p>
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The local character area does not directly adjoin any settlement edges. The nearest edge is the wooded and recently built out cul-de-sac development to the north eastern edge of Thetford.</p>	<p>The north eastern edge of Thetford is well integrated with its landscape due to the density of woodland planting and would be inherently sensitive, although it does not directly abut the character area – N/A.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The local character area does not directly abut the settlement edge – N/A.</p>	N/A.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> There are no gateways within the local character area – N/A.</p>	N/A.
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the character area – N/A.</p>	N/A.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are greatly contained by the density of plantation blocks and field boundary vegetation, in the form of plantation belts and tree lines, in addition to the woodland planting buffering the A11 on the more elevated land in the north of the character area.</p>	<p>Due to their containment and filtered character views are considered to have a low visual sensitivity.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There are filtered views to the settlement edge from the Kilverstone road in the south of the character area.</p> <p>The industrial estates on the northern and western edge of Thetford are visible on the rising ground on the skyline.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Views from the settlement edge are filtered by field boundary and roadside hedge vegetation.</p>	<p>Views are considered to be of relatively low visual sensitivity due to the containment provided by structural vegetation.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a relatively densely wooded landscape, due to plantation blocks and belts and the scots pine tree lines which form many field boundaries.</p>	<p>In view of the density of existing woodland, mitigation potential is judged to be high.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Sensitivity to change on the edge of Thetford is judged to be **moderate** in view of the density of field boundary vegetation/shelterbelts/plantations and woodland and the containment of views. The area as a whole represents an intact rural landscape in good condition.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Instigate appropriate and sensitive arboricultural management, in addition to new tree planting, to the scots pine tree lines to ensure continuous, sustained tree cover;
- Conserve and enhance the intact landscape structure represented by the plantation blocks and shelterbelts belts;
- Conserve and enhance the setting of the Brettenham Heath Nature Reserve, exploring opportunities for further heathland creation/restoration to provide habitat connectivity and to assist in delivering BAP targets.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Retain structural landscape elements such as farm coverts, field boundaries (hedgerows and tree lines) and plantation blocks when planning future development, to ensure that it is properly integrated with its wider landscape;
- Development should not form a component of the skyline and should respect the historic urban form of Thetford as a valley town – concentrate any future development on the lower lying land rather than the more elevated land on the upper valley slopes;
- Consider opportunities for enhancing recreational access opportunities within the area (e.g. Maiden's Walk).
- Consider effects of road lighting at A11/A1075 junctions on the night time character of the landscape.

# TH8: SNARE HILL – SEVEN HILLS

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*TH8: Snare Hill- Seven Hills* forms a small element of the wider *Harling Heathlands* District Character Area, considering an area extending to 3km from the settlement edge of Thetford. The area forms part of the valley sides of the Thet Valley rising as a gentle slope from the town to about 30mAOD (Snarehill Farm) and then dropping gradually away. The local landscape character area consists of relatively large arable fields interspersed with occasional large scale plantation woodland blocks and scots pine lines. Plantation belts and roundels are key features of the agricultural land, which link in to the extensive woodland at Oak Wood.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Harling Heathlands* Character Area is defined by large scale blocks of plantation woodland, scots pine trees lines to the arable field boundaries and areas of remnant heathland.

It is therefore considered that the local character area is representative of the wider character area, although heathland is generally absent.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The landscape is typical of the wider <i>Harling Heathlands</i> Character Area, with large arable fields intermittently interspersed with plantation woodland blocks. And copses.	This is a high quality landscape of managed character and as such is inherently sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key elements are the plantation blocks and the pine tree lines and hedgerows which mark field boundaries.  Much of the arable farmland within the character area forms part of Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA), a site of European importance.	These elements would take significant time to recreate if lost and are therefore sensitive to change.  Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA) provides a breeding ground for bird species of international significance, such as Stone Curlew, and is therefore highly sensitive. A buffer of up to 500m for is likely to be required in relation to any potential development.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> There are few built elements within the local character area other than the buildings of Snarehill Farm. Key elements defining cultural pattern are the	The plantations are significant, illustrating the scale of past widespread landscape change within Breckland and are sensitive. The SAM and its setting would be sensitive to change. The Snarehill Estate is identified on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk and is considered



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
round barrows at Seven Hills (SAM) and plantation blocks on the site of former areas of heathland. The parkland and estate buildings of the Georgian Snarehill Hall lie at the northern edge of the character area.	sensitive to change.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A landscape of relatively large scale and simple composition with a domed landform and a large scale field pattern interspersed with significant blocks of plantation woodland in addition to scots pine tree lines and field boundary hedgerows.	The few structural landscape elements are an essential part of this character. They would take significant time to re create if lost and are therefore sensitive features.
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> No settlement edges directly adjoin the local character area, although the relatively well wooded eastern edge of Thetford which has partly breached the valley floor, is visible from within the character area.	The area of settlement, whilst visible from the character area does not form part of it – N/A.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> No settlement edges directly abut the local character area – N/A.	N/A
<b>Gateways:</b> A1066 and A1088 are key gateways that cross this area. Currently Thetford is largely within its valley setting with few views to the settlement edge from the roads.  There is a key gateway into Thetford along Coronation Avenue/Jubilee Avenue (lime/horse chestnut walk)	Gateway routes into Thetford are sensitive. Any development should respect the valley setting of the town and create a strong entrance to the town, avoiding an abrupt edge within this very rural landscape.  This gateway is not within the character area. However, any new development should recognise this important access/axis in its design.
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	N/A

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b>  Views are often framed by plantation woodland blocks and by scots pine tree lines to the east, although more extensive views are available westwards from the more elevated land within the eastern part of the character area.	Views to the west are considered sensitive in view of their more open aspect. The area would be sensitive to further skyline development such as the existing industrial estate on the northern edge of Thetford.  Views to key landmarks within the town are important and sensitive to change. Any development should respect these views.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> From the elevated land in the eastern part of the character area, there are views westwards to the northern and western edges of Thetford, with the industrial estates visible against the wooded hinterland of the Brecks. There are also potential views to key sites (such as the Castle) within the town. The landform means this area is visually prominent in views from Thetford.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge at the A1088/A1066 junctions, views are available across the arable farmland to the wooded hinterland of the character area at Snareshill Wood and Oak Wood.</p> <p>The visual prominence of this area in views from Thetford means that, if this area were to be developed – that there would be views from the town centre to development rising up the valley sides.</p>	<p>Although woodlands form the skyline, views are of a relatively open character at this point and are therefore sensitive. In the design of any new development a key consideration should be its impact in views from Thetford town centre.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Structural landscape elements include the plantation belts and copses and hedgerows. Tree lines are a distinctive landscape feature.</p>	<p>In view of the influence of the plantation woodland, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **high** in view of the intactness and quality of the landscape and its location in relation to the town. It is also recognised that much of the character area is designated as part of Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA), which, plus buffer zone would act as a significant constraint to development.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

#### General Landscape Management

- Instigate appropriate and sensitive management, in addition to new tree planting, to the scots pine lines and plantations blocks and roundels;
- Conserve, enhance and extend the farmland habitats of the SSSI (SPA). Conserve and manage the buffer area to the designation;

- Reinforce native hedgerows and gap up where appropriate with native species to provide wildlife corridors and connectivity.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- SSII and associated buffer zone will provide a firm constraint to development limits;
- Retain structural landscape elements such as field boundaries (hedgerows and pine tree lines) and plantation blocks when planning any future development, to ensure that it is properly integrated with its wider landscape;
- Development should have a porous and transitional edge where it abuts the rural landscape and should not form an abrupt or sharply contrasting line at the interface. There may be opportunities for higher density development in association with the Thetford edge;
- Development should not form a skyline element and should respect the historic urban form of Thetford as a valley town – any future development should not breach the skyline on the upper valley slopes;
- Respect the sensitivities of historic sites and their visual setting, notably the SAM and historic parks;
- Ensure any future development in this area creates an appropriate entrance to Thetford along the main gateways of the A1066 and A1088;
- Consider the effect of views from the town to this land – use the existing landscape framework, plus new structural planting to help integrate any new development;
- Recognise the important access gateway/axis to Thetford town centre along Jubilee Avenue/Coronation Avenue in any design for new development;
- Recognise, respect and promote key views to landmarks and foci within Thetford town centre (e.g. the Castle) from the site in designing any new development;
- Conserve the river frontage and its setting in adjacent character area and explore opportunities for further links along and across it.

# TH9: NUNNERY STUD

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

TH9 *Nunnery Stud* occupies a small part of the wider *Harling Heath* character area to the south of Thetford, extending from the Little Ouse river valley. Whilst the area does not directly adjoin the settlement edge of Thetford, development within the urban area is clearly visible from within the local character area, which is also influenced by the stud farm and associated buildings/boundary features. The character area is defined by horse grazed pasture interspersed with mixed woodland boundary belts.

A gently undulating area of grazing land and paddocks, the character area lies in a loop of the Little Ouse River, with land falling towards the river to the south and west. Framed, wooded views are available to the eastern edge of Thetford and long views are available across the more elevated land at the A1088 to wooded skylines to the north and west. The industrial estates at the fringe of Thetford are also visible from this point, although the urban area is largely screened by its valley floor location.

The wooded skylines formed by the field boundary hedgerows and pine belts are a locally distinctive feature, creating a relatively small scale landscape in comparison to the wider *Harling Heath* character area. Post and rail fencing and other features associated with the paddocks such as horsewalkers create a distinct stud landscape, with the elaborate brick and flint buildings of Nunnery Stud and associated floodlighting prominent features.

Part of *Nunnery Stud* lies within the Breckland Farmland SSSI and as such the character area is identified as falling within the Core Area by the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project, in view of the concentration of high quality extant habitat. Land on the site of former mineral extraction at Elder Hill is identified as a County Wildlife Site.

Cultural pattern is represented by the tumuli (Scheduled Monuments) within the grounds of the Stud, although there is little other evidence of historic pattern, with the exception of the remaining scots pine windbreak hedgerows.

### Representation of District LCA character area

It is considered that this local landscape character area is not greatly representative of the wider *Harling Heath* character area, in view of the paddocks and buildings associated with Nunnery Stud, although a number of historic scots pine hedgerows survive, as do small areas of remnant heathy grassland, which relate to the wider character and historic landcover.

# EVALUATION

## Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape quality and condition</b>	
Some elements of the field boundary pattern exist. Nunnery Stud and associated buildings have influenced landscape character creating a manicured small scale enclosed stud landscape, with enclosures defined by pine trees and subdivided by paddock fencing.	Landscape condition and quality is changed by the influence of Nunnery Stud, although individual landscape elements such as the scots pine shelterbelts are relatively intact and therefore distinctive/sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<p><b>Natural:</b> The pine/plantation belts are distinctive natural elements of this landscape.</p> <p>Some remnant heathy/rough grassland survives on land between Nunnery Stud and the urban edge.</p> <p>A small part of the area falls within the Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA).</p>	<p>These structural landscape elements would take a significant time to re create and are therefore sensitive.</p> <p>Heathy grassland is an element of historic land cover which would not be easily re created.</p> <p>Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA) provides a breeding ground for bird species of international significance, such as Stone Curlew, and is therefore highly sensitive. A buffer likely to be required in relation to any potential development.</p>
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Tumuli are evident in the grounds of Nunnery Stud.</p> <p>The principal built elements include the brick and knapped flint buildings of Nunnery Stud.</p>	Cultural pattern is only subtly perceived. The site and setting of historic features are sensitive. Buildings are relatively recent structures of grand proportions and of relatively low architectural interest and sensitivity.
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Key factors include the wooded skylines created by the pine belts and the filtered/wooded views to the settlement edge.</p>	The containment provided by the boundary vegetation is considered to be a key feature of the experiential landscape. The wooded skylines are a sensitive feature.
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Two storey late 20<sup>th</sup> century brick built residential development to the eastern edge of Thetford, whilst not within the character area is visible from within it.</p>	Development is medium-high density two storey brick built residential. This edge is generally well wooded. Any future development should aim to reflect this character.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The urban edge is well integrated with the character area, being of a generally wooded but semi permeable character and contained by landform.</p>	The woodland and structural vegetation which provide this sense of integration are sensitive features.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The A1088 is a key gateway to Thetford. Currently the town is</p>	Gateway routes into Thetford are sensitive. Any development should respect the valley setting of the

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
largely within its valley setting with few views to the settlement edge from the roads.	town and create a strong entrance to the town, avoiding an abrupt edge within this very rural landscape.
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area.	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General views (landform and enclosure):</b></p> <p>Long views are possible to the industrial estates on the elevated land to the northern and western fringes of Thetford.</p> <p>Nunnery Stud and associated buildings form the key landmarks within the character area.</p>	<p>Much of the urban area is contained by its valley floor location, particularly from more elevated vantage points. Views are otherwise contained by field boundary vegetation and are not considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views to the urban area are often contained by landform, although filtered views of the eastern urban edge are available from the lower ground within the character area.</p> <p>There are also long views across the town in the valley to industrial development on the rising valley crests to the north of Thetford.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> These are essentially contained by the pine belts, which combined with landform results in a wooded skyline.</p>	<p>Due to the containment provided by landform and vegetation views are often filtered in nature and are therefore considered to be of low sensitivity.</p> <p>Development on the higher land on the valley crest (north and north east of Thetford) is potentially sensitive in terms of views from this area.</p> <p>The wooded skylines are a key element of views and are therefore a sensitive feature.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a relatively well wooded landscape, in view of the shelterbelts and field boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>Whilst this is a relatively well wooded landscape, there would be the opportunity to reinforce and strengthen existing field boundary vegetation and hedgerows.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the character area is considered to have a **Moderate - High** sensitivity to change. The semi-enclosed character and visual containment provided by both landform and pine shelterbelts/field boundary vegetation provides an opportunity for development to be sensitively integrated within the landscape. However, higher

sensitivity relates to the Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA) and need to retain and manage a buffer zone. Development has already extended across the floor of the adjacent Ouse Valley but has a porous wooded edge, which should be reflected in future development.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve the remaining areas of heathy/rough grassland (e.g. between Nunnery Stud and the eastern edge of Thetford) and seek opportunities to reinforce/extend this habitat;
- Conserve, enhance and extend the farmland habitats of the SSSI and maintain and manage an appropriate buffer;
- Conserve and maintain distinctive structural landscape elements, e.g. the scots pine wind breaks forming the field boundaries within Nunnery Stud.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

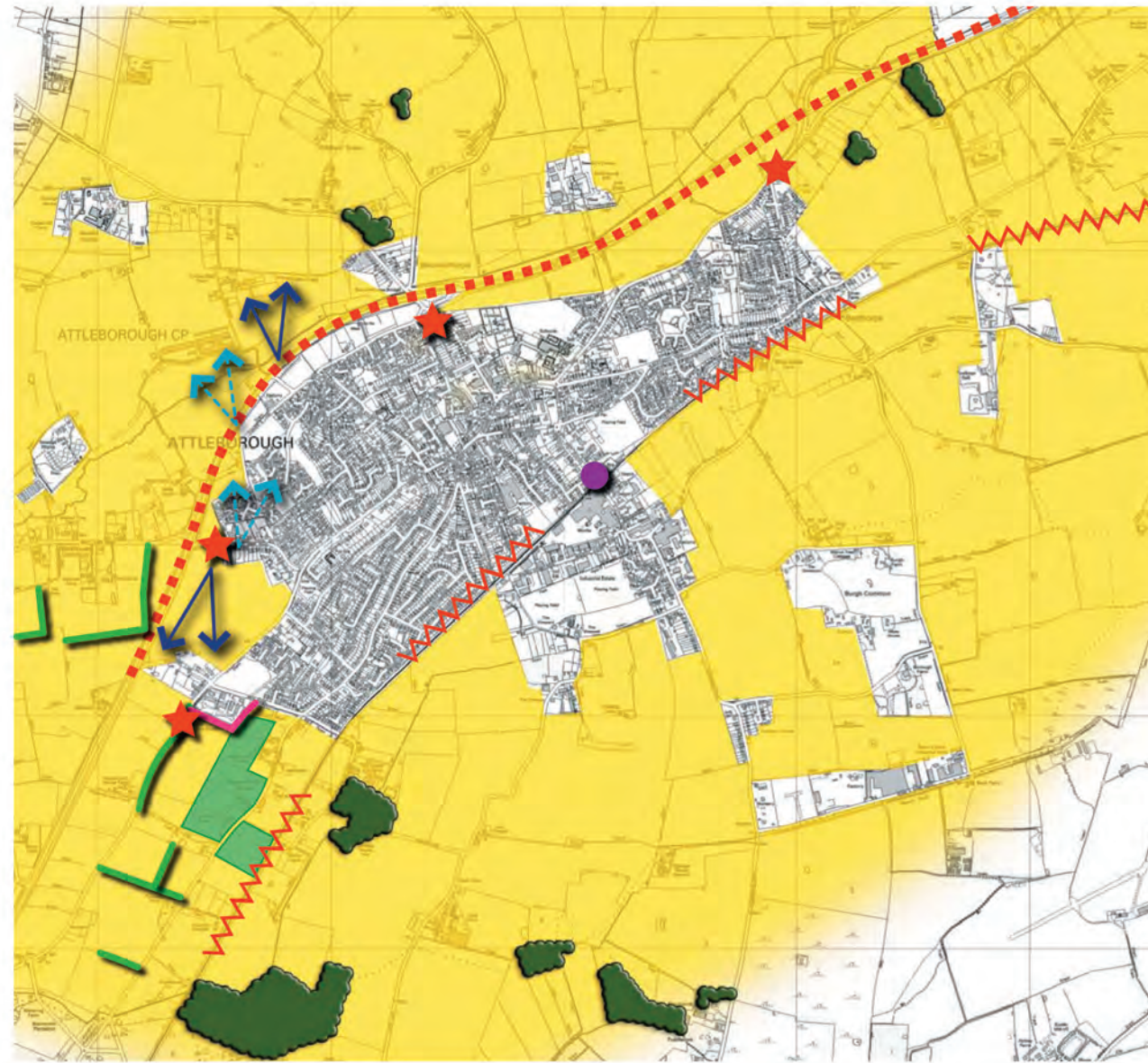
- Existing employment development to the north and western fringes of Thetford is intervisible with the character area. Future development to the north and west of Thetford should take account of views from the Nunnery Stud area and should not be higher than existing or further breach wooded skylines;
- Conserve the site and setting of historic features including Tutt Hill Tumulus;
- Any new residential development should respect the existing framework of field boundaries and plantation strips and belts;
- Aim to create a porous, wooded development edge (using native species e.g. oak, elm, pine) to integrate into the wider landscape;
- Ensure any future development in this area creates an appropriate entrance to Thetford along the main gateways of the A1088;
- New residential development to the settlement interface should make use of local materials and be of an appropriate and high quality design;
- Consider lighting design in relation to new development, to maintain dark night skies on the rural edge.

## ATTLEBOROUGH

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
B3 Thet Settled Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland	AT1 Attleborough Hall Tributary Farmland
A1 River Thet	Valley Floor with Fenland and woodland	AT2 Hargham Heath Valley Floor
B2 The Buckenhams Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland	AT3 Attleborough, East







### Attleborough Settlement Fringe Analysis

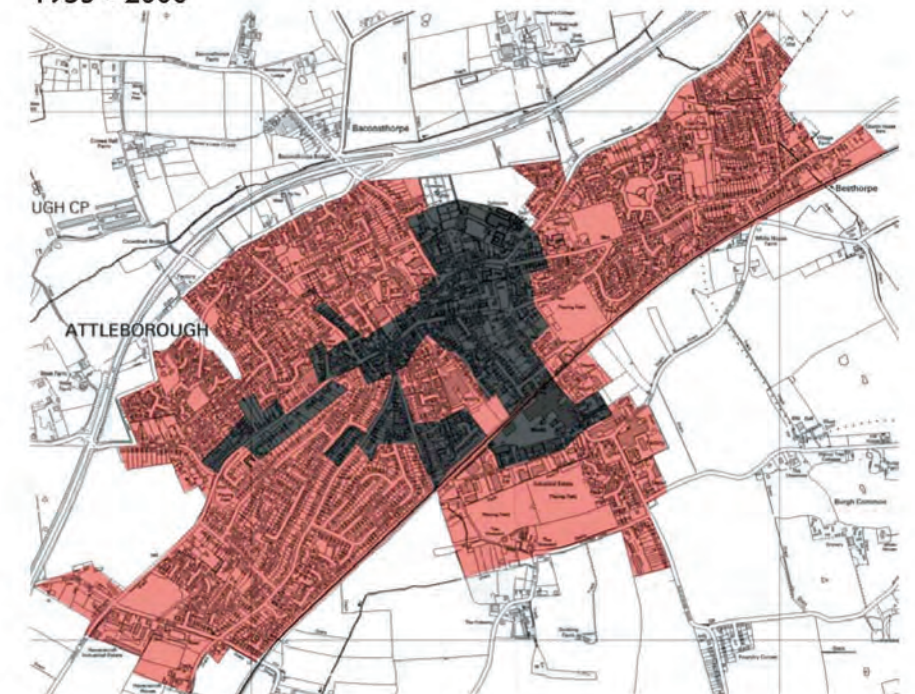
- Woodland
- Agricultural land
- Open views
- Filtered views
- Open edge
- Structural vegetation which integrates edge
- Prominent skyline feature
- Key gateways
- Small scale fields
- Node
- Transport corridor
- Railway

### Historic Growth of Attleborough

- Road
- Railway line
- Settlement (Historic core)



1953 - 2000





**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Attleborough Landscape  
Character Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

**Sensitivity**

Low

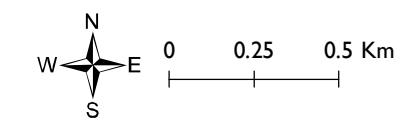
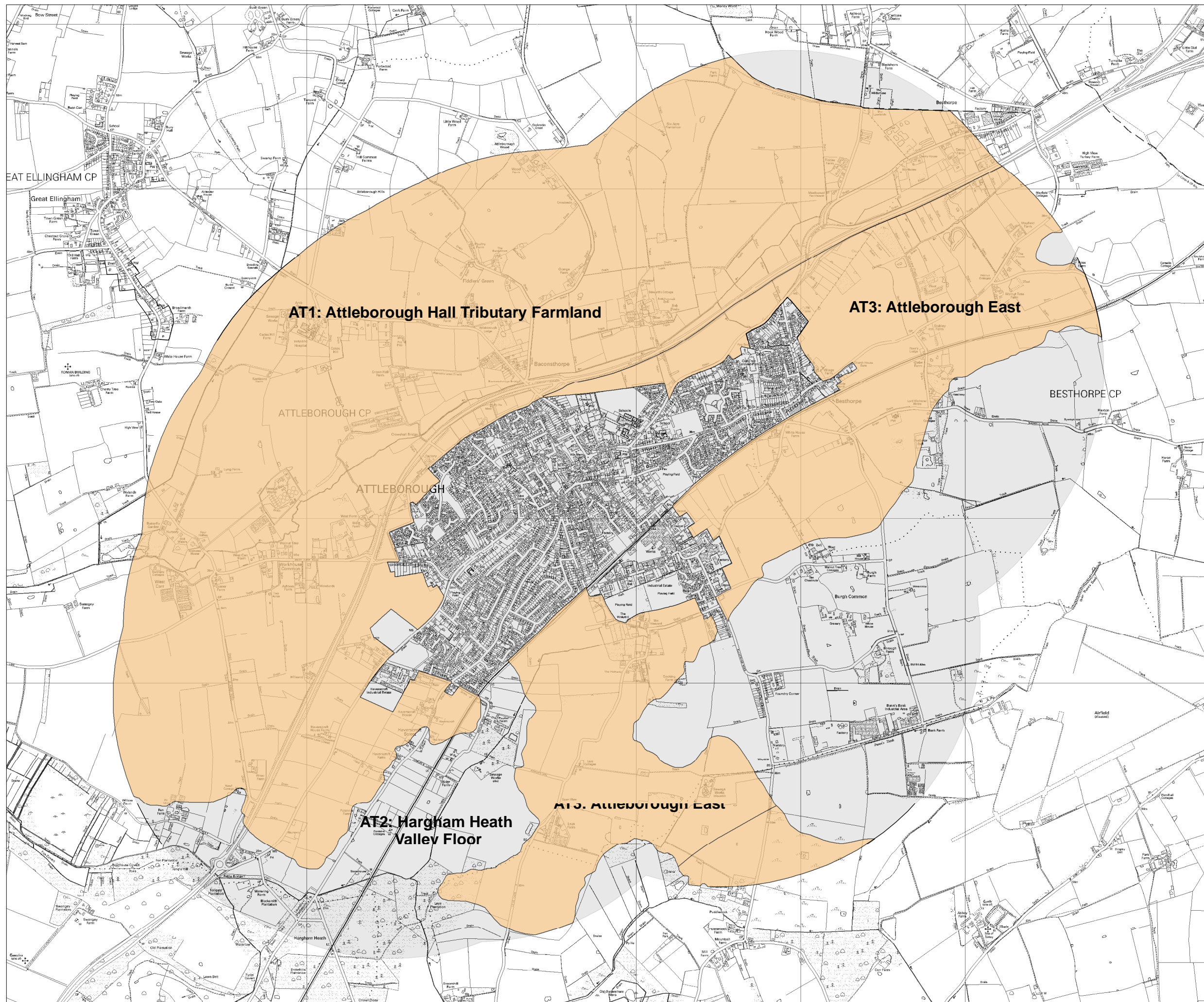
Low / Moderate

Moderate

Moderate / High

High

Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# ATI: ATTLEBOROUGH HALL TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

ATI: *Attleborough Hall Tributary Farmland* forms a minor component of the wider B3: *The Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area*, with the local character area considering a 3km radius extending from the north western and western edges of Attleborough. The local character area is defined by undulating mixed agricultural farmland interspersed with hedgerows and pasture associated with the tributaries draining into the River Thet. The AII corridor is a prominent component of the character area, encircling the north western edge of Attleborough, an historically linear and now increasingly nucleated town set within a tributary valley landscape.

### Representation of District LCA character area

Within the wider character area, land cover is predominantly arable cultivation set within a field pattern of varying scale and shape, although interspersed with numerous small scale wetland elements, including wet woodland and meadow. The minor tributary watercourses and green lanes are distinctive features of the landscape.

The local character area incorporates elements such as small to medium scale arable and pastoral fields defined by mixed native hedgerows, together with willow/alder/poplar lined ditches and tributaries. As such it is considered broadly representative of the wider character area, although the reconstructed landscape around the AII corridor is substantially different in character.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
<p>The landscape to the north and north west of the AII comprises intact tributary farmland, incorporating small-medium scale fields and hedgerows.</p> <p>To the south of the AII the landscape is of a more disturbed character due to the road corridor, recent widening works and the recently implemented attenuation scheme.</p>	<p>The landscape to the north of the AII is of a higher quality and more managed character and as such has a higher inherent sensitivity.</p>
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the woodland buffering to the	The established and mature structural landscape elements would take significant time

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>All, both established and recently implemented as part of the widening scheme.</p> <p>Hedgerow trees and remnant lines of wetland trees such as willow punctuate the landscape to the inside of the A11, in addition to some lines of shelterbelt species, e.g. Lombardy Poplar.</p> <p>To the north of the A11 mixed native field boundary hedgerows are the principal natural element.</p> <p>A small scale pastoral field network is evident at Carvers Lane.</p> <p>The landform to the north of the A11 corridor is distinctly undulating and associated with the minor tributary watercourses.</p>	<p>to re create if lost and consequently are considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Attleborough Hall, a moated site and 17<sup>th</sup> Century timber framed house to the north of the A11, is the principal cultural element within the landscape.</p>	<p>The hall, moat and adjoining medieval fish ponds would be sensitive to change although they are not directly affected by the settlement edge due to their location on the outside edge of the A11.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> To the north and north west of the A11 is a patchwork landscape of small to medium scale tributary farmland.</p> <p>The A11 is a significant visual and physical barrier, with the woodland planting/attenuation effectively separating the lowland pastoral landscape to the south. The concrete over bridges and junction lighting influence the perceptual character of the landscape at this point.</p>	<p>The landscape to the north and north west of the A11 has a more unified aesthetic character and consequently would be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Character of the settlement edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The north western and western edges of Attleborough comprise 1970s and 1980s-90s 2 storey brick built residential development, which both backs on to and faces the A11 and wider landscape (at Carver Lane). Some 19<sup>th</sup> century brick houses are apparent at the Westcarr Road approach to the settlement to the south of the A11.</p> <p>To the western edge of the settlement there is a 1970s residential development and a car dealership/garage.</p>	<p>These edges do not form part of the Conservation Area and therefore are not inherently sensitive to change. The north western edge has the lowest sensitivity to change in view of its relationship to the A11 corridor.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The</p>	<p>The western edge is better integrated with its</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>western edge has a permeable character and is connected visually and physically with the adjoining mixed agricultural landscape.</p> <p>The north western edge, whilst having a permeable character, is physically separated from its wider landscape by the A11 corridor.</p>	<p>wider landscape and as such would have greater sensitivity to change. The small scale pastoral fields to the north western edge within the A11 would however be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the B1077 which forms the south western approach to Attleborough, the Westcarr Road approach and the Ellingham Road approach.</p> <p>The B0177 gateway is defined by 1970s residential development and a car dealership, and framed by field boundary hedgerows, whilst the Westcarr Road approach is formed by a recent concrete overbridge for the A11 with 19<sup>th</sup> century housing beyond. The Ellingham Road Gateway consists of a ramped junction/sliproads onto the A11, with wet woodland to either side.</p>	<p>Both the Westcarr Road and Ellingham Road gateways are significantly influenced by the A11 and consequently do not create positive approaches to the settlement. Of the gateways, they are considered to have the lowest sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>From the A11 there are relatively extensive views of the small to medium scale tributary farmland landscape and the rising landform to the west and north west. Much of the western edge of Attleborough is also visible from the A11.</p>	<p>Due to their relatively extensive nature the northward views from the A11 would be most sensitive to change.</p>



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Of the urban edge, much of the central part of the western edge is visible from the A11, although the southern end of this edge is heavily screened due to mixed native woodland planting.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge there are views to the network of small to medium scale mixed agricultural fields, although these are partly filtered by field boundary vegetation to the network of fields within the arc of the A11.</p>	<p>The views to the exposed parts of the edge would be the most sensitive in visual terms.</p> <p>The sensitivity of these views is reduced by the filtering provided by field boundary vegetation to the inside edge of the A11.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> There is a relatively high density of structural vegetation within the landscape, in the form of field boundary hedgerows, shelterbelts and woodland buffering to the A11.</p>	<p>In view of the density of existing structural vegetation, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate** overall. This judgement reflects the higher sensitivity of the more intact landscape to the north of the A11 and the lower (moderate-low) sensitivity of the landscape inside the A11, which is markedly influenced by the infrastructure associated with the A11, the recent widening works and the associated attenuation measures. The localised areas of surviving pasture within the A11 would however have a moderate-high sensitivity.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Ensure sustained tree cover to A11 corridor and within the network of field boundary hedgerows to the south of the road through active and appropriate arboricultural management;
- Explore opportunities for additional hedgerow tree planting to the south of the A11 to further reinforce the landscape structure and to enhance habitat connectivity;
- Consider replacement of shelterbelt species with native species more appropriate to the lowland character and the scale of the landscape.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Explore opportunities for the creation of a more porous and transitional character to the structural planting undertaken as part of the attenuation design for the A11, to tie it more effectively into its wider landscape;
- Consider effects of highway lighting to the key junctions at the approaches to Attleborough and their effect on the night time character of the landscape, particularly the rural landscape to the north of the A11.



# AT3: ATTLEBOROUGH, EAST

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

Attleborough is a substantial market town located on the London Norwich Road (now bypassed by the A11). The town is located within the *Tributary Farmland* landscape type, on low lying land at the head of the Thet Valley (A11). The town sits within two character areas. To the north and west *B3: River Thet Settled Tributary Farmland* encompasses the A11 and extends westwards. *B2: The Buckenham's Tributary Farmland* extends south east of Attleborough encompassing the larger villages of the Buckenham's, Banham and Kenninghall. This description considers the fringe of Attleborough within character area B2 and takes in a sliver of land between the A11 and B1077 on the edge of the town and extends around the new development that follows the Norwich Road to the east of the town and the land south east of the town south of the railway.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is generally representative of the wider *B2: The Buckenham's Settled Tributary Farmland*, with its arable farmland, local areas of pasture and wetland, hedgerows and mature trees. The wider area is considered to have a rural, peaceful quality. In this area the proximity to Attleborough influences local character, with occasional views to large scale development on the edge of the town and the prominent infrastructure related to the A11.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A landscape of varying quality and condition. It is typical low lying tributary valley landscape, with a mix of arable and pasture fields to the settlement edge, plus occasional orchards and an area of parkland. To the east towards Besthorpe is a rural landscape of arable, pasture and wetland, around the new urban edge which has extended to encompass former hamlets (Village Farm/Church House). To the south, the arable landscape abuts the hard edge created by the rail line. To the north a distinctive parkland/pasture landscape with veteran trees forming part of the park of Attleborough Hall provides a narrow rural setting between the town	The wetland and grazed parkland landscape north west of Attleborough (Attleborough Hall) is of a high quality and forms a distinctive setting to the town and bypass. It is inherently sensitive, as is the low-lying landscape to the east of the town. The arable landscape to the south has few features of interest and is less sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
edge (B1077) and the A11.	
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued natural features include the small areas of carr and wetland vegetation east of the town and the parkland pasture and veteran trees north of the Norwich Road. Occasional orchards.	These features are inherently sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Small SAM – moated site and earthworks at Stubble Farm to the east of the town. Smaller scale field pattern and orchards east of the town likely to be of greater historic interest than larger arable fields. The historic landscape associated with Attleborough Hall is also of interest.	The historic landscape features are inherently sensitive.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> In parts, this area forms a distinct rural setting to Attleborough, particularly north of the B1077 and east of the town. This is in contrast to the area south east of the town which encompasses the large scale industrial works.	The rural setting would be sensitive to further expansion of Attleborough, particularly development to the north and east which could result in infill development up to the A11.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The eastern edge of Attleborough is comprised of modern housing infill, with rapid expansion along the Norwich Road over the last 20 years following completion of the bypass. For the most part this is well contained by the rail line to the south and the Norwich Road to the north. To the south large scale factory development extends along the Buckenham Road.	The settlement edge is relatively recent. It is not sensitive in its own right. There are opportunities to enhance the entrance to the town from Buckenham Road. There is very limited/no capacity for further expansion along the Norwich Road. To the east, the relatively low key/rural transition at Church House/Village Farm is well integrated with the rural landscape. This edge would be sensitive to large scale development creating a more abrupt settlement boundary.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge is currently well integrated by existing roads and the rail line and forms a compact eastwards extension to the town.	This aspect of the settlement edge is not sensitive.
<b>Gateways:</b> The principal gateways are the B1077 from Norwich, a low key rural lane to the east of the town, Bunwell Road and railway crossing to the south and the B1077 Buckenham Road.  The Norwich Road would originally have been a main gateway – it is now a low key residential gateway. The open land north of the B1077 (Attleborough Park)	The pasture/parkland setting to the Norwich Road is sensitive. Other gateways are not sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
provides a valuable open setting. Bunwell Road and Whitehouse Lane join and enter the town at the rail crossing. Industrial/factory development extends along Buckenham Road.	
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the area. Within the town the central church site and Queen's square are key nodes.	These features are not sensitive to change on the edge of the town.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> This is relatively enclosed landscape with the landform and hedgerow trees generally containing views.	The enclosure created by the landform and field boundary vegetation means that this fringe area is not sensitive, provided key hedgerow boundaries are retained.
<b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b>  <b>Views to settlement edge:</b> Views to the settlement edge are variable. To the south, along Whitehouse Lane there are some stark open views across arable fields to residential development north of the rail line. Along the B1077, residential development extends along the road and is considered to be well integrated. There are few views to the narrow eastern edge of the town. There are no views to key landmarks.  <b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> There are limited views out from the residential development to farmland beyond.	The rural- settlement interface is generally not sensitive. The low key edge to the east at Village Farm/Church House is sensitive to any large scale development which would create a more solid /abrupt boundary of the town.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Hedgerow boundaries are feature of the landscape.	The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting. Reinforcement and recreation of hedgerows is a key opportunity.

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the area is judged to be **Moderate**. This judgement relates to the general absence of inherently sensitive features. However, within this judgement there is relatively limited capacity for further development. To the south east of the town development is effectively contained by the railway and although the adjoining arable land is of low landscape sensitivity, other factors such as connection with and access into the town would need to be considered. To the east the low key rural interface at Church House/Village Farm provides an appropriate town edge, which is sensitive to further large scale development and infilling to the A11. To the north of the town the pasture and veteran trees providing a parkland setting between the A11 and Norwich is considered to be highly sensitive.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve the pattern of hedgerows and seek to restore and renew hedgerow boundaries to form a strong framework for the town;
- Conserve and restore orchards where they formed a characteristic feature;
- Conserve the pasture and veteran trees which form part of the parkland landscape of Attleborough Hall. Seek to revert areas of arable land, within the parkland, to pasture;
- Conserve and enhance areas of wetland east of Attleborough at Besthorpe Carr and adjacent pasture fields;
- Consider opportunities to enhance recreational access from Attleborough.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

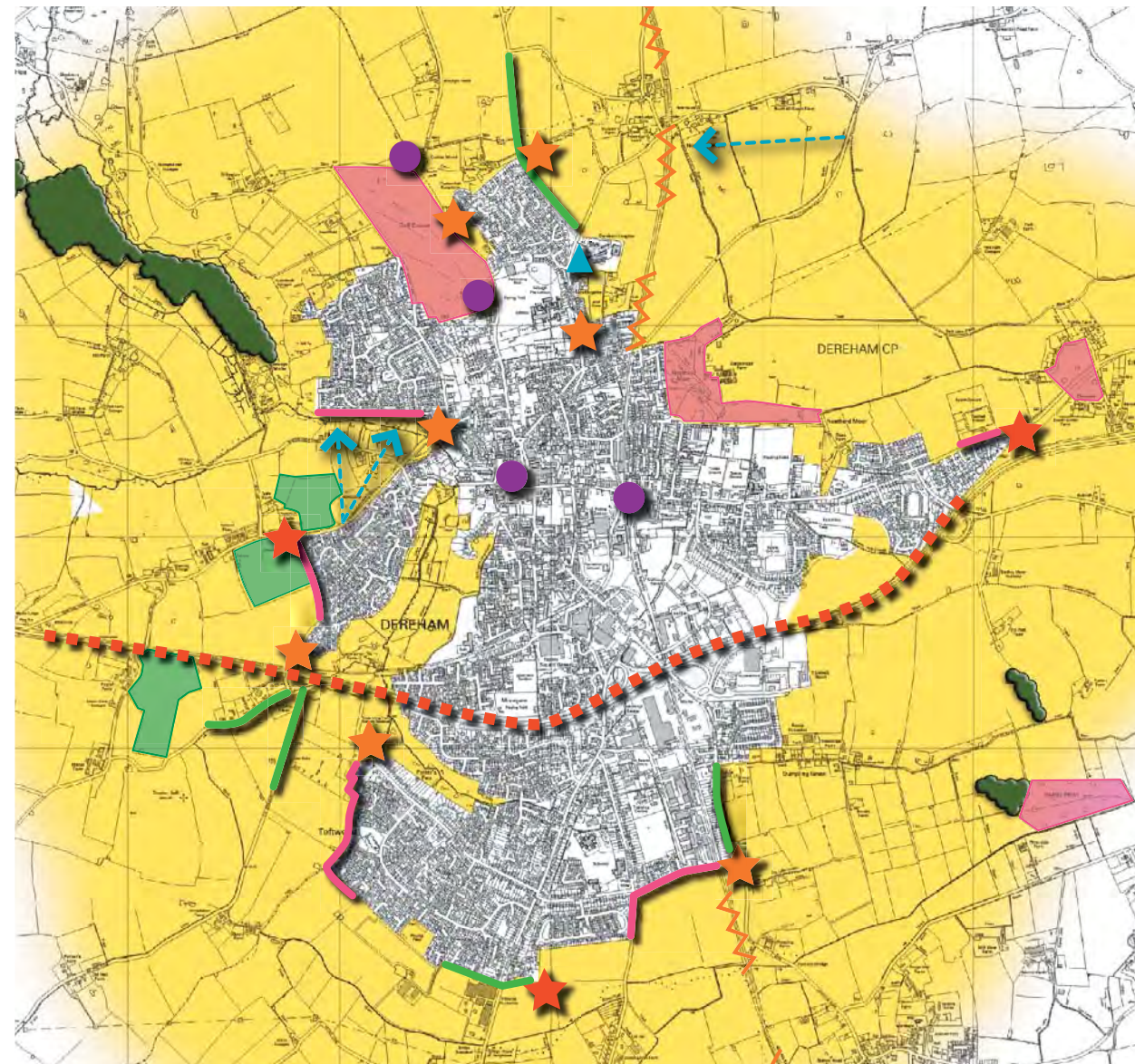
- Seek opportunities to enhance the gateway to the town along Buckenham Road, but avoid further linear development out along the road;
- Conserve the well integrated rural/settlement to the east of the town at Village Farm /Church House.

## DEREHAM

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
A4 River Wensum and Blackwater	Wooded valley floor	DE1 Old Carr Wooded Valley Floor
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Estate Tributary Farmland	DE2 Dillington Hall Tributary Farmland
E8 Dereham Plateau	Arable Plateau	DE3 Northall Green Arable Plateau
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Estate Tributary Farmland	DE4 Old Hall Tributary Farmland
A5 Upper Tud Valley	Tributary Valley	DE5 Badley Moor Tributary Valley
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Small Scale Tributary Farmland	DE6 Scarning Fen Tributary Farmland





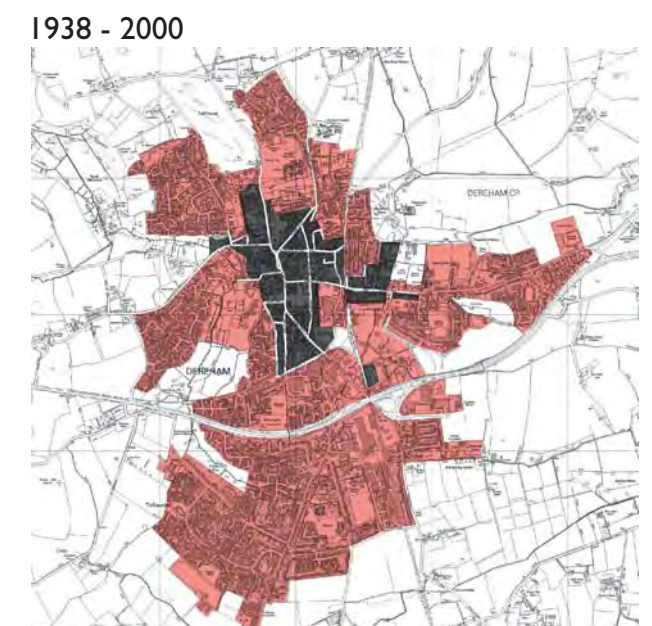


### Dereham Settlement Fringe Analysis

- Woodland
- Agricultural land
- Open views
- Filtered views
- Open edge
- Integrated edge
- Key Gateway
- Minor gateways
- Small scale fields
- Common land
- Node
- Transport corridor (A47)
- Recreational railway
- Prominent skyline feature

### Historic Growth of Dereham








- Road
- Railway line
- Settlement
- 1960-2000 housing

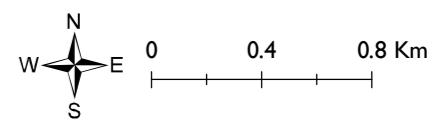
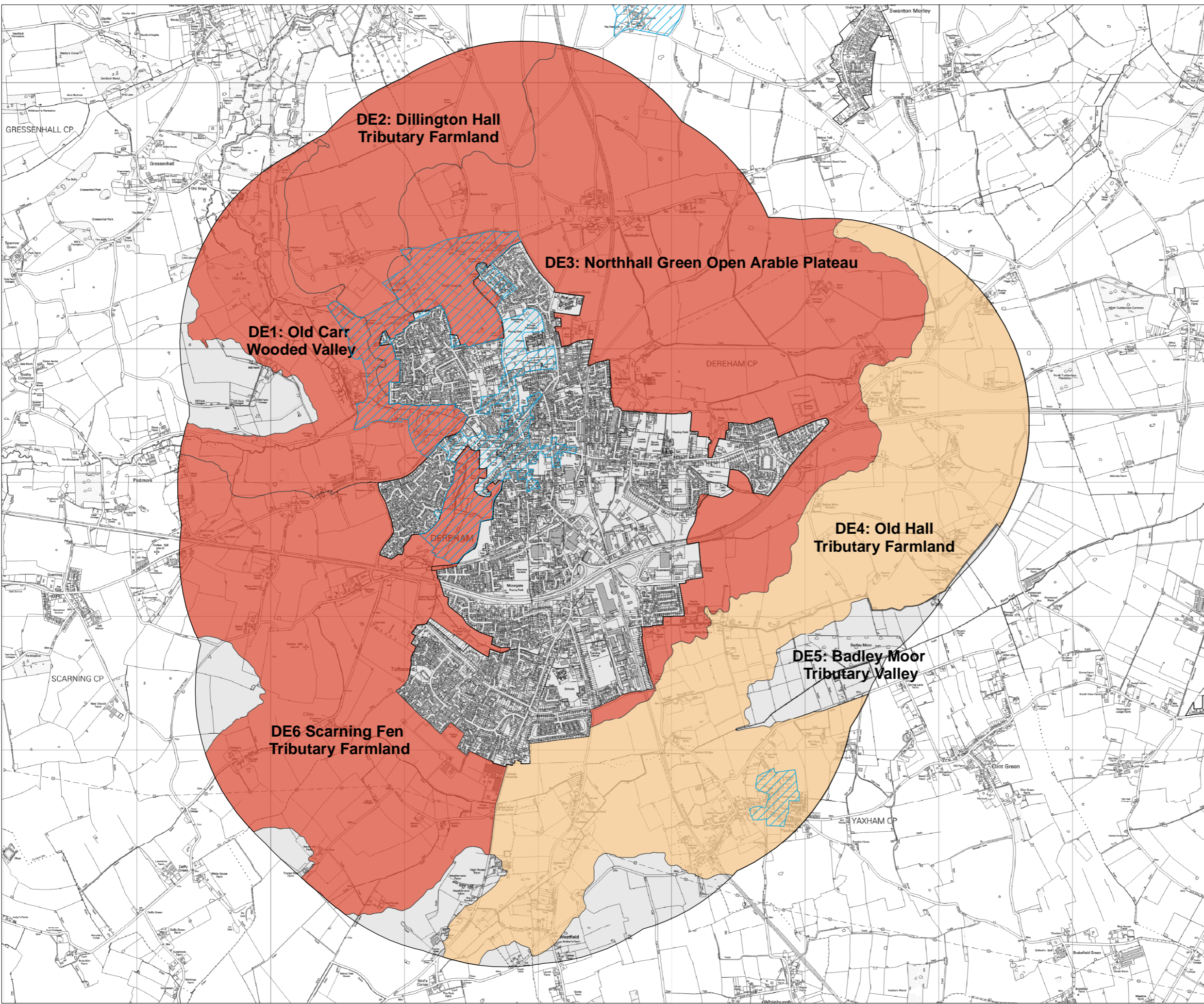




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Dereham Landscape Character  
Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# DEI: OLD CARR WOODED VALLEY

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Old Carr Wooded Valley* forms a small, relatively densely wooded and largely intact section of the wider Wensum Valley floodplain adjacent to the western edge of Dereham, a large town situated predominantly on the plateau. The local character area considers a 3 km radius extending from the edge of the settlement and is defined by carr woodland and wetland habitat in addition to areas of mineral extraction.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Wensum and Blackwater* character area is defined by wetland pasture, wet woodland and areas of redundant and active mineral extraction. The local character area is therefore considered representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A generally intact and relatively well wooded valley floor landscape, with areas of rough grassland, grazing pasture and wet woodland/scrub, although it is of less managed character than other parts of the valley.	This valley character is relatively high in quality, albeit of a generally unmanaged character. In view of the landscape quality it is considered inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> These include areas of carr woodland and areas of wetland/willow scrub and wet meadow.	Such habitats would take significant time to re create if lost and therefore are inherently sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Part of the western edge of the settlement displays an intact late 18 <sup>th</sup> /early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century character, with red brick townhouses.  The river valley floor in the area to the west displays an intimate, small scale character defined by hedged and ditched field boundaries.	The western edge of Dereham forms part of the Conservation Area and is sensitive to change.  The small scale network of pastoral fields and the associated patchwork character would also be sensitive to change.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Containment is provided by the hedgerow field boundaries and areas of wetland scrub and carr woodland, creating a landscape of a generally intimate, small scale.	The landscape elements which contribute to this character would take considerable time to re create if lost. As such they are sensitive to change.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
of a generally intimate, small scale.	
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The western edge on the Dereham Road includes late 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century brick houses, together with later and modern infill/expansion on the western section of the road, towards The Grange and Scarning.</p> <p>The north western edge comprises late 20<sup>th</sup> Century cul-de-sac development, predominantly of bright red brick and tile. There is also some 1970s development in pale brick.</p>	The 18 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> century development within the Conservation Area would have a higher inherent sensitivity to change than the modern development to the settlement edges.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The western edge, including the older development to the south of Dereham Road has a porous character due to copse vegetation and hedgerows.</p> <p>The north western edge has an exposed character at points, particularly to its south eastern end.</p>	The better integrated western edge would have a higher inherent sensitivity to change.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The approach to Dereham from Dereham Road forms the key gateway within the local character area, creating a low key and generally well wooded approach to the town. The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings impart a sense of the historic townscape, although this has been diminished by the modern expansion to the west.</p>	The historic and established components of this gateway would take significant time to re create and therefore are inherently sensitive.
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Filtered views are available across the valley floor and to the north western edge of Dereham from the Dereham Road.</p>	These are contained by field boundary vegetation and are not considered sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The edge to the south of the Dereham Road is filtered due to the presence of copses and remnant hedgerow vegetation.</p> <p>Views are available to the more exposed north western edge although these are again filtered by intervening field boundary vegetation.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> There is some intervisibility with the adjacent <i>Dillington Hall Estate Tributary Farmland Character Area</i> although views out are generally contained by field boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>Due to their filtered nature these views are not considered sensitive.</p> <p>Due to their containment these views are considered to have a relatively low inherent sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a relatively well vegetated landscape with a high density of structural vegetation, including carr and wet woodland and wetland scrub, in addition to field boundary hedges.</p>	<p>In view of the variety and density of structural vegetation mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate – high**, in view of the relatively intact small scale character of the valley floor and the range and quality of landscape elements and habitats present.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Instigate a programme of management to the existing copses to the settlement edge;
- Conserve and enhance grazing pasture through traditional management;
- Conserve and enhance remaining carr woodland through active management, e.g. pollarding to extend its lifespan.

### Principles in relation to Development

- New development should make appropriate use of local materials to ensure development with a clear sense of place;
- Conserve the setting of the lowland valley floor to the edge of Dereham.





# DE2: DILLINGTON HALL TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

DE2: *Dillington Hall Tributary Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area*, with the local character area considering a 3km radius from the north western edge of the large plateau edge town of Dereham. The local character area is defined in part by a largely intact planned/estate farmland landscape associated with Dillington Hall, and incorporating woodlands and a deer park. This is combined with a larger scale arable agricultural landscape to the north.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area* is defined by arable farmland interspersed with small scale wetland features associated with the tributaries which feed the rivers Wensum and Tud. Parklands and associated wooded skylines are a prominent feature of the landscape. It is therefore considered that the local character area is broadly representative although wetland features associated with the minor tributaries are less evident.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
This is a densely wooded landscape at the points adjacent to the settlement edge, and incorporating managed parkland and estate farmland, in addition to larger scale arable cultivation.	The more intact landscape to the southern part of the character area incorporates a planned estate and farmland landscape of some quality and managed character at Dillington Hall. Consequently this would have the highest inherent sensitivity. A more eroded arable character persists to the network of agricultural fields to the north and east of Dillington Hall.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include carr woodland, field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees and structural parkland planting (including exotics) at Dillington Hall.	Carr woodland is a significant relic of Norfolk's historic landscape character and a BAP priority habitat. It is therefore inherently sensitive to change, as are the other mature structural vegetation elements, which would all take significant time to replace if lost.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Principal cultural elements include Dillington Hall (a late 18 <sup>th</sup> Century red brick villa) and associated estate architecture. Humbletoft is a large house	Both Dillington Hall and Humbletoft are listed and are therefore inherently sensitive, together with their landscape settings.

to the south with its origins in the 16 <sup>th</sup> Century and with later additions.	
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Key elements include the traditionally managed deer park at Dillington Hall, together with the densely wooded settlement edge.	The deer park is representative of the historic land use and historic character of Dereham's landscape setting and is therefore sensitive to change.
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The north western edge of Dereham as it abuts the local character area is defined by 1970s/1980s red brick cul-de-sac development to the south of Humbletoft.	In view of its modern character this settlement edge is not considered inherently sensitive, although the setting of the adjacent Humbletoft (listed building) is.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge is not generally perceived from the wider landscape due to the density of woodland/hedgerow vegetation at this point.	The edge is well integrated but largely impermeable in character. As such, in view of the density of the woodland vegetation which creates this character, the edge would be sensitive to change in terms of integration and should be conserved.
<b>Gateways:</b> o gateways within the local character area – N/A.	
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are generally greatly contained by landform and by the density of the woodland to the settlement edge. Views out are generally filtered by field boundary hedgerows.</p>	In view of the containment and filtering provided by landform and structural vegetation, these views are not considered inherently sensitive.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views to the settlement edge are available from the public footpath at Heathfield, to the north of Humbletoft and within the character area.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge, views are greatly contained by structural vegetation and woodland, in addition to roadside hedgerows.</p>	<p>Due to their very contained nature and the influence of woodland and field boundary vegetation, these views are not generally considered inherently sensitive, although the setting of the listed building at Humbletoft would be sensitive.</p> <p>In view of their restricted nature and the limited visibility, these views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a landscape with a relatively high density of</p>	In view of the comparatively high density of woodland cover, mitigation potential is judged

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
structural vegetation elements, in terms of woodland, wooded field boundary strips, parkland vegetation and field boundary hedgerows.	to be high.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate-high**, due to the influence of Dillington Hall, parkland and estate and associated areas of relatively intact historic landscape. Whilst recent expansion has taken place to the north western edge of the settlement it is considered that in view of the integrated and robust character of the edge at this point that potential for future expansion would be extremely limited. Development considerations therefore relate primarily to existing development and the relationship it creates with its landscape setting.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the setting of the Dillington Hall Estate through restoration and reinforcement of the adjoining arable field boundary pattern;
- Existing hedgerow trees in the area around the Dillington Hall Estate and Humbletoft should be conserved through active and appropriate arboricultural management to prolong their lifespan;
- Seek opportunities to reinforce the existing hedgerow tree network through new hedgerow tree planting at irregular intervals within hedgerows, and to enhance habitat connectivity;
- Encourage the creation of a more pastoral/parkland character (meadow set asides, grazing pasture and field trees) to field margins around Dillington Hall Estate to link to existing pastoral habitat and enhance the parkland setting.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Development should conserve the wooded settlement edge;
- Create a natural wooded edge to Dereham, avoiding boundary treatments which could have a sub urbanising influence, such as conifers and close board fencing.



# DE3: NORTHALL GREEN OPEN ARABLE PLATEAU

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

DE3: *Northall Green Open Arable Plateau* comprises a discrete part of the wider *Dereham Plateau Character Area*, with the local character area considering a radius of 3km extending from the settlement edge. Dereham is a large settlement located to the western edge of the plateau and which has grown extensively to the south and west in the later 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Within the local character area, Neatherd Moor has effectively constrained growth to the north eastern settlement edge. The local character area is defined by arable farmland interspersed with a relatively intact network of mixed native field boundary hedgerows and occasional parklands (Quebec Hall) and commonland at Neatherd Moor.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Dereham Plateau Character Area* is an essentially flat elevated arable landscape with a medium scale, irregular field pattern defined by mixed hedgerows, including hedgerows with veteran trees. Fragments of once widespread commonland remain. As such the local character area is considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A varied range of elements are incorporated within the landscape adjacent to the settlement edge, including remnant parkland at Quebec Hall, commonland at Neatherd Moor and managed arable farmland.	The landscape is of a managed character and includes distinctive elements which contribute to landscape quality and sense of place. It is therefore inherently sensitive in terms of condition and quality. Condition and quality are reduced in the area around the A47 corridor.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include veteran oak trees within field boundaries, native and ornamental trees within the former parkland of Quebec Hall and the Golf Course opposite.	Elements such as the veteran trees would take considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore considered inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> These are primarily Quebec Hall (an extensively altered brick and stucco villa dating from the mid 18 <sup>th</sup> Century) and the remnants of its parkland setting.	Quebec Hall lies within the settlement boundary but is a listed building and part of a Conservation Area. Parts of its former parkland setting (e.g. Quebec Wood, estate farm) lie within the local character area, which defines the setting of the listed building. As

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>The commonland at Neatherd Moor also signifies the cultural pattern.</p>	<p>such it is inherently sensitive.</p> <p>Neatherd Moor is a significant piece of remnant common land which indicates the historic landscape of the local character area and is therefore sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Primary elements are the wooded parkland setting of Quebec Hall and the rough grassland of Neatherd Moor, in addition to the definition provided by the network of field boundary hedgerows and the hedgerow oaks.</p>	<p>These combine to create a landscape of varied landcover elements and textural quality, which would be inherently sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Character of the settlement edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Development to the settlement edge encompasses a varied range of building types, styles and periods, ranging from 19<sup>th</sup> Century rendered and tiled terraced cottages and brick and flint houses at Neatherd Moor in addition to later 'suburban style' detached properties from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Recent brick built Victorian style development characterises the part of the settlement edge within the former parkland of Quebec Hall, whilst much 1970s cul-de-sac development is evident to the north eastern settlement edge.</p>	<p>Period development at Neatherd Moor and development within the Conservation Area at Quebec Hall would have the highest inherent sensitivity to change. Development at Quebec Hall creates a relatively positive, transitional edge that responds to the existing landscape elements and streetscape.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> A permeable, semi wooded edge is evident at Quebec Hall, whilst much of the north eastern edge is of a wooded character. Neatherd Moor to the east creates a transitional character to the settlement edge.</p>	<p>The settlement is well contained by woodland and boundary vegetation. As such these edges would be sensitive to change, as would that at Neatherd Moor which creates a porous development edge which is well integrated with the wider landscape.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The key gateway is the Quebec Road approach, with a minor gateway at Cemetery Road, towards the development at Windsor Park, east of the Quebec Hall Estate.</p> <p>Quebec Road is a low key, transitional approach to the settlement, flanked by the remnant parkland at Quebec Hall and the woodland within the Golf Course, whilst Cemetery Road forms a densely wooded, rural approach.</p>	<p>The Quebec Road gateway creates a positive approach to the settlement and forms part of a Conservation Area. It would therefore be sensitive to change, as would the Cemetery Road gateway, in view of its wooded, rural character.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The junction of minor rural roads at Quebec Lodge and Quebec Wood form the primary node within the local character area. Quebec Hall is a</p>	<p>The elements of the Quebec Hall Estate lie within a Conservation Area and are therefore sensitive to change.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
significant node, although just outside of the character area.	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are generally filtered by field boundary hedgerows and woodland blocks.</p>	In view of their contained nature these views are not considered inherently sensitive.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Relatively extensive views are available from the north east across the more open arable farmland, although views of the settlement edge are generally filtered by woodland vegetation. The water tower and the church tower form a prominent element of these views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge at Cemetery Road there are contained/framed views north eastwards. From Neatherd Moor there are filtered views north east across the network of agricultural fields.</p>	<p>The open views would be sensitive to change although views to the settlement edge are partly filtered by woodland. The church and church tower are listed and therefore a sensitive component of views.</p> <p>In view of their contained quality views from Cemetery Road are not considered sensitive. Views from Neatherd Moor are of a more extensive, albeit filtered, nature and consequently of higher sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape displays a relatively high density of structural elements, ranging from mixed field boundary hedgerows and veteran hedgerow trees to farm woodlands and parkland/estate woodland.</p>	Mitigation potential would therefore be relatively high, in terms of reinforcing and extending the existing field boundary hedgerow and tree network. Mass woodland planting would not be appropriate in this elevated plateau landscape.

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate-high**, in view of the intact landscape structure and the presence of surviving historic landscape elements such as Neatherd Moor.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.



## **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve veteran oaks near Quebec Hall through appropriate and active arboricultural management to prolong their lifespan, whilst exploring opportunities for new native tree planting to ensure continuity of cover;
- Conserve and enhance the remaining areas of parkland at Quebec Hall;
- Conserve and enhance Neatherd Moor through appropriate landscape management including grazing.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Explore opportunities for the enhancement of the A47 corridor to the south eastern edge through native planting as part of the attenuation design;
- Encourage a porous, transitional character to the settlement edge.

# DE4: OLD HALL TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

DE4: *Old Hall Tributary Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider B6: *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland* character area, with the local character area considering a 3km radius extending from the southern edge and part of the eastern edge of Dereham. Dereham is a large town sited predominantly on a plateau and of increasingly nucleated formation, with much later 20<sup>th</sup> Century expansion having taken place south of the A47 at Toftwood.

The local character area is defined by a gently undulating landform with predominantly arable land cover set within a network of hedged fields of varying size and shape/form. This ranges from relatively large, irregular fields at the Mattishall Road to a small scale rectilinear field network associated with the minor tributaries draining into the River Tud.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland* Character Area is defined by a network of arable fields of variable scale and shape, intersected by the tributaries draining into the Rivers Wensum and Tud. As such the local character area is considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
Landscape condition and quality varies across the local character area, with a more intact network of small scale fields and hedgerows associated with the tributary drains at Salt Lane and Dumpling Green. A relatively large scale, irregular field network persists elsewhere.	The small scale field network displays the most intact landscape character and is therefore inherently sensitive to change. The large scale field network which characterises much of the rest of the character area is partly the result of agricultural intensification.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the mixed native hedgerows which form the field boundaries and the remaining mature hedgerow trees.  A smaller scale network of mixed agricultural fields, including grazing and rush pasture, persists in the around Yaxham. Shelterbelt and coniferous	These vegetation elements indicate the historic/post enclosure land cover pattern. They would take significant time to replace if lost and are therefore considered sensitive to change.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>vegetation is also apparent to the Whinburgh Road, adjacent to the Mid Norfolk Railway Line.</p> <p>Landform throughout the character area is that of a series of tributary valleys.</p>	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is represented by remnant elements of heathland and moor e.g. at Lolly Moor, part of a formerly extensive network of heaths in the character area and identified on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk. Toftwood Common has subsequently been absorbed within the settlement of Dereham.</p> <p>The Mid Norfolk Railway (former Wymondham-Dereham-Fakenham Railway, laid out from 1845 and associated hump back bridge crossings form another significant element of the cultural pattern.</p>	<p>The surviving areas of heathland and moor illustrate the historic land cover pattern and are therefore inherently sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Primary aesthetic and perceptual factors are the large scale and relatively open arable landscape to the south, which has a comparatively sparse distribution of structural vegetation. Containment is provided by the undulating landform, with the minor tributary valleys providing localised variation to the aesthetic character of the landscape.</p>	<p>The more intimate and distinct landscape pattern associated with the minor tributaries would be most inherently sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Character of the settlement edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The southern settlement edge at Toftwood is defined by a mix of 1950s local authority type house in wire cut brick together with 1970s and later residential development including bungalows (brick/render).</p>	<p>Toftwood does not form part of the Conservation Area and the southern edge does not display any distinctive architectural styles or buildings. As such the southern edge is not considered inherently sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The southern edge is open at this point (although recent native double staggered field boundary hedgerow planting has taken place alongside the lane which defines the edge, east of the railway). This edge displays a range of garden boundary treatments including conifers, although the south eastern edge has a more wooded character.</p>	<p>The open parts of the southern edge are poorly integrated with the wider landscape and therefore have a relatively low inherent sensitivity to change. The more wooded south eastern edge has a higher sensitivity to change in view of its more integrated quality (hedgerows), although the influence of street lighting is apparent.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The primary gateway within</p>	<p>This gateway creates a hedged and generally</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
the local character area is the Whinburgh Road approach to Toftwood from the village of Yaxham to the south.	well wooded approach to the settlement which would be sensitive to change.
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Expansive views are available across the relatively open arable farmland to the south. Parts of the Tud Valley to the east are intervisible with the local character area.</p>	In view of their open nature these views are considered sensitive to change.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Much of the southern settlement edge is visible from the farmland to the south. There is intervisibility with the eastern settlement edge within the adjacent DE3: <i>Northall Green Arable Plateau</i> Character Area.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the southern settlement edge there are wide views across the arable farmland to the south. Views to Yaxham are screened by shelterbelt planting to the Whinburgh Road.</p>	<p>In view of the open character of these views they are considered inherently sensitive to change.</p> <p>The wide views to the south would be most inherently sensitive in view of their open aspect.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> A relatively low density of structural vegetation and woodland is evident throughout the local character area.</p>	In view of the relatively low density of structural landscape cover, it is judged that there would only be moderate mitigation potential, although there would be the potential to accommodate new hedgerow planting and reinforcement of existing field boundaries. Mass woodland planting would not be appropriate in this tributary valley landscape.

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate**, in view of the comparatively small distribution of significant landscape features and the eroded quality of much of the landscape. Sensitivity to change would be locally higher where a more intact land cover pattern persists, e.g. the small scale pastoral fields associated with the tributaries near Yaxham. In view of the open character of the landscape it is considered that there is limited capacity to accommodate new development.

Development considerations therefore relate primarily to existing development and enhancement of its interface with the wider landscape.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Reinforce recent hedgerow planting which has taken place to the southern settlement edge with new native hedgerow tree planting at irregular intervals;
- Explore opportunities for further new hedgerow planting to enhance connectivity;
- Seek opportunities to replace shelterbelt and coniferous tree species at Whinburgh Road with appropriate native tree planting;
- Conserve and enhance the tributary valleys.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve well wooded, low key character of existing settlement gateway at Toftwood (Whinburgh Road), ensuring that the structural vegetation which provides this sense of integration is retained;
- Consider the impact of street lighting on the night time character of the landscape at the Toftwood/Whinburgh Road gateway;
- Avoid species and boundary treatments which could have a sub urbanising influence, e.g. conifers.

# DE6: SCARNING FEN TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

DE6: *Scarning Fen Tributary Farmland* forms a small part of the wider B6: *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland* character area, with the local character area considering a 3km radius from the southern and south western settlement edges of Dereham, a large town of nucleated formation located predominantly on the plateau but with the Wensum and associated tributary valleys defining its landscape setting.

The local character area is defined by a relatively small scale network of mixed agricultural fields (both arable and pastoral) bounded by mixed hedgerows and ditches. Willow lined ditches are a characteristic feature of the local landscape. The local character area is distinguished from the adjoining DE4: *Old Hall Tributary Farmland* local character area by the more intact small scale field pattern and wetland vegetation associated with the network of minor tributaries and Potter and Scarning Fen.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area is defined by a network of arable fields of variable scale and shape, intersected by the tributaries draining into the Rivers Wensum and Tud. As such the local character area is considered broadly representative, although it has a higher density of wetland elements associated with the tributaries.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A largely intact network of field boundary hedgerows and willow lined ditches.	This landscape is in a managed condition and of notable quality due to the density of wetland elements. As such it would be inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the network of field boundary hedgerows, the willow line ditches to field boundaries and the wooded/hedged edge to the A47 corridor.  Potter and Scarning Fen is designated as a SSSI and forms part of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC in view of its standing water, fen, marsh and swamp habitats and the fact that it supports a diverse range of	These structural landscape elements would take significant time to replace if lost and are therefore considered sensitive to change. Potter and Scarning Fen is inherently sensitive in view of its European nature conservation importance, recognised in the SSSI and SAC designations.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>flora and fauna including the nationally scarce small red damsel fly.</p> <p>An undulating landform is apparent, associated with the network of tributary drains and ditches.</p>	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Potter and Scarning Fen is a key element of the cultural landscape and represents the last surviving tract of both the former Toftwood (Toftwood) Common as identified on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk and a scarce land cover element.</p> <p>Built elements include traditional thatched cottages at Fen Road to the south of the A47.</p>	<p>Potter and Scarning Fen is of significant importance and therefore inherently sensitive in cultural landscape terms.</p> <p>Traditional vernacular buildings such as those at Fen Road would be inherently sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A landscape of intimate spatial scale and textured quality due to the varied land cover pattern and field boundary vegetation. The A47 corridor is a major feature of the landscape in terms of the landscape attenuation and street lighting, and intersects the character area east-west.</p>	<p>The elements which create this intimate landscape mosaic (hedgerows, fens, pasture, and tree lined ditches) would be inherently sensitive to change, partly in view of the fact that they would take significant time to replace if lost. The otherwise tranquil quality of the landscape is reduced by the A47 corridor (road noise and lighting).</p>
<p><b>Character of the settlement edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The southern and south western settlement edges at Toftwood are defined by 1970s and later brick built cul-de-sac development.</p> <p>More recent, late 20<sup>th</sup> Century development is apparent to the western settlement edge, to the south of Dereham Road.</p>	<p>This development edge is modern in character without any distinctive building styles or quality. It is not therefore considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> Much of the south western and western edge of the settlement is open.</p>	<p>This open, exposed settlement edge is not considered inherently sensitive to change, although integration is provided by the wider field boundary hedgerow network, which would be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> There are no gateways within the local character area – N/A.</p>	
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are limited by vegetation and the undulating landform.</p>	<p>Due to their limited nature views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Parts of the south western settlement edge are visible from within the local character area, although filtered by field boundary vegetation.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge, views are contained by landform and field boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>Due to their filtered nature these views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p> <p>In view of the contained character of these views they are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape of the local character area displays a relatively high density of vegetation (field boundaries).</p>	<p>In view of the existing density of structural vegetation, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high. Mass woodland planting would not be appropriate to the character of the landscape.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate-high**, in view of the intact landscape structure and the quality of individual landscape elements such as Potter and Scarning Fen. Sensitivity would be locally lower in the areas around the A47 corridor.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance existing willow lined ditches through active and appropriate management (e.g. pollarding on an appropriate cutting cycle);
- Continue to conserve, enhance and reinforce native field boundary hedgerows which integrate the south western edge of the settlement, gapping up with native species as appropriate to ensure connectivity,
- Consider new native hedgerow tree planting at irregular intervals within existing hedgerows.



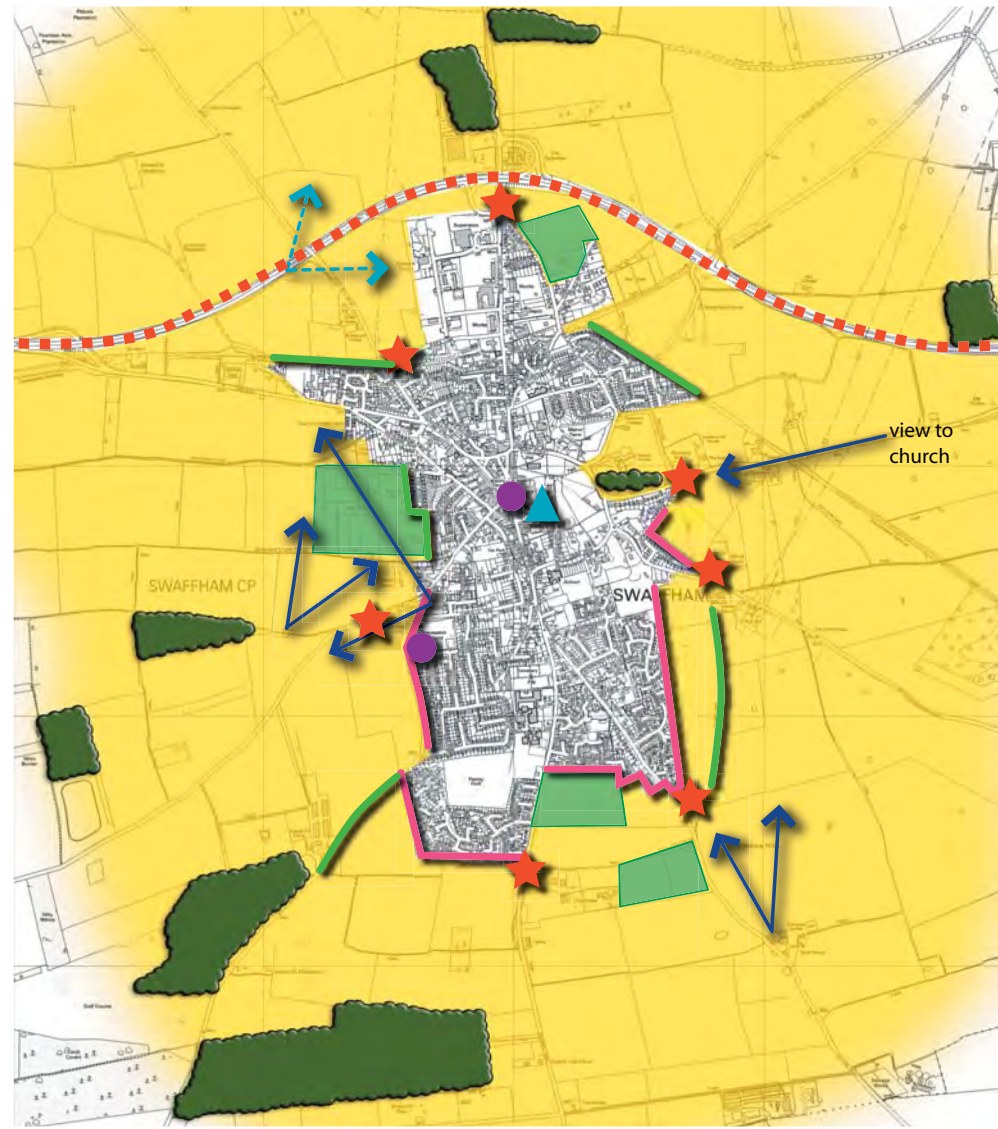
## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Development should incorporate a porous and transitional edge, making use of native planting to extend/reinforce the integration provided by the wider hedgerow network;
- Explore opportunities for the use of further native planting to the A47 corridor as part of the attenuation design.












## SWAFFHAM

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
B5 River Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland	Open Tributary Farmland	SW1 Clarence Hills Open Tributary Farmland
E6 North Pickenham Plateau	Open Plateau Farmland	SW2 Washpit Drove Open Plateau Farmland
D1 Swaffham Heath	Plantation and Farmland	SW3 Hilly Whins Plantation and Farmland



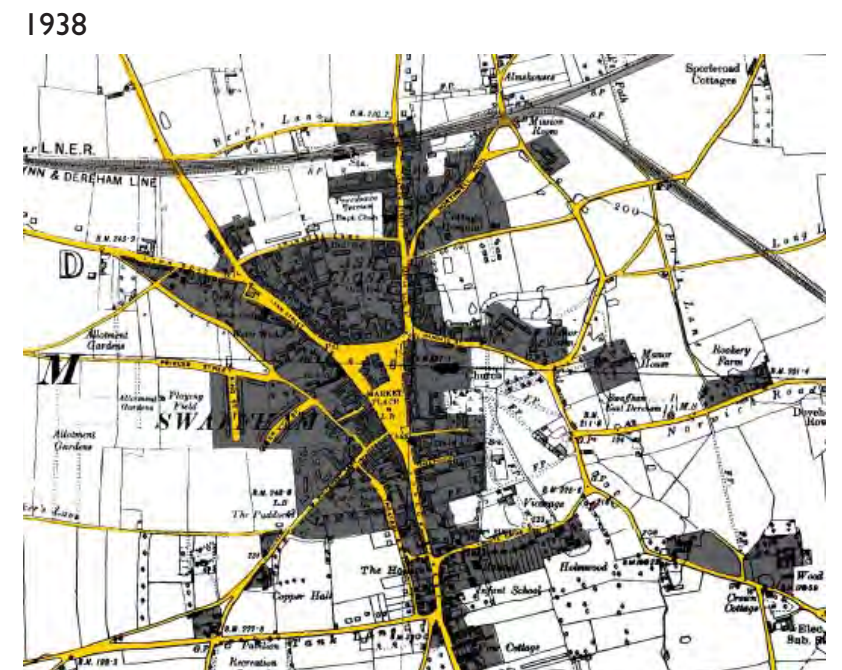
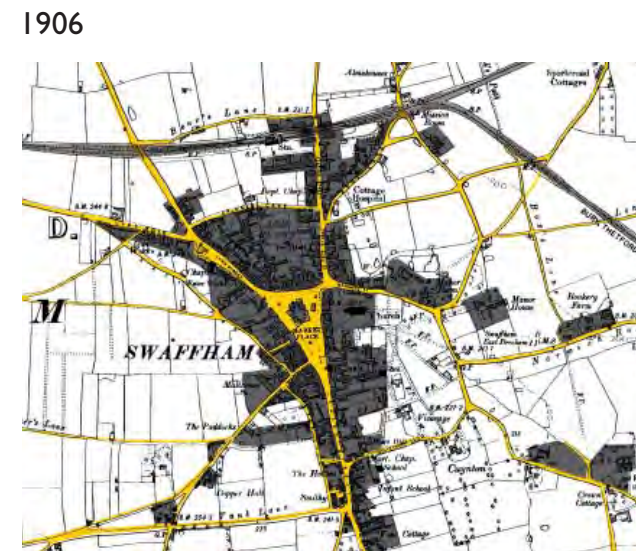


## Swaffham Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Woodland
-  Agricultural land
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Transport corridor (A47)
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Node
-  Prominent skyline feature

## Historic Growth of Swaffham








- Road 
- Railway line 
- Settlement 

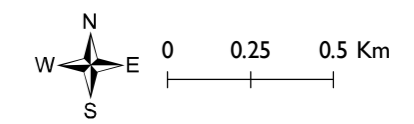
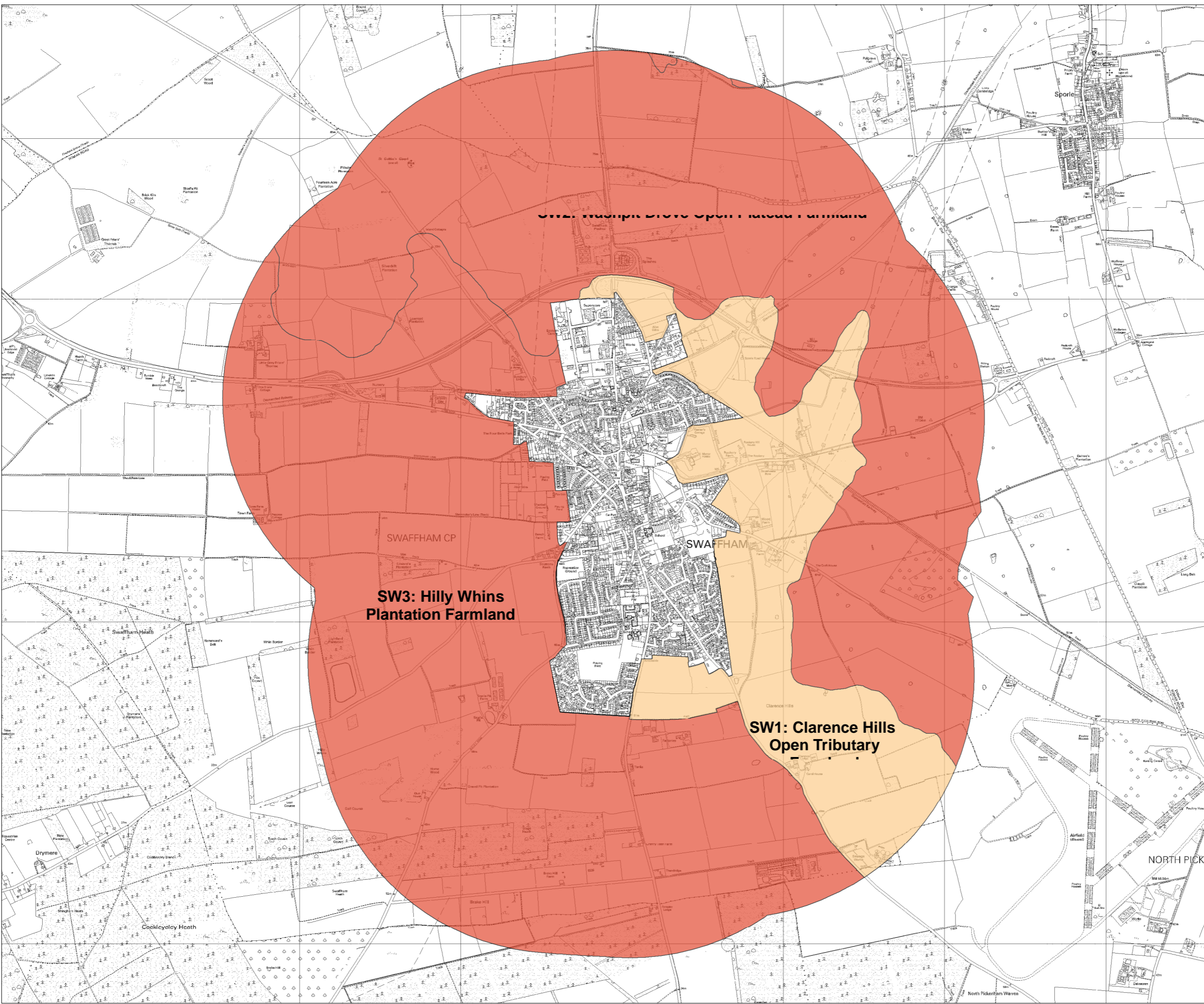




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Swaffham Landscape Character  
Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# SWI: CLARENCE HILLS OPEN TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

SWI: *Clarence Hills Open Tributary Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider B5: *Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland* Character Area, rising to 65m AOD and considering a radius of 3km extending from the south eastern edge of Swaffham. Swaffham is a large town of irregular formation and which straddles the boundaries of two distinct landscapes, with the undulating tributary farmland to the east and the more elevated arable farmland with plantation to the west. The local character area comprises a series of relatively large scale, open arable fields, interspersed only with occasional mixed hedgerows, oak field trees, occasional pasture and woodland blocks. Wind turbines form a prominent visual element within the local character area.

### Representation of District LCA character area

Within the wider character area, arable agriculture is the predominant land cover. Fields are often medium to large in size and bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees, of variable condition. Localised areas of smaller fields are found on settlement edges and land adjacent to tributaries. Fenland is a small-scale feature which provides localised texture and ecological value. Hedged and treed skylines are a feature of the landscape.

The local character area is therefore considered representative of the wider character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The condition of the landscape is variable, with area of intact pasture occasionally interspersed with considerably larger arable fields with degraded field boundaries.	A managed arable landscape with locally intact areas of landcover (e.g. pasture) but degraded in areas due to domestic/ornamental species to the settlement edge. The landscape is therefore moderately sensitive in terms of condition and quality.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key natural elements include green lanes, remnant hedgerows and oak field trees marking the lines of former hedgerows, in addition to field ponds (possible marl pits) and the distinctly undulating tributary valley landform to	The structural vegetation such as the mature oaks would take a considerable time to replace if lost and is therefore inherently sensitive.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
the south east.	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Principal built elements include Carol House, an altered early 18<sup>th</sup> century red brick dwelling on the Watton Road, and the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century red brick Manor House at Norwich Road.</p> <p>Much of the historic landcover pattern such as heathland (e.g. North Pickenham Heath) has been absorbed within later agricultural intensification.</p>	The manor house and its associated minor parkland would have the highest inherent sensitivity to change.
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A gently undulating landscape with varying spatial experiences created by open arable fields occasionally interspersed with woodland blocks and surviving hedgerow and field oak trees. Wind turbines to the east of Swaffham form a prominent visual element.</p>	Although relatively few structural landscape features combine to create this aesthetic character, elements such as the mature hedgerow and field trees would take a considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore sensitive.
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> To the southern edge of the settlement, development is characterised by late 1970's/80s brick built development, predominantly two storeys but also including chalet bungalows, whilst to the south eastern edge is brick cul-de-sac development dating predominantly from the 1980's.</p>	In view of the undistinguished, modern character of these settlement edges, they are not considered inherently sensitive to change.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> Both the southern and eastern edges are open and exposed in character, often exhibiting boundary treatments such as closeboard fencing and ornamental species, but integrated by the density of adjacent/parallel field boundary hedgerow vegetation.</p>	<p>In view of the exposed character of the settlement edges they are poorly integrated and not inherently sensitive to change, although the outlying hedgerows which provide wider containment and integration with the landscape are sensitive.</p> <p>Recent development at Watton Road has successfully integrated existing field boundary hedgerows and dense roadside hedgerows (sensitive features) within the layout.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways are the approaches to the settlement from Sporle Road, Norwich Road and Watton Road, with North Pickenham Road forming a minor gateway to the settlement.</p> <p>The gateways form well wooded, hedged and low key approaches to the settlement, although coniferous species are apparent at the Watton Road</p>	The field boundary vegetation and roadside hedgerows form key elements in defining the setting of the settlements and these points and are instrumental in tying the settlement in to its wider landscape. The gateways are therefore sensitive to change, although sensitivity is reduced at Watton Road due to the sub urbanising influence of coniferous planting.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
gateway.	
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are often filtered to the south due to field boundary vegetation and undulating landform, although more expansive at points (e.g. to the south east and east) due to the scale of the field pattern. There is some intervisibility with the plantation blocks and pine lines within the adjacent SW3: <i>Hilly Whins Plantation and Farmland</i> character area.</p>	<p>The more open views to the south east and east are considered most sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The south eastern edge is visible from both Watton Road and Norwich Road, although views from North Pickenham Road are filtered due the density of the vegetation to the green lane at Dulgate Lane.</p> <p>The embattled church tower and its distinctive leaded 'Gothic' lantern spirelet form a component of views from the east.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge, the wind turbines are visible to the south east, although views to the east are largely filtered by the density of the vegetation at Dulgate Lane.</p>	<p>The church is a listed building and therefore forms a sensitive component of these views.</p> <p>Structural vegetation provides containment and lessens visual sensitivity at points.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a relatively open landscape with only localised cover and containment provided by the undulating landform and by structural vegetation, e.g. hedgerows, field trees, green lanes and occasional woodland blocks.</p>	<p>In view of the comparatively low density of structural vegetation, the landscape could not accommodate large scale landscape planting. As such the mitigation potential is moderate, although there would be scope to reinforce and reinstate field hedgerow boundaries.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate**, although this would be locally higher in areas where a more intact small scale pastoral field pattern persists.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Implement an appropriate programme of arboricultural/sylvicultural management to hedgerow trees/field trees and green lanes to ensure continuity of cover;
- Gap up existing network of native field boundary hedgerows around Watton Road/Dulgate Lane, and explore opportunities for further field boundary reinstatement in this area;
- Use native species e.g. thorn/blackthorn to gap up existing hedges and encourage development of a dense structure to enhance connectivity for wildlife;
- Reinststate native (oak) hedgerow tree planting at irregular intervals to reinforce existing field boundary pattern/landscape structure.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Use existing development pattern to the southern settlement edge (scale/massing) to integrate development into the landscape (e.g. mix of 1-2 storey buildings);
- Development should incorporate settlement edges of a porous and transitional character, in order for it to integrate properly within the wider landscape;
- Avoid non native/ornamental species and boundary treatments such as closeboard fencing to the settlement edge, which could have a sub urbanising influence;
- Retain the existing hedgerow and tree structure within new development, ensuring that it respects this landcover pattern.

# SW2: WASHPIT DROVE OPEN PLATEAU FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

SW2: Washpit Drove Open Plateau Farmland forms a small component of the wider E6: North Pickenham Plateau Character Area, defined by the 70-75m AOD contour, and considering a 3km radius from the northern edge of Swaffham. The large, irregularly formed town of Swaffham falls most within the adjacent local character areas but abuts the southern edge of character area SW2. The local character area comprises elevated arable farmland with mixed hedgerows defining field boundaries.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider District LCA character area is defined by an elevated, largely flat landform and rectilinear arable fields, occasionally interspersed with blocks of plantation woodland. Field boundaries are defined by mixed, sometimes treed hedgerows.

As such the local character area is broadly representative of the wider character area although the small area adjoining the settlement edge is markedly different, due to the retail park and EcoTech Centre development, in addition to the attenuation scheme for the A47 corridor.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
<p>The wider landscape of this character area is composed of elevated arable farmland divided intermittently by mixed hedgerows, creating a relatively open, large scale field pattern.</p> <p>Adjacent to the settlement the landscape is markedly influenced by development, with the A47 embankment and associated attenuation measures, e.g. woodland and the development of the retail park and EcoTech Centre within the A47 corridor.</p>	<p>Whilst the wider landscape is in a managed state, condition and quality in the area around the settlement edge are substantially eroded by the A47 and associated development. As such the landscape is not considered inherently sensitive in terms of condition and quality.</p>
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<p><b>Natural:</b> Key features include the treed field boundary hedgerows where these survive, in addition to the mixed native woodland to the A47 embankment and areas of mixed plantation woodland at</p>	<p>Remaining structural landscape features which indicate the historic post Enclosure landcover pattern, such as field boundary hedgerows and trees, would take considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore markedly more</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>Swaffham Plashes.</p> <p>The landform to the north of the A47 corridor rises gently to the more elevated points of the plateau.</p>	<p>sensitive than the relatively recent planting to the A47 corridor.</p>
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Surviving elements of the landscape's cultural pattern include Washpit Drove, a remnant of the road network shown on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk. The associated commonland has however been lost to subsequent agricultural intensification. The windmill identified by Faden to the south of Washpit Drove has since been lost.</p>	<p>Much of the cultural pattern has been lost to 20<sup>th</sup> Century agricultural practices and the remnants are barely tangible. There are no sites designated for their historic interest within the local character area. As such cultural elements are not inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Aesthetic and perceptual character are variable, with the area outside the A47 relating more widely to the district character area (large arable fields, interspersed with occasional treed hedgerows). The area inside the A47 has a considerably more enclosed character due to woodland planting and a disturbed quality in view of recent industrial and retail development.</p>	<p>The open arable aspects of the landscape character would be sensitive to change. The industrial areas to the south of the A47 have a lower sensitivity due to the degraded, disturbed character which has resulted (areas of made ground and car park dominated frontages).</p>
<b>Character of the settlement edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> A small part of the northern edge of Swaffham abuts the southern boundary of the local character area. This edge consists of a recent supermarket development and associated car parking, in addition to the EcoTech Centre, small scale industrial development and areas of made ground within the wooded, embanked corridor of the A47.</p>	<p>The retail development creates a degraded settlement edge which is not considered sensitive to change, although the EcoTech centre makes use of timber cladding and has less urbanising influence.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The A47 and associated woodland round off the settlement edge at this point, creating a physical and visual barrier.</p>	<p>The A47 corridor strongly limits the permeability of the edge but forms a natural edge to the settlement. However the result is that the settlement is poorly integrated with its wider landscape at this point.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Castle Acre Road, under the A47 overbridge, forms the principal settlement gateway within this local character area.</p>	<p>This gateway has a harsh character due to the poorly integrated concrete overbridge and degraded minor industrial estate development along Castle Acre Road. It is not therefore considered to be inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Filtered views of the wider landscape are available from the A47 and the areas to the north along the Castle Acre Road, although their extent is curtailed by rising landform and field boundary/roadside hedgerow vegetation.</p> <p>The A47 and associated woodland planting act as a visual barrier, particularly with views to the south. The vegetated A47 corridor also limits views from the more elevated landform to the north.</p>	<p>Due to their containment these views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views to the settlement edge are largely denied by the wooded embankment to the A47 trunk road.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> These are again greatly limited by the A47 corridor with only a channelled view available of part of the rising arable land to the north available from under the overbridge.</p>	<p>No views are available – no sensitivity.</p> <p>Due to the containment and the restricted nature this view has a low inherent sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Beyond the wooded A47 corridor the landscape has a relatively low density of structural landscape elements (mainly hedgerows and some hedgerow trees).</p>	<p>Around the A47 corridor mitigation potential is considered to be relatively high in view of the existing level of woodland cover although this is significantly lower outside this area due to the relatively sparse landcover.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity for the character area as a whole is considered to be **moderate-high**, in view of the elevated and open aspect, which would not easily accommodate significant landscape change. However the area within the A47 corridor is considered to have a lower (moderate-low) sensitivity to change in view of its degraded character and the urbanising influence of existing development.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

## **General Landscape Management**

- Reinforce existing network of field boundary hedgerows to the north of the A47 to enhance connectivity, gapping up with native species where appropriate;
- Reinstate historic field boundary pattern where possible to the north of the A47 to enhance landscape character of the plateau, using small scale blocks of woodland coverts to tie the wooded A47 embankment into the landscape.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Consider impact of lighting to A47 slip roads and visual effects of the highway/retail park lighting on the night landscape;
- Industrial premises should create a positive frontage and relationship to the settlement gateway/streetscape - use native planting to the boundaries (with fencing behind as appropriate) and sensitive design of car parking/service areas;
- Use a simple, muted colour palette for the claddings/facings for industrial buildings and retail park development.

# SW3: HILLY WHINS PLANTATION AND FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

SW3: *Hilly Whins Plantation and Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider D1: *Swaffham Heath Character Area*, with the local character area considering an area extending 3km from the western and south western edges of Swaffham. The settlement edge of Swaffham to this character area is of a long and rectilinear, irregular character. Both arable fields and blocks of plantation woodland are contained within the local character area, although the dominant landcover/landuse is that of arable cultivation, with plantations often forming the hinterland/skylines.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Swaffham Heath Character Area* is defined by large scale, open and windswept arable fields interspersed with visually prominent blocks of mixed plantation woodland. Ancient scots pine hedgerows/tree lines are a prominent feature of the landscape. The landscape has a remote and unsettled character, although historic parklands, designed landscapes and associated features such as lodge houses and rides are evident.

The local character area is considered broadly representative of the wider character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
This is a managed agricultural landscape, with a variable density of field boundaries and set against the backdrop of mixed, predominantly coniferous woodland. There is a variable density of field boundary hedgerows.	Field boundaries have often been lost or have become neglected due to arable intensification, but the landscape otherwise has a unified, well managed quality, with the plantations providing a strong sense of place. These are inherently sensitive but are not directly affected by the settlement edge.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key elements include the distant blocks of plantation woodland, in addition to remnant mixed field boundary hedgerows and oak/field maple former hedgerow trees (a number of which are veteran trees).  Landform ranges from gently undulating in the northern part of the character area to more distinctly undulating/falling	The veteran trees would take considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore considered inherently sensitive.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
in the southern part.	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural elements are represented by vernacular flint and red brick barns on the south western approach to Swaffham at Strattons Farm.</p> <p>Heathland was identified as the dominant landcover within the character area on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk although this has subsequently been lost to agricultural intensification. Snails Pit Farm, also identified on the 1797 Map, is extant.</p>	The surviving buildings are unlisted although their traditional/vernacular construction makes a significant contribution to the character of the settlement edge, which would be sensitive to change.
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A landscape defined by landform of varying undulation, expansive and largely open arable fields and framed by distant plantation blocks of vast scale. A more wooded character and relatively intimate spatial scale is apparent at Cley Road, due to the influence of the plantations at Cockleycley Heath.</p>	The plantations are significant in defining the hinterland and parts of the spatial experience within the local character area. They would take significant time to replace and are therefore inherently sensitive although they are not directly affected by the settlement edge.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The western settlement edge displays a range of development types and periods ranging from traditional brick and flint barns and former farm buildings of Strattons Farm, opposite the recreation ground, to 1970s development including bungalows.</p> <p>The south western edge of the settlement comprises a combination of late 1970s and early 1980s bungalow and 2 storey development.</p>	The vernacular buildings at Strattons Farm would have a higher inherent sensitivity than the later and modern development to the settlement edge.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The northern end of the western settlement edge has a permeable character due to field boundary and garden vegetation, although this is more open and exposed to the southern end. The southern edge is similarly exposed.</p>	The northern part of the western edge has the most integrated character and therefore the highest inherent sensitivity. The southern end of this edge, together with the southern settlement edge has an exposed character and this is reinforced by boundary treatments such as chainlink fencing.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the approach from the A1065 and the approach from the west (from Edward's Plantation).</p> <p>The A1065 gateway forms a low key approach to the settlement, with field boundary and roadside hedgerows</p>	The existing hedgerows and features such as the rural lanes and remnant hedgerows, which define these gateways, would be inherently sensitive to change.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>flanked by the rooflines of 1970s development.</p> <p>The western approach is defined by a narrow rural lane and remnant former hedgerows facing a recreation ground with mature semi ornamental tree planting.</p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b> The key node is the recreation ground at the junction of rural lanes on the western settlement edge.</p>	<p>In view of the small scale rural character at this point and the backdrop provided by the vernacular buildings of Strattons Farm, this node is considered sensitive to change.</p>

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Extensive views are available to the west, although views to the south and south west are more filtered, due to the presence of woodland and the lower lying, more undulating landform. Views to the north are channelled due to boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>The more open and exposed views to the west are considered to have the highest sensitivity to change.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views are available to the western settlement edge, including the water tower, whilst filtered southward views are available from West Acre Road. The water tower is again a prominent element of these views and the church spire is apparent.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge views to the south are filtered by woodland and falling landform. Extensive views are available across the arable farmland to the west of the settlement edge.</p>	<p>The church spire is the most sensitive component of these views in view of its listed status.</p> <p>The open views to the west are considered most sensitive to change, in view of their exposed aspect.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Much of the landscape comprises large scale open arable fields, intermittently interspersed with plantation woodland, although the density of woodland cover is greater in the southern part of the character area.</p>	<p>In view of the influence of the plantations and the more wooded character in the southern part of the character area, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate-high**, in view of the exposed and large scale character of the landscape, particularly to the western edge of the settlement. It is considered that there would be limited potential for expansion of the settlement. The network of smaller scale fields defined by hedgerows and scrub vegetation, and partly indented into the western settlement edge, would be sensitive to change.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for reinstating the network of native hedgerows at Cley Road and the intersecting rural lanes at Strattons Farm;
- New hedgerows should be of double staggered form and planted with mixed natives and hedgerow trees at irregularly spaced intervals to assist in restoring the landscape structure;
- Instigate a programme of scrub management to the small scale field network to the western settlement edge to enhance visual quality and landscape character in this area;
- Manage hedgerows associated with this small scale field network, gapping up with native species where appropriate to encourage the development of a dense structure and to enhance wildlife corridors.

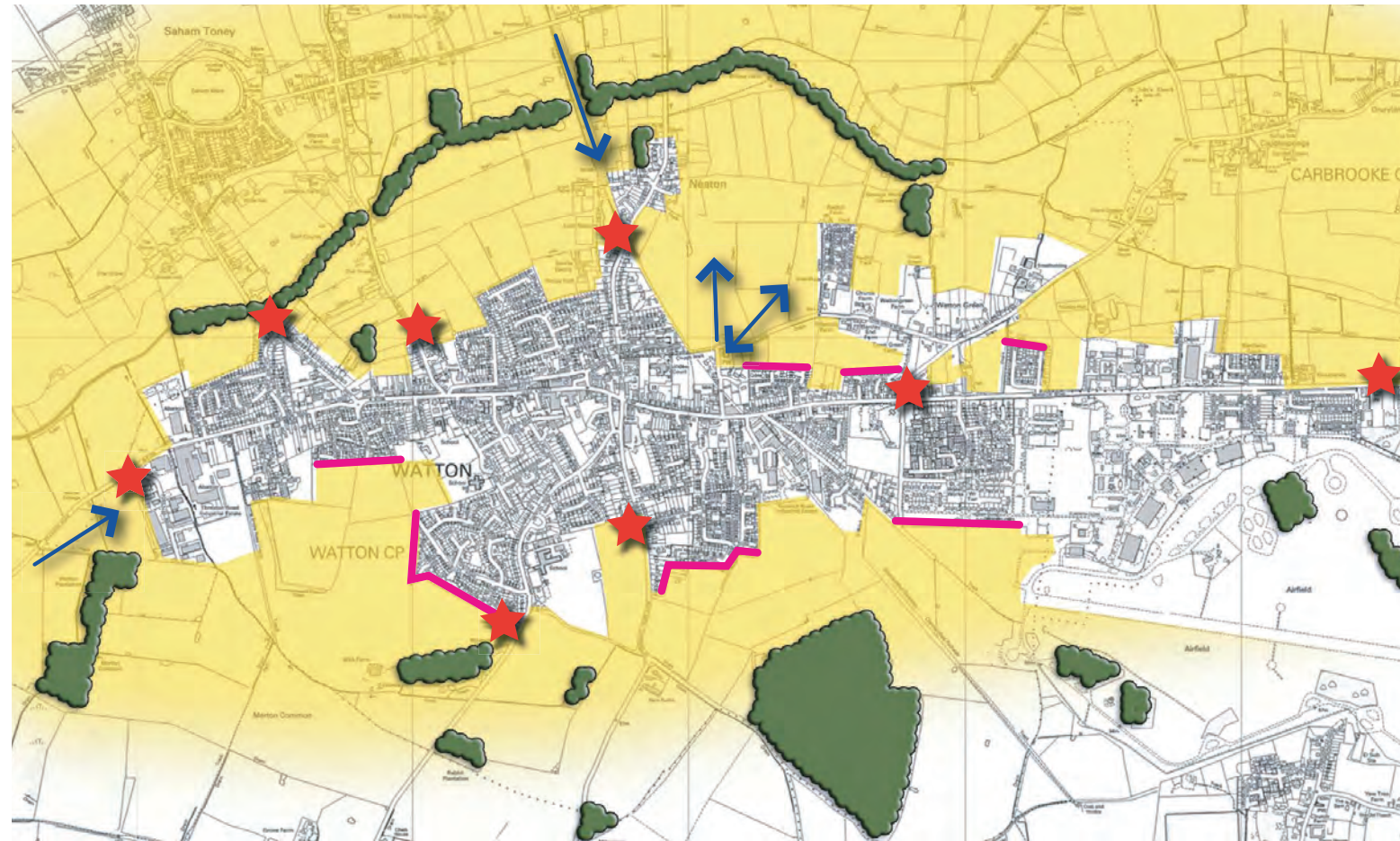
### Principles in relation to Development

- Avoid boundary treatments such as chainlink fencing, which could have a suburbanising influence;
- Encourage a porous, transitional settlement edge, using native planting to filter and absorb development within its wider landscape, using the character of the small scale, hedged fields to part of the western edge as a template;
- In view of the elevated and open character of the landscape in the northern part of the character area, discourage development which by its scale and massing would breach the existing skyline;
- New plantation woodland could be accommodated to mitigate development in the more wooded southern part of the character area;
- Use existing residential development as a template for massing, scale and broad development form;
- Development should make reference to the local materials vocabulary, e.g. red brick, flint and clay tile.








## WATTON

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
B5: River Wissey Tributary Farmland	Tributary Valley	WA1 Watton Brook Tributary Farmland
E4: Wayland Plateau	Plateau	WA2 Watton Airfield Plateau
D2: Stanta Heath	Tributary Valley	WA3 Watton West/Threxton





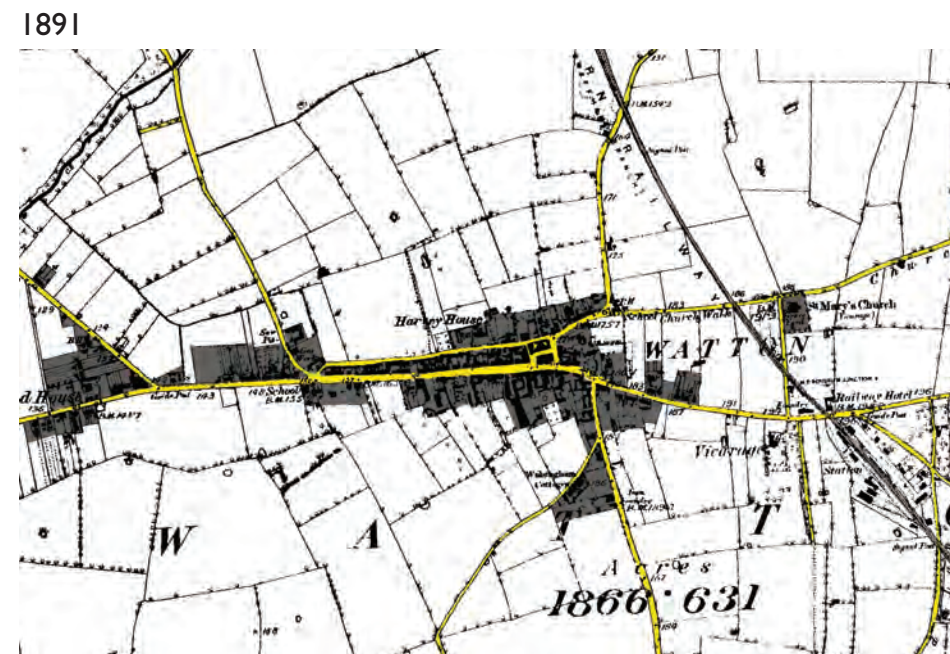


## Watton Settlement Fringe Analysis

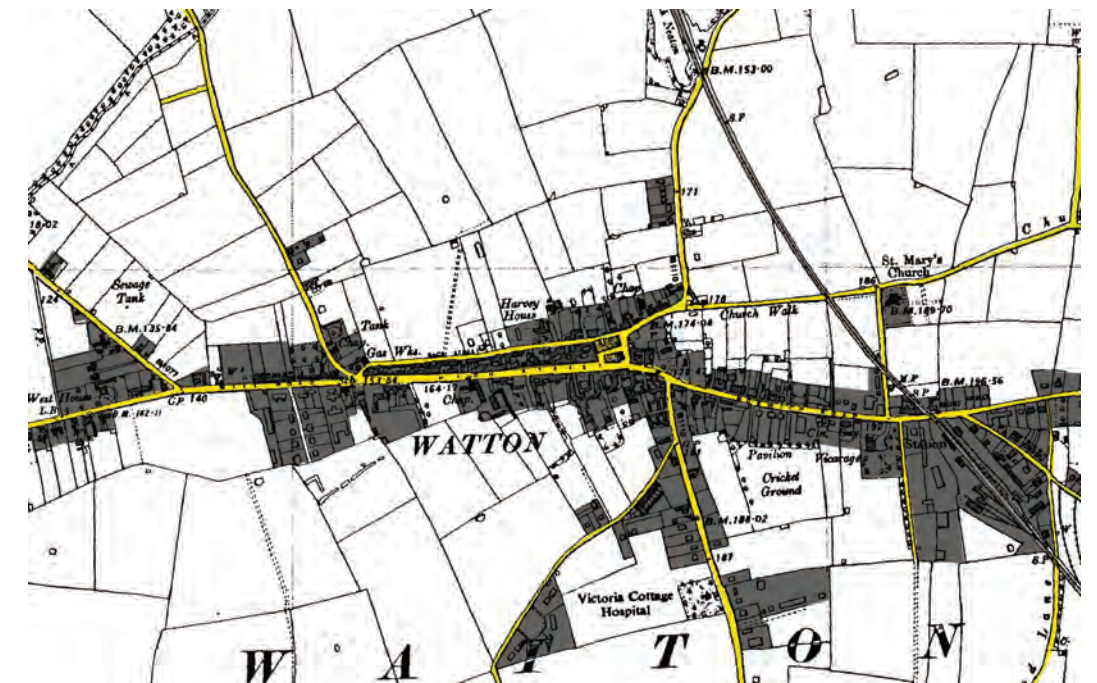
-  Structural landscape blocks
-  Agricultural fields
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key gateways

## Historic Growth of Watton

- Road 
- Railway line 
- Settlement (Historic core) 










1952

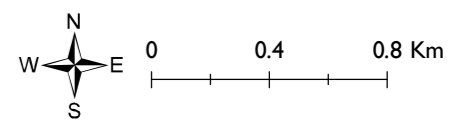




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Watton Landscape Character  
Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007







# WAI: WATTON BROOK TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

The character area comprises the whole of the northern edge of Watton from Swaffham Road in the west to the small hamlet of Caudlesprings in the east. It extends from the settlement edge to 3km radius incorporating the villages of Ovington, Saham Toney, Carbrooke plus the adjoining residential area of Neaton and linear settlement at Watton Green. It forms part of the district character area B5: *River Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland*. This is a typical rural landscape of arable fields. It is crossed east to west by, Watton Brook, a minor tributary of the River Wissey which creates local landscape diversity, with a more enclosed river course and greater tree cover. From this minor valley the land rises gently to Watton and the higher plateau landscape immediately to the south of Watton (*E4: Wayland Plateau*) and north to *E5: Central Breckland Plateau*. Views from the settlement edge to the north extend across the valley and gently rising topography north of Ovington, and incorporate landmark features associated with the settlements including the former windmill at Saham Toney and church tower at Ovington.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is representative of the wider district character area. It is a rural landscape of arable fields bound by sparse hedgerows and field drains. Minor tributaries, including Watton Brook, cut through the area creating localised landscape variation and diversity. Small rural villages close to, and visible from, the settlement edge are a key feature.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A typical agricultural landscape of managed arable fields, with sparse field boundaries. The settlement edge is very prominent (stark) in some locations. However, although sparse, field boundary vegetation plus the rising landform together filter long distance views towards the edge of Watton.	The landscape condition and quality is not inherently sensitive. The managed agricultural landscape extending to the settlement edge is however an important feature. There are opportunities to enhance/strengthen field boundary planting in some locations to provide better integration of development within the rural context.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> The main natural features of interest are the minor watercourse and associated vegetation and tree line along the watercourse and vegetation associated with Broom Hall. The wider study area includes Saham Toney Mere, a ground water-fed fluctuating mere.	These features are all sensitive to change but would not be directly affected by residential development on the northern edge of Watton. Note increased development may have an adverse impact on groundwater levels and affect the meres in this part of Breckland.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Surviving cultural elements include views to landmark features such as the mill at Saham Toney and church tower at Ovington.</p> <p>On the northern edge of Watton, St. Mary's Parish Church is an important landmark feature, of flint construction with a prominent round/hexagonal tower. It has a rural setting to the north. Church Walk, a lime avenue, with gates at each end extends from the church to the west to Linden Court.</p>	<p>Landmark features would not be directly affected by residential development on the northern edge of Watton.</p> <p>The rural setting of, and views, to the church on the northern edge of Watton are sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> The area forms a transition from the town to the tributary valley. Watton is located at the top of the valley slopes on the edge of the higher plateau landscape. The tributary valley landscape is in comparison a relatively quiet, rural landscape.</p>	<p>Further development on the northern edge of Watton would have potential to 'spill' down the tributary valley slopes creating a very visible development edge in views across the tributary valley e.g. from Ovington. For this reason the location is judged to be of relatively high sensitivity.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> This is residential edge, although varied in character. To the west between Swaffham Road and the A1075 Dereham Road it is characterised by low density single storey developments and back garden boundaries, predominantly fenced. At the A1075 gateway Loch Neaton is an interesting feature forming an area of public open space and water created through construction of the rail line in 1875. East of Neaton, the settlement edge is fragmented, with blocks of modern development extending out from the Norwich Road and terminating as hard boundaries alongside arable fields. The fields have an important role in separating the edge of Watton from the more rural settlement/hamlet of Watton Green. The easternmost edge is characterised by industrial estates and development along the Norwich Road associated with the former RAF base.</p>	<p>Sensitive elements of the northern edge of Watton are the rural gaps and agricultural fields between Watton and Watton Green. Further development in this area would consolidate the town. Also of high sensitivity is the small rural gap along the tributary separating Watton from Saham Toney. The whole northern edge is sensitive by virtue of the landform at the crest of the slopes rising from the minor tributary valley.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> West of the Dereham Road, the edge is reasonably well integrated visually through a combination of landform and planting – although back garden fences generally provide hard boundary with limited permeability. To the east of Dereham Road this is a more diffuse edge, with agricultural land permeating into the town.</p>	<p>West of Dereham Road, further expansion of the settlement edge would have impinged on the tributary valley and is therefore considered to be sensitive. East of the Dereham Road, there is some capacity for development to provide a better settlement edge and help in the=grate the harsh blocks of modern development jutting out into agricultural land, although this would need to be balanced with effects on the potential consolidation of settlement with Watton Green.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Watton is a market town extending east-west along the Norwich Road, with a central thickening along the Dereham- Thetford Road.</p>	<p>Although, not inherently sensitive in landscape terms, this local gateway has already merged Watton with Neaton and</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
Within the character area, the main gateway is from the north from Dereham (A1075). This is a low key residential gateway with the settlement of Neaton merging with Watton.	therefore further extension would be inappropriate. It would also change the typically linear character of the market town which extends along the Norwich Road.
<b>Nodes:</b> The distinctive church of St. Mary's with its round tower and associated lime walk is a key node.	The rural setting of the church is sensitive.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> Views from the area to Watton are generally contained by the gently rising landform and field boundary vegetation. There are some long distance views (from near Ovington) to the masts and water tower on high land associated with the airfield in the eastern part of the town.	The location of the town on the crest of rising land means that any expansion northwards (downslope) would have the potential to be very visible in some locations, for example from Ovington.
<b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b>  <b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views to the urban edge are generally filtered and screened by field boundary vegetation and the gently rising landform. In some cases back garden fences form a harsh boundary with the surrounding rural landscape.  <b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> There are medium distance views from the settlement edge across the minor tributary valley to Ovington and rising land to the north.	The location of Watton at the brow of the hill and the presence of field boundary vegetation restricts views of the settlement edge. The further extension of the settlement edge downslope towards Watton Brook would be highly visible.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Field boundary vegetation is present.	The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting.

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the area to further expansion of Watton is judged to be **Moderate - High**. Within this judgement, there are some areas where small residential extensions may be appropriate. The judgement of higher sensitivity relates to:

- the rural character and separation of Watton Green from Watton;
- site and setting of St. Mary's Church;
- tributary valley crests and slopes where further outward development would be highly visible in views from the north (Ovington);
- the distinction and separation of Saham Toney;
- the need to limit thickening of the town away from its historic core along the Norwich Road.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe;

### **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve and enhance field boundary vegetation and consider opportunities for reinstating boundaries where they have been lost;
- Conserve the setting of St. Mary's Church and associated features (lime walk);
- Consider opportunities to enhance recreational access from the northern edge of Watton into the rural landscape.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the rural character of Watton Green and its separation from Watton;
- Avoid development on the crests and slopes of the tributary valley which would be highly visible in views from the north (Ovington);
- Conserve the distinction and separation of Saham Toney;
- Seek to create a well integrated settlement edge, avoiding large blocks of development jutting out into the agricultural landscape.

# WA2: WATTON AIRFIELD PLATEAU

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

The character area considers the landscape to the east and south of Watton. It forms part of the more elevated landscape of *E4: Wayland Plateau*. The area extends to a 3km radius from Watton encompassing the settlement of Griston. It is a large scale open arable landscape with dominant features including the former RAF Watton airfield, now disused, on the south east edge of Thetford and Wayland Prison at Griston. Wayland Wood is a large semi-natural coppiced woodland (SSSI), and is associated with the 'Babes in the Wood' legend. The landscape is characterised by arable fields delineated by low/sparse mixed hedgerows.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is generally representative of the district character area forming part of an arable plateau landscape. It is influenced by the edge of Watton, with views to the settlement edge and the disused airfield being a prominent feature. The area does have some variation in character with the south eastern edge incorporating the former RAF base, airfield and new residential development, and the south west edge having a stronger agricultural character. For the purposes of the assessment they have been described and evaluated as one area, with any differences and local variation in character noted.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A landscape in a moderate condition. Field boundary loss has resulted in a more open landscape and there are some views to the stark residential edge of Watton and the disused airfield.	The landscape is not of a condition and quality which is considered to be highly sensitive. There is a need to conserve and continue to manage a functional agricultural landscape to this edge of Watton.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued elements include the large Wayland Wood (one of the largest semi-natural woods in this part of Norfolk), small woodland copses and remaining intact field boundary and boundary trees.	The aim should be to conserve and enhance Wayland Wood. The wood is sensitive to further development which would adjoin or increase recreational pressure within the wood.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Features of cultural interest include former commons, such as Merton Common, now subsumed within the arable landscape.	The former commons have potential for restoration as commonland/heathland and are therefore sensitive to change.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A strong rural	The rural farmland landscape (west) is more

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
character west of the airfield, with woodland, managed farmland and some quiet rural lanes. The former airfield and prison to the east, by comparison have less rural character. The area is located on the higher plateau and is therefore potentially viable in views from the tributary valley landscape to the north.	sensitive than airfield (east). The higher plateau land is sensitive to tall/industrial type buildings which could be seen on the skyline in views from the tributary valley landscape to the north. Note: existing tall features including masts and water tower are visible skyline features.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The settlement edge is varied; the west is mainly 1970's residential estates, with some areas of newer development extending outwards. A school and associated playing field form the edge to the west of the Thetford Road. East of Thetford Road the edge is more varied containing a mix of light industrial estates/highways depot and new residential estates – some of which terminate abruptly at the rural edge, with prominent fencing, limited onsite vegetation and chainlink/metal fencing securing the surrounding landscape. The former RAF base is being comprehensively redeveloped with mixed density residential development.	This is a poorly integrated edge with often harsh abrupt boundaries between the settlement and the rural landscape. In this respect it is not sensitive and there is an opportunity for a more creative approach to form a softer edge through field boundary and small copse planting which would be in keeping with the character of this plateau landscape.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> This edge of Watton has good rights of way links between the town and surrounding countryside (e.g. Watton Wood) as well as the wider rural landscape via the Peddar's Way and North Norfolk Coast Path.	Although the new settlement edge is not well integrated there are some good access links into the wider rural landscape. While, not inherently sensitive these access links should be conserved and where appropriate enhanced.
<b>Gateways:</b> The area contains two Gateways. The A1075 from Thetford enters the town from the south. This is a relatively low key gateway with residential development and school playing field along the road. The gateway to the east on the Norwich Road is dominated by the former RAF base (now being converted to residential). Light industrial and business uses create a poor quality entrance to the town, with chainlink fencing, car parks and warehouse type buildings extending along the Norwich Road.	These gateways are not sensitive. There is an opportunity to enhance the entrances to Watton and create a stronger sense of place. The grass verges and horse chestnut avenue along the Norwich Road are features that would benefit from enhancement. The linear character of Watton means that further lateral extension outwards along the Norwich Road would not be appropriate.
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no distinct nodes. The water tower and masts along the Norwich Road form tall features visible from a wide area.	N/A.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
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<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> This is a relatively flat landscape, with Watton being located at the edge of the plateau. There are some open views, for example across the disused airfield from Griston. In other locations field boundary vegetation and tree cover limits views. The higher land (masts and water tower) are visible in views from the tributary valley landscape (e.g. Ovington) north of Watton.</p>	<p>The openness of the landscape and potential for long views is sensitive and demonstrates the importance of the field boundary vegetation in filtering views. The plateau is particularly sensitive to tall developments/industrial estates which could potentially form dominant features on the skyline.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the edge of Watton:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> At close range there are open views to a very abrupt urban edge. In areas of new development, this may be because further outward expansion is expected and therefore appropriate landscape treatments have not been implemented.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Conversely there are open views from the urban edge to the arable farmland landscape.</p>	<p>The openness of the landscape and potential for views to an abrupt settlement edge is a sensitive element and requires appropriate mitigation planting.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The large area of Wayland Wood is supplemented by field boundary trees, plus a number of small copses.</p>	<p>The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting – the existing pattern of woodland and tree cover provides a template for new planting.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the landscape south and east of Watton is considered to have a **Low** sensitivity to change. This judgement relates to lack of individual sensitive features, relatively moderate condition and quality of the landscape and its open character and often harsh transition between the existing settlement edge and the surrounding rural landscape. It is considered that some new development could provide a catalyst for enhancement of the settlement edge and sense of place of Watton. Key sensitive elements, however, are the large semi-natural woodland at Wayland Wood and access links between the town and wider countryside.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

#### General Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance Wayland Wood and consider opportunities to extend the wooded character to provide a stronger setting for the southern edge of Watton;
- Seek to reinforce and manage existing field boundary hedgerows and, where appropriate create new boundaries, notably in areas of boundary loss or in association with the new settlement edge;



- Consider opportunities for heathland/species rich grassland creation inline with ECONet objectives. Key sites are the airfield and former commons;
- Conserve and enhance recreational access opportunities notably rights of way links with Watton.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Seek to create a well integrated settlement edge with the adjacent farmland landscape:
  - avoid geometric blocks of development jutting into farmland;
  - use/create strong field boundaries to provide screening;
  - avoid use of industrial material including metal palisade fences and gates at the entrance to farmland;
- Consider opportunities to enhance the eastern approach to Watton from Norwich, through appropriate landscape treatment of boundaries, verges and planting to create a stronger sense of place and sense of arrival at the market town;
- Consider the effect of any further tall development on this elevated plateau landscape which is highly visible, for example in views across the tributary farmland (e.g. Ovington) to the north;
- The extent of new development means that this edge of Watton does not have a strong vernacular character. Within Watton, generally, traditional building materials include rendered clay lump, brick and some flint which should be reflected in any new development.

# WA3: WATTON WEST/THREXTON

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

The character area considers the landscape to the west of Watton. It forms part of the distinctive heathland and plantation landscape of *D2: Stanta Heath*. The area extends to a 3km radius from Watton from the narrow western extent of the town from the B1077 at Saham Mere in the north to Merton Common/Long Bridle Road to the south.

It is a medium – large scale undulating arable landscape forming part of a minor valley (Watton Brook) running towards the River Wissey. In parts the landscape is very open with low clipped hedgerows, but in other areas there are numerous small plantations, screening belts and copses forming a typical estate landscape, with Halls, lodges and estate cottages. In the area to the west of Saham Toney is a more intimate, valley landscape of pasture and, parkland and woodland providing the rural setting to the village and separation from Watton.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is generally representative of the district character area. The large tract of heathland surviving within Stanford Training Ground SSSI is not included within the area surrounding Watton.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A landscape in a moderate condition. Field Boundary loss and flailing of remaining thorn hedges has resulted in a more open landscape and there are some views to the industrial western edge of Watton. More intact 'valley' landscape to the west of Sham Toney.	The landscape is not of a condition and quality which is considered to be highly sensitive. There is a need to conserve and continue to manage a functional agricultural/estate landscape to this edge of Watton.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued elements include the small plantations, copses and wooded strips and the course of the river tributary that threads through the landscape. Areas of grazed pasture along the river course form the immediate setting to the western edge of the town. Also of natural interest are areas of former heathland/common land, as at Merton Common and areas of Carr vegetation and marshy wetland at Capp's Bush.	Areas of former common/heath provide opportunities for future heathland creation/restoration to link to large areas of heathland landscape to the south. Local wetland and woodland features are sensitive and should be conserved and enhanced.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Features of	The former commons have potential for

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
cultural interest include the SAM at Woodcock Hall – site of a Romano British settlement, plus parkland landscape associated with Broom Hall. Former heathland commons for, now subsumed within the arable landscape are also features of historic interest.	restoration as commonland/heathland and are therefore sensitive to change. The parkland landscapes of Broom Hall are also sensitive, notably for its role in creating a rural gap between Saham Toney and Watton. The SAM is at some distance from Watton and is unlikely to be affected by further expansion of the settlement.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A strong rural character in parts, but with views to large scale industrial buildings on the edge of Watton and heavy traffic on the B1108 (Brandon Road).	This area is sensitive to loss of rural characteristics such as the hedges, boundary plantations and copses which contribute to the rural character.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> This is a very short settlement edge – Watton being a linear market town and extending west – east along the Norwich-Brandon Road. The western edge is primarily composed of large scale warehouse/industrial buildings associated with Threxton Road Industrial Estate (Abattoirs). There are, in addition small areas of residential development extending from Brandon Road. Saham Toney, by comparison has a more rural setting and settlement edge.	The large scale industrial/warehouse buildings are visually prominent and create poor quality entry to Watton. However, this area would be sensitive to further westward expansion to create a new area separated from the main part of the town by the industrial estate.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> This edge of Watton is poorly integrated – with large scale building forming a visually prominent edge.	The poor settlement edge to this part of Watton is not sensitive to change. There are opportunities to enhance the existing settlement edge
<b>Gateways:</b> The area contains the gateway to Watton from Brandon B1108. It is dominated by large scale warehouse buildings which are visually prominent on the approach to Watton. There is a rural setting between Watton and Sham Toney.	This is a poor entrance to Watton, with potential for enhancement. It is not inherently sensitive. However, further development would not improve the gateway.
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no distinct nodes.	n/a

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> This is a medium – large scale open landscape. In close proximity to Watton many field boundaries have been lost or intensively flailed opening up long views to the town.	The openness of the landscape and potential for long views is sensitive.
<b>Intervisibility with the edge of Watton:</b>  <b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There are medium distance views along the Brandon Road to the large scale warehouse buildings on the	The openness of the landscape and potential for views to an abrupt settlement edge is a sensitive element and requires appropriate mitigation

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
industrial estates.  <b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> The nature of the development (warehouses) effectively blocks views from Watton out to the rural landscape beyond.	planting.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The pattern of plantations, copses and tree belts are a feature of the landscape.	The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting – the existing pattern of woodland and tree cover provides a template for new planting.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the landscape west of Watton is considered to have a **Moderate** sensitivity to change. This judgement relates to the few individual sensitive features, relatively moderate condition and quality of the landscape and its open character and harsh transition between the existing settlement edge and the surrounding rural landscape. Nevertheless, capacity for further development is low. Further linear extension of the town beyond the industrial estates would be inappropriate. Note that in the area between Watton and Saham Toney sensitivity is judged to be **High**. This judgement relates to the role of tributary valley and parkland/pasture and woodland setting in defining the separation of Saham Toney and Watton and creating a strong rural character.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

#### General Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the grazed pasture along the tributary valley to the west of Watton;
- Seek to reinforce and manage existing field boundary hedgerows. In this area, opportunities for flailed hedges to ‘grow out’ and provide stronger landscape features should be encouraged. Where appropriate create new boundaries, notably in areas of boundary loss edge;
- Consider opportunities for heathland/species rich grassland creation in line with ECONet objectives. Key sites are former commons;
- Conserve the parkland landscape of pasture, parkland trees and woodland associated with Broom Hall;
- Conserve the rural setting of woodland, pasture and parkland of Saham Toney and sense of separateness from Watton;
- Conserve and enhance recreational access opportunities notably rights of way links with Watton.

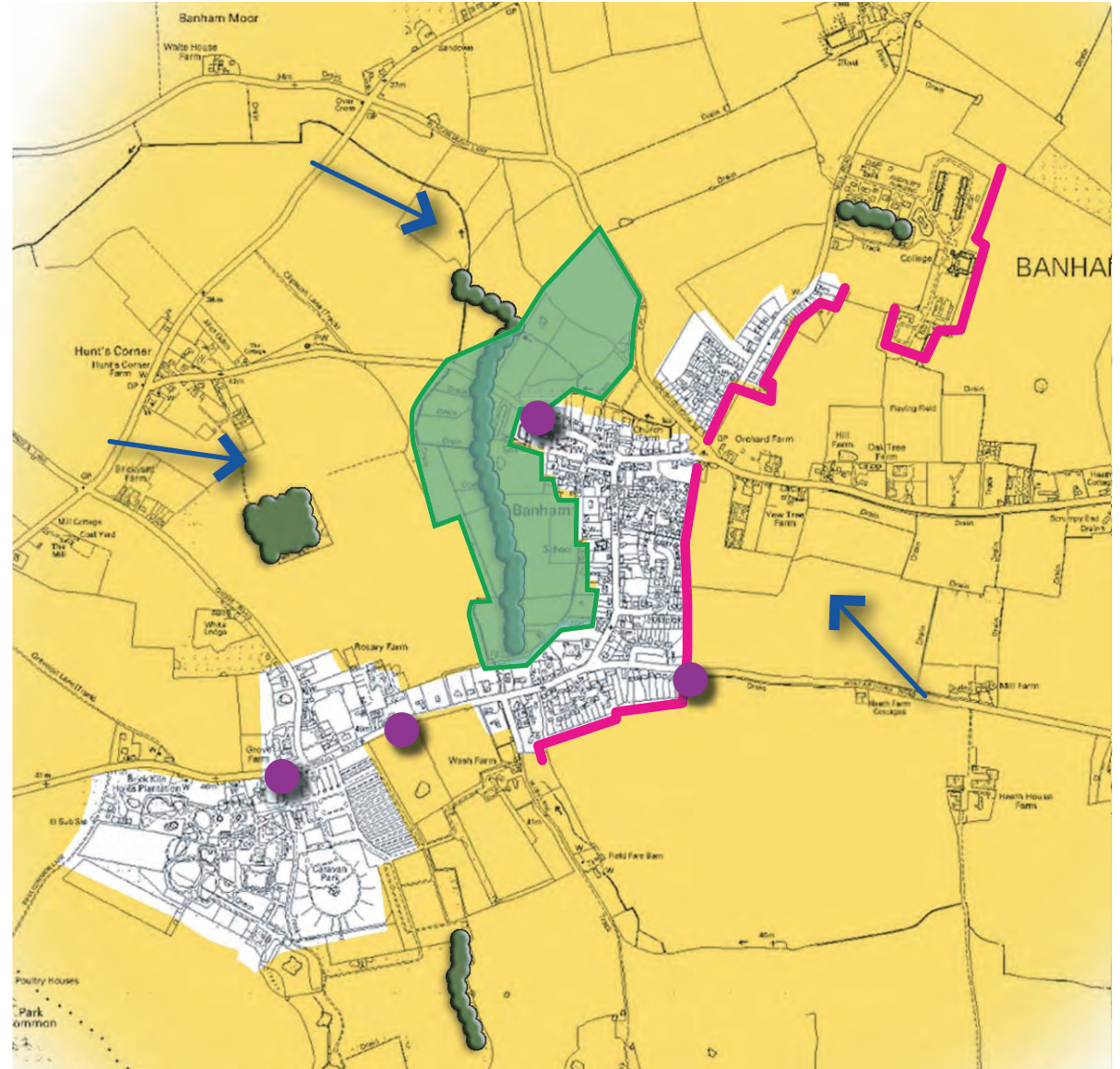
## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Consider opportunities to enhance the western approach to Watton from Brandon to create a stronger sense of place and sense of arrival at the market town. Consider opportunities for planting to screen the large scale industrial units;
- Consider the effect of any further tall development on this elevated plateau landscape which is highly visible, for example in views across the tributary farmland (e.g. Ovington) to the north;
- Conserve the distinction and separation of Saham Toney.










## **BANHAM**

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
B2: The Buckenham Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland	BA1 Banham Fringe





## Banham Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Structural landscape blocks
-  Agricultural fields
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Nodes

## Historic Growth of Banham

Road



Settlement (Historic core)



1890



1952







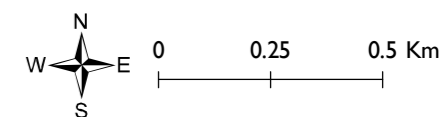
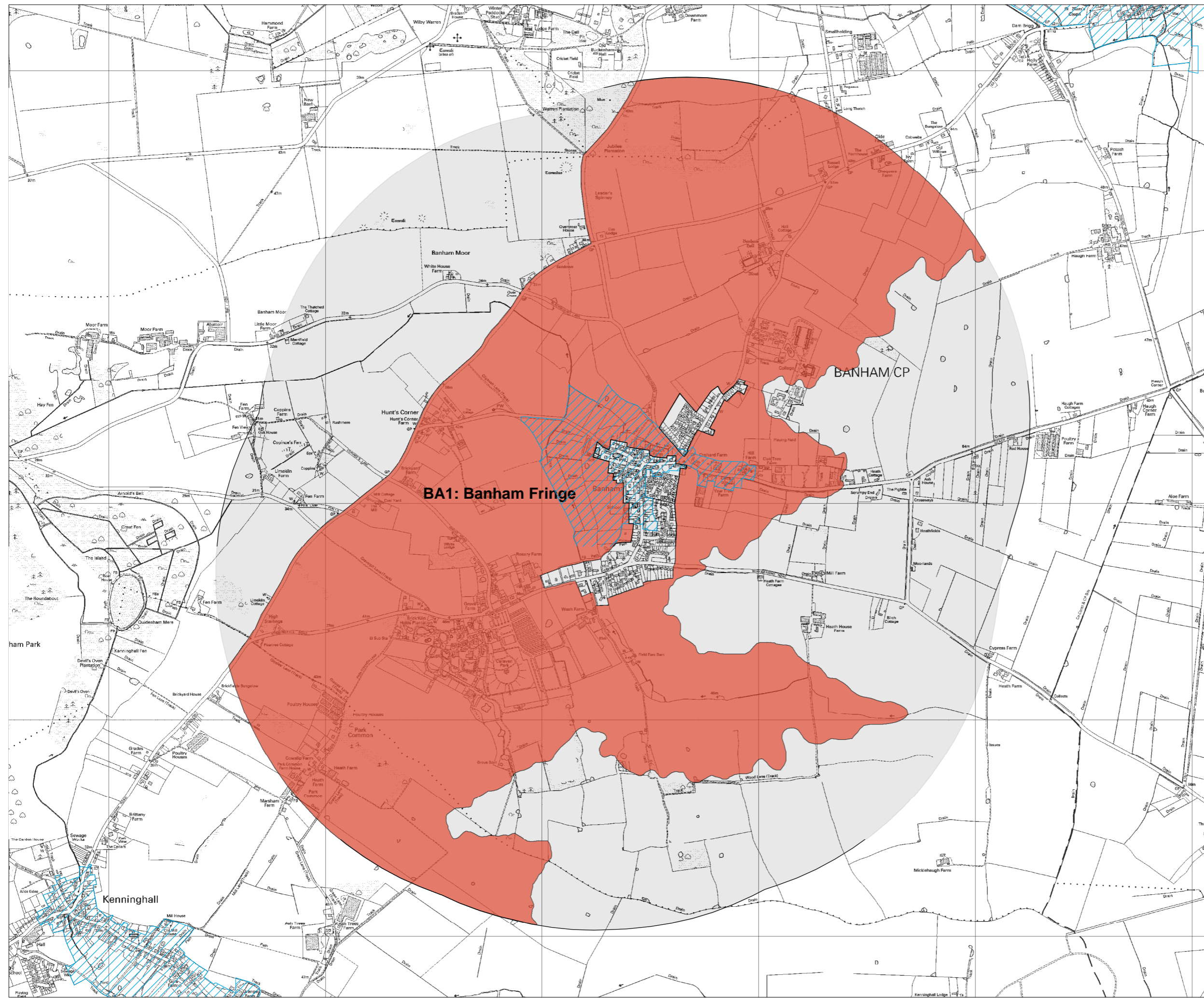
# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Banham Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

## Key

1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

## Sensitivity

- Low
- Low / Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate / High
- High
- Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# BAI: BANHAM FRINGE

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

Banham is a small-medium village located in *B2: The Buckenhams Settled Tributary Farmland*, within a subtle valley. The linear settlement has extended out from the historic (church and green) along the seven minor roads and lanes which converge at Banham. The village lies within a relatively narrow area of Tributary Farmland, with a more open elevated plateau landscape (E2) rising to the east, along Winfarthing Road, and The Brecks Heathland with Plantation (D3) landscape to the west of Banham Road. This is a transitional landscape and is especially notable for the areas of fen, as at Coppices Fen, Banham Great Fen. This assessment considers the edge of Banham, as one character area.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is typically representative of the wider *B2: The Buckenhams Settled Tributary Farmland*, with its arable farmland, local areas of pasture and wetland associated with the tributaries, network of drainage channels, and framework of hedgerows and mature trees.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A landscape in generally good quality and condition providing an intact rural setting to the village. To the north, woodland (Warren Plantation) provides a strong wooded skyline. To the immediate west of the settlement, an area of low lying grazed wet pasture provides an important setting to the church located on slightly higher ground. The village core and this low lying pasture landscape form a Conservation Area.	The wetland and grazed pasture landscape immediately west of Banham is of a high quality and forms a distinctive setting to the village. It is inherently sensitive. The intact rural character of the other settlement edges is also sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued natural features are the grazed pasture to the west of the village. In the wider setting the small areas of fen vegetation are key features, as is the parkland associated with Banham Hall.	Theses features are inherently sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Small moated site at Banham Hall. Banham church (St. Mary's) is a landmark feature	The historic landscape features are inherently sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
with its spire visible across the landscape and from many locations within the village.	
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A distinct pastoral setting to the village, to the west. Generally a strong rural character. A more open exposed arable landscape along Winfarthing Road.	The rural setting, particularly the pastoral setting west of the church would be sensitive to further expansion of Banham. To the east of the town the open, exposed aspect and potential for views to the settlement edge is also of high sensitivity.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Banham has extended out along the rural road network and has an extensive settlement edge of low density red brick residential development; different edges being visible in views across the intervening fields. There are few large blocks of development – the main development comprising single lines of cottages and newer houses along the roads. Banham Zoo is a large scale recreational feature on the periphery of the village on Kenninghall Road. To the west the historic core of the village formed by the church and lime-lined green and adjacent historic properties forms a strong edge above the low lying grazed pasture, contained by woodland and field boundaries.	The length of settlement edge and form of the village extending out along roads means that settlement edges are frequently in view creating the impression of a larger village. Although the settlement edge is not sensitive in its own right, the village is sensitive to further linear expansion. The historic edge of the, west and south of the church is highly sensitive.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge of Banham is not well integrated with frequent views to different settlement edges across intervening fields.	This aspect of the settlement edge is not sensitive.
<b>Gateways:</b> There are numerous low key gateways to Banham along the 7 rural roads which converge in the village.	The gateways are not sensitive. However, there is a need to retain a compact coherent settlement form and further linear expansion along the roads would be inappropriate.
<b>Nodes:</b> The principal node is the lime line village green in the centre of the village. A small green and chestnut at the junction of Heath Road, Mill Road and Greyhound Road forms a further small node.	The nodes within the centre of the village are sensitive, but would not be affected by development on the edge of the settlement.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> There are frequent views across the landscape to the settlement, with the spire of St. Mary's Church forming a prominent landmark.</p>	<p>The potential for long views to and across the settlement increases sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to settlement edge:</b> Long views are available from the more elevated open arable land to the east. To the west the hedgerow framework creates a more contained landscape immediately adjacent to the village. Long views to Banham are available from Banham Road. St. Mary's church is a key landmark in many local views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> There are frequent views out from the settlement across intervening farmland.</p>	<p>Views to the church spire and setting are sensitive. Consolidation and infill of development between roads would change the character of views in and out of the settlement.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Hedgerow boundaries and small woodland copses are feature of the landscape.</p>	<p>The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting. Reinforcement and recreation of hedgerows is an opportunity.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the area is judged to be **Moderate – High**. This judgement relates to the small scale of the settlement and rural context. Sensitivity is highest on the meadow landscape west of the church. However, elsewhere opportunities for development are also limited, with sensitivities noted both to further linear expansion along the rural roads and to infilling and consolidation of settlement between roads.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve the pattern of hedgerows and seek to restore and renew hedgerow boundaries to form a strong framework for the settlement;
- Consider opportunities to restore orchards, which were a traditional feature of the Banham landscape;
- Conserve and manage the pasture which forms the meadows to the west of the church.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

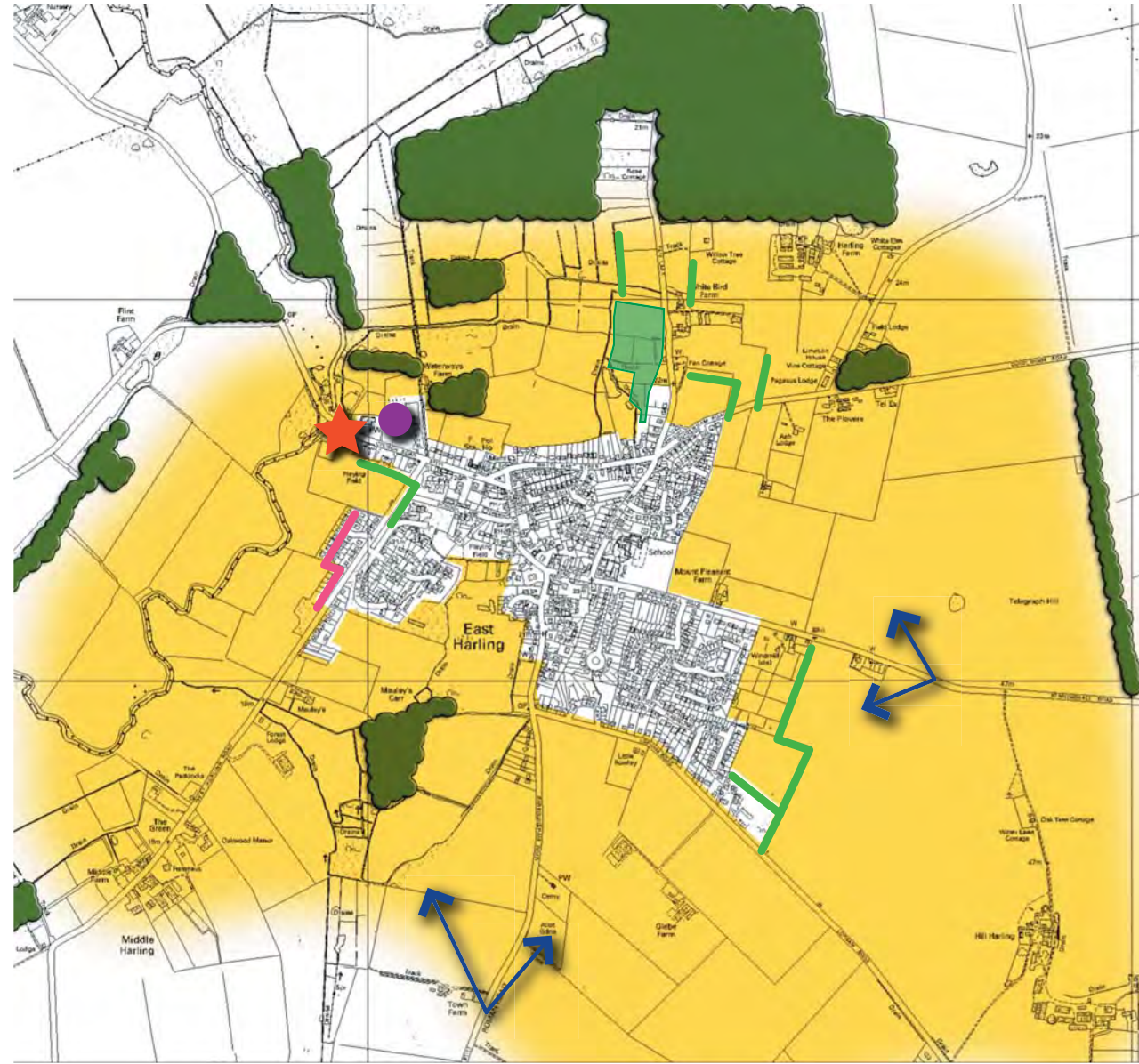
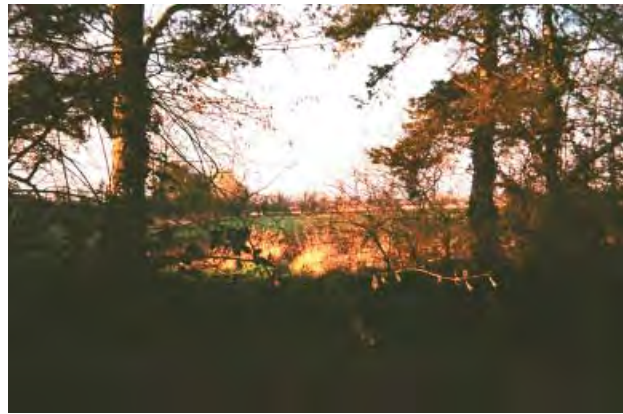
- Avoid further linear development out along the rural roads that converge at Banham;
- Conserve views across the village in its rural setting and notably views to the church spire;
- Conserve the well integrated rural/settlement edge to the west of the village;
- Respect the settlement location within a low lying tributary. Avoid further expansion into the more elevated plateau landscape along Winfarthing Road or east of Mill Road (school site) within this more open, exposed landscape.

## **EAST HARLING**

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
A1 River Thet	Open Valley Floor	EH1 Middle Harling Open Valley Floor
A1 River Thet	Fenland	EH2 East Harling Fen
D3 Harling Heathlands	Farmland and Heathland	EH3 East Harling Heathlands





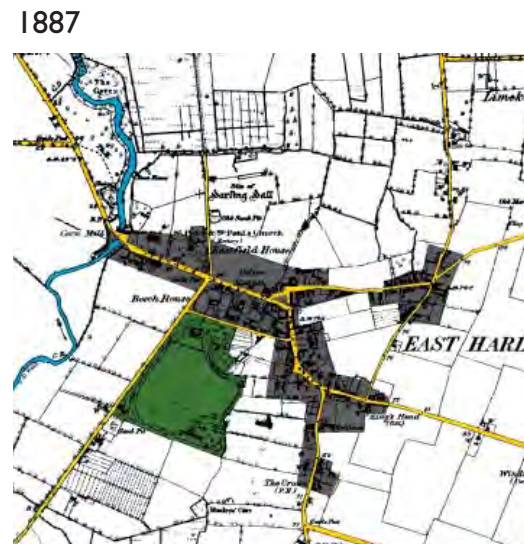


### East Harling Settlement Fringe Analysis

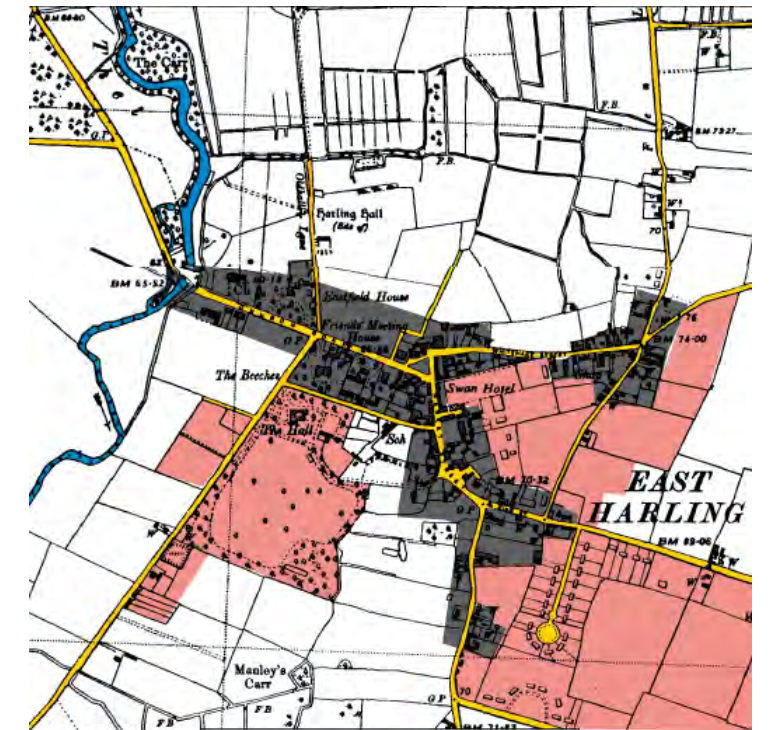
- Woodland / Structural buffering
- Open views
- Filtered views
- Open edge
- Integrated edge
- Key Gateway
- Minor gateways
- Small scale fields
- Node
- Agricultural land

### Historic Growth of East Harling

- River
- Settlement (Historic core)
- Harling Hall
- Road
- 1952-2000 housing










1952 - 2000

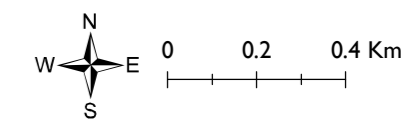
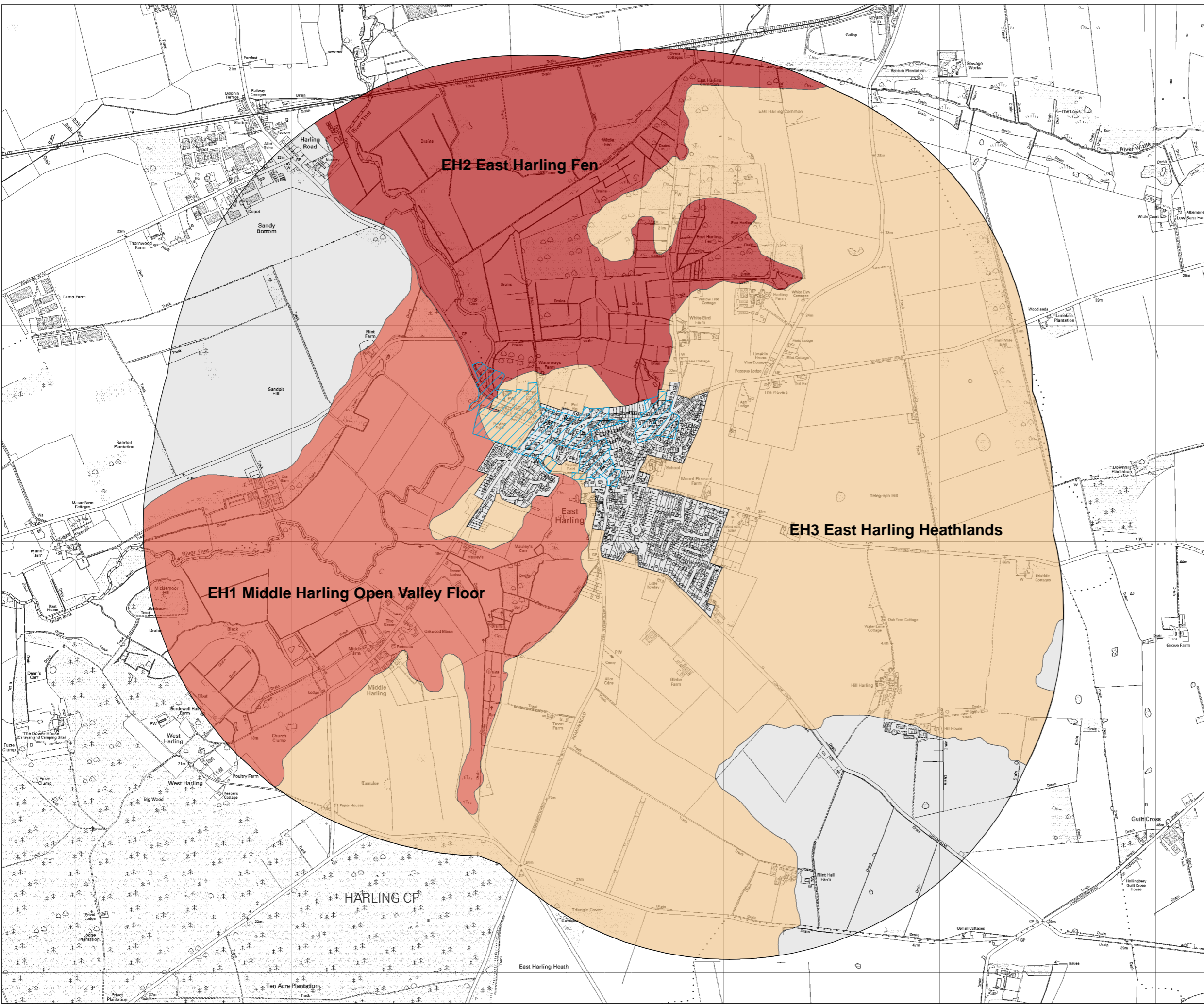




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
East Harling Landscape  
Character Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 03/07/2007





# EHI: MIDDLE HARLING OPEN VALLEY FLOOR

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Middle Harling Open Valley Floor* forms a small, discrete part of the Thet valley floor and sides within the wider A1: *Thet Valley* Landscape Character Area, and lying to the west of East Harling, a large village of historically linear and now nucleated form and situated on the edge of the D3: *Harling Heathlands* character area, although the Thet Valley forms the setting of the settlement. The local character area considers a radius of 1.5 km from the edge of East Harling village, and is distinguished from the adjacent EH2: *East Harling Fen* Character Area by its more open and large scale pastoral character, interspersed only occasionally with hedgerows and alder field trees.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The District character area represents a broad, shallow river valley with variable landcover, which ranges from small scale open grazed pasture bounded by willow belts and post and wire fencing to areas of fen and alder carr woodland. The character area is ecologically diverse, with SSSI designations at Old Buckenham Fen and areas of carr woodland.

As such it is considered that the local character is representative of parts of the District LCA, which encompasses a varied range of landcover and landscape elements and scales, although the local landscape is more open in character than many areas of the wider Thet Valley.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The condition and quality of the landscape to the edge of East Harling is variable. An open settlement edge is apparent to the western part of the village, with a range of recreational uses such as the playing field and paddocks. The boundaries to the network of pastoral fields are often eroded or enlarged.	The landscape at this point is markedly more influenced by the settlement area than the other more wooded edges of the village envelope and as such has a lower inherent sensitivity.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Field boundaries are often eroded/replaced by post and wire fencing although a number of distinctive alder boundary trees are apparent. Where wooded hedges/field boundaries do exist,	The remaining hedged and treed field boundaries are a key landscape feature, forming skyline elements at many points. As such these would be inherently sensitive to change, as would the SSSI, which represents a relatively

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>they are prominent elements, often forming skylines.</p> <p>Localised variation is provided by the swathe of wet woodland and fenland/riparian habitat associated with springs at Middle Harling Fen (SSSI) in the south eastern part of the character area.</p> <p>Landform is that of a broad, shallow valley.</p>	<p>scarce fenland habitat.</p>
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The flint and dressed stone Perpendicular Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul and its distinctive west tower with lantern spirelet is a prominent element, forming part of the setting both of the character area and of East Harling.</p> <p>Much of the landscape pattern in the character area has been influenced by 20<sup>th</sup> Century agricultural intensification, although localised areas of carr woodland remain.</p>	<p>The church forms part of the Conservation Area and is therefore inherently sensitive. Carr woodlands are an important part of the historic and cultural landscape of Norfolk and sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A wide, open pastoral valley floor, with the hedged and wooded field boundaries forming prominent landscape elements.</p> <p>The settlement of East Harling is increasingly nucleated in character.</p>	<p>This open, pastoral character and the remaining areas of structural vegetation would be relatively sensitive to change.</p> <p>The settlement form of East Harling would be sensitive to further change.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> An historic character is evident to the western edge of East Harling, with the Parish church on its wooded promontory and associated flint churchyard wall creating a positive edge at this point.</p> <p>Undistinguished two storey 1970s and modern infill development and settlement edge recreational uses characterise the relatively open western part of the settlement edge, e.g. at West Harling Road.</p>	<p>The historic settlement edge, encompassing part of the Conservation Area, is considered to have an inherently high sensitivity to change.</p> <p>The settlement edge adjacent to West Harling Road, composed of a more disparate range of built elements and land uses, would be less sensitive to change.</p> <p>As such the north western edge adjacent to the church should be conserved whilst the exposed western edge would provide considerable opportunities for landscape enhancement.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The southern edge, together with the north western edge adjacent to the parish church is well wooded and integrated with the wider landscape, although the western side of West Harling Road is defined by 1970's development and garden boundaries.</p>	<p>The wooded edges to the north west and to the south would take significant time to replace if lost and are therefore considered sensitive to change.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the church on the promontory overlooking the valley, and West Harling Road.	The church and its setting are considered to be inherently sensitive in view of its listed status.
<b>Nodes:</b> No nodes are present within the local character area, although the church is a significant landmark which abuts the character area boundary.	In view of the historic and architectural interest of the church this is considered inherently sensitive to change.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Wide views are available across the valley floor, due to the open aspect and the relatively sparse structural vegetation in relation to other parts of the valley floor in the wider <i>Thet Valley</i> character area.</p>	Views are considered to be inherently sensitive in view of their relatively open aspect.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The Church tower and spire are a key component of many views.</p> <p>The western settlement edges on the more elevated land to the east of the local character area are also visible.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge views are available across the broad, shallow and relatively open valley floor, and also to the hamlet of Middle Harling to the south.</p>	<p>Views to the church tower, together with its setting, are considered to be sensitive.</p> <p>Views of an open character would be sensitive to landscape change.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a predominantly open pastoral landscape. The few structural elements such as wooded belts and hedgerows form prominent and distinctive elements.</p>	Mitigation could be accommodated in the form of field boundary enhancement and reinforcement. Mass woodland planting would be inappropriate to the open valley context.

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate-high**, in view of the relatively wide, open views and the comparatively sparse landcover. The remaining established landscape elements, such as the wooded belts, field trees and the wooded settlement edge adjacent to the church and to the south would be sensitive to change.



## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Use appropriate arboricultural management to conserve remaining alder/wetland trees adjacent to watercourses such as the Thet and ditched field boundaries;
- Reinforce and enhance field boundary network through gapping up with native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, buckthorn, elder and dogwood;
- Enhance margins of the river Thet through planting of native marginal vegetation.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure that the sense of separation between East Harling and Middle Harling is maintained, avoiding potential coalescence;
- Avoid infill development which could lead to further nucleation of the village envelope/settlement footprint within East Harling;
- New development should use the form and scale of the existing historic settlement within East Harling as a template and make use of local materials e.g. red brick and flint to create a locally distinctive idiom/sense of identity.

## EH2: EAST HARLING FEN

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### DESCRIPTION

#### Location and Summary

*East Harling Fen* forms a discrete part of the wider *AI: Thet Valley* character area, being defined by the valley crests and located to the north of East Harling. The local character area considers an area of 1.5 km radius extending from the north western and western edges of the settlement of East Harling on the valley crests. It is distinguished from character area EH2: *Middle Harling Open Valley Floor* by fens and the network of small scale pastoral fields bounded by tree lined ditches and areas of wet woodland and carr, which create a landscape of intimate scale.

#### Representation of District LCA character area

The District character area is a broad, shallow river valley with variable landcover, ranging from small scale open grazed pasture bounded by willow belts and post and wire fencing to areas of fen and alder carr woodland. This varied range of landcover elements is reflected in the ecological diversity of the wider character area, notably SSSI designations at Old Buckenham Fen and areas of carr woodland.

It is considered that the local character area is broadly representative of the wider *Thet Valley* character area.

### EVALUATION

#### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The landscape of <i>East Harling Fen</i> is a largely intact network of small scale pastoral fields and fens bounded by ditches lined with pollard willows and interspersed with blocks of wet woodland.	A strong sense of integrity and character, together with the general intactness and managed character of the landscape mean that this landscape is inherently sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> These include the pollard willow tree belts to the network of field boundary ditches, historic alder and oak field and boundary trees and the blocks of extant carr woodland.  Landform is that of broad valley.	The vegetation would take a significant time to re create if lost and are therefore considered inherently sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Surviving cultural elements include remnant common land at Harling Common, together with a small scale, local parkland with iron estate fenced	These elements provide a sense of the historic evolution of the settlement and its setting and are therefore sensitive to change. Pevsner cites the importance of the 14 <sup>th</sup> Century church, describing it as the ' <i>best in its</i>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>boundary adjacent to the church.</p> <p>The lantern spirelet of the church of St Peter and St Paul is a distinctive element, visible from within the local character area.</p> <p>The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) identifies areas of carr woodland and relict field boundaries adjacent to Fen Lane.</p>	<p><i>neighbourhood</i>'.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Key elements are the small scale, pastoral character, with containment provided by the willow belts and areas of wet woodland.</p> <p>Paddocks are also evident within the local character area.</p>	<p>This intimate, small scale landscape represents the historic landscape character of the Thet Valley and would be sensitive to change, although sensitivity is locally reduced by the paddocks.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The northern and north western edge of East Harling is predominantly 19<sup>th</sup> Century and earlier, lying within the village Conservation Area, with a small amount of modern and single storey infill development.</p> <p>Some domestic garden boundaries are characterised by coniferous planting and close board fencing, detracting from the character of the edge.</p> <p>Industrial estate development including metal clad sheds at Harling Road is visible to the valley crests outside of the local character area.</p>	<p>Development within the Conservation Area displays a largely intact vernacular character, including timber framed and lime plastered buildings, red brick and flint. It is considered sensitive to change.</p> <p>The northern edge, in particular towards the church and associated with the valley crest, displays a relatively intact built character and should therefore be conserved.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge is well integrated due to wooded field boundaries and the areas of single storey development which tie the settlement in to its landscape.</p>	<p>The wooded edge would take significant time to re create and is therefore considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Church Road leading from the rough grazed valley floor to the church and flint walled churchyard is the key gateway within the local character area.</p>	<p>This gateway creates a positive approach to the settlement and would be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> No nodes are apparent within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Filtered views are available across the character area, due to the containment provided by field boundary/ditch vegetation and the blocks of carr woodland.</p> <p>Long views are available to the Harling Road Industrial Estate from within the northern part of the character area.</p>	<p>Views are of a filtered nature and contained due to the density of the field boundary vegetation. They are therefore not considered inherently sensitive. The Harling Road Industrial Estate is a prominent element of views to the north, comprising a series of large metal clad industrial sheds.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The church tower and spire are a key component of many views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the north western and western settlement edges filtered views are available to the valley floor and fens. These are again contained by boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>Views to the church (listed building) and the minor parkland within the Conservation Area on the valley crests are considered inherently sensitive.</p> <p>Due to the filtered nature of views these are of a relatively low sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a relatively wooded landscape with an intimate spatial character created by the relatively small scale field pattern and the mature field boundary vegetation, tree lined ditches and blocks of carr woodland.</p>	<p>In view of the wooded character, the potential to accommodate sensitive tree planting/woodland creation is considered to be relatively high, provided this also maintains the intimate pastoral character.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **high**, in view of the intactness of the landscape elements and the intimate, small scale character of the landscape, which includes a number of historic features such as Harling Common and the local parkland adjacent to the church. Whilst visual containment is provided by the densely vegetated field boundaries, the tree lined ditches and the blocks of carr woodland, views are available to sensitive elements such as the church on the valley crest.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landscape planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve historic alder and oak boundary and field trees through active and appropriate arboricultural management;

- Continue to conserve willow tree belts and sustain tree cover through pollarding on an appropriate cutting cycle;
- Conserve and enhance areas of fenland habitat adjacent to Fen Lane and seek opportunities to create new areas of wetland habitat and reedbed to create connectivity between existing areas, fulfilling the objectives of the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the existing intact northern and north western settlement edge;
- Avoid garden boundary treatments which could have a sub urbanising influence to the edge of East Harling, e.g. conifers and close board fencing;
- Ensure that views to and the setting of the church and the adjacent local parkland are conserved;
- Mitigate visual effects of Harling Road Industrial Estate through reinforcement of existing native field boundary hedgerows, and consider skylines in relation to the potential future expansion of employment development.

# EH3: EAST HARLING HEATHLANDS

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

East Harling is a substantial village located on the edge of the Thet Valley. This character area considered the slightly more elevated land to the east of the village away from the Thet Valley, and defined in the district landscape assessment as *D3: Harling Heathlands*. The character area extends from the relatively recent/modern developed eastern edge of East Harling, and includes large arable fields, subdivided and contained by pine shelterbelts and plantation belts and blocks. It is a much more open, exposed landscape compared to the small scale, intimate landscape of fens, wet woodland and pasture of the Thet Valley to the west of the settlement.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is representative of the wider *D3: Harling Heathlands*, with its open arable farmland and plantation/pine woodland blocks and belts. The area slightly elevated above the Thet Valley and has an open and exposed aspect.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A typical arable landscape. The pine blocks, and plantation strips and small clumps are important features of the landscape creating the typical Breckland character.	A landscape with a distinct character created by the open arable farmland and strips, blocks and clumps of woodland. The open, exposed aspect and potential for long views to the settlement edge is sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued natural features include the woodland blocks, strips and clumps. The former heathland character of parts of the area is also of interest.	The woodland strips and clumps are sensitive, although have the potential for re-creation.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> This is a relatively modern edge of the village. The brick tower windmill on the Kenninghall Road is a historic feature.	The mill contributes to the character of the village. It is not inherently sensitive to further small scale development.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A distinct open arable 'Breckland' landscape. The landscape is elevated above the Thet valley with East Harling, forming a typical valley settlement contained below the 30m contour. The landscape to the East of Harling is more elevated rising to 50m.	The open character would be sensitive to expansion of East Harling way from the valley setting and extending further up the valley sides. Any development breaching the 30m contour would be very exposed and visible in long distance views within this area.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The eastern edge of East Harling is primarily modern low density 1970's/1980's and more recent residential development. Close range views often reveal a harsh settlement edge, with development fronting onto roads or back garden boundaries. Pine plantations provide a well integrated edge at Lopham Road.	The existing settlement edge is not sensitive. There are opportunities to enhance the edge.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge is not generally well integrated, with a harsh interface between development and the rural landscape.	This aspect of the settlement edge is not sensitive.
<b>Gateways:</b> The east edge is permeated by numerous roads – Lopham Road, Kenninghall Road, Quidenham Road each forming a relatively low key gateway to East Harling.	The low key gateways are not sensitive. There is an opportunity to enhance the setting to East Harling.
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the area. Within the village, the small green and market square are important features.	N/A.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> This is an open, exposed landscape with long views terminated by plantation belts. The nature of the landform means that views to the current edge of East Harling are only possible at relatively close range (where the land dips below the 40m contour).	The open, exposed character is sensitive with new development having the potential to be highly visible.
<b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b>  <b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The east edge is permeated by numerous roads – Lopham Road, Kenninghall Road, and Quidenham Road from which there are views across arable fields to residential development. Travelling along the roads, views to the current edge of East Harling are only possible at relatively close range (where the land dips below the 40m contour). There is a long range view from the higher land to the steeple and spire of St. Peter and Paul church in the Thet Valley.  <b>Views from the urban edge:</b> There are limited views out from the residential development to farmland beyond.	The relatively poor rural- settlement interface is not sensitive and could be enhanced through better screening. The pine plantation at Lopham Road is a good example. Views to an expanded settlement edge breaching the skyline above the 40m contour are highly sensitive. The view to the prominent church spire is also sensitive.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Plantation blocks, pins strips, clumps are a key feature of the landscape.	The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting following the existing pattern of pine belts and woodland strips. .

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
	belts and woodland strips. .

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the area to further expansion of the eastern edge of East Harling is judged to be **Moderate**. This judgement relates to the absence of inherently sensitive features and the potential for small scale residential development to create an enhanced settlement edge. However, it should be noted that any development should seek to retain the perception of East Harling as a Thet Valley settlement, and therefore should not breach the skyline and extend above the 40m contour where it would create a very visible settlement edge in the more open *D3: Harling Heathland* landscape.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve the pattern of woodland belts, pine strips and blocks and seek opportunities for further planting to enhance the settlement edge and eastern approach to East Harling. Use the existing pattern of pines as a template;
- Reversion of arable land to heathland is an important opportunity, in areas in or in close proximity to former commons;
- Consider opportunities to enhance recreational access from East Harling.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Avoid any development that would change the valley character of East Harling and encroach onto the wider 'unsettled' *Harling Heathlands* landscape and form a prominent skyline. Consider the 35m- 40m contour as the limit to change;
- Retain a low density residential edge to the east of East Harling. Larger scale development or industrial estates buildings would have the potential to be highly visible in this open landscape;
- Consider views to East Harling from Quidenham. Kenninghall, Lopham and Garboldisham Road and seek to create a well integrated edge, as opposed to isolated blocks of development jutting out into the arable landscape;
- Conserve the view to the church in East Harling.

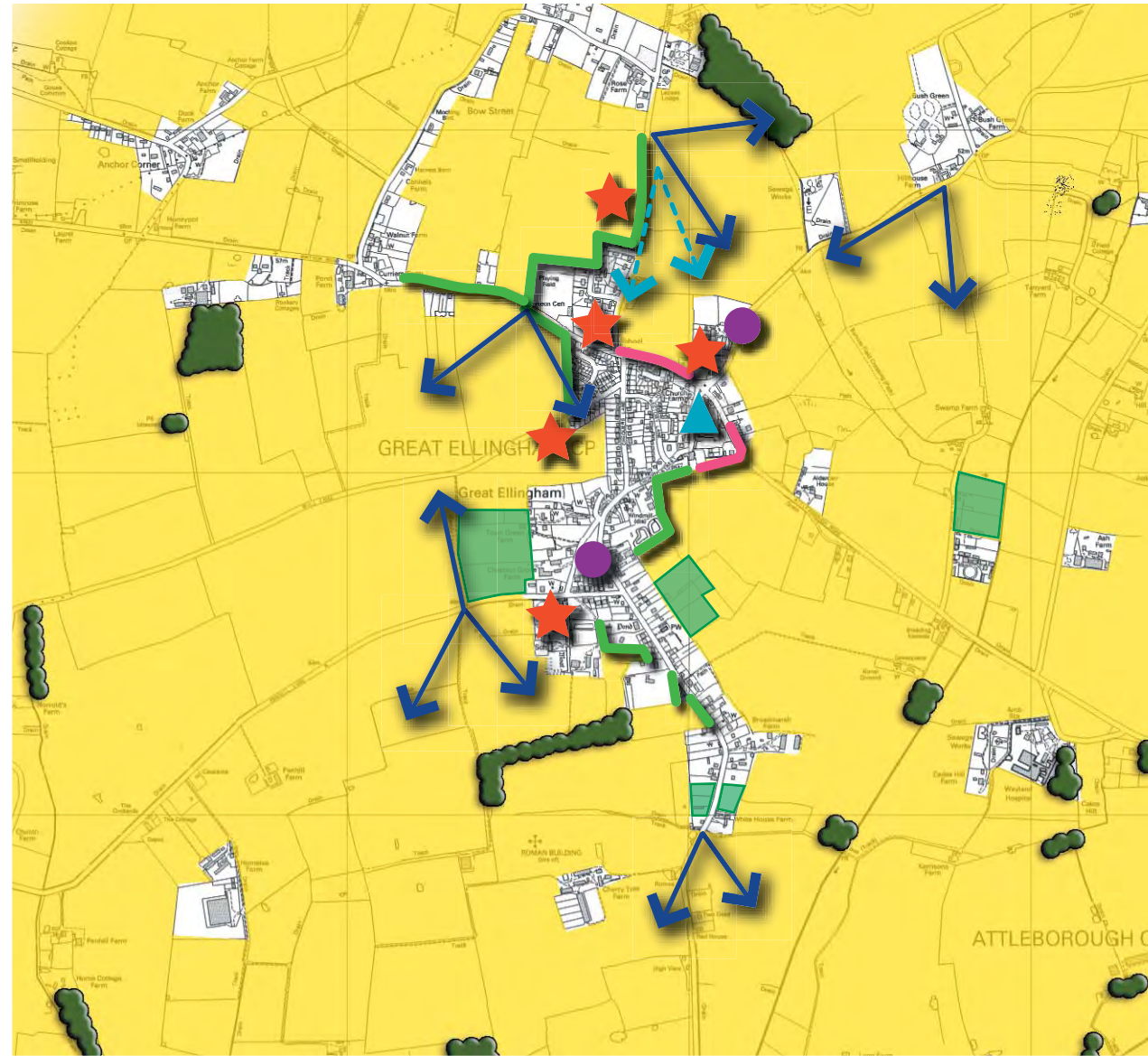













## GREAT ELLINGHAM

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
E4 Wayland Plateau	Enclosed Arable Plateau	GE1 Bow Street Enclosed Arable Plateau
B3 Thet Settled Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland with Woodland	GE2 Attleborough Hills Tributary Farmland with Woodland









### Great Ellingham Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Woodland
-  Agricultural land
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Node

### Historic Growth of Great Ellingham

- Road 
- Railway line 
- Settlement (Historic core) 
- 1953-2000 housing 

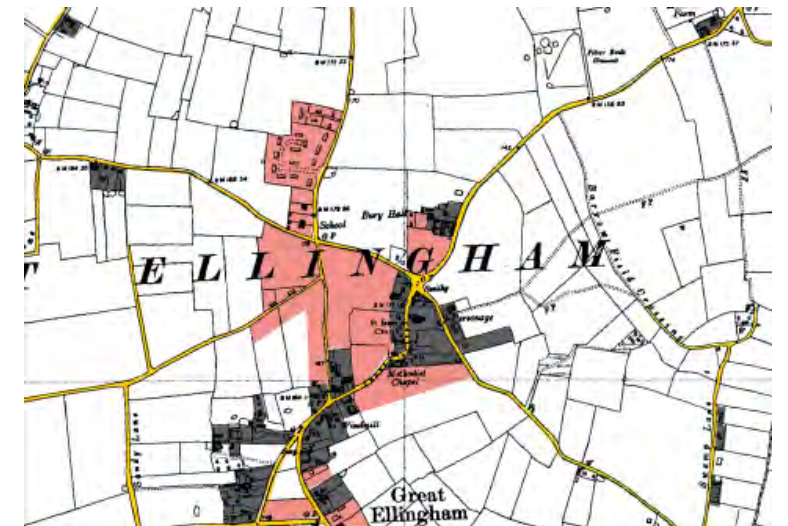
1885



1907



1953 - 2000










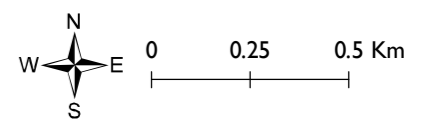
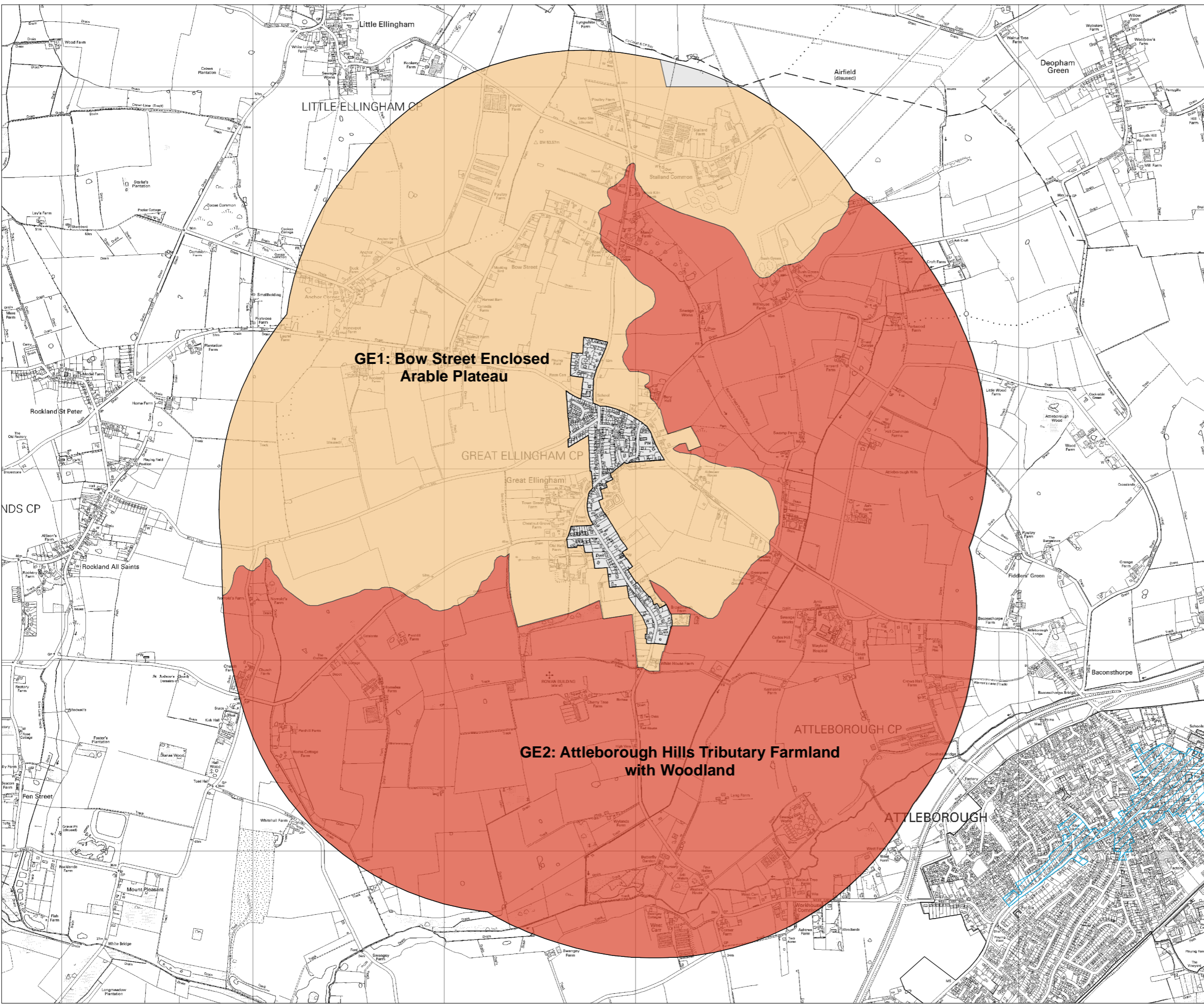


# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment

## Great Ellingham Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# GE1: BOW STREET ENCLOSED ARABLE PLATEAU

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

GE1: *Bow Street Enclosed Arable Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider E4: *Wayland Plateau Character Area*, with the local character area considering an area extending 1.5km from the Great Ellingham settlement edge. Great Ellingham is a nucleated settlement to the edge of the plateau. The local character area incorporates extensive areas of arable farmland together with localised areas of more intact small scale landscape defined by mixed native hedgerows with oak and horse chestnut hedgerow trees.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Wayland Plateau Character Area* is defined by arable farmland, occasionally interspersed with small scale blocks of woodland or farm coverts, in addition to paddocks. A geometric field pattern of varying scale is defined by mixed Enclosure hedgerows, sometimes with hedgerow trees. The local character area is therefore considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
<p>Landscape quality and condition is variable across the character area, with an intact network of field boundary hedges and hedgerow trees in the area around Bow Street.</p> <p>To the immediate north west of the settlement edge are recreational land uses associated with the school playing fields and the recreation ground.</p> <p>A network of small scale fields defined by mixed hedgerows of varying quality and density lies to the eastern and western edges of the settlement.</p>	<p>The landscape is that of a managed agricultural landscape, although landscape quality is highest in the area around Bow Street and Hingham Road, with a more intact network of hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. In terms of quality and intactness this area is considered to be most inherently sensitive.</p>
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<p><b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the mature hedgerow oaks and horse chestnuts at Bow Street and Hargham Road, in addition to mixed native hedgerows of variable intactness which define the field boundaries.</p>	<p>The mature trees would take considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore considered inherently sensitive.</p>



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is primarily defined by the architectural elements to the northern settlement edge, which include the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Church of St James and a range of vernacular buildings including thatched, lime plastered houses and traditional red brick and flint.</p> <p>The remains of a windmill at Mill Farm illustrate the elevated nature of the plateau and the past exploitation of wind power.</p> <p>The areas of heath and common surrounding the village and identified by Faden on his 1797 Map of Norfolk have now been lost to arable cultivation.</p>	<p>The church and the adjoining thatched dwellings are listed buildings and therefore considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A variable aesthetic and perceptual character is created by the intimate and enclosed rural lanes around Bow Street and the open and relatively large scale arable farmland to the east.</p>	<p>The more intact and small scale landscape around Bow Street would have a higher inherent sensitivity.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The northern settlement edge encompasses a range of development types, including 1950s social housing built of wire cut brick in the cul-de-sac off Hingham Road, to new build and traditional late medieval and pre 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, with materials including thatch, lime plaster, red brick and flint.</p> <p>The eastern edge is defined by linear development encompassing a range of ages and styles including 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century brick built and later and modern infill development.</p> <p>To the western edge, development includes rendered and pantiled properties at Town Green, with farm buildings outside of the settlement boundary to the west and relatively recent rendered red tiled development to the north.</p>	<p>The northern settlement edge would have the highest inherent sensitivity to change in view of its concentration of listed buildings and more intact historic fabric, most notably to the eastern end around the church.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The northern edge is wooded to the western end around the social housing and open to the easternmost point. The central section of this edge includes a mix of woodland and close board garden</p>	<p>The close board fencing and garden boundary treatments to the northern settlement boundary create a poorly integrated edge at this point. The better integrated parts of this edge and the eastern and western settlement edges would have the highest inherent</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>boundary fencing.</p> <p>The eastern and western edges are integrated by mixed native hedgerows and scrub vegetation of variable density.</p>	<p>sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the western approach on the Watton Road, the northern approach from Hingham Road and the approach from Bury Hall. Minor gateways are represented by Penhill Lane and the unmade road at Mill Lane.</p> <p>The Watton Road gateway is a well wooded approach to the settlement, flanked by the recreation ground to the north.</p> <p>Both Hingham Road and the Bury Hall approach incorporate hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees, whilst the two minor gateways are formed by narrow rural lanes.</p>	<p>The Watton Road gateway incorporates elements of the landscape structure, although the recreation ground, together with associated car park and modern club house building erode the character of this approach. Hingham Road and the Bury Hall Gateway create positive and low key rural approaches which are defined by native structural and field boundary vegetation. As such these would be most inherently sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> Town Green, on the western edge of the settlement, forms the key node within the character area.</p>	<p>Town Green is a small, intact area of rough grassland and scrub vegetation, framed by mature oak trees and traditional cottages and farm buildings. It would be sensitive to change.</p>

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Expansive views are available across the large arable fields to the west of the settlement. and to the north east.</p> <p>There is intervisibility with the adjacent GE2: <i>Attleborough Hills Tributary Farmland with Woodland</i> character area.</p>	<p>Due to their open, exposed aspect these views would be sensitive to change.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> From Hingham Road views are available to the northern settlement edge, including both the traditional buildings to the edge and the modern garden boundary treatments. The church tower forms a key element of these views. The ruined windmill forms a prominent element of views within the settlement.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the B1077 at the eastern point of the northern settlement edge, open views are available across the network of arable fields to the north, and there is intervisibility with the adjacent GE2: <i>Attleborough Hills Tributary Farmland</i> character area. Similarly open views are available from the Watton Road looking west from the recreation ground.</p> <p>At Mill Lane and Penhill Lane, views out are greatly contained by the density of vegetation to the settlement gateways.</p>	<p>The church and tower and its setting would be an inherently sensitive element of views due its listed status.</p> <p>The more exposed and open views to the north east and to the west from the recreation ground would have the highest inherent sensitivity in visual terms, in view of the comparative absence of screening/filtering provided by structural vegetation.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape exhibits a variable density of structural elements, with a more intact network of field boundaries and hedgerow trees at Bow Street, and a more exposed and less vegetated pattern to the east and west.</p>	<p>Generally mitigation potential would be moderate in view of the open aspect of much of the plateau. There would be scope to introduce vegetation to enhance and reinforce the field boundary network. Mass woodland planting would be inappropriate in this elevated landscape.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate**, in view of the eroded nature and landscape character of the plateau, although in purely visual terms sensitivity would be higher due to the open, exposed aspect. Combined landscape and visual sensitivity would be locally higher in the more intact areas around Bow Street, where a stronger field boundary pattern persists, and in the historic elements of the northern settlement edge, e.g. the church and adjoining vernacular cottages.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

#### General Landscape Management

- Instigate appropriate management regimes to conserve the character of Town Green, such as grazing and scrub management;

- Reinforce existing network of native field boundary hedgerows, seeking opportunities to restore field boundaries within the arable farmland to the north, to enhance opportunities for connectivity;
- Conserve existing mature hedgerow trees around Bow Street/Hingham through active arboricultural management to prolong their life;
- Ensure sustained continuity of tree cover through new hedgerow tree planting to reinforce the existing at irregular intervals within hedgerows to enhance the landscape structure.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the setting of the parish church and adjoining listed (thatched) buildings;
- Avoid boundary treatments such as closeboard fencing which could have a sub urbanising influence;
- Retain and reinforce existing landscape structure and hedgerows.



# GE2: ATTLEBOROUGH HILLS TRIBUTARY FARMLAND WITH WOODLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

GE2: *Attleborough Hills Tributary Farmland with Woodland* forms a discrete component of the wider B3: *The Settled Tributary Farmland* Character Area, with the local character area considering a 1.5km radius from the settlement edge of Great Ellingham. The settlement is located to the edge of the E4: *Wayland Plateau* Character Area, with intervisibility between the two character areas. The local character area is an agricultural landscape of variable scale and composition, incorporating a small scale landcover pattern of hedged field associated with the tributaries feeding the Thet, together with wetland elements such as swamp vegetation. This small scale character rapidly gives way to a larger scale network of arable fields further from the settlement edge and occasionally interspersed with small blocks of farm woodland.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider Thet Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area is defined primarily by arable cultivation interspersed with small scale wetland elements. The local character area is therefore considered representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
To the settlement edge is a landscape of small scale elements e.g. fields bounded by mixed hedgerows and wetland features associated with the tributary drains. A larger scale arable landscape is evident to the north. The settlement edge is relatively densely wooded.	A managed landscape and of relatively high quality, most notably the small scale elements adjacent to the settlement edge. These areas where a more intact field pattern persists would be most inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include mature hedgerow oak trees and mixed native field boundary hedgerows, the tributary valleys and associated wetland vegetation.  The character area is defined by an undulating landform associated with the minor tributaries.	The hedgerow oaks illustrate the historic landcover pattern and are therefore sensitive to change.  Wetland vegetation associated with the tributaries makes a positive contribution to landscape character which would be sensitive to change.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Principal cultural elements include the traditional cob farm buildings at Hillhouse Farm, outside the settlement area, and the brick and flint buildings of Bury Hall.</p>	<p>These elements illustrate the traditional use of locally occurring materials for building and are therefore inherently sensitive, although Hillhouse Farm is not affected by the settlement edge.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A relatively small scale and intimate landscape character is created in the areas around the settlement, due to strips of wet woodland and hedgerows with trees.</p>	<p>This small scale landscape contrasts with the wider arable landscape of the tributary farmland within the local character area and would be more sensitive to change in view of its relative intactness.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b>  The linear development in the southern part of the settlement lies partly within the local character area, containing a range of development types, including 19<sup>th</sup> Century brick dwellings and later and modern development.</p>	<p>There is no one defining built character to these settlement edges and as such they are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> An intermittently wooded character is evident to the eastern and western settlement edges.</p>	<p>The vegetation and hedgerows creates a permeable settlement edge which is integrated with its wider landscape and which would be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Principal gateways are represented by the approach to the village from Bury Hall to the north, and by the southern approach at Whitehouse Farm.  Bury Hall Gateway is formed by the brick and flint estate buildings of Bury Hall and by field boundary hedgerows, whilst the southern approach is a low key gateway defined by a rural road framed with mixed hedgerows.</p>	<p>The Bury Hall Gateway would have the highest sensitivity in view of the intact historic built fabric and structural vegetation, which creates a positive approach to the settlement.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b>  Views are generally contained in the vicinity of the settlement edge due to the density of field boundary vegetation, although more elevated views are available from Hillhouse Farm to the north.</p>	<p>The open views from Hillhouse Farm are considered the most sensitive in view of the open aspect and the extent of visibility.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The northern settlement edge is visible from Hillhouse Farm, and the parish church is a prominent element of these views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> In the area around the church, views are largely curtailed due to the density of the vegetation to the north, although more extensive views are available across the farmland to the east, with intervisibility with the adjacent GE1: <i>Bow Street Enclosed Arable Farmland</i> character area.</p>	<p>The parish church and its setting are an inherently sensitive element of views due to its listed status.</p> <p>The views to the east are considered most sensitive in visual terms due to their open aspect.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape displays a variable density of structural landcover, with an intact network of field boundary hedgerows around the settlement edge and a more open, large scale landscape to the east.</p>	<p>Mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high in view of the scope for restoring and enhancing field boundary hedgerows. Mass woodland planting would not be appropriate within this agricultural landscape, although small scale farm woodland could be accommodated.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate-high** in the areas of small scale and more intact landscape around the settlement edge, although sensitivity would be lower (moderate) in the more eroded arable landscape to the north and to the east.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve the surviving mature hedgerow trees on the lane leading from Hillhouse Farm and Bury Hall through active arboricultural management;
- Ensure sustained continuity of tree cover through new planting of native hedgerow trees to reinforce the existing;
- Explore opportunities for the creation of new field boundary hedgerows in the northern and eastern parts of the character area to enhance opportunities for habitat connectivity.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Conserve the setting of the church and Bury Hall;

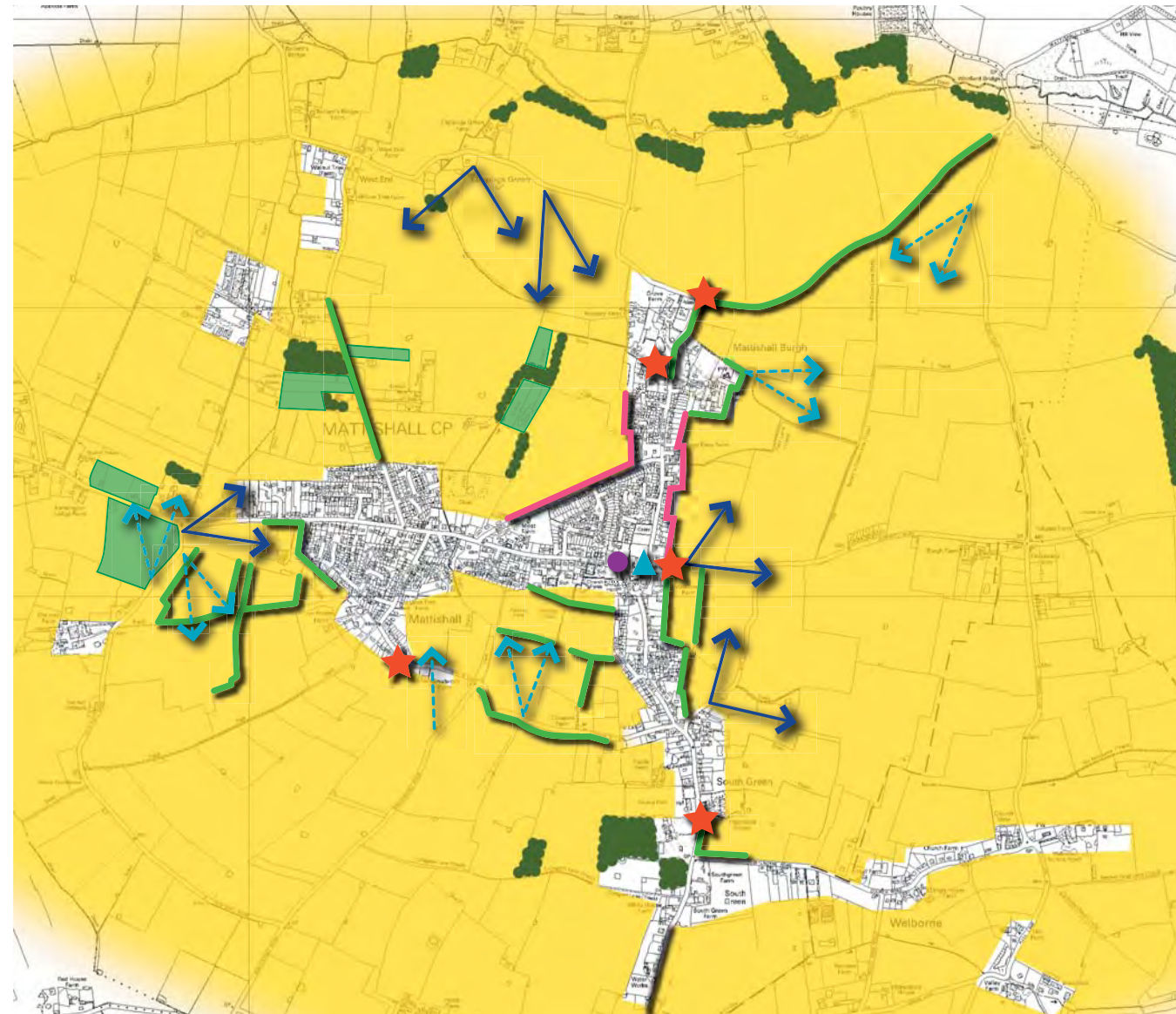


- Retain existing landscape structure, using the integration of development to the eastern and western edges of the settlement as a template;
- Avoid further linear/ribbon development of the type which has occurred in the southern part of the settlement, which would lead to further expansion of the settlement form.










## MATTISHALL

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Small Scale Tributary Farmland	MA1 Clippings Green Small Scale Tributary Farmland
E5 Central Breckland Plateau	Small Scale Plateau Farmland	MA2 Mattishall Hall Small Scale Plateau Farmland
E5 Central Breckland Plateau	Large Scale Plateau Farmland	MA3 Mattishall Burgh Large Scale Plateau Farmland
A5 Upper Tud Valley	Valley Floor	MA4 Ballards Bridge Valley Floor






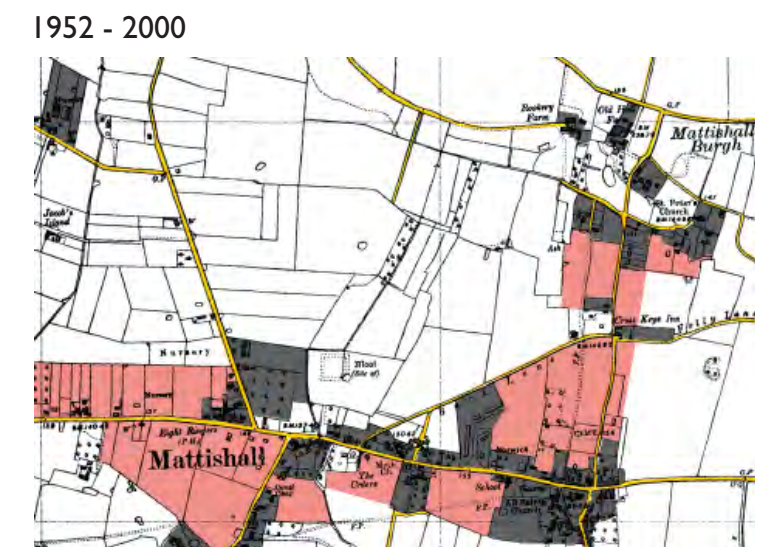


### Mattishall Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Woodland
-  Agricultural land
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Structural vegetation which integrates edge
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Node

### Historic Growth of Mattishall








- Road 
- Settlement (Historic core) 
- 1952-2000 housing 

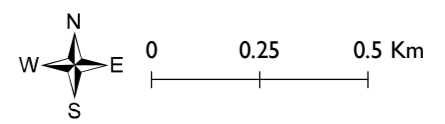
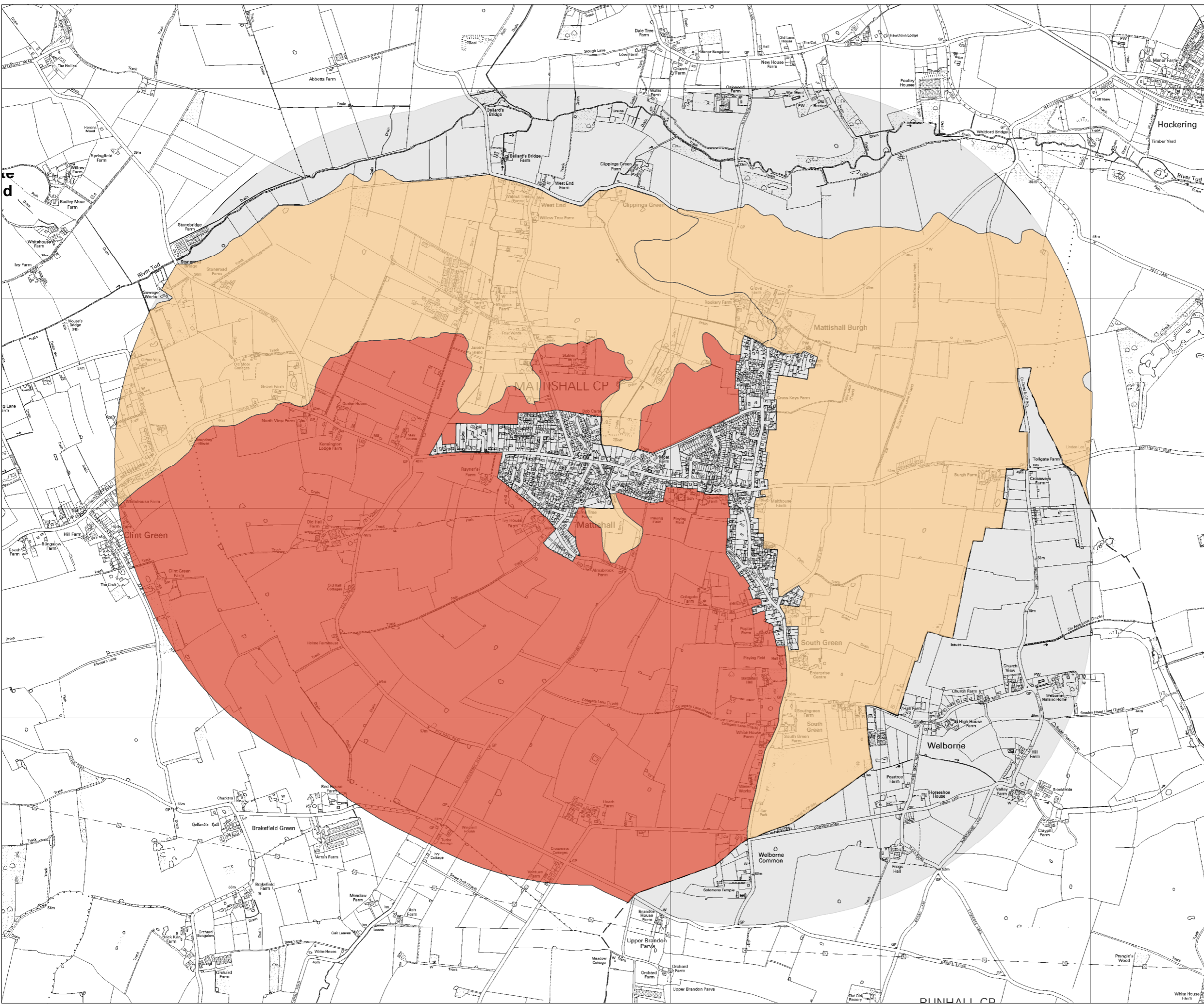




# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Mattishall Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# MA1: CLIPPINGS GREEN SMALL SCALE TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

MA1: *Clippings Green Small Scale Tributary Farmland* forms a small part of the wider B6: *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area*, with the local character area considering a 1.5km radius from the northern edge of Mattishall. Mattishall is a large, historically linear and increasingly nucleated village which is located on the edge of the adjoining *Central Breckland Plateau (E5)* and partly abuts the tributary valley of which this character area forms part. The local character area is defined by a combination of small scale pastoral farmland associated with the network of ditches around Mill Road and a network of relatively large scale arable fields to the east.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The district LCA character area is defined by arable agriculture, interspersed with pasture and meadow associated with the minor tributaries draining into the Rivers Wensum and Tud. As such the local character area is considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
The western part of the local character area displays a largely intact and small scale wetland landscape character with a network of small scale grazed pastoral fields defined by ditches and interspersed with wet woodland and scrub. To the eastern half of the character area the landscape is that of relatively large scale arable cultivation.	The small scale pastoral landscape to the west of Mill Road is a relatively high quality, traditionally managed landscape and as such has the higher inherent sensitivity, although sensitivity is locally reduced by paddocks and associated fencing.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<p><b>Natural:</b> Principal elements include the lines of willow and poplar trees which define the field boundary ditches and the areas of wet woodland in addition to mature oak trees either as field trees marking relict hedgerows or as hedgerow trees.</p> <p>The character area is marked by a very gently undulating landform, which falls</p>	These natural elements indicate the historic landcover and would take considerable time to replace if lost. They are therefore considered sensitive to change.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
below 40m AOD.	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The cultural elements identified in Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk, such as the windmill at Mill Lane and the areas of heathland to the north of the settlement edge, have been lost both to later development and agricultural intensification.</p> <p>Cultural character is therefore largely represented by the intact vernacular buildings around All Saints Church within the historic settlement core (outside the local character area) and the mix of traditional 19<sup>th</sup> century brick dwellings and later and modern development at Back Lane.</p>	<p>The sensitive elements such as the village core and the parish church lie outside the character area. In view of the disparate range of built styles at Back Lane these are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> The landscape around Mill Lane is contained and intimate in scale and of a tranquil pastoral character. Elsewhere the landscape is large in scale and of a considerably more open character.</p>	<p>A relatively intricate mosaic of landscape elements creates the intimate, textured landscape around Mill Road, and these would have the highest inherent sensitivity to change.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Only small parts of the northern settlement edge directly abut the local character area. These comprise traditional brick dwellings and 1970s brick built development, in addition to bungalows at Occupation Lane, opposite the church of St Peter at Mattishall Burgh, to the north of the main settlement.</p>	<p>Development within the northern settlement edge encompasses a range of styles and periods and has a disparate character. Sensitive elements such as St Peter's Church do not form part of this settlement edge. As such the northern edge is not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> At the points where it abuts the local character area the northern settlement edge has a permeable character due to field boundary hedgerows.</p>	<p>The permeable character of this part of the settlement edge enables integration with the wider landscape and is therefore sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Mill Road forms the principal gateway within the local character area, with the approach to the settlement framed by hedgerows and wetland tree species which are interspersed with the farmsteads and detached dwellings along Mill Road.</p>	<p>This gateway forms a low key and integrated approach to the settlement which would be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes with the local character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Extensive views are available to the east and more filtered to the south in view of the density of woodland cover.</p> <p>There is intervisibility with the adjacent MA3: <i>Mattishall Burgh Large Scale Plateau Farmland</i> character area, albeit filtered due to field boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>The more open eastern views are considered most inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> From the north filtered views are available of the northern settlement edge. The church tower forms a key component of these views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge at Mill Road views are filtered due to the density of field boundary vegetation. More open views are available across the character area from Back Lane to the east.</p>	<p>Due to its listed status the church and its setting would be an inherently sensitive component of these views.</p> <p>The more exposed views across the eastern half of the local character area would have the highest inherent sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This landscape has a variable density of structural vegetation, ranging from the relatively densely vegetated landscape at Mill Lane to the comparatively sparse arable fields to the east.</p>	<p>In view of the variable density of structural landscape cover, mitigation potential is judged to be moderate-high, with the landscape able to accommodate further structural planting. Mass woodland planting would not be appropriate to either the pastoral or arable character of this landscape.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate**, although this would be locally higher in the more intact and small scale pastoral landscape at Mill Road. As such it is judged that capacity for future development would be limited. Development considerations therefore relate primarily to the relationship of existing development to its landscape.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Ensure sustained continuity of tree cover to the small scale pastoral landscape at Mill Road through active management of willow and poplar belts (e.g. pollarding);

- Continue to manage the pastoral areas through grazing;
- Explore opportunities for the further creation of pastoral and wetland habitat to link to existing and to assist in delivering Norfolk BAP targets.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure that remaining areas of small scale landscape and the associated field network are integrated within development (e.g. as at Mill Road);
- Features such as paddocks should be properly integrated within their pastoral landscape to avoid sub urbanising influences.

# MA2: MATTISHALL HALL SMALL SCALE PLATEAU FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

MA2: *Mattishall Hall Small Scale Tributary Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider E5: *Central Breckland Plateau Character Area*, with the local character area considering a radius of 1.5km extending from the south western settlement edge of Mattishall. Mattishall is a large and increasingly nucleated village to the edge of the plateau. The local character area is defined by small to medium scale mixed agricultural fields (including both arable and grass ley) set within mixed native hedgerows, with hedgerow oaks and roadside hedgerows (some of which are densely vegetated) distinctive elements of the local landscape.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider character area is predominantly arable agriculture within a large scale, geometric field pattern, with field boundaries defined by variable hedgerows with occasional hedgerow oaks. As such the local character area is considered only partly representative, in view of its smaller scale landcover pattern and more densely vegetated character.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
This is a managed agricultural landscape with a largely intact network of dense field boundary hedgerows and vegetated hedgerows.	The structural landscape elements including the hedgerows and hedgerow oaks create a clearly defined landscape of significant quality. The condition is that of a managed agricultural landscape and as such it would be inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the hedgerow oak trees and the densely vegetated hedgerows to the network of rural lanes, in addition to the elevated, gently undulating plateau landform.	These elements are illustrative of the historic landscape character and would take considerable time to replace if lost. They are therefore considered inherently sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Mattishall Hall, an 18 <sup>th</sup> Century 'Gothic' house with later classical and Victorian additions, forms the primary cultural element within the local character area, in addition to its associated wooded	In view of its listed status Mattishall Hall and its parkland setting are considered inherently sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>minor parkland.</p> <p>A mixed palette of building materials and styles defines the pattern of built development within the local character area, including traditional red brick and clay pantiles and modern brick built development.</p>	
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A contained landscape of comparatively small scale due to the intact field boundary network.</p>	<p>Due to the relatively textured quality created by the landcover pattern the landscape is considered sensitive to change in perceptual terms.</p>
<p><b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Development to the south western and western settlement edges is defined primarily by 1970s brick built cul-de-sac development, with larger detached mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> Century properties to the western point of the settlement at Norwich Road. Ivy House Farm, to the south of the south western settlement edge, is a listed building, as is Mattishall Hall, to the south eastern edge of the settlement.</p>	<p>Mattishall Hall, Ivy House Farm and their settings would be the most inherently sensitive components of the settlement edge, in view of their listed status.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The south western and western edges generally display a well wooded character, with only the westernmost point on the north side of Norwich Road having an exposed character, with domestic garden boundary treatments apparent.</p>	<p>The wooded edges, primarily to the south and south west are well integrated with their surrounding landscape and therefore sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways are Thynnes Lane and Old Hall Lane.</p> <p>Thynnes Lane is flanked by field boundary hedgerows and hedgebank vegetation, whilst Old Hall Lane has a more open character facing the ribbon development at Norwich Road and flanked by hedgerows of variable density which bound mixed fields including arable and grass ley.</p>	<p>Thynnes Lane forms a low key and positive approach to the settlement with only filtered views of rooflines above the hedgebank vegetation. It forms a positive approach to the settlement that would be inherently sensitive to change. The approach from Old Hall Lane is of lower sensitivity due to the more apparent influence of the settlement edge at Norwich Road.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The key node within the local character area is the junction of Old Hall Lane with Norwich Road.</p>	<p>Some of the landscape structure to this node is intact, notably sections of mixed hedgerow and hedgerow oaks, although sensitivity is reduced by the exposed development edge at Norwich Road.</p>

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Due to the network of field boundary vegetation, views are generally limited with only filtered views available of the settlement from Old Hall Lane. Views of the wider landscape character area are restricted by the density of field boundary hedgerow vegetation.</p> <p>Intervisibility with adjacent character areas is limited by the field boundary vegetation and undulating landform.</p>	<p>In view of the filtering and containment provided by the field boundary vegetation, these views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The primary views to the settlement edge are those from Old Hall Lane, where parts of the development at Norwich Road are visible, as are some of the rooflines to the south western edge.</p> <p>Mattishall Hall is screened from view by the woodland planting within the associated minor parkland.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge views are contained by the field boundary hedgerows to the south and west.</p>	<p>Due to the filtering provided by field boundary vegetation these views are not considered sensitive, provide effective screening is maintained.</p> <p>Due to their containment these views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape displays a relatively high density of structural vegetation elements, including field boundary hedgerows, hedgerows and hedgerow oaks.</p>	<p>In view of the density of structural vegetation, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate-high** overall, in view of the intactness of the landcover and field boundary pattern and the presence of elements such as Mattishall Hall and the associated minor parkland.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

## **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve and enhance the existing network of field boundary hedgerows to the south and west of Old Hall Lane to ensure a dense structure for wildlife corridors;
- Manage parkland at Mattishall Hall to conserve parkland character and to maintain structural vegetation at its current extent;
- Gap up existing hedgerows where appropriate with native species (e.g. at Old Hall Lane) to reinforce the landscape structure;
- Conserve existing mature hedgerow trees through active arboricultural management to prolong their lifespan, and plant new native hedgerow trees to ensure sustained continuity of tree cover.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Development should have a porous and transitional edge to ensure integration with the surrounding landscape, e.g. as at Old Hall Lane and Thynnes Lane;
- Avoid garden boundary treatments which could have a sub urbanising influence.

# MA3: MATTISHALL BURGH LARGE SCALE PLATEAU FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

MA3: *Mattishall Burgh Large Scale Plateau Farmland* forms a discrete component of the wider E5: *Central Breckland Plateau Character Area*, with the local character area considering a 1.5 km radius extending from the northern and eastern edges of Mattishall and Mattishall Burgh. The village of Mattishall was of historically linear formation and has become increasingly nucleated and merged with Mattishall Burgh, at the edge of the plateau. The local character area incorporates a varied range of landscape elements, including an enlarged arable field pattern as a result of agricultural intensification, interspersed with relict components of the historic landcover, e.g. woodland and oak field trees/hedgerow trees. Hedgerows of intermittent density add variety to the landscape.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Central Breckland Plateau Character Area* is defined predominantly by open arable fields of large scale and geometric form, interspersed with a sparse distribution of field boundary hedgerows and woodland including ancient woodland. As such the local character area is considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
In terms of quality and condition, this is a variable landscape defined by an enlarged arable field pattern and interspersed with remnant of the historic landcover, e.g. field trees and woodland blocks.	The landscape is generally of an intensively managed character. Although the remaining elements of the post Enclosure landcover pattern are distinctive and contribute to the quality of the landscape, the landscape is not considered inherently sensitive in terms of condition and quality, in view of the predominantly arable land use.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the field and hedgerow oak trees, intermittent hedgerows, mixed woodland and areas of coniferous planting.  The elevated and largely flat landform is also an important natural element.	The oaks and the hedgerows illustrate the historic landcover pattern and would take considerable time to replace if lost. They are therefore inherently sensitive to change. At localised points the conifers detract from this character.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is defined primarily by	St Peters is an early 14 <sup>th</sup> Century parish church, whilst the large church of All Saints dates from



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>the churches of All Saints at the eastern approach to the village and St Peters to the north, within Mattishall Burgh.</p> <p>The Conservation Area around the church of All Saints displays a range of local building materials and stylistic traditions, including red brick, render and clay pantile.</p>	<p>the late 14<sup>th</sup> Century. Both are listed and are, along with their settings, inherently sensitive to change. The relatively intact areas of vernacular traditional building surrounding All Saints and forming part of the Conservation Area are also considered sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Primary aesthetic and perceptual characteristics are the essentially rural quality defined by the arable farmland setting and the network of narrow semi sunken rural lanes leading into the settlement, together with the cluster of traditional red roofed buildings around the church of All Saints.</p>	<p>The rural and tranquil quality created by the agricultural landscape and the backdrop of the church and the settlement would be sensitive to change.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The eastern settlement edge is defined by a mix of traditional buildings with clay pantile roofs in the area around the church, weatherboard barns and mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> Century development.</p> <p>The northern settlement edge is similarly defined by traditional pre 19<sup>th</sup> Century dwellings, by the church of St Peter and by mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century development at Occupation Lane.</p> <p>The southern end of the eastern settlement edge is defined by the Industrial Estate development at South Green.</p>	<p>The parts of the edges associated with the churches of All Saints and St Peters would have the highest inherent sensitivity to change in view of their more intact historic character. The development adjacent to All Saints also forms part of the village Conservation Area.</p> <p>The minor industrial estate/business park at South Green comprises metal clad sheds painted in mid blue/ grey with lower storeys in yellow/buff brick, together with associated car parking and plastic signage. As such sensitivity at this point is relatively low.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The northern edge is wooded and permeable in character, as is much of the eastern settlement edge. Vegetation is predominantly native mixed hedgerow and thicket, although garden boundary planting including conifers is occasionally evident. A more exposed character is evident to the southern end of this edge, adjacent to the recent South Green Business Park Development.</p>	<p>The thicket and hedgerows which defines much of the northern and eastern settlement edges creates a well integrated edge that would be sensitive to change. South Green Business park and associated metal clad sheds creates an exposed edge of lower sensitivity, with potential for enhancement.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Norwich Road, forming the eastern approach to the settlement, is the key gateway within the local character area whilst the northern approach to Mattishall Burgh is a minor gateway.</p>	<p>Both of these gateways would be sensitive to change, that at Norwich Road in view of the positive approach created by the church of All Saints and the approach to Mattishall Burgh in view of its wooded, integrated character.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
The Norwich Road gateway is flanked by the wooded settlement edge, with the church of All Saints forming the backdrop, whilst the approach to Mattishall Burgh is of a low key and densely wooded character.	
<b>Nodes:</b> The churches and surrounding vernacular buildings form the key nodes within the local character area.	Both churches are listed buildings. They and their settings are therefore inherently sensitive.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are extensive to the east of the settlement and filtered to the south due to woodland. In view of the elevated aspect and open quality of views to the east, there is intervisibility with the adjacent MA1: <i>Clippings Green Small Scale Tributary Farmland</i> character area.</p>	The more open and exposed views to the east would have the highest inherent sensitivity.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> From Norwich Road, the church of All Saints and the eastern edge is visible and partly filtered by hedgerow vegetation.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge extensive views are available eastwards across the network of large scale arable fields and towards the row of cottages on Norwich Road.</p>	<p>The church forms a sensitive component of these views due to its listed status.</p> <p>Due to their relatively extensive and open aspect these views are considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is an open landscape with a relatively low density of structural vegetation and landcover elements.</p>	In view of the comparatively low density of structural vegetation, and the open nature of the landscape, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively low, although there would be scope for reinforcement and restoration of field boundary hedgerows and small scale farm woodlands. Mitigation potential would be locally higher around the more wooded settlement edges.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall landscape sensitivity is judged to be **moderate**, in view of the eroded landscape structure and character, which is counterbalanced by the generally high instances of visibility and intervisibility to the east.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for the reinforcement and enhance of remaining field boundary hedgerows to the east of the settlement, and to reinstate former hedgerows, both on the grounds of landscape character and to enhance wildlife connectivity;
- Conserve existing field oaks and hedgerow oaks through active and appropriate arboricultural management, to prolong their lifespan;
- Reinforce existing hedgerows to the east of the settlement through new native hedgerow tree planting at irregular intervals both to enhance the landscape structure and to provide flight lines for birds/bats.

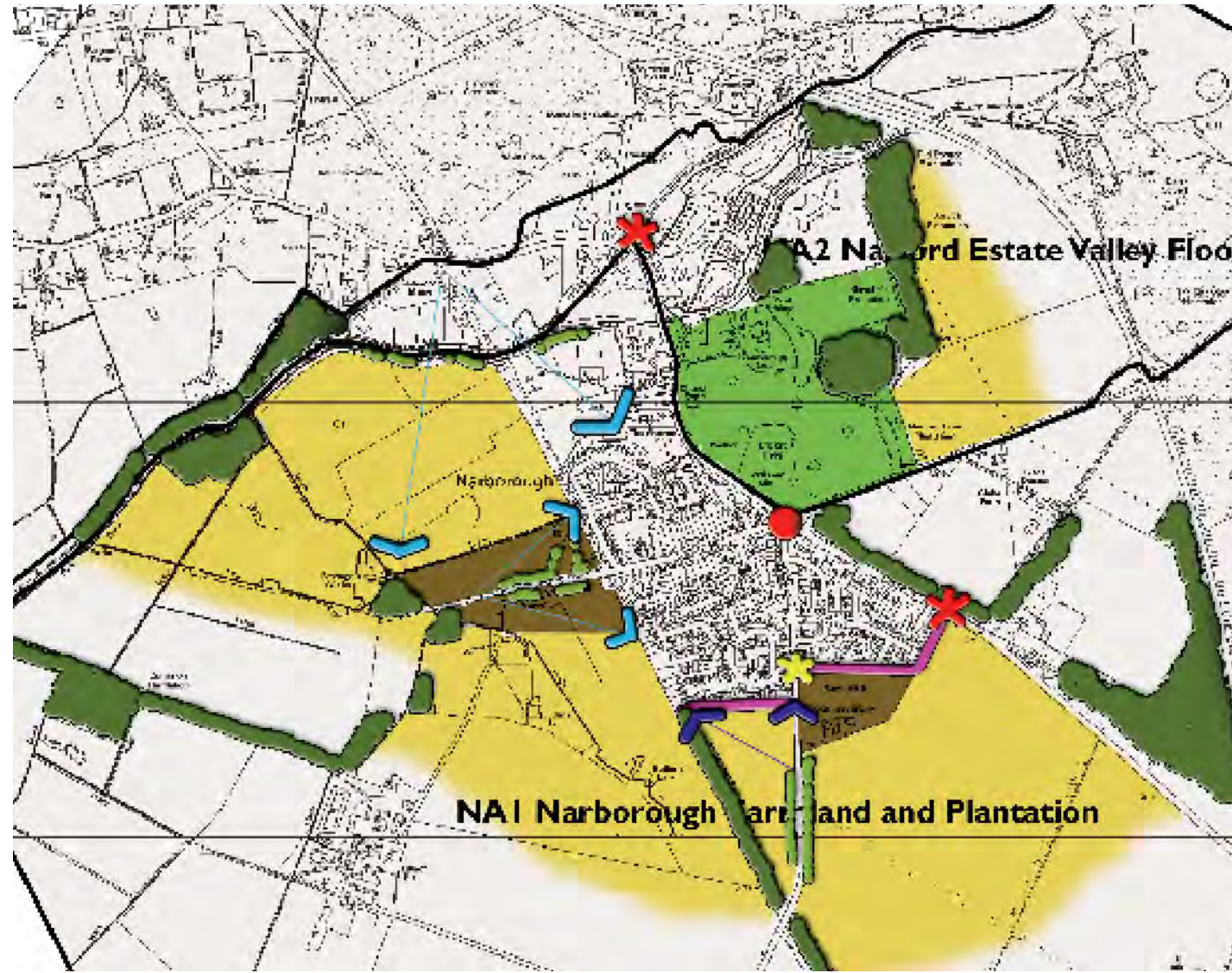
### Principles in relation to Development

- Development should not breach skylines/edge vegetation as at South Green Business Park);
- Use a muted palette of earth/sky colours for the claddings for industrial buildings and avoid signage which has an urbanising influence on the network of narrow rural lanes;
- Development should create a porous edge which integrates with the wider landscape, and should retain the existing landscape structure;
- Use native planting to integrate future development into the landscape to ensure connectivity to existing wildlife corridors and avoid species which could have a sub urbanising influence e.g. conifers;
- Consider the effect of any change on views from both within the character area and beyond, e.g. MA1: *Clippings Green Small Scale Tributary Farmland*.

## NARBOROUGH

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
DI Swaffham Heath	Farmland and Plantation	NA1 Narborough Farmland and Plantation
FI River Nar	Valley Floor	NA2 Narborough Estate Valley Floor





### Narborough Settlement Fringe Analysis

- Structural landscape blocks
- Partial screening
- Node
- Key gateways
- Minor Gateway
- Exposed edge
- Open views
- Filtered views
- Parkland
- Agricultural land
- Paddocks and allotments

### Historic Growth of Narborough

- River Nar
- Settlement (Historic core)
- Railway line
- Narborough Hall
- Road
- 1960-2000 housing
- Community centre and playing fields





### Post 1955











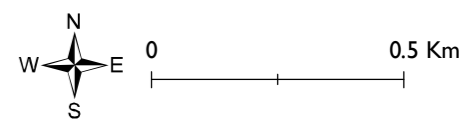
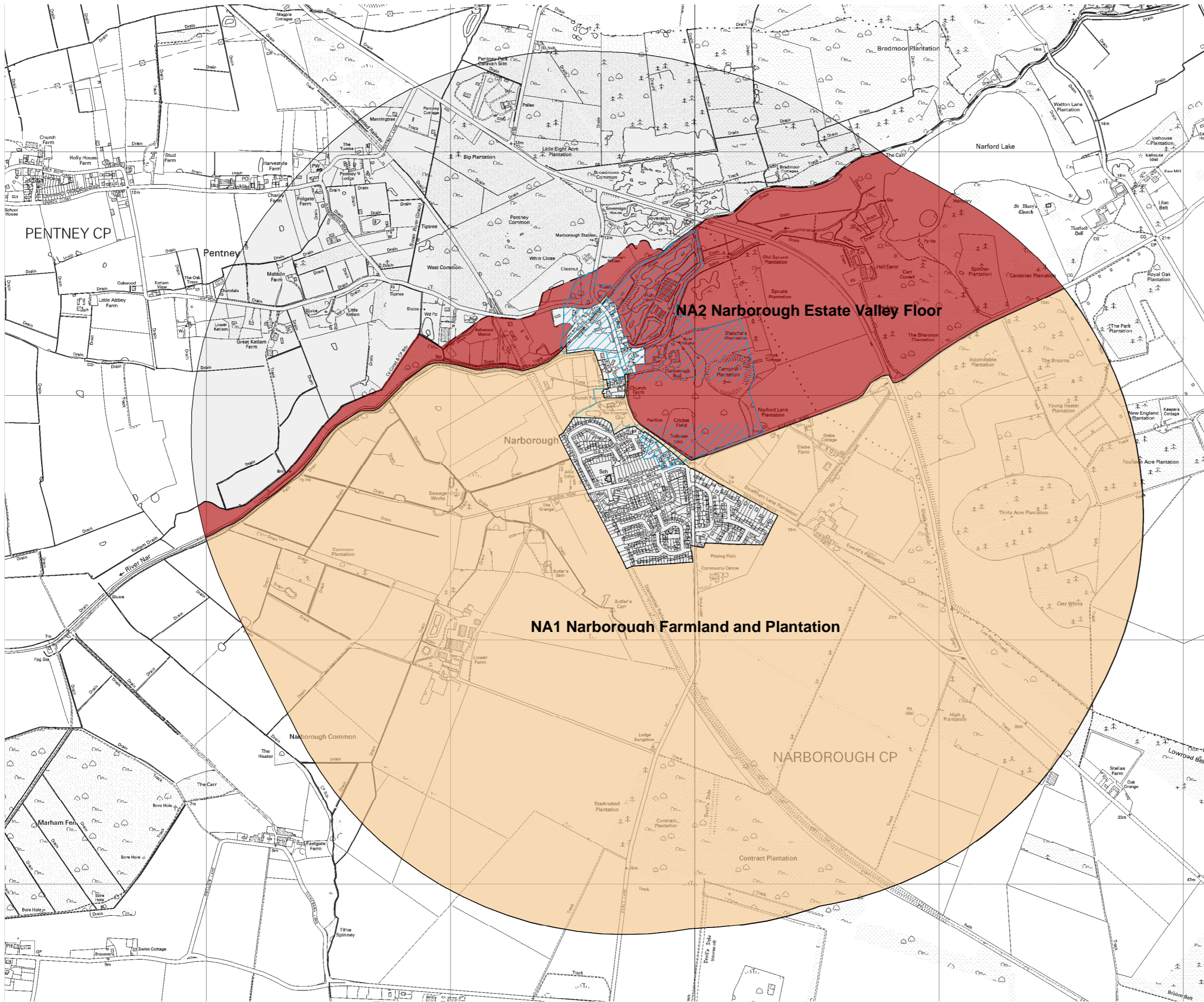
# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Narborough Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

**Key**

-  Breckland Boundary
-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

**Sensitivity**

-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007







# NAI: NARBOROUGH FARMLAND AND PLANTATION

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Narborough Farmland and Plantation* forms a section of *Swaffham Heath* surrounding the nucleated village of Narborough. The local character area considers an area of 1.5km radius from the settlement edge, although extensive woodland planting and the railway embankment restrict views to the urban area and therefore also its influence. The nucleated settlement of Narborough is focused on 4 rural roads, the historic core of the village being of linear formation along Main Road. The historic core is a Conservation Area.

Landform is gently undulating, ranging between 10 and 30m A.O.D although this is not perceptible due to the extensive woodland cover and hedgerow boundaries.

Medium sized arable fields lined by generally intact hedgerows with hedgerow trees form the dominant land cover. Hedgerow trees include a variety of species, including twisted pines along Chalk Lane leading into Narborough and historic oaks throughout the local character area. Arable fields are interspersed with blocks of medium sized plantation woodland in the east of the character area in addition to small woodland blocks and shelterbelts elsewhere. Woodland along the embankment of the dismantled railway is designated as a SSSI.

Localised variation in land use and character is found to the west of Narborough along the track leading to Butler's Barn. Here fields are smaller in size and used as paddocks and allotments exhibiting a degraded character.

Small parcels of historic rural character are evident throughout the character area. This is notable along the Narford Road where grass verges, laid hedgerows and historic hedgerow oaks create a strong historic setting to views into the parkland of the adjacent NA2 *Narborough Estate Valley Floor* character area. In other parts of the character area the historic character is less overt, although localised areas of historic character are created by features such as the unmarked track leading to Butlers Barn which is unlit and bounded by intact species rich hedgerows and historic oaks.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The character unit is representative of the wider Landscape Character Area, comprising of both arable farmland and plantation woodland.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
Landscape Quality/Condition	

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Natural:</b> Field boundary and roadside hedgerows (both intact and remnant) and associated mature hedgerow trees, primarily oak and pines.</p> <p>Woodland associated with the railway embankment is designated as a SSSI.</p> <p>The field edges are an ecologically important feature and recognised as such in the Norfolk BAP.</p>	<p>Plantation woodland, hedgerows, hedgerow trees and screening belts are structural landscape features which would take considerable time to re create and are therefore sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Evidence of the cultural pattern is displayed in the small scale field pattern to the west of Narborough (possibly remnants of a more historic field pattern, although the hedgerows and boundary materials have been partially removed), and the medium sized plantation blocks associated with Narborough Hall.</p> <p>The historic core of Narborough displays a distinct local vernacular, including stone, render and slate and tiled roofs.</p>	<p>The small scale field pattern and plantation woodlands would be sensitive to change.</p> <p>The historic core of Narborough is designated as a Conservation Area and is therefore considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> This is a rural landscape displaying a variety of scales and spatial experiences. Medium sized, open fields allow for long range views to large woodland blocks. The wooded areas provide a sense of containment, although localised, short range views are available.</p> <p>An intimate historic character is evident in the north eastern urban edge which forms part of the Conservation Area, although this has been eroded to the south due to later expansion.</p>	<p>The woodlands and hedgerows are integral to this sense of containment and are therefore sensitive features, as are the wooded skylines which frame the arable fields.</p> <p>The historic urban edge would be sensitive to change.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The urban edge is composed primarily of residential development including recent housing to the south and west and historic, established settlement to the northern and eastern edges.</p> <p>Land uses to the urban edge include playing fields associated with the community centre on the southern edge.</p>	<p>Later 20<sup>th</sup> Century urban expansion to the southern and western urban edges has created an abrupt, harsh urban edge, with housing, closeboard fencing and recreational land uses visible. This edge is considered to be of lower sensitivity than the edges within the Conservation Area, which are integrated with the adjacent parklands by mixed and plantation woodland.</p> <p>The historic north eastern edge should be conserved whilst the southern and western edges offer potential for landscape</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
	enhancement.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> To the north east housing along Main Road faces towards Narborough Hall and the use of local vernacular creates a historic character which integrates well with the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>To the south and west the absence of woodland screening creates an abrupt edge. Housing faces away from the surrounding landscape with garden boundaries often defined by close board fencing.</p>	<p>In view of the parkland setting provided by Narborough Hall, the historic urban edge is well integrated. It is therefore of higher sensitivity than the harsh, poorly integrated urban edges created by the 1960's/70's urban extensions to the southern and western edges of Narborough.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Narford Road has an enclosed character due to the well maintained, laid hedgerows and historic oak hedgerow trees. Views across parkland associated with Narford Hall in the adjacent NA2 character area create an historic character.</p> <p>Main Road is an important gateway as it passes the historic core of Narborough, separating it from the parkland of Narborough Hall to the east.</p> <p>Chalk Lane and Swaffham Lane share a similar character, passing alternately through arable fields and plantation blocks creating a variable landscape experience. From both roads the 1960s/70s residential development to the southern edge of Narborough is visually prominent.</p>	<p>Narford Road and Main Road are of greatest sensitivity due to the fact that they form part of the setting for the parklands of Narborough Hall. Chalk Lane and Swaffham Lane are of lower sensitivity due to the prominence of the southern and western urban edges.</p>

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are contained both by undulating landform and blocks of plantation, hedgerows and hedgerow trees along roads and field boundaries.</p>	<p>The plantation woodland and hedgerows provide visual containment, although views to abrupt urban edges are a feature of the southern and western settlement boundaries.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The southern and western edges are unscreened and abrupt, defined by late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing. Some containment is provided to the west by the smaller scale fields and their hedgerow boundaries.</p> <p>Views of the north-eastern urban edge are contained by the plantation woodland and woodlands associated with the parkland of Narborough Hall. Where views of the edge are possible it is to the established, historic settlement.</p> <p>The tower of All Saints Church at Narborough is a visually prominent feature, forming an important element of the view into Narborough.</p> <p>There is the potential for filtered views from the wooded former railway embankment.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Views into the adjacent <i>Narborough Estate Valley Floor</i> are possible from the eastern edge of the character unit, providing views across an historic parkland setting.</p> <p>To the south and west, views are across arable fields with a wooded skyline. The wooded railway embankment limits views to the south.</p>	<p>Whilst containment and filtering is provided by woodland and field boundaries to a number of the settlement edges, long views of the urban edge are available from the southern and western edges due to the variable density of woodland cover.</p> <p>The church tower is a sensitive vantage point as are views of the historic urban edge framed by parkland.</p> <p>Views to the historic parkland are sensitive although elsewhere containment by woodland vegetation results in a lower sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a well wooded landscape in terms of field boundary hedgerows and the plantation blocks associated with the adjoining estates of Narborough and Narford.</p>	<p>The containment and filtering of views by woodland to the north and east creates potential for mitigation through enhancement and reinforcement of existing vegetation. To the west there are opportunities to strengthen the hedgerows and hedgerow trees whilst respecting the existing small scale landscape pattern.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the character unit is judged to have **Moderate** sensitivity to built development. Hedgerows, field edges, shelter belts and plantation woodland, and historic elements such as the small scale fields to the west of Narborough and the village Conservation Area are sensitive to change. Sensitivity is however reduced by screening provided by plantation blocks and the railway embankment, and land uses such as paddocks and the recreation ground which have partially eroded landscape character. As such the southern edges would have some potential to accommodate small scale residential development due to its containment. The aim should be to create a transitional, wooded development edge at this point.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this local landscape character area and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve small scale field pattern to the west of Narborough, improving and replacing hedgerows where they have become degraded or have been replaced by paddock style fencing;
- Conserve the lines of twisted pines along Chalk Lane as a distinctive landscape feature;
- Conserve the rural character of Narford Lane, ensuring that the grass verges, laid hedgerows and historic hedgerow oaks are retained;
- Opportunities should be explored for the enhancement of arable field boundary margins through agri-environment/set aside schemes, creating further opportunities for habitat connectivity and satisfying the objectives of the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project;
- Conserve and enhance the grass verges where they line the roads through Narborough encouraging a species rich mix;
- Conserve existing woodland, but ensure that new woodland planting does not detract from important views e.g. to parkland setting of Narborough Hall or to Narborough Church;
- Conserve dark night skies when considering the lighting design for new development.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Ensure that any new development responds to the existing scale and uses local materials;
- Ensure that the setting of Narborough Church is conserved and that future development does not block views to or detract from the setting of this important landmark;

- Conserve the historic integrity of the core of settlement along Main Road in Narborough discouraging further infill development;
- Consider means of softening the southern urban edge of Narborough through the development of a porous/transitional, part wooded edge;
- Preserve unlit rural roads with no kerbs where they exist e.g. Narford Road;
- Conserve views from the character unit into the parkland setting of Narborough Hall when planning for future development.

# NA2: NARBOROUGH ESTATE VALLEY FLOOR

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Narborough Estate Valley Floor* forms part of the *River Nar* District character area. The local character area considers an area of 1.5km from the settlement edge of Narborough, and comprises the floodplain and valley sides of the River Nar, including the parkland of Narborough Hall. Woodland planting associated with Narborough Hall contains views of the eastern urban edge of Narborough.

The character area forms part of the Narborough Hall Parkland and abuts the built edge of the Conservation Area (within character area NA1) to the west. Land uses along the western boundary of the character area which forms the context of the settlement include the historic mill and paper mill, parkland of Narborough Hall, a cricket ground and pavilion and Narborough Trout Lakes.

The majority of the character unit is composed of parkland associated with Narborough Hall, which is characterised by gently sloping parkland with intermittent mature parkland tree planting. Occasional glimpsed views of Narborough Hall are possible through the trees. Boundaries of the parkland are created by small blocks of plantation woodland e.g. Blanche's Plantation and Spruce Plantation to the east and laid hedgerows as found along Narford Road to the south.

The River Nar SSSI flows through the northern part of the local character area and is lined by willows, poplars and reeds, although a more urbanised character is apparent near the paper mill. These landscape elements create a textured character and contained, short-range views. Narborough Trout Lakes are located on the southern banks of the River Nar. This man made feature is also bounded by willows, poplars and reeds contributing further to the screening of the urban edge of Narborough.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The character unit is representative of the wider district landscape character area being unsettled and characterised by parkland. The natural landscape elements including blocks of woodland and wetland vegetation associated with the River Nar are concurrent with the district character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<i>Landscape Quality and Condition</i>	



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>The local character area includes the parkland of Narborough Hall and associated woodlands, in addition to areas of lowland pasture associated with the River Nar.</p>	<p>The landscape is generally intact and well managed, particularly the parkland/estate setting of Narborough Hall. The stretch of river to the west is influenced by the paper mill and associated industrial development to the west of Main Road. As such the parkland is considered to be the area of the highest sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Natural:</b> The course of the River Nar is designated as a SSSI due to its chalk river habitats. Wetland vegetation associated with the River Nar and Narborough Trout Lakes includes willows, poplars and reeds.</p> <p>Plantation woodland blocks forming the boundaries of Narborough parkland are distinctive landscape elements.</p> <p>The majority of the hedgerow boundaries around Narborough Hall are in good condition and are an important landscape feature.</p>	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The principal cultural element is the grounds of Narborough Hall (of Tudor and Elizabethan origin and extensively remodelled in the 1770's).</p> <p>The Scheduled Monument (fort and earthworks) within the grounds of Narborough Hall provides a sense of the cultural pattern.</p> <p>The Conservation Area within Narborough abuts the western boundary of the character area and displays a range of vernacular building styles.</p>	<p>Narborough Hall is a Grade II* listed building and therefore considered to be of high sensitivity, as is the Scheduled Monument.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Key factors include the historic character created by views across the parkland landscape of Narborough Hall and the contained character created by the extensive screening provided by woodland blocks, parkland trees and wetland vegetation associated with the River Nar.</p>	<p>These elements are integral to the sense of containment and to the landscape experience and are therefore considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Character of the settlement Edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement edge development type:</b> There are no urban edges within the character area, although the Conservation Area of Narborough abuts the western edge of the character area.</p> <p>The north western urban edge is also</p>	<p>In view of the relative intactness of the edge incorporating the Conservation Area it is considered sensitive to change.</p> <p>Other urban edges are characterised by later 20<sup>th</sup> Century residential development and are less sensitive.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
visible from within the character area.	less sensitive.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The adjoining urban edge within the Conservation Area forms a largely continuous street frontage but is visually connected with the local character area.</p> <p>Built development within the character area, including the watermill is integrated through the wooded setting of the adjoining trout lakes.</p>	The parkland and the woodland planting within the trout lakes ensure a well integrated settlement edge and are considered to be sensitive features.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Main Road, leading into Narborough from the north-northwest is a key gateway.</p>	This gateway has an urbanised character due to kerb stones and signage and the backdrop of the paper mill site. The wooded edge evident in places is sensitive to change.
<p><b>Nodes:</b> Key nodes are represented by the former railway and station and by the junction of this road with Main Road into Narborough, to the east.</p>	The sensitivity of these nodes is reduced by the industrial backdrop provided by the paper mill.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Narborough Hall parkland has relatively open boundaries due to laid hedges, and views are therefore available across it.</p> <p>The Nar Valley has a relatively open character to the west of the main road where it meets the district boundary and views are available across the floodplain pasture at this point.</p> <p>All Saints Church tower and Narborough Hall form key landmarks within views.</p>	Views of Narborough Hall and parkland are considered sensitive in the context of the setting for the historic house and associated estate buildings (the lodge to Main Road). The church tower is considered a sensitive vantage point.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b></p> <p>The north western urban edge and the church tower are visible from the former railway station.</p> <p>The north eastern urban edge within the Conservation Area is visible from Narborough Hall and parklands.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b></p> <p>From the urban edge views are available to Narborough Hall, parkland and associated estate buildings.</p>	<p>Views to the Conservation Area are considered sensitive in view of its relatively intact character and vernacular. Whilst views of the north western urban edge are relatively open in character, these are less sensitive in view of the later 20<sup>th</sup> Century urban expansion which is apparent at this point.</p> <p>Whilst partially filtered by parkland and woodland vegetation, these are considered sensitive in view of the historic interest of elements in these views.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape character area is relatively well wooded, due to the parkland trees, hedgerows and blocks of plantation woodland.</p>	<p>There is the potential for enhancement and reinforcement of existing structural vegetation, provided that it does not detract from the remaining areas of pastoral, open character associated with the course of the River Nar.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The overall sensitivity of this character area is considered to be **High**, although locally lower (**Moderate**) where affected by urban edge recreational development, such as at the trout lakes. The high sensitivity judgement reflects the relatively intact landscape and cultural integrity of the character area. Whilst views are often contained or filtered by vegetation they often contain sensitive elements e.g. Narborough Hall and parkland. It is therefore considered that capacity for further residential development would be extremely limited.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this local landscape character area and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement fringe.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve mature trees adjacent to the watercourse through active and appropriate arboricultural management, seeking opportunities to ensure sustained tree cover through additional tree planting;
- Conserve and enhance the setting of Narborough Hall parkland through traditional management practices such as hedge laying;
- Seek opportunities to enhance the biological diversity of the River Nar near the Paper Mill site through marginal vegetation and floodplain meadow creation.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

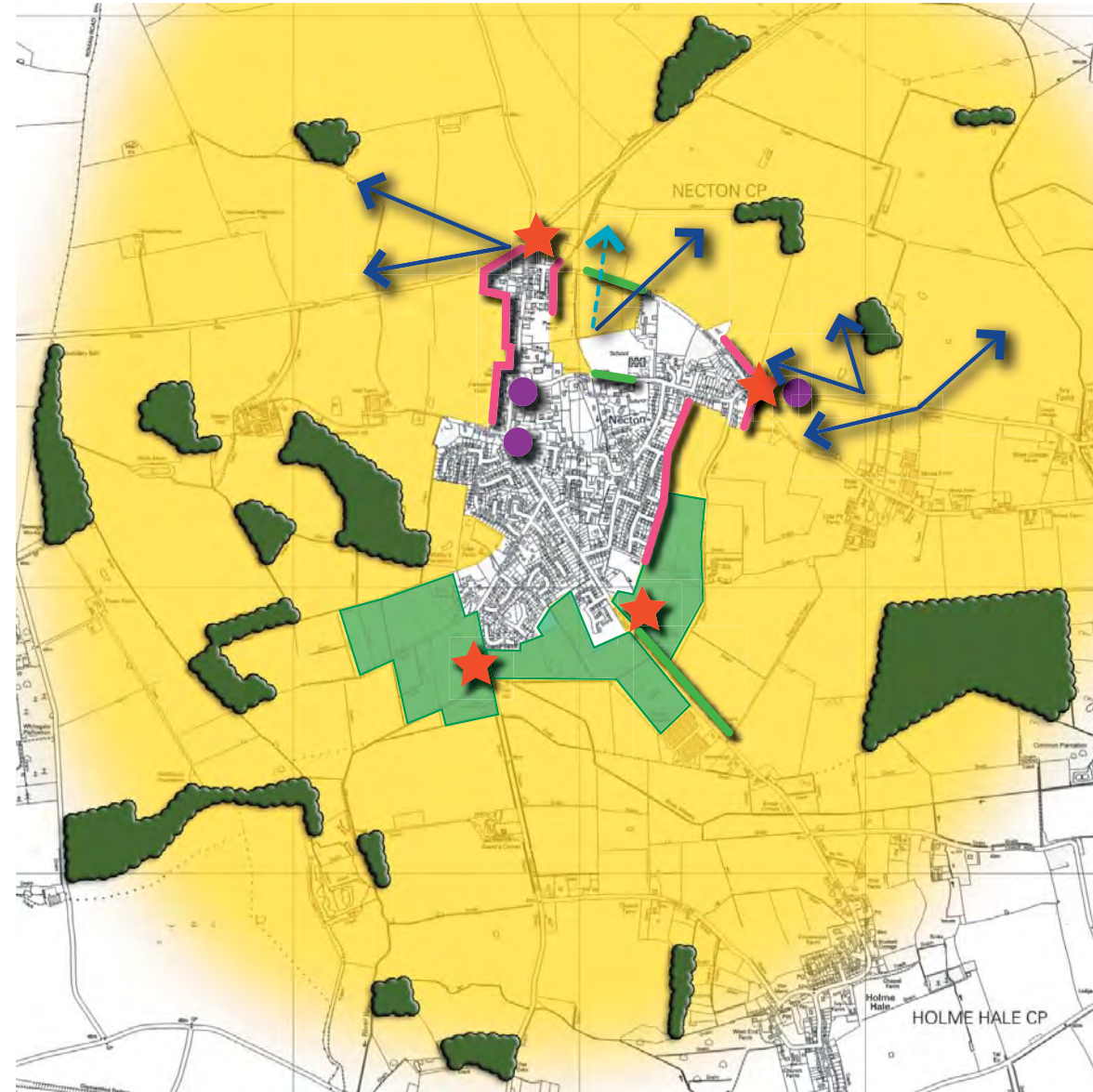
- Ensure that the rural road network around Narborough Hall remains and is not influenced by upgrading works which could have an urbanising influence, such as kerb stones and signage;
- Conserve unlit character of rural roads and dark night skies when considering new development;
- There is limited development capacity, but future development should respect the existing field boundary pattern and structural features such as hedgerow trees, in addition to responding to local vernacular in terms of building materials and scale;
- Development should not detract from the setting of historic elements such as Narborough Hall/All Saints Church, or views to them.



## NECTON

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
B5 River Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland	Open Tributary Farmland	NE1 Sparham Hall Open Tributary Farmland
B5 River Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland	Small Scale Tributary Farmland	NE2 Holme Hale Small Scale Tributary Farmland
E6 North Pickenham Plateau	Open Plateau Farmland	NE3 Hulverhouse Open Plateau





### Necton Settlement Fringe Analysis

- Woodland
- Agricultural land
- Open views
- Filtered views
- Open edge
- Integrated edge
- Key gateways
- Small scale field networks
- Node

### Historic Growth of Necton

- Road
- Settlement (Historic core)
- 1952-2000 housing

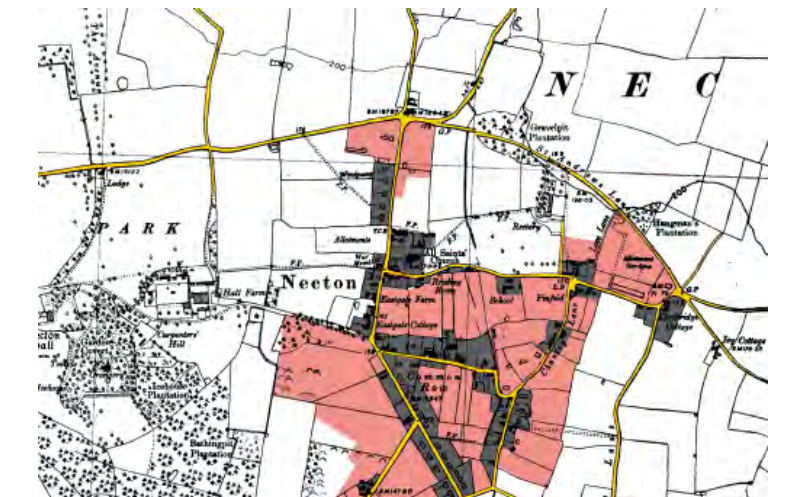
1887



1906



1952 - 2000







# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Necton Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

## Key

1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

## Sensitivity

Low

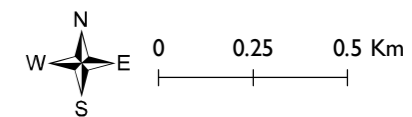
Low / Moderate

Moderate

Moderate / High

High

Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# NEI: SPARHAM HALL OPEN TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

NEI: *Sparham Hall Open Tributary Farmland* forms a minor component of the wider B5: *Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland* District Character Area, considering an area extending 1.5km from the northern edge of the village of Necton, a relatively large village of nucleated formation and set within a tributary valley, nucleated settlement. The local character area is defined by open, large scale arable farmland interspersed only occasionally with field boundary hedgerows.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland* is characterised by arable cultivation, with medium to large sized fields often defined by mixed treed hedgerows. Localised texture and visual variety is provided by small scale areas of fenland.

As such, the local character area is only partly representative, being defined only by large scale arable fields with many historic field boundaries lost to later agricultural intensification.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
This landscape has been significantly influenced by the A47 trunk road corridor and by the arable cultivation and 20 <sup>th</sup> Century agricultural intensification. A number of historic landscape elements survive e.g. remnant hedgerows and hedgebanks (St Andrew's Lane) and some small blocks of mixed farm woodland.	The A47, attendant lighting and roadside uses such as the former filling station and adjoining diner have significantly eroded the quality and condition of the landscape at this point. As such the landscape in this area is markedly lower in sensitivity than the more intact areas of landscape around St Andrew's Lane, on the north eastern edge of the village.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key features include the remnant native field boundary hedgerows and hedgebanks/sunken lane, e.g. St Andrew's Lane, in addition to the remaining small scale blocks of farm woodland.  An undulating landform rises to the adjacent plateau to the north.	The structural vegetation elements indicate the historic land cover pattern and would take significant time to replace if lost. They are therefore sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b>	The remaining elements of the historic

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>Cultural pattern is largely indicated by the remaining historic field boundary elements and the fragments of the network of sunken lanes as at St Andrew's Lane and the associated byway which is now truncated by the A47.</p> <p>Built form within the northern part of Necton adjoining this character area is largely mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> Century bungalow development, in addition to the small garden centre and the former filling station to the A47 frontage.</p>	<p>landcover pattern are considered to be of the highest sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A landscape defined by relatively large scale elements and of a generally open character. The A47 is significant in terms of perceptual character, particularly with regard to the night time landscape (road lighting to the Necton junction).</p>	<p>There are few distinctive features which define aesthetic character. The A47 markedly affects perceptual character, both in terms of tranquillity (road noise) and the aesthetic qualities of the night time landscape. As such the inherent sensitivity is reduced.</p>
<p><b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The northern settlement edge is defined both by development associated with the A47 to the western end (e.g. the former filling station and associated canopy), by the garden centre and mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century bungalow development and by 1950's brick built local authority type housing to the eastern end.</p>	<p>None of these development types provides a clear sense of place or is of any distinct quality, and as such inherent sensitivity is relatively low.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The western end of the northern settlement edge has an exposed, open character, with poor quality built fabric and boundary treatments (former filling station and development associated with the edge of the A47 and junction) whilst the eastern end is more integrated due to field boundary hedgerows and roadside hedgerow vegetation.</p>	<p>The western end of this edge has a degraded quality, influenced by the A47 and insensitive boundary treatments such as chainlink fencing and coniferous planting. It is exposed and poorly integrated with the rural landscape to the north of the A47, whilst the eastern end is more permeable in character and better integrated.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the approach to Necton from the A47, which is framed by the garden centre and the former filling station site, and the eastern approach to Necton at the foot of St Andrew's Lane.</p>	<p>The eastern gateway has a low key and rural character defined by the junction of narrow rural lanes and remnant hedgebanks, creating a positive approach to the settlement. As such sensitivity is markedly higher than that of the northern gateway.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The eastern gateway, at the foot of St Andrew's Lane, forms the key node within the character area, occupying the junction of St Andrew's Lane, Ivy Todd Road and Chapel Lane.</p>	<p>This represents an intact part of the rural lane network and is therefore sensitive.</p>

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>There are expansive views across the arable fields to the north, towards the rising land of the plateau.</p>	<p>Views are open and relatively exposed in nature and therefore inherent sensitivity is high.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> From the A47 the open northern settlement edge is clearly visible, particularly to the more exposed western end.</p> <p>The much restored 15<sup>th</sup> Century Perpendicular Parish Church with reconstructed 19<sup>th</sup> Century 'Shipdham style' west tower and lantern spirelet forms a prominent element of views to the settlement edge.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge there are extensive views northwards across the large scale arable field network.</p>	<p>The parish church and its setting form a sensitive element within views, in view of its listed status.</p> <p>These views are open and relatively exposed in nature and are therefore considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This is a relatively open and exposed landscape with few significant structural landscape features.</p>	<p>Due to the existing open character of the landscape mitigation potential would be low-moderate, although there would be scope to reinforce and reinstate existing field boundary hedgerows and small scale farm woodlands/coverts.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate**. This is in spite of the relatively exposed visual character and primarily in light of the eroded structure and quality of the landscape. In view of the existing settlement form and pattern of growth it is considered that there is extremely limited potential for the accommodation of new development, with the A47 effectively defining the extent of the settlement edge. Development considerations therefore relate primarily to existing development and ensuring appropriate integration with the landscape setting.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landscape planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

## **General Landscape Management**

- Explore opportunities for the reinstatement of mixed native field boundary hedgerows, particularly to the network of sunken lanes and remnant hedgebanks around St Andrew's Lane;
- Gap up and reinforce existing native hedgerows to create opportunities for habitat connectivity and for the establishment of wildlife corridors.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Consider the use of native planting to provide a noise attenuation function to the A47 corridor and to integrate the trunk road more with its landscape and to create a positive edge to the settlement at this point;
- Consider the effect of existing highway lighting on the night sky and the perceptual character of the night time landscape, particularly the approach to Necton;
- Avoid sub urbanising boundary treatments such as chainlink fencing and coniferous planting, and aim to create a porous, integrated northern settlement edge;
- There is limited capacity for development to this edge, without creating further nucleation of the settlement form. The A47 naturally rounds off the settlement, limiting further expansion.

# NE2: HOLME HALE SMALL SCALE TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

NE2: *Holme Hale Small Scale Tributary Farmland* forms a small component of the wider B5: *Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland* Character Area. The local character area considers an area extending 1.5km from the edge of the relatively large, nucleated village of Necton and is more intimate in scale than the adjacent NE1: *Sparham Hall Open Tributary Farmland* character area. It comprises a range of landscape elements such as arable farmland, grazing pasture and rush meadows associated with the tributaries feeding the River Wissey.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland* is characterised by arable cultivation, with medium to large sized fields often defined by mixed treed hedgerows. Localised texture and visual variety is provided by small scale areas of fenland.

The local character area is therefore considered broadly representative of the wider character area, although it creates a rather more varied patchwork or 'mosaic' character, with medium scale arable fields bounded by mixed native hedgerows and often juxtaposed with grazing pasture and wetland elements associated with the tributaries, such as rush meadows.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
This is a landscape associated with the tributaries feeding the River Wissey. It incorporates a range of wetland features such as willow lined field boundary ditches and areas of wetland scrub.	A high quality landscape in terms of the variety of landscape elements and their juxtaposition, and in a generally good, managed condition. In respect of condition and quality the landscape is considered sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key natural elements include rush meadows at Hale Road, the willow lined ditches and tributary drains and the mixed native hedgerows.  A gently undulating landform associated with the tributaries falls southwards towards the River Wissey.	The vegetation elements indicate the historic landcover pattern and would take significant time to replace if lost. They are therefore sensitive to change.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is represented by the	The site of Necton Hall and associated estate elements indicate historic intervention in terms



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>surviving brick stable range (mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century) from the now demolished Necton Hall (a former Elizabethan house to the west of the village). A number of other estate features survive, such as Ice House Plantation, in addition to the farm and some minor estate buildings.</p> <p>The wooded Necton Common, a remnant of a formerly much more extensive swathe of common land, and Mona Hill (SAM), lie to the east of the settlement edge.</p>	<p>of designed and planned landscapes and as such are sensitive to change, although they are not directly affected by the settlement edge.</p> <p>The remaining areas of common and the SAM are also inherently sensitive although again are not directly related to the settlement edge.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A landscape of relatively intimate scale and patchwork character in terms of the variety of landcover elements. Small scale fields (possibly of historic origin) are concentrated to the settlement edge and often associated with tributary drains.</p>	<p>The various landscape elements which make up this mosaic character (such as wetland and rush pasture) would take significant time to re create if lost and are therefore sensitive to change.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The eastern edge of the settlement comprises bungalow development with associated domestic garden boundary treatments.</p> <p>The southern edge includes recent brick built cul-de-sac development.</p>	<p>The eastern edge in particular offers landscape enhancement potential, in the context of the settlement's interface with its wider landscape. The southern edge is in the process of being further built out (phased development around Hale Road/Bittern Close). The settlement edges are considered moderately sensitive in view of the enhancement potential and the recent development at Bittern Close.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The eastern edge has an exposed character, whilst the southern edge has a semi permeable wooded character.</p>	<p>The southern edge at Holme Hale Road is well integrated with its landscape and is therefore of higher sensitivity than the eastern edge. Existing structural vegetation should be retained in future development.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the approach to Necton from Hale Road and the approach from Brown's Lane.</p> <p>Hale Road forms a low key approach lined with native hedgerows, whilst Brown's Lane is densely wooded.</p>	<p>Both gateways form positive and well integrated approaches to the settlement and, in view of the level of vegetation cover, would be sensitive to change. The sensitivity of the southern gateway from Hale Road is slightly diminished by the visibility of the rooflines of the new development at Bittern Close.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The church and churchyard, near to the western settlement edge, forms the key node within the local character area.</p>	<p>The church, churchyard and adjoining vernacular buildings in the surrounding streets are part of the Conservation Area and are therefore inherently sensitive.</p>

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views to the south from the settlement edge are filtered by field boundary hedgerow vegetation and blocks of mixed woodland, and by falling/undulating landform.</p>	<p>Due to the containment provided by structural vegetation these views are not inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Filtered views are available to the southern settlement edge, due to the density of woodland and hedgerow cover.</p> <p>Due to the more exposed character of the eastern edge, views here are more extensive. The church tower and spire form a key component of views from Chapel Lane.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Views from the southern edge are filtered by field boundary hedgerows and woodland blocks, whilst views from the eastern edge are more extensive.</p>	<p>Views to the church tower and its setting are considered to be of the highest sensitivity.</p> <p>Views from the eastern edge are most sensitive, due to their relatively exposed character.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> This landscape has a relatively high density of structural landscape features, including field boundary hedgerows and woodland blocks.</p>	<p>In view of the existing density of structural landscape and woodland cover, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The local character area is judged to have a **moderate-high** overall sensitivity to change. This is in view of the relatively high quality and the range of landscape elements displayed within the area, in addition to the large intact, managed condition of the landscape. It is noted that small scale expansion has occurred within some of the small scale fields adjacent to the settlement edge at Hale Road/Bittern Close.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

## **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve and enhance the existing network of tributaries and wetland features such as rush pasture around Hale Road, exploring opportunities for creating new wetland features to link habitats;
- Employ appropriate arboricultural and silvicultural management to the farm woodland and wooded settlement edges, notably at Holme Hale Road, to ensure continuity of tree cover;
- Ensure that woodland understorey layers particularly to the south are managed to develop a dense structure and species diversity and enhance existing wildlife corridors;
- Explore opportunities for the restoration of former heathy common land e.g. at Necton Common.

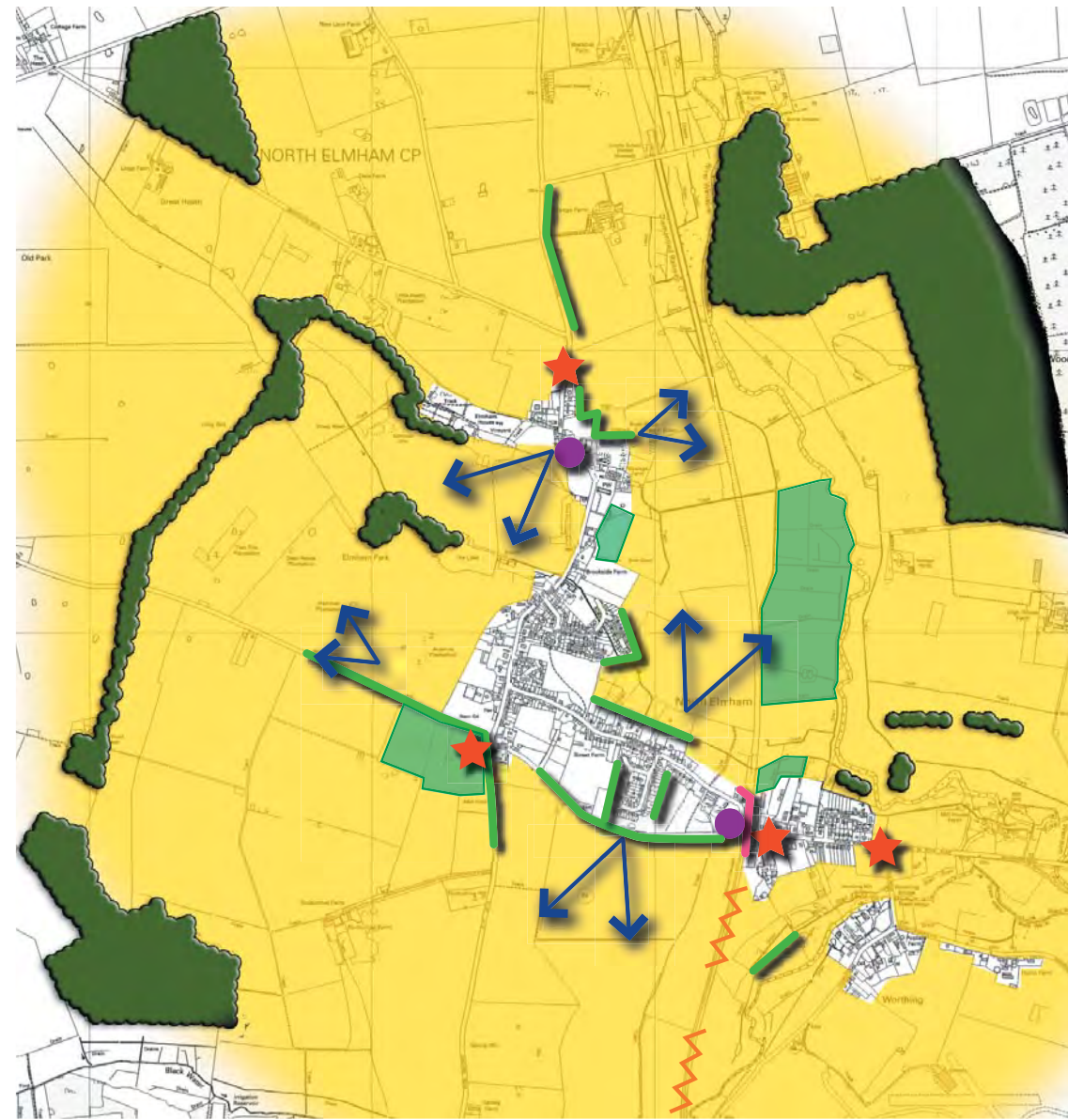
## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure that the settings of historic elements such as the remains of Necton Hall Estate and Mona Hill (SAM) are conserved when planning future development;
- Maintain existing hedgerows/structural vegetation and field boundary patterns in new development to ensure that it is properly integrated with the wider landscape and links to existing wildlife corridors;
- Consider connectivity to existing wetland /floodplain systems as part of SuDS/water balancing design in new development, e.g. swales and reedbeds, and to deliver potential new opportunities for biodiversity.










## NORTH ELMHAM

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
A4 River Wensum and Blackwater	Valley Floor	NE1 County School Station Valley Floor
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Wooded Tributary Farmland	NE2 Bintree Woods Tributary Farmland
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Open Tributary Farmland	NE3 Worthing Open Tributary Farmland
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Open Tributary Farmland	NE4 Elmham Park Tributary Farmland
E9 Whissonsett Plateau	Open Plateau Farmland	NE5 Great Heath Open Plateau Farmland









### North Elmham Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Woodland
-  Agricultural land
-  Open views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Node
-  Disused rail line at North Elmham

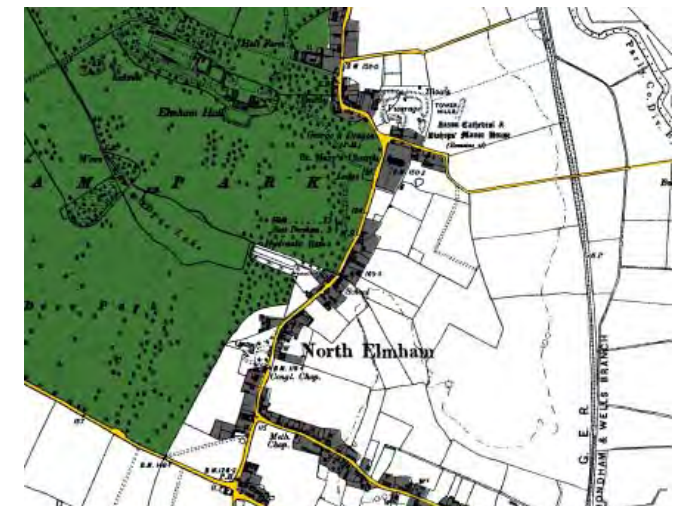
### Historic Growth of North Elmham

- Road 
- Elmham Hall 
- 1952-2000 housing 
- Settlement (Historic core) 

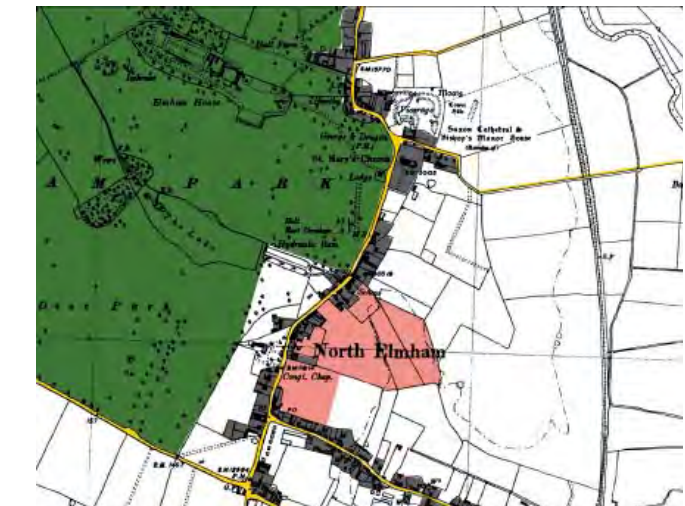
1892



1906










1952 - 2000

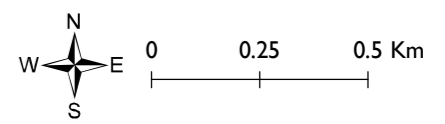
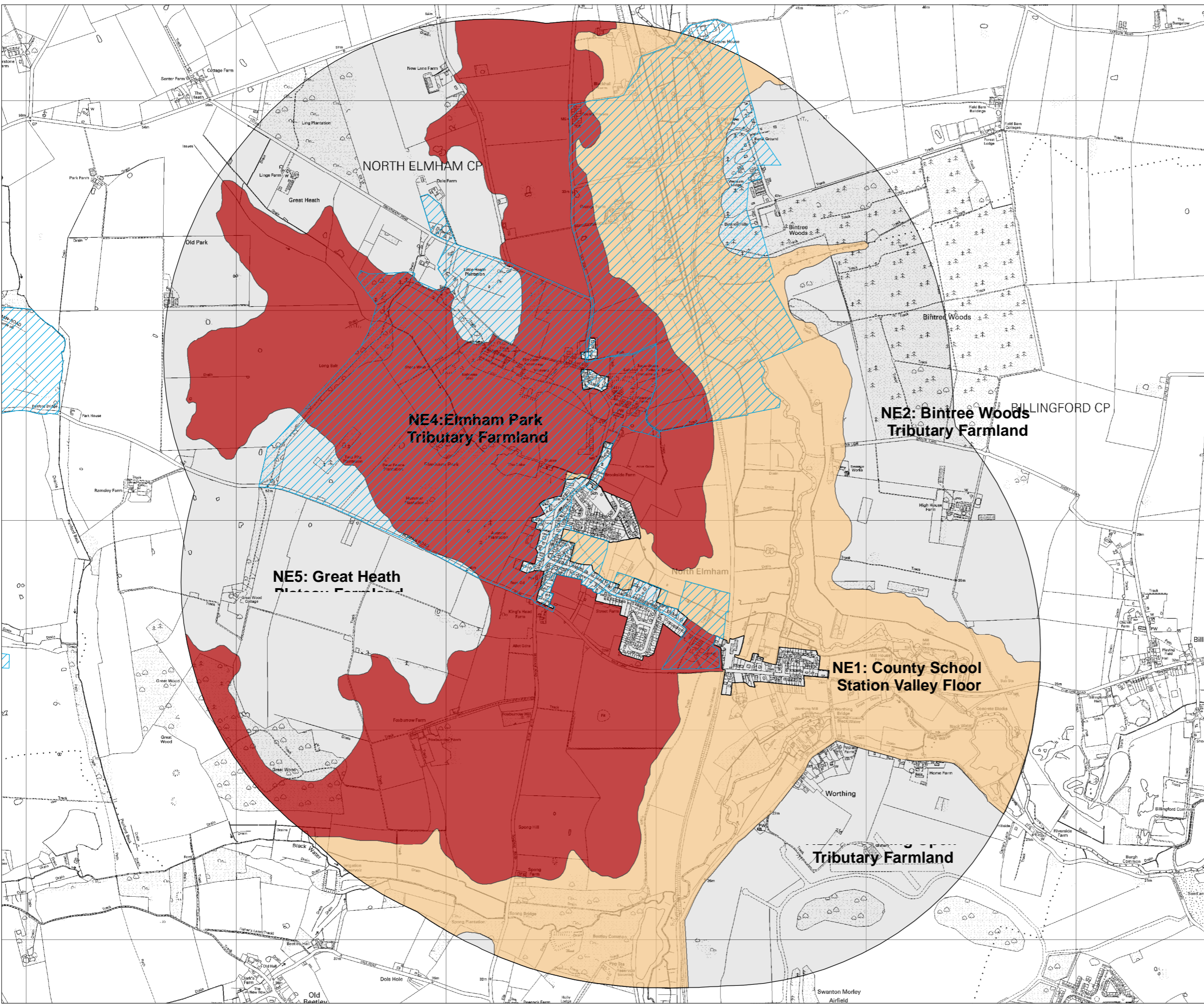




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
North Elmham Landscape  
Character Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007







# NEI: COUNTY SCHOOL STATION VALLEY FLOOR

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

NEI: *County School Station Valley Floor* represents a discrete element of the wider A4: *Wensum and Blackwater Valley Character Area*, with the local character area considering a 1.5km radius extending from the eastern and southern edges of the settlement of North Elmham. North Elmham is an historically linear and now partly nucleated settlement which is divided into three discrete parts (refer to settlement boundary on accompanying sensitivity map) and located mainly on the gently undulating tributary valley sides, with the easternmost part of the settlement extending into the Wensum Valley. The local character area incorporates a range of wetland elements including small scale grazing pasture, ditches and wet woodland and the course of the River Wensum (SSSI), in addition to parkland elements associated with the former County School site.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider character area is that of a broad, shallow and well defined valley, encompassing a range of wet grassland and meadow habitats and carr woodland.

The local character area is considered broadly representative of this lowland river landscape character, albeit with a more degraded character at points due to the influence of the former railway station at North Elmham and derelict railway line and adjoining industrial premises.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
Landscape condition and quality varies within the local character area, with intact wetland habitat and land cover associated with the River Wensum SSSI (including reed and rush meadow) around Worthing Mill, although the influence of the settlement edge is more marked in the area around the former North Elmham Railway Station.	The areas of more intact wetland habitat are judged to be inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include willow and alder tree belts, areas of wet scrub and wet grazing pasture/meadow, and the broad valley floor landform. In the north of the character area is an avenue of mature	These natural elements would take significant time to replace if lost and are therefore sensitive to change. The River Wensum is designated as SSSI in view of its ecological interest as a chalk river and is therefore sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
horse chestnuts which formerly led to County School.	sensitive.
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Principal built cultural elements include the surviving mills and mill houses at Bintree Mill and Worthing Mill.</p> <p>The now disused part of the former Dereham-Lynn railway line and the former railway station, built in the late 1840s, also lie within the character area, as do parkland elements and the railway station associated with the former County School.</p>	Although unlisted, the mills are pre 19 <sup>th</sup> Century structures, identified on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk and illustrative of the historic pattern of development and historic use of the natural resources of the Wensum. They are therefore inherently sensitive.
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Aesthetic and perceptual character varies, with the northern part of the character area displaying a tranquil rural character defined by pastoral grazing. In the area around the railway line and former railway station, the aesthetic character is more influenced by the settlement edge.</p>	The more intact pastoral areas within the northern part of the character area would have the highest inherent sensitivity to change.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The western section of the eastern settlement edge, leading to the historic settlement core, comprises a range of development types including traditional brick built vernacular.</p> <p>The eastern section of the settlement edge which forms a detached component extending from the former railway station, comprises predominantly mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> Century brick built development, including cul-de-sac development.</p>	The more intact areas of vernacular and traditional buildings to the western end of the settlement edge would have the highest sensitivity to change.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The western section of the eastern settlement edge has a permeable character due to wetland vegetation such as scrub and field boundary hedgerow vegetation.</p> <p>Development adjacent to the eastern side of the railway line has an exposed edge defined by close board fencing, although the edges of the development within this eastern part are otherwise integrated by woodland planting.</p>	The western section of the edge is better integrated with its wider landscape and as such has the highest inherent sensitivity to change.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The eastern approach to North Elmham at Worthing Mill forms</p>	The mill, millstream, wetland vegetation and wet woodland, and predominantly pastoral

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
the principal gateway into the settlement within the local character area. The gateway forms a low key, rural and well wooded approach to the settlement, with the River Wensum and associated wetland vegetation, the mill stream and the mill buildings forming part of the setting.	character, form a positive approach to the settlement which would be sensitive to change.
<b>Notes:</b> The junction with Worthing Lane (leading to Worthing Mill) forms the key node within the local character area.	Worthing Lane is a narrow lane of rural character bridging the River Wensum and would be sensitive to change.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views eastwards are channelled in character due to field boundary and roadside hedgerow vegetation of variable density and quality, and the rising landform on the opposite side of the valley.</p> <p>Views to the south and east are contained in character due to willow scrub and wet woodland.</p>	In view of the containment provided by structural vegetation and landform these views are not considered inherently sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Filtered views are available to Worthing Mill on the easternmost point of the settlement edge.</p> <p>Filtered views would also be available across the pastoral fields to the vernacular buildings within the part of the settlement edge to the west of the former railway line.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the western part of the settlement edge, to the west of the former railway line, views are available north across the pastoral farmland associated with the Wensum floodplain, to the more distant arable farmland on the upper valley slopes, although longer views would be contained by this rising landform.</p> <p>Views are otherwise heavily filtered by field boundary vegetation, most notably to the south of the settlement.</p>	<p>These views are filtered in character and are not inherently sensitive. However, the more intact historic quality and visual character of the setting of Worthing Mill would render these views of greatest sensitivity.</p> <p>The more open northward views are considered the most sensitive to change in view of their relatively exposed aspect and the extent of visibility.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape contains a variety of structural vegetation elements including wet woodland and scrub and field boundary hedgerows.</p>	<p>In view of the density and variety of structural vegetation, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high, provided the pastoral valley character was maintained.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate**. Whilst this would be locally higher (e.g. moderate-high) in the area around Worthing Mill and the more intact network of pastoral fields to the north, the degraded character of parts of the settlement edge, as exhibited by the former railway station, railway line and associated industrial premises, reduces the overall sensitivity.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

#### General Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for the creation of further areas of reed bed and rush pasture to link with existing habitat at Worthing Mill and to assist in delivering BAP/Ecological Network Map targets;

- Reinforce the existing network of field boundary hedgerows to the west of the railway line, gapping up with native species where appropriate to encourage the development of a dense structure and to enhance wildlife corridors.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure that future development is integrated with the wider landscape through use of native planting, including wetland species, to create a porous and transitional development edge;
- Avoid boundary treatments which could have a sub urbanising influence, such as close board fencing and coniferous species;
- Conserve the linear character of the settlement and the sense of separation between the individual settlement components, to avoid further nucleation/expansion/consolidation of the settlement form.



# NE4: ELMHAM PARK TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

NE4: *Elmham Park Tributary Farmland* forms a discrete part of the wider B6: *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area*, with the local character considering a 1.5 km radius from the western edge of North Elmham and including the historic parkland of Elmham Park. North Elmham is an historically linear and now partly nucleated settlement which is divided into three discrete parts (refer to settlement boundary on accompanying sensitivity map) and located mainly on the gently undulating tributary valley sides, with the easternmost part of the settlement extending into the Wensum Valley.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider character area is defined by arable agriculture and minor tributaries feeding the rivers Wensum and Tud and creating a series of small scale wetland elements such as wet meadow and wet woodland.

Historic parklands and designed landscapes form a prominent feature of the cultural landscape, with wooded skylines formed by woodland planting and parkland exotics as at *Bylaugh Park* being particularly distinctive.

Within the local character area, a number of elements are apparent, including small scale pastoral farmland and historic parkland at *Elmham Park*. It is therefore considered that the local character area is broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A relatively intact landscape to the settlement edge, due to the influence of <i>Elmham Park</i> and associated farmland which abuts the settlement boundary.  Small scale pastoral farmland defined by dense mixed hedgerows forms the setting to the ruined chapel ( <i>North Elmham Cathedral</i> ) to the north of the village.	<i>Elmham Park</i> is a high quality estate landscape comprising rolling parkland with stands of parkland trees and associated managed estate farmland. This and the small scale network of pastoral fields to the north east, adjacent to the cathedral ruins have a high inherent sensitivity to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal individual elements include the stands of parkland trees within <i>Elmham Park</i> and associated woodland blocks. The undulating	These elements would take significant time to re create if lost and are therefore considered sensitive.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
landform and the east facing valley slope on which Elmham Park is sited are also distinctive natural features.	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Elmham House (early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and incorporating elements from the earlier Regency House) and the associated estate buildings within Elmham Park (e.g. the lodge house and stone gateposts) are notable cultural elements, as is the grouping formed by the church and the ruins of the Norman North Elmham Cathedral and Bishops Palace, on the north eastern edge of the village.</p> <p>Elmham Park and a dwelling predating Elmham House are identified as Westfield Park on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk.</p>	Elmham Park is a registered park and garden of historic and interest and also forms an extension of the village Conservation Area, as does the setting of North Elmham Cathedral ruins. The ruins are also designated as a SAM. As such these cultural elements are inherently sensitive.
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A tranquil, rural landscape of pastoral fields, parkland, with filtered views to the wooded hinterland formed by Bintree Woods on the opposite side of the Wensum Valley.</p>	The landscape structure which reinforces this rural quality and sense of containment (e.g. parkland and field boundary hedgerows) would take significant time to replace if lost and is therefore sensitive.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The north eastern and western edges of the settlement comprises traditional and pre 19<sup>th</sup> Century red brick and flint vernacular buildings and later and modern infill.</p> <p>The eastern edge incorporates 1970s cul-de-sac development to the south of Brookside Farm School, together with traditional red brick and rendered vernacular properties along the road to the south leading to the former railway station.</p>	The north eastern and western edges form part of the village Conservation Area and the western settlement edge forms the setting of Elmham Park. As such they are more inherently sensitive to change than the eastern edge.
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The western edge is open and fronts on to the boundary wall and railings of Elmham Park, whilst the north eastern and eastern edges are contained by mixed native hedgerow and thicket vegetation.</p>	The western edge creates a positive relationship with Elmham Park and is well integrated with it, whilst the north eastern and eastern edges are permeable in character and well integrated with the wider landscape due to hedgerow vegetation.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Principal gateways include the northern approach to the settlement and the southern entrance adjacent to the King's Head Hotel.</p> <p>The northern approach is well wooded, and centred on the cluster of cottages</p>	Both gateways form part of the village Conservation Area and create positive approaches to the settlement which incorporate relatively intact historic built fabric. They are therefore considered sensitive to change.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
before the flint boundary wall of the park, whilst the southern approach is formed by the red brick early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century King's Head Hotel and the adjoining recreation ground.	
<b>Nodes:</b> The key node is that formed by the triangle of ground between the parish church and the cathedral site, which also forms part of the setting of Elmham Park.	In view of the setting this forms for the church, the cathedral ruins and the park, this node is considered inherently sensitive.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Filtered views are available across the farmland to the north east and more open views across Elmham Park.</p>	Views across Elmham Park are considered to have the highest sensitivity, due to the park's status as a registered park of historic interest.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There are filtered views to parts of the northern and eastern settlement edges from the right of way behind the cathedral site. The ruins and the church, adjacent to the settlement edge, are visible.</p> <p>There are open views to the western edge of the settlement from much of Elmham Park, in view of the elevated/rising landform at this point.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the western edge of the settlement, views are available across Elmham Park.</p>	<p>Views from Elmham Park would be of the highest sensitivity as these include much of the village Conservation Area and the edge forms part of the setting of the park.</p> <p>The cathedral ruins are a SAM, forming part of the extended Conservation Area and are therefore a sensitive component of views.</p> <p>Elmham Park forms part of the extended village Conservation Area. Views are therefore of heightened sensitivity, in view of the park's historic interest.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape incorporates a relatively high density of structural vegetation, in the form of the parkland tree stands, woodland blocks and field boundary hedgerows.</p>	In view of the density of structural vegetation, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **high**, in view of the generally intact character of much of the settlement edge and landscape structure of the character area, and the extent of the village Conservation Area, which encompasses both Elmham Park (registered park and garden of historic interest) and the setting of the cathedral site (SAM). It is therefore considered that potential to accommodate

development would be extremely limited. As such development considerations relate primarily to conserving the existing landscape setting and associated historic elements.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Ensure sustained tree cover within Elmham Park and prolong the life of the existing tree stands through active and appropriate arboricultural management, in addition to new tree planting (both native and parkland species);
- Gap up native thicket planting to the eastern settlement edge as appropriate and manage to ensure even density of cover and connectivity for wildlife;
- Enhance opportunities for habitat connectivity within the existing native field boundary hedgerow network, through gapping up with native species as appropriate and through planting of new hedgerow trees at irregular intervals.

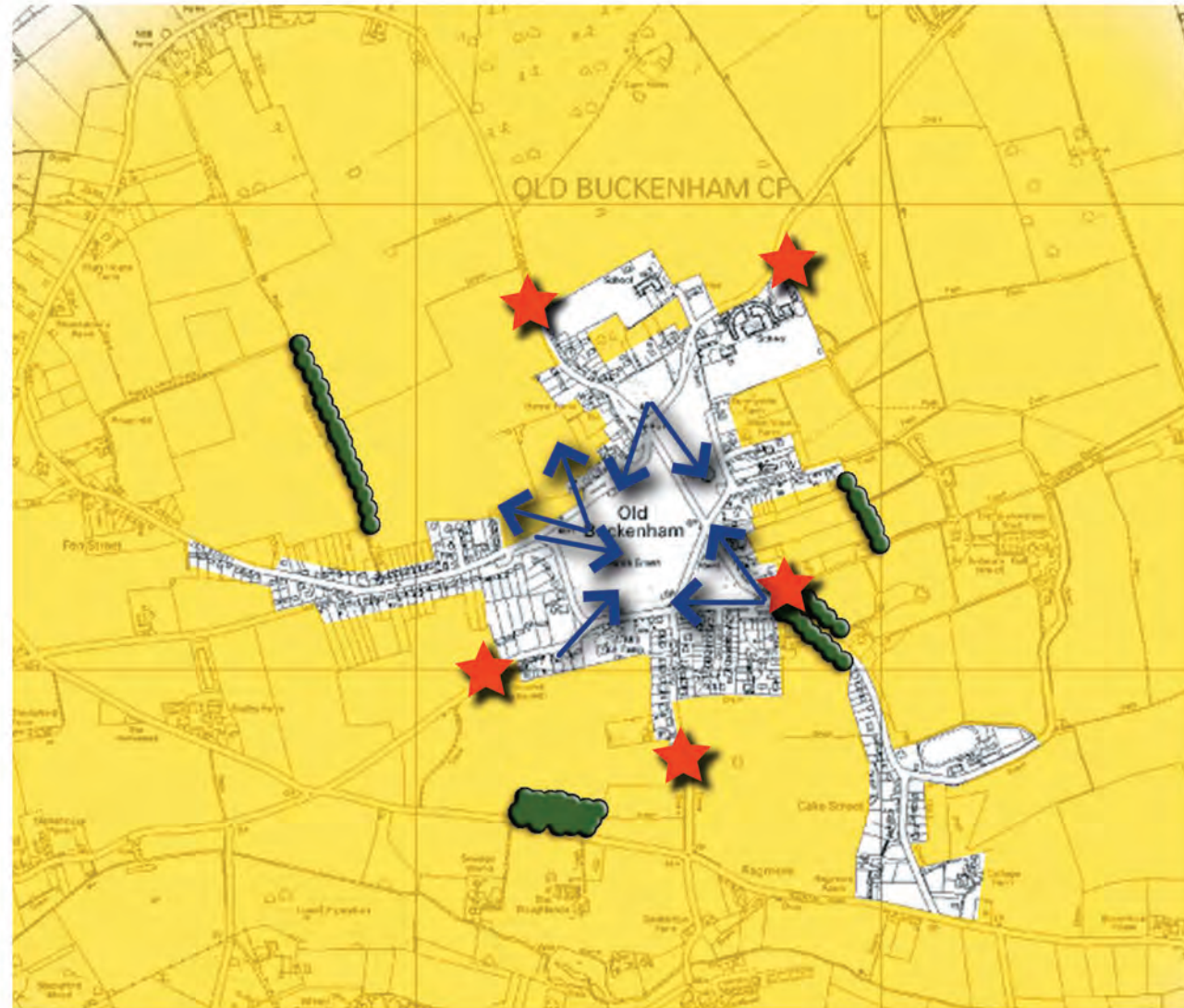
### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the setting of Elmham Park Conservation Area and the cathedral site (SAM) and discourage development which would prejudice this;
- Conserve the parkland and estate features of Elmham Park, such as flint boundary walls, lodge house and railings;
- Conserve the predominantly linear form of the settlement, avoiding development which would lead to further nucleation of the village form.








## OLD BUCKENHAM

District Character Area	Local Landscape Type	Local Landscape Character Area
B2: The Buckenham Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland	OBI Old Buckenham Fringe







## Old Buckenham Settlement Fringe Analysis

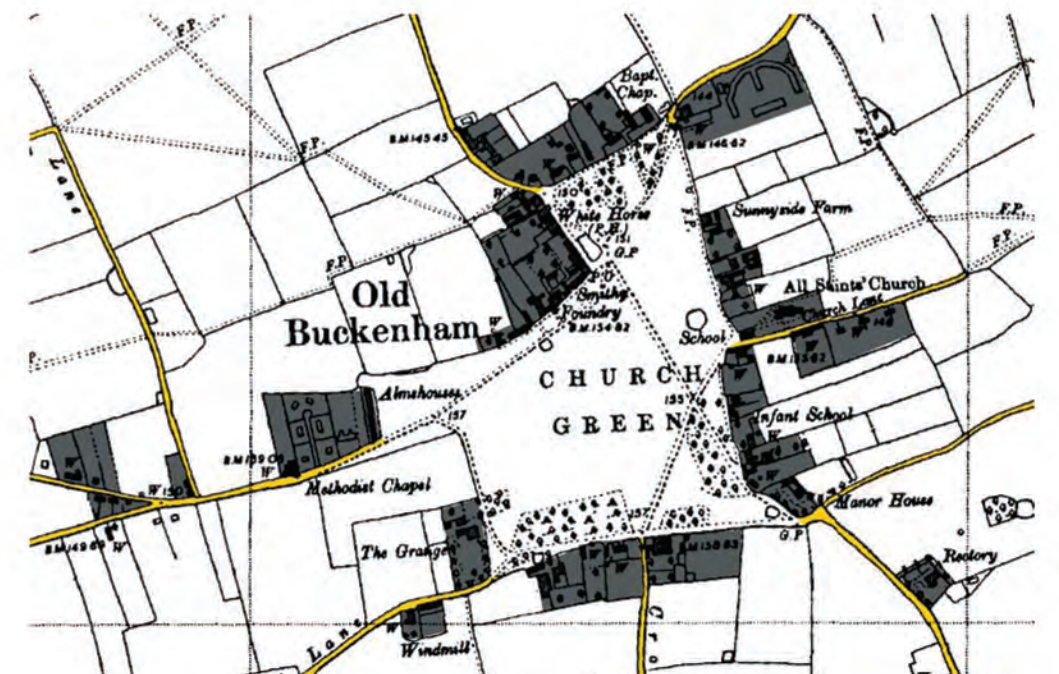
-  Structural landscape blocks
-  Agricultural fields
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key gateways

## Historic Growth of Old Buckenham

- Road 
- Settlement (Historic core) 










1950

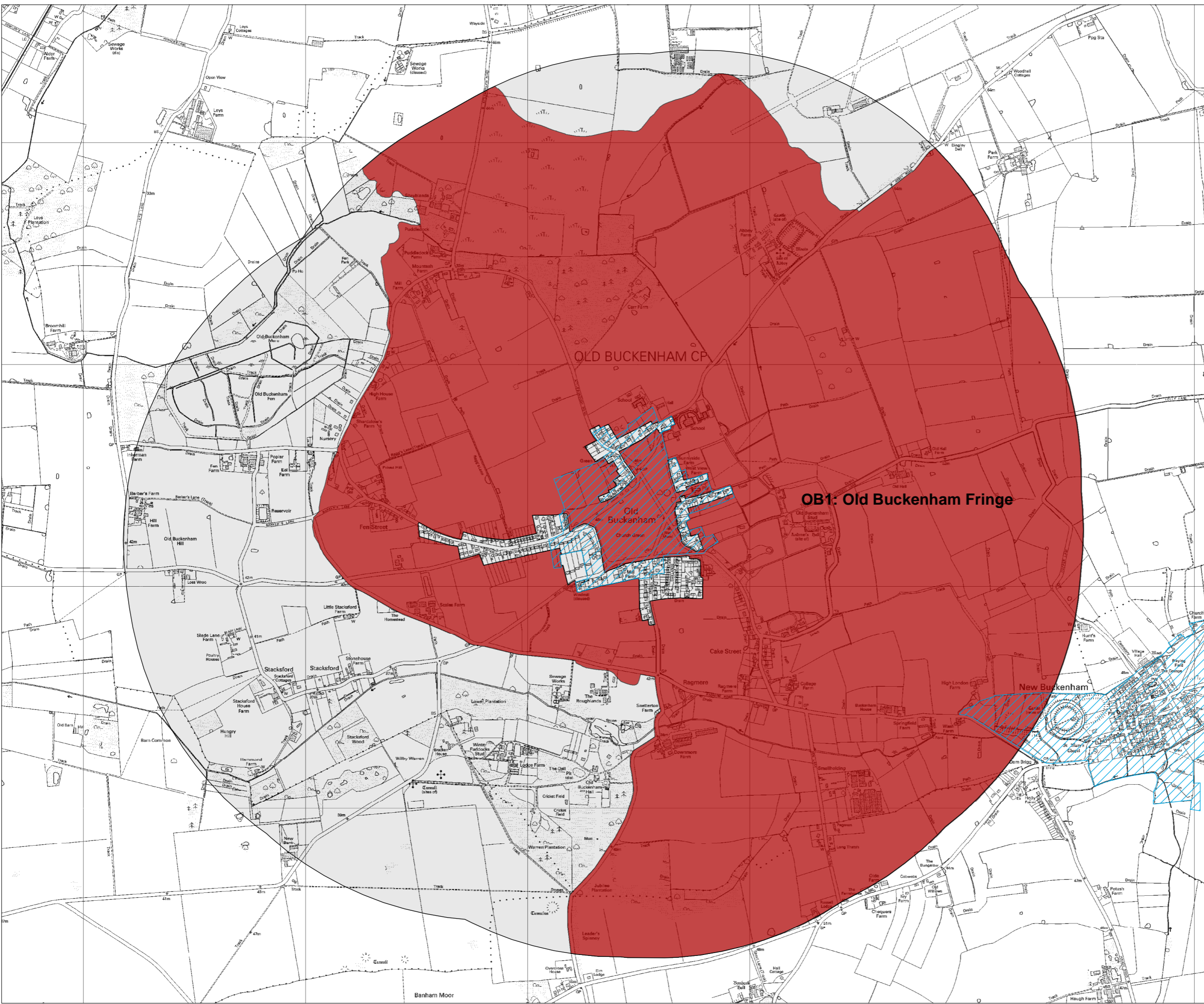




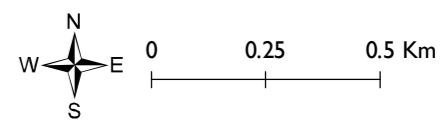
# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Old Buckenham Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



**OB1: Old Buckenham Fringe**



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007







# OBI: OLD BUCKENHAM FRINGE

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

Old Buckenham is a small village set around a large central green. It is located in *B2: The Buckenham Settled Tributary Farmland*. The settlement is located at the head of the *Thet Valley (A1)*, with the land falling away slightly to the west in character area *D3: Harling Heathlands*. The settlement is distinctive for the large central green, reputed to be the largest village green in England. The houses bordering the green appear insignificant in contrast to the vast open central space. In addition to housing around the green, settlement extends out along the five roads which converge at the village. This creates an unusual sequence in approaching the village, travelling initially through a short settled area and arriving at the open green. This assessment considers the entire edge of Old Buckenham as one character area.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is typically representative of the wider *B2: The Buckenham Settled Tributary Farmland*, with its arable farmland, local areas of pasture and wetland associated with the tributaries, network of drainage channels, and framework of hedgerows and mature trees.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A managed landscape of generally high quality and in good condition providing an intact rural setting to the village. The village core and green form a Conservation Area. To the east the paddocks of Old Buckenham Stud form a distinctive landscape.	A distinctive settlement around an enormous central green, with a strong rural context, which would be sensitive to further outward expansion.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued natural features include Old Buckenham Fen (SSSI) and the wetland and woodland to the south of the village at Wilby Warren and The Roughlands (County Wildlife Sites).	These features are inherently sensitive, but would not be directly affected by development on the edge of Old Buckenham.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> There are several tumulus and earthworks south of the village, plus site of a castle and Abbey to the north west (all SAM). The windmill at mill lane is an	The historic landscape features are inherently sensitive, although would not be directly affected by development on the edge of Old Buckenham.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
important landmark.	
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A very distinctive settlement, with development insignificant in comparison to the huge central green. An intact rural character.	The rural setting would be sensitive to further expansion of Old Buckenham. There is presently an interesting balance between the scale of settlement and the size of the green which could be altered by further peripheral expansion or consolidation.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Three sides of the green are bound by a single line of dispersed residential development, although a larger block of modern development extends to the south at Oaklands. The settlement has extended in a linear form along Fen Street. Apart from the school and church this is an entirely residential edge.	The low density residential edge around the common is sensitive to infilling or further consolidation by new blocks of development.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge of Old Buckenham is generally well integrated, with some views of a stark settlement edge from Green Lane and Crown Road.	The generally well integrated settlement edge is sensitive.
<b>Gateways:</b> There are numerous low key gateways to Old Buckenham along the 6 rural roads/lanes which converge around the green. The main gateway is the Attleborough Road – the woodland framing the road to the south of the green is an important feature.	The gateways to Old Buckenham are interesting with residential development extending out along the roads and the centre of the village, in contrast, formed by a large rural green. The approaches to the green are therefore highly sensitive.
<b>Nodes:</b> The principal node is the large village green.	The green would be adversely affected by consolidation of the settlement edge or further linear extension of the village.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> There are relatively few views across the landscape to the settlement, with long views contained by field boundary vegetation. Buildings are not prominent.	The presence of field boundary screening means that views are not especially sensitive provided screening vegetation is conserved.
<b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b>  <b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There are few views to the settlement, apart from short range views to	The good rural- settlement interface is sensitive to further development/ infilling which

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>development extending along Fen Street and at Oaklands. The windmill is a landmark feature in views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> There are views out from the settlement. The undeveloped edge of the Green east of the Almshouses provides a view out across the rural landscape.</p>	could create a more solid settlement edge.
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Hedgerow boundaries and small woodland copses are feature of the landscape.</p>	The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting. Reinforcement and recreation of hedgerows is an opportunity.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the area is judged to be **High**. This judgement is based on the small scale of the settlement and its relationship with the central open green.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve the pattern of hedgerows, small copses and tree belts and seek to restore and renew hedgerow boundaries to form a strong framework for the settlement;
- Conserve and manage areas of pasture which remain around the settlement.

### Principles in relation to Development

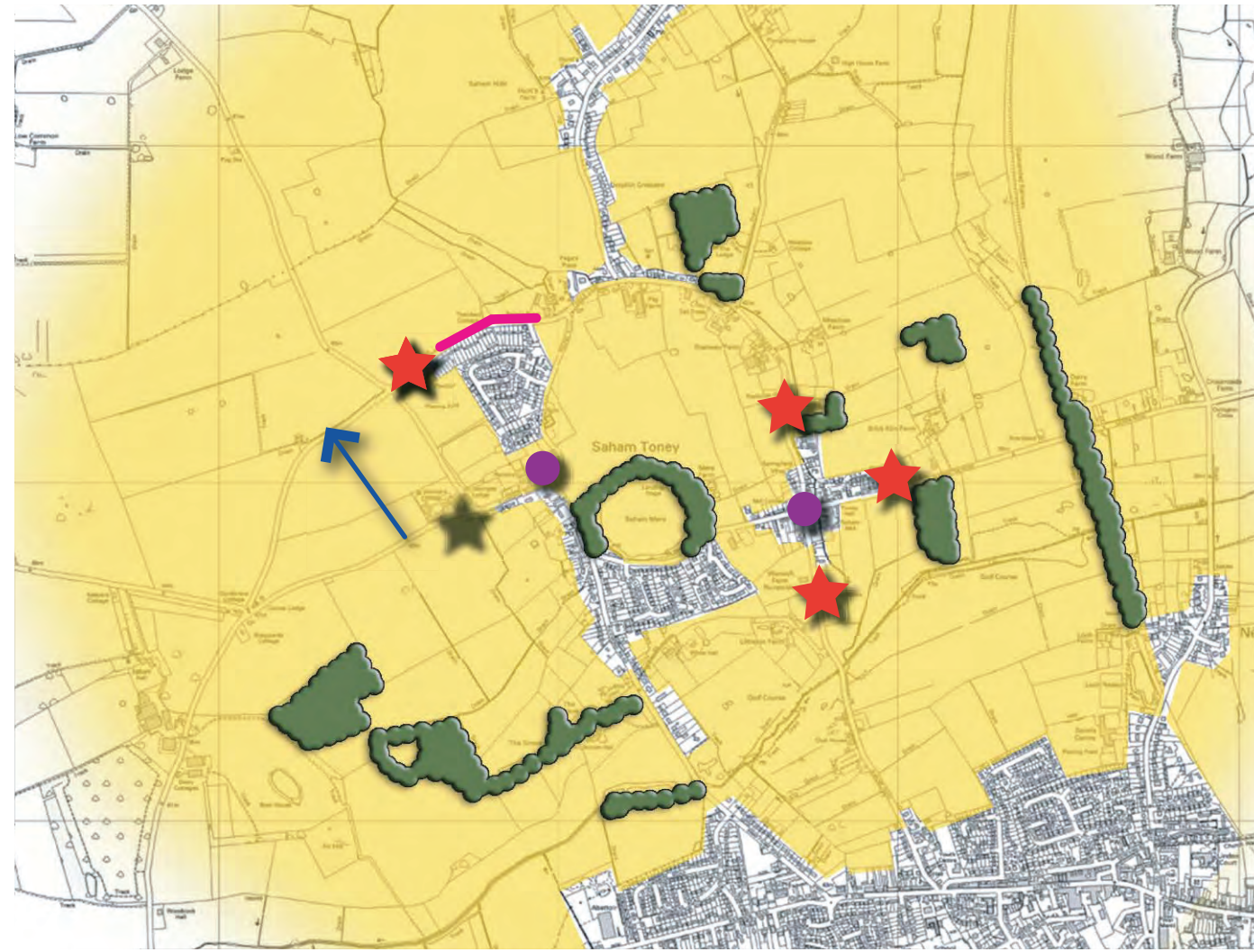
- Conserve the form of the village with small scale residential development set around a very large central green;
- Avoid further linear development out along the rural roads that converge at Old Buckenham;
- Avoid consolidation or infilling of development around the green and conserve gaps which provide views out to the wider landscape.












## SAHAM TONEY

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
D2: Stanta Heath	Tributary Farmland	ST1 Saham Toney South West
B5: River Wissey Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland	ST2 Saham Toney North, West, East







### Saham Toney Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Structural landscape blocks
-  Agricultural fields
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Nodes

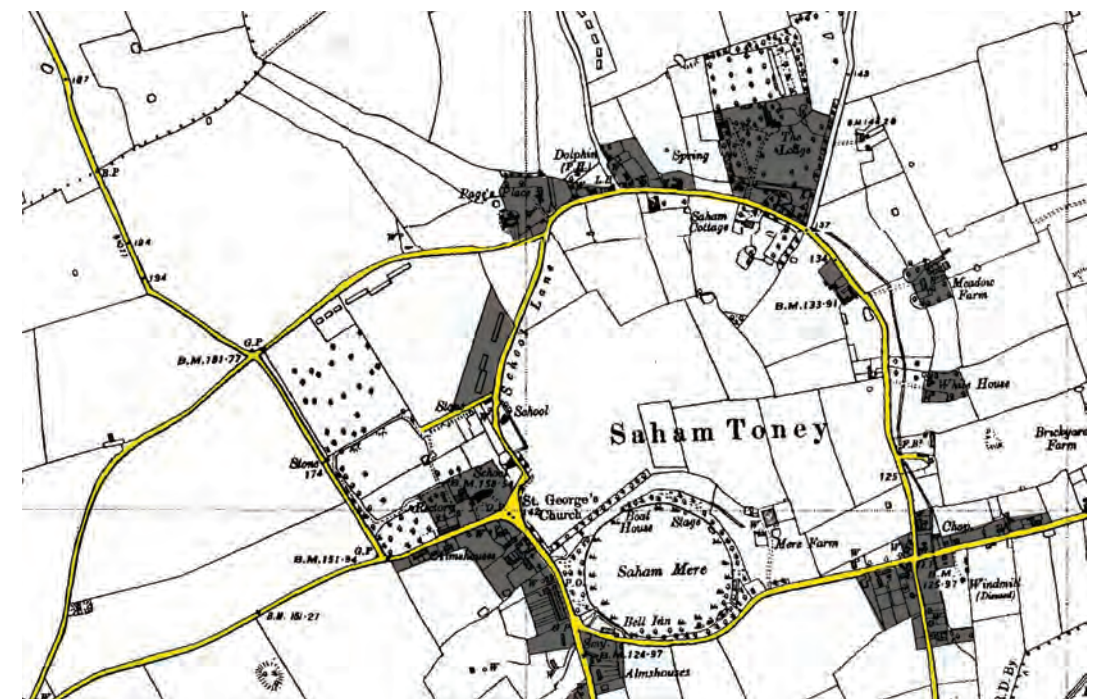
### Historic Growth of Saham Toney

Road  Settlement (Historic core) 

1889



1952










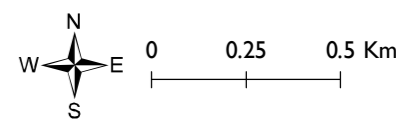




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Saham Toney Landscape  
Character Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# STI: SAHAM TONEY SOUTH WEST

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

Saham Toney lies within a tributary valley of the Wissey (B5) – The Watton Brook. This character area considers the land to the west of the B1077 between Watton and the church of St. George, the tower of which is a landmark feature of the village and surrounding landscape. The area has been defined, in the district landscape assessment as part of *D2: Stanta Heath*. This sub area is an enclosed parkland landscape forming part of the grounds of Broom Hall and Saham Hall.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is not representative of the wider *D2: Stanta Heath* landscape, with its large tracts of open heathland, grassland and plantation. The area, in contrast, is an enclosed parkland landscape of pasture, small woodland blocks, and tree lined watercourse. It is a transitional area with the adjacent *B5: Wissey Tributary Valley* landscape sharing similar characteristics.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
An intact estate landscape of pasture, small woodland blocks, and tree lined tributary watercourses.	A landscape in good condition with a distinctive tributary valley character. These qualities would be highly sensitive to further expansion of development associated with Saham Toney or Watton.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued natural features are the watercourse, grazed pasture and woodland blocks. The wet woodland alongside the watercourse 'The Grove' is a county wildlife site.	The aim should be to conserve and enhance the natural character of the landscape. These features would be sensitive to further extension of development.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The area has a strong 'estate' character associated with the Halls.	The 'parkland' landscape of the Halls is sensitive.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A distinct rural landscape separating Watton and Saham Toney.	The rural 'gap' between Watton and Saham Toney is sensitive to any further encroachment of development.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> This settlement edge of Saham Toney	A low density well integrated settlement edge. It is sensitive to creation of large blocks of

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
comprises a single line of dwellings along the B1077. Predominantly late 20 <sup>th</sup> century low density residential development and closer to the church a terrace of Victorian cottages.	infilling development which would change the character.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The low density and single line of development creates a well integrated edge. There is limited access into the adjacent landscape.	It is considered that further expansion/development with large blocks of infill would change the rural character of this edge of Saham Toney, creating the appearance of an expanded edge of Watton.
<b>Gateways:</b> This is a low key gateway to Saham Toney – the crossing of the river and views to the dominant church tower on rising land to the north create the impression of a distinct rural village, although actual gap between Watton and the edge of Saham Toney is relatively small (<200m).	The function of the landscape is creating a distinct rural setting to Saham Toney and separation from Watton is highly sensitive.
<b>Nodes:</b> The church of St. George on rising land to the north, small green and older properties south of the church form a distinct node and strong sense of place.	The setting of these buildings is sensitive.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> Views within the landscape are contained by tree cover. North west of Church Farm views are more open.	The enclosed character and presence of woodland blocks and parkland contributes to the distinct rural character which is sensitive.
<b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b>  <b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There is limited public access into the area and no points at which the settlement edge can be viewed. The low density and low rise nature of residential development and presence of tree cover limits views.  <b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Trees and woodland filter views from the settlement edge.	The good rural- settlement interface is sensitive to further development infilling which could create a harsher settlement edge.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Plantation blocks, copses and waterside trees are a feature of the landscape.	The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting.

## **Overall Sensitivity Judgment**

Overall the sensitivity of the area to further expansion of Saham Toney/Watton is judged to be **High**. This judgement relates to the role of tributary valley and parkland/pasture and woodland setting in defining the separation of Saham Toney and Watton and creating a strong rural character to this edge of the village.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve the river course and grazed pasture alongside the river;
- Manage the woodland blocks, copses and waterside trees. Lime avenue and parkland trees for historic landscape and biodiversity interest;
- Conserve the landscape setting of Saham Hall and Broom Hall;
- Consider opportunities to enhance recreational access from Saham Toney and Watton where this is compatible with other land management objectives.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the low density residential development and single line of houses along the B1077 approach to Saham Toney. Avoid infill or creation of further blocks of development;
- Conserve the sensitive rural gap between the Watton and Saham Toney created by the wooded watercourse and the parkland landscape of Broom Hall;
- Conserve and manage the woodlands and copses, notably The Grove which is of biodiversity interest.



# ST2: SAHAM TONEY NORTH, WEST, EAST

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

Saham Toney lies within a tributary valley of the Wissey (B5). This character area considers the land to the north, west and east of the village. It is a dispersed settlement with nodes of development south of Saham Mere, at Mill Corner cross roads (Cley Lane and Ovington Road) and a further linear extension along the minor road to Saham Hills. This assessment provides a generalised description and evaluation of sensitivity to change. It does not consider each edge of the village separately as this would require a more detailed study.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The area is representative of the wider *B5: Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland*, with its gently undulating land form, tributary streams, arable and pasture farmland and small blocks of farm woodland. The land immediately surrounding the village is predominantly pasture, enclosed by hedgerows with considerable areas of wet woodland, including the willow and poplar vegetation fringing Saham Mere. To the north and both west the landscape is more typically an open arable landscape forming the transition with the higher plateau landscape (E5).

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
Essentially a mix of pasture and wet woodland forming an enclosed setting to the settlement. A managed rural landscape. Some more open arable landscape, notable north of the sports ground and adjoining settlement on the lane to Saham Hills.	A landscape with a distinctive tributary valley character, with the pasture and tree cover providing a strong rural setting to the village. These qualities would be sensitive to further expansion of development.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Valued natural features are the areas of grazed pasture, woodland and the groundwater fed Saham Mere.	The aim should be to conserve and enhance the natural character of the landscape of pasture and woodland. These features would be sensitive to further extension of development. Further development may also have an adverse affect on the groundwater-fed mere.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> A number of historic buildings. The church of St. George with its tower forms a landmark feature, plus windmill (no sails).	These features contribute to the character of the village. They are not individually sensitive to further small scale development.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
landmark feature, plus windmill (no sails).	
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A distinct rural landscape of wetland, woodland and pasture forming an enclosed setting to the village. To the north a more typical open, arable landscape.	The strong rural character of the landscape and setting of the village within the tributary valley is sensitive to further expansion of development.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The settlement edge of Saham Toney is very diverse and varies within each settlement cluster/line. In some areas back garden boundaries/fences form the boundary with the surrounding agricultural landscape. In other areas residences run along a road fronting onto agricultural land. On the road to Saham Hills a single line of dwellings runs either side of the road.	There are sensitivities relating to the merging of the existing small settlement clusters into a larger consolidated development. Where linear development extends as a single line along the road, backland or infill development would create a more solid defined settlement edge, with loss of permeability and views out. Generally, the loose, informal character of Saham Toney is considered to be sensitive to further development which would create a more consolidated settlement form.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge is generally will integrated. Although there are few recreation/access connections the settlement edge is visually permeable. For example, along Saham Hills Road there are frequent views out between houses or views down rural lane and tracks, which create a well integrated settlement edge. Some edges, for example, along the road west of the church where a line of houses faces directly onto the open arable landscape, are less well integrated.	It is considered that further expansion/development would change the rural character of the edges of Saham Toney.
<b>Gateways:</b> Each settlement cluster is entered via has a low key gateway with the adjacent rural area.	The function of the landscape is creating a distinct rural setting to the different settlement areas within Saham Toney and separation from Watton is highly sensitive. The areas of rural landscape between each settlement cluster, although small, are important in creating the character of Saham Toney
<b>Nodes:</b> The main nodes are Saham Mere and pub and the crossroads at Mill corner, and the church. This is a diffused/dispersed settlement with no real 'centre'	Low key dispersed character of Saham Toney is sensitive to expansion/consolidation of the settlement form. The setting of the church is sensitive.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
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Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b> Views within the landscape are contained by tree cover. North west of Church Farm views are more open.</p>	<p>The enclosed character and presence of woodland blocks contributes to the distinct rural character which is sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There is limited public access into the area and few points at which the settlement edge can be viewed. The low density and low rise nature of residential development and presence of tree cover limits views.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Trees and woodland filter views from the settlement edge. The low density of development – often a single linear line allows views out between houses and along tracks to the wider rural landscape.</p>	<p>The good rural- settlement interface is sensitive to further development infilling which could create a more solid settlement edge.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Plantation blocks, copses and waterside trees are a feature of the landscape.</p>	<p>The character area is not sensitive to mitigation planting.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall the sensitivity of the area to further expansion of Saham Toney is judged to be **High**. This judgement relates to the role of tributary valley landscape and pasture in providing a distinct setting to the settlement which would be sensitive to change, and the potential for further development to change the loose, informal settlement pattern and create a more consolidated developed area.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve Saham Mere and the wooded edge and pasture setting of the mere;
- Conserve the grazed pasture fields and hedgerows that surround the settlement – and create the distinct tributary valley character;
- Manage the woodland blocks, copses and waterside trees for landscape and biodiversity interest;
- Conserve the setting of and views to the church;
- Consider opportunities to enhance recreational access from Saham Toney where this is compatible with other land management objectives.

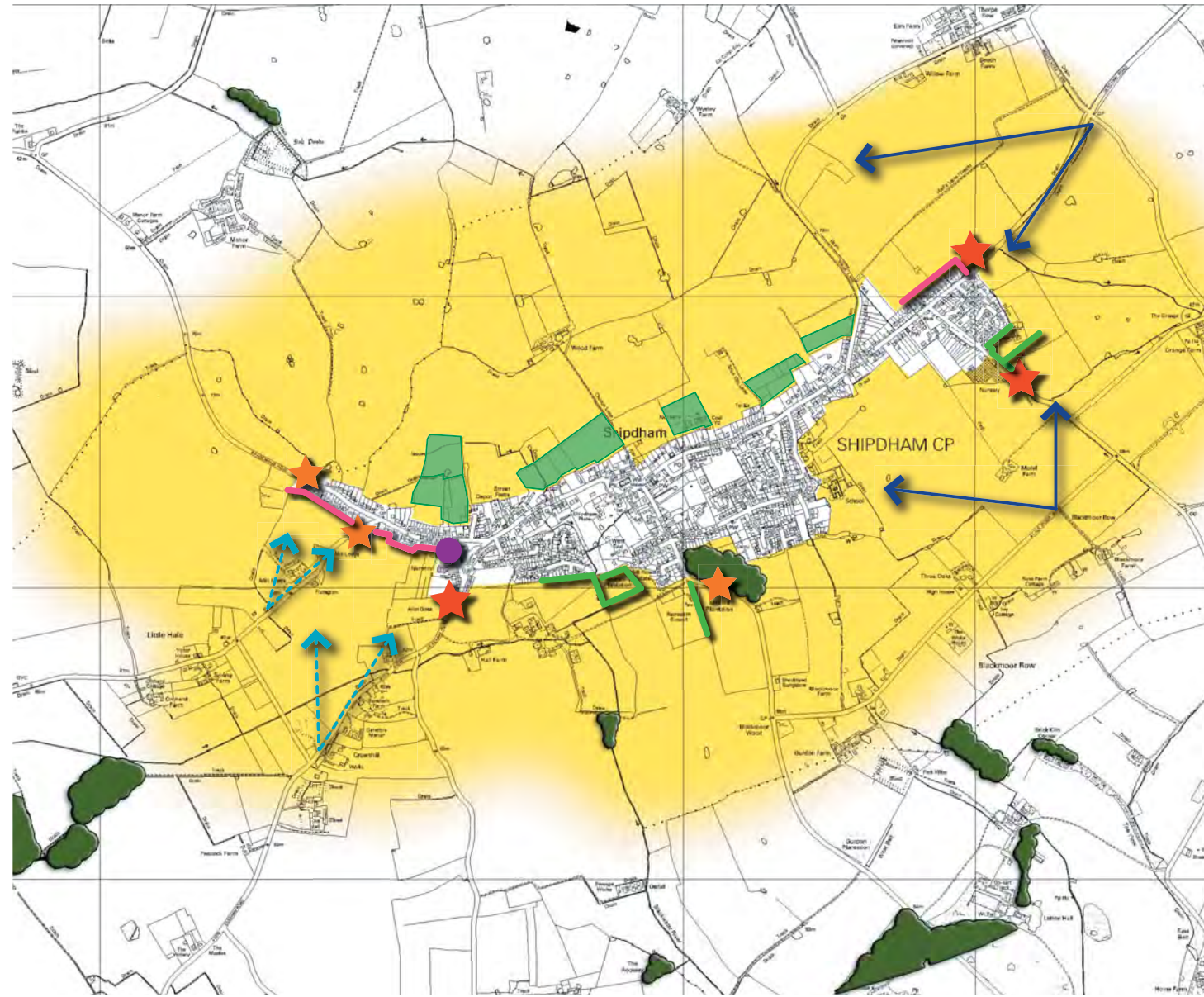
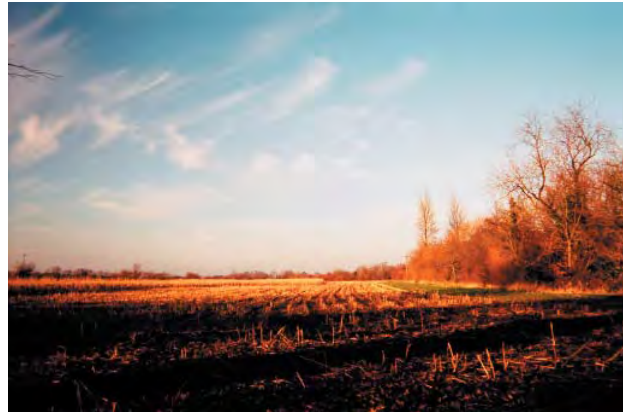
## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the low density residential development and loose cluster and lines of development – avoid infill which would consolidate the settlement form. Avoid creation of further blocks of development;
- Conserve the sensitive rural gap between the Watton and Saham Toney created by the wooded watercourse;
- Conserve the rural landscape between areas of development, for example along Bell Lane and Cley Lane;
- Conserve the single lines of development along Saham Hills Road and the views out along tracks and between houses to the rural landscape beyond. Avoid backland and infill development which would consolidate development along this road.




## SHIPDHAM

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
E5 Central Breckland Plateau	Arable Plateau	SH1 Crows Hill and Thorpe Row Arable Plateau
B5 River Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland	Tributary Farmland	SH2 Bradenham Arable Farmland with Tributaries
B4 River Blackwater Settled Tributary Farmland	Arable Farmland with Parkland and Woodland	SH3 Letton Hall Arable Farmland with Parkland and Woodland





### Shipdham Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Woodland
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key Gateway
-  Minor gateways
-  Small scale pastoral fields
-  Node
-  Agricultural land

### Historic Growth of Shipdham

-  Settlement (Historic core)
-  Shipdham Hall
-  Road
-  Community centre and playing fields
-  1952-2000 housing

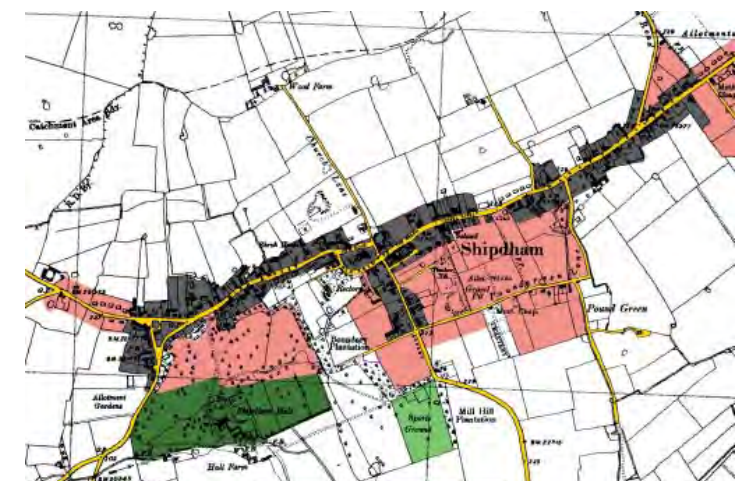
1891



1921










1952 - 2000

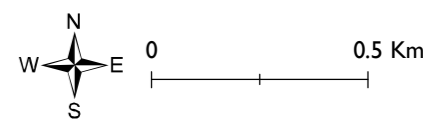
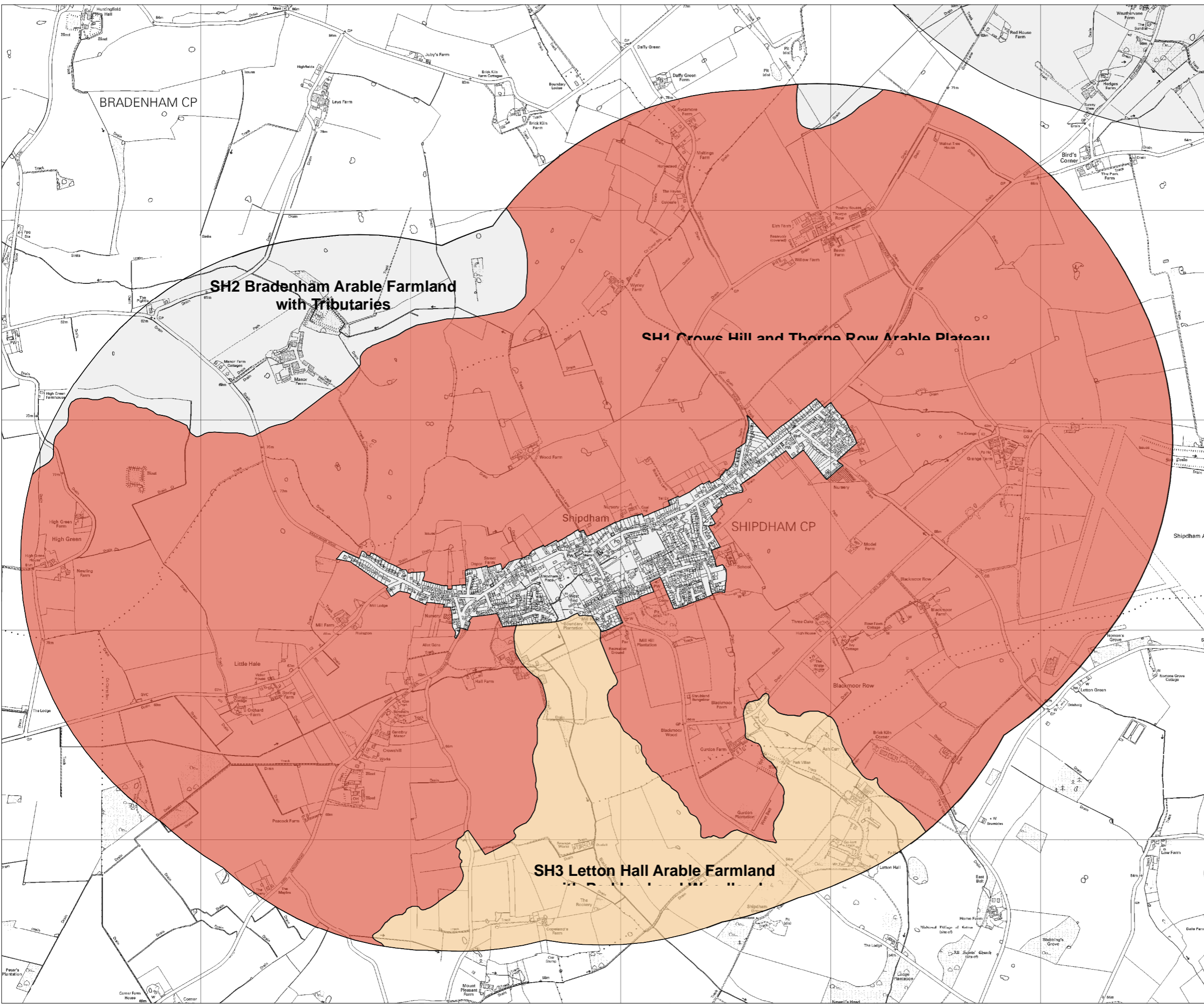




**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Shipdham Landscape  
Character Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer
- Sensitivity**
-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007







# SHI: CROWS HILL AND THORPE ROW ARABLE PLATEAU

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Crows Hill and Thorpe Row Arable Plateau* forms part of District Character Area E5: *Central Breckland Plateau*. It occupies the elevated land encircling the linear plateau village of Shipdham to the north, east and west and partially to the south. The local character area is defined by an elevated plateau landform with arable landcover predominating, although a smaller scale and pastoral field pattern persists to the northern edge of the settlement.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Central Breckland Plateau* character area is defined by arable landcover with large scale geometric field pattern defined by hedgerows of variable density and interspersed with occasional linear settlements. The local character area is therefore considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
Condition and quality is variable throughout the character area, with the southern and eastern parts representing a post Enclosure arable landscape defined by hedgerows, and the northern and eastern parts defined by agricultural intensification and interspersed with paddocks.	The southern and eastern parts of the character area, to the north of the settlement edge, exhibit a more intact landcover pattern and are therefore more inherently sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> These include field boundary and roadside hedgerows, both intact and remnant and associated mature hedgerow oak trees.  Landform is that of a gently undulating and elevated plateau.	The vegetation elements would take a considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore considered sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is evident in the narrow, linear settlement form and areas of remnant historic landscape structure, e.g. the small scale field systems at Church Lane.	The small scale field pattern and remnant historic landscape structure to the north of the settlement illustrates the historic landcover pattern and is therefore sensitive to change. Much of the northern and north western settlement edge forms part of the Conservation Area and as such is inherently

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
Built character ranges from vernacular red brick and colour rendered 18 <sup>th</sup> century buildings to the western approach to Shipdham (A1075) and late 20 <sup>th</sup> century brown/red brick 2 storey residential developments which predominates to the eastern and north eastern settlement edges.	sensitive.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Containment and enclosure is provided by the roadside and field boundary hedgerows to the west, north and south of Shipdham.	The landscape elements which create this contained intimate character would take significant time to replace if lost and are therefore inherently sensitive.
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The northern settlement edge incorporates a range of development styles and periods, including traditional and pre 19<sup>th</sup> Century vernacular in the area around the Church within the Conservation Area. Some 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> Century development is apparent to the A1075 approach to the settlement.</p> <p>Later and modern brick built 20<sup>th</sup> Century development characterises the settlement edge at Bradenham Road, and to the east and much of the southern settlement edge.</p>	<p>The central part of the northern edge, incorporating the church and the Conservation Area is the most inherently sensitive in view of the more intact historic character.</p> <p>The northern and western edges should therefore be conserved.</p> <p>The eastern edge in particular has potential for landscape enhancement due to its exposed character and more degraded landscape structure.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> Hedgerow boundaries to the south and west and the small scale landcover pattern to the north integrate the settlement edge with its landscape.</p>	The boundary features which integrate the settlement and its landscape setting are either the products of historic landscape processes or would otherwise take significant time to re create. They are therefore inherently sensitive.
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The western gateway (A1075) is formed by a triangle of land surrounded by a combination of traditional and modern housing.</p> <p>Other gateways include the wooded settlement edges at Mill Lodge and Swan Lane and the more open ones to Bradenham Road and Dereham Road (A1075 east). Letton Road forms a densely hedged rural road with hedgerow oaks and settlement is subtly perceived.</p>	A number of the gateways have a more historically intact character such as A1075 (west) and Letton Road. The eastern most gateway (Dereham Road/A1075 east) has an open exposed character. Gateways with a more intact historic character would be most inherently sensitive to change.
<p><b>Nodes:</b> Key nodes are formed by the triangle of land at the A1075 approach and by Church Lane to the north of the churchyard.</p>	These nodes have a relatively intact historic character and are therefore sensitive to change.

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>In spite of the elevated, gently undulating landform, containment is provided to the west and to the south by the network of field boundary hedgerows;</p> <p>Filtered long views are possible to the north and more open views to the east.</p> <p>There is intervisibility with the adjoining <i>Letton Hall Arable Farmland with Parkland</i> local character area (SH3)</p>	<p>Views to the east would be most inherently sensitive in view of their more open aspect and the extent of views.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Key views include those to the church spire from the principal settlement edges.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge filtered views are available to the north due to field boundary vegetation and more extensive views to the east across the network of arable fields.</p>	<p>The church and its setting form a sensitive element of views due to its listed status. Views to the Conservation Area which forms part of the northern settlement edge are also considered sensitive.</p> <p>The more open views to the east would be most inherently sensitive, in view of the extent of visibility.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> Density of structural vegetation varies across the character area, with a more intact field boundary network to the northern settlement edge.</p>	<p>Mitigation potential is judged to be relatively low in view of the predominantly open plateau character, although there would be scope to reinforce/enhance the field boundary hedgerow network. Mass woodland planting would not be appropriate to the plateau landscape character.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The overall sensitivity to change of this landscape character area is judged to be **moderate-high**. This is in view of the elevated plateau landscape which is relatively exposed in character, notably to the east, and also the smaller scale and more intact landscape which is evident to the northern settlement edge.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Conserve historic post enclosure field boundary hedges, hedgerow oaks and small scale field pattern beyond the small scale landscape to the north of the

settlement, ensuring continuity of cover through appropriate and sensitive arboricultural management, in addition to succession planting;

- Explore opportunities for the restoration and re instatement of hedgerow field boundaries to the north east and east of Shipdham;
- Reinforce the existing hedgerow network with appropriate and species rich native hedgerow mixes (to include hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, dogwood, field maple etc), gapping up where appropriate to enhance connectivity;
- Opportunities should be explored for the enhancement of arable field boundary margins through agri-environment/set aside schemes, creating further opportunities for habitat connectivity and satisfying the objectives of the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure that any future development respects the existing field boundary pattern and accommodates the retention of mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees/landscape structure;
- The rural character of the key roads leading into and out of Shipdham should be conserved, resisting upgrading works that could have an urbanising influence, e.g. kerbstones, traffic calming, and signage;
- Any future development to the settlement edge should aim to create a varied range of frontage treatments and spatial experiences, and a porous, transitional landscape edge to the settlement (as is apparent to the northern, western and southern settlement edges);
- New development should reflect the traditional vernacular in terms of local materials, built form, density and street scene, and should be of an appropriate and high quality design.

# SH3: LETTON HALL ARABLE FARMLAND WITH PARKLAND AND WOODLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Letton Hall Farmland with Parkland and Woodland* is located to the south western edge of the linear plateau edge village of Shipdham and forms part of the B4: *Blackwater Settled Tributary Farmland District Landscape Character Area*. It forms an undulating area of arable farmland with areas of wooded parkland and farmland associated with the Letton Hall Estate, 1km to the south east.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Blackwater Settled Tributary Farmland* character area is a gently undulating and predominantly arable landscape, with views often contained by landform and field boundary vegetation. Parklands are evident at Letton Hall. As such the local character area is considered broadly representative.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A post Enclosure agricultural landscape defined by geometric thorn dominated hedgerows and oak dominated woodland strips, notably to the southern edge of Shipdham.	Whilst the landscape is generally intact and in a good, well managed condition, it has few distinctive or high quality features. As such it is not considered inherently sensitive.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> The dense woodland buffering and undulating landform adjoining the plateau on which Shipdham is sited are distinctive natural features, as are oak and field maple hedgerow trees.	The hedgerow oaks and dense buffer strips would take a significant time to re create if lost and are therefore considered sensitive.
<b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Evidence of the cultural pattern is provided by the 18 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> Century Enclosure field boundary hedgerows, and by the moat and lost village near Letton Hall (SAMs), although these do not form part of the settlement edge.	Whilst the SAMs and their settings are inherently sensitive, they do not form part of the settlement edge.
<b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> This is an essentially rural landscape with a settled skyline to the north, which is softened by the wooded edge.	The structural vegetation and woodland which contributes to this quality is sensitive to change.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The southern settlement edge is formed by late 20 <sup>th</sup> Century two storey red/brown brick housing.	Settlement edge development does not form part of the Conservation Area and does not display any distinctive features. As such it is not inherently sensitive.  The densely wooded southern edge of Shipdham is an important urban edge and should be conserved.
<b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The southern settlement edge displays a wooded character, integrated with the wider landscape by field boundary vegetation and the undulating landform.	The woodland which provides this sense of integration would take significant time to replace if lost and is therefore sensitive to change.
<b>Gateways:</b> There are no gateways within the local character area – N/A.	
<b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b>  A gently undulating landform and field boundary vegetation provide containment and filter views.  Limited views are available to the settlement edge, in addition to prominent elements such as the church spire.	Views are generally not considered sensitive in view of their contained, filtered quality, although the church spire (listed building) and its setting are a sensitive component of views.
<b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b>  <b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> There is intervisibility with the settled parts of the adjacent character area SH1: <i>Crows Hill</i> , in addition to the church spire.  <b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge views are largely contained by landform and field boundary vegetation.	The church spire forms a sensitive component of these views in view of its listed status.          In view of the containment provided by landform and field boundary vegetation these views are not considered inherently sensitive.
<b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The settlement edge and local character area display a reasonably high density of structural landscape elements, including the oak dominated buffer to the southern settlement edge. Field boundary	In view of the existing density of structural vegetation, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
hedgerows and woodland blocks within Letton Hall parkland to the south east are also evident.	

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The overall sensitivity of the local landscape character area to change is judged to be **moderate**. This is in view of the containment provided by landform and field boundary/settlement edge vegetation.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### General Landscape Management

- Use appropriate and sympathetic arboricultural management to prolong the life of mature and veteran hedgerow trees, and plan for maintaining long term landscape structure through new native hedgerow tree planting (e.g. oak and field maple);
- Maintain and enhance existing field boundary hedgerows, gapping up where appropriate with a native thorn dominated hedgerow mix to ensure habitat connectivity;
- Further habitat connectivity could be provided by the enhancement of the field boundary margins through creation of grassland, fulfilling the objectives of the Norfolk BAP and the ECONet Project.

### Principles in relation to Development

- Ensure that existing structural vegetation and field boundaries/field patterns are retained in new development, as at the southern settlement edge;
- Development should respect the historic pattern of settlement on the plateau, with the undulating land to the south to retain an open, rural character;
- Maintain the porous and transitional, well wooded settlement edge;
- Consider a range of frontage/spatial relationships to create a porous settlement edge integrating both landscape and townscape. Appropriate native planting mixes should be used to the settlement edge to integrate future development (e.g. oak, field maple, hawthorn, blackthorn).

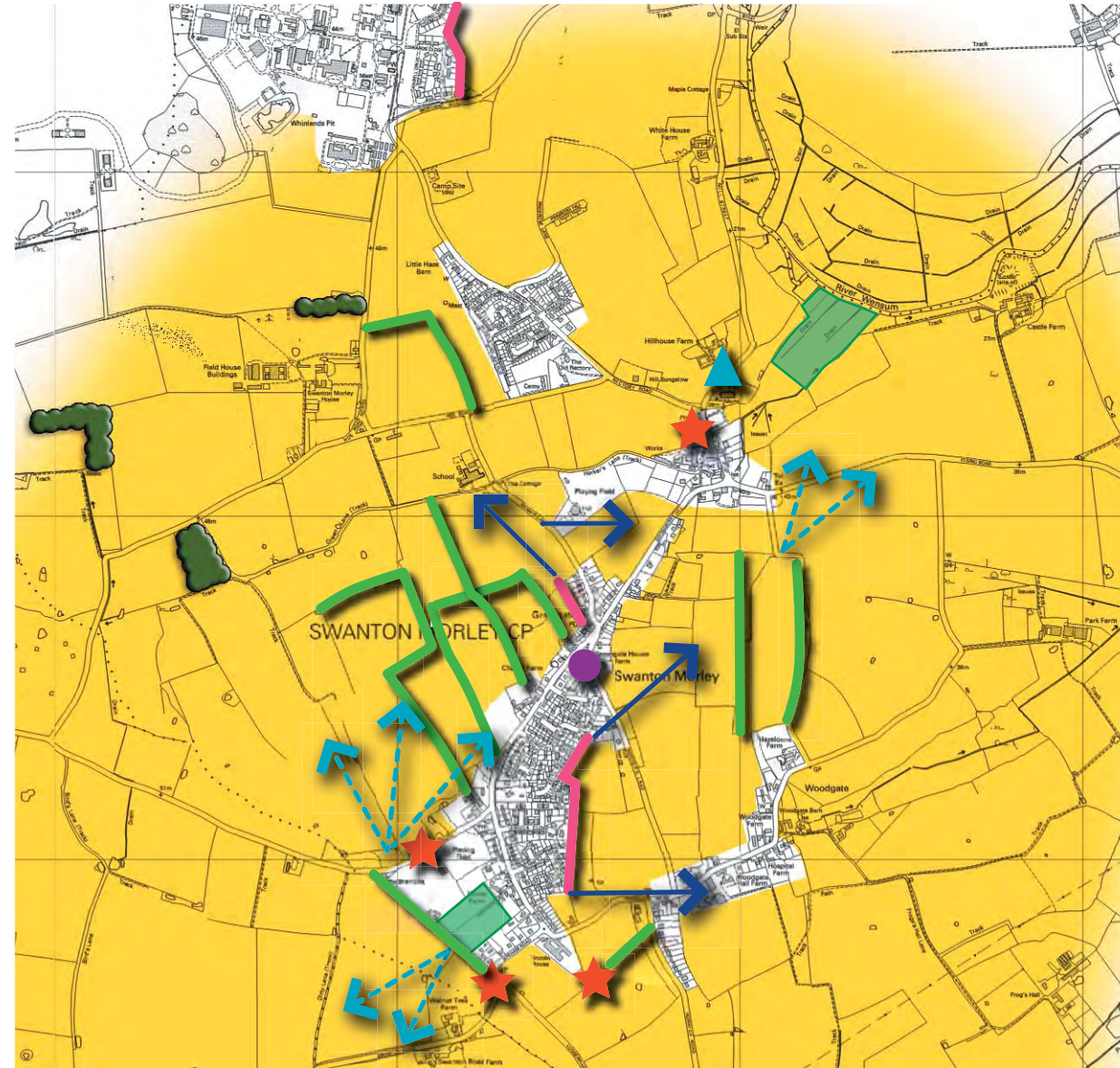














## SWANTON MORLEY

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
E8 Dereham Plateau	Enclosed Arable Farmland	SM1 Northall Green Enclosed Arable Farmland
B6 Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Enclosed Tributary Farmland	SM2 Woodgate Enclosed Tributary Farmland
A4 River Wensum and Blackwater	Valley Floor	SM3 Castle Farm Valley Floor

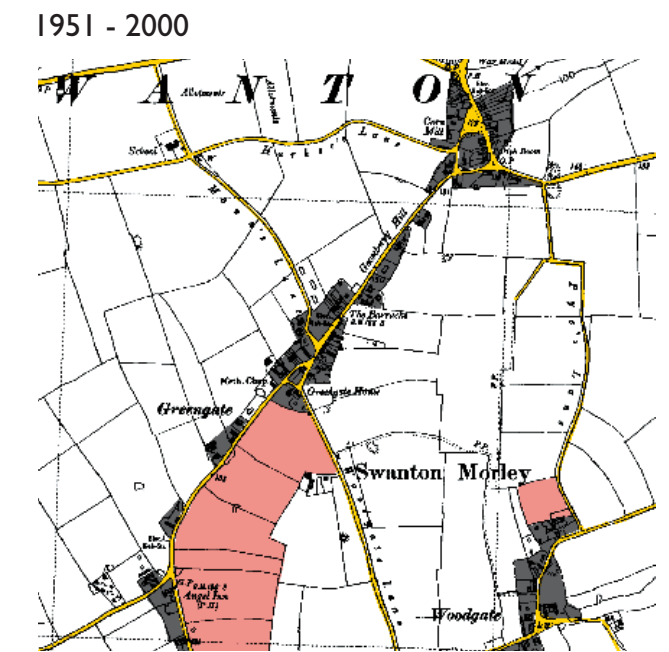
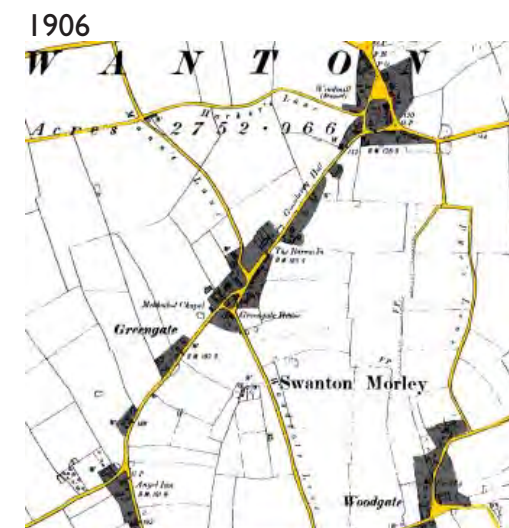
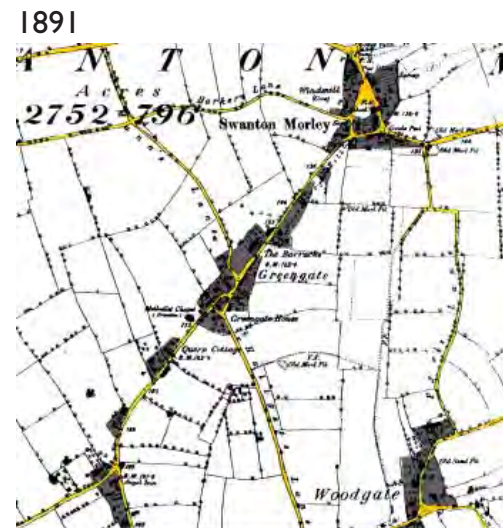
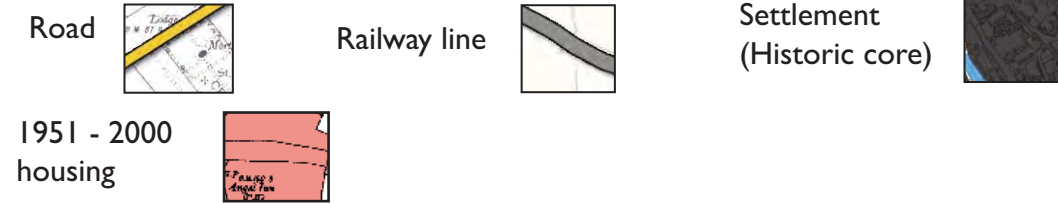




## Swanton Morley Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  Woodland
-  Agricultural land
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Structural vegetation which integrates edge
-  Key gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Prominent skyline feature
-  Node

## Historic Growth of Swanton Morley





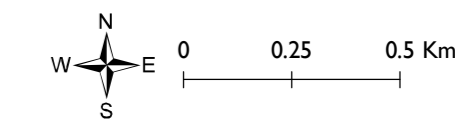
# Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Swanton Morley Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

## Key

1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

## Sensitivity

- Low
- Low / Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate / High
- High
- Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007





# SM1: NORTHALL GREEN ENCLOSED ARABLE FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

SM1: *Northall Green Enclosed Arable Farmland* forms a significant part of the wider E8: *Dereham Plateau* district character area and lies to the west of the settlement of Swanton Morley, considering an area extending 1.5km from the settlement edge. Swanton Morley is a linear village to the edge of the plateau and partly dipping into the adjacent SM2: *Woodgate Enclosed Tributary Farmland* character area, with the hamlet of Woodgate in close proximity to the east. The local character area is defined by arable farmland interspersed with a largely intact network of mixed native hedgerows and hedgerow oaks.

### Representation of District LCA character area

*Dereham Plateau* is an elevated and predominantly flat arable farmland landscape, with field boundaries defined by mixed hedgerows and hedgerow trees, interspersed with occasional blocks of farm woodland.

As such the local character area is considered broadly representative of the wider district character area, in view of its arable land use and the density of field boundary vegetation and farm woodland.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A generally intact plateau farmland landscape, with a network of mixed field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and in managed condition. Some settlement edge influences are apparent, e.g. school playing fields.	The intactness and managed character of the landscape and the fact that a number of the landscape elements contributing to quality (such as hedgerow oaks, including some veteran trees) would take considerable time to replace if lost, render the landscape sensitive in terms of condition and quality.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal natural elements include the mixed field boundary hedgerow and the mature hedgerow oaks trees. Whilst predominantly an arable landscape localised areas of pasture are distinctive elements.  New native tree planting is evident to the roadsides to the west of the settlement.	These elements would take significant time to replace and are therefore inherently sensitive.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>The area is characterised by an elevated and only very gently undulating plateau landform.</p>	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Principal cultural elements include the minor parkland and estate of Hoe Hall (a house of 17<sup>th</sup> Century origin, and much reconstructed and extended in gault brick in the 1840s), to the western edge of the local character area.</p>	<p>Hoe Hall and its parkland setting forms part of the Conservation Area encompassing the hamlet of Hoe. It is therefore inherently sensitive, although is not affected by the settlement edge.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> A rural landscape of tranquil character, defined by hedgerows and a network of narrow rural lanes. There is little evidence of the influence of the settlement across much of the character area, except in localised areas where roofline are visible, and in the area around the school, playing fields and the large, modern village hall.</p>	<p>The landscape is sensitive in terms of its rural, tranquil character. The sensitivity is lower where aesthetic character has been affected by settlement edge land uses or influences e.g. around the village hall and playing fields.</p>
<p><b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The western edge of the settlement is characterised by 1970s brick built development.  The eastern edge comprises a range of development types including brick built vernacular and later and modern development.</p>	<p>The more intact northern end of the eastern settlement edge displays a range of vernacular building materials and styles and as such has a higher sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> Much of the eastern edge has a permeable, integrated character, incorporating existing field boundary and roadside hedgerows. This is also apparent to the south western edge although parts of the western edge are exposed.</p>	<p>The better integrated, contained and vegetated edges would be more affected by change than the more exposed western settlement edge and as such they have a higher inherent sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include Mann's Lane which forms the north western approach to the settlement and Woodgate Lane to the eastern edge, in addition to Tuddenham Road and Hoe Road South.  Mann's Lane forms a low key, hedged approach to the settlement, with mature hedgerow oaks, although some exposed parts of the settlement edge are visible.  Woodgate Lane is a well hedged gateway characterised by both traditional vernacular and modern development in red brick and flint.</p>	<p>The gateways form positive approaches to the settlement. Hedgerow vegetation and mature hedgerow trees are an essential part of the character of the gateways and these elements would be sensitive to change. The sensitivity of the Manns Lane gateway is reduced slightly by the visibility of the 1970s housing at this point, including chalet bungalows with steeply pitched roofs.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
The Tuddenham Road and Hoe Road South gateways form a well hedged and vegetated contained approach to the settlement.	
<b>Nodes:</b> The principal node within the character area is formed by the junction of Woodgate Lane and Gooseberry Hill (main road). This junction is characterised by traditional red brick buildings from the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century and earlier.	Although relatively intact in terms of character this node does not form part of a village Conservation Area and none of the buildings are listed. It is not therefore inherently sensitive.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Views are generally filtered and contained by field boundary hedgerow vegetation, notably to the west of the settlement.</p>	In view of the containment provided by field boundary vegetation these views are not considered to be sensitive.
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The western edge of the settlement is visible from Mann's Lane.</p> <p>The distinctive and prominent Perpendicular tower of the parish church to the northern end of the village forms a key element of all views to the settlement edge.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Although the landform of the plateau is elevated and only very gently undulating, views south and west from the settlement edge are filtered due to the presence of field boundary hedgerows. More extensive views are available eastwards.</p>	<p>The church is a listed building and is therefore considered a sensitive element, as is its setting.</p> <p>Views eastwards are considered most sensitive, due to their more open aspect.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape has a high proportion of relatively intact mixed field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow oaks are a common feature.</p>	Mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high in view of the existing density of field boundary vegetation. Blanket woodland cover would be inappropriate to the arable plateau farmland character of the landscape.

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is judged to be **moderate**. This is in view of the filtered character of views and the relative lack of visibility to much of the settlement

edge, resulting from the relatively intact structural elements such as field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- New native tree planting on the roadsides to the west of the settlement should be reinforced with double staggered mixed native hedgerow planting to further restore and enhance the landscape structure, and to provide habitat connectivity;
- Employ appropriate and sympathetic arboricultural management to the mature and veteran hedgerow oaks, particularly where these form a positive approach to the settlement e.g. at Mann's Lane;
- In addition to managing existing hedgerow trees to prolong their lifespan, reinforce with new native hedgerow tree planting to ensure sustained continuity of tree cover.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- In view of the elevated nature of the settlement, new development should not form the skyline. Use existing areas of well integrated development (e.g. to the eastern and western settlement edges) as a template in terms of building heights and rooflines;
- Preserve the predominantly linear form of the settlement, avoiding further nucleation and/or coalescence with the adjoining hamlet of Woodgate;
- Development should create a porous, transitional and well wooded edge in order to integrate with the wider landscape;
- Use existing local materials vocabulary (e.g. red brick and flint) as a template for new development.

# SM2: WOODGATE ENCLOSED TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

SM2: *Woodgate Enclosed Tributary Farmland* lies to the east and north of the linear settlement of Swanton Morley as it straddles the plateau and lower lying tributary farmland, and forms a small component of the wider B6: *Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland Character Area*, considering an area of 1.5km radius from the settlement edge and defined by a network of enclosed arable fields of more undulating character than the adjacent SM1: *Northall Green Enclosed Arable Farmland* character area. Within the local character area the wooded skylines of *Bylaugh Park* are also distinctive, as is the predominantly arable land use interspersed with field boundary hedgerows and occasional woodland blocks.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider district character area is defined by arable fields intersected by minor tributary drains feeding the Rivers Wensum and Tud. At these points small scale, ecologically diverse wetland features are apparent, such as meadow, wet woodland and marshland. Wooded skylines are a distinctive feature, e.g. *Bylaugh Park*.

As such the local character area is considered broadly representative of the district character area, although there is a comparative absence of wetland features due to the elevated aspect adjacent to the plateau.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
A rural landscape of managed character, comprising of arable agriculture interspersed with some pastoral fields and a network of mixed native hedges. The settlement edge has little influence at this point.	The landscape is largely intact and of a managed character and as such would be sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Key natural elements include hedgerows lining the network of sunken lanes, hedgerow trees including oak and ash and areas of rough grassland, notably to field boundaries and roadside verges to the east of Swanton Morley.  Landform undulation is distinct as it dips	Elements such as the hedgerows and the hedgerow trees indicate historic landscape character and landcover pattern. They would take considerable time to replace if lost and are therefore inherently sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
towards the Wensum Valley to the north.	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Principal built cultural elements include the group of vernacular red brick cottages at Swanton Morley village green which form part of the setting of the parish church on the elevated land to the north. Other elements include the range of traditional cottages at Woodgate and the buildings of Woodgate Hall Farm.</p>	<p>The cottages are unlisted and do not form part of a village Conservation Area. As such their sensitivity is not inherently high, although the setting of the parish church is of high sensitivity. Pevsner notes that the parish church of Swanton Morley is 'outstandingly interesting' as an example of early Perpendicular architecture.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Key elements include the narrow rural lanes which form the approach to the settlement. Hedgerows provide containment at points and the essentially rural landscape is characterised by a variety of spatial experiences due to variation in structural vegetation and its density.</p>	<p>The elements which combine to create aesthetic and perceptual character also illustrate the historic landcover pattern and are therefore inherently sensitive.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Much of the northern settlement edge comprises traditional red brick terraced cottage development, dating primarily from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and earlier.</p> <p>The eastern edge comprises a range of development types including traditional brick and flint vernacular, later and modern (including 1970s) infill development and late 20<sup>th</sup> Century development based on traditional vernacular.</p>	<p>In view of its intact historic character and built pattern the northern settlement edge is considered most sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The northern edge is contained by falling landform and by boundary hedgerow vegetation, whilst the eastern edge is permeable in character due to hedgerows and field boundary vegetation, in addition to some coniferous planting.</p>	<p>Both of these settlement edges are well integrated with their wider landscape and therefore sensitive to change. The eastern edge's sensitivity is locally reduced by areas of coniferous planting.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Elsing Road forms the north eastern gateway into the settlement, approached via a semi sunken lane bordered by dense native hedges, and including a number of traditional red brick and tile vernacular cottages.</p>	<p>This gateway creates a positive approach to the settlement which is generally historically intact and would therefore be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> The junction of Elsing Road and Gooseberry Hill creates the principal node within the local character area, with a range of traditional red brick cottages drawn tight to the street frontage to the</p>	<p>This node is relatively intact in terms of historic built character and is considered to be inherently sensitive to change.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
west of the Elsing Road gateway.	

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>Filtered views are available to the east of the settlement, although these are contained by the undulating landform and by the density of field boundary hedgerows.</p>	<p>Due to the level of containment provided by landform and field boundary vegetation, these views are not considered to be inherently sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> From Pye's Lane, filtered views are available to the eastern edge of the settlement, filtered by the density of the hedgerows which contain the network of semi sunken lanes at this point.</p> <p>The church tower forms a component of views to the settlement edge.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge, views eastwards are generally contained by landform and field boundary vegetation. Views eastwards from Elsing Road in particular are greatly restricted by rising landform and the density of the hedgerow vegetation.</p>	<p>The Church and its setting are an inherently sensitive component of these views due to the church's significant historical interest and architectural value.</p> <p>Due to their contained nature and the restricted visibility, these views are not considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape has a relatively high density of structural vegetation, in terms of field boundary hedgerow vegetation.</p>	<p>Mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high in view of the density of the existing field boundary vegetation. Mass woodland planting would be inappropriate to the character of the landscape.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

The sensitivity of the local landscape character area to change is judged to be **moderate-high** overall. This is in view of the intact landscape structure which has also survived to much of the settlement edge. It is considered that there would be extremely limited capacity to accommodate further development without altering the predominantly linear settlement form at this point. As such the principles in relation to development primarily concern existing development and opportunities to enhance the settlement's interface with the landscape.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Through appropriate arboricultural management, conserve and enhance the existing hedgerows which form the approach to the settlement and help to set it within its landscape (e.g. Elsing Road/Pye's Lane);
- Gap up hedgerows where appropriate with native species to ensure habitat connectivity;
- Explore opportunities for the further creation of grassland field margins to the eastern edge of Swanton Morley to enhance connectivity for wildlife and to assist in delivering BAP Priority Habitat targets.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Ensure that Elsing Road and the associated gateway continues to maintain its narrow rural character, avoiding traffic calming/upgrading pressures which could have an urbanising influence;
- Development should create a porous/transitional and well integrated edge, making use of native species to create an appropriate interface with the wider landscape;
- Avoid the use of coniferous/gardenesque species which could have a sub urbanising influence.

# SM3: CASTLE FARM VALLEY FLOOR

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

SM3: *Castle Farm Valley Floor* forms a discrete component of the wider A4: *Wensum and Blackwater Character Area*, adjacent to the northern settlement edge of the linear village of Swanton Morley. The settlement lies predominantly on the more elevated land within the adjacent SM1: *Northall Green* / SM2: *Woodgate* character areas, although the northern settlement edge abuts character area SM3. The local character area considers a radius of 1.5km extending from the settlement edge and contains a range of wetland features, including willow scrub, rush pasture and a network of small scale pastoral fields defined by hedgerows and ditches draining into the River Wensum.

### Representation of District LCA character area

The wider *Wensum and Blackwater Character Area* is defined by a broad shallow valley landform, a range of riparian features such as willow and alder lined ditches, black poplars and wet unimproved meadow. Due to drift deposits of sand and gravel there are isolated areas of heathy grassland in addition to extensive mineral extraction sites, both redundant (open water) and active.

As such the local character area is considered broadly representative of the more intact parts of the wider landscape character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
An intact area of lowland river valley, overlooked by the Perpendicular parish church, and incorporating areas of rush meadow and grazing pasture.	This landscape is a mosaic of diverse elements which are of a high quality and which create distinct sense of place. The landscape is in a managed condition and is considered to be inherently sensitive to change.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Principal elements include very mature hedgerow oaks, areas of willow scrub, field boundary hedgerows of variable density and rush meadow/small scale pasture.  The course of the River Wensum (SSSI and SAC) flows through the local character area, and the landform is that of a broad, well defined valley.	These elements represent the historic character of the valley floor, and would take considerable time to replace if lost. They are therefore sensitive.  The River Wensum is inherently sensitive in view of the nature conservation designations.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The distinctive and prominent parish church, dating primarily from the late 14<sup>th</sup> Century and displaying a tall, narrow west tower, is the primary cultural element within this landscape.</p> <p>The 19<sup>th</sup> Century estate of Bylaugh Park lies outside of the local character area but its wooded skyline is a prominent element in northward views from the character area.</p>	<p>The church is a listed building and is therefore inherently sensitive, as is its setting.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> An intimate, small scale landscape of rural character and defined primarily by grazing pasture and wetland scrub. The landscape has a strongly textured, patchwork quality.</p>	<p>The elements which create this textured character would take considerable time to re create if lost and are considered sensitive.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> The northern settlement edge adjoins the local character area and comprises a range of vernacular terraced red brick and painted cottages, in addition to a bowling green. The parish church is a prominent feature to the outer area of the settlement edge.</p>	<p>This represents an intact historic edge to the settlement and would therefore be sensitive to change. The church and its setting would have the highest sensitivity to change.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The settlement edge is permeable at this point, partly contained by landform and field boundary vegetation. It is generally integrated with its wider landscape.</p>	<p>In view of its integration with the landscape the edge is considered sensitive to change, although less so adjacent to the bowling green and its associated ornamental boundary hedging.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The church, which occupies an elevated promontory on the valley side, and its associated flint and brick walled, yew lined churchyard, forms the key gateway into the settlement.</p>	<p>The church forms a positive and historically intact gateway, which would be inherently sensitive in view of its status as a listed building.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>There are wide views across the Wensum Valley from the elevated ground within the churchyard.</p> <p>There is some intervisibility with the adjacent SM1: <i>Northall Green</i> / SM2: <i>Woodgate</i> character areas on the more elevated land to the south.</p>	<p>In view of the extent of visibility, these views would be sensitive to change.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The church and adjacent group of cottages are visible from the valley sides, and from Mill Street, leading down from Bylaugh Park.</p> <p>The church is a key landmark in all views to the settlement edge.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge, most notably the elevated ground within the churchyard, views of the valley floor are filtered by hedgerow and scrub vegetation, although wide views are available over the northern part of the Wensum Valley, with the wooded skyline of Bylaugh Park forming a prominent backdrop.</p>	<p>Due to the listed status the church and its setting are a sensitive component of these views.</p> <p>Due to the extent of views and the hinterland provided by Bylaugh Park, these views are considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The landscape incorporates a range of structural elements, including very mature hedgerow oaks, hedgerows and areas of willow scrub.</p>	<p>In view of the density and variety of structural landscape elements, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high, provided the intimate, pastoral character was maintained.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **high**, in view of the local character area's role in forming the setting of the historically important parish church, and the quality of the valley floor landscape. It is therefore considered that development could not be accommodated within this edge without impairing either the setting of the church or the quality of the landscape. Guidelines therefore relate primarily to landscape management principles and to considerations in respect of existing development and its relationship to the wider landscape.

## **LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES**

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Conserve mature hedgerow oak trees and prolong their lifespan through appropriate and sensitive arboricultural management, whilst instigating new native hedgerow tree planting to ensure continuity of cover;
- Instigate appropriate management regimes to control extent of willow scrub to valley sides, e.g. rotational coppicing;
- Continue to manage the network of small scale pastoral fields to the north of the church through grazing regimes.

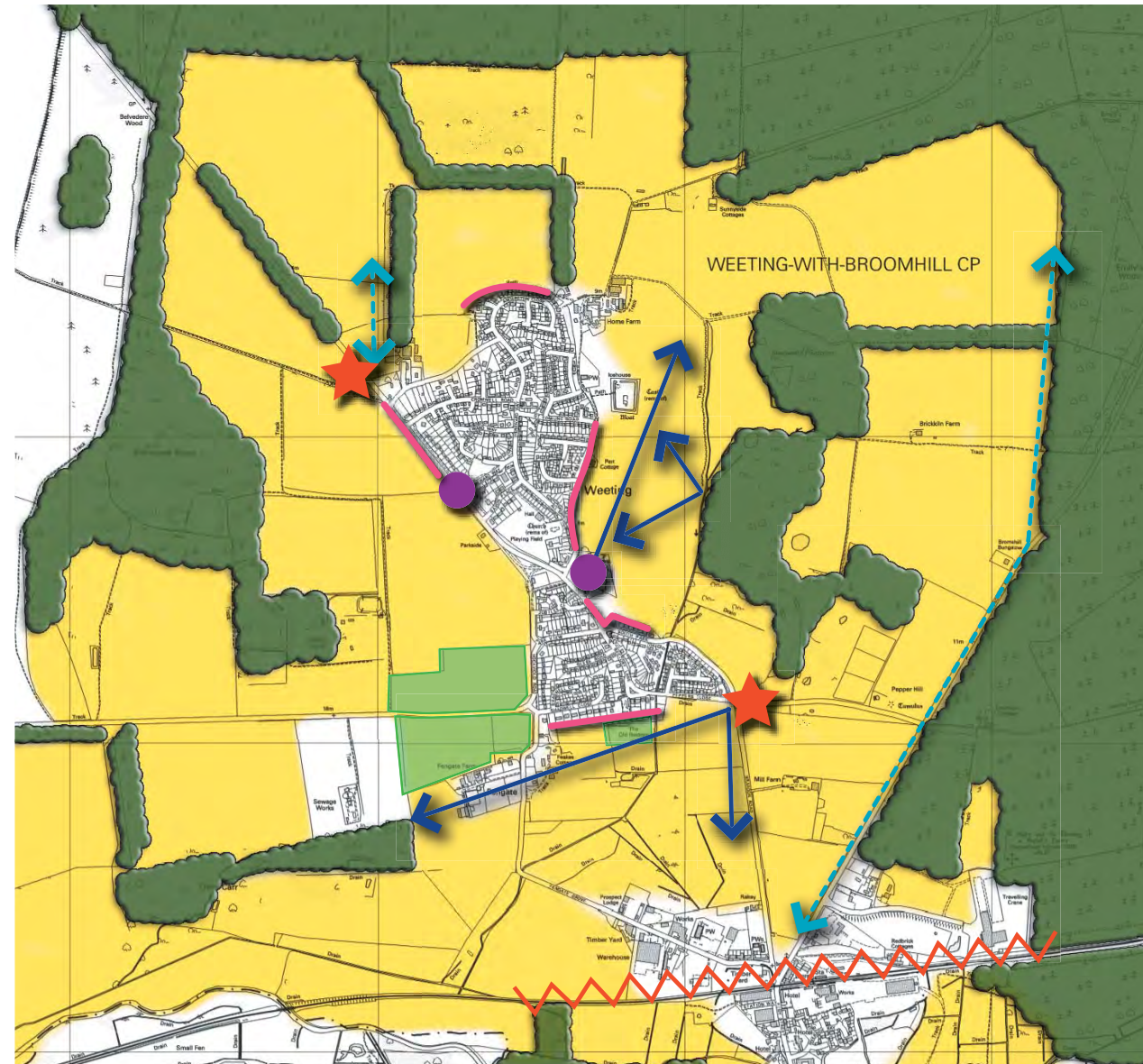
### **Principles in relation to Development**

- Conserve the setting of the church and churchyard;
- Avoid ornamental boundary treatments particularly where these occur in close proximity to the valley floor, sides and associated wetland habitats (as at the bowling club).

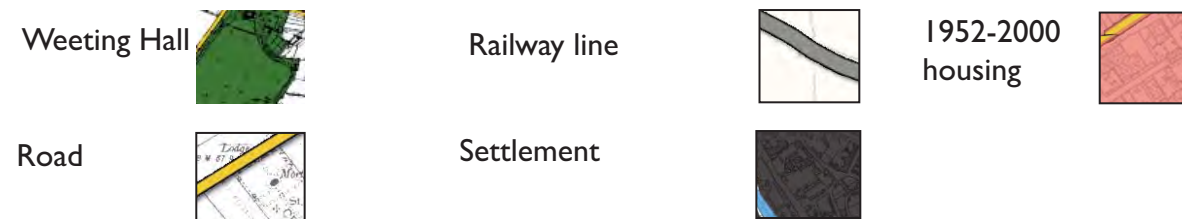
## WEETING

<b>District Character Area</b>	<b>Local Landscape Type</b>	<b>Local Landscape Character Area</b>
CI Brecks of Thetford Forest	Plantation and Farmland	WE1 Weeting Castle Plantation and Farmland
CI Brecks of Thetford Forest	Woodland and Wetland	WE2 Fengate Woodland and Wetland





### Historic Growth of Weeting



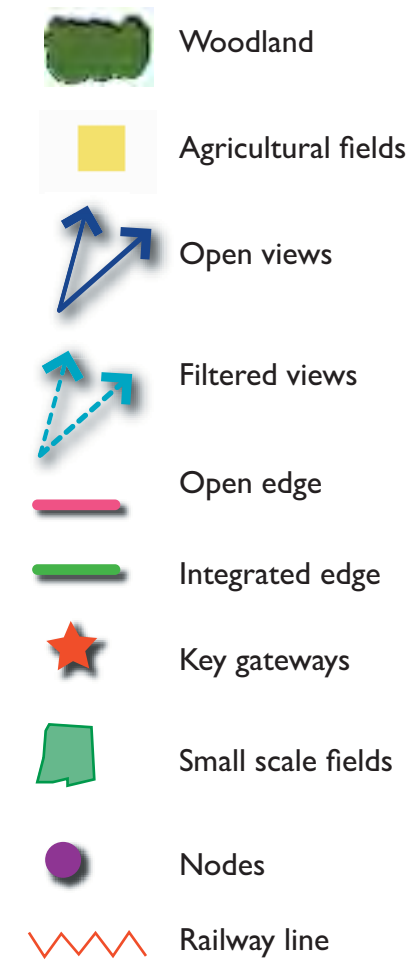
1887



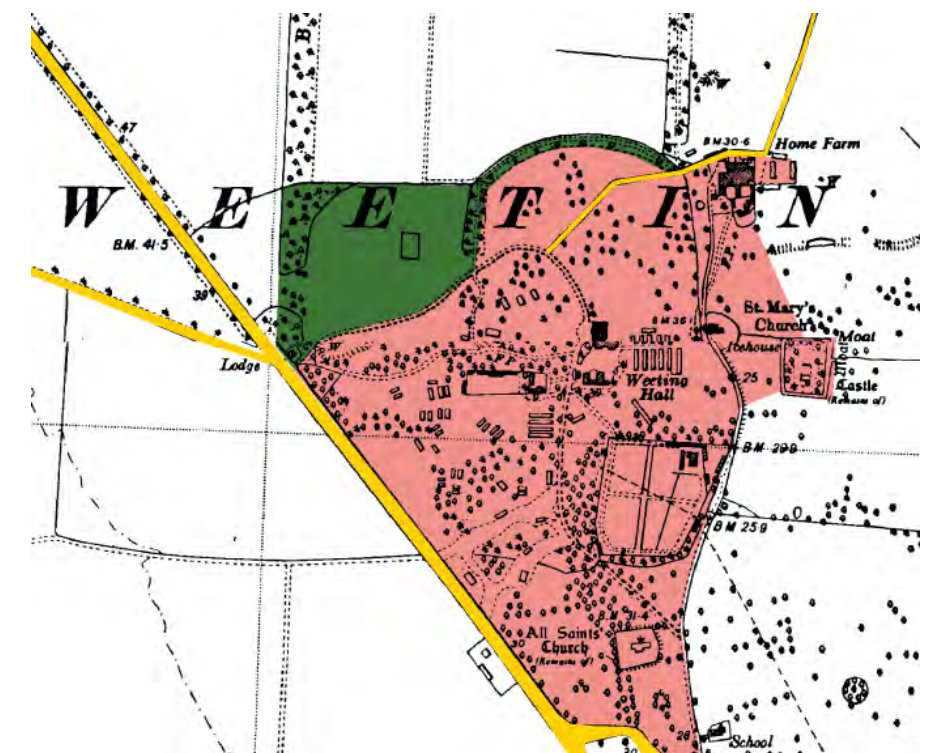
1906



### Weeting Settlement Fringe Analysis





1952 - 2000











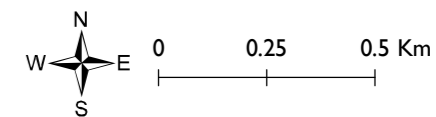
**Breckland Settlement Fringe  
Landscape Assessment  
Weeting Landscape Character  
Area Sensitivity**

**Key**

-  Breckland Boundary
-  1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

**Sensitivity**

-  Low
-  Low / Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate / High
-  High
-  Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council  
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007







# WEI: WEETING CASTLE PLANTATION AND FARMLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Weeting Castle Plantation and Farmland* forms a discrete part of the District Character Area C1: *The Brecks of Thetford Forest*. The local character area considers a radius extending to 1.5 km from the edge of the nucleated village of Weeting, which lies entirely within the wider C1: *The Brecks of Thetford Forest* Character Area. The local character area is defined by large scale blocks of mixed plantation woodland interspersed with mixed farmland.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Brecks of Thetford Forest* character area is a gently undulating landscape overlain with extensive mixed commercial plantation woodland. Views are essentially contained and confined by the plantation blocks, creating an intimate and small scale landscape, with a clear sense of enclosure, in spite of the large scale of the landscape elements. Relatively few areas of open land punctuate the landscape, other than remnant areas of heathy grassland and small scale agricultural fields.

As such the local character area is considered broadly representative of the wider district character area. Larger areas of open agricultural land surround the settlement at points, although these are representative of localised variations found elsewhere within the character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
Landscape quality and condition is variable, with the eastern edge adjacent to Weeting Castle and church influenced by domestic garden boundary treatments including close board fencing. A considerably more intact character is apparent to the western edge, with mixed hedgerows and wooded strips evident. Pastoral fields and the hinterland of Thetford Forest lie beyond.	The sensitivity of the landscape is variable with the eastern part having a lower inherent sensitivity than the more intact western section.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Important elements are field trees (including alders), scots pine tree lines and the dense coniferous and more occasionally mixed plantation woodland	The vegetation elements would take a significant time to re create if lost and are therefore considered inherently sensitive.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>of Breckland Forest, which forms the hinterland.</p> <p>Landform is very gently undulating throughout the local character area.</p>	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> Cultural pattern is represented by the much restored round towered church to the eastern edge of the village and by the remains of Weeting Castle (SAM). 'The Row' opposite the village green is an important line of late medieval thatched cottages. Other historic elements include the site of the former second parish church and remnants of red and blue brick 'diaper work' walls associated with the now destroyed Weeting Hall (absorbed within the housing estate adjacent to the church), together with the lodge house at All Saints.</p>	<p>The setting of the Church and the SAM are considered inherently sensitive. 'The Row' and the existing thatched school building are listed buildings and therefore their settings are sensitive to new development.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual</b></p>	
<p>Primary aesthetic and perceptual characteristics are those associated with the plantation hinterland of the Brecks.</p>	<p>The plantations are important in defining the setting of the settlements and are considered sensitive.</p>
<p><b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b></p>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Settlement edges are variable, with the southern edge defined by 1960s bungalow development and a mix of development periods and styles to the eastern edge including traditional vernacular associated with The Row and the village green, in addition to 1970s development on the former site of Weeting Hall. The northern edge is defined by 1970s cul-de-sac development and recent infill development, whilst the western edge comprises both traditional buildings (e.g. Lynn Lodge – early 19<sup>th</sup> Century and 1970s low density development largely screened by existing hedgerows and wooded belts, interspersed with relatively extensive areas of green space.</p>	<p>The southern and eastern edges are often relatively exposed in character and are therefore considered of lower inherent sensitivity. However certain elements, such as the traditional buildings around the village green to the eastern edge, would result in a higher sensitivity.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The southern and eastern edges are largely exposed, with close board fencing forming the garden boundaries adjacent to the church, whilst the western edge is permeable and well integrated with its wider landscape due to hedgerow vegetation (opportunities for physical</p>	<p>The northern and western edges are well integrated with the wider landscape and are therefore considered to have a higher inherent sensitivity to change than the southern and eastern edges.</p>

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
connections and filtered views in/out). The northern edge is generally contained by woodland and field boundary hedgerows.	
<p><b>Gateways:</b> Key gateways include the southern approach to the village at Brandon Road and the northern approach, also accessed via Brandon Road. The northern gateway is low key and transitional in character, framed by native hedgerow and trees to both sides, together with Lynn Lodge (estate gatehouse) and associated estate farmland.</p> <p>The southern gateway is of a more exposed and degraded character, with mixed and heavily flailed, part replanted hedgerows and the exposed southern edge visible.</p>	The northern gateway creates a positive approach to the settlement that would be sensitive to change.
<p><b>Nodes:</b> Key nodes are the village green and 'The Row', in addition to the wide road junction associated with the public house and filling station to the western edge of the settlement.</p>	The historic village green and the setting to the associated listed buildings would be most inherently sensitive.

### Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>To the east, expansive views are available to the Brecks hinterland, whilst filtered views are available to the forest to the west.</p>	Views to the east would be the most inherently sensitive in visual terms due to their open aspect and comparative absence of structural landscape screening.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> Views are available of the southern settlement edge from Brandon Road on the approach to Weeting. In addition views are available back towards parts of the eastern edge from Weeting Castle and the approach to the parish church.</p> <p>The church tower and the remains of the castle form a key element in views to the eastern edge and from the east. 'The Row' is also visible in views from the east.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> Open views are available from much of the eastern edge although these are limited by the plantation blocks in the middle ground. From the western edge, views are heavily filtered by hedgerow vegetation, such that only glimpses of plantation woodland are visible.</p>	<p>The church tower (listed building) and the castle (SAM) are considered inherently sensitive elements of views, as are their settings.</p> <p>Views from the eastern edge would have a higher sensitivity due to their open aspect.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> There is a relatively high density of structural vegetation in the character area due to the blocks of plantation woodland.</p>	<p>In view of the existing level of woodland cover and structural landscape, mitigation potential is judged to be relatively high, although remaining areas of open heath and agricultural land should be conserved.</p>

### Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate-high**. This is in view of the proximity of the settlement to the SSSI's to the west and the sensitive historic elements of the settlement edge to the east, notably the church, the castle and the village green including 'The Row'. Although containment is provided by hedgerow and woodland vegetation to the north and west, potential for expansion would be limited without creating further nucleation of the urban form. The potential for longer views from the eastern settlement edge creates a visually sensitive relationship between landscape and settlement edge. Two small sites already have planning permission for development adjacent to the eastern edge, and this focuses the considerations of the guidelines below.

### LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

## **General Landscape Management**

- Employ appropriate and sympathetic arboricultural management to remaining scots pine tree lines adjacent to the settlement edge, to ensure sustained continuity of tree cover;
- Explore opportunities for the creation of new scots pine tree lines/native hedgerows e.g. to reinforce existing retained belts of vegetation to the western settlement edge;
- Manage existing hedgerows and tree belts to the northern and western edges of the settlement to ensure density of cover, gapping up with native planting where appropriate;
- Avoid the use of coniferous/ornamental plantings where this could have a sub urbanising influence to the settlement edge, particularly to the setting of the church and the SAM.

## **Principles in relation to Development**

- Use historic density pattern and materials palette in the village core to set the template for new development;
- Consider existing pattern of development, e.g. single storey dwellings to the edge, to ensure a development edge which integrates successfully with its wider landscape, preserving existing skylines and views out;
- Ensure that new development makes appropriate provision for usable and accessible green space, rather than areas of under utilised green space as represented by existing development to the western edge;
- Encourage the use of native planting to development boundaries, rather than boundary treatments which could have a sub urbanising influence, such as close board fencing;
- Ensure that future development and streetscape faces and interacts with the settlement edge rather than away from it;
- Conserve the setting of the parish church and the castle ruins (SAM), in addition to that of the village green and 'The Row'.



# WE2: FENGATE WOODLAND AND WETLAND

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## DESCRIPTION

### Location and Summary

*Fengate Woodland and Wetland* lies to the south of the village of Weeting, an increasingly nucleated settlement occupying much of the former site of Weeting Hall and parkland and set entirely within the wider C1: *Brecks of Thetford Forest* landscape. The local character area considers an area extending to 1.5 km from the settlement, or otherwise truncated by the District boundary where this occurs within the 1.5 km zone. It forms a small area of localised variation, defined by the course of the Ouse, associated wetland vegetation and pastoral fields, within the wider C1: *Brecks of Thetford Forest* Character Area.

### Representation of District LCA character area:

The wider *Brecks of Thetford Forest* character area is a gently undulating landscape overlain with extensive mixed commercial plantation woodland. Views are essentially contained and confined by the plantation blocks, creating an intimate and small scale landscape, with a clear sense of enclosure, in spite of the large scale of the landscape elements. Relatively few areas of open land punctuate the landscape, other than remnant areas of heathy grassland and small scale agricultural fields.

The District wide Landscape Character Assessment has identified the presence of a more open and pastoral character associated with the course of the River Ouse although this is a local variation. Consequently *Fengate Woodland and Wetland* is not considered representative of the wider character area.

## EVALUATION

### Landscape Character Sensitivities

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<b>Landscape Quality and Condition</b>	
Some intact areas of grazing and rush pasture survive, in addition to scots pine tree lines. Otherwise the landscape has a degraded quality at the settlement edge due to the influence of overhead wires and coniferous species.	The degrading influence of the conifers and overhead wires reduces the inherent sensitivity of the landscape.
<b>Individual Elements</b>	
<b>Natural:</b> Important natural elements include the scots pine tree lines, willow belts and alder field trees, in addition to the areas of floodplain meadow and grazed pasture associated with the Ouse and field drains at Fengate.  Mature coppiced ash trees are present at	These elements are representative of the historic landscape character of the area. A number, such as the trees would take considerable time to re create if lost and are therefore inherently sensitive. Breckland Farmland SSSI would be inherently sensitive to change.



Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>Fengate Drove.</p> <p>Breckland Farmland SSSI, which provides a breeding ground for Stone Curlew, lies partly within the local character area.</p> <p>Landform is that of a gently undulating, broad and shallow valley.</p>	
<p><b>Cultural (inc. built/architectural):</b> The farm buildings of Fengate Farm including the distinctive brick estate wall and the brick and flint gatehouse are the principal historic built elements. The site of a Romano-British settlement (SAM) lies at the outer edge of the local character area.</p>	<p>The SAM is considered inherently sensitive although it is outside of the settlement edge. The farm buildings and associated vernacular boundary features are important in defining the sense of place in terms of stylistic traditions and use of local materials.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic/perceptual:</b> Principal aesthetic and perceptual elements are the open pastoral fields and the willow lined ditches and drains, in addition to the alder field trees.</p>	<p>These elements would take significant time to re create if lost and are therefore sensitive.</p>
<b>Character of the Settlement Edge</b>	
<p><b>Settlement Edge Development Type:</b> Development to the southern edge of Weeting adjacent to the character area is principally 1960s/1970s brick built bungalow development, in addition to the vernacular buildings of Fengate Farm to the south of the settlement.</p>	<p>The relatively modern development to the southern edge has a lower inherent sensitivity than the buildings of Fengate Farm.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Integration:</b> The southern edge of the settlement generally has an open, exposed edge.</p>	<p>The southern edge is considered to have a relatively low inherent sensitivity to change in view of its exposed, poorly integrated character.</p>
<p><b>Gateways:</b> The gateway within this character area is the southern approach to Weeting on the Brandon Road. This is defined by mixed and heavily flailed, part replanted hedgerows and the exposed southern edge of the settlement is visible.</p>	<p>This gateway would have potential for landscape enhancement and mitigation, as the sensitivity is reduced by the exposed character of the settlement edge and disturbed/part replaced vegetation.</p>
<p><b>Nodes:</b> There are no nodes within the character area – N/A.</p>	

## Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p><b>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</b></p> <p>There are wide views to the south and into Suffolk beyond the River Ouse, although these are partly filtered by field boundary vegetation.</p>	<p>These views are considered inherently sensitive to change due to their relatively extensive nature.</p>
<p><b>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</b></p> <p><b>Views to the settlement edge:</b> The southern edge is visible from the Brandon Road. Landmarks within Weeting such as the church tower do not form a component of these views however.</p> <p><b>Views from the settlement edge:</b> From the settlement edge views are available eastwards into the adjacent WE1: <i>Weeting Castle Plantation and Farmland</i> Character area and the wooded hinterland of the Brecks.</p> <p>Filtered views are also available southwards from the settlement edge, across the pastoral farmland towards the industrial premises at Fengate Drove.</p>	<p>These views do not form a component of the setting of historic built features or landmarks such as the church tower and therefore have a relatively low inherent sensitivity.</p> <p>Due to their extent and the role in forming part of the visual setting of the Brecks the views to the east are considered to have a higher inherent sensitivity than those to the south which are influenced by elements such as the industrial premises.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Potential:</b> The local landscape character area is already relatively well vegetated due to field boundary vegetation, willow lined ditches, alder field trees and scots pine tree lines.</p>	<p>It is considered that mitigation potential would be relatively high. Mass woodland planting would be inappropriate to the pastoral character of the landscape.</p>

## Overall Sensitivity Judgment

Overall sensitivity to change is considered to be **moderate-high**, particularly in the western part of the area (Breckland Farmland SSSI) and in the areas of more intact wetland meadow and floodplain pasture associated within the course of the Ouse in the southern part of the character area. Whilst views to the west are filtered to the east they are more open, which creates a visually sensitive relationship between the settlement and the landscape. It is considered that potential for future development would be extremely limited and development considerations therefore relate primarily to the relationship of existing development to the landscape.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The following sets out a series of landscape management and design principles, both to maintain and enhance the character of this landscape unit and to inform future landuse planning/planning for change to the settlement edge.

### **General Landscape Management**

- Extend the traditional silvicultural practices at Fengate Farm and Fengate Drove (coppiced ashes) to other existing and new tree planting within the local character area, to ensure sustained tree cover;
- Consider opportunities for extending the network of wetland vegetation such as sedges, rushes and reeds associated with the field drains at Fengate and the Ouse, to fulfil Biodiversity Action Plan/Ecological Network Mapping targets.

### **Principles in relation to Development**

- The southern development edge should be porous and transitional in character, using native planting to ensure that it is properly absorbed within the landscape.
- Development should avoid further nucleation of the settlement form of Weeting.

## **APPENDIX I: SAMPLE FIELD SURVEY FORM**



# BRECKLAND RURAL-URBAN FRINGE – FIELD SURVEY SHEET

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Settlement:

Date:

Time:

Weather:

Photo Nos:

<b>DISTRICT LANDSCAPE TYPE:</b>	<b>DISTRICT CHARACTER AREA:</b>
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**RURAL-URBAN FRINGE SUBDIVISIONS AT 1:10,000 (if any):**

**LOCAL LANDSCAPE TYPE:**

**LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:**

If sub-divisions exist what determines them? (differences in habitat types, land use, condition, quality etc.)

**Brief Description of District Landscape Character Area:**

**Description/Representation of wider LCA:**

## LANDSCAPE

**Landscape Quality and Condition – the settlement fringe:**

**Individual Elements:**

***Natural:***

**Cultural inc. built/architectura:l**

Built/Architectural Character (✓=Subtle, ✓✓=Apparent; ✓✓✓= Conspicuous)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Timber-frame	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brick - traditional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tile
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weatherboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brick - modern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slate	<input type="checkbox"/>	other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flint	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conglomerate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thatch	<input type="checkbox"/>	other

**Aesthetic/perceptual:**

**Character of the settlement edge:**

**Settlement edge development type:**

*(including edges to conserve and those with enhancement potential)*

**Permeability and integration:**

**Local gateways:**

**Key Nodes:**

## **VISUAL**

***General views (landform and enclosure)***

***Intervisibility with the settlement edge:***

***Views to the settlement edge, including landmarks/townmarks:***

***Views from the settlement edge:***

***Mitigation potential:***



**Overall sensitivity judgment and justification:**

<b>L</b>	<b>M/L</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M/H</b>	<b>H</b>
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**Guidelines:**

***General landscape management:***

***Principles in relation to development:***