

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

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Acknowledgements

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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:

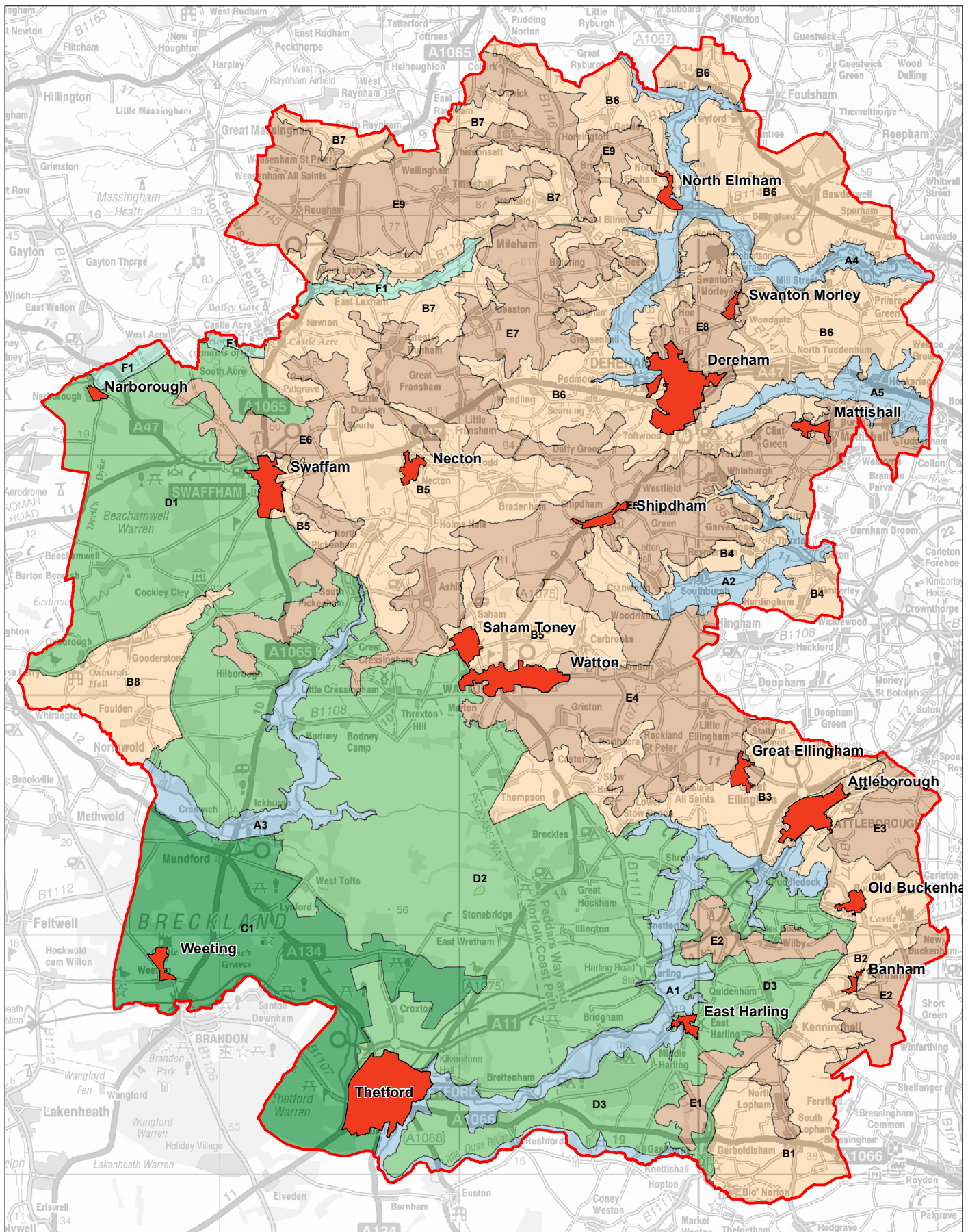
This is the main part of the report and comprises the detailed LCA – characterisation, evaluation and guidelines of the fringes of 17 settlements.

2. STUDY AREA - SETTLEMENTS

- 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.

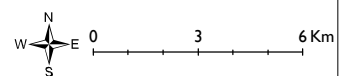
Table 2.1: Settlements

Growth Point
Thetford
Market Towns
Attleborough
Dereham
Swaffham
Watton
Candidate Local Service Centre Villages
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"> ■ Urban Rural Fringe Settlements Breckland Boundary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A - River Valleys A1: River Thet A2: Upper Yare A3: River Wissey A4: River Wensum and Blackwater A5: Upper Tud B - Settled Tributary Farmland B1: Little Ouse Tributary Farmland B2: The Buckenham Tributary Farmland B3: River Thet Tributary Farmland B4: River Blackwater Tributary Farmland B5: River Wissey Tributary Farmland B6: River Wensum and Tud Tributary Farmland B7: River Nar Tributary Farmland B8: Gooderstone to Oxborough Tributary Farmland C - The Brecks - Plantations C1: The Brecks of Thetford Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D - The Brecks - Heathland with Plantation D1: Swaffham Heath D2: Stanta Heath D3: Harling Heathlands E - Plateau Farmland E1: Lophams Plateau E2: Snetterton Heath Plateau E3: Old Buckenham Plateau E4: Wayland Plateau F - Chalk Rivers F1: River Nar Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E5: Central Breckland Plateau E6: North Pickenham Plateau E7: Beeston Plateau E8: Dereham Plateau E9: Whissonsett Plateau <p>Source: Land Use Consultants</p>
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Date: 12/07/2007
Revision: B



3. METHOD STATEMENT

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>High Sensitivity: 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>High-Moderate Sensitivity: 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>Moderate Sensitivity: 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>Moderate-Low Sensitivity: 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>Low Sensitivity: 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

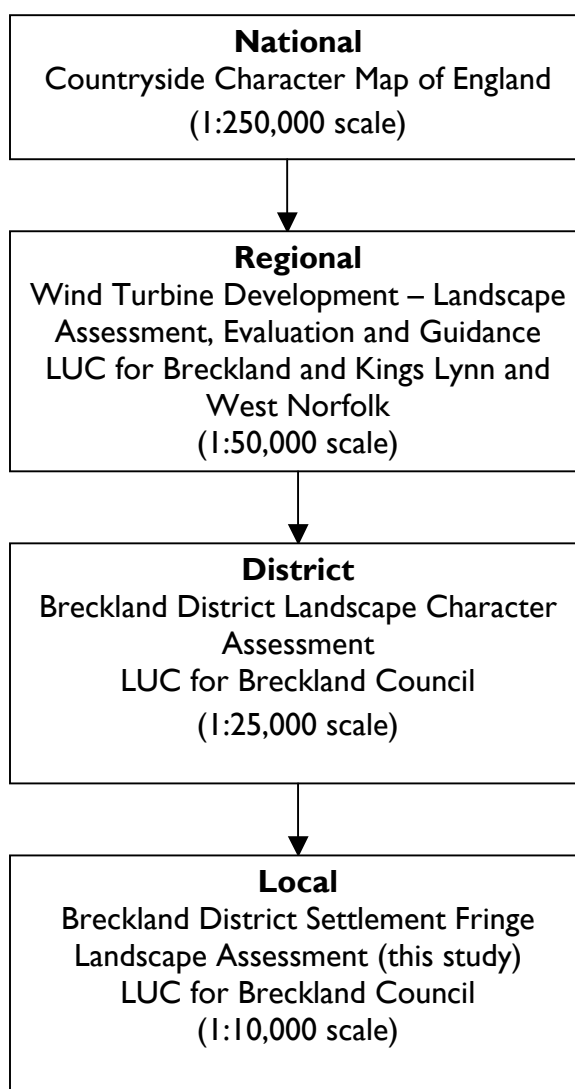
- 3.17. Guidance on the nature and form for potential future development in terms of built vernacular, stylistic idiom, scale and massing.

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

- 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

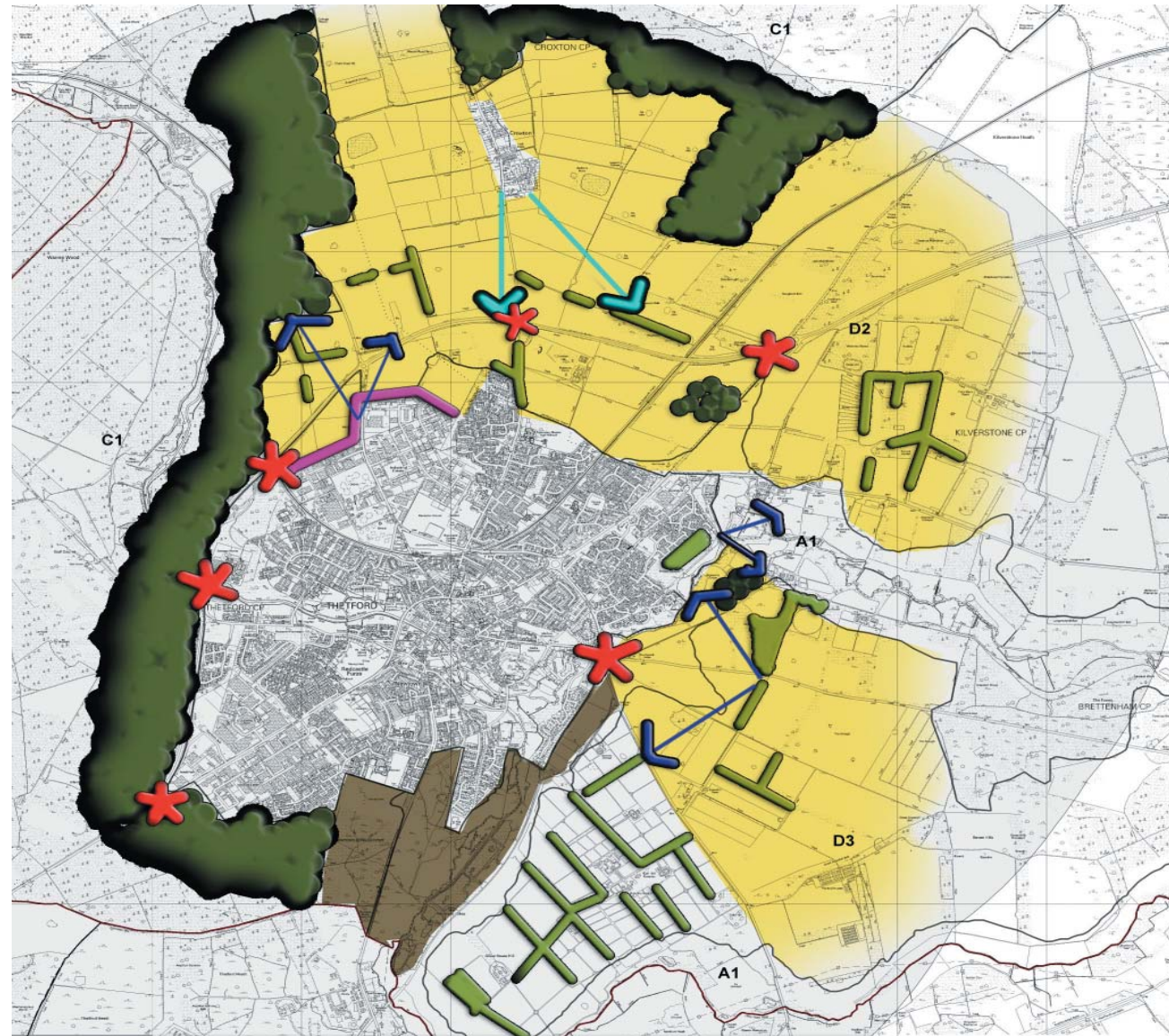
Settlement	Local Character Areas
Growth Point	
Thetford	TH1: Thet Valley TH2: Lower Thet - Little Ouse Valley TH3: Thetford Warren TH6: Croxton TH7: Kilverstone TH8: Snare Hill Seven Hills TH9: Nunnery Stud
Market Towns	
Attleborough	AT1: Attleborough Hall Tributary Farmland AT3: Attleborough, East
Dereham	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

Settlement	Local Character Areas
Local Service Centre Villages	
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









Settlement	Local Character Areas
	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

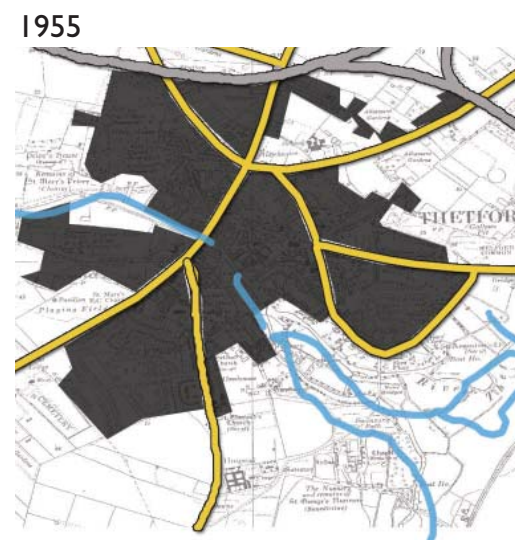
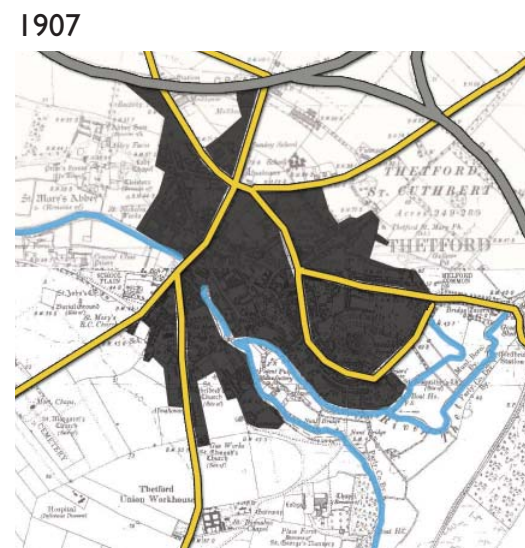


Thetford Settlement Fringe Analysis

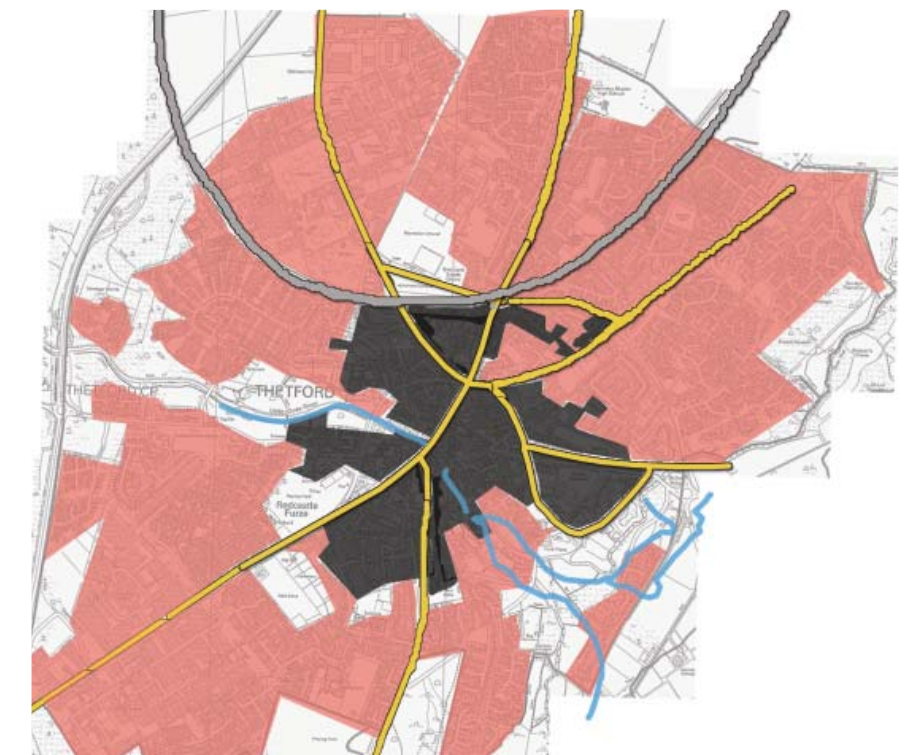
-  Structural landscape blocks
-  Partial screening
-  Key gateways
-  Exposed edge
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Agricultural fields
-  Common land

Historic Growth of Thetford

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





Post 1955









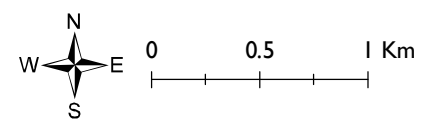
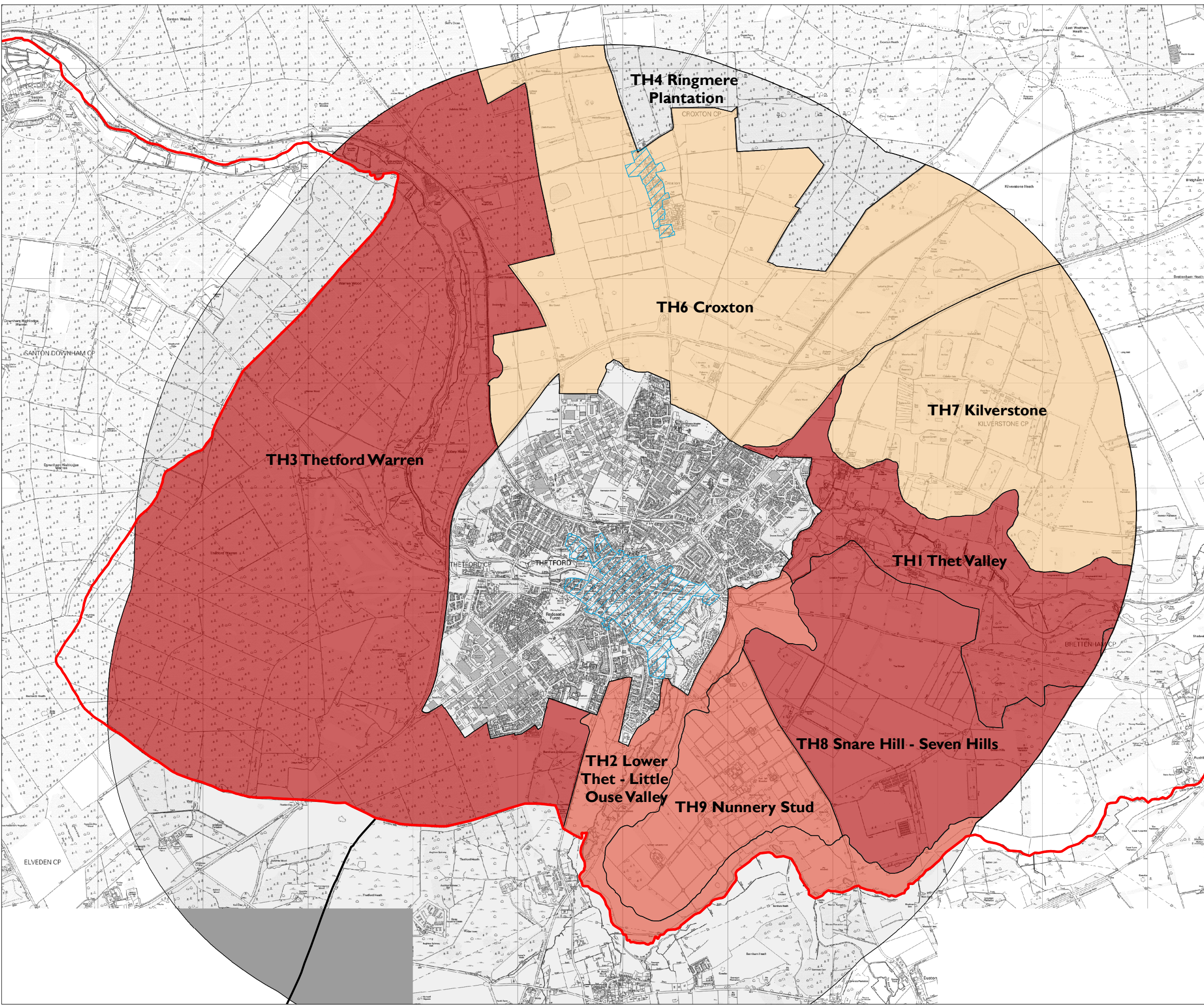
**Breckland Settlement Fringe
Landscape Assessment
Thetford Landscape Character
Area Sensitivity**

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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>Character of the Settlement Edge</p>	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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>Nodes: 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>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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.
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the Settlement Edge	
Settlement Edge Development Type: 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.
Accessibility and Integration: 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.
Gateways: 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>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential:</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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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.
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the Settlement Edge	
Settlement Edge Development Type: 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.
Accessibility and Integration: 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.
Gateways and Nodes: 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>A1075 London Road: 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>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>A11 Corridor: 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.
Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
<p>Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.	
Character of the Settlement Edge	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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>Nodes: 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>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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.
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>
Character of the settlement edge	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: The local character area does not directly abut the settlement edge – N/A.</p>	N/A.
<p>Gateways: There are no gateways within the local character area – N/A.</p>	N/A.
<p>Nodes: There are no nodes within the character area – N/A.</p>	N/A.

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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.
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the settlement edge	
Settlement Edge Development Type: 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.
Accessibility and Integration: No settlement edges directly abut the local character area – N/A.	N/A
Gateways: 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.
Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	N/A

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
General Views (Landform and Enclosure): 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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape quality and condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
<p>Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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>	<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>
<p>Aesthetic/perceptual: Key factors include the wooded skylines created by the pine belts and the filtered/wooded views to the settlement edge.</p>	<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.</p>
Character of the settlement edge	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: Two storey late 20th century brick built residential development to the eastern edge of Thetford, whilst not within the character area is visible from within it.</p>	<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>
<p>Accessibility and Integration: The urban edge is well integrated with the character area, being of a generally wooded but semi permeable character and contained by landform.</p>	<p>The woodland and structural vegetation which provide this sense of integration are sensitive features.</p>
<p>Gateways: The A1088 is a key gateway to Thetford. Currently the town is</p>	<p>Gateway routes into Thetford are sensitive. Any development should respect the valley setting of the</p>

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.
Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area.	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General views (landform and enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

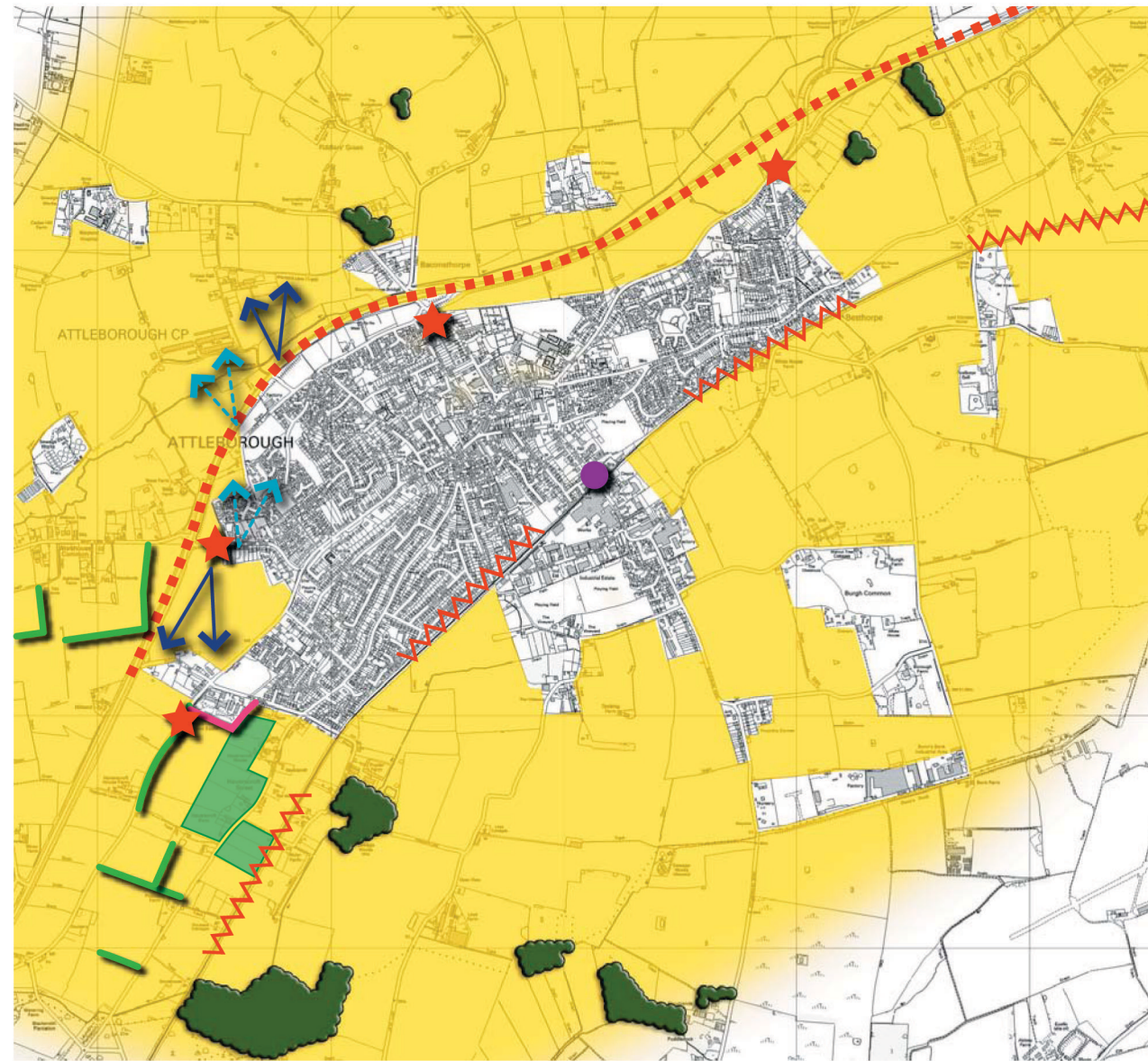
- Conserve the remaining areas of heathy/rough grassland (e.g. between Nunnery Stud and the eastern edge of Thetford) and seek opportunities to reinforce/extend this habitat;
- Conserve, enhance and extend the farmland habitats of the SSSI and maintain and manage an appropriate buffer;
- Conserve and 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

District Character Area	Local Landscape Type	Local Landscape Character Area
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

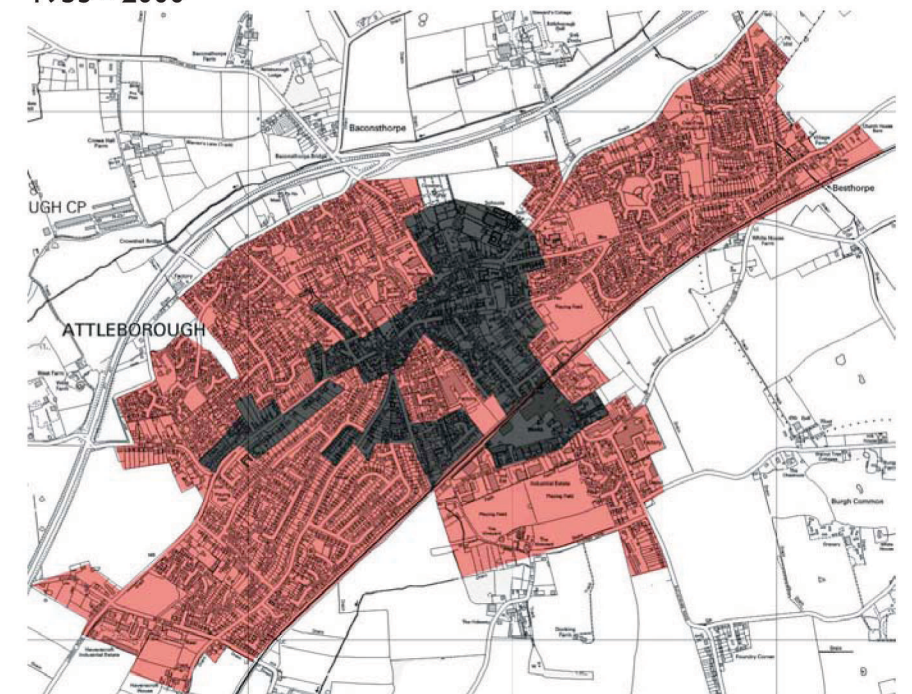
Historic Growth of Attleborough

- Road 
- Railway line 
- Settlement (Historic core) 

1884



1953 - 2000



Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment Attleborough Landscape Character Area Sensitivity

Key

 1.5km Settlement Edge Buffer

Sensitivity

 Low

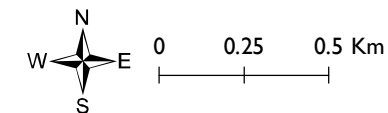
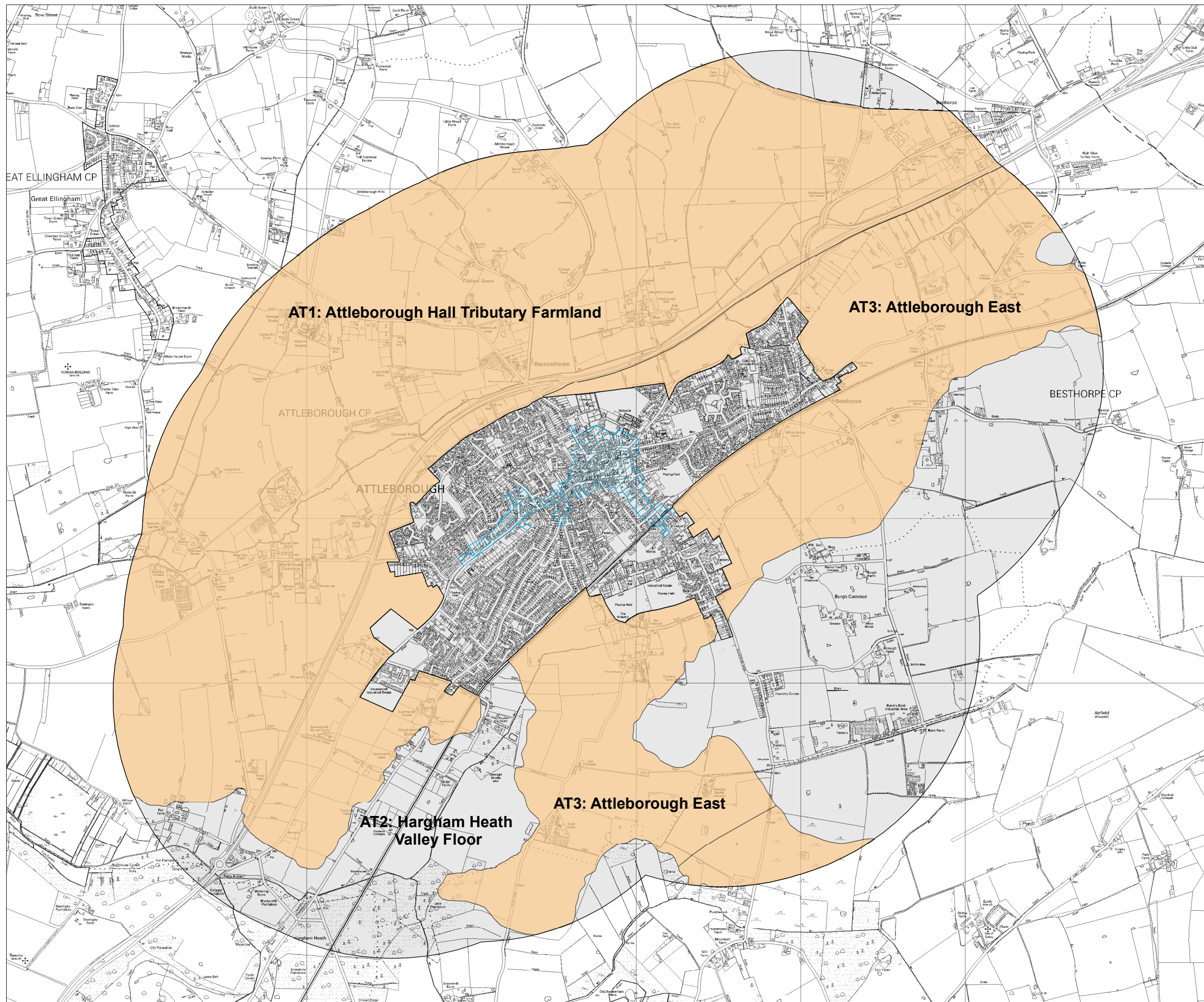
 Low / Moderate

 Moderate

 Moderate / High

 High

 Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007



ATI: ATTLEBOROUGH HALL TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
The landscape to the north and north west of the AII comprises intact tributary farmland, incorporating small-medium scale fields and hedgerows. 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.	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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): Attleborough Hall, a moated site and 17th 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>Character of the settlement edge</p>	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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 19th 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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 19th 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>Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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 Buckenhams Tributary Farmland* extends south east of Attleborough encompassing the larger villages of the Buckenhams, 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 Buckenhams 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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.	
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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.
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the Settlement Edge	
Settlement Edge Development Type: 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.
Accessibility and Integration: 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.
Gateways: 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.	
Nodes: 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
General Views (Landform and Enclosure): 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.
<p>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to settlement edge: 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.</p> <p>Views from the settlement edge: There are limited views out from the residential development to farmland beyond.</p>	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.
Mitigation Potential: 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

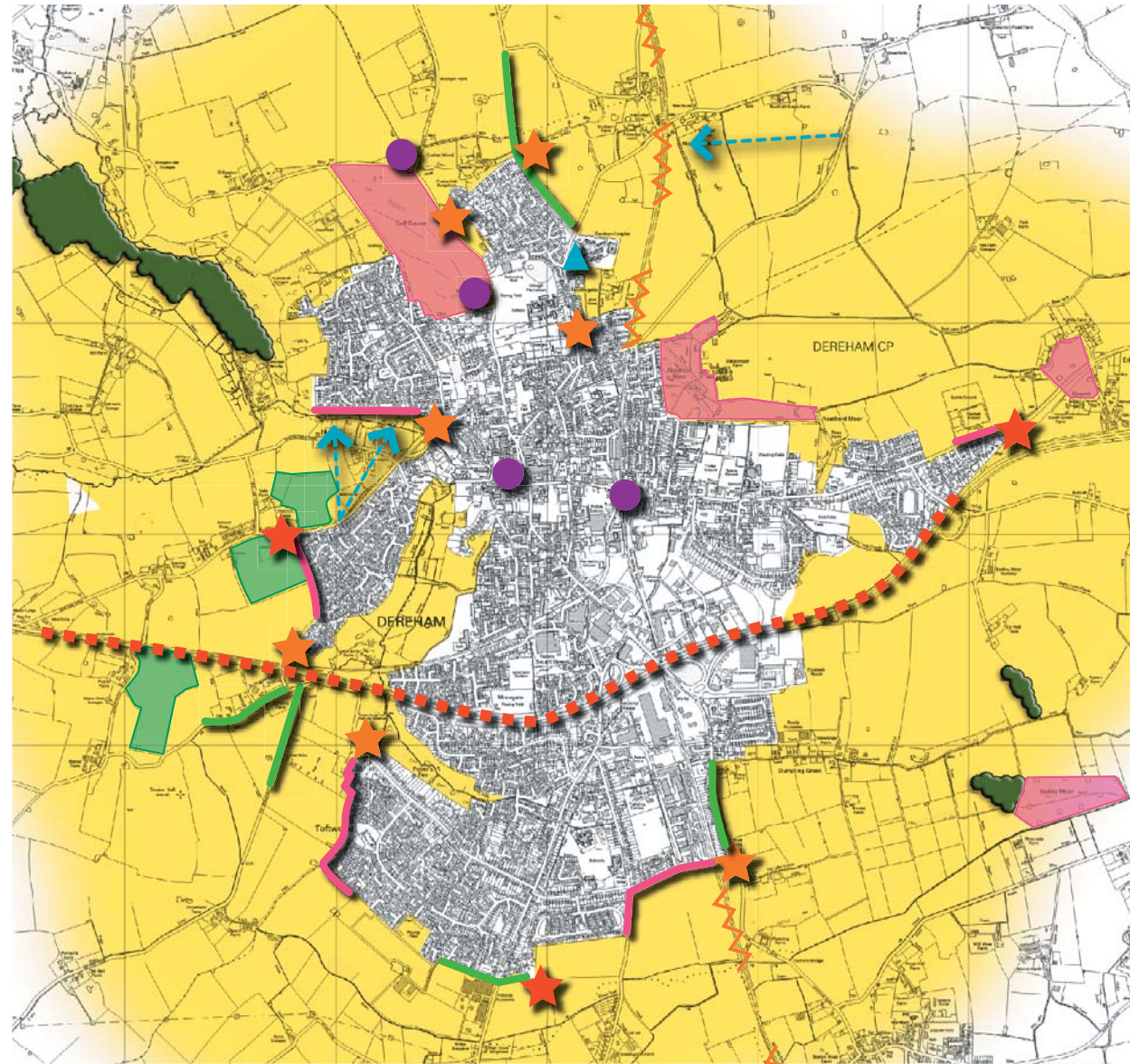
- Conserve the pattern of hedgerows and seek to restore and renew hedgerow boundaries to form a strong framework for the town;
- Conserve and restore orchards where they formed a characteristic feature;
- Conserve the pasture and veteran trees which form part of the parkland landscape of Attleborough 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



District Character Area	Local Landscape Type	Local Landscape Character Area
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

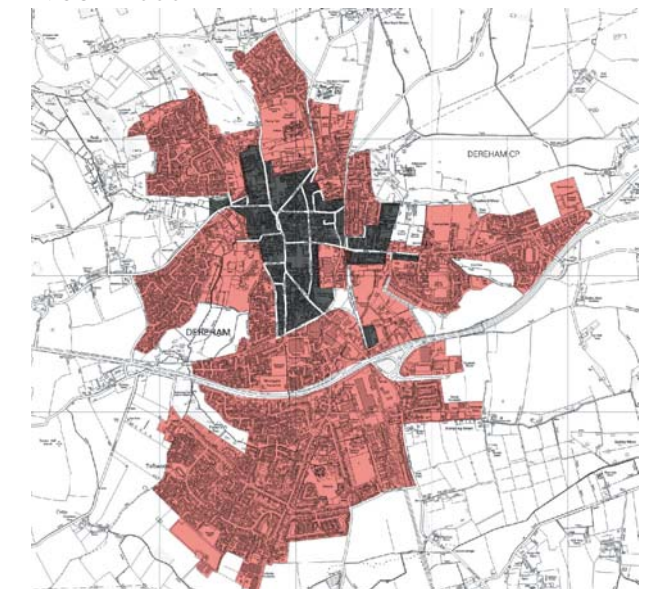
-  Woodland
-  Agricultural land
-  Open views
-  Filtered views
-  Open edge
-  Integrated edge
-  Key Gateway
-  Minor gateways
-  Small scale fields
-  Common land
-  Node
-  Transport corridor (A47)
-  Recreational railway
-  Prominent skyline feature

Historic Growth of Dereham

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










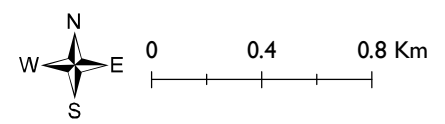
1938 - 2000



**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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): Part of the western edge of the settlement displays an intact late 18 th /early 19 th 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.
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.	
Character of the settlement edge	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: The western edge on the Dereham Road includes late 18th/19th 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 20th Century cul-de-sac development, predominantly of bright red brick and tile. There is also some 1970s development in pale brick.</p>	The 18 th /19 th century development within the Conservation Area would have a higher inherent sensitivity to change than the modern development to the settlement edges.
<p>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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 18th and 19th 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>Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): Principal cultural elements include Dillington Hall (a late 18 th 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.

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
to the south with its origins in the 16 th Century and with later additions.	
Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the settlement edge	
Settlement Edge Development Type: 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.
Accessibility and Integration: 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.
Gateways: o gateways within the local character area – N/A.	
Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
General Views (Landform and Enclosure): 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.	In view of the containment and filtering provided by landform and structural vegetation, these views are not considered inherently sensitive.
Intervisibility with the settlement edge: Views to the settlement edge: Views to the settlement edge are available from the public footpath at Heathfield, to the north of Humbletoft and within the character area. Views from the settlement edge: From the settlement edge, views are greatly contained by structural vegetation and woodland, in addition to roadside hedgerows.	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. In view of their restricted nature and the limited visibility, these views are not considered inherently sensitive.
Mitigation Potential: This is a landscape with a relatively high density of	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

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 20th 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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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.
Cultural (inc. built/architectural): These are primarily Quebec Hall (an extensively altered brick and stucco villa dating from the mid 18 th 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>Character of the settlement edge</p>	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: Development to the settlement edge encompasses a varied range of building types, styles and periods, ranging from 19th 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 20th 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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>Nodes: 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>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</p> <p>Views are generally filtered by field boundary hedgerows and woodland blocks.</p>	<p>In view of their contained nature these views are not considered inherently sensitive.</p>
<p>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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>	<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.</p>

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

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 20th 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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>Character of the settlement edge</p>	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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.
Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>Character of the settlement edge</p>	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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 20th 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: There are no gateways within the local character area – N/A.</p>	
<p>Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: Parts of the south western settlement edge are visible from within the local character area, although filtered by field boundary vegetation.</p> <p>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

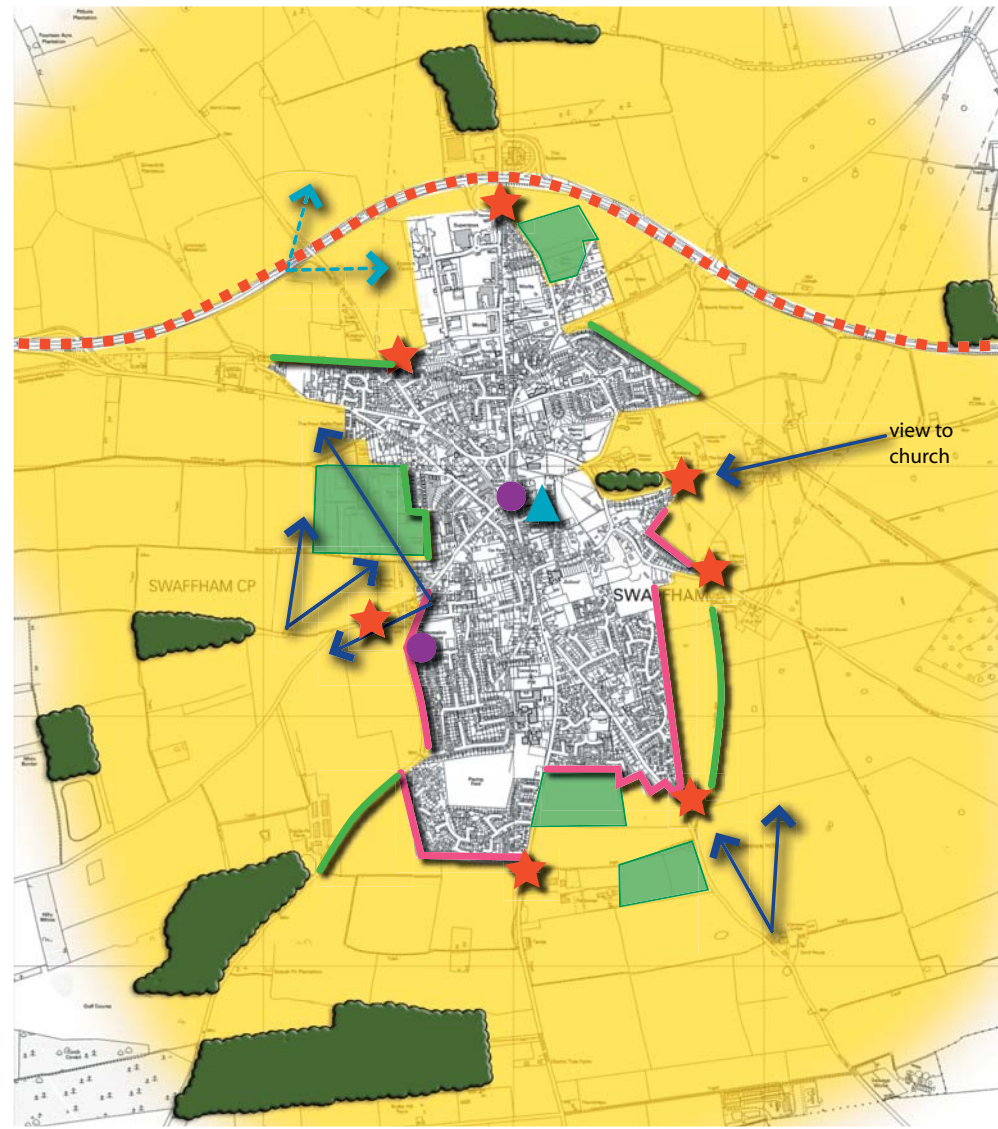
- Conserve and enhance existing willow lined ditches through active and appropriate management (e.g. pollarding on an appropriate cutting cycle);
- Continue to conserve, enhance and reinforce native field boundary hedgerows which integrate the south western edge of the settlement, gapping up with native 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

District Character Area	Local Landscape Type	Local Landscape Character Area
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

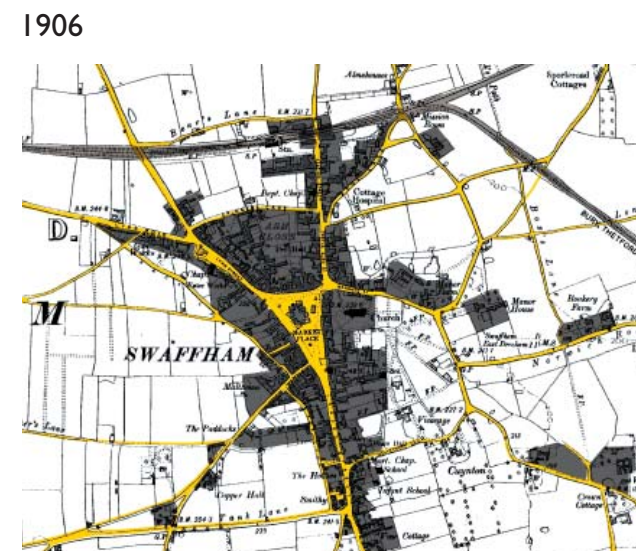


Swaffham Settlement Fringe Analysis

-  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

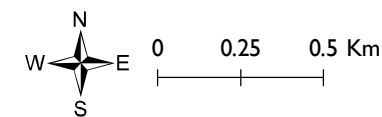
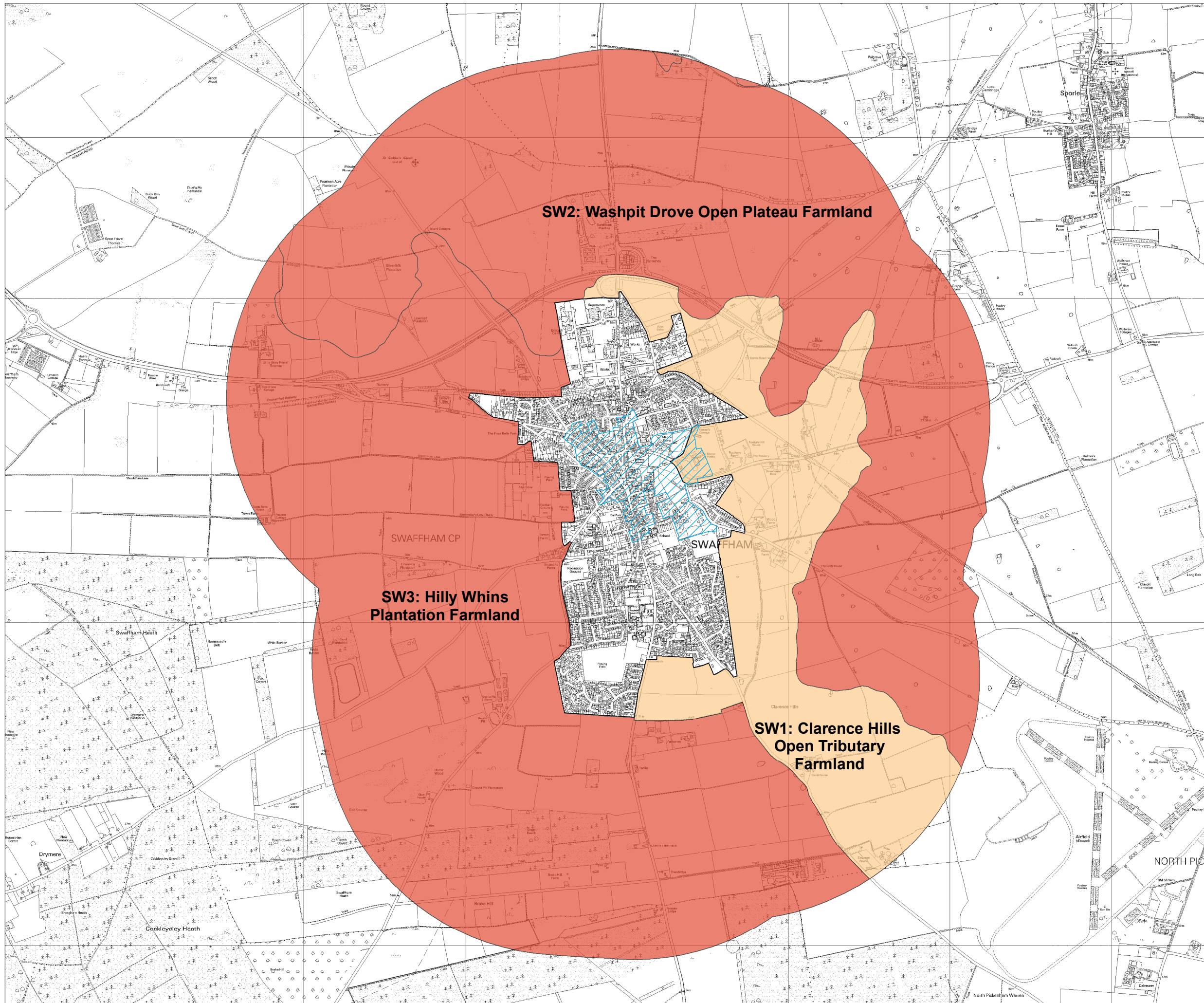
Low / Moderate

Moderate

Moderate / High

High

Conservation Area



Source: Breckland Council
Land Use Consultants

Date: 11/07/2007



SWI: CLARENCE HILLS OPEN TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): Principal built elements include Carol House, an altered early 18th century red brick dwelling on the Watton Road, and the early 18th 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the settlement edge	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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.	
Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
<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>
Individual Elements	
<p>Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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 20th 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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>
<p>Character of the settlement edge</p>	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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>Nodes: There are no nodes within the local character area – N/A.</p>	

Visual Sensitivity

Criteria	Judgement and Comment
<p>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: Views to the settlement edge are largely denied by the wooded embankment to the A47 trunk road.</p> <p>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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;
- Reinststate 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
Landscape Quality and Condition	
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.
Individual Elements	
Natural: 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>Cultural (inc. built/architectural): 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>Aesthetic/perceptual: 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.
Character of the Settlement Edge	
<p>Settlement Edge Development Type: 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>Accessibility and Integration: 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>Gateways: 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>Notes: 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>General Views (Landform and Enclosure):</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>Intervisibility with the settlement edge:</p> <p>Views to the settlement edge: 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>Views from the settlement edge: 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>Mitigation Potential: 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

District Character Area	Local Landscape Type	Local Landscape Character Area
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

