

# LIZ LAKE ASSOCIATES

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Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal

## Brentwood Enterprise Park S & J Padfield and Partners

October 2013

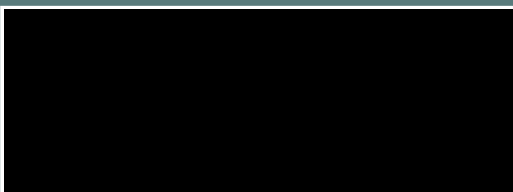
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## I INTRODUCTION

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- I.1.1 This Landscape Report has been prepared by Liz Lake Associates on behalf of S & J Padfield and Partners to provide information and guidance with regards to the landscape and visual issues relevant to the land at Codham Hall, Brentwood, Essex (the Site). The principal objective of the study is to provide guidance on landscape and visual matters to inform the preparation of a master plan for the Site associated with the consultation submission for the Brentwood Enterprise Park development.
- I.1.2 The report considers the existing baseline conditions and seeks to identify the relevant landscape and visual issues applicable to the Site. A landscape and visual appraisal has been undertaken to assess the likely effects upon the landscape resource, specific views and visual amenity, and a potential landscape and visual strategy has been defined including a suggested mitigation approach.
- I.1.3 The appraisal was made by Elizabeth Hazelwood, Associate, Chartered Landscape Architect on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The weather was hazy clearing to bright and sunny. Visibility was good.
- I.1.4 Liz Lake Associates is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 28 years' experience of master planning, landscape, ecology, industrial design, heritage and environmental impact assessment. The company is a registered practice of the Landscape Institute.
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## 2 METHODOLOGY

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- 2.1.1 An initial landscape and visual appraisal of the Site has been prepared, encompassing the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013), and 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage 2002). In summary, the approach combines information and desktop reviews with on-site surveys and appraisal. The Liz Lake Associates LVIA Methodology: Definitions are included in **Appendix E**.
- 2.1.2 The site based assessment involves the recording of both objective description and subjective impressions of the landscape, as well as details of the existing landscape condition. It includes an appraisal of the extent and nature of views to and from the Site and the type of receptors that experience these views.
- 2.1.3 The following relevant studies and documents have been considered as part of the desk based review and subsequent appraisal:
- Natural England NCA Profile: 111 Northern Thames Basin (NE466)
  - Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)
  - Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (2006)
  - Brentwood Borough Local Wildlife Site Review (2012)
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### 3 EXISTING SITUATION

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#### 3.1 Context

- 3.1.1 The land at Codham Hall is located to the northeast of Cranham, Upminster in the Borough of Brentwood (refer **Figure 1, Designations and Public Rights of Way**). On the southern edge of the Essex Wooded Hills character area, the Site adjoins the A127 to the north, the M25 and Junction 29 to the west and agricultural land to the south.
- 3.1.2 From the upper extents of the Site (north and south boundaries at approximately 30m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)) the landform falls to a shallow central valley, approximately 20m AOD at the lowest point (refer **Figure 2, Topography**). To the low lying land a small watercourse flows to the west, to join a stream flowing south parallel to the M25 corridor.
- 3.1.3 The Site land area extends to approximately 23.5 hectares and is generally characterised by its former use as a works depot for the M25 construction phase. The area is mainly hard stand with incidental site buildings and vegetated bunding to the perimeter of the area. Isolated trees (Oak) and sporadic native hedgerow extend along the watercourse route through the centre of the Site, with sections of hedgerow vegetation located along Site boundaries to the south and east.
- 3.1.4 Adjacent land use is mixed, including transport corridors (M25 and A127), agricultural land and residential properties (refer **Figure 3, Photographic Viewpoints Location Plan**; this includes an aerial photograph illustrating the area and **Figures 4-7 Photographic Sheets**).

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#### 3.2 Published Landscape Character Assessments and other designations

- 3.2.1 A brief summary of the published landscape character assessments and other designations in the context of the Site is detailed below.
- 3.2.2 **National Character Area:** The Site and its broad context, in south Essex lies within the Great Warley district and falls within the National Character Area 111: *Northern Thames Basin* (refer **Appendix A**).

- 3.2.3 Within the NCA III the site is broadly located on the cusp of the London Clay Lowlands and the Essex Wooded Hills and Ridges sub-character areas. The lowlands are characterised by flat, extensive tracts of farmland on heavy clay soils with very sparse settlement patterns typified by hamlets and few villages. The area contrasts with the adjacent boulder clays, wooded hills and ridges.
- 3.2.4 The Essex wooded hills and ridges character area is characterised by well wooded and prominent hills and ridges, often referred to as the 'Bagshot Hills'. A well-hedged landscape with ancient, semi-natural woodlands. Historically scattered and relatively sparse settlement patterns have been impacted upon by extensive residential developments and large towns.
- 3.2.5 The Site, located to the northern edge of the London Clay Lowlands character area, does not relate directly to the lowland character, the character of which predominates over the fenlands to the south. The Site is located in a transition zone between the lowlands character area and the Essex wooded hills and ridges, a zone which extends to the east along the route of the A127.
- 3.2.6 **Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003):** The Essex Landscape Character Assessment identifies different landscape types across the county and subdivides these further into landscape character areas. Within this appraisal, the Site lies within the Wooded Hill and Ridge Landscapes (D). Within the Wooded Hill and Ridge Landscapes the Site is defined within the Brentwood Hills (D2) landscape character area (**Appendix B**).
- 3.2.7 Key characteristics<sup>1</sup> of the Brentwood Hills are:
- Gently to strongly undulating hills / ridges;
  - Semi enclosed character due to presence of numerous small woods, large interlocking blocks of woodland and frequent hedgerow trees;
  - Patchwork of small irregular pasture and arable fields, opening out to medium to large regular arable fields in the centre of the area; and
  - Dense linear settlement pattern along major south west to north east road / rail routes

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<sup>1</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, Chris Blandford Associates, 2003

- 3.2.8 Detractors within the landscape in proximity to the Site include the M25, A127 and a pylon route which is locally visually prominent in the landscape.
- 3.2.9 **Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (2006):** The study provides a baseline inventory of the landscape character of the five authority areas including recommendations to inform land use planning and land management decisions.
- 3.2.10 The County landscape assessment (refer above) provides the framework for the more detailed classification of the district study areas. Within the Brentwood district the Site lies within the *Fenland* (G) landscape character type and specifically the *Horndon Fenland* (G1) landscape character area (**Appendix C**). The *Great Warley Wooded Farmland* (F13) lies adjacent to the Site to the north of the A127 road corridor.
- 3.2.11 Key characteristics of the Horndon Fenland landscape include large arable and pasture fields, a predominantly flat topography with mature hedgerow field boundaries (sometimes gappy), which contain several single mature trees. A relatively sparse settlement pattern with views to the surrounding wooded hills to the north and long distance views of pylons to the south.
- 3.2.12 The Site is not specifically within the F13 wooded farmland character area which extends to the north of the A127 trunk road. To the south of the A127, the Site, within a transition zone, is influenced by but not wholly representative of the wooded farmland landscape character.
- 3.2.13 **Thames Chase Community Forest:** The Thames Chase Community Forest was established in 1990 to improve landscapes in East London and South Essex. One of 12 community forests in England, the Forest covers approximately 100 square kilometres of land to the east of London and across south-west Essex, centered around the towns of Brentwood, Dagenham, Grays, Romford and Upminster. The Site is located within the Thames Chase Community Forest, which promotes regeneration, quality green space creation, management and community engagement within the framework of the Thames Chase Plan (2000). Brentwood Borough Council *'supports the development of Thames*

*Chase Community Forest*' and specifically Policy DM19<sup>2</sup> of the DRAFT Local Plan identifies the following key strategies:

- Reclamation of derelict land to beneficial uses;
- Protection and management of wildlife habitats including habitat creation;
- Provision of outdoor recreation and tourism;
- Traditional landscape enhancement; and
- Protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

3.2.14 *'Any development proposals within the Community Forest area will be expected to make a positive contribution towards its implementation and comply with the policies contained in this plan'*

3.2.15 **Conservation Areas:** The Site is located in proximity to three Conservation Areas within the Brentwood Borough:

- Thorndon Park Conservation Area: located to the north east of the Site (approx 3.1km)
- Warley Place Conservation Area: located to the north of the Site (approx 2.3km)
- Great Warley Conservation Area: located to the north of the Site (approx 1.6km)

3.2.16 **Listed Buildings:** To the north east of the Site, two properties, Hulmers (1250605) and Brick House Hotel (1263167) on Great Warley Street (B186) to the north of the A127 are listed within the English Heritage register.

3.2.17 **Local Wildlife Sites:** A review of sites within the Borough was undertaken in 2012. The review identified the area of woodland adjacent to the Site as Bre66 Hobbs Hole (1.8ha), a lowland mixed deciduous woodland (BAP habitat) area to the south east of M25 Junction 29. A woodland and scrub habitat of ash coppice and standards with dense blackthorn scrub and mixed quality ground flora. Areas along a small stream on the north eastern

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<sup>2</sup> DRAFT Brentwood Borough Local Plan 2015-2030: Preferred Options (July 2013)

wood edge include an increased diversity of shrub layer and ground flora with Ancient woodland indicator species such as bluebell, wood anemone and moschatel.<sup>3</sup>

- 3.2.18 To the north of the A127 the local wildlife site Bre59 Codham Hall Wood (5.0ha), lowland mixed deciduous woodland (BAP habitat) extends from the M25 Junction 29 in a linear strip along a small stream on the western boundary of Codham Hall and continues to the north.

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### 3.3 Landscape Resource

- 3.3.1 The Site is located to the western extents of the Brentwood Borough, broadly bounded by the A127 to the north, residential properties on Warley Street (B186) to the east, agricultural land to the south and the M25, Junction 29 to the west. Refer **Figure 1, Designations and Public Rights of Way**.
- 3.3.2 The Site is located across a shallow valley running east-west between high ground along the A127 and a southern ridge (approx 30m AOD). Refer **Figure 2, Topography**). A small watercourse flows within the valley to the west, to join a stream flowing south parallel to the M25 route. Areas of higher ground extend beyond the A127 to the north, typically wooded farmland rising to higher ground beyond Great Warley.
- 3.3.3 The Site land area extends to approximately 23.5 hectares and is generally characterised by its former use as a works depot for the M25 construction phase, now redundant and derelict. There are two entries to the Site, either via the access road (signalised junction) at the M25 Junction 29 roundabout in the north-west corner of the Site or via an over bridge crossing of the A127 on the northern boundary.
- 3.3.4 The area is mainly hard stand with incidental site buildings and remnant works depot infrastructure. A series of vegetated bunds are located to the perimeter of the central works areas. A large detention pond (lined) is located to the western end of the Site in proximity to the course of a stream which crosses the north-west corner of the site (partly culverted beneath the site entry access road) and flows to the south.

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<sup>3</sup> Brentwood Borough Local Wildlife Site Review (2012), Bre66

- 3.3.5 Adjacent land use is mixed, including transport corridors (M25 and A127), agricultural land and residential properties. The rural landscape has been notably influenced by the works depot site and the presence of substantial transport corridors which are partially elevated in proximity to the Site forming strong barriers between the Site and areas to the north and west.
- 3.3.6 The Site is generally devoid of significant vegetation. A number of early mature oak trees within a fragmented hedge line (*ash, hawthorn, damson, elder and dog rose*) which extends along the watercourse route through the centre of the Site are notable. The eastern boundary is defined by a group of off-site trees (*oak, grey poplar, Lawson cypress*) which are of low quality (C)<sup>4</sup> but form a valued landscape screen for residential properties beyond. Plantings on the A127 verge (southside) adjacent to the site include *oak, damson, hawthorn, sycamore and field maple*. Plantings are fragmented but of fair form and condition with reasonable screening qualities. Internal bunding has been planted with a mix of *ash, birch, laurel, pinus, cupressus and hawthorn*. Species are young, of mixed quality and establishment with little screening capacity.
- 3.3.7 Beyond the western site boundary, adjacent to the M25 corridor, the lowland mixed deciduous woodland known as Hobbs Hole (1.8ha) is located. The wood, a local wildlife site, includes *oak, crack willow, grey willow, damson, ash, goat willow, blackthorn and grey poplar*, and is of moderate quality<sup>5</sup> but of high amenity value<sup>6</sup>. Beyond Hobbs Hole, to the west, an electricity pylon is located in close proximity to the Site. The transmission line route traverses the landscape from low lying land to the south along the western edge of Hobbs Hole and crosses the M25 just south of Junction 29.
- 3.3.8 The site is predominantly bare ground and considered to be of low ecological value<sup>7</sup>. Rough grass and ruderal vegetation with vegetated bunds border the bare ground and provide potential habitat for reptiles and birds. The small watercourse corridor within the Site provides potential foraging and roosting opportunities for bats and the adjacent Hobbs Hole woodland may provide potential habitat for badgers, birds and bats.

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<sup>4</sup> Arboricultural Report, DF Clark Bionomique Ltd (Sept 2013), Tree Survey Sheets, Tree ref G4

<sup>5</sup> Arboricultural Report, DF Clark Bionomique Ltd (Sept 2013), Table 1, Tree ref W1

<sup>6</sup> Arboricultural Report, DF Clark Bionomique Ltd (Sept 2013), Tree Survey Sheets, Tree ref W1

<sup>7</sup> Ecological Scoping Survey, JBA Consultancy Services Ltd (Sept 2013), page 23, para 7.1



- 3.3.9 Public Right of Way (PROW) 183 (designated as Bridleway) bisects the north-west corner of the Site (refer **Figure I, Designations and Public Rights of Way**). The route extends from the Fenchurch Street rail line in the south along the east side of the M25 corridor. The route continues past Hobbs Hole woodland to the M25 Junction 29, where a bridleway diversion directs the route across the north-west corner of the Site to run parallel with the A127 before crossing the over bridge and rejoining the original route to the west of Codham Hall.
- 3.3.10 A number of footpath routes navigate the surrounding landscape, specifically PROW 179 to the south of the Site which links PROW 183 at Hobbs Hole, via agricultural fields, with Warley Street to the east, and PROW 180 which extends to the south between PROW 179 (southern ridge) to the Fenchurch Street rail line and onwards to St Mary's Lane (B187).
- 3.3.11 Cycle access in the vicinity of the Site is generally limited to roads and off-road recreational use along the local lanes and byways. There are no designated national cycle routes within the vicinity of the Site.
- 3.3.12 The PROWs are generally not well utilised, routes are poorly defined and tranquillity is compromised by the constant hum of traffic from the M25 and A127 trunk road which maintains a presence as they traverse the lower slopes of the Brentwood Hills. Sections of the A127 to the northeast corner of the Site are partially at grade and within shallow cutting further west. The M25 and associated Junction 29 slip lanes are elevated in the vicinity of the Site.
- 3.3.13 Within the wider context beyond the Site, the Horndon Fenland, with low lying arable and pasture fields divided by mature hedgerow field boundaries forms a relatively intact landscape. Incongruous elements such as the M25, A127 trunk road and electricity transmission lines and pylons detract within the immediate vicinity of the Site.
- 3.3.14 As a whole the Site is considered to make a *negative contribution* to the local landscape character. The existing character of the Site is dominated by the former construction depot use and contains few significant attributes representative of the local landscape character. Adjoining incongruous elements, such as the electricity power lines /pylons and M25 / A127 transport corridors detract from the local landscape character.
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### 3.4 Visual Resource

3.4.1 Documented visual characteristics<sup>8</sup> within the broader Horndon Fenland include:

- Long and short distance, glimpse and open views to surrounding wooded hills to the north and east;
- Long distance views to pylons and Tilbury power station to the south; and
- Views to Little Warley church and East Horndon church (landmarks to the north).

3.4.2 The wider valley landscape is typical of these identified attributes but the Site and immediate surrounds forms part of a transition zone located on the lower Brentwood Hills. Within this zone the landform dissipates into the open fenland character to the south, with a wooded backdrop and site characteristics more typical of the undulating wooded farmland character to the north.

3.4.3 The visual amenity of the Horndon Fenland is attractive, however there are incongruous elements within the area. Specifically the M25 (elevated route with prominent gantries / signage), the A127 route, and electricity transmission lines and pylons which detract from the rural setting and are prominent in many local views.

3.4.4 Refer **Figure 3, Photographic Viewpoints Location Plan;** and **Figures 4-7 Photographic Sheets.**

#### *Views from the Site*

3.4.5 Long views from the Site are generally contained by the partially elevated transport corridors to the north and west and the natural topography of the southern ridge to the south (*refer viewpoints 18, 21 and 22*). Existing vegetation beyond the Site on the east and west boundaries provide effective screens to views beyond (*refer viewpoint 19*).

3.4.6 From elevated locations along the northern boundary, specifically in association with the A127 over bridge, broad distant views to the south can be attained over and above the former depot landscape and southern ridge to the fenlands beyond (*refer viewpoints 13*

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<sup>8</sup> Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford LCA, Chris Blandford Associates, 2006

and 14). Long views to the north from this vantage point include the A127 / M25 Junction 29 roadscape and distant views of the Great Warley wooded ridge and hill farmland.

- 3.4.7 The expansive site area, typically bare ground with incidental works compounds, incorporates very few intimate views. Exceptionally, close views are noted in proximity to the riparian corridor (*refer viewpoint 26*) and in isolated areas within the site where bunding and screen plantings provide enclosure (*refer viewpoint 25*).

#### *Views of the Site*

- 3.4.8 The visual amenity experienced by people (visual receptors) in the locality of the Site differs according to many factors. Visual receptors of higher sensitivity with limited susceptibility to change include residents at home (private viewpoints), people engaged in outdoor recreation (including use of PROWs), visitors to heritage assets and other attractions, travellers on recognised scenic routes (public viewpoints) and people at their work place where views are an important contributor to the setting and quality of their working life.
- 3.4.9 Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes and people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation are considered less sensitive to changes in visual amenity.
- 3.4.10 Consideration of the study area, via desk research and field survey, has identified locations from which the proposed development will potentially be visible. The following specific, representative and illustrative viewpoints have been selected for inclusion in the appraisal to illustrate the visual effects:

#### *Private viewpoints*

- Close views from residential properties along Warley Street directly adjacent to the Site (Jax Folly)
- Long partial views from residential properties along Warley Street (Gladstone Cottages)
- Distant views from residential properties along St Mary's Lane (B187)
- Long distant views from residential properties along Clay Tye Road (B186)

#### *Public viewpoints*

- Close views from PROW 183 (Bridleway)

- Views from PROW 179
- Views from PROW 180

#### *Transport routes*

- Open views from M25
- Partially filtered views from A127
- Glimpsed views from Warley Street (BI86)

#### **Private viewpoints**

- 3.4.11 Where access is restricted the potential extent of likely views from private residential properties has been estimated on site using professional judgement. As such the visual analysis of private viewpoints is approximate only.
- 3.4.12 Direct views of the Site from residential properties along Warley Street, specifically Jax Folly are noted from the upper rear windows of the property. Bunding and screen plantings to the western property boundary will likely obscure eye level views from within the rear garden but oblique views over the Site from upper windows are probable. Residential properties to the north of Jax Folly on Warley Street (including Warley Brook) are generally single storey properties, nestled within existing mature boundary vegetation which helps to obscure and filter direct views of the Site.
- 3.4.13 Gladstone Cottages are located to the east of Warley Street on the crest of the southern ridge. Given their proximity to the Site and elevated position, long views of the Site, or part of, are noted. Views are likely from upper windows over and above the roadside hedgerows along Warley Street. Views from lower floor windows are generally obscured by the roadside plantings (*refer viewpoint 8*).
- 3.4.14 Residential properties on St Mary's Lane (BI87), typically small holdings, in the low lying fenland are likely to attain glimpsed distant views of the southern Site edge between intervening hedgerow plantings (*refer viewpoints 10 and 11*). The extent of views will vary dependent upon residential boundary treatments and property composition / storey height.
- 3.4.15 To the south of the Site long distant views of the southern Site edge are likely from selected residential properties along Clay Tye Road (BI86) as the road descends into the

low lying Horndon Fenland (*refer viewpoint 12*). Residential properties address the road and are generally orientated east – west, however properties on higher ground with upper side windows would attain views over the fenland to the north. Intervening roadside hedgerows and woodland blocks screen portions of the view and the M25 is conspicuous in the landscape from these vantage points.

### Public viewpoints

- 3.4.16 Close views of the Site from PROW 183 (Bridleway), which follows the northern boundary of the Site, are generally un-obscured, given the proximity, elevation and limited vegetation (*refer viewpoints 15 and 16*). The open and bleak character of the route in this vicinity and vehicular movements associated with the adjoining A127 impacts upon visual amenity. Broad long views across the Site can be obtained from the A127 over bridge (*refer viewpoint 1*). To the north of the A127 the PROW 183 route continues to the west beyond carriageway plantings which effectively screen views of the Site.
- 3.4.17 Views of the Site from PROW 179 are intermittent. The extent of the Site viewed varies when travelling along the PROW with partial screening provided by the southern ridge landform. Higher vantage points provide several un-obscured views of the northern half of the Site (*refer viewpoints 5, 6 and 7*). An electricity pylon and transmission lines are conspicuous in the views from PROW 179. Views from the lower sections of PROW 179 adjoining the bridleway (PROW183) are partially screened by the Hobbs Hole woodland but a low point in the topography allows narrow views of the Site to the north (*refer viewpoint 4*).
- 3.4.18 Long views of the Site from PROW 180, which ascends from the south via a crossing at the Fenchurch Street rail line are generally obscured by the shallow ridgeline to the south of the Site.

### Transport Routes

- 3.4.19 Open views across the site from the M25 where engineered embankments raise the profile of the road at Junction 29 are evident. Transient views of the Site can be attained from the northbound carriageway for a short period as the traveller approaches Junction 29 but views are partially obscured by the Hobbs Hole woodland and road barriers, infrastructure etc. Travellers on the southbound carriageway experience transient long views over

Codham Hall Wood to the Site on approach to Junction 29. Views from the Junction 29 roundabout are generally obscured by structures and vegetation, however direct views over the north-east corner of the Site are visible in proximity to the site access.

- 3.4.20 Direct and partially filtered views from the A127 along the northern Site boundary are evident given the proximity. Direct views over the Site are often restricted by landform, where much of the route is located in shallow cutting and interrupted by intermittent carriageway verge plantings.
- 3.4.21 Glimpsed views from Warley Street (B186) can be attained at selected points where the road rises over the A127 and also the Fenchurch Street rail line, within the undulating topography. Roadside hedgerow plantings screen the majority of the views, but isolated locations are subject to long transient views of the Site.
- 3.4.22 In summary the principal views of the Site are from the adjoining transport corridors (transient), selected residential properties on Warley Street and the PROW 183 and to a lesser extent PROW 179. Long distant views of the southern edge of the Site are glimpsed from vantage points to the south within the low lying Horndon Fenland.
- 3.4.23 Existing vegetation, field boundaries and landform help to partially screen and filter views. The Site is viewed in proximity to adjacent transport corridors and electricity pylons and transmission lines which form prominent features in the skyline.
- 3.4.24 The Horndon Fenland as a whole forms a distinct landscape within the Northern Thames Basin. An expansive landscape of flat topography, extensive tracts of farmland, sparse settlement patterns and mature hedgerow field boundaries. The Site located to the northern edge of the fenland character area is more representative of the wooded hills and ridges landscape to the north, typified by gentle undulating hills and ridges, small woods and irregular pasture / arable fields. The existing visual amenity from principal viewpoints within the context of this transition zone has been assessed to offer **fair visual amenity**, where the quality of the existing views is such that there are a number of incongruous elements.
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## 4 THE PROPOSAL

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### 4.1 Proposal

- 4.1.1 This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of future potential industrial development of the Site. The proposed development scheme includes the creation of 23.5 hectares of employment land comprising a mix of B1 (business – offices), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage or distribution) uses, the provision of footpath and access routes, parking, incorporation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), retention and enhancement of selected existing internal vegetation and boundary hedge lines, proposed tree and shrub planting.
- 4.1.2 A sensitivity evaluation<sup>9</sup> of the Brentwood Hills (D2) character area identifies for commercial / warehouse estate development the following key landscape sensitivity and accommodation of change issues:
- Low to moderate inter-visibility;
  - Some ridges, hillsides are visually exposed;
  - Landform character; and
  - Islands of tranquillity.
- 4.1.3 Specific comments identify '*siting, massing, form and colour, and landscape framework that respond to character are critical*' when considering this type of development. The introduction of individual large / bulky buildings within the landscape would be subject to specific landscape sensitivities issues in the area including the visual exposure of some ridges, hilltops and landform character.
- 4.1.4 Overall the area is deemed to have a medium landscape sensitivity level when considering commercial / warehouse estate development.
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<sup>9</sup> Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (2006), Sensitivity Evaluation, page 123

## 4.2 Mitigation by Design

4.2.1 The district LCA identifies the following key planning and land management guidelines<sup>10</sup> applicable to the Horndon Fenland character area:

- Conserve the relatively sparse settlement pattern and generally rural character of the area;
- Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to the existing settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character;
- Seek to screen visual detractors (such as the edges of the small industrial estate in West Horndon, and large agricultural buildings);
- Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow network by planting hedgerow species appropriate to local landscape character;
- Establish arable field margins as important nature conservation habitats;
- Seek ways to mitigate the visual impact of the railway and A127 corridor through introducing new and strengthening existing parallel shelterbelts where appropriate; and
- Introduce new woodland planting in the form of shaws and copses, as well as hedgerow trees.

4.2.2 The location of the Site within the Horndon Fenland character area advocates, where feasible, the inclusion of these guideline principles to help 'fit' the proposed development within the transition zone between wooded farmland and the fenland landscape.

4.2.3 The design of the proposed development should be well-integrated into the landscape and maintain the quality of the transition between the 'urban' and rural landscape; the treatment of the internal areas and open spaces will be key to maintaining and enhancing the quality of that transition.

4.2.4 The proposed development layout, building alignment and composition has the potential to respond to the distinctive character of the Horndon Fenland landscape. The incorporation

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<sup>10</sup> Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford LCA, Chris Blandford Associates, 2006 (GI : Horndon Fenland)



of supplementary planting within and beyond the Site will help integrate the proposals while enhancing links to the wider landscape.

4.2.5 In consideration of the landscape and visual issues relevant to the Site a landscape strategy and an approach to the mitigation of the proposed development has been developed and recommendations have been incorporated into the proposed Master Plan which aim to avoid, reduce and if possible remedy the identified landscape and visual effects.

4.2.6 The proposed scheme layout (refer **Figure 7 - Outline Landscape Master Plan**) has been developed in response to the following mitigation strategy:

4.2.7 **Siting**

- Units to 'nestle' in the landscape and topography, allow the 'landscape' to penetrate the Site and integrate the 'urban' form into the landscape;
- Incorporate sensitive ground modelling proposals which reduce the extent of built form above the southern ridgeline, including terracing to the southern section of the Site and gentle grades with shallow bunding (where applicable);
- Enhance existing watercourse - establish a broad vegetated east-west spine within the Site to divide and screen built form mass;
- Provide breaks in the built form layout to establish open space and tree belts (within the streetscape) that dissect the Site to reduce the impact of mass on the periphery of the fenland landscape;
- Provide a vegetated buffer to the southern boundary to screen built form and enhance east-west habitat connections;
- Incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to restrict potential adverse effects upon the small watercourse and create a locally accessible resource; and
- Incorporate detention basins off-site in proximity to Hobbs Hole woodland to promote habitat creation and increase local wildlife site resource;

4.2.8 **Pedestrian / Cycle Access**

- Promote pedestrian / cycle connections through the Site with links to existing PROWs to south and north;

- Maintain PROW 183 (Bridleway) route to north west corner of the Site;
- Potential for inclusion of improved bridleway and cycle links throughout the Site; and
- Conserve the setting of PROW 179 (south of site) along the ridge and retain panoramic views to the south;

#### 4.2.9

#### **Planting**

- Maintain a sense of scale and place through well-designed planting appropriate to the locality;
- Establish a strong landscaped frontage, framing key vistas into the Site from the A127 and M25;
- Establish a wooded appearance, through extensive street tree plantings and groups within the Site representative of the wooded hill and ridge landscape of the Great Warley Wooded Farmland to the north;
- Conserve and enhance vegetation bounding the Site to maximise screening of the development, specifically on the eastern boundary;
- Promote rural boundary treatments i.e. native hedgerows, within the Site;
- Establish a broad vegetated spine to the central low-lying watercourse, enhance existing trees (Oaks) and riparian vegetation, and create opportunities for incorporation of SUDS features;
- Promote opportunities for wildflower meadow grassland within and adjacent to the Site; and
- Incorporate ecological enhancements and habitat creation with connections to the adjacent Hobbs Hole woodland.

#### 4.2.10

**Offsite Planting:** The proposed landscape scheme includes the following offsite planting proposals:

- Woodland tree belt to southern ridge to improve screening of the development from the south;

- Tree and shrub plantings, and wildflower meadow grassland associated with proposed detention (SUDS) pond features (adjacent to Hobbs Hole woodland) to help screen views from PROW 183 and promote extended habitat creation; and
- Establishment of wildflower meadow grassland to improve habitat diversity.

4.2.11 Further offsite plantings to strengthen local boundary hedgerows, enhance watercourse vegetation etc. has not currently been considered but may offer potential for further mitigation.

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## 5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

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### 5.1 Effect on Landscape Resource

- 5.1.1 The effect of the proposed changes to the Site, specifically on the identified landscape receptors (attributes) has been reviewed including consideration of changes to the existing landscape resource, the introduction of new elements within the landscape and changes to local perceptions of the Site.
- 5.1.2 In terms of the existing landscape resource, the main issues to be considered and addressed with regard to the proposed development are:
- the considered approach to the M25 / A127 transport corridors;
  - the conservation and management of the majority of the existing hedgerows / trees bounding the Site;
  - the conservation and enhancement of the small watercourse and early mature trees;
  - the sensitive ground modelling of the industrial area to reflect the underlying topography; and
  - the effective integration and transition from industrial to rural character.
- 5.1.3 The Site is strongly influenced by the existing land use (former construction works depot), and also adjacent land uses, notably the M25 and A127 transport corridors. A dilapidated landscape which has been subject to extensive alteration in isolation from the surrounding landscape character. The proposed development will establish a largely industrial land use on an otherwise derelict site and provide opportunity to establish an improved landscape setting and sense of place.
- 5.1.4 Internally the Site includes few natural features (attributes), which are of varying quality. Generally all hedgerow tree and shrub plantings bounding the Site are to be retained and enhanced. Within the Site rough grassland, ruderal vegetation and vegetated bunds to the edge of the works areas (bare ground) will generally be removed (subject to further ecological assessment). Vegetation cover within the Site is limited and predominantly of low ecological value.

- 5.1.5 Hobbs Hole woodland is located beyond the Site boundary to the south-west and will be unaffected by the proposed development. The proposed incorporation of drainage features to the north and additional woodland plantings to the east will provide opportunities for enhanced habitat creation in proximity to the woodland.
- 5.1.6 The small watercourse running through the Site with associated early mature oaks and fragmented hedge line vegetation is proposed to be retained and enhanced in coordination with drainage proposals for the Site. Opportunities for the incorporation of SUDS features and increased diversity of planting etc. along this central vegetated spine will conserve and enhance this riparian feature, and promote habitat creation and connectivity through the Site.
- 5.1.7 A landscape led site layout ensures that new built form responds to the underlying topography of the Brentwood Hills to help reduce dominance in the landscape. The proposed development has been sited in consideration of the site topography and features, and will endeavour to limit substantial ground modelling effects, to promote the 'nestling' of large units into the landscape, thus reducing the extent of building elevation particularly in proximity to the ridge landscape along the southern edge of the Site.
- 5.1.8 The routing of the PROW 183 (Bridleway) through the north-east corner of the Site will be retained and enhanced. The routing of adjacent PROWs to the south will not be affected by the proposed development. The Site offers opportunities to provide further pedestrian / cycle connections via open space provision with links to the wider countryside.
- 5.1.9 The Site is currently in a dilapidated state, a derelict feature within the landscape which includes limited landscape attributes and is highly influenced by the proximity of the M25 and A127 whereby the Site attains a low level of tranquillity. The proposed development will not adversely affect the limited landscape resource within the Site, but will retain and enhance the remnant landscape features including the watercourse and associated early mature trees.
- 5.1.10 The introduction of commercial / industrial warehouses on former depot land will provide opportunities to enhance and expand the existing attributes of the Site and establish a landscape framework that responds to and incorporates features typical of the wooded hills and ridges character area.
-

## 5.2 Susceptibility

- 5.2.1 An important element in identifying the effects of a Proposal is to assess the ability (the susceptibility) of the existing landscape to accommodate the specific proposed changes with regard to the consequences on the local landscape character.
- 5.2.2 A sensitivity evaluation within the Essex Landscape Character Assessment identified the key landscape sensitivities applicable to commercial / warehouse estate development are the potential impact upon visually exposed ridges and hillsides, landform character and islands of tranquillity. The landscape sensitivity to commercial / warehouse estate development incorporating large / bulky buildings within the Brentwood Hills is deemed to be medium.<sup>11</sup>
- 5.2.3 Landscape characteristics identified within the Site are unlikely to constrain the ability of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development.
- 5.2.4 The Site (landscape resource) has been deemed to be of *low susceptibility* to accommodate change. A damaged landscape where change would bring opportunities for the significant enhancement of key characteristics, individual elements or features (i.e. riparian corridor) and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects, or overall local landscape character.

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## 5.3 Effect on Landscape Character

- 5.3.1 The existing character of the Site contains some attributes, such as landform and remnant hedgerow vegetation representative of the Brentwood Hills local landscape character area but also includes many incongruous elements such as extensive hard stand surfacing, temporary buildings and structures. In addition, adjacent incongruous elements, transport infrastructure (M25, A127) and electricity transmission lines and pylons coalesce to detract from the local landscape character.
- 5.3.2 The proposed development of the Brentwood Enterprise Park will replace the existing derelict landscape with built form of increased scale and mass, while establishing a landscape

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<sup>11</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, Chris Blandford Associates, 2003: Sensitivity Evaluation (page 123)

framework and response to mitigation which considers the transition from rural fenland to industrial landscape within the Brentwood Hills.

- 5.3.3 The proposed commercial / industrial warehouses will coalesce with the existing transport corridors in proximity to the Site forming a cohesive character zone. The integration of the Site's southern edge into the wider landscape is critical when considering the resultant effect upon the broader landscape character.
- 5.3.4 The proposed development will marginally alter the existing landscape character of the site in the local vicinity. The Site is able to accommodate the changes proposed without adverse effects on the local landscape character.

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## 5.4 Effect on Visual Amenity

- 5.4.1 The visual effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The appraisal involves a systematic identification and description of the visual effects, supported by plans and photographs.
- 5.4.2 The likely value placed upon views by people or the visual amenity of the locality is evaluated to help assess the effects of proposed development.
- 5.4.3 Consideration of the views and visual amenity has been undertaken in the summer months when deciduous vegetation is in full leaf. As such, the appraisal has endeavoured to make informed judgements applicable to visual amenity throughout the year and the consideration of seasonal views, i.e. in the winter months when vegetation is devoid of foliage.
- 5.4.4 This report does not consider the assessment of night views. If required, the significance of changes at night is generally assessed separately when detailed lighting proposals have been defined.
- 5.4.5 An important element in identifying the visual effects of a Proposal is to assess the sensitivity of the existing visual receptors (people who see the view) and their susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity. The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:
- *The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and*

- *The extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.*

5.4.6 The visual amenity of the Site within the wider Horndon Fenland locality has been identified as 'fair' where the quality of existing views is influenced by the presence of a number of incongruous elements such as transport infrastructure, hardstand areas and electricity pylons.

5.4.7 Key visual issues to be addressed in considering the proposed development of the Site are: the interface between the proposed development and the southern ridge in consideration of long distance views from the south; the relationship of the existing properties on Warley Street to the development; the potential visual effects on the bridleway (PROW 183) and the southern public footpaths (PROW 179 and 180); and the treatment of the internal streetscape and the transition to the wider countryside.

5.4.8 For all identified viewpoints, or groups of viewpoints (refer Chapter 3) the degree of change which the Proposals will engender is described and appraised. The following summary identifies the primary viewpoints and people or visual receptors within the area who are likely to be affected by the change in views and visual amenity resulting from the proposed development.

5.4.9 Selected viewpoints have been classified by type according to their perceived sensitivity and likely susceptibility to change.

#### **Private viewpoints (residential)**

5.4.10 *Close views from residential properties along Warley Street directly adjacent to the Site (Jax Folly):*

Receptors are likely to incur partially obscured and some direct views of the proposed development from first floor side windows of the property and within the rear garden. Existing rear garden boundary vegetation will help screen some close views. Proposed enhancement of the eastern site boundary adjacent to the property including woodland belt planting will extend and complement the existing off site plantings and result in increased screening and obscured views from the 'Jax Folly' residence.



5.4.11 *Long partial views from residential properties along Warley Street (Gladstone Cottages):*

Likely to incur partially obscured and some direct views of the proposed development. Direct views of the proposed development are restricted to upper windows. Views from ground floor windows are obscured by existing hedgerows on Warley Street. The proposed enhancement of the southern boundary with woodland tree belt plantings will provide increased screening which would help filter views of the development.

5.4.12 *Distant views from residential properties along St Mary's Lane (B187):*

Isolated glimpsed views of the southern edge of the Site (warehouse ridgelines) from the rural landscape to the south are noted, specifically from small holdings along St Mary's Lane. Intervening mature hedgerow field boundaries and the proposed woodland tree belt plantings to the southern ridge will help screen and break up built form on the edge of the fenland landscape.

5.4.13 *Long distant views from residential properties along Clay Tye Road (B186):*

Long distant views of the proposed development from properties on Clay Tye Road over the flat fenland topography are viewed against a backdrop of wooded hills and farmland. Mature hedgerow field boundaries and intervening woodland blocks break up the view from the upper floor windows of selected properties. The proposed woodland tree belt plantings on the southern ridge will help screen and break up the built form massing of warehouse ridgelines on the Brentwood Hills.

### **Public viewpoints**

5.4.14 *Close views from PROW 183 (Bridleway):*

Given its proximity to the Site close transient views of the proposed development will be evident from PROW 183, specifically along elevated sections where the route crosses the A127. The enhancement of the Site frontage adjacent to the A127 route will substantially improve views along this section of the route. Sections of PROW 183 in proximity to Hobbs Hole woodland are screened by the existing vegetation. The siting of SUDS features to the north of Hobbs Hole allows planting (trees and shrubs) to be incorporated along the western boundary of the development area and the enhancement of the riparian corridor in this vicinity will establish a vegetated outlook from this section of PROW 183 with improved screening of views to the east.

5.4.15 *Views from PROW 179:*

Given its proximity to the Site close transient views of the proposed development will be evident from PROW 179 as it traverses the ridgeline to the south of the Site. The proposed establishment of internal street tree plantings, enhancement of the central riparian corridor and a woodland tree belt to the southern boundary will help to filter these transient views and break up the built form of bulky warehouse ridgelines in proximity to the route.

5.4.16 *Views from PROW 180:*

Distant transient views of the proposed development will be likely from the upper sections of PROW 180 as it ascends to the southern ridge. Southern boundary woodland belt tree plantings will help to filter long views and break up built form mass (warehouse ridgelines) in the landscape.

#### **Transport Routes**

5.4.17 *Open views from M25:*

Travellers on the M25 northbound carriageway are likely to experience fleeting long open views over the Site, generally of the warehouse buildings ridgelines and southern development edge. Travellers on the M25 southbound carriageway are likely to experience only glimpsed transient views across the western area of the Site incorporating the proposed hotel and office buildings. The speed at which these views are seen allows for only brief recognition of features in the landscape. The proposed establishment of internal street tree plantings and a woodland tree belt to the southern boundary will help to filter these transient views and break up the built form massing within the gently undulating hills and ridge landscape.

5.4.18 *Partially filtered views from A127:*

Transient, often contained views of the proposed development from the westbound carriageway on approach to M25 Junction 29 would be visible from selected locations between breaks in roadside vegetation. The proposed development set back and the establishment of a treed frontage along the northern boundary within the Site will filter and screen these intermittent views while allowing recognition of the Park presence.

5.4.19 *Glimpsed views from Warley Street (B186):*

Isolated glimpsed long views of a proportion of the Site from elevated sections of Warley Street are infrequent, but where visible over the verge hedgerows are likely to coalesce with the existing transportation corridors in the vicinity. Proposed woodland tree belt plantings to the southern boundary will provide increased screening which would help filter views of the development.

5.4.20 In summary, visually, the Site benefits from enclosure provided by the engineered embankments of the M25 and A127, the Hobbs Hole woodland and the existing eastern boundary plantings, however proposed development on the lower Brentwood Hills would be discernible in local views particularly from the south and viewpoints closer to the scheme along PROWs.

5.4.21 The proposed woodland tree belt plantings on the southern ridge of the Site would provide a strong visual screen to views from the east and south. The planting of woodland blocks and hedge lines within the Site and enhancement of the riparian central corridor would be in keeping with the local landscape character. Establishment of significant tree belt plantings, particularly on the southern ridge will form a strongly defined transition between urban form and the rural hinterland.

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## 6 CONCLUSION

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- 6.1.1 The landscape and visual appraisal has reviewed the existing landscape and visual resource relevant to land at Codham Hall, Great Warley (the Site) in consideration of the proposed development of Brentwood Enterprise Park. The existing Site is considered to make a *negative contribution* to the local landscape character and the existing visual amenity from principal viewpoints within the locality is deemed to offer *fair visual amenity*.
- 6.1.2 The existing character of the Site is dominated by its former construction depot use and contains few significant attributes representative of the local landscape character. Adjoining incongruous elements, such as the M25, A127 transport corridors and electricity power lines /pylons detract from the local landscape character and affect the quality of the existing views and visual amenity.
- 6.1.3 The Site (landscape resource) is considered to be of *low susceptibility* to accommodate change. A damaged landscape where change would bring opportunities for the significant enhancement of key characteristics, individual elements or features (i.e. riparian corridor) and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects, or overall local landscape character.
- 6.1.4 The effective integration of built form into the transition zone between the wooded ridge and farmland and Horndon Fenland landscape will be dependent upon a combination of landscape and visual strategies which endeavour to provide a 'best fit' and a development that nestles well into the undulating hills.
- 6.1.5 Retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedge lines within a central riparian spine, the establishment of appropriate building lines and sensitive ground modelling, the provision of off-site woodland blocks to the southern ridge and adjacent to Hobbs Hole, and the establishment of dense internal street tree plantings will reduce the long term visual impact of the development within the locality and from the broader Horndon Fenland to the south.
- 6.1.6 The Site is strongly influenced by the existing land use (former construction works depot), and also adjacent land uses, notably the M25 and A127 transport corridors. A dilapidated landscape which has been subject to extensive alteration in isolation from the surrounding landscape character. The proposed development will establish a largely industrial land use

on an otherwise derelict site and provide opportunity to establish an improved landscape setting and sense of place.

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**BRENTWOOD ENTERPRISE PARK  
S & J PADFIELD AND PARTNERS**

**National Character Area Profile:  
III Northern Thames Basin (NE466)**

October 2013

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## Summary

The Northern Thames Basin is a diverse area which extends from Hertfordshire in the west to the Essex coast in the east. It is separated from the North Sea and Thames Estuary by a narrow band of land that makes up the Greater Thames Estuary National Character Area (NCA). Included within this NCA are the suburbs of North London and also historic towns and cities including St. Albans and Colchester, as well as new and planned towns such as Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield and Basildon. Although arable agriculture is a large industry in the area the soil quality ranges from good to poor quality. The London Clay provides a poor quality soil that becomes waterlogged in winter and cracks and shrinks in summer. Better quality soil is found in areas that contain alluvial deposits from the Thames and other rivers in the area as they formed and changed position over time.

The Northern Thames Basin is an area rich in geodiversity, archaeology and history and diverse landscapes ranging from the wooded Hertfordshire plateaux and river valleys, to the open landscape and predominantly arable area of the Essex heathlands, with areas of urbanisation mixed in throughout. Urban expansion has been a feature of this area since the 16th century when wealthy merchants who were conducting business in London built homes on its outskirts, mainly in the Hertfordshire area. This trend increased dramatically from the mid-19th century as infrastructure improved and people could travel to work in London from the surrounding areas in an hour or less. This has put increased pressure on the area in terms of extra housing developments, schools and other necessities for expanding populations, with a consequential reduction in tranquillity. Tranquil areas can still be found in parts of Hertfordshire and Essex in areas that have a more dispersed settlement pattern broken up by arable land and semi-natural habitats.

There are a wide variety of semi-natural habitats in the area and these support many important species. However, the habitats have become fragmented over time and a landscape-scale approach is needed to connect them so that they can be sustained and provide beneficial functions including; increasing pollinating insects, acting as flood defences and water storage areas, preventing soil erosion and helping to improve soil and water quality as well as maintaining the area's sense of place and history. This NCA includes many internationally and nationally designated sites including 72 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (20 of which are designated wholly or in part for their national geological importance), 6 Ramsar sites, 6 Special Protection Areas, 3 Special Areas of Conservation and 2 National Nature Reserves. The majority of these sites are estuaries and woodlands. The estuaries support migrating and overwintering birds as well as rare or locally important plants and invertebrates. The selected woodlands are ancient and have a long history of management through coppicing and pollarding, which has allowed rich ground flora to develop and also supports rare mosses and deadwood invertebrates.

[Click map to enlarge; click again to reduce.](#)



The main changes to the area have resulted from increased construction and commercial-scale farming. Both of these have increased pressures on water availability, water flow, soil quality, biodiversity and sense of place. Although housing, other construction and agriculture are significant for the area it is important that these are developed in a sustainable way so that predicted changes in climate and the effects on the area's character are considered and sense of place and history are preserved.

The main opportunities available to this area are the continuation of the agricultural tradition, but within this land management should consider methods that are more sustainable in terms of water use and soil quality in order for it to continue to be a viable industry in the future. The areas of various semi-natural habitats also present opportunities to improve water storage and soil quality for surrounding agricultural land as well as to increase advantageous species that will aid pollination and reduce pest species. In addition to this the woodlands in the area could be an important resource to supply timber and fuel to the local area if they were managed effectively.



Farmland next to the River Colne in Essex.

## Statements of Environmental Opportunity

**SEO 1:** Manage rivers and river valleys to protect and improve water quality and help to alleviate flooding in the downstream urban areas, while also helping to improve aquifer recharge and provide a sufficient store of water to meet future need, especially with predicted climatic changes. Conserve the riparian landscapes and habitats, for their recreational and educational amenity for their internationally significant ecological value.

**SEO 2:** Manage the agricultural landscape and diverse range of soils which allow the Northern Thames Basin to be a major food provider, using methods and crops that retain and improve soil quality, water availability and biodiversity.

**SEO 3:** Protect and appropriately manage the historic environment for its contribution to local character and sense of identity and as a framework for habitat restoration and sustainable development, ensuring high design standards (particularly in the London Green Belt) which respect the open and built character of the Thames Basin. Enhance and increase access between rural and urban areas through good green infrastructure links to allow local communities recreational, health and wellbeing benefits.

**SEO 4:** Manage and expand the significant areas of broadleaf woodland and wood pasture, and increase tree cover within urban areas, for the green infrastructure links and important habitats that they provide, for the sense of tranquillity they bring, their ability to screen urban influences and their role in reducing heat island effect and sequestering and storing carbon.



Ancient woodland at Pound Wood in Benfleet, Essex.



## Description

### Physical and functional links to other National Character Areas

The Northern Thames Basin forms the rising land above the low-lying marshy landscapes adjoining the coast and estuaries of the Greater Thames Estuary and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths National Character Areas (NCAs) to its east and south-east extent and enjoys associated views of these areas. Chalk geology commonly underpins this NCA and the neighbouring Chilterns and South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands NCAs to the west and north; The Chilterns, a formation of chalk hills and plateaux with a prominent escarpment, offers views across to this similarly elevated NCA. To the south-west the Thames Valley NCA forms a wedge-shaped area containing the open Thames flood plain surrounded by rolling clay farmland. Directly south is the Inner London NCA on the banks of the Thames where the river valley widens out into a broad flood plain.

The London Basin Chalk aquifer, which underlies much of the western section of the Northern Thames Basin NCA, is the principal aquifer supplying water to Inner London. The Chalk is confined in the basin by the overlying Tertiary formations of London Clay, which means recharge largely occurs in the extensive Chalk outcrop of the Northern Thames Basin and into the Chilterns NCA to the north and the North Downs to the south.

A small part of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) straddles the eastern edge of this NCA, the more northerly South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands and the south- western tip of the Suffolk Coast and



Major transport links include the M25 motorway.

Heaths NCA. The urban character in the south of the Northern Thames Basin continues into the Thames Valley and Greater Thames Estuary NCAs.

The landscape becomes extensively urbanised towards the Inner London NCA and includes major transport links from outside the area such as the East Coast mainline railway, M11 which connects to London and Cambridgeshire, the M1 which passes north-west through the Chilterns to the Midlands beyond, and

the M25 which provides circular access to all parts of London and the south. Important A roads providing wide physical links include the A12 and A120 and the A1(M), which has a similar route to the M1 but diverts towards the East Anglian Chalk and Bedfordshire Claylands NCAs.

Many watercourses feed in or flow from surrounding areas, often along courses incised into boulder clays or tills, for instance the Blackwater and Colne flowing from the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands and the Ver and Lea from the westerly Chilterns NCA which flow into Hertfordshire before joining the Thames in inner London. These, along with others, form a series of river valleys draining south to the Thames and east to the North Sea and Thames Estuary, including the Roding, Wid, Chelmer, Roach and Crouch. Also notable is the Grand Union Canal, which runs from here through several other NCAs northwards to Birmingham.

## Distinct areas

- Hertfordshire plateaux and river valleys
- Essex wooded hills and ridges
- London Clay lowlands
- Essex heathlands



River Mimram valley flood plain, Hertfordshire.

## Key characteristics

- The landform is varied with a wide plateau divided by river valleys. The prominent hills and ridges of the 'Bagshot Hills' are notable to the north-west and extensive tracts of flat land are found in the south.
- Characteristic of the area is a layer of thick clay producing heavy, acidic soils, resulting in retention of considerable areas of ancient woodland.
- Areas capped by glacial sands and gravels have resulted in nutrient-poor, free-draining soils which support remnant lowland heathlands, although these are now small. Areas that have alluvial deposits present are well drained and fertile.
- The water bearing underlying Chalk beds are a main source of recharge for the principal London Basin Chalk aquifer.
- A diverse landscape with a series of broad valleys containing the major rivers Ver, Colne and Lea, and slightly steeper valleys of the rivers Stour, Colne and Roman. Numerous springs rise at the base of the Bagshot Beds and several reservoirs are dotted throughout the area
- The pattern of woodlands is varied across the area and includes considerable ancient semi-natural woodland. Hertfordshire is heavily wooded in some areas as are parts of Essex, while other areas within Essex are more open in character. Significant areas of wood pasture and pollarded veteran trees are also present.
- The field pattern is very varied across the basin reflecting historical activity. Informal patterns of 18th-century or earlier enclosure reflect medieval colonisation of the heaths. Regular planned enclosures dating from the Romano-British period are a subtle but nationally important feature on the flat land to the south-east of the area. In the Essex heathlands 18th- and 19th-century enclosure of heathlands and commons followed by extensive 20th-century field enlargement is dominant.
- Mixed farming, with arable land predominating in the Hertfordshire plateaux, parts of the London Clay lowlands and Essex heathlands. Grasslands are characteristic of the river valleys throughout. Horticulture and market gardening are found on the light, sandy soils of former heaths in Essex, particularly around Colchester, along with orchards, meadow pasture and leys following numerous narrow rivers and streams.
- The diverse range of semi-natural habitats include ancient woodland, lowland heath and floodplain grazing marsh and provide important habitats for a wide range of species including great crested newt, water vole, dormouse and otter.
- Rich archaeology including sites related to Roman occupation, with the Roman capital at Colchester and City of St Albans (Verulamium) and links to London. Landscape parklands surrounding 16th- and 17th-century rural estates and country houses built for London merchants are a particular feature in Hertfordshire.
- The medieval pattern of small villages and dispersed farming settlement remains central to the character of parts of Hertfordshire and Essex. Market towns have expanded over time as have the London suburbs and commuter settlements, with the creation of new settlements such as the pioneering garden city at Welwyn and the planned town at Basildon.
- Brick-built dwellings are characteristic from the late 17th century onwards. Prior to this dwellings and farm buildings tended to be timber built with weatherboarding, now mainly painted white but traditionally black or tarred, and whitewashed plaster walls.

**BRENTWOOD ENTERPRISE PARK  
S & J PADFIELD AND PARTNERS**

**Essex Landscape Character Assessment:  
Wooded Hill and Ridge Landscapes (D) and Brentwood Hills (D2)**

October 2013

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EXTRACTS FROM

**Essex & Southend-on-Sea  
Replacement Structure Plan Review**

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**ESSEX LANDSCAPE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

Approved By:     Dominic Watkins    

Signed:                                     

Position:     Senior Associate    

Date:                 2003                

**Final Report**

**2003**

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***CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES***  
*Environment Landscape Planning*



## 4.5 Wooded Hill and Ridge Landscapes (D)

4.5.1 The Wooded Hills and Ridges are a distinctive landscape type within the south and west of the study area. Their relief and strongly wooded character are a marked contrast to surrounding areas of more open arable farmland and river valleys.



4.5.2 The key characteristics of this division can be summarised as:

- Woodland dominated hills and ridges on a belt of Bagshot/Claygate Beds and other sand and gravel formations, stretching through Essex from Epping Forest to Tiptree.
- Wooded commons with ancient and secondary woodland defined by peripheral medieval wood banks.
- A concentration of small estates/areas of historic parkland.
- Well hedged landscape, with large areas of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- Historically scattered and fairly sparse settlement pattern, overlain in parts by expanding modern suburban development of historic market towns.

4.5.3 Typical hedgerow species are Hawthorn and Oak with occasional Gorse, Holly, Blackthorn, Dog rose, Hazel, Elm, Ash, Birch, Beech, Sweet Chestnut, Elderberry.





4.5.4 The Wooded Hills and Ridges comprises four Landscape Character Areas within the study area:

- Epping Forest & Ridges (D1)
- Brentwood Hills (D2)
- Danbury Hills (D3)
- Tiptree Ridge (D4)

#### 4.5.6 *Brentwood Hills (D2)*



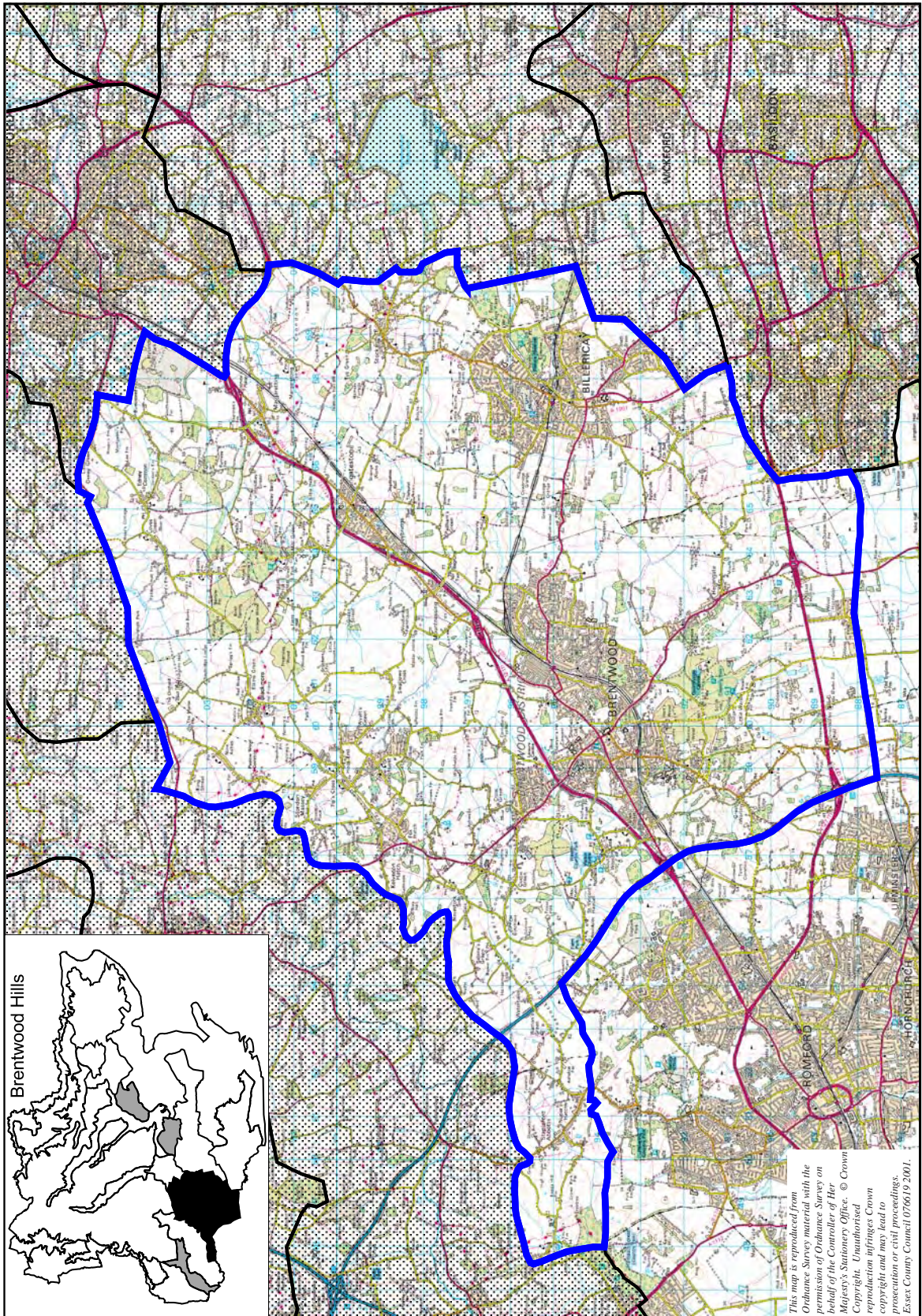
##### *Key Characteristics*

- Gently to strongly undulating hills/ridges.
- Semi enclosed character due to presence of numerous small woods, large interlocking blocks of woodland and frequent hedgerow trees.
- Patchwork of small irregular pasture and arable fields, opening out to medium to large regular arable fields in the centre of the area.
- Dense linear settlement pattern along major south west to north east road/rail routes.

##### *Overall Character*

The Brentwood Hills have a varied topography comprising a series of ridges and rounded hills. The landform is strongly rolling towards the edges of the character area, flattening out towards the centre on high ground. To the south a slight escarpment occurs between Childerditch and Little Burstead. It is a wooded landscape with many small scattered woods, some large blocks of woodland, tree belts of historic parkland and hedgerow trees. As a result, views are often quite confined, but in parts long views are possible over more open farmland and from high ground. Small unenclosed greens, commons and scattered ponds add interest and variety of the area. A number of isolated churches on hilltops are also a distinctive feature. Villages, hamlets, cottages and farmsteads are typically strung out along the narrow lanes, with a dense urban settlement concentrated along the main road and rail routes running through the centre of the area.







## *Character Profile*

### *Geology*

- Claygate and Bagshot Beds, London Clay, and a small area of Glacial Till.

### *Soils*

- Complex mosaic of soils including well drained fine loamy soils, seasonally waterlogged slowly permeable clayey, fine and coarse loamy soils.

### *Landform*

- Gently to strongly undulating low hills/ridges.
- South facing escarpment between Gt Warley and Gt Burshead incised by small narrow valleys.
- Gentle, very shallow valley of the River Wid.

### *Semi-natural vegetation*

- Ancient oak-hornbeam and mixed deciduous woodland, e.g. Hordon, Norsey, Thorndon Woods. Sweet chestnut coppice. Springline alder woodland.
- Unimproved neutral/acid grassland and relict pockets of heathland.

### *Pattern of field enclosure*

- Predominantly small scale irregular hedged field pattern.
- Some parts in the centre of the area have medium to large scale field pattern with straight boundaries, defined by tree belts or fragmented hedgelines.

### *Farming pattern*

- Mix of arable and pasture farmland.

### *Woodland/tree cover*

- Relatively high tree/woodland cover.
- Very large blocks of woodland south of Brentwood, east of Billericay and north of Ingatestone.
- Many small woodlands and copses scattered throughout the area.
- Frequent hedgerow trees, shaws.
- Mixed or conifer shelterbelts around some farms, fields.

### *Settlement pattern and built form*

- Many small linear hamlets along lanes interspersed with farmsteads and cottages.
- Some medium-large villages along major road routes.
- Brentwood and Billericay are historic market towns, much expanded by modern commuter development.
- Mixed vernacular including red brick, colour washed plaster and weatherboarding.

### *Communications*

- Complex pattern of narrow sinuous lanes.
- M25 forms the eastern boundary of the character area.
- A12(T) cuts through the centre.
- A pylon route runs close to the M25, and another cuts across farmland between Brentwood and Billericay.

### *Other landscape features*

- Some greens associated with settlement, and a few surviving commons, e.g. Galleywood Common.
- High frequency of ponds.
- Large historic park at Hylands and a number of small estates.
- Country Parks of Weald/Thorndon include remnant wood pasture and historic parkland.
- Local landmarks include isolated churches, e.g. Little Burstead, and windmills at Mountnessing and Stock.
- Golf courses are a fairly common feature.

### *Landscape Condition*

- The condition of woodlands and hedgerows is moderate to good. However, parts of the arable farmland have a fragmented hedgerow pattern in poor condition.
- Major roads, some industrial development and large farm buildings are visually intrusive/detract from character in localised areas.

### *Past, Present and Future Trends for Change*

- The character of much of the landscape has not changed significantly for long periods of time apart from enclosure of large commons in the 19th Century, and erosion of typical small irregular field patterns due to expansion of arable farming since the Second World War.

- The development of major road/rail routes through the area and pressure from the expansion of London has led to considerable expansion of the market towns of Brentwood and Billericay, and partial urbanisation of some of the larger villages.
- As well as urban development pressure, there are likely to be continuing pressures for major road improvements which, if not sensitively aligned and designed, could be damaging to character. Also, the character of narrow hedged/banked lanes are vulnerable both to erosion and to minor highway improvements to accommodate increasing levels of commuter traffic.

**BRENTWOOD HILLS (D2)  
SENSITIVITY EVALUATION**

TYPE/SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT/CHANGE	KEY LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND ACCOMMODATION OF CHANGE ISSUES	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY LEVEL
1. Major urban extensions (>5 ha) and new settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Some ridges, hillsides are more visually exposed.</li> <li>• Integrity of woodland, hedgerow field pattern.</li> <li>• Coalescence.</li> <li>• Islands of tranquillity in the north.</li> </ul> <p><i>Any new development should include strong new woodland/hedgerow framework planting particularly where arable farmland is in poor condition.</i></p>	M
2. Small urban extensions (<5 ha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Some ridges, hillsides are visually exposed.</li> </ul>	M
3. Major transportation developments/improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Irregular grain of the landscape.</li> <li>• Landform character.</li> <li>• Islands of tranquillity.</li> </ul> <p><i>Route alignment and appropriate mitigation is critical.</i></p>	M
4. Commercial/warehouse estate/port development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Some ridges, hillsides are visually exposed.</li> <li>• Landform character.</li> <li>• Islands of tranquillity.</li> </ul> <p><i>Siting, massing, form and colour and landscape framework that respond to character are critical.</i></p>	M
5. Developments with individual large/bulky buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility but some ridges, hilltops are visually exposed.</li> <li>• Landform character.</li> </ul> <p><i>Siting, massing, form and colour are critical.</i></p>	M
6. Large scale 'open uses'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Integrity of woodland, hedgerow field pattern.</li> </ul>	M
7. Mineral extraction/waste disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Some ridges, hillsides are visually exposed.</li> <li>• Integrity of woodland, hedgerow field pattern.</li> <li>• Islands of tranquillity.</li> </ul>	M
8. Incremental small scale developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character of the narrow lanes.</li> <li>• Distinctive character/form of some settlements.</li> <li>• Integrity of hedgerow field pattern.</li> </ul>	H
9. Utilities development, i.e. masts, pylons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate intervisibility.</li> <li>• Some ridges, hillsides are visually exposed.</li> <li>• Islands of tranquillity.</li> </ul>	M
10. Decline in traditional countryside management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland condition.</li> <li>• Integrity of small scale hedgerowed field pattern.</li> </ul>	H

Table to be read in conjunction with paragraphs 1.4.15 – 1.4.17

# BRENTWOOD ENTERPRISE PARK S & J PADFIELD AND PARTNERS

Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape  
Character Assessment: Fenland (G) and Horndon Fenland (GI)

October 2013

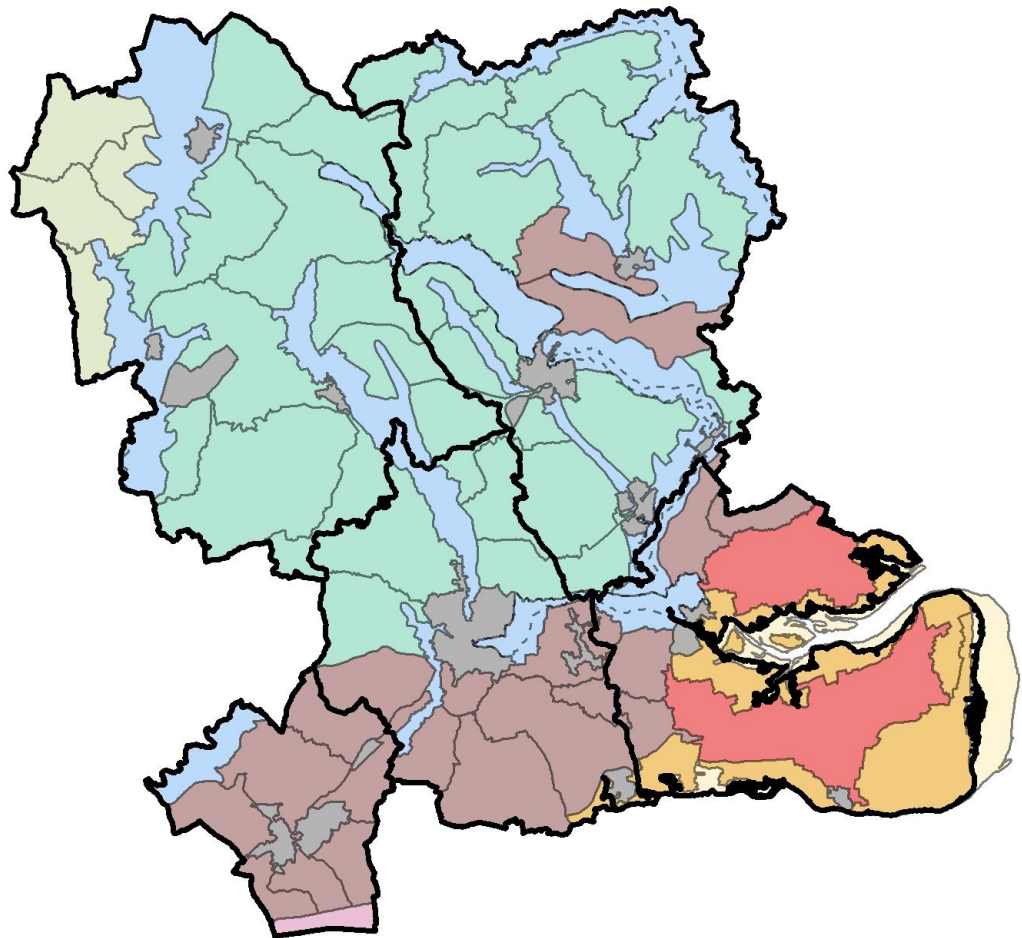
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**BRAINTREE, BRENTWOOD, CHELMSFORD,  
MALDON AND UTTLESFORD  
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS**



**September 2006**

***CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES***

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*Environment Landscape Planning*

#### **4.4 Fenland Landscape**

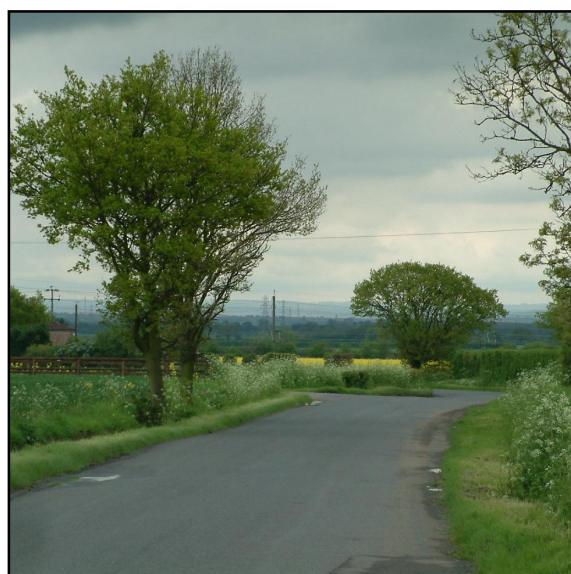
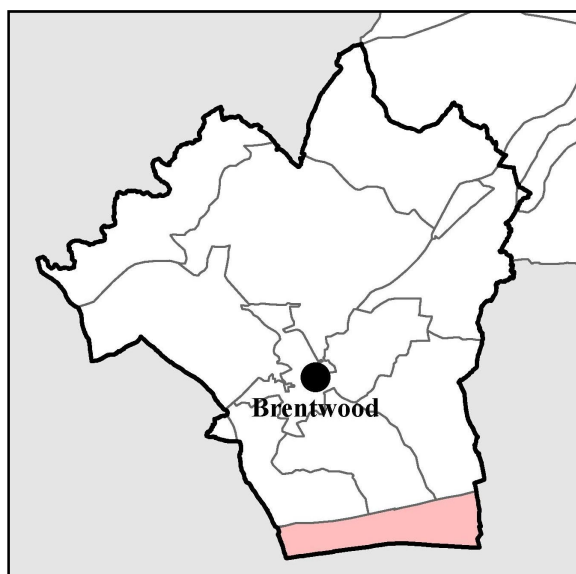
4.4.1 The key characteristics of this Landscape Character Type are:

- Level relief
- Open, exposed landscape
- Large-scale arable and pasture farmland
- Gappy hedges
- Linear roads on causeways

4.4.2 This Landscape Character Type contains the following Landscape Character Area:

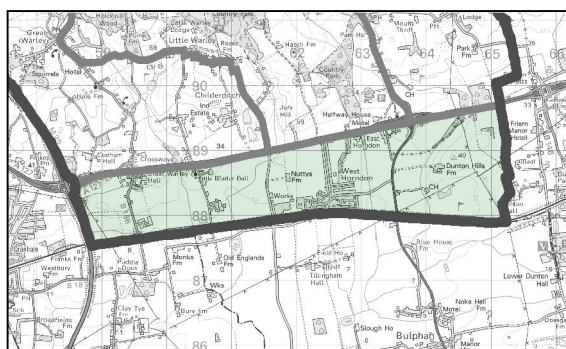
G1 - Horndon

## G1 HORNDON FENLAND



### Key Characteristics

- Large arable and pasture fields.
- Predominantly flat topography.
- Mature hedgerow field boundaries (sometimes gappy), which contain several single mature trees.
- Relatively sparse settlement pattern.
- Views to surrounding wooded hills to the north.
- Long distance views to pylons and Tilbury power station to the south.



### Overall Character

This predominantly flat arable farmland is situated to the south of A127 and most of the Fenchurch Street to Southend railway line, and encompasses West Horndon settlement. Fields are generally large, with low hedgerows at field boundaries. These hedges often contain single mature deciduous trees, and although gappy in places, are usually trimmed. Sense of tranquillity within the area is disturbed by constant background traffic noise associated with the A127 and also the corridor to the south. To the north and east, a sense of general enclosure is provided by views to low wooded hills. Open views to pylons (which are dominant within several views) and Tilbury power station give a hint of the proximity of this area to a landscape, which is more greatly influenced by human activity around Thurrock<sup>1</sup> and the Thames Gateway to the south. Other than residential and small industrial areas at West Horndon, settlement pattern within the area consists of occasional single farmsteads dotted within the landscape.

### Visual Characteristics

- Long and short distance, glimpse and open views to surrounding wooded hills to the north and east.
- Long distance views to pylons and Tilbury power station to the south.
- Views to Little Warley church and East Horndon church (landmarks to the north).

<sup>1</sup> For further information on landscape character to the south and east of this area, refer to Thurrock Landscape Capacity Study (Thurrock Council/CBA, March 2005).

## Historic Land Use

Evidence of historic land use within the Character Area is dominated by fields with a distinctive grid-like grain to its layout of ancient origin. Dispersed farms are generally located along the roadsides, and settlement is clustered around the handful of nucleated settlements. The main historic landscape features include:

- Field boundaries marked by drains.
- Generally regular shaped fields, with long slightly sinuous boundaries running north/south.
- Distinctive tall hawthorn/elm hedgerows which follow wide verged historic lanes and tracks across the area.
- Small reservoirs, along with a scattering of smaller ponds and some medieval moated sites.

## Ecological Features

This Character Area is dominated by widespread arable agriculture with infrequent narrow woodlands blocks in the fenland. The area contains 4 areas of ancient woodland.

## Key Planning and Land Management Issues

- Visually intrusive extensions to the small industrial park (west of West Horndon).
- Potential expansion of West Horndon settlement.
- Highway improvements or potential widening of A127 (to the north of the area).
- Potential future decline and loss of field boundaries through lack of management and further introduction of intensive agricultural practices.
- Loss of hedgerow trees due to Dutch Elm disease and changing farming practices.
- Potential new pylons/utilities developments to the south.

## Sensitivities to Change

Sensitive key characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include mature hedgerow field boundaries, often containing single mature deciduous trees. The flat and open nature of parts of the character area, combined with the fact that it is overlooked by wooded hills to the north and east, determines that the landscape is visually sensitive to new development (in particular tall development). There is a sense of historic integrity, resulting from historic field boundaries (drains) and distinctive tall hawthorn/elm hedgerows, which follow wide verged historic lanes and tracks across the area and are sensitive to changes in land management. Overall, this character area has moderate sensitivity to change.

## Proposed Landscape Strategy Objectives

**Conserve** - seek to protect and enhance positive features that are essential in contributing to local distinctiveness and sense of place through effective planning and positive land management measures.

**Enhance** - seek to improve the integrity of the landscape, and reinforce its character, by introducing new and/or enhanced elements where distinctive features or characteristics are absent.

**Restore** – seek to reinforce and/or reinstate historic landscape patterns and features that contribute to sense of place and time depth, by repairing distinctive elements that have been lost or degraded.

## Suggested Landscape Planning Guidelines

- Conserve the relatively sparse settlement pattern and generally rural character of the area.
- Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to the existing settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character.
- Conserve the setting of West Horndon, through careful consideration of the existing landscape structure.

- Conserve views to landmark churches to the north.
- Seek to screen visual detractors (such as the edges of the small industrial estate in West Horndon, and large agricultural buildings).

**Suggested Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow network by planting hedgerow species appropriate to local landscape character.
- Establish arable field margins as important nature conservation habitats.
- Seek ways to mitigate the visual impact of the railway and A127 corridor through introducing new and strengthening existing parallel shelterbelts where appropriate.
- Introduce new woodland planting in the form of shaws and copses, as well as hedgerow trees.

### **4.3 Wooded Farmland Landscapes**

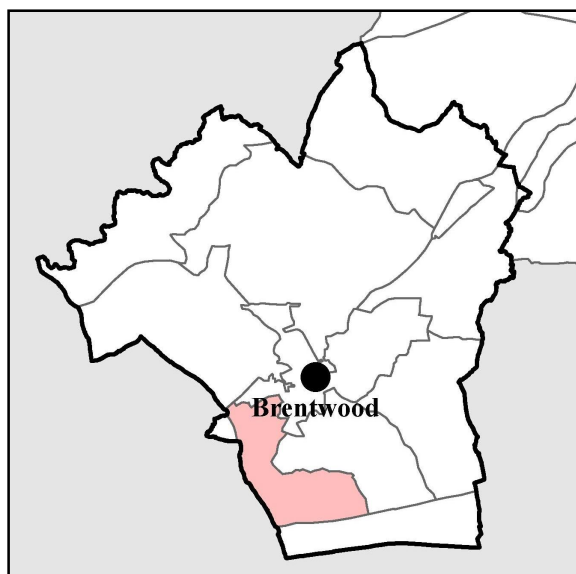
4.3.1 The key characteristics of this Landscape Character Type are:

- Elevated undulating hills or ridges and slopes
- Mixture of arable and pasture farmland
- Pockets of common and pasture
- Views to wooded horizons
- Well wooded with blocks of mature mixed and deciduous woodland (including areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland); copses, hedges and mature single trees
- Mature field boundaries
- Framed views to adjacent character areas
- Enclosed character in places
- Network of quiet, often tree-lined narrow lanes

4.3.2 The Landscape Character Type contains the following Landscape Character Areas:

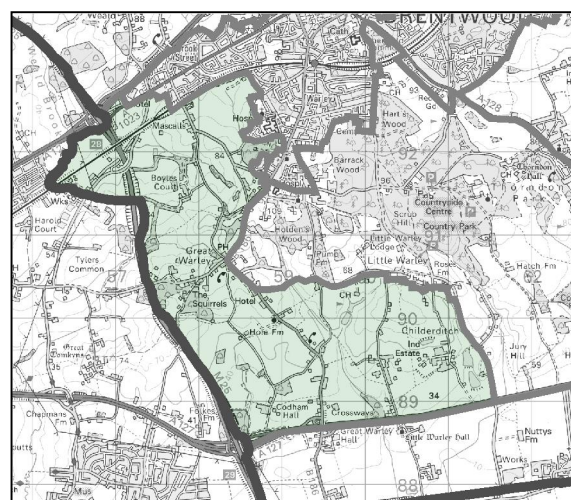
- F7 - Blackmore Wooded Farmland
- F8 - Doddinghurst Wooded Farmland
- F9 - Little Warley Wooded Farmland
- F10 - Heybridge Wooded Farmland
- F13 - Great Warley Wooded Farmland
- F14 - Ingrave and Herongate Wooded Farmland
- F15 - Weald Wooded Farmland

## F13 GREAT WARLEY WOODED FARMLAND



### Key Characteristics

- Strongly undulating wooded farmland/wooded hills.
- Extensive patches of woodland.
- Small-scale field pattern with mature treed field boundaries.
- Small-scale settlement pattern comprising small historic farmsteads and hamlets.
- Narrow, quiet sinuous rural lanes.
- Noise and movement associated with the M25 and A127 road corridors.
- Strong sense of place and orientation provided by views across Thames Chase to the west towards London and North Kent.



### Overall Character

Situated to the southwest of Brentwood, this character area encompasses an area of strongly undulating wooded farmland/wooded hills. The area extends from the southwestern edge of Brentwood urban area in the north, to the A127 road corridor in the south. Character is dominated by the extensive patches of woodland, scattered amongst a small-scale (predominantly arable) field pattern. Mature hedgerows, generally in good condition and containing several mature deciduous trees, delineate fields. Pockets of improved meadows, streams and ponds speckle the area and contribute to an overall mature landscape structure. Settlement pattern consists of several dispersed historic farmsteads and the linear hamlet of Great Warley. Narrow, quiet sinuous rural lanes runs across and along the slopes. Despite a sense of enclosure and tranquillity within woodland clearings, tranquillity within the area is disturbed in several locations by background noise associated within the M25 and A127 road corridors, which delineate the western and southern boundaries of the area. Strong, recognisable sense of place is provided by open views across the M25 road corridor over the Thames Chase to London and North Kent.



### **Visual Characteristics**

- Panoramic, open views across the M25 road corridor over the Thames Chase to London and North Kent.
- Views to wooded horizons within adjacent Landscape Character Areas.
- Open views to the southern edge/fringe of Brentwood urban area.
- Short-distance, framed views within woodland clearings.

### **Historic Land Use**

Evidence of historic land use within the Character Area is dominated by a complex landform of undulating hills and ridges with panoramic views over the Thames and North Kent. It is heavily wooded. Where fields exist between the parks and copses, they are small and regular, and appear to have their origins as assarts into the woodland. The historic settlement pattern was dispersed around commons, including linear commons, and along roads. To a large extent this pattern survives. The main historic landscape features include:

- Smaller areas of ancient origin woodland, copses and shaws scattered across the landscape.
- Several small lakes, including dammed minor valleys.
- A strong linear grain to the landscape, running SE-NW, reflecting the historic functional integration of this area with the low-lying areas to the south.
- Fields of medieval origin or possibly earlier.

### **Ecological Features**

This Character Area is dominated by widespread arable agriculture with frequent small woodland blocks. The area contains 7 areas of ancient woodland, the largest of 50 hectares near Great Warley.

### **Key Planning and Land Management Issues**

- Loss of mature field boundaries.
- Noise and visual intrusion associated with the main M25 and A127 road corridors.
- Increased pressure on historic lanes and minor roads.
- Potential visually intrusive expansion of Brentwood urban area.
- Loss of mature woodland.
- Potential expansion or widening of the M25 road corridor.

### **Sensitivities to Change**

Sensitive key characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include extensive patches of woodland, mature treed-field boundaries, mature deciduous trees and pockets of improved meadows, streams and ponds which contribute to a mature landscape structure and are sensitive to changes in land management. The network of narrow tree-lined lanes is also sensitive to change and potential new development, or increases in traffic flow associated with such development. Open views to wooded horizons are sensitive to potential new development, which may interrupt or block such views. There is a sense of historic integrity, resulting from a dispersed historic settlement pattern (around commons). Other sensitive visible historic features include smaller areas of ancient woodland, copses and shaws scattered across the landscape, several small lakes including dammed river valleys and fields of medieval origin (or even earlier). There are also several important wildlife habitats consisting of 7 areas of ancient woodland. Overall, this character area has relatively high sensitivity to change.

### **Proposed Landscape Strategy Objectives**

**Conserve** - seek to protect and enhance positive features that are essential in contributing to local distinctiveness and sense of place through effective planning and positive land management measures.



**Suggested Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Ensure that the design of new agricultural buildings reflects the local vernacular style and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character.
- Conserve the mostly rural character of the area.
- Ensure that any new development responds to the historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character.
- Seek ways to ensure that potential new development at the fringes of Brentwood or the other smaller settlements is not visually intrusive within the surrounding landscape setting.
- Conserve the southern landscape setting of Brentwood.
- Conserve open views westwards across the Thames Chase towards London.
- Conserve views to wooded horizons within adjacent wooded farmland Landscape Character Areas.
- Seek ways to screen and mitigate the visual impact of the M25 and A127 road corridors through introducing new and strengthening existing parallel shelter belts.

**Suggested Land Management Guidelines**

- Encourage linking of small copses and shaws, where appropriate to landscape character.
- Conserve and manage areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland within the area as important historical, landscape and nature conservation features.
- Conserve and manage the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen where appropriate through planting.
- Retain and encourage the development of hedgerow trees, particularly existing oaks through sensitive management and replanting where necessary.
- Conserve historic, tree lined and covered lanes and unimproved roadside verges.
- Establish arable field margins as important nature conservation habitats.

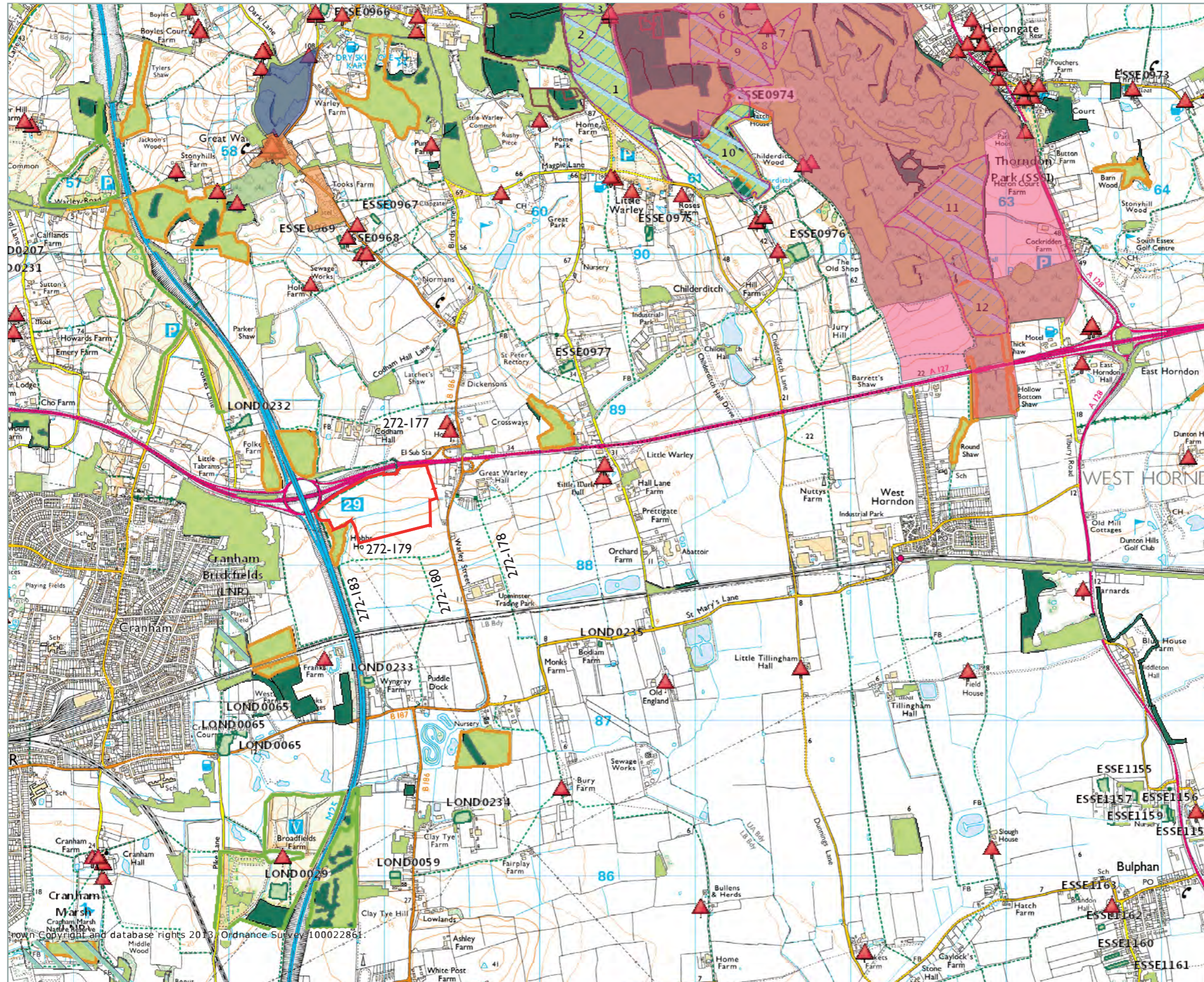
**BRENTWOOD ENTERPRISE PARK  
S & J PADFIELD AND PARTNERS**

**Figures 1 - 8**

October 2013

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LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
-  Ancient Replanted Woodland
-  Traditional Orchard BAP Priority Habitat
-  Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Habitat
-  National Inventory of Woodland and Trees
-  Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat
-  SSSI
-  Local Nature Reserve
  
- Public Rights of Way**
-  Footpath (reference number where noted)
-  Bridleway
-  Other routes with public access
-  Byway open to all traffic
  
-  Thorndon Park Conservation Area (individual Listed Buildings not shown)
-  Warley Place Conservation Area (individual Listed Buildings not shown)
-  Great Warley Conservation Area (individual Listed Buildings not shown)
-  Listed Buildings

Project: Skanska Depot

Client: Strutt & Parker LLP

Date: Sept 2013

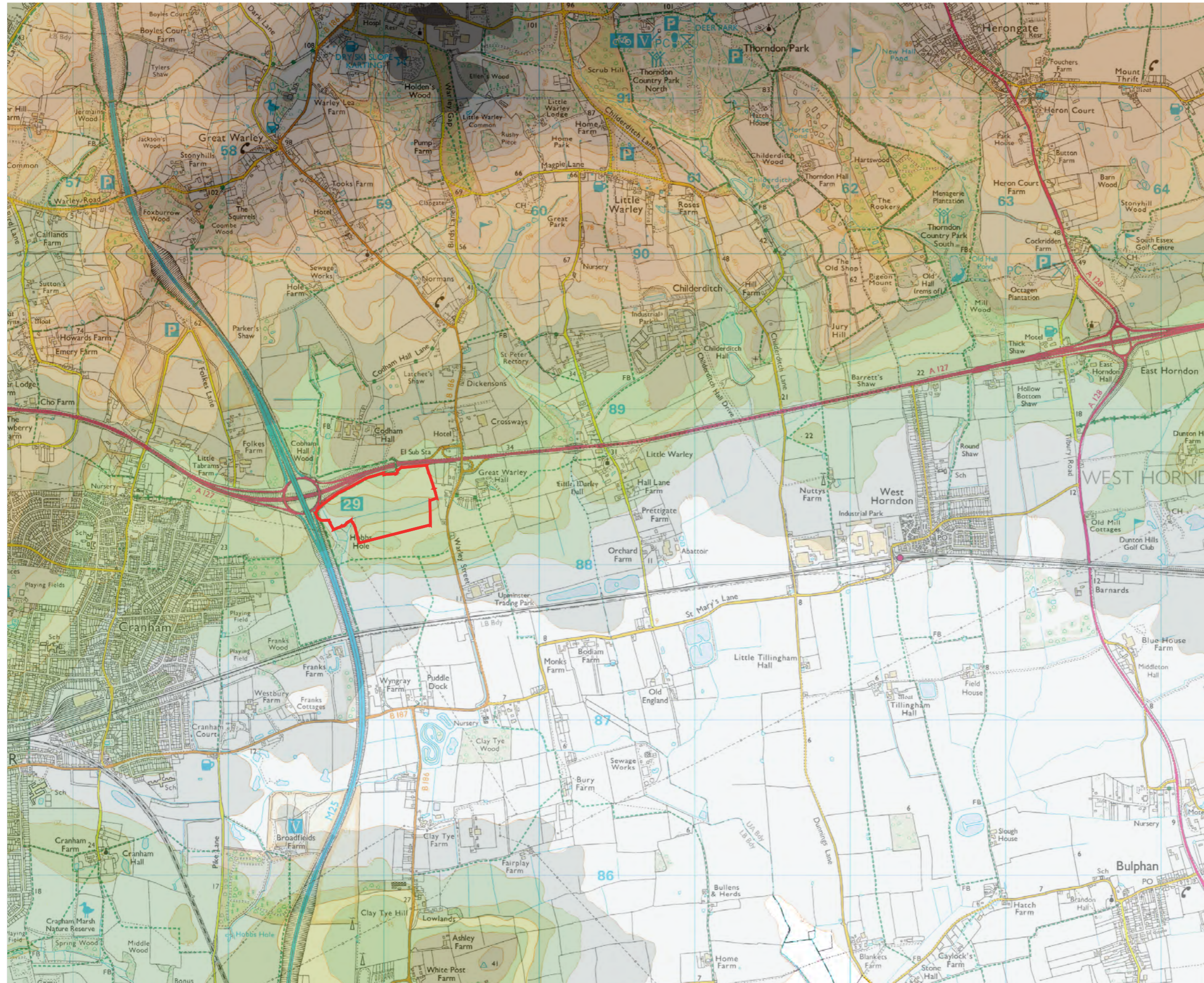
Scale: 1:25000

Status: Final



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LEGEND

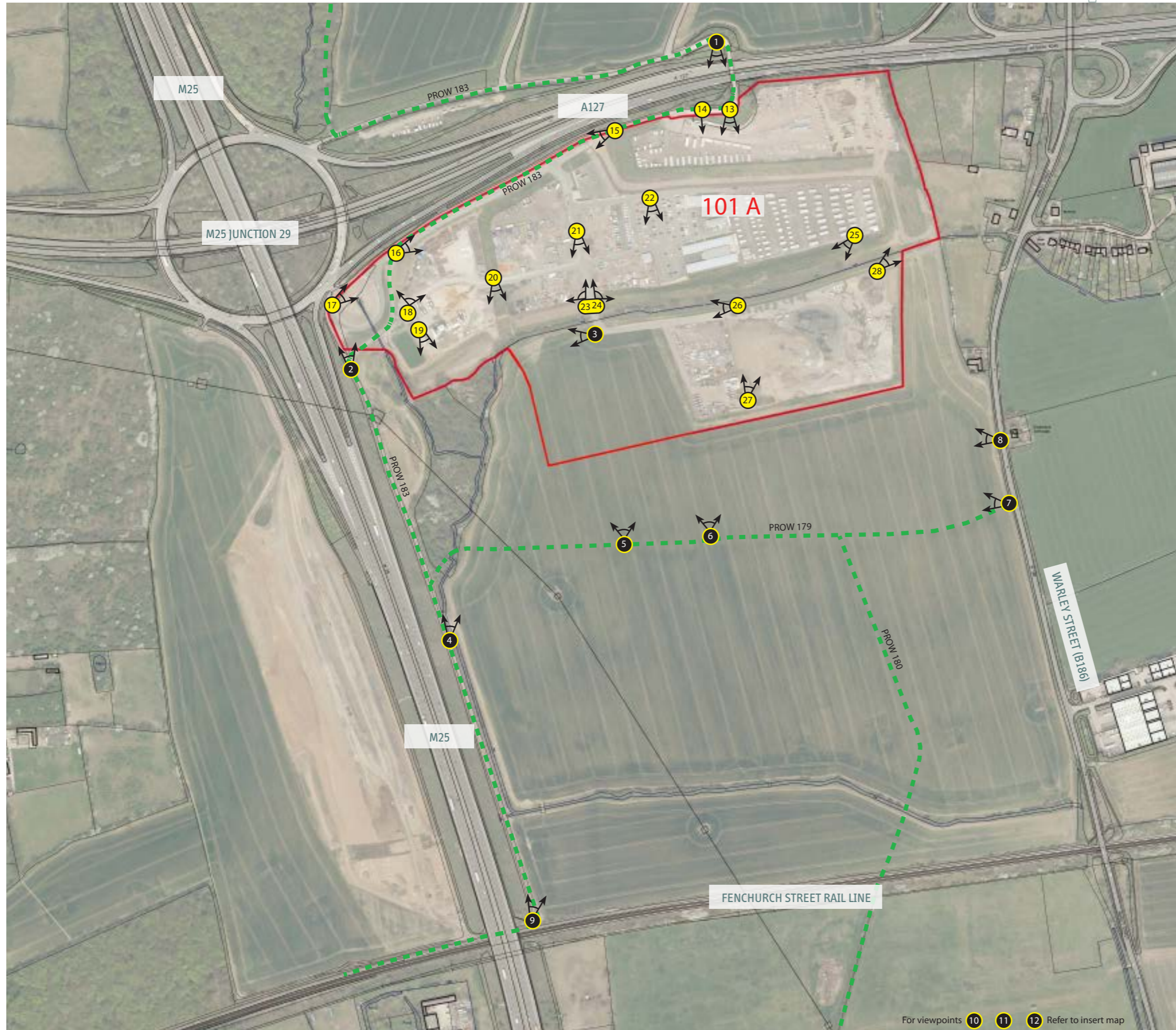
 Site Boundary

	65-70m		110-115m
	60-65m		105-110m
	55-60m		100-105m
	50-55m		95-100m
	45-50m		90-95m
	40-45m		85-90m
	35-40m		80-85m
	30-35m		75-80m
	25-30m		70-75m
	20-25m		
	15-20m		
	10-15m		
	5-10m		
	0-5m		



Project: **Skanska Depot**  
 Client: **Strutt & Parker LLP**  
 Date: **Sept 2013**  
 Scale: **1:25000**  
 Status: **Final**





Key

- 25 Photographic View Location
- Site ref 101A boundary (Draft Brentwood Borough Local Plan 2015-2030: Preferred Options for consultation (June 2013))
- Public footpath/bridleway



Project: Brentwood Enterprise Park  
Client: S&J Padfield and Partners

Date: September 2013  
Scale: See Bar Scale  
Status: Final



For viewpoints 10 11 12 Refer to insert map

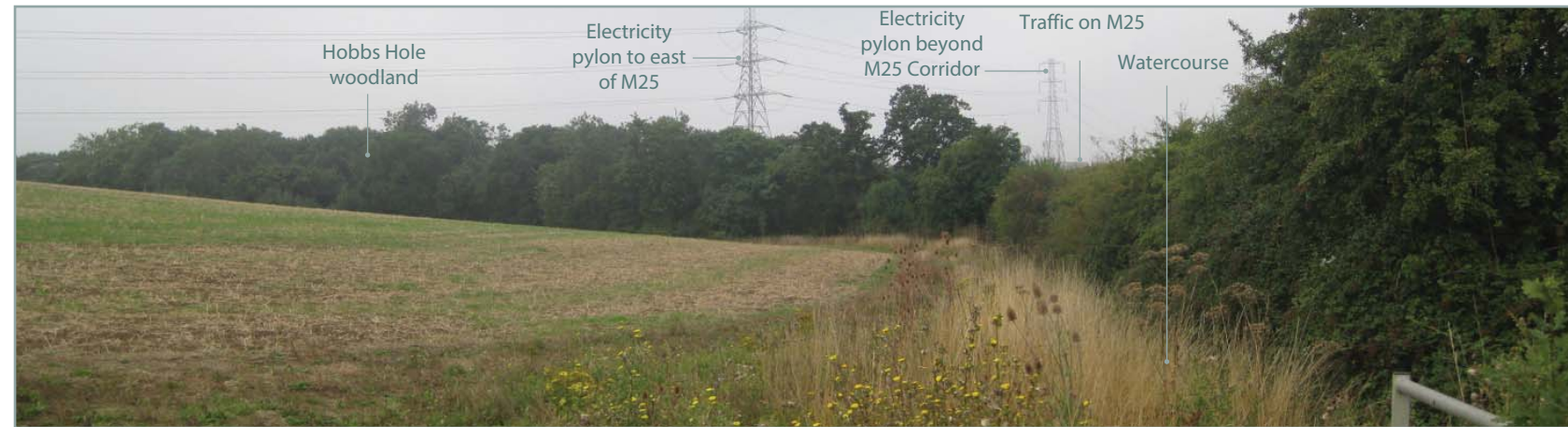




Panoramic Photograph 1: View south - southwest from over bridge (north of A127)



Panoramic Photograph 2: View north east from PROW 183 (Bridleway)



Panoramic Photograph 3: View west along watercourse / hedgeline towards Hobbs Hole woodland



Panoramic Photograph 4: View north-west from PROW 183 (Bridleway)



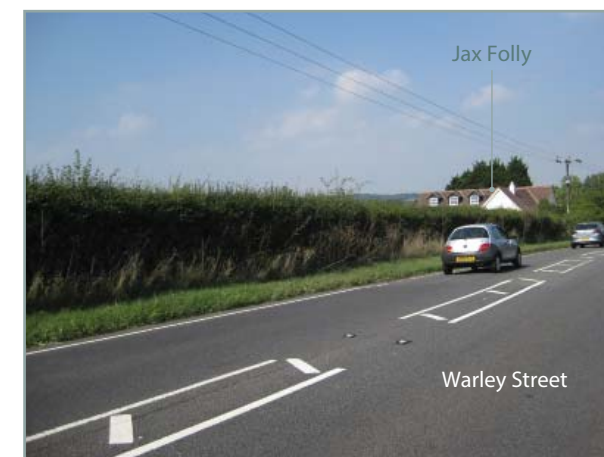
Panoramic photograph 5: View north-west northeast from PROW 183



Panoramic Photograph 6: View north - northeast from PROW 183



Photograph 7: View northwest from PROW 179 at Warley Street



Photograph 8: View to northwest from Gladstone Cottages on Warley Street





Panoramic Photograph 9: Northern views from PROW 183 (Bridleway) at Fenchurch Street rail line



Panoramic Photograph 10: View north from St Mary's Lane (B187)



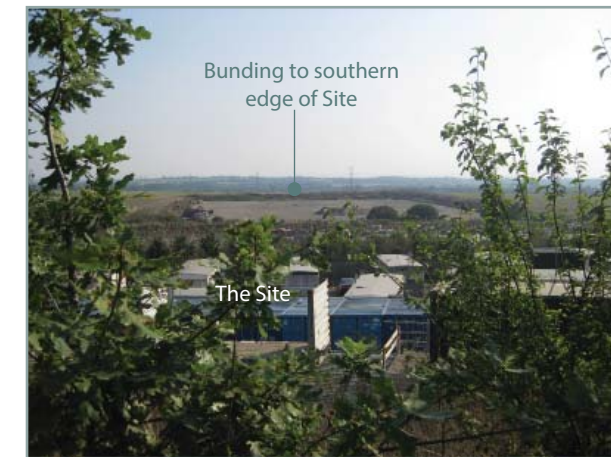
Panoramic Photograph 11: View northwest from St Mary's Lane (B187)



Photograph 12: Long distance view looking north from Clay Tye Road



Panoramic Photograph 13: Southern view from A127 over bridge (south of A127)



Photograph 14: View south over Site from A127 over bridge (south of A127)



Photograph 15: View west along PROW 183 (Bridleway)



Panoramic Photograph 16: View north east along PROW 183 (Bridleway)





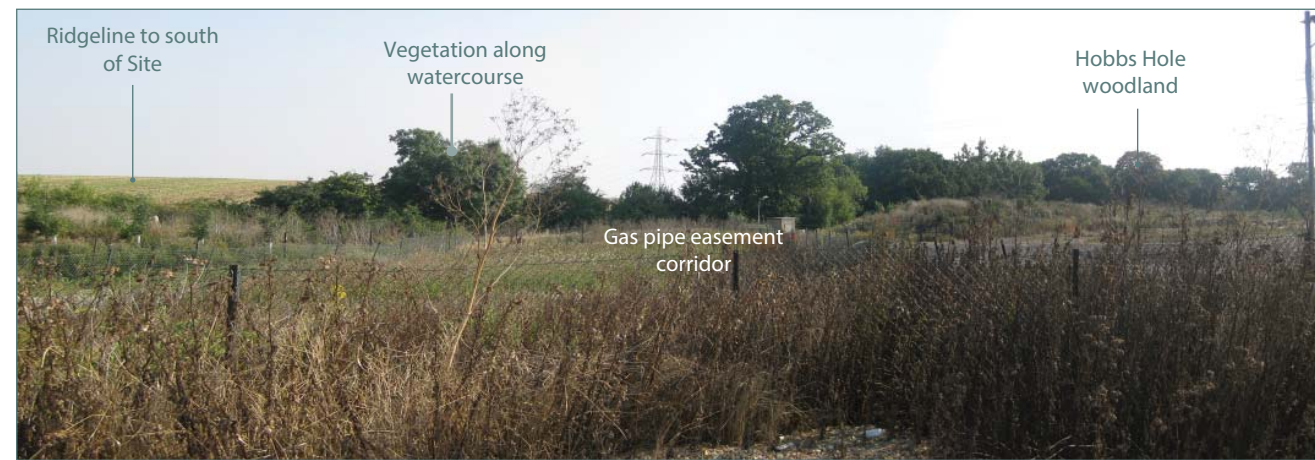
Photograph 17: View east from access road entry



Panoramic Photograph 19: View south towards Hobbs Hole woodland



Panoramic Photograph 18: View north-east towards M25 (Junction 29) and A127



Panoramic Photograph 20: View south over gas pipe (easement) corridor



Panoramic Photograph 21: View south towards southern ridgeline





Panoramic Photograph 22: View southeast - southwest across the Site



Panoramic Photograph 25: View to southwest along vegetated bund, watercourse beyond



Panoramic Photograph 23: View west-north over the Site from watercourse crossing



Panoramic Photograph 24: View north-northeast over the Site from watercourse crossing



Photograph 26: View west along watercourse



Panoramic Photograph 27: View northwest-east from higher ground on southern edge of Site













Photograph 28: View east along watercourse





**LEGEND**

-  Site 101A boundary (Brentwood DRAFT Local Plan 2015-2030: Preferred Options for Consultation)
- Existing**
-  Woodland vegetation
-  Trees
- Proposed**
-  Mixed deciduous woodland plantings
-  Woodland and hedgerow trees
-  Primary street trees
-  Street trees
-  Riparian corridor incorporating mixed native plantings and SUDS features
-  Amenity grass
-  Wildflower meadow grassland





**BRENTWOOD ENTERPRISE PARK  
S & J PADFIELD AND PARTNERS**

**Liz Lake Associates LVIA Methodology: Definitions**

October 2013

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**LIZ LAKE ASSOCIATES**

Chartered Landscape Architects ■ Urban Designers ■ Landscape Planners

DEFINITIONS:

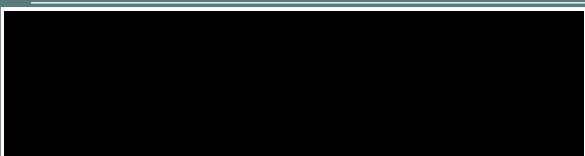
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

and

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Liz Lake Associates

September 2013



## DEFINITIONS USED IN THE LIZ LAKE ASSOCIATES METHODOLOGY

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This document sets out the definitions used in the methodology used by Liz Lake Associates, Chartered Landscape Architects & Urban Designers (LLA) to prepare an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of a Site specific proposed development. The methodology is broadly based on:

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition 2013* (the Guidelines) published by the Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.
- *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland 2002* published by the Countryside Agency  
[www.publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2671754?category=31019](http://www.publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2671754?category=31019)
- *Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity 2004* published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage  
[www. publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2671754](http://www.publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2671754)
- *Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment*, Landscape Institute Technical Advice Note 01/11.

The Guidelines make clear that a methodology that follows the Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or Appraisal is also applicable to townscape. The words landscape and townscape are inter-changeable.

The criteria and definitions that are used in the appraisal or assessment are set out below.

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### 1. Contribution to the local landscape character

- *Outstanding contribution.* Where the existing character of the Site is representative of the local landscape character and the structure of the landscape is intact
- *Very positive contribution.* Where the existing character of the Site contains many attributes representative of the local landscape character and the structure of the landscape is apparent
- *Positive contribution.* Where the existing character of the Site contains some attributes representative of the local landscape character and some incongruous elements but the Site does not detract from the local landscape character

- **Limited contribution.** Where the existing character of the Site contains some attributes representative of the local landscape character but also incongruous elements that detract from the local landscape character
  - **Negative contribution.** Where the existing character of the Site contains no attributes representative of the local landscape character and the incongruous elements detract from the local landscape character.
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## 2. Existing visual amenity

The existing *visual amenity* from principal viewpoints is assessed. Published surveys on the relative values people put on views within an area are limited but these would be used where they exist. Where a survey does not exist an evaluation is made using the professional judgement of an experienced landscape architect using the following definitions:

- **Exceptional visual amenity** – where the quality of existing views is such that people would travel some distance to experience them
  - **High visual amenity** – where the quality of existing views is such that local people would go out of their way to experience them
  - **Good visual amenity** – where the quality of existing views is such that there are few incongruous elements
  - **Fair visual amenity** – where the quality of existing views is such that there are a number of incongruous elements
  - **Poor visual amenity** – where the quality of existing views is such that the incongruous elements dominate.
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## 3. Susceptibility of the landscape

- **High Susceptibility:** A finely balanced landscape where the landscape character is so well defined that even a small-scale development might cause a significant loss of, key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects or, overall landscape character
- **Medium/High.** An established landscape with a well-defined character where only well-considered changes could be accommodated without loss of key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects or, overall landscape character

- **Medium Susceptibility:** An established landscape where change of an appropriate nature could be absorbed without loss of key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects or, overall landscape character
- **Medium/Low Susceptibility:** A damaged or robust landscape where appropriate change can be absorbed and could contribute to the restoration of key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects or, overall local landscape character
- **Low Susceptibility:** A damaged landscape where change would bring opportunities for the significant enhancement of key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects, the overall local landscape character or the creation of a new landscape.

**4. Table One: Significance criteria for effects on landscape character**

Category	Criteria
<i>Substantial adverse effect</i>	<p>The Proposals would do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Change the landscape character type to a major degree</li> <li>· be at considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape</li> <li>· result in a total loss or major alteration to key attributes and their setting</li> <li>· disrupt a finely balanced or intact landscape</li> <li>· cause a major deterioration to the contribution that the Site makes or has the potential to make to the local landscape character</li> <li>· be visually intrusive and disrupt valued views of the area</li> <li>· cause a major reduction in the current level of tranquillity</li> <li>· introduce incongruous elements into the landscape</li> <li>· be incapable of full mitigation</li> <li>· be in serious conflict with local guidelines, where they exist, for the landscape character area</li> <li>· make no or little contribution to green infrastructure</li> <li>· be in serious conflict with government policy for the protection of nationally recognised countryside as set out in the NPPF.</li> </ul>



## Significance criteria for effects on landscape character

Category	Criteria
<i>Moderate adverse effect</i>	<p>The Proposals would do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Change the landscape character type to a moderate degree</li> <li>· be out of scale with the landscape, or at odds with the local pattern and landform</li> <li>· result in a partial loss of key attributes, or reduce or remove their setting</li> <li>· cause a noticeable deterioration to the contribution that the Site makes or has the potential to make to the local landscape character</li> <li>· be visually intrusive and adversely affect views into and across the area</li> <li>· cause a noticeable reduction in the current level of tranquillity</li> <li>· introduce prominent new elements that are not entirely characteristic</li> <li>· be incapable of adequate mitigation</li> <li>· be in conflict with local guidelines, where they exist, for the landscape character area</li> <li>· make only a very limited contribution to green infrastructure</li> <li>· conflict with local and/or national policies to protect open land and nationally recognised countryside as set out in the NPPF.</li> </ul>
<i>Slight adverse effect</i>	<p>The Proposals would do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· change the landscape character type to a minor degree</li> <li>· not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape</li> <li>· result in a minor loss of key/characteristic elements or features or their setting reduced</li> <li>· cause a minor deterioration to the contribution that the Site makes or has the potential to make to the local landscape character</li> <li>· although not very visually intrusive, would adversely affect certain views into and across the area</li> <li>· cause a minor reduction in the current level of tranquillity</li> <li>· introduce noticeable new elements that are not entirely characteristic</li> <li>· not fulfil local guidelines, where they exist, for the landscape character area</li> <li>· make a limited contribution to green infrastructure</li> <li>· conflict with local authority policies for protecting the local character of the countryside</li> </ul>

## Significance criteria for effects on landscape character

Category	Criteria
<i>Neutral effect</i>	<p>The Proposals would do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· make no change to the landscape character type</li> <li>· complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape</li> <li>· incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure that the scheme will blend in well with surrounding landscape</li> <li>· avoid being visually intrusive</li> <li>· have no adverse effect on the current level of tranquillity of the landscape</li> <li>· maintain existing landscape character</li> <li>· maintain the existing green infrastructure</li> <li>· avoid conflict with government policy towards protection of the countryside</li> <li>· a neutral effect can also be the result of the removal of incongruous or intrusive elements and the introduction of new elements.</li> </ul>
<i>Slight beneficial effect</i>	<p>The Proposals would do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· reinforce the landscape character type to a minor degree</li> <li>· fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape</li> <li>· incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they will blend in well with surrounding landscape</li> <li>· enable some sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed planting and mitigation measures</li> <li>· make a minor improvement to the contribution that the Site makes to the local existing landscape character</li> <li>· be in line with local guidelines, where they exist, for the landscape character area</li> <li>· make a small contribution to green infrastructure</li> <li>· make a small contribution towards government policy towards protection of the countryside.</li> </ul>

### Significance criteria for effects on landscape character

Category	Criteria
<i>Moderate beneficial effect</i>	<p>The Proposals would provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because they do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· reinforce the landscape character type to a moderate degree</li> <li>· fit very well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape</li> <li>· have the potential, through mitigation, to enable the restoration of key/characteristic features, partially lost or diminished</li> <li>· make a noticeable improvement to the contribution that the Site makes to the local landscape character through well-designed planting and mitigation measures</li> <li>· enable some sense of quality to be restored or enhanced through beneficial landscape proposals and sensitive design</li> <li>· support objectives in local guidelines, where they exist, for the landscape character area</li> <li>· make a moderate contribution to green infrastructure</li> <li>· further government objectives to regenerate degraded countryside.</li> </ul>
<i>Substantial beneficial effect</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The Proposals would do one or more of the following:</li> <li>· reinforce the landscape character type to a major degree</li> <li>· mitigate substantially an existing severe adverse effect</li> <li>· fulfil objectives in local guidelines, where they exist, for the landscape character area</li> <li>· make a major contribution to green infrastructure</li> <li>· make a major improvement in the contribution that the landscape makes to the local landscape character by restoring the integrity of a damaged landscape.</li> </ul>

5. **Table Two: Significance criteria for effects on visual amenity**

Category	Criteria
<i>Substantial adverse effect</i>	<p>Where the Proposals would cause a major deterioration to existing views and visual amenity by doing one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Affect people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity to a major degree</li> <li>· Affect people at recognised viewpoints or important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes to a major degree</li> <li>· Remove characteristic or valued elements or features to a major degree Introduce large-scale changes of new, non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture</li> <li>· Dominate a large proportion of a view</li> <li>· Be within a direct view from a sensitive receptor</li> <li>· From a road, right of way, train or other means of transport, be dominant in the view for a relatively long period of time</li> <li>· Be visible from an extensive area.</li> </ul>
<i>Moderate adverse effect</i>	<p>Where the Proposals would cause a moderate deterioration to existing views and visual amenity by doing one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Affect people who are sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity to a moderate degree</li> <li>· Affect people at recognised viewpoints or important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes to a moderate degree</li> <li>· Remove characteristic or valued elements or features on a moderate scale</li> <li>· Introduce moderate-scale changes of new, non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture</li> <li>· Dominate a moderate proportion of a view with some partial views</li> <li>· Be within an angled view from a sensitive receptor</li> <li>· From a road, right of way, train or other means of transport, be dominant in the view for a relatively medium period of time.</li> <li>· Be visible from a moderately extensive area.</li> </ul>

### Significance criteria for effects on visual amenity

Category	Criteria
<i>Slight adverse effect</i>	<p>Where the Proposals would cause a slight deterioration to existing views and visual amenity by doing one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Affect people who are sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity to a limited degree</li> <li>· Affect people at recognised viewpoints or important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes to a limited degree</li> <li>· Remove characteristic or valued elements or features on a minor scale</li> <li>· Introduce small-scale changes of new, non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture</li> <li>· Dominate a small proportion of a view with partial or glimpsed views</li> <li>· Be within an oblique view from a sensitive receptor</li> <li>· From a road, right of way, train or other means of transport, be dominant in the view for a relatively moderate period of time</li> <li>· Be visible from a small area.</li> </ul>
<i>Negligible effect</i>	<p>Where changes are visible with the Proposals but they are not readily discernible, often because they are distant views.</p>
<i>Neutral effect</i>	<p>Where there are noticeable changes from the Proposals but no deterioration or improvement to existing views and the visual amenity.</p>
<i>No change</i>	<p>Where one might expect change from the Proposals but none is likely to be experienced.</p>

### Significance criteria for effects on visual amenity

Category	Criteria
<i>Slight beneficial effect</i>	<p>Where the Proposals would cause a minor improvement to the existing visual amenity by doing one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Enhance views that are enjoyed by people who are sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity to a limited degree</li> <li>· Enhance views from recognised viewpoints or important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes to a limited degree</li> <li>· Enhance a small proportion of the existing view</li> <li>· Remove non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture on a minor scale</li> <li>· Reduce views of non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture on a minor scale</li> <li>· Open up views of valued elements, features and landscape that have previously been obscured to a minor degree</li> </ul> <p>Create a new visual focus in the landscape to a minor degree.</p>
<i>Moderate beneficial effect</i>	<p>Where the Proposals would cause a moderate improvement to the existing visual amenity by doing one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Enhance views that are enjoyed by people who are sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity to a moderate degree</li> <li>· Enhance views from recognised viewpoints or important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes to a moderate degree</li> <li>· Enhance a moderate proportion of the existing view</li> <li>· Remove non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture on a moderate scale</li> <li>· Reduce views of non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture on a moderate scale</li> <li>· Open up views of valued elements, features and landscape that have previously been obscured to a moderate degree</li> <li>· Create a new visual focus in the landscape to a moderate degree.</li> </ul>

## Significance criteria for effects on visual amenity

Category	Category
<p><i>Major beneficial effect</i></p>	<p>Where the Proposals would cause a major improvement to the existing visual amenity by doing one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Enhance views that are enjoyed by people who are sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity to a major degree</li> <li>· Enhance views from recognised viewpoints or important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes to a major degree</li> <li>· Enhance a major proportion of the existing view</li> <li>· Remove non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture on a major scale</li> <li>· Reduce views of non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour or texture on a major scale</li> <li>· Open up views of valued elements, features and landscape that have previously been obscured to a major degree</li> <li>· Create a new visual focus in the landscape to a major degree.</li> </ul>

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