

Norfolk Vanguard Offshore Wind Farm Landscape Character Assessment Documents

2. Breckland Council Part 5 of 5

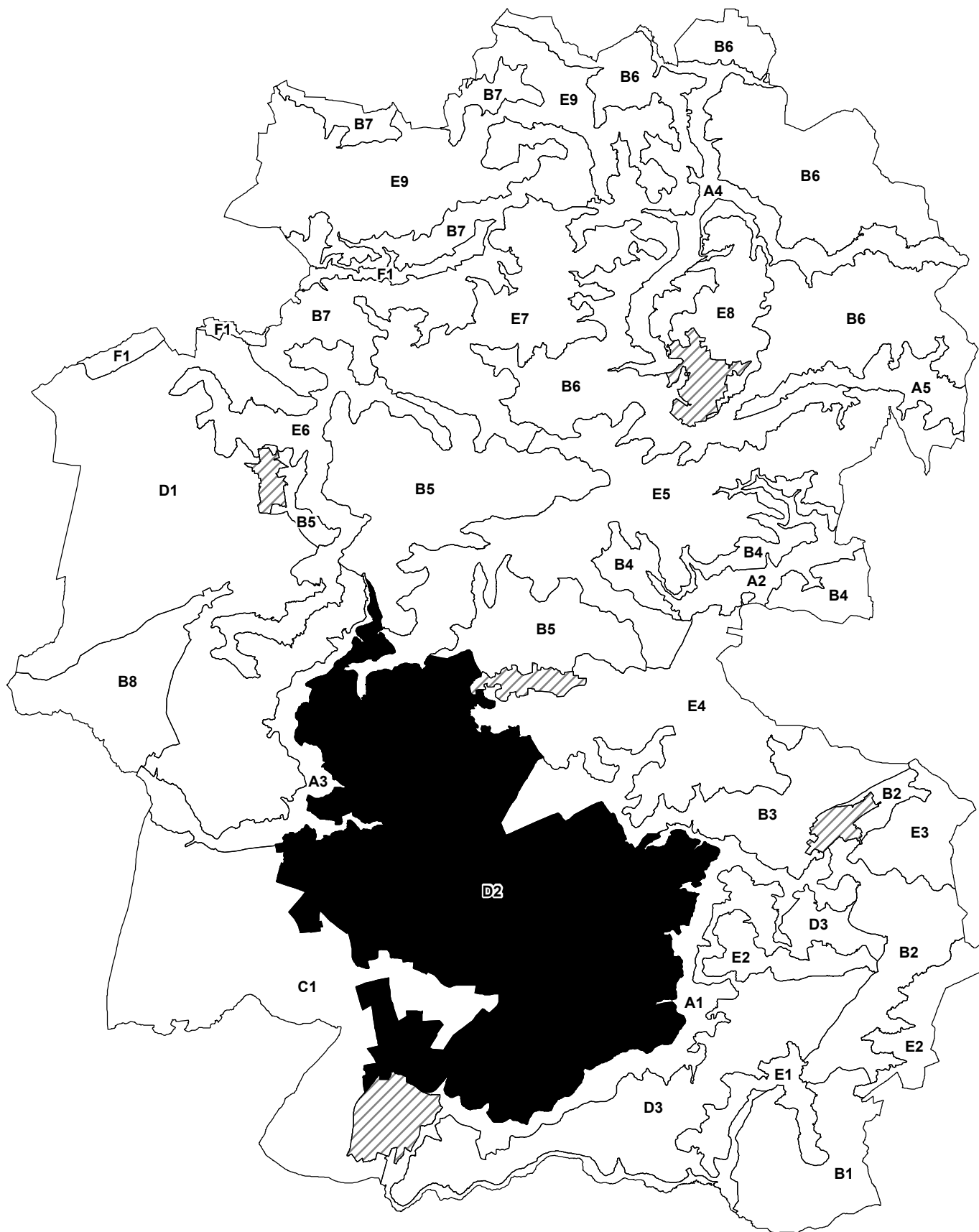
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Photo: Kentish Flats Offshore Wind Farm



D2: STANTA HEATH



D2: STANTA HEATH

Location and Boundaries

D2.1 This area of the *Breckland with Heathland and Plantations* landscape type covers a large area in the southern and central part of the district. The character area is defined primarily by the distinctive land cover of arable fields interspersed with blocks of mixed plantation woodland and areas of heathland and grassland. It is bounded by the more continuous forest cover of *Thetford Forest* to the south, by the *Wissey Valley* to the west and by the *Thet Valley* to the east, with the elevated plateau landscape marking the northern extent.

Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating landscape with glacial drift deposits of sand, clay and gravel. Topography ranges from 20 – 55m AOD.
- Free draining sandy soils support a functional landscape of arable cultivation and plantation woodland.
- Large tracts of heathland and grassland survive within the extensive MOD land holdings at Stanford Training Ground (SSSI (SAC)), in the western half of the character area.
- Groundwater dependent meres at East Wretham Heath and the Stanta Training Area are internationally significant – unique hydrogeological features fed by base-rich groundwater with no inflowing or outflowing streams. Water filled pingos are a further distinctive feature.
- Contorted Scot's pine wind break hedgerows and screening belts of trees provide shelter to the easily eroded soils and are a prominent landscape feature, particularly on skylines. Plantation blocks are locally prominent features.
- The arable fields are delineated by hedgerows in variable condition from occasional species rich intact hedgerows with hedgerow trees, thorn hedges and distinctive pine lines.
- A large scale landscape, with an open windswept character, generally quiet apart from occasional aural interruptions arising from MOD training activities. Remote in some areas.
- Plantation woodland occurs on the site of historic parklands and landed estates, and parkland features such as rides and parkland species are evident in the landscape.
- The fenced and conifer hedged boundaries of Stanford Training Ground are prominent features in this open landscape.
- A number of Scheduled Monuments and features reflecting the settled historic character are evident, such as tumuli, a Roman Settlement and a number of

moated sites/ moated churches and deserted villages at West Tofts and Roudham.

- Sparsely settled with scattered Halls, farm buildings and a small number of isolated, nucleated villages and hamlets.
- The presence of 'A' roads and overhead aircraft noise interrupt the landscape.
- Open access land at Langmere and Brettenham and East Wretham Heaths provides opportunities for recreation.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- D2.2 The underlying solid chalk solid geology forms gently undulating plateau capped in places by a thin layer of glacial drift deposits including boulder clay and sand and gravels. The varied drift deposits create in complex soils typically sandy free draining mixes of chalk, sand, silt and flints. The soils are prone to wind erosion and are protected by blocks of plantation woodland and the historic planting of scots pine wind breaks allowing much of the landscape to be given over to arable production. In addition, there are large tracts of heathland with some pasture surviving within the MOD Stanford Training Ground and at Roudham Heath.
- D2.3 The area is of considerable biodiversity interest. Significant areas of the central heathland are designated as Breckland Farmland SSSI (SPA) Stanford Training Ground SSSI (SPA, and some parts SAC). This includes both historic and reverted heathland, associated primarily with acidic soils, in addition to localised areas of calcareous grassland and the fluctuating, groundwater dependant meres at Fowlmere and Devil's Punch Bowl, which are identified as 'internationally important' within the SSSI citation. Brettenham Heath is designated as a National Nature Reserve.
- D2.4 Much of Breckland Forest SSSI lies outside of the character area, but plantation woodland at Bridgham Heath within the character area forms part of the SSSI. The SSSI supports an important assemblage of nationally scarce plant species, of which a number are largely restricted to East Anglia and occupy habitats characteristic of Breckland.
- D2.5 Field boundaries are defined by hedgerows of various states and species compositions, and the historic, contorted scots pine wind breaks are also an important and distinctive feature. Grassy banks and field edges are very important to the conservation of the remnant Breckland grass-heath habitats.
- D2.6 The great majority of the character area falls within the 'Core Area' as defined by the Ecological Mapping Project for Norfolk. Core areas represent significant concentrations of high quality extant habitat. The high quality habitat represented within the D2 *Stanta Heath* character area is lowland heathland and grassland, with areas of calcareous grassland.

Historic Character

- D2.7 A formerly exposed, open heathland dominated landscape, has been substantially enclosed and modified over the last 200 years. Faden's Map of 1797 identifies the key parklands of West Tofts, Buckenham Tofts, Merton and West Wretham, in addition to the meres and extensive tracts of heathland in the centre of the character area. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data illustrates a number of historic landscape processes. Most significantly these are piecemeal parliamentary enclosure, 18th-20th century plantation woodland, and post medieval military use, as well as areas of boundary loss associated with 20th century enclosure. The parklands of Buckenham Tofts and West Tofts (Caston Hall) were requisitioned by the MOD in 1944, and have subsequently been absorbed within Stanford Training Ground.
- D2.8 Planting with conifers began in 1922. The majority of the initial plantings reached the end of their first rotation in the mid 1970s. Since then the harvesting of these and subsequent plantings has created a continuous supply of clear-felled areas and young plantations. Plantations are found on sites of former parkland, these are in varying states of repair and intactness, with West Tofts (Caston Hall) and Sturston Hall having been requisitioned and subsequently demolished by the MOD, although parkland vegetation is evident, as are features such as rides and lodges. Wretham Hall was similarly demolished in the Second World War, and only parts of Buckenham Tofts and Merton Halls remain. A number of estate churches survive, notably at Tottington, associated with the former hall, and at West Tofts.

Settlement and Built Character

- D2.9 The area is very sparsely settled, reflecting the land ownership pattern of estates and now MOD. Settlement density is characterised by a small number of nucleated and sometimes linear villages and a general pattern of dispersed farmsteads across the character area. The local vernacular is red brick and flint with occasional colour rendered buildings, with some white wash and thatch.
- D2.10 Great Hockham is the largest settlement, centred around the historic Village Green, the 14th Century church and the small parkland of the early 18th Century Hockham Hall. The settlement edge has expanded from the original nucleated form, containing later 20th century development.

Perceptual/Visual

- D2.11 This is a large scale landscape with a strong geometry – with large regular fields defined by straight rows of Scot's pine or thorn hedges, interspersed with areas of conifer plantation. In places this creates a very open, exposed and windswept landscape. There is a relatively low density of woodland blocks, although where they do exist, they are large in scale and create a notable feature within the landscape. The heathland character of much of the central area survives within the MOD land a Stanford Training Area.
- D2.12 Views both within the character area and to adjacent character areas are variable. In places views are distant, to the wooded skylines and to the more elevated plateau land to the north, but in other locations views are framed or contained by woodland blocks.

D2.13 Population density is low and the character area has is sparsely settled with large swathes of farmland and woodland and heathland on non-accessible MOD land. However the presence of main A roads and overhead noise associated with military activity create localise interruptions within this otherwise quiet, even remote landscape.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- The historic boundary features e.g. contorted scots pine hedgerows;
- Remnant parkland features such as rides, lodges and remains of halls which provide a sense of historical integrity;
- The patchwork character created by the boundaries between plantation woodland and arable farmland and areas of heathland resulting in a visually varied landscape mosaic;
- Variations in light created by plantations, in addition to localised spatial variety and enclosure;
- The extensive areas of heathland and local areas of calcareous grassland, which are of considerable biodiversity interest;
- The meres are historically, hydrologically and ecologically significant;
- Sparse settlement and associated rural character;
- The ecological value of the arable farmland for birds, notably stone curlew
- Rural road network with bracken verges relates to the historic heathland character.

Visual Sensitivities

D2.14 Open views, particularly across the military land, are a key visual sensitivity within this character area. The woodland blocks create an important focus to the landscape, particularly where views are across arable fields to woodland blocks on the skyline.

Current State of the Landscape

D2.15 This is on the whole a functional and managed landscape. Within the MOD Estate extensive areas of heathland have survived and these, in addition to areas of calcareous grassland and the fluctuating meres, provide significant ecological interest. The arable land, under appropriate management is a valuable habitat for farmland birds, with the Scot's pine hedgerows surrounding fields forming a distinctive landmark feature.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Agricultural enclosure and loss of heathland, plus further loss of heathland with decline in grazing;
- Conversion of parkland and heath/commons to plantation woodland and MOD training areas;
- Agricultural changes including outdoor pig raising and development of water storage reservoirs on agricultural land.
- Decline of distinctive Scot's pine hedgerows;
- An increasing influence of traffic upon the landscape character due to the presence of 'A' Roads and military activities.

Future Change

D2.16 Potential future change may arise from the implementation of agri environment schemes and through heathland restoration within areas of commercial forestry plantation as part of the Forestry Enterprise's management strategy. The land management objectives of the MOD's will also influence the landscape in the future. Climate change, within this very dry area is a significant threat to the groundwater meres.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The landscape strategy should be to conserve the remote, open sparsely settled character of the *Stanta Heath* character area – restoring and enhancing the heathland character where appropriate and managing the arable farmland to enhance its ecological value particularly for farmland birds.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Encourage take up of agri-environment schemes to improve the ecological value of arable farmland and to create habitat connectivity;
- Conserve and enhance the historic contorted pine wind break hedgerows through appropriate a management;
- Conserve an manage surviving areas of heathland and consider opportunities for heathland creation on areas where it has been lost, for example areas of plantation woodland;
- Ensure that any further recreation provision does not conflict with the sensitive species and habitats within the Stanford Training Ground SSSI, Breckland Farmland and Breckland Forest SSSI;

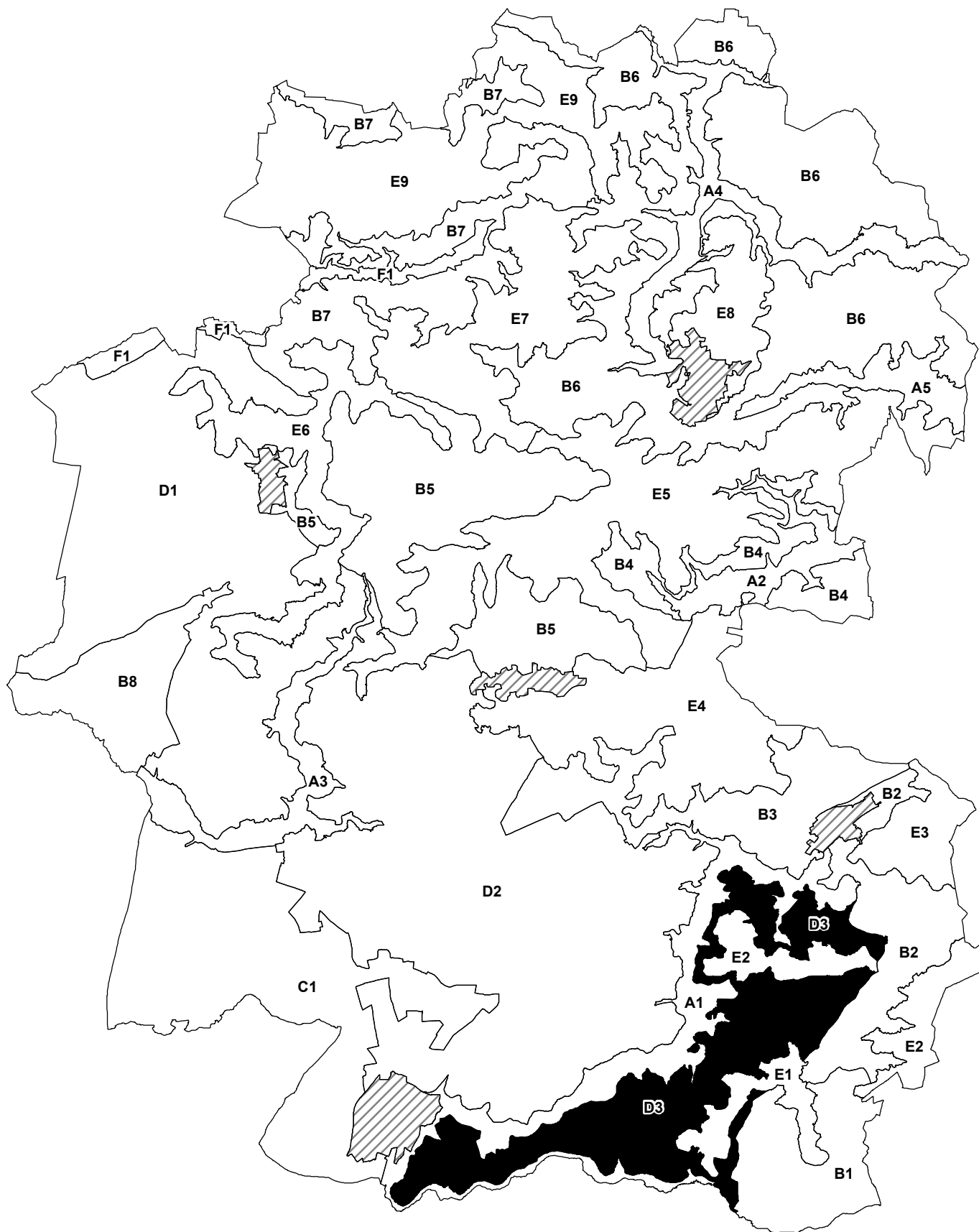
- Conserve the rides within parklands and plantations which provide attractive vistas to historic features, including those designated as Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Conserve areas of calcareous grassland through traditional management e.g. grazing.

Development Guidelines

- Conserve the sparse settlement pattern and low population density;
- Ensure that any new built development fits with the local built vernacular, including use of materials (brick and flint);
- Consider the effect of tall or vertical structures within this very open, exposed landscape;
- Conserve the remaining historic parkland features, such as lodges and rides and ruined halls/churches;
- Conserve the existing rural road network, resisting traffic pressures and traffic calming measures which could have an urbanising influence.



D3: HARLING HEATHLANDS



D3: HARLING HEATHLANDS

Location and Boundaries

- D3.1 A relatively narrow section of the *Brecks Heathland with Plantation* landscape type in the east of the district defined by elevation and landform. The River Thet to the west, the River Ouse to the south and the more elevated land of the *Old Buckenham Plateau* character area to the east and north create the character area boundaries.

Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating landscape with landform influenced by glacial drift deposits of sand, clay and gravel. Topography ranges from 20 – 40m AOD.
- Brown sand soils support the functional landscape which is used for arable cultivation, pig farming and plantation woodland.
- Contorted Scots Pine shelterbelts and screening belts of trees provide shelter to the easily eroded brown soils and are a prominent landscape feature.
- Large blocks of Breckland Forest SSSI are located within the character area on sites of former parkland creating a wooded, enclosed character in places.
- Forestry planting has occasionally eroded parkland character as at West Harling, although parkland is more intact in parts of the character area e.g. at Quidenham Hall.
- Large scale, geometric arable fields are delineated by hedgerows in variable condition, ranging from species rich intact hedgerows with hedgerow trees, to severely degraded hedgerows on some field boundaries.
- Small areas of calcareous and acid grassland/heathland, primarily associated with remnant common land, are locally distinctive vegetation elements.
- An open, windswept landscape in places due to areas of hedgerow loss.
- Chalk, aquifer fed meres, such as at Quidenham and East Harling, are a distinctive feature of the area.
- A number of Scheduled Monuments and other historic features illustrate the historic settlement of the character area, including tumuli, the presumed grave of Boudicea, the Devil's Ditch, the Peddars Way and the historic parklands and St Chad's Well at Shadwell Park.
- The settlement pattern is characterised by nucleated hamlets and larger villages focused around the rural road network, the largest being East Harling.
- A tranquil, rural landscape due to the low population density, the presence of only 2 'A' Roads (A11 and A1066) to the fringe of the character area and the localised impact of the Thetford - Attleborough railway line.

- Opportunities for recreational access are facilitated by the rights of way network and open access land at West Harling Heath.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- D3.2 An underlying chalk solid geology is overlain with extensive and varying drift deposits including sand and gravels associated with tributaries draining into the River Thet, which has created a gently undulating landscape. Other formations specific to this solid and drift geology are meres which are depressions carved into the chalk by water erosion, and which are fed by springs from the chalk. Quidenham Mere SSSI which is found to the east of Quidenham, and East Harling Mere are both examples of chalk, aquifer fed meres. To the west of Quidenham peat is found associated with the drains and waterlogged conditions associated with the River Wittle.
- D3.3 The drift deposits have given rise to the dominant brown sand soil – a droughty soil which without irrigation is prone to wind erosion. The geology and soils are reflected in the species composition of the woodland blocks, with pine being the main species. The blocks of plantation and the historic planting of scots pine shelter belts has protected the soil from erosion and has allowed much of the landscape to be given over to arable production. In addition to arable cultivation, a number of areas are used for outdoor pig farming.
- D3.4 Due to the contrasting bands of acidic and calcareous soils, a varied and contrasting range of vegetation types are located in close proximity within the character area.
- D3.5 A number of sites are protected by nature conservation designations, illustrating the ecological diversity of the character area. The majority of the Breckland Forest SSSI (SPA) lies outside of the character area, but plantation woodland south of West Harling on the former parkland of West Harling Hall is also designated as Breckland Forest SSSI. The SSSI supports an important assemblage of nationally scarce plant species, a number of which are largely restricted to East Anglia and occupying habitats characteristic of Breckland. The Breckland Forest also contains the only extant population of red squirrel in East Anglia.
- D3.6 Field enclosure is provided by hedgerows of varying condition and species composition, and are characterised by being of fairly large geometric 20th century formation and under arable cultivation. Historic scots pine wind breaks and screening poplars are also a boundary feature. The grassy banks and field edges are very important to the conservation of the remnant Breckland grass-heath habitats.
- D3.7 In addition to the important habitats defined as SSSIs, there are a number of County Wildlife sites within the character area representing the ecologically important Fen habitat (Kenninghall and Banham Fens, Middle Harling Fen SSSI) and common land (East Harling Common and Meres).
- D3.8 The entire character area falls within the ‘Core Area’ as defined by the Ecological Mapping Project for Norfolk. Core areas represent significant concentrations of high quality extant habitat. The habitats highlighted for particular study and recreation within the D3 *Quidenham* character area are calcareous grassland (specifically in the

south of the character area), aquifer fed naturally fluctuating water bodies or meres, wet woodland, heathland and Fens.

Historic Character

- D3.9 A long history of settlement has left a variety of historical and archaeological features. These range from pre-historic earthwork sites to buildings and structures, such as medieval and post-medieval estate houses. Faden's 1797 Map shows five parklands and associated features either partly or wholly within the character area, representing the areas past wealth and the historic significance of the landed estates. These are Quidenham Hall (now a Carmelite Convent), Kilverstone Hall, Hargham Hall, Riddlesworth Park and West Harling Hall, in addition to Shadwell Park. Faden's Map also shows a number of areas of heath and common land e.g. East Harling Common. The majority of the parkland are extant, although many areas of heathland have subsequently been absorbed within both arable cultivation (e.g. East Harling Heath) and plantation forestry (West Harling Heath).
- D3.10 There are ten Scheduled Monuments and numerous ancient monuments within the character area. Devil's Ditch runs north south along the boundary of the block of plantation woodland at Harling. It is thought to have been a defensive structure built during the post Roman period. The presumed site of Boudicea's grave also lies within the character area near Kenninghall.
- D3.11 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has identified the presence of 18th-20th century plantation and 20th century agricultural cultivation. Smaller scale landuses are shown interspersed with these features e.g. parklands and small farm clusters. A number of these parklands are extant, e.g. Shadwell Park, designated as a park and garden of historic interest and Riddlesworth Park, now a school.
- D3.12 The acquisition of land by the Forestry Commission for the national afforestation programme in 1922 resulted in the absorption of areas of parkland, heathland, unstable sand dunes and marginal agriculture, within commercial forestry plantations. Corsican pine is the dominant species comprising over 70% of all plantings within the Breckland Forest SSSI as a whole. Scots pine, Douglas fir and larch also feature in the forest. The majority of the initial plantings reached the end of their first rotation in the mid 1970s. Since then the harvesting of these and subsequent plantings has created a continuous supply of clear-felled areas and young plantations. The main block of plantation within the character area is found at Harling, on the former site of West Harling Hall.

Settlement and Built Character

- D3.13 The settlement pattern is characterised by scattered hamlets largely encompassing clusters of farm buildings, and larger villages of both nuclear and linear formation along the rural road network. The largest village is East Harling which is described by Pevsner as being 'a substantial village with a square'. The market square is surrounded by 18th and 19th century houses and shops and the village today still includes buildings from the 14th century including St Peter and Paul's Church. A variety of vernacular building materials is apparent, including pantiles, render, red brick and clay lump.

D3.14 The Halls and parklands are an additional layer of settlement pattern with associated lodges and farm buildings clustered around the parkland features.

Perceptual/Visual

D3.15 This is a large scale landscape with large geometric fields which appear seemingly larger in places due to degraded hedgerows, creating localised areas of a very open, exposed character. Woodland cover is sporadic, but where woodlands do exist they are large in scale and create a notable feature within the landscape e.g. large plantation block at Harling. The landscape contains a variety of landscape elements, although the large scale of these elements provides a unifying influence.

D3.16 Views both within the character area and to adjacent character areas are variable. In places views are distant, to the wooded skylines, and up to the elevated *Old Buckenham Plateau Farmland*, while in other locations views are framed or contained by woodland blocks.

D3.17 The swathes of farmland and woodland create a landscape of peaceful, rural character. Localised interruption is created by the A1066 and the A11.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- The field boundary features e.g. ancient scots pine wind breaks and mixed native hedgerows which lend a sense of historical continuity and also enhance the ecological integrity of the character area;
- The numerous historical sites scattered throughout the character area;
- Remnant parkland features such as views along the driveway of Quidenham Hall;
- The landscape mosaic created by the boundaries between plantation woodland and arable farmland land uses;
- Remaining areas of heathland and calcareous grassland, which are significant biodiversity value, as are the chalk, aquifer fed meres;
- The clearings within the woodland which break up the generally large scale landscape;
- Sparse settlement and rural character of the hamlets and villages;
- The historic core of the village of East Harling;
- The narrow, often unmarked rural lanes and tracks;
- Devil's Ditch (Scheduled Monument).

Visual Sensitivities

- D3.18 A number of vistas designed into the landscape as parkland features have been retained. These views create surprise historical markers within the landscape. They would be sensitive to variations in woodland management.
- D3.19 The woodland blocks create an important focus to the landscape, particularly where views are across arable fields to a wooded skyline. Churches, such as at East Harling, are also an important focal point within the landscape.
- D3.20 There is occasional intervisibility with adjacent character areas, most significantly with the *River Thet Valley*.

Current State of the Landscape

- D3.21 This is a functional managed landscape with an eroded character in places due to degraded field boundaries and areas of open air pig farming.
- D3.22 Areas of intensive arable cultivation and use of the landscape for plantation woodland has resulted in the loss of habitats such as heathland and common land, although the presence of the meres and areas of calcareous grassland provide a measure of ecological integrity and diversity.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Agricultural intensification and loss of heathland/commons;
- Conversion of parkland to plantation woodland;
- The introduction of the railway line.

Future Change

- D3.23 Potential future landscape change may arise from implementation of agri-environment schemes and revisions to Forestry Enterprise strategy through new Forest Design Plans.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall landscape strategy for the *Harling Heathlands* character area should be to conserve the remaining historic parkland and estate elements and other features which contribute to the historical integrity of the character area, such as nucleated settlements centred on village greens and the rural road network. Existing woodland structure and field boundaries should be enhanced and reinforced through new hedgerow planting and appropriate ongoing management. The opportunity for further heathland restoration and enhancement of cereal field margins should also be explored.

Guidelines

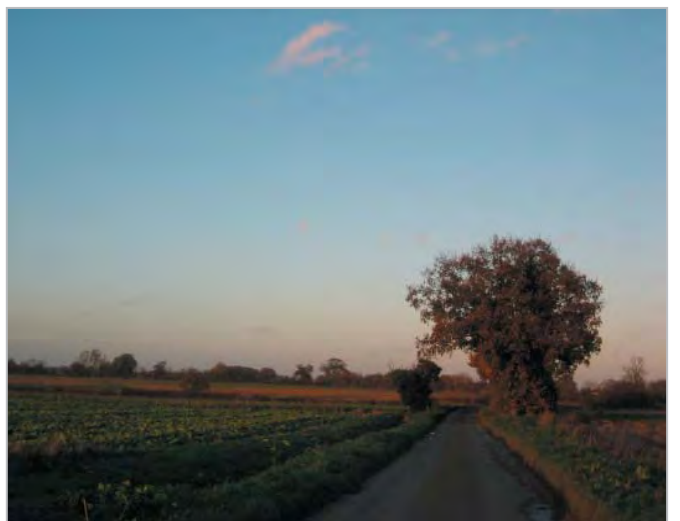
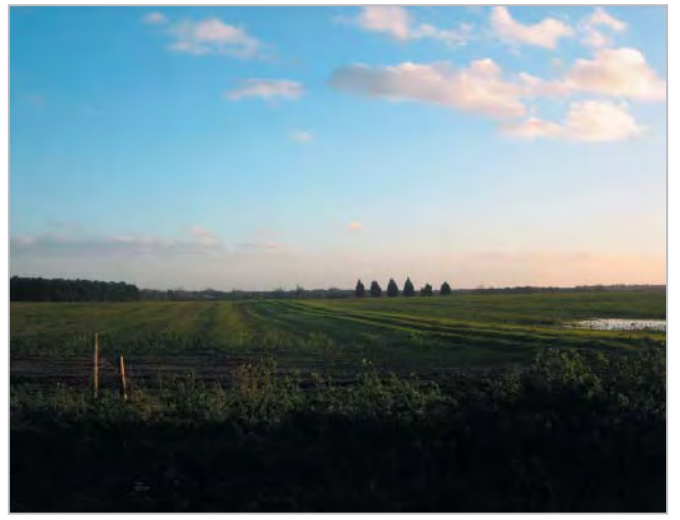
Landscape Management

- Ensure that historical features are not lost or degraded through agricultural cultivation, and conserve the sites and setting of Scheduled Monuments within the character area;
- Maintain hedgerow trees through appropriate arboricultural management, and reinforce field boundary hedgerows, gapping up where appropriate with a native hedgerow mix;
- Monitor the processes of arable cultivation and field drainage to ensure that they do not have a detrimental effect on the hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Encourage take up of agri-environment schemes to improve the ecological value of Fenland and chalk grasslands (identified as a priority habitat within the BAP and EcoNet Project);
- Conserve remaining areas of heathland and calcareous grassland;
- Conserve the meres and associated riparian habitat, monitoring causes of significant fluctuations in water level which could adversely affect these features;
- Reduce soil erosion by minimising exposure of bare soil associated with crop growth. Ensure that soils are protected from erosion by the retention of historic Scots Pine wind breaks and shelter belts of native trees;
- Maintain the historic scots pine shelterbelts and prolong/sustain their life through appropriate arboricultural management;
- Ensure that any further provision of footpaths or recreation areas does not conflict with the sensitive species and habitats within the Breckland Farmland and Breckland Forest SSSI;
- Ensure that the species mix of the plantations, incorporating broadleaf woodland and coniferous species is maintained;
- Promote traditional silvicultural management for the areas of deciduous woodland to ensure a diverse (indigenous) species and age structure;
- Consider the use of noise attenuation measures such as native planting to the A11 corridor.

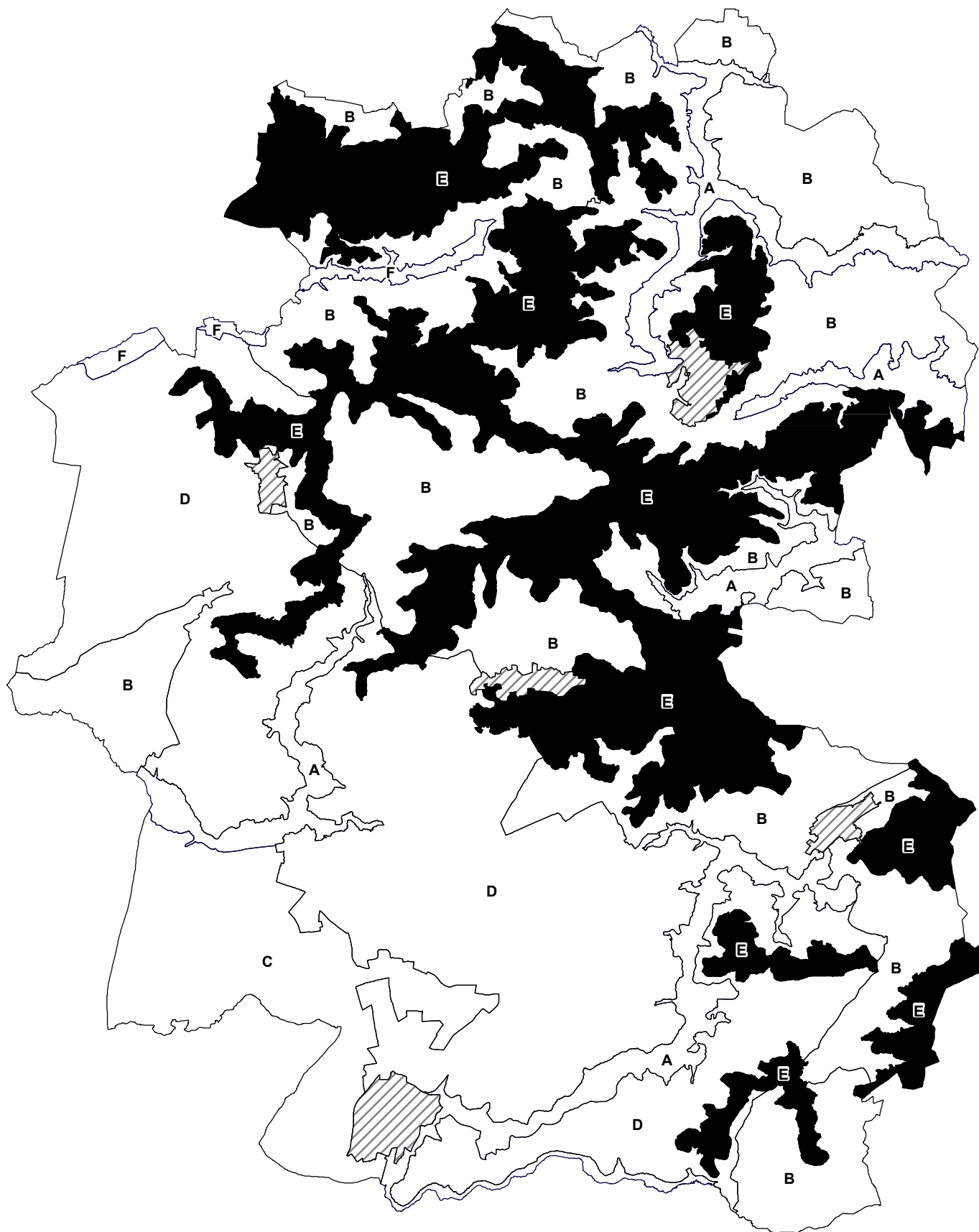
Development Guidelines

- Conserve the rides within parklands and plantations which provide attractive vistas to historic buildings, including those designated as Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Conserve views to landmark features within the villages, such as church towers;
- Maintain the nucleated character of the few villages, discouraging linear spread along the rural road network;

- Ensure that any new built development reflects the local built vernacular, including use of materials (red brick);
- Maintain the external fabric, appearance and setting of farm buildings and promote the use of local materials.
- Explore opportunities to enhance access for recreation, ensuring that this does not conflict with nature conservation objectives.



E. PLATEAU FARMLAND



LANDSCAPE TYPE E: PLATEAU FARMLAND

E1 The Plateau Farmland Landscape Type constitutes a predominantly arable, agricultural landscape of elevated landform (40-90m AOD). Whilst relatively open and large in scale, the landscape is interspersed with well treed field boundary hedgerows and small woodland blocks. The extent of the landscape type is based both on geology and topography.

Key Characteristics

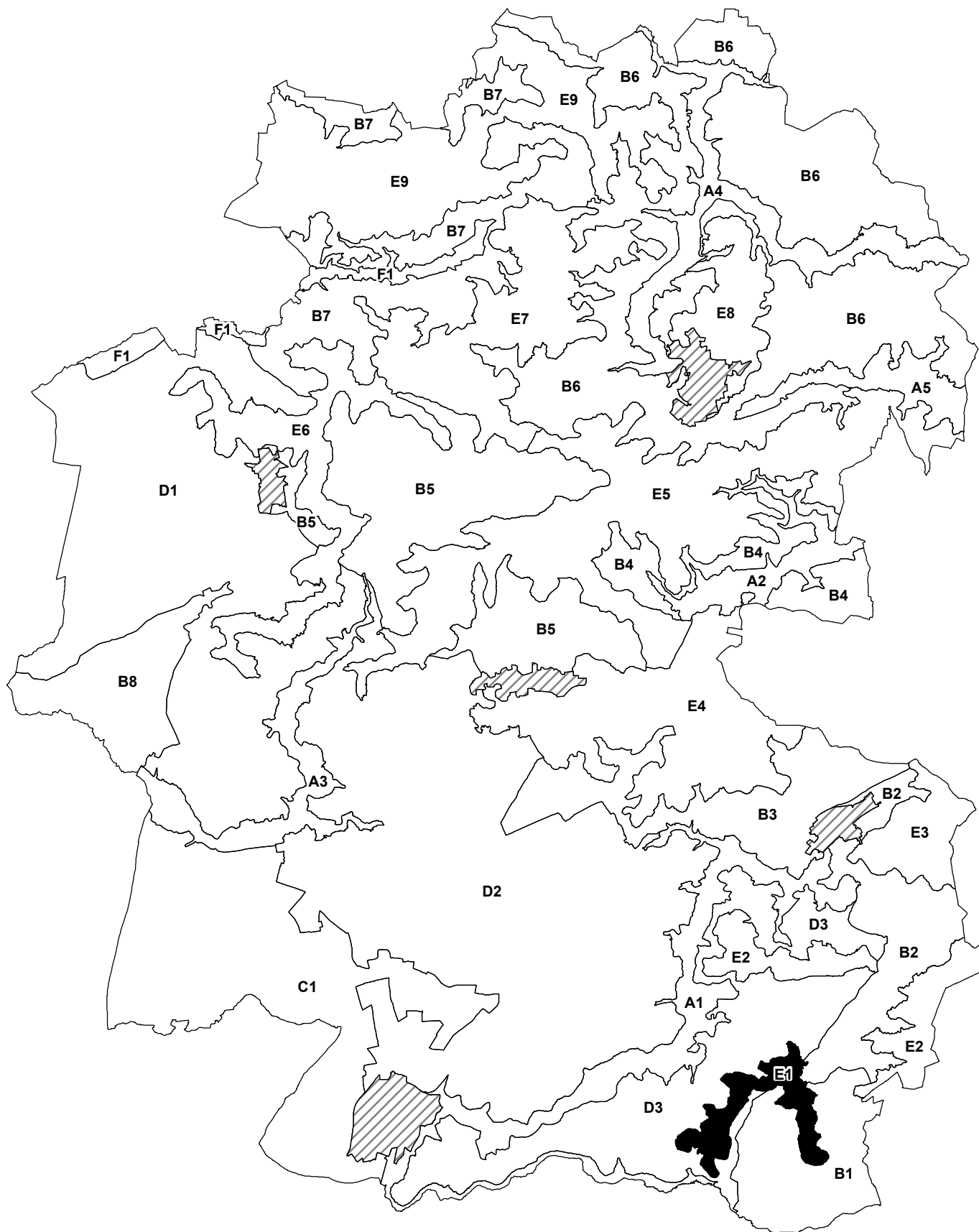
- A large scale landscape predominantly defined by extensive geometric fields under arable crop production.
- The most elevated landscape type within the study area – occurring between 40m and 90m AOD.
- Landform characterised by a strikingly flat terrain providing long distance, panoramic views and a strong sense of exposure.
- A simple and regular pattern – defined by geometric fields typically bound by straight drainage ditches, short flailed hedges and Scots pine shelterbelts.
- Settlement occurs throughout the plateau – comprising individual farmsteads, hamlets and small scale villages – the latter often centred around a green or pond. There are some larger scale settlements on the edges of the plateau.
- The skyline is prominent, often uninterrupted and smooth giving way to wide-open skies.
- Visible built structures and landmarks include village churches. Where communication masts and pylons occur, these are prominent features.
- Views from adjacent landscapes are predominantly restricted to the plateau edges forming a barrier to views beyond.
- A number of roads cross through the landscape and these bring an intermittent source of movement. However the landscape feels for the most part still – having a remote character in places.

Landscape Type E: Plateau Farmland

Character Area

- E1 Lophams Plateau
- E2 Snetterton Heath Plateau
- E3 Old Buckenham Plateau
- E4 Wayland Plateau
- E5 Central Breckland Plateau
- E6 North Pickenham Plateau
- E7 Beeston Plateau
- E8 Dereham Plateau
- E9 Whissonsett Plateau

EI: LOPHAMS PLATEAU



EI: LOPHAMS PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- EI.1 The character area is located in the south eastern part of the District and is defined primarily by the 50m AOD contour. Although displaying some localised undulation, landform is more consistent than that in the adjoining *Little Ouse Settled tributary farmland* character area. To the north and west the character area is adjoined by the more wooded *Harling Heath* character area.

Key Characteristics

- The thick, underlying deposits of glacial Lowestoft Till create a narrow, elevated plateau landscape.
- Gently undulating landform defined by the 50m AOD contour.
- Distant though intermittent views are available from within the character area.
- Landcover is predominantly arable with a scattering of small mixed plantation woodlands particularly to the south of the character area to the north of Garboldisham.
- Field pattern is irregular and large in scale, separated by hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees.
- There are a number of round barrows (Scheduled Monuments) on Garboldisham Heath, near to the Devil's Ditch which traverses the western part of the character area.
- Pill boxes within the character area indicate the military history of Breckland.
- Settlement pattern is generally low density, with settlements of essentially linear formation e.g. North Lopham/South Lopham. Settlements are centred around vernacular 17th Century and later buildings with a wide variation in built character and style.
- There are some instances of intervisibility with other character areas to the fringes, and the landscape is generally unified in character, being an essentially tamed arable landscape.
- Opportunities for recreation are provided by a number of rights of way, in addition to the access land within the woodlands in the western part of the character area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- EI.2 Glacial drift deposits of sand and gravel overlay the solid geology, creating a gently undulating landform defined primarily by the 50m AOD contour. The drift deposits

have also influenced the chalky till and glaciofluvial drift soils, in addition to the landuse of arable cultivation.

- EI.3 Arable farmland is the predominant landcover, and many field boundary hedgerows have been eroded or neglected due to agricultural intensification, giving an open, exposed character. There are a number of blocks of mixed plantation woodland in the western half of the character area.
- EI.4 A small area of Breckland Forest SSSI (SPA), which is valued both for the habitat it provides for scarce plant species and for species such as nightjar and woodlark, lies within the north western edge of the character area, at Garboldisham Belt. At the local level, a block of mixed woodland to the west of GUILT Cross is identified as a County Wildlife Site (CWS).
- EI.5 The northern and western parts of the character area fall within the Ecological Network Mapping Project's Core Area, in view of the range of BAP habitats including lowland deciduous woodland and cereal field margins, and due to the Breckland Forest SSSI (SPA), a small part of which lies within the character area.

Historic Character

- EI.6 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has identified a number of historic processes which have influenced the present character of the landscape. These include 20th Century Enclosure and associated field boundary loss, and areas of common and heathland.
- EI.7 Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk shows the parklands of Garboldisham Hall (partly outside the character area) and areas of woodland (on the site of present day coverts and woodland within access land), in addition to extensive areas of heath at Garboldisham and Kenninghall Heath.
- EI.8 Of these features only the remnant parklands of the former Garboldisham Hall are extant, with the heaths having been enclosed and subsequently absorbed within the agricultural intensification of the 20th Century.

Settlement and Built Character

- EI.9 Settlement is of a low density and linear pattern as at North Lopham and South Lopham, which is partly outside of the character area. There is some evidence of vernacular building at North Lopham with 17th century thatched buildings, local red brick, render and clay lump, and the dressed stone and flint church of St Nicholas.
- EI.10 The relatively low settlement density, concentrated on the linear villages of North Lopham and South Lopham, is similar to that shown by Faden. Pevsner refers to the Decorated Church of St Nicholas at North Lopham in addition to the range of 16th-18th Century buildings on 'The Street'. St Andrew's Church at South Lopham is a fine example of a Norman Parish Church.

Perceptual/Visual

- EI.11 This is an open arable landscape, which is of a large scale due to its comparatively sparse land cover and field pattern. There is the potential for distant though intermittent views which are partially contained by landform variation. It is essentially

a simple, tamed agricultural landscape of muted colour and smooth texture due to the extensive arable land use.

EI.12 The low population density and the rural road network which is largely made up of narrow, minor roads, contribute to the tranquil character of the landscape.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.

- Elevated position and open aspect, which define the sense of place.
- Farm ponds and marl pits refer to historic land uses (stock watering and clay excavation).
- Remnant hedgerow trees indicate post Enclosure land cover pattern prior to agricultural intensification;
- Remnant parkland recalls the former influence of landed estates;
- Sparsely settled character, with settlements of linear formation.

Visual Sensitivities

EI.13 The key visual sensitivities within this character area are primarily the elevated and open aspect, which leads to instances of high intervisibility with adjoining character areas.

Current State of the Landscape

EI.14 *Lophams Plateau* is essentially an intensively managed and productive arable landscape. As such historic and ecological integrity are both relatively weak, due to the limited land cover and structure, e.g. field boundary hedgerows. The landscape is visually lacking in variety due to the agricultural land use, but is broadly representative of the farmed plateaux within the District.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Enclosure of heathland;
- Agricultural intensification and attendant field boundary loss.

Future Change

EI.15 Potential future change may arise from the implementation of agri environment schemes and through the enhancement of field boundaries and cereal field margins to meet the biodiversity of objectives of the EcoNet Project and the Norfolk BAP.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective for *Lophams Plateau* should be to enhance the arable landscape in terms of field boundaries and opportunities for biodiversity, in addition to maintaining the rural, tranquil character. Opportunities should be explored to replant field boundary hedgerows and to create new hedgerows to the network of rural lanes, in addition areas of set asides to cereal field margins.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for the reinforcement of existing field boundary hedgerows and for the planting of new hedgerows of an appropriate and species rich native mix. With native hedgerow tree planting and appropriate ongoing management this could provide habitat connectivity through a series of wildlife corridors, and enhance the biodiversity value of the character area;
- Opportunities should be explored for the creation of set aside/grassland margins to crop fields, to enhance biodiversity.
- Investigate opportunities for heathland re-creation to reintroduce this historic land cover element and provide habitat creation opportunities.
- Maintain areas of woodland at their current extent to conserve the historically open character of the plateau.
- Conserve the sites of Scheduled Monuments and their settings

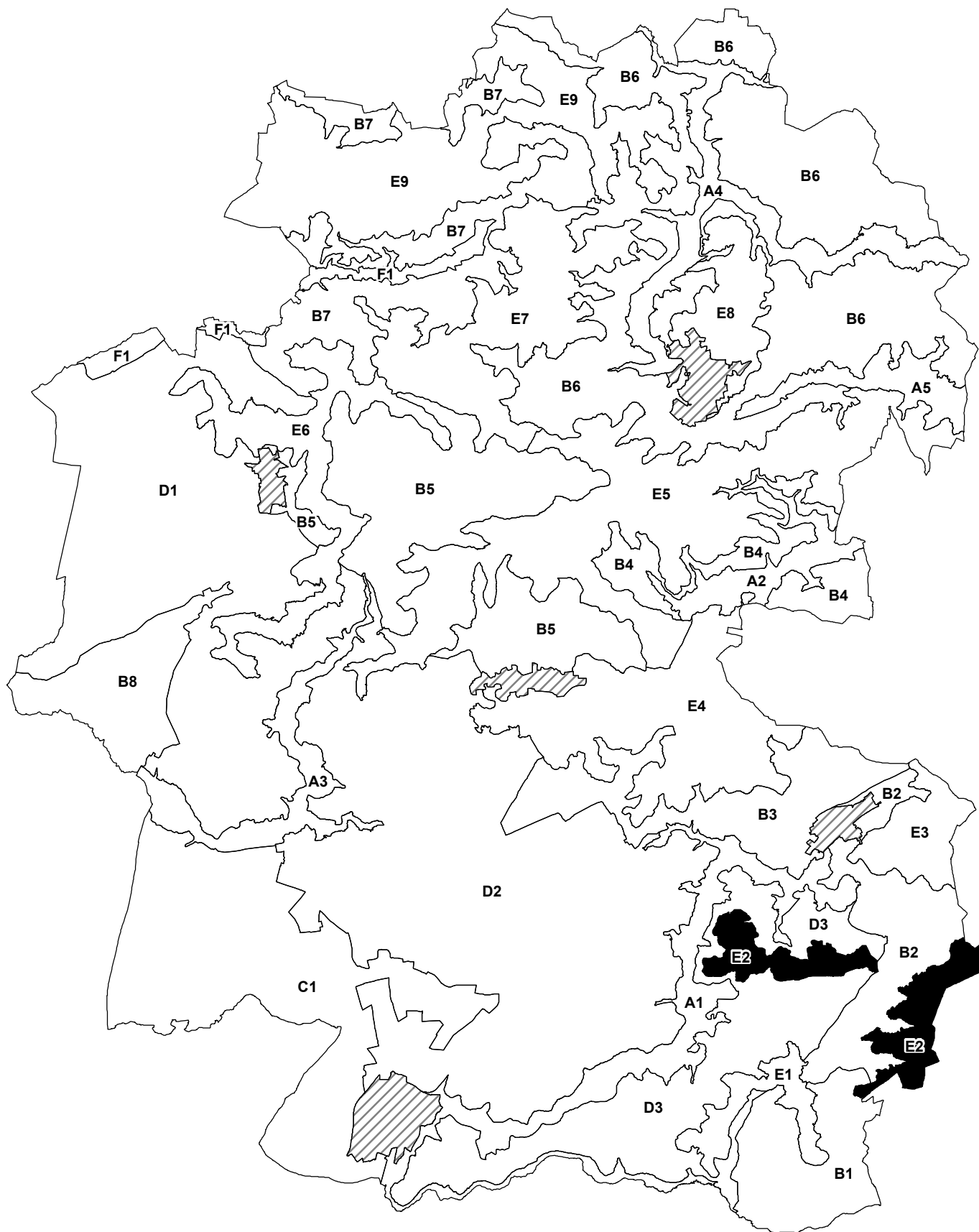
Development Considerations

- Conserve linear settlement character and sense of separation between settlements when planning for change, ensuring that open skylines are respected;
- Any new development should respect the established vernacular and local building materials, and be of an appropriate and high quality design;
- Maintain the small scale, rural character of the road network, resisting change due to signage or traffic calming /edge treatments which could have an urbanising influence.
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with surrounding character areas.

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E2: SNETTERTON HEATH PLATEAU



E2: SNETTERTON HEATH PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E2.1 *Snetterton Heath Plateau* is an elevated landform in the south east of Breckland, forming two separate areas separated by the more low lying topography around Banham. Although the eastern boundary of the character area is formed by the Breckland district boundary, the *Plateau Farmland* landscape type extends eastwards into South Norfolk District.

Key Characteristics

- A large scale, elevated landscape overlying a thick layer of glacial drift deposits of Lowestoft Till, sand and gravel - sandy drift deposits being dominant to the west.
- Topography ranges from 35-60m AOD making it one of the most consistent plateau landscapes.
- The elevated aspect of the landform provides opportunities for distant views across the character area and into the adjacent *Little Ouse Settled tributary farmland* character area.
- Arable agriculture is the dominant land cover interspersed with woodland blocks of various sizes and composition including carr woodland, small blocks of coniferous planting and larger broadleaf woodland e.g. Warren Plantation and Jubilee Plantation.
- Arable fields are large in scale and bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Localised areas of wetland and fen exist e.g. east of Banham. These are drained by a geometric pattern of field drains creating a more intricate landscape pattern.
- Numerous County Wildlife Sites (largely woodland) in the west of the character area illustrate its ecological potential.
- The plateau has a long history of human intervention and settlement and this is evident in the tumuli at Leader's Spinney and Round Barrow on Wilby Warren.
- Settlement is very low density and dispersed, taking the form of either scattered hamlets along the rural road network e.g. at the junction of Wilby Road and Quidenham Road, or isolated farms and lodges.
- Snetterton Circuit is a prominent recreational land use in the west of the character area.
- The A11 and the Thetford-Attleborough railway line in the western part of the character area are locally distinctive and divisive features.
- Recreational access is facilitated by a network of rights of way.
- This is a tamed landscape with an essentially peaceful, rural quality.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E2.2 The elevated landform is composed of thick glacial deposits of Lowestoft Till. These drift deposits create an elevated landform which gently undulates between 35m and 60m A.O.D. The clayey Lowestoft Till informs the Stagnogley soils which predominate within the character area supporting the dominant arable land use.
- E2.3 Localised variation in the underlying geology is found to the west of the area. A thin layer of sand drift deposits overlies the Lowestoft Till which at one point supported extensive areas of heathland, which have now been lost.
- E2.4 The arable fields are characteristically split into large scale arable fields, lined by hedgerow and hedgerow trees. Many hedgerow field boundaries have been eroded or neglected due to agricultural intensification, giving an open, exposed character. The clayey Typical Stagnogley Soils are prone to waterlogging and in places overlain by a drainage system e.g. to the east of Heath Road.
- E2.5 Arable farmland is interspersed with woodland blocks of various sizes and composition including carr woodland, small blocks of coniferous planting and larger broadleaf woodland e.g. Warren Plantation and Jubilee Plantation. Despite the small scale of woodland cover, a number of the woodlands have been designated as County Wildlife Sites due to their ecological importance e.g. Eccles Wood, Warren and Nuttery Plantation. The Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project defines the *Snetterton Heath* landscape as an Enhancement Area for heathland, grassland and woodland creation.

Historic Character

- E2.6 There are two Scheduled Monuments within the character area, a Round Barrow at Wilby Warren and a tumuli at Leader's Warren, demonstrating that whilst population density is now very low, the character area has a long history of human habitation.
- E2.7 HLC data shows that 20th Century enclosure and boundary loss associated with modern farming methods has had a profound impact upon the landscape. The majority of fields are large in scale, with a number of hedgerows having been absorbed due to agricultural intensification. Localised areas of parliamentary enclosure remain, and are characterised by a smaller scale field pattern, fields being notably smaller surrounding settlement e.g. along Heath Road and Long Lane.
- E2.8 With reference to the HLC data, it is apparent that areas of heathland were enclosed during the 18th and 19th century and converted to arable farmland. Heathland has also been lost due to woodland planting. Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk also shows that Eccles Wood was formerly Eccles Heath, but was planted with woodland between the 18th and 20th century.
- E2.9 Snetterton Race Circuit is a large scale recreational feature in the west of the character area. The racetrack was constructed in 1951, having previously been the site of a US military Air base during World War II.

Settlement and Built Character

- E2.10 Settlement density is very low, being characterised by scattered hamlets along the rural road network and isolated churches. There are no villages, and housing either takes the form of isolated farm buildings or linear hamlets formed along the rural road network.
- E2.11 A more settled character is apparent in the west, due to the influence of the A11, the railway line and employment development adjacent to the A11. The employment area at Snetterton utilises the former airfield site, and is a prominent landscape feature due to the scale of the buildings.

Perceptual/Visual

- E2.12 The *Snetterton Heath Plateau* is a large scale arable landscape with varying levels of enclosure due to the variable intactness of the field boundary hedgerows and the presence of localised blocks of woodland cover. The elevated aspect creates opportunities for distant views, and intervisibility with other landscapes, particularly the adjacent *Little Ouse Settled tributary farmland*.
- E2.13 A combination of simple landscape elements, consistent land use and smooth texture creates a landscape of unified character. Due to the low density, nucleated settlement pattern and the narrow rural road network the landscape of the *Snetterton Heath Plateau* is characterised by an essentially peaceful, rural quality, interrupted only occasionally by examples of overt human influence in the case of Snetterton Circuit, Snetterton employment development and the A11.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.

- The remaining network of hedgerow and hedgerow trees;
- The rural road network of unmarked lanes;
- Occasional small blocks of woodland particularly those designated as County Wildlife Sites;
- Pockets of fenland drainage systems;
- Remaining intact parliamentary enclosure fields which provide contrast with the larger 20th century enclosure fields;
- The tumuli at Leader's Spinney and Round Barrow on Wilby Warren as evidence of a long history of human intervention;
- The very low population density which contributes to the tranquil, rural character;
- The largely open skyline allowing clear views across the character area;

- Occasional views across the adjacent Settled tributary farmland character areas.

Visual Sensitivities

E2.14 The key visual sensitivities within this character area are primarily the elevated and open aspect, which leads to instances of intervisibility with adjoining lower lying character areas of the *Little Ouse Settled tributary farmland* and *Thet Settled tributary farmland*.

Current State of the Landscape

E2.15 The landscape is essentially an intensively managed and productive arable landscape and as such biodiversity interest is relatively low, confirmed by the designation as an EcoNet Enhancement Area for heathland, grassland and woodland creation. The consistent land use creates a landscape which is visually simple, but is broadly representative of the farmed plateaux within the District.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Enclosure of heathland;
- Woodland planting on heathland;
- Agricultural intensification and attendant field boundary loss;
- The construction of major transport routes including the A11 and the railway line connecting Attleborough and Thetford;
- Use of the Snetterton Heath as a military air base and subsequently as a race track;
- Introduction of drainage channels to drain areas of fenland.

Future Change

E2.16 There is potential for increased woodland planting and reversion of small areas of farmland to heathland through implementation of the EcoNet project's objectives. The Local Plan reveals an allocation for employment development, in addition to enhancement proposals along the A11 corridor.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective for *Snetterton Heath Plateau* should be to conserve the rural, tranquil character. Opportunities should be explored to replant field boundary hedgerows and to create new hedgerows to the network of rural lanes, in addition areas of set asides to cereal field margins. Opportunities should also be sought to create and enhance heathland, woodland and grassland, and to enhance the setting of the A11 corridor.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

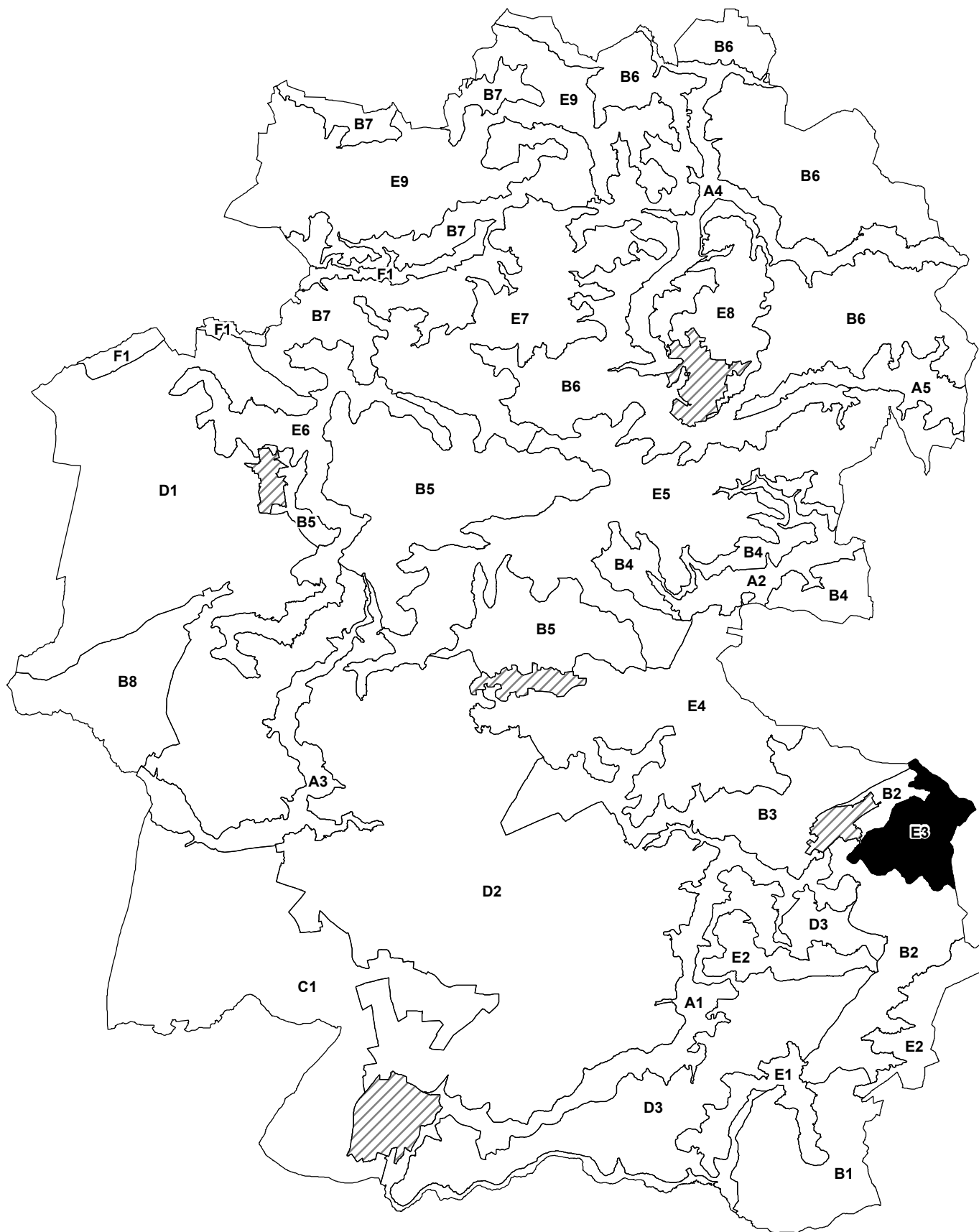
- Explore opportunities for the reinforcement of existing field boundary hedgerows and for the planting of new hedgerows of an appropriate and species rich native mix;
- Seek opportunities for enhancement of woodland, and creation of heathland and grassland to fulfil EcoNet objectives;
- Explore opportunities for the creation of set aside/grassland margins to crop fields, to enhance biodiversity.
- Ensure that any new woodland planting does not detract from the overall open character of the plateau.
- Retain the remaining areas of historic field pattern associated with parliamentary enclosure which create a sense of historical and visual variety;
- Protect archaeological features/ historic sites and their setting, such as the tumuli at Leader's Spinney;
- Maintain the drainage network associated with areas of fenland encouraging improved ecological diversity.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the sense of peace and quiet away from the main roads, and maintain the sparse settlement and road network;
- Consider noise attenuation measures and native planting in enhancing the relationship of the A11 corridor to the landscape;
- Monitor new development ensuring that it fits with the established vernacular and uses local building materials;
- Ensure that new development retains the low density, dispersed character to support the tranquil, rural character;
- Careful attention should be paid to maintain the predominantly open skylines in planning for change, particularly with regard to potential employment development;
- Maintain rural road network and avoid signage or traffic calming measures/edge treatments which could have an urbanising influence.



E3: OLD BUCKENHAM PLATEAU



E3: OLD BUCKENHAM PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E3.1 *Old Buckenham Plateau* is located in the eastern part of Breckland District, east of Attleborough. The character area boundary is drawn along the District boundary, although the landscape type extends eastward into South Norfolk District. The character area boundaries are defined primarily by topography.

Key Characteristics

- An elevated, gently undulating plateau landscape informed by underlying thick deposits of glacial Lowestoft Till.
- Topography ranges from approximately 45-66m AOD.
- Distant though intermittent views are available to the surrounding Thet Settled tributary farmland and River Thet character areas.
- Landcover is predominantly arable with some blocks and clumps of woodland/coverts, sometimes associated with former marl pits, in addition to a number of plantation blocks.
- Field pattern is irregular and large in scale, fields being bounded by hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees.
- Although commons are referred to in place names e.g. Burgh's Common, common land is generally no longer present in the character area, with the exception of isolated remnants.
- Old Buckenham Airfield, a relic of World War II is located in the south of the character area.
- Settlement pattern is of linear formation and low density, being limited to two main hamlets at Black Carr and Burgh Common and scattered farmsteads related to the narrow rural road network.
- This is a large-scale landscape in terms of its landscape elements and is relatively open in aspect. An essentially tamed arable landscape of unified character.
- An empty, almost vacant landscape is created by the low settlement density and absence of main roads.
- Opportunities for recreation are provided by a network of rights of way, and the open access land within the woodlands in the western part of the character area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E3.2 Chalk forms the solid geology of *Old Buckenham Plateau* although the landform is created by the deposition of Lowestoft Formation drift material deposited. The

glacial drift creates a slightly elevated landscape, levelling off to a plateau with the highest point of 66m A.O.D.

- E3.3 The soils are a Typical Stagnogley, which is a clay based soil, and used for arable cultivation, the majority of the character area being separated into large scale arable fields by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Many field boundary hedgerows have been eroded or neglected due to agricultural intensification, giving an open, exposed character. The clayey Typical Stagnogley Soils are prone to waterlogging and are in places overlain by a drainage system e.g. south of Black Carr.
- E3.4 There is very little vegetation within the character area, woodland being limited to very small farmland blocks or coverts, often associated with marl pits and ponds and occasionally with historic carr woodland.
- E3.5 Due to the intensive agricultural land use, there is relatively little habitat and ecological variation. One County Wildlife Site is represented within the landscape character area at West Moor. In view of the intensive arable cultivation and comparatively sparse landcover, the character area is identified as falling within the heath, grassland and wood enhancement area by the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.
- E3.6 A number of Norfolk BAP priority habitats lie within the character area including cereal field margins.

Historic Character

- E3.7 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is currently at an unpublished stage, although sections of it have been completed for this character area. Within the HLC data available for the character area, 20th Century military activity is a key land use, with Old Buckenham Airfield developed in 1942, utilising the open, elevated position. The HLC identifies the surrounding land as predominantly 20th century agriculture, which is evident in the large scale arable fields currently visible in the landscape.
- E3.8 Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk has identified heathland and common at Burgh Common and a smaller area of heathland to the east, these features now having been largely eroded due Enclosure and later intensive arable cultivation.
- E3.9 A number of halls and estates are located within the character area e.g. Old Hall (identified as a farm adjacent to the now destroyed St Andrew's Hall in Faden's survey) and Besthorpe Hall. The earthworks of Bunn's Bank (Scheduled Monument) are a notable historic feature within the character area.

Settlement and Built Character

- E3.10 Settlement is of a low density and linear formation as at Foundry Corner along Buckenham Road. Employment development is apparent at Bunn's Bank. Other settlement displays a range of vernacular building materials including pantile, clay lump and red brick, and includes small hamlets such as Burgh Common and Black Carr, in addition to scattered farmsteads and buildings associated with Halls e.g. the cluster of buildings around Old Hall. However the character area otherwise has a remote and unsettled character.

Perceptual/Visual

E3.11 This is an open landscape, which is of a large scale due to its comparatively sparse land cover and field pattern. The elevated landform allows for occasional distant views into surrounding character areas. It is essentially a simple, tamed agricultural landscape of muted colour and smooth texture due to the arable land use.

The landscape has a peaceful rural character due to the active arable land use, absence of main roads and low settlement density.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

E3.12 The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.

- The remaining network of hedgerow and hedgerow trees;
- The rural road network of unmarked lanes;
- Occasional small blocks of farm woodland, often associated with coverts or marl pits;
- Areas of historic wetland features such as carr woodland.
- Peaceful rural character.

Visual Sensitivities

E3.13 The key visual sensitivities within this character area are primarily the elevated and open aspect, resulting in intervisibility with adjoining character areas.

Current State of the Landscape

E3.14 The landscape is essentially an intensively managed and productive arable landscape. As such historic and ecological integrity are both relatively low, due to the limited land cover and structure, e.g. field boundary hedgerows. Due to the intensive arable land use the landscape is visually simple but broadly representative of the farmed plateaux within the District.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Enclosure of heathland and common land;
- Agricultural intensification and attendant field boundary loss.

Future Change

E3.15 Potential future landscape change may arise through implementation of agri-environment schemes and initiatives resulting from the objectives of the Norfolk

BAP, such as enhancement of field boundary hedgerows and cereal field margins. Industrial/employment landuses at Foundry Corner and Bunn's Bank may be subject to future expansion. Future expansion of Attleborough to the south may impact upon the character of the landscape.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective for *Old Buckenham Plateau* should be to conserve the rural, tranquil character. Opportunities should be explored to replant field boundary hedgerows, in addition areas of set asides to cereal field margins to enhance biodiversity and to fulfil the objectives of the Norfolk BAP/EcoNet Project. Opportunities should also be sought to re create heathland and woodland, in accordance with the EcoNet Project's objectives, in addition to enhancing recreational access. Landscape enhancement of the edges of future settlement expansion and employment development should also be undertaken.

Guidelines

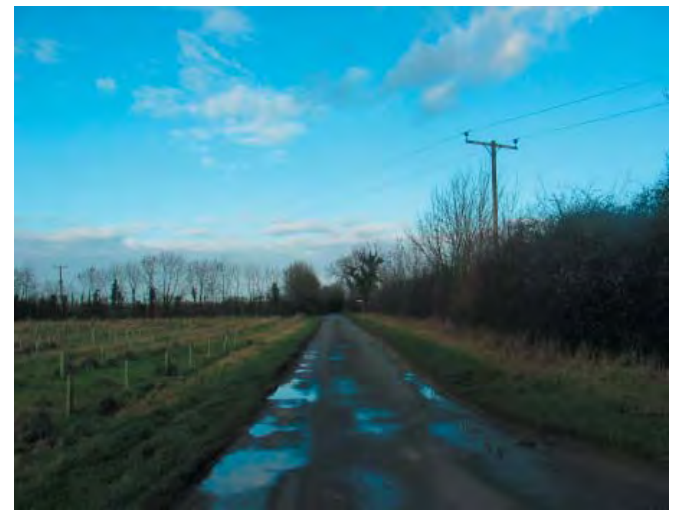
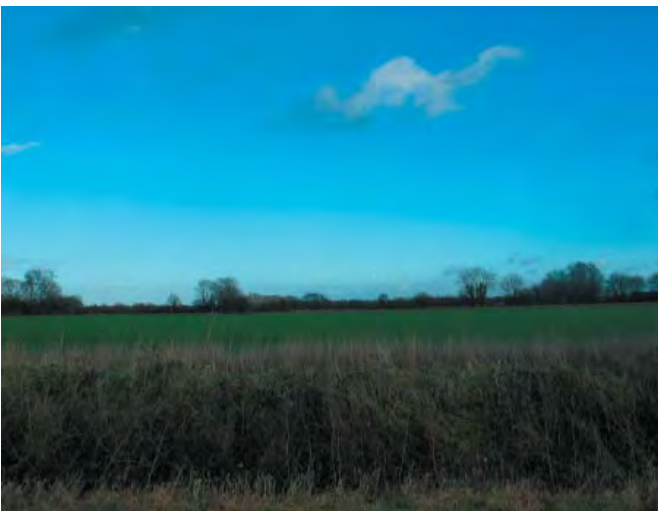
Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for the reinforcement of existing field boundary hedgerows and for the planting of new hedgerows of an appropriate and species rich native mix;
- Seek opportunities for enhancing existing woodland, and creation of new areas of heathland and grassland as suggested by the EcoNet Enhancement Area proposals;
- Explore opportunities for the creation of set aside/grassland margins to crop fields, to enhance biodiversity and fulfil the objectives of the EcoNet project and the BAP;
- Ensure that where woodland planting takes place the overall open character of the plateau is maintained.

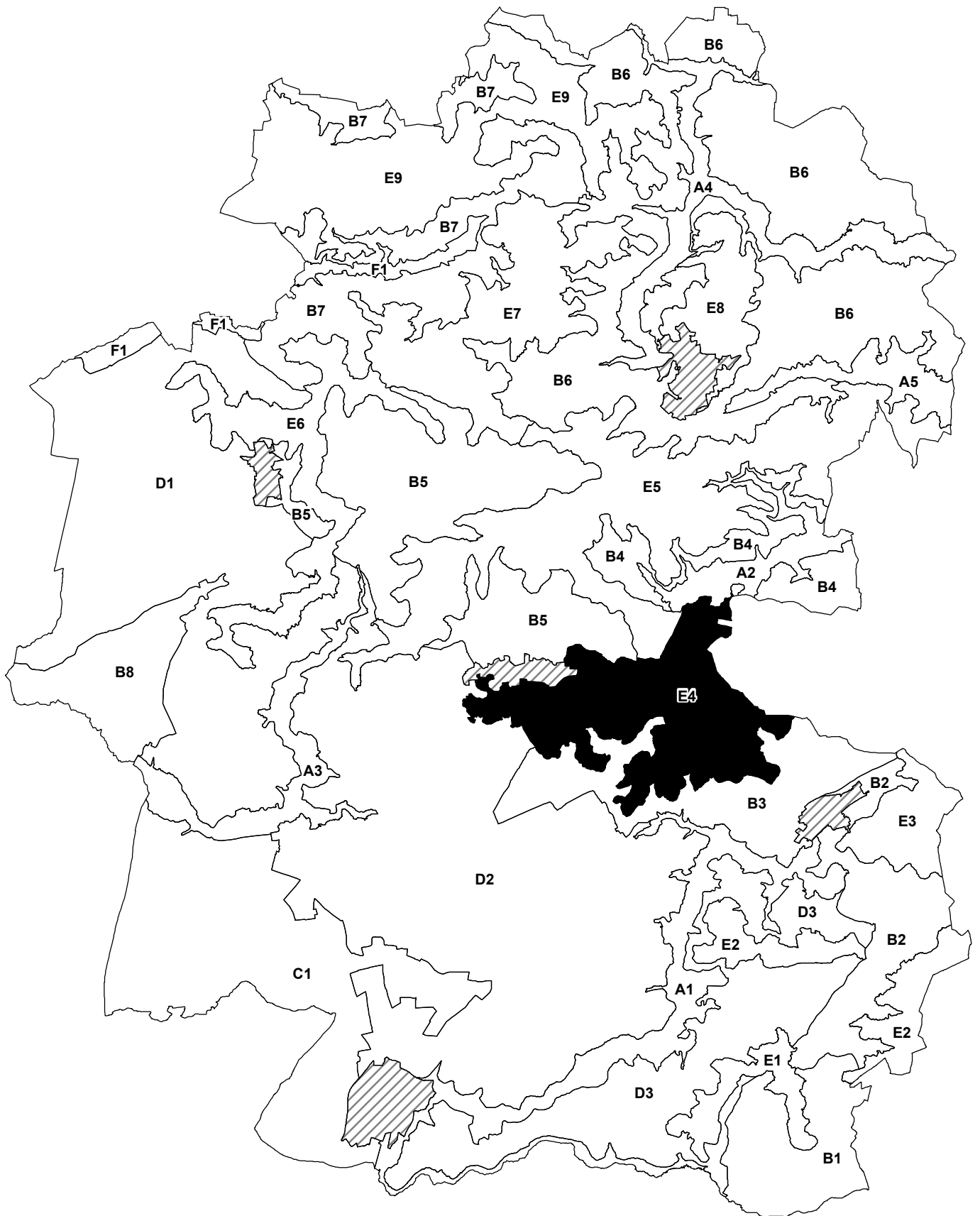
Development Considerations

- Monitor new development within the urban fringes of Foundry Corner, Burgh Common and Black Carr ensuring that it fits with the established vernacular and uses an appropriate materials vocabulary;
- Conserve the linear character of settlements and pay careful attention to maintaining the predominantly open skylines when planning for change;
- Maintain small scale rural road network, discouraging signage or traffic calming measures/edge treatments which could have an urbanising influence.
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with surrounding character areas.

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E4: WAYLAND PLATEAU



E4: WAYLAND PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E4.1 *Wayland Plateau* is located in the eastern part of the District, to the south and east of Watton, with the landscape type extending beyond the District boundary into the adjoining South Norfolk District. Whilst the character area has a relatively settled character it is distinguished from the adjoining *Blackwater* and *Thet Settled tributary farmlands* by the more elevated landform which ranges from approximately 40-60m AOD. *Stanta Heath* adjoins the character area to the west.

Key Characteristics

- A chalk solid geology, overlain with localised glacial drift deposits of sand and gravel and chalky till and glaciofluvial drift soils.
- An elevated plateau landform with contour intervals ranging from 40-60m AOD.
- Opportunities for distant views are provided by the elevated aspect.
- Land cover is predominantly arable farmland, sometimes interspersed with small blocks of woodland or farm coverts, in addition to occasional paddocks.
- Fields are geometric in pattern, varying in scale from small to large and bounded with mixed Enclosure hedgerows, some of which have hedgerow oaks.
- Historic sites include a moated site at Woodrising Hall and the mound and associated moats at Hazel Hurn ancient woodland.
- Blocks of ancient woodland are a distinctive feature, e.g. Wayland Wood to the south of Watton.
- Distinctive features include the former Watton Airfield, Wayland Prison and the dismantled railway line near Watton.
- Low to medium settlement density, with a compact settlement pattern, which includes both linear settlements (e.g. Rocklands) and nucleated settlements (e.g. Great Ellingham/Little Ellingham), associated with the narrow rural road network.
- A landscape of simple elements, but with a textured quality, and of unified character.
- Opportunities for recreation are provided by the fisheries at Lays Farm and Scoulton Mere and Melsop Farm Park, in addition to the network of rights of way.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E4.2 The character area is created by, thick layers of boulder clay which create an elevated landscape which undulates between 40 and 60m A.O.D. A distinctive

feature of the character area is the consistent, thick layer of clay glacial deposits, there being only very small areas of sandy drift, overlain with heavy clay, argyllic brown earth soils.

- E4.3 The land is intensively farmed and characterised by arable fields of variable sizes delineated by low, mixed hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Arable farming forms a consistent land use which is only occasionally interrupted by smaller scale features such as woodland, common land and paddocks. Goose Common is a small block of common land that is a relic of the formerly extensive network of commons which once covered the elevated *Wayland Plateau*. The arable field network is occasionally interspersed with small woodland blocks on field edges, in addition to the larger block at Wayland Wood SSSI (ancient woodland). The traditionally managed coppice woodland is composed entirely of semi natural stands forming an important habitat for a range of species.
- E4.4 Small scale water features are a characteristic feature of this landscape. Scoulton Mere SSSI is a notable example, including swamp, fen and bog communities that occur on islands in the mere and around the shore. These support a diverse flora including several rare plant species. In addition there are numerous marl pits, drains and tributaries which contribute to the ecological diversity of the character area.
- E4.5 Much of the northern and eastern parts of the character area fall within the Ecological Network Mapping Project's Enhancement Area for woodland, grassland and heathland re-creation, whilst the southern part of the character area is identified as a Core Area. The arable land use and small areas of Ancient Woodland are both identified as priority habitats within the Norfolk BAP.

Historic Character

- E4.6 Whilst the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is currently at an unpublished stage and has only been completed for the south western part of the character area at the time of writing, this has identified a number of historic processes and pressures which have influenced the present character of the landscape. The arable landscape is composed of a mosaic of small and medium sized 18th and 19th century Enclosure and larger 20th century Enclosure fields.
- E4.7 Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk identifies the presence of extensive areas of common and heathland at Griston and Caston Commons, in addition Scoulton Common and the mere, in addition to a number of areas of woodland at Wayland Wood and Woodrising Wood, together with a number of minor halls/estates on the edges of settlements, such as Woodrising Hall.
- E4.8 Of these elements only the ancient woodlands at Wayland Wood and Woodrising Wood are extant together with the mere and fragments of the heath at Scoulton, with the majority of the rest subsequently lost to Enclosure and later agricultural intensification. A number of Scheduled Monuments do however still indicate the long continuity of settlement on the plateau, such as the moat at Woodrising Hall and the moated site and mound within Hazel Hurn Wood.

Settlement and Built Character

- E4.9 This is a sparsely populated landscape, with a dispersed settlement pattern. Settlement across the character area is generally low to medium density, consisting primarily of compact linear villages associated with the narrow rural road network as at Griston, Northacre and Rockland St Peter. A number of settlements are also of nucleated formation, such as Great and Little Ellingham. Use of traditional building materials of red brick, flint and thatched roofs are a feature of the historic cores of villages, although twentieth century infill and edge development is also apparent. The relatively low level of woodland cover and twentieth century development on village edges creates a visible edge to settlements which can be harsh.

Perceptual/Visual

- E4.10 This is an elevated arable landscape with opportunities for distant, open views although the relatively intact field boundary hedgerows and occasional blocks of farm woodland provide an element of shelter and containment.
- E4.11 In terms of the variety of landscape elements the character area is relatively simple but has a textured quality due to the hedgerows, trees and farm woodlands and localised features of interest such as Scoulton Mere and Heath.
- E4.12 The overriding characteristic is that of a productive and managed tamed agricultural landscape of unified character.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.

- Localised areas of ancient woodland which indicate historic land cover pattern and are of significance for their biodiversity value;
- The mere at Scoulton, which is a significant seasonal, ground water based wetland habitat;
- Areas of remnant heathland such as at Scoulton refer to the historic land cover pattern prior to Enclosure.
- The intimate character of the historic village cores;
- The large skies and open views across the arable fields;
- The rural character of the network of narrow roads.

Visual Sensitivities

- E4.13 The key visual sensitivities within this character area are the views across the arable fields to large, open skylines. The expansive views, relatively low density of woodland cover and consistent landform with only gentle undulation, creates occasional visibility to settlement edges.

Current State of the Landscape

- E4.14 The landscape is generally in good condition with the majority of individual elements being in good condition. Although the intensive use of the land for arable cultivation has resulted in some boundary loss and deprivation, the character area largely retains an intact visual and functional character and a range of small scale ecologically important features such as tributaries, Scoulton Mere and small blocks of woodland.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Enclosure and later agricultural intensification, with attendant field boundary loss;
- Enclosure of common land;
- Planting of small woodland blocks between the 18th and 20th century;
- 20th century infill development and extension to village edges;
- The construction of Watton Airfield, and its subsequent closure in 1995;
- The introduction of small pockets of paddocks within the network of arable fields.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective for *Wayland Plateau* should be to conserve existing small scale features such as woodland and common land, whilst maintaining the open, expansive views. The small scale intimate character of the villages should be retained and enhanced. Opportunities should be sought to strengthen the biodiversity of the character area in line with the Norfolk BAP objectives (field margins and ancient woodland) and the principles and guidelines of the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for the reinforcement of existing field boundary hedgerows and for the planting of new hedgerows of an appropriate and species rich native mix;
- Seek opportunities for enhancing existing woodland through appropriate arboricultural management and new native woodland planting to sustain the existing level of cover;
- Seek opportunities for the enhancement of the former airfield site, through creation of heathland and species rich grassland, to fulfil BAP/EcoNet targets;
- Explore opportunities for the creation of set aside/grassland margins to crop fields, to enhance biodiversity;

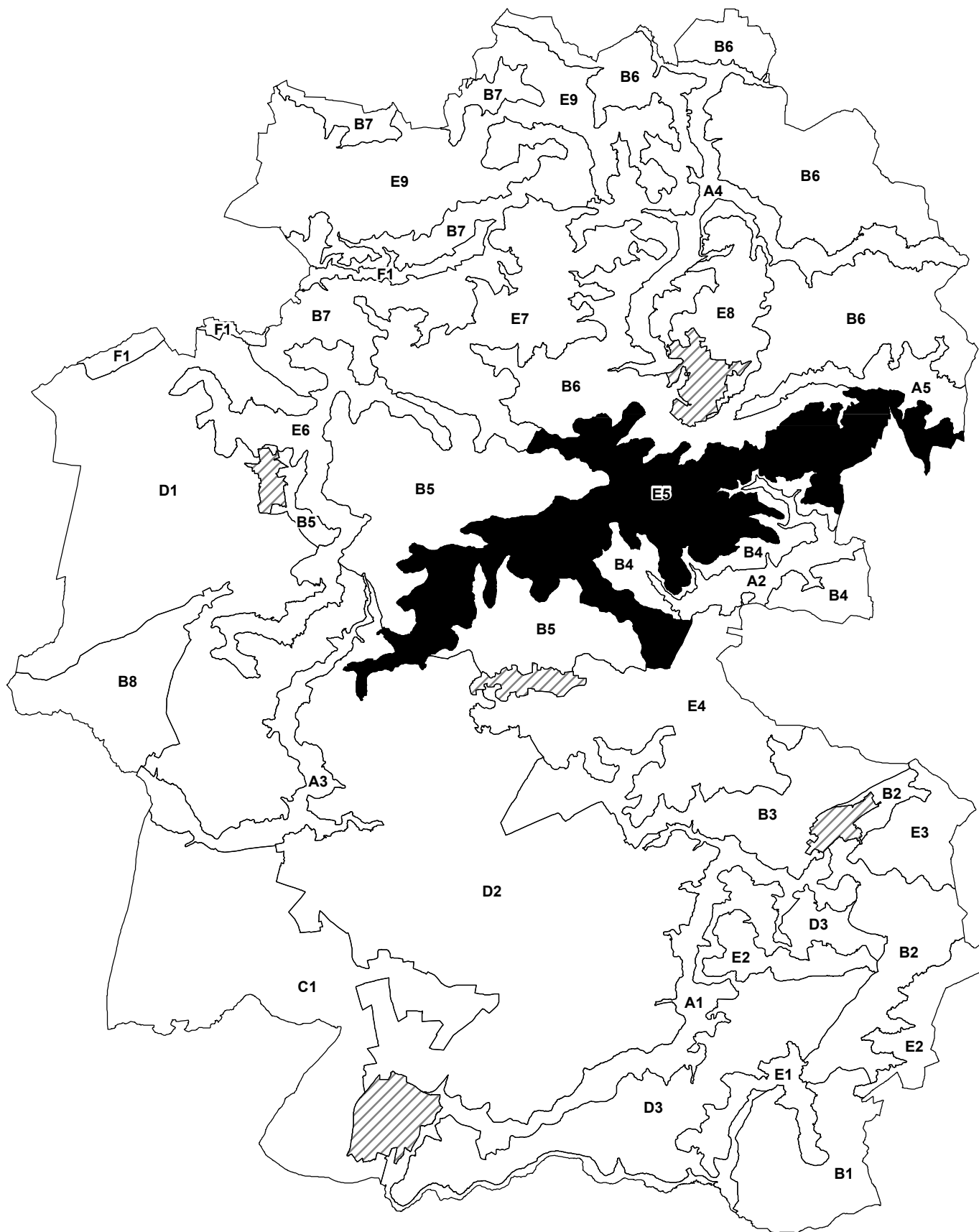
- Ensure that any new woodland planting does not detract from the overall open character of the plateau;
- Conserve the site and setting of historic sites.

Development Considerations

- Monitor new development within the key settlements of Griston, Rockland Saint Peter and Great and Little Ellingham, ensuring that it fits with the established vernacular and uses local building materials;
- Particular attention should be paid to conserving the historic cores of villages;
- Ensure that the predominantly open visual character is retained in planning for change;
- Development should reflect the linear character of the settlements, and maintain their sense of separation. Careful attention should be paid to maintain the predominantly open skylines;
- Maintain the rural road network and avoid signage or traffic calming measures/edge treatments which could have an urbanising influence;
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with surrounding character areas



E5: CENTRAL BRECKLAND PLATEAU



E5: CENTRAL BRECKLAND PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E5.1 This character area lies in the eastern part of Breckland District, occupying the ridge of elevated land between the *Blackwater/Yare* and *Tud Valleys*. Breckland's District Boundary defines the eastern boundary, although the landscape type extends into the neighbouring South Norfolk District. The character area is defined primarily by the 60-70m AOD contour, in addition to a more gently undulating landform than is apparent in the adjacent settled tributary farmland character areas.

Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating landscape overlying glacial Lowestoft Till drift deposits.
- Topography ranges from 60-70m AOD, and the plateau landform displays localised/gentle undulation.
- Opportunities are provided for distant views, in addition to intervisibility with other character areas, due to the elevated aspect and the exposed, open character, with relatively little boundary vegetation evident. Skylines are often open.
- There is little vegetation of significance other than variable field boundary hedgerows (mixed and thorn dominated) occasional hedgerow / field oaks and small blocks of remnant ancient woodland.
- Land cover is dominated by arable farming, with a generally large scale, geometric field pattern.
- Historic sites across the plateau include the site of old Panworth Hall and the associated lost medieval village, a moated site and fishponds at Shipdham, a Roman enclosure to the north east of Panworth Hall and part of the Devil's Dyke earthworks.
- Settlement is predominantly linear and associated with the network of rural roads traversing the plateau, although some of the larger villages such as Ashill, Mattishall and Shipdham are continuing to grow and become more nucleated.
- A distinctive feature of the plateau is the former RAF Shipdham Airfield, occupying the elevated land to the south east of Shipdham.
- This is an open, sparse arable agricultural landscape, with a muted palette of colours and few structural landscape features.
- Recreational opportunities are afforded by the network of public footpaths in addition to the partially restored Mid Norfolk Railway, a section of which lies within the western part of the character area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E5.2 The physical character and gently undulating topography of this landscape are defined primarily by glacial drift deposits of Lowestoft formation, overlain by chalky till and glaciofluvial drift soils, which has in turn influenced the historic calcareous heathland cover and subsequent arable cultivation.
- E5.3 Due to both its elevated aspect and the 20th Century agricultural intensification, the landscape has an open, exposed quality. Field pattern is geometric and large in scale, with field boundaries often being defined by gappy, low mixed hedgerows although denser hedgerows and relict historic hedgerow oaks survive in places.
- E5.4 In view of its intensively managed agricultural landuse, the character area is of limited biodiversity value, with the majority of the historic heath and common having been enclosed and subsumed within later agricultural intensification. The great majority of the character area lies within the Ecological Network Mapping Project's Enhancement Area for heathland, grassland and woodland creation in light of the intensive arable cultivation.
- E5.5 A number of small blocks of ancient woodland survive within the character area e.g. at Yaxham Wood, Woodrising Wood and Hazel Hurn, and some of these are designated as County Wildlife Sites (CWS) on account of their habitat value. Ancient woodland, with lowland mixed deciduous woodland, is also identified as a priority habitat within the Norfolk BAP, as are ancient and/or species rich hedgerows.

Historic Character

- E5.6 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is currently at an unpublished stage, and has not been completed for this character area. However, Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk has identified a number of historic land cover features and land uses. These include area of heath and common land at Shipdham, Mattishall and Tuddenham, in addition to the parklands of Letton Hall (largely outside the character area) and the ruins of Letton Church, in addition to a number of blocks of woodland at Necton Wood, West Bradenham and Whinburgh.
- E5.7 Of these, the heathlands have subsequently been enclosed and absorbed within later arable agricultural intensification. The areas of ancient woodland and the late 18th Century Letton Hall (by Sir John Soane) and parklands are extant, although only the foundations of Letton Church remain.
- E5.8 The presence of a number of Scheduled Monuments (SM's) within the character area indicates the long history of settlement, and includes part of the Devil's Ditch, a Roman Enclosure, a number of medieval village sites, notably at Letton and Panworth.

Settlement and Built Character

- E5.9 There a number of large villages within the character area, often centred around historic brick and flint cores, with much 17th -18th Century and later work, in addition to a significant amount of later and modern infill and urban edge development.

Settlement pattern was historically linear and based primarily on the rural road network, although it has become increasingly nucleated as at Ashill and Mattishall (partly outside the character area).

- E5.10 The other areas of settlement within the character area are defined primarily by small hamlets and scattered farmsteads associated with the narrow rural road network.

Perceptual/Visual

- E5.11 The landscape of the character area is relatively large in scale and open in nature, due to the intensive managed arable land use. As such distant views are afforded across much of the character area, and intervisibility with adjacent landscape character areas is high. The arable land use has also resulted in an essentially tamed agricultural landscape of muted colour. Due to the relatively low density of settlement the landscape is also peaceful in character.
- E5.12 Opportunities for recreation are provided by the network of public footpaths which traverses the character area, in addition to the section of the Mid Norfolk Railway in the western part of the character area.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Localised historic/veteran oak hedgerow trees provide a link to the early post Enclosure landscape prior to 20th Century agricultural intensification;
- Relict blocks of ancient woodland strengthen the ecological diversity of the character area and provide a visual link to the historic landcover pattern;
- Historic/vernacular settlement cores and use of local flint and brick for buildings reinforces the sense of place and historical integrity;
- Peaceful rural character.

Visual Sensitivities

- E5.13 Key visual sensitivities include the predominantly open skylines and horizons and the high potential intervisibility with other character areas due to its openness and elevated aspect. Long views are available from the elevated road network, with the potential for light pollution of the night sky from settlements.

Current State of the Landscape

- E5.14 This landscape is essentially a productive, intensively used but poorly managed agricultural landscape, and field boundaries are often in variable condition. In terms of its ecological and historical integrity this is generally weak, although locally strengthened by the presence of early Enclosure hedgerow oaks and discrete areas of ancient woodland.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Agricultural intensification and attendant field boundary loss;
- Loss of field boundaries due to agricultural intensification;
- Enclosure of heaths and commons and subsequent absorption within arable field systems;
- The construction and later closure of RAF Shipdham Airfield.

Future Change

- E5.15 Potential future landscape change may arise from the implementation of agri environment schemes and the implementation of habitat enhancement proposals as set out in the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project. The airfield may be a potential site for future employment development, as has occurred elsewhere within Breckland. A number of the larger villages within the character area are identified as Local Service Centres (Mattishall, Shipdham and Necton) and may expand, with potential for landscape change to their edges.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall landscape strategy for the *Central Breckland Plateau* should be to conserve the remaining blocks of ancient woodland and veteran hedgerow/field trees. Opportunities should be explored for enhancing the arable landscape.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Explore opportunities for new species rich native field boundary hedgerow and farmland tree planting, which, with appropriate management could substantially enhance the landscape and ecological integrity of the character area
- Opportunities for the creation of set aside field margins should be explored to enhance the biodiversity of field boundaries and to provide potential habitat connectivity;
- Conserve the sites and settings of historic sites.

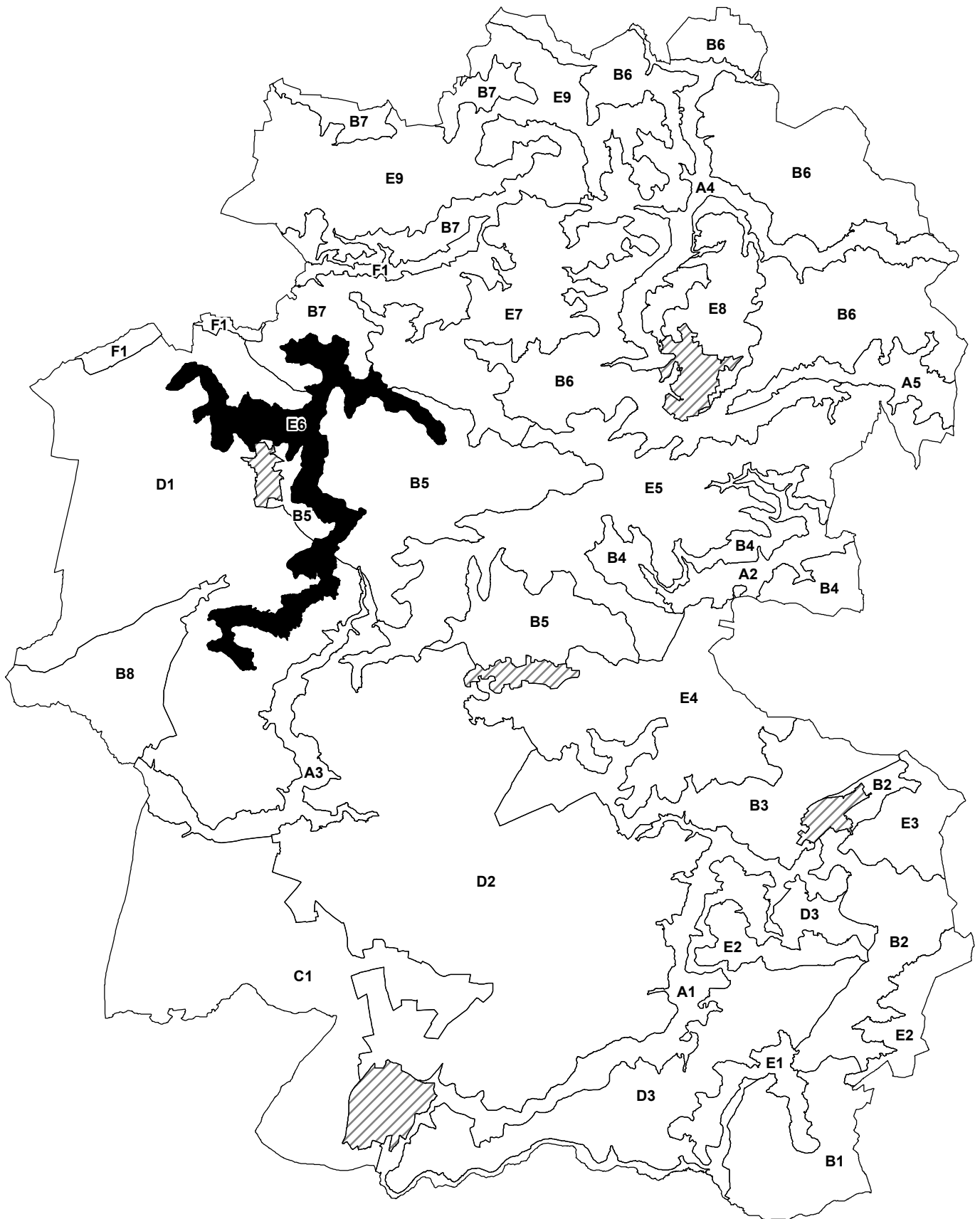
Development Considerations

- Monitor urban edge expansion of key settlements, ensuring that any development is appropriate to local historic vernacular and materials;
- This is an open, elevated and exposed landscape, with open fields often forming the horizon, and therefore attention should be paid to this, to long views/intervisibility with surrounding character areas, and to night skies when planning for change;

- Maintain existing small scale network of narrow rural roads, discouraging traffic calming measures/signage/lighting that would have an urbanising influence;



E6: NORTH PICKENHAM PLATEAU



E6: NORTH PICKENHAM PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E6.1 *North Pickenham Plateau* encircles Swaffham from the northwest to the south, creating an elevated, arable plateau backdrop to the settlement. This largely flat, open landscape contrasts with the more undulating *Wissey Settled tributary farmland* and more wooded *Swaffham Heath* character areas that bound it.

Key Characteristics

- Thick Lowestoft Till glacial deposits underlie the character area creating its elevated position.
- A largely flat landscape defined by 70-75m contours.
- Due to the elevated position affords views across the adjacent Settled tributary farmland and Heathland with Plantation landscape types are possible. Church towers within adjacent character areas are distinctive and prominent in views across the character area.
- The turbines on the ridge directly north of Swaffham are visually prominent vertical structures.
- Predominantly arable agricultural land cover, with some areas of mature mixed plantation woodland in the southern part of the character area.
- Geometric/rectilinear field pattern, of large scale, defined by low, flailed hedges, with more extensively treed hedges to the network of lanes traversing the character area.
- Former marl pits are a feature of the plateau.
- Occasional osier beds are interspersed with the field network.
- Remote character with little evidence of settlement, other than isolated farms and network of semi enclosed and enclosed rural roads and lanes.
- The character area is defined by muted colour and is strongly rural. The landscape of the character area is relatively remote and peaceful, with little movement.
- Runways, disturbed ground and industrial premises associated with the former North Pickenham Airfield are apparent in the southern part of the character area.
- The historic way marked route of the Peddars Way bisects the character area in the east, together with other waymarked routes such as Procession Lane. There is a network of footpaths and bridleways across the character area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

- E6.2 The Character Area displays broadly consistent, gently undulating topography, and a large scale, rural landscape and land cover pattern.

Physical/Natural

- E6.3 The physical geology of the character area is defined by glacial drift deposits of clay, silt, gravel and diamicton, which is reflected in the gently undulating, domed landform. Topography is defined by the 70-75 metre AOD contour.
- E6.4 Landform is gently undulating or domed, and defined primarily by the 70-75 metre contour, and land use is predominantly arable agriculture, defined by a large scaled field pattern with low, managed hedgerows often with drainage ditches.
- E6.5 Whilst localised enclosure is provided by the hedged lanes and small scale blocks of oak-ash dominated woodland, in addition to historic scots pine dominated windbreaks the landscape is relatively open and exposed in view of the relatively sparse, large scale field pattern.
- E6.6 The northern part of the character area lies within the one of the Ecological Network Mapping Project's Enhancement Area for heathland, grassland and woodland restoration, whilst the southern part of the character area, including and to the south of North Pickenham Airfield, falls within a Core Area. This is in view of the land designated as Breckland Farmland SSSI, in addition to an area of predominantly coniferous plantation woodland designated as part of Breckland Forest SSSI. Breckland Farmland SSSI, which is also a SPA, is designated as such in view of the fact that it provides a breeding ground for Stone Curlew. Breckland Forest SSSI (SPA) is designated due to the fact that it provides a breeding ground for woodlark and nightjar and supports an important assemblage of nationally rare vascular plant species and a rich invertebrate fauna.

Historic Character

- E6.7 Whilst the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has only been completed for the southern part of the character area, this has identified a number of historic landscape processes and pressures which have informed the present character of the landscape. These include heathland, 20th Century Enclosure and military land uses around North Pickenham Airfield.
- E6.8 Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk illustrates that the southern part of the character area was defined by common land and heathland at the end of the 18th Century, although this has subsequently been absorbed into both the arable field network and the plantations to the south of Swaffham which lie partly within this character area. The area was generally sparsely wooded in the late 18th Century. A more complex network of minor lanes, associated with isolated dwellings, is illustrated on the map, although these have largely been lost or otherwise absorbed into the agricultural landscape, sometimes surviving as tracks along field boundaries.
- E6.9 The landscape of the character area is a post enclosure agricultural landscape, with a predominantly geometric field pattern defined by low, managed mixed hedgerows. This has evolved into a large scale field pattern, due to agricultural intensification.

- E6.10 Localised areas of historic character and landcover survive, as at Grange Farm, with blocks of farm woodland containing veteran trees, together with densely wooded enclosed lanes. There are however few areas of designated Ancient Woodland, with the exception of a small parcel in the north eastern part of the character area.
- E6.11 The line of the former Dereham branch of the Mid Norfolk Railway, built in 1882, lies in cutting, following a north-east to south-west arc across the central part of the character area, and is perceived generally by the presence of scrub vegetation and the remaining road bridges across it.

Settlement and Built Character

- E6.12 There is little visual or physical evidence of historic settlement within this plateau landscape and it remains predominantly unsettled today, with occasional isolated farms and associated, relatively large modern farm buildings, notably Grange Farm, and a small, nucleated area of settlement at the cross roads at Edwin Farm, to the northern end of Sporle, which is largely outside the character area. The site of the former medieval village and associated moats of Great Palgrave adjoins the western edge of the character area.
- E6.13 Sporle, whilst lying largely outside the character area, displays some use of local vernacular, with red brick and clay tiles.
- E6.14 The other principal area of development within this character area are the runways and the brick built industrial premises associated with the former RAF North Pickenham Airfield.

Perceptual/Visual

- E6.15 Opportunities are created for extensive and panoramic views across the plateau due to the openness of the landscape, and intervisibility with other landscape character areas is high.
- E6.16 The character area as a whole is a generally simple landscape with a muted palette of colours, due to the predominantly arable agricultural land use, although with considerable seasonal variation depending on the crops planted. It is an essentially tamed rural landscape and is generally tranquil. It is remote in character due to its isolated settlement pattern.
- E6.17 In terms of visual unity and perceptual/visual character, this is interrupted, with overhead power lines and pylons apparent, in addition to road noise and light glare from the A47. The wind turbines adjacent to Swaffham are prominent vertical structures in views across the south of this character area.
- E6.18 In terms of use, much of the character area is a productive, working agricultural landscape. Opportunities for recreational access are however provided by a network of rights of way.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- E6.19 The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.
- Dense, well treed hedgerows concentrated on the network of rural roads and lanes, in addition to localised enclosed lanes and hedgebanks with veteran trees, which impart an historic character to these parts of the landscape and provide evidence of the former landcover pattern;
 - Mature trees (predominantly oak/ash) within isolated woodland blocks on the plateau are of significant landscape, biodiversity and amenity value;
 - The sparse isolated settlement pattern and associated remote character, which would be compromised by further new development;
 - The gently undulating landform and marl pits/clay ponds which dot the plateau;
 - Localised areas of historic character associated with historic way marked routes such as Peddars Way and Procession Lane, in addition to more intact areas of Enclosure landscape;
 - Presence of occasional osier beds interspersed within the field network providing local variation;
 - Pine wind breaks – outgrown former hedgerows composed of Scots Pine are a locally occurring feature across the plateau and impart a sense of place and historic landcover pattern.

Visual Sensitivities

- E6.20 The key visual sensitivities of this landscape relate to its elevated position and gently domed plateau landform. The landscape is exposed, due to its scale and comparatively sparse land cover. There is high intervisibility between settlements and between this and other character areas, with church towers forming a prominent element in views. Overhead power lines also form a prominent element in views, as do the wind turbines adjacent to Swaffham and the turbines and mast tower at North Pickenham.

Current State of the Landscape

- E6.21 The landscape of the character area is that of a working arable agricultural landscape, and as such its visual intactness has been affected by agricultural intensification in the early and mid 20th Century and the associated removal of field boundary hedgerows. In terms of ecology the character area is, as a whole, relatively weak, with the exception of localised woodland blocks and the ancient hedgerows to the lane network. The character area is in a generally good, managed condition.

Landscape Change

Past Change

E6.22 The primary historic force for change within this character area are as follows:

- Early-mid 20th Century agricultural intensification, with the resultant loss of field boundaries and hedgerows;
- Loss of areas of common/heathland to plantations to the south of Swaffham.
- The creation of the RAF Airfield at North Pickenham in 1943-1944 further disturbed the historic field pattern.
- The turbines on North Pickenham Airfield have had a significant visual impact on the plateau landscape.

Future Change

E6.23 Potential future change may arise from further development of tall structures which could interrupt the open character of the landscape. In addition there may be the potential for expansion of residential /industrial development, e.g. associated with Swaffham or along the A47.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective should be to conserve the peaceful and rural character of the plateau and to support opportunities to recover semi natural habitats such as heathland. Key features that should be conserved include the veteran trees and the historic scots pine shelterbelts. Enhancement opportunities predominantly relate to succession planting of new hedgerow trees and reinforcement of field boundary hedgerows, which, with appropriate landscape management, would improve the integrity of the landscape and strengthen its character. There are also opportunities to restore elements that have been lost such as areas of heathland.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

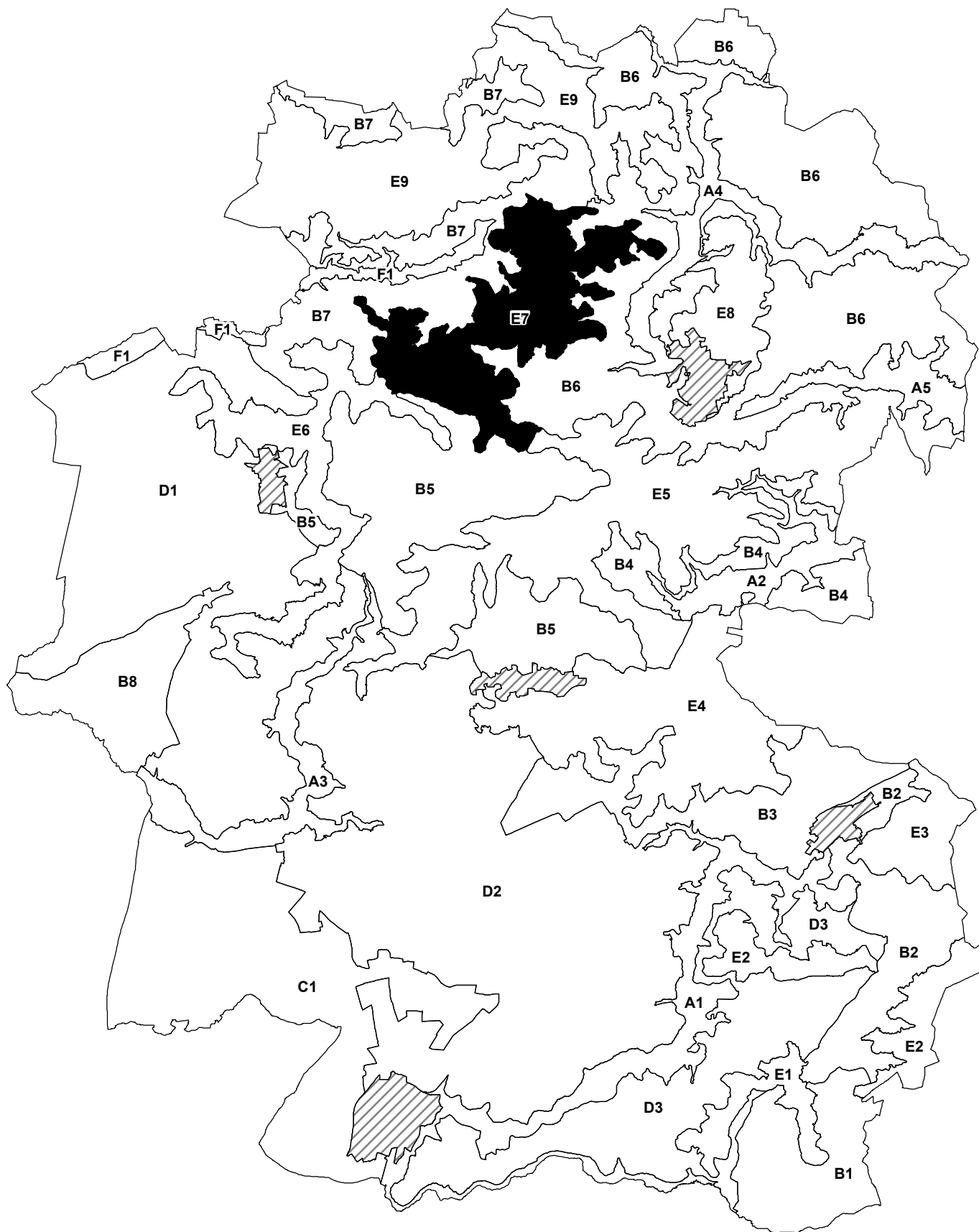
- Conserve and enhance existing network of hedgerows and mature/over mature hedgerow trees, with appropriate additional and new native planting to ensure continuity of existing tree cover where it exists;
- Create new areas of set asides to field boundaries, to enhance biodiversity of cereal field margins, subject to the provisions of agri-environment schemes;
- Consider the creation of new areas of broadleaf woodland to reinforce existing farm woodlands, providing continuity of tree cover and habitat connectivity;
- Where possible, create new areas of heathland to satisfy the requirements of the EcoNet Project, by restoring some areas of farmland or plantation to this landscape type, when plantations have reached the end of their productive life;

Development Considerations

- Maintain the historically sparse development pattern and unsettled character of the plateau;
- Monitor the expansion of the few areas of settlement, to conserve individual identity and prevent gradual urban sprawl;
- Avoid the use of bunding and dense woodland screen planting, which would be uncharacteristic elements within this landscape, in proposals for screening development;
- Maintain characteristic dark night skies and consider appropriate lighting requirements for industrial premises within the area;
- Consider the effects of further tall structures on the remote character and simple uninterrupted views;
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with surrounding character areas;
- Retain the rural character of narrow lanes and resist traffic pressures for road widening schemes/traffic calming measures, in addition to maintaining current level of low key road signage.



E7: BEESTON PLATEAU



E7: BEESTON PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E7.1 The character area is located in the north western part of the District, forming part of the elevated plateau that is distinguished from other arable plateau character areas by a network of small villages. Other less settled sections of plateau farmland which form part of the same ridge of glacial till informed plateau, and the lower lying and more undulating *Wissey Settled tributary farmland* character area form the character area boundaries, with the *Nar Valley* close to the western boundary.

Key Characteristics

- Thick deposits of glacial till underlie the character area, informing its elevated position overlooking the adjacent *Wissey Settled tributary farmland* character areas.
- A gently undulating topography ranges from 60-95m AOD making this one of the most elevated character areas within Breckland.
- There is the potential for distant views due to the elevated aspect although these are often framed due to relict historic vegetation, field boundary hedgerows, and hedgerow enclosed lanes.
- Landcover pattern is predominantly arable, although there are frequent blocks of mixed oak and ash dominated woodland.
- Mature woodland blocks, including areas of Ancient Woodland at Horse Wood (Mileham) and Honeypot Wood (Wendling) lend a sense of historical integrity to the character area.
- Field pattern is regular and medium-large in scale, often defined by mixed hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Field boundary ditches are also apparent.
- A number of historic sites, associated with the long history of settlement on the plateau, include the earthworks of Mileham Castle, the deserted medieval village at Little Bittering and the moated site of Longham Old Hall.
- Ponds are a feature e.g. at Bittering, representing past sand and gravel extraction.
- Areas of settlement are centred on cross roads (Beeston) or key road junctions, and are often linear but becoming increasingly nucleated as at Beeston.
- The airfield to the south west of Longham Hall is a locally distinctive feature.
- A network of rural roads lined by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees connects the villages, creating an enclosed and rural character.
- Opportunities for recreation are afforded by the fisheries at the deserted railway line near to Little Fransham, in addition to a number of way marked routes across the character area, including the *Nar Valley Way*.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E7.2 Glacial till deposits of Lowestoft formation overlay the chalk solid geology. The distinctive east-west watershed is reflected in the soils, which comprise chalky till and glacio fluvial drift to the western/central part of the character and chalky till and glacio fluvial drift to the east.
- E7.3 Landform is gently undulating and increasingly domed in the eastern part of the character area. Topography is defined by the 60-70m AOD contour.
- E7.4 The underlying geology has informed not only the undulating/domed landform but also the current intensive arable agricultural land use. The presence of clay deposits is reflected in the historic woodland and hedgerow vegetation which remains, with species including oak, field maple and ash.
- E7.5 Whilst none of the character area is subject to statutory designations for nature conservation or scientific interest, the local value of a number of the remaining areas of broadleaf ancient woodland is recognised through their designation as County Wildlife Site (CWS), as at Bakers Wood. Ancient Woodland is recognised, with Lowland Broadleaf Woodland, as a priority habitat within the Norfolk BAP. A number of the older Enclosure field boundary hedgerows and those associated with the network of rural lanes display a range of native species and are likely to be relatively species rich in terms of flora and fauna, in addition to imparting an element of historic character.
- E7.6 In view of the intensive arable cultivation, the entire character area falls within one of the Ecological Network Mapping Project's Enhancement Areas for woodland, grassland and heathland re-creation.

Historic Character

- E7.7 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is currently at an unpublished stage and has not been carried out for this character area. However, reference to Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk indicates a number of historic landcover elements, in particular a number of areas of common and heath, notably at Beeston Common and Longham Common, in addition to village greens with ponds as at Bradmore, and a windmill at Beeston Common. A number of minor landed estates are also shown, notably at Curd's Hall (Cad's Hall) and Dunham Hall.
- E7.8 Of these, the heaths and commons have large been lost to Enclosure and the subsequent 20th Century agricultural intensification. A number of elements of historic built character survive, notably the tight, nucleated historic settlement pattern which is related to the network of narrow rural roads and lanes. Settlements are generally centred on manor houses and prominent medieval parish churches which range from late Anglo Saxon to Decorated 14th Century. A number of manor houses and halls and associated parklands still impart fragments of a designed/planned character on localised parts of the landscape, and former parklands are apparent, particularly with the obelisk and woodland belts associated with the now demolished Curds Hall at Little Fransham.

- E7.9 The continuity of settlement is reflected in a number of Scheduled Monuments within the character area, including the moated site of Longham Old Hall, Mileham Castle and the deserted medieval village and manorial site at Little Bittering. More recently the elevated aspect of the plateau has lent itself to the siting of an airfield (Wendling Airfield) to the south west of Longham Hall.
- E7.10 Due to the drift geology the character area has in the past been exploited for mineral extraction, notably at Bittering, where a series of pools are the legacy of this activity.

Settlement and Built Character

- E7.11 The settlement pattern is low-medium density and comprises a number of linear and nucleated villages such as Beeston, Mileham, the Dunhams and the Franshams. Historically, settlements within the character area display a range of vernacular building materials including local red brick, clay ridged roof tiles and whole and knapped flint, particularly to gable ends. Churches are frequently constructed of flint and dressed stone or otherwise display lime plaster to their elevations. Broad, squat church towers are frequently apparent.
- E7.12 Later and modern infill, particularly single storey dwellings, is evident to the periphery of the settlements, in addition to wooded settlement edges. The character area is dissected by the A47 and the former railway line.

Perceptual/Visual

- E7.13 This is a landscape of relatively enclosed character, in spite of the arable land use. Lanes are often enclosed by dense mixed hedgerows and areas of ancient woodland and blocks of farm woodland impart a sense of the historic landscape character.
- E7.14 The landscape has a relatively muted colour palette in view of the arable land use, and has a peaceful rural quality, in spite of the settled character. This is due primarily to the fact that the settlement pattern is small in scale and of low-medium density, and the road network essentially defined by narrow rural lanes.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.

- Dense, mixed and well treed hedgerows in places, which refer to the historic landcover pattern and the early post Enclosure landscape.
- Areas of ancient woodland and veteran trees in field covers indicate historic landcover, as do localised areas of enclosed lanes, in addition to enhancing biodiversity interest.

Visual Sensitivities

- E7.15 The key visual sensitivities within this character area are the elevated, domed plateau landform, and the availability of distant, framed views out of the character area from localised points.

Current State of the Landscape

- E7.16 The landscape is essentially a well managed, functional arable agricultural landscape, with a reasonably intact Enclosure field boundary hedgerow system in addition to localised farm coverts and areas of ancient woodland. The landscape and historic integrity has been partially eroded by 20th Century agricultural intensification. Ecological integrity is generally relatively weak in view of the arable land use and the limited variety of habitats, although there are localised exceptions due to species rich hedgerows, blocks of ancient woodland and enclosed/green lanes.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Loss of field boundaries due to agricultural intensification
- Enclosure of heaths and commons and subsequent absorption within arable field systems
- Land drainage schemes and associated ditched field boundaries.
- Localised areas of mineral extraction.

Future Change

- E7.17 Potential future landscape change may arise through the implementation of agri-environment schemes and ongoing after use design of mineral extraction sites. The former airfield near Longham Hall may create the potential for future development, with attendant pressure on the rural road network.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective should be to conserve and enhance the existing Enclosure field boundary pattern, and area of broadleaf ancient woodland, farm coverts and other over mature tree cover. Consideration should also be given to new native tree planting and woodland creation, in addition to set asides to cereal field margins (a BAP priority habitat). Opportunities should be also explored for the sensitive restoration/after use design of mineral extraction sites.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance existing field boundary hedgerow network through appropriate management and where appropriate succession planting to reinforce and enhance and to ensure continuity of vegetation cover;

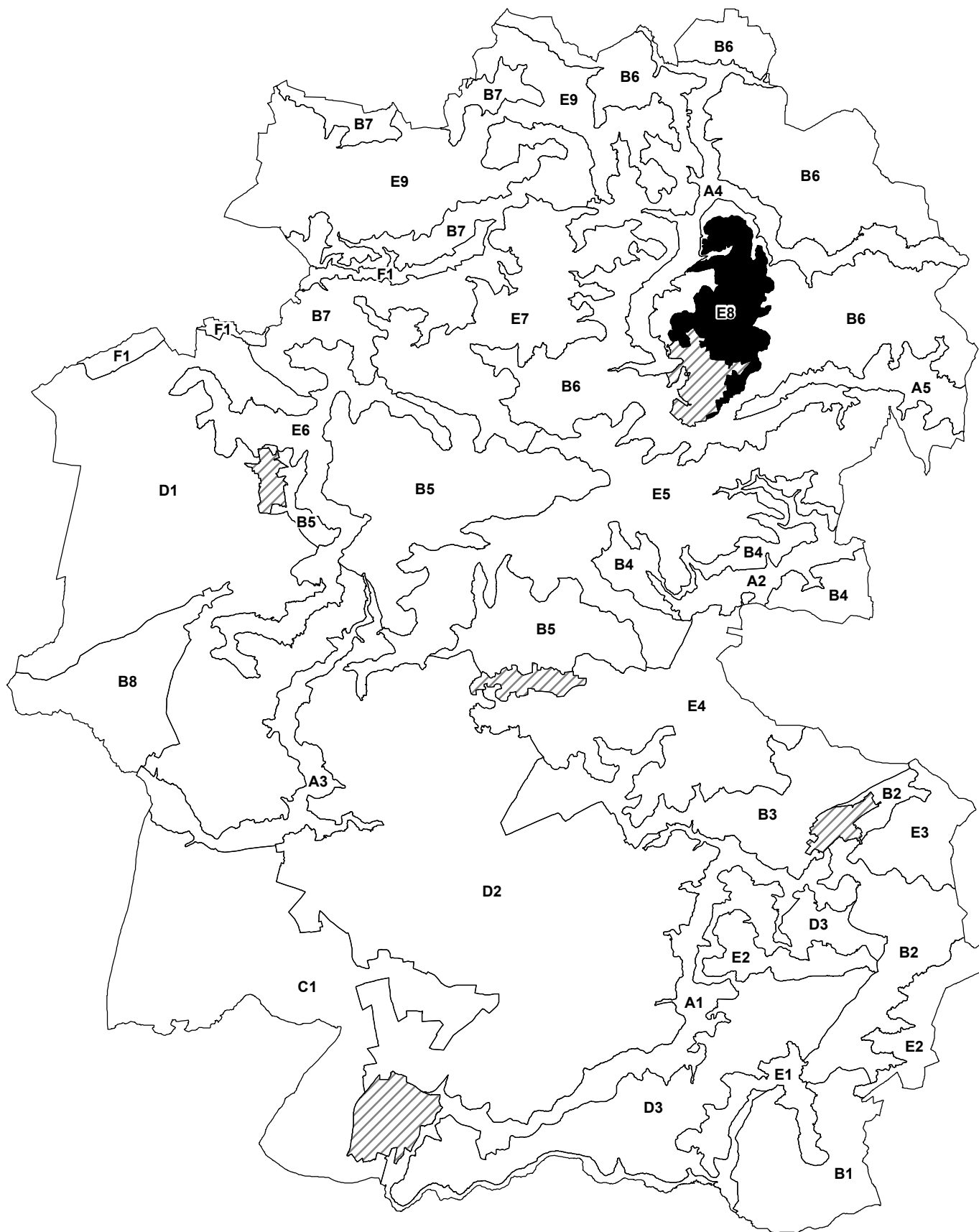
- Seek to enhance existing and ancient woodlands where appropriate through active management, including pollarding and coppicing regimes to prolong their life;
- Explore opportunities for new hedgerows and farm woodland creation to fulfil the objectives of the EcoNet Project;
- Explore opportunities for set asides and long grassland/wildflower margins to cereal field boundaries (BAP Priority Habitat);
- Conserve sites and settings of historic sites;
- Ensure appropriate and sensitive after use design and landscape management of mineral extraction sites.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the elements of historic vernacular in terms of building materials and styles within the settlements, ensuring that any new development reflects these;
- Ensure that views to locally prominent built elements, such as church towers, are conserved when planning for change;
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with surrounding character areas;
- Monitor expansion of existing settlements, ensuring that wooded settlement edges are conserved, avoiding the introduction of species/features which could have an urbanising influence;
- Maintain small scale, narrow rural road network and low key signage, resist traffic calming/signage pressures, which could alter this character.



E8: DEREHAM PLATEAU



E8: DEREHAM PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E8.1 *Dereham Plateau* occupies the elevated land surrounding Dereham in the northern part of Breckland District, being bounded by the adjacent *Wissey Settled tributary farmland* and *River Wissey* character areas.

Key Characteristics

- An elevated landscape of predominantly flat arable farmland with localised gentle undulations overlying glacial drift deposits of sand and gravel.
- Topography ranges from 45-60m A.O.D.
- Due to the elevated aspect and the landform, there are opportunities for distant views to the Wensum Valley.
- Arable agriculture is the dominant land cover. This is interspersed by only occasional small scale farm coverts and blocks of mixed plantations to the edges of the character area e.g. Quebec Wood.
- The plateau is characterised by medium-large scale, irregular arable fields, with boundaries defined both by mixed Enclosure hedgerows and hedgerow trees, some being veteran trees.
- The elevated landform has historically been exploited for military uses (three pickett-Hamilton Forts at Swanton Morley), and Swanton Morley Airfield remains in use as a military base today.
- Commons were once widespread across the Dereham plateau but due to later Enclosure are now limited to a small area at Neatherd Common on the edge of Dereham.
- Population density is low, settlement being limited to the linear village of Swanton Morley and very occasional farmsteads scattered along the rural roads which are occasionally sunken and bounded by hedgerow lined banks.
- A simple, untextured character with little variation to the flat, arable landscape.
- Access to the character area is via the rural road network, with the railway line now only used for recreational purposes.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E8.2 A gently undulating and elevated landform results from drift deposits of boulder clay, sand and gravel which overlay the chalk solid geology, with topography ranging from 40-50 metres AOD.

- E8.3 Although soils are heavy and clayey, the dominant land use is arable agriculture. Fields are small to medium sized and separated by hedgerows, hedgerow trees and ditches to aid drainage of the heavy soils. Very occasional mixed species woodland blocks and farm coverts are interspersed with the arable fields e.g. Hoe Wood associated with Hoe Hall. The margins of the arable fields are an important habitat and are recognised as a Norfolk BAP Priority Habitat.
- E8.4 The drift deposits of sand and gravel have resulted in localised exploitation for mineral extraction, notably in the north western part of the character area.
- E8.5 In view of the area's intensive arable cultivation and the absence of sites designated for nature conservation interest, the character area falls within the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project's Enhancement Area for heathland, woodland and grassland restoration.

Historic Character

- E8.6 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is currently at an unpublished stage and has not been completed for this character area at the time of writing. However other sources suggest a long and varied history of human intervention.
- E8.7 The Veteran Trees survey demonstrates a high concentration of veteran trees, often associated with hedgerow boundaries, particularly within the south of the character area immediately adjacent to Dereham. Mature and veteran trees are often associated with hedgerow boundaries.
- E8.8 Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk illustrates a number of historic elements, notably Quebec Hall and Hoe Hall. Other estate features are also apparent e.g. the obelisk associated with Quebec House. From Faden's Map it is apparent that common land was formerly extensive (e.g. Northill Common and Lettice Moor Common). Common land has largely been lost to subsequent Enclosure, although a large area of Open Access land remains at Neatherd Moor.
- E8.9 The elevated landform has historically been exploited for military uses (three pickett-Hamilton Forts at Swanton Morley), and Swanton Morley Airfield remains a military base today.

Settlement and Built Character

- E8.10 Settlement density is low, with a single village at Swanton Morley and scattered farms along the rural road network of occasionally sunken lanes. Swanton Morley was originally a linear settlement, but infill and sprawl has created a nucleated urban form. Buildings are a mixture of 18th-19th century red brick and flint with later 20th century additions being constructed from brick with suburbanising features such as paved driveways and non-native planting. Bungalows are a feature of the 20th century infill development.
- E8.11 The settlement edge of Swanton Morley is abrupt due to the modern settlement expansion and the comparatively low level of woodland cover.

Perceptual/Visual

- E8.12 The *Dereham Plateau* is a largely flat, medium to large scale arable landscape, occasionally interspersed with farmsteads or small woodland blocks. This facilitates long views of open skies. However, the occasionally sunken lanes lined by hedgerow provides a localised sense of enclosure and containment. The mature hedgerow trees contribute to a sense of historical continuity and character, which is reinforced by views across the parkland of Hoe Hall.
- E8.13 The gently undulating landscape affords long-range views across both the character area and into the adjacent *River Wensum* and *Wensum Settled tributary farmland*. Views show very little human activity, strengthening the sense of a tranquil, near vacant landscape.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

The following are judged to be the key inherent landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.

- Mature (occasionally veteran) hedgerow trees;
- Intact and continuous hedgerow boundaries to the small and medium sized arable fields;
- Ditches which form occasional field boundaries and an opportunity for enhancing ecological diversity;
- The parkland setting to Hoe Hall;
- The network of rural roads crossing the plateau including occasionally sunken lanes;

Visual Sensitivities

- E8.14 The key visual sensitivities within this character area are the large, open skies which are only occasionally interrupted by isolated farmsteads, small woodland blocks or a view of an abrupt urban edge of Swanton Morley and Dereham.

Current State of the Landscape

- E8.15 This is a managed arable landscape, with the principal elements such as hedgerow lined arable fields, drainage ditches and sunken rural roads generally in good condition. Mature and veteran hedgerow trees have been retained and create a mature character. Expansion of Swanton Morley during the latter half of the 20th century has created an occasionally abrupt and un-sympathetic urban edge which detracts from the essentially arable landscape.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Enclosure of common land;

- Agricultural intensification and attendant field boundary loss;
- Introduction of drainage channels to drain the arable fields;
- The construction of Swanton Morley Airfield;
- Infilling and expansion of Swanton Morley;

Future Change

- E8.16 The Local Plan shows sites with planning permission for residential development within Swanton Morley, demonstrating potential further expansion and infill. Potential future development may occur on Swanton Morley Airfield.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective should be to conserve and maintain the rural, tranquil character. Opportunities should be explored to replant field boundary hedgerows and to create new hedgerows to the network of rural lanes, in addition areas of set asides to cereal field margins. Enhancement of woodland, and heathland re-creation, fulfilling the objectives of the Ecological Network Mapping Project, should also be explored.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Maintain, improve and restore the biodiversity of the field boundaries through appropriate management/ set asides;
- Ensure that an appropriate programme of arboricultural management is implemented to conserve the remaining veteran hedgerow trees and to prolong their life, whilst exploring opportunities for new native hedgerow tree planting.
- Seek opportunities for enhancing woodland, heathland and grassland to meet the objectives of the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project. Consider such opportunities as part of the sensitive after use design of mineral extraction sites;
- Ensure that any new woodland planting does not detract from the overall open character of the plateau.

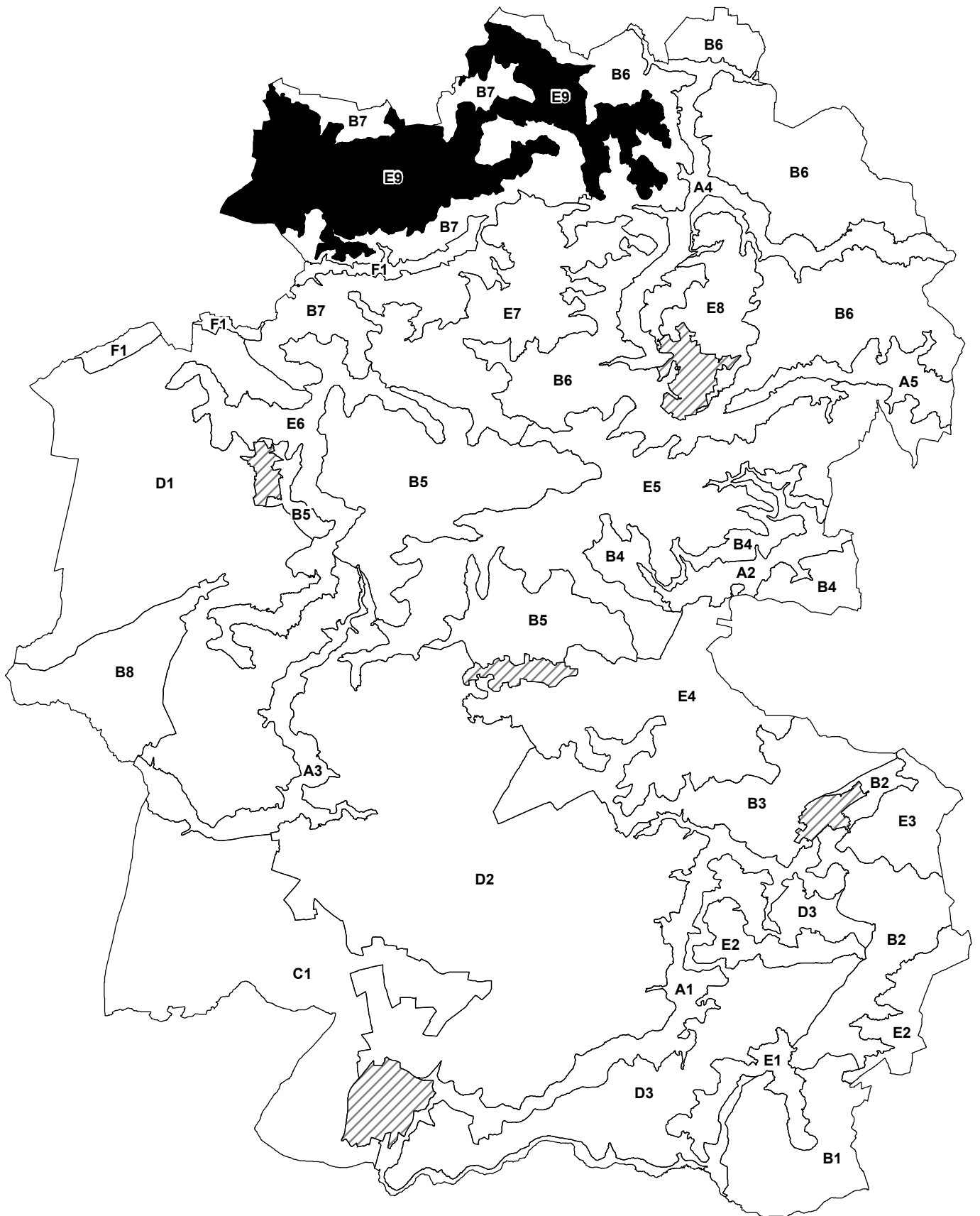
Development Considerations

- Monitor new development on the edges of Swanton Morley and Dereham ensuring that it fits with the established vernacular and uses local building materials;
- Seek opportunities to create an integrated and permeable urban edge to the settlement of Swanton Morley;
- Ensure that the rural character of the sunken lanes is maintained and does not become cluttered by lighting, signage or road markings;

- Careful attention should be paid to maintain the predominantly open skylines when planning for change;
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with surrounding character areas.



E9: WHISSONSETT PLATEAU



E9: WHISSONSETT PLATEAU

Location and Boundaries

- E9.1 *Whissonsett Plateau* occupies the elevated land (above 50m AOD) in the north western part of Breckland District, with the landscape type extending into the adjoining authorities of North Norfolk District to the north and the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk to the west. This is a gently undulating plateau bounded to the south and to the east by the network of ridges and minor tributary valleys formed by the *Nar Settled tributary farmland*.

Key Characteristics

- A medium to large-scale landscape overlying glacial drift deposits of sand and gravel.
- Landform is that of a gently undulating plateau, with topography ranging from 50-80m AOD.
- The elevated landform provides opportunities for distant views, including to elevated ridges within the adjoining Borough of Kings Lynn.
- Arable agriculture is the dominant land cover, although this is interspersed with small farm coverts and some ancient woodland (e.g. Horningtoft Wood SSSI) and blocks of mixed plantations, in addition to some paddocks.
- Veteran trees and areas of ancient woodland and common land which are also designated as County Wildlife Sites illustrate the ecological potential of the character area.
- The plateau is characterised by a medium-large scale network of predominantly arable fields, with boundaries defined both by Enclosure hedgerows with hedgerow trees and by former hedgebanks, notably to the rural lanes.
- Historic settlement is evident in the tumuli at Weasenham Lyngs, the deserted village of Godwick, manorial earthworks at Horningtoft and parklands at Rougham and Weasenham, in addition to a small part of Elmham Park.
- The large common at Brisley is a locally and historically distinctive feature.
- Settlement pattern is defined primarily by small villages of very low population density created following enclosure, such as Whissonsett, Weasenham All Saints and Brisley, in addition to scattered farmsteads. Settlement is often of nucleated formation based either on village greens or junctions of rural roads.
- Varying enclosure is provided by the field boundaries. The landscape is simple in terms of its elements, smooth in texture and essentially unified in character.
- A number of rights of way cross the character area, which afford opportunities for recreation, as do the areas of open access land within the character area, notably at Brisley Green, Harpers Green and Weasenham Lyngs.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- E9.2 Glacial till deposits and drift materials i.e. sand and gravel overlay the chalk solid geology and have created a gently undulating, elevated landform. Topography ranges from 50-80m AOD across the character area.
- E9.3 Arable agriculture is the predominant landcover, occasionally interspersed with small blocks of mixed farm woodland/coverts, in addition to larger blocks of plantation woodland as at Weasenham Lyngs. In addition there are scattered areas of grazing pasture, primarily associated with paddocks.
- E9.4 Field pattern is geometric and composed of medium-large scale fields bounded by mixed Enclosure hedgerows or by lines of oaks marking former hedgerows.
- E9.5 A number of sites are protected by statutory and local nature conservation designations, illustrating the ecological potential of parts of the character area. The ancient woodland at Horningtoft Wood is designated as a SSSI, in view of its importance as a relatively rare and species rich coppice with standard maple-ash-limewood dominated woodland, which supports varied groundflora including locally scarce species such as broad leaved helleborine and greater butterfly orchid. At the local level, a number of small areas of ancient woodland including farm woodland, coverts and groves are designated as County Wildlife Sites in view of their botanical and biological interest.
- E9.6 The character area lies within the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project's Enhancement Area for heathland, grassland and woodland re-creation. A number of Norfolk BAP Priority Habitats are represented within the character area, e.g. ancient woodland and cereal field margins.

Historic Character

- E9.7 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has only been completed for small parts of the character area. This however indicates a number of historic processes which have influenced the present landscape character, including piecemeal Enclosure by agreement. This has informed the subsequent landcover pattern of Enclosure field boundary hedgerows. The field survey revealed some instances of boundary loss to agricultural intensification, evident in the rows of oaks marking former hedgerows in places.
- E9.8 Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk identifies a number of halls and associated minor parklands within the character area, such as Rougham and Weasenham, together with the historic village of Godwick which is described as 'in ruins' by 1797. The map illustrates a small scale pattern of predominantly linear rural settlements. Also identified are areas of heathland and common at Weasenham, Brisley and Wellingham Heath, together with relatively extensive areas of woodland around Tittleshall.
- E9.9 Many of the commons and heaths have been lost to later agricultural Enclosure, but the large common at Brisley Green is extant, and is a locally significant element of

historic landcover. In addition a number of the ancient woodlands around Tittleshall remain, notably Church Wood and Sandholes Wood.

- E9.10 The settlement pattern identified by Faden, of nucleated and occasionally linear villages associated with village greens, manorial groupings or the rural road network largely remains today. Population density has significantly reduced following Enclosure and partly due to earlier settlement abandonment e.g. at Godwick.

Settlement and Built Character

- E9.11 Settlement is predominantly of nucleated formation, represented in the compact villages of Whissonsett, Weasenham All Saints and smaller hamlets such as Brisley. Areas of settlement are either associated with village greens as at Brisley, key junctions of rural roads or clustered around manorial halls and parklands as at Weasenham and Rougham.
- E9.12 A wide variety of vernacular character in terms of style and building materials is displayed by the settlements within this character area. Building materials include red brick, colour washed render and dressed stone, particularly to settlement cores, although a more modern palette and stylistic range is sometimes apparent to the edges of settlements.

Perceptual and Visual

- E9.13 The *Whissonsett Plateau* is a gently undulating medium to large scale arable landscape with some enclosure created by field boundary hedgerows and localised woodland blocks, in the form of farm coverts and mixed plantations. The gently undulating land and elevated aspect creates opportunities for distant views and intervisibility with other landscapes, particularly to the west.
- E9.14 A combination of simple landscape elements, generally consistent land use and smooth texture creates a landscape of unified character.
- E9.15 Due to the low density, nucleated settlement pattern and the narrow rural road network the landscape of the *Whissonsett Plateau* is characterised by a peaceful, rural quality.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- E9.16 The following are judged to be the key landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.
- The unenclosed village green at Brisley which indicates the historic evolution of the settlement and is a rare survival of a large area of common land.
 - Earthworks represented by a number of Scheduled Monuments e.g. the tumuli at Weasenham Lyngs and the former medieval village of Godwick, which illustrate the continuity of human intervention and settlement.

- Hedgerow oaks and field oaks defining former hedgerows, which represent the Enclosure landscape pattern.

Visual Sensitivities

- E9.17 Key visual sensitivities are the elevated landform and the large scale, relatively open arable field pattern. Long views are available and there is some intervisibility with elevated ridges within the adjoining Borough of Kings Lynn.

Current State of the Landscape

- E9.18 This is a visually unified and coherent landscape defined by its elevated plateau landform and the predominantly arable landcover and Enclosure field pattern. In spite of some areas of boundary loss, the landcover pattern is relatively intact and includes farm coverts and a number of small blocks of ancient woodland.
- E9.19 Generally the character area is relatively weak in terms of biodiversity and ecological integrity, in view of the intensive arable cultivation. However localised areas of species diverse habitat exist such as Horningtoft Wood, the importance of which is recognised through the SSSI designation.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Loss of commons and heathland through Enclosure and later agricultural intensification;
- Afforestation on areas of former common and heath (e.g. Weasenham Lyngs);
- Loss of woodland cover to agricultural intensification;
- Changes to population density due to 17th Century village abandonment/retreat (e.g. Godwick) and Enclosure;
- Localised areas of hedgerow boundary loss due to agricultural intensification.

Future Change

- E9.20 Potential future change may arise through implementation of agri-environment schemes. Damage to/loss of field boundary hedgerow trees through ploughing too close to field margins may also be an issue. There may be potential pressure for farm diversification and associated development, e.g. barn conversions.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective should be to conserve the arable landuse and the remaining areas of ancient woodland, historic green and common. Existing recreational provision, in the form of rights of way and open access land should be conserved and where possible enhanced. Opportunities should be explored to enhance field boundary margins.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

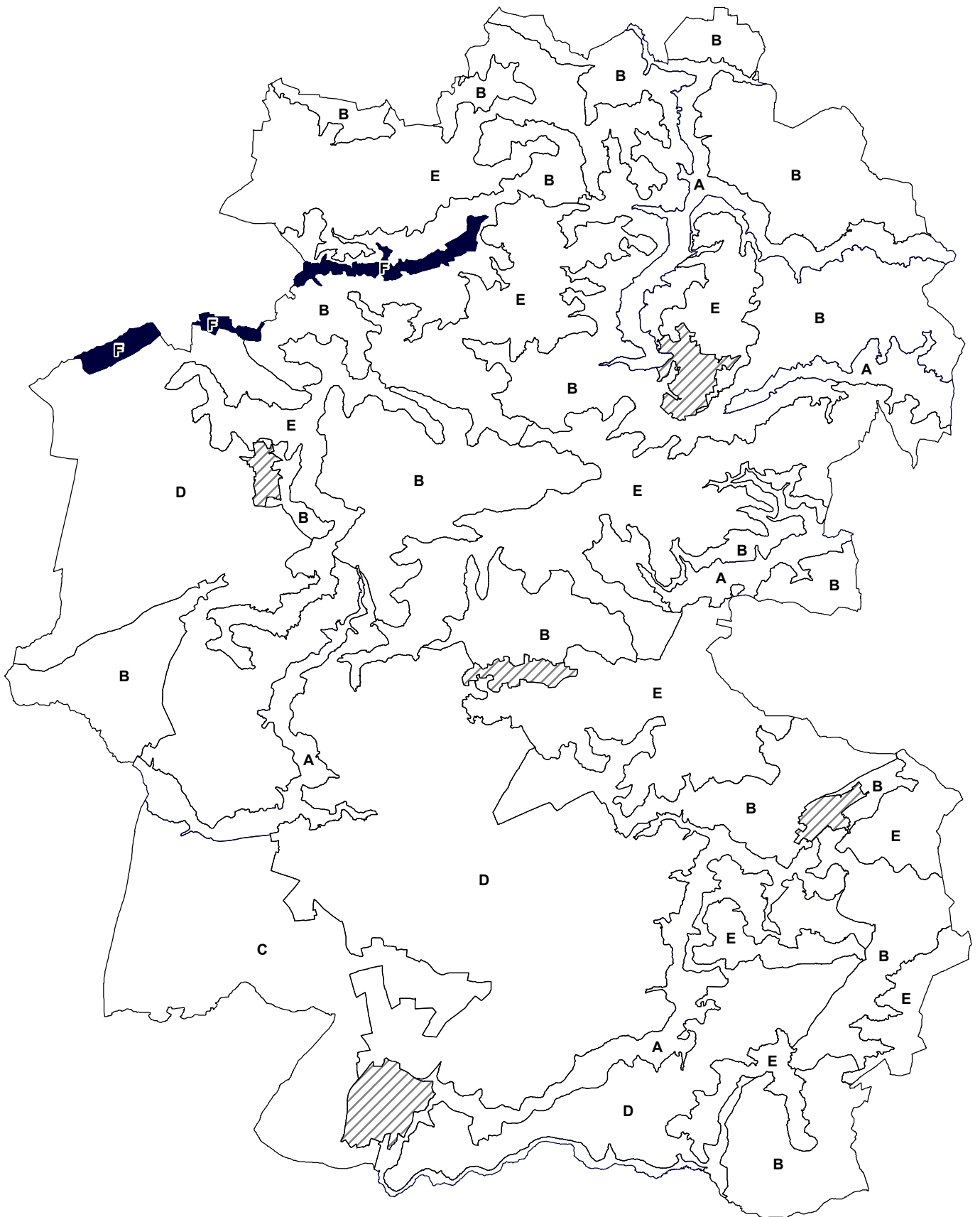
- Conserve existing arable landcover, whilst seeking opportunities to enhance field boundary hedgerows through agri-environment schemes;
- Subject to the provisions of agri-environment schemes seek opportunities to enhance field boundary margins and biodiversity value through long grassland set asides;
- Maintain the existing thorn dominated Enclosure hedgerow network, gapping up incomplete hedgerows where appropriate with a native species mix to ensure the network continues to provide a unity across the landscape as well as providing wildlife habitats;
- Conserve existing hedgerow oaks and field oaks through appropriate arboricultural management;
- Conserve the existing areas of coppices with standard ancient woodland through active and appropriate management;
- Conserve the rural character of the small scale road/lane network;
- Conserve the sites and settings of historic sites.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the local vernacular e.g. red brick and colour washed render and ensure that any new development is of a high quality design which responds to local materials and styles;
- Conserve scattered distribution of small scale farmsteads, ensuring that new development is contained within defined settlement boundaries;
- In planning for future change, consider the scale of potential development and its effects on long views, skylines and intervisibility with adjoining landscapes.



F. CHALK RIVER VALLEYS



LANDSCAPE TYPE F: CHALK RIVER VALLEY

FI The Chalk River Valley landscape type constitutes a pastoral landscape associated with the meandering course of fast flowing, shallow chalk rivers which rise from springs, as distinct from the tributary fed rivers which occur elsewhere within Breckland. The landscape type displays a rich range of wetland vegetation, in addition to woodlands, which are often associated with parkland in the valley floor. Within Breckland District. There is one river of this type in Breckland District – the River Nar.

Key Characteristics

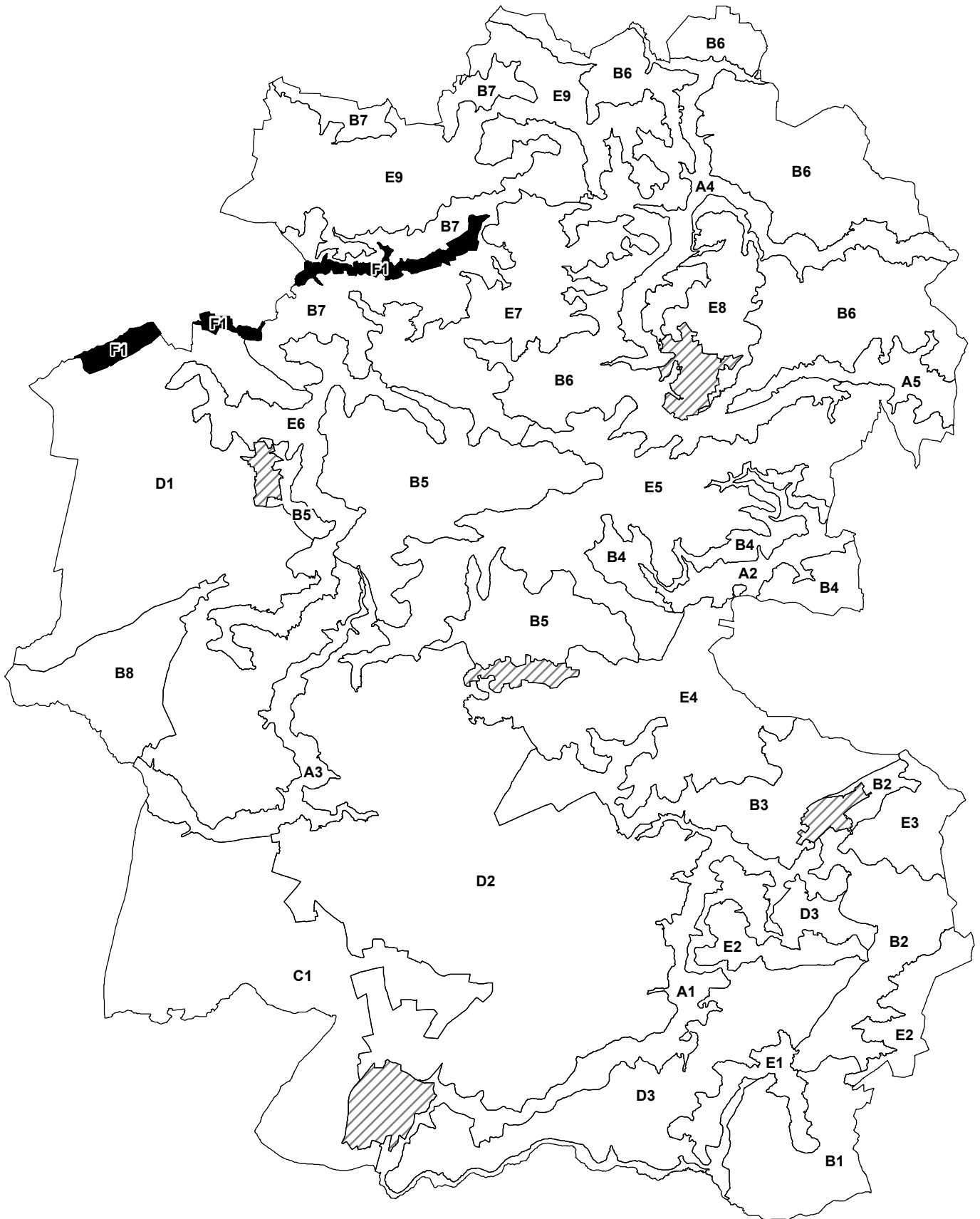
- Rivers fed by springs carve a meandering course through the underlying chalk bedrock overlain by alluvial deposits and sand and gravel drift material and typical brown soils.
- Valleys are typically of narrow formation and profile, with the valley crests generally not exceeding 50 metres AOD.
- Containment is often provided both by landform and by vegetation including hedgerows and woodlands, which are often associated with parkland.
- Grazing pasture is interspersed with areas of parkland, wet meadow and wet woodland.
- The sandy soils found on the valley sides are evident in remnant blocks of heathland.
- Wooded skylines often form a distinctive element.
- A rich range of riparian habitats is supported by the chalk river landscape type, and this is recognised both in the nature conservation designations and by the definition of chalk rivers as a Core Area within the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.
- Evidence of human intervention is frequently apparent in the river valleys, e.g. weirs and mills.
- Recreational access and way marked routes are far more evident than in landscape type A: River Valleys.
- Common land was historically an extensive land cover, although this has been significantly diminished due to Enclosure.
- Settlement density is generally low, with settlement confined to compact nucleated villages to the valley sides and isolated halls and farmsteads.

Landscape Type F: Chalk River Valley

Character Area

FI River Nar Valley

FI: RIVER NAR



FI: RIVER NAR

Location and Boundaries

FI.1 The *River Nar* is located in the western part of Breckland District and is comprised of the floodplain and valley sides of the River Nar. The Nar is fed by springs rising from the chalk rather than the tributaries which feed the other Breckland rivers, and is therefore classified as a separate landscape type. The south westerly draining Nar rises from springs to the south west of Mileham and flows westwards into the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

Key Characteristics

- The River Nar arises from chalk springs follows a meandering course through the underlying chalk bedrock and later glacial drift, with alluvial deposits along the floodplain.
- A narrow floodplain with valley sides rising to approximately 50m, with this contour approximately defining the crests of the valley sides.
- Visual containment is provided by the valley landform and landcover such as hedgerows and woodland associated with parkland.
- Grazing pasture line the valley floor interspersed with areas of parkland, wet meadow and wet woodland.
- Small remnant blocks of heathland e.g. Newton Heath occupy areas of sandy soils on the valley sides.
- Woodland associated with Lexham Hall, West Lexham Hall and Narborough Hall create a wooded character, views to the wooded skyline being distinctive.
- The course of the River Nar and sections of the floodplain are designated as SSSI due to its value as a chalk river habitat.
- Evidence of human interaction with the river is evident along the river course in the form of weirs e.g. Lexham Hall and mills e.g. at Narborough.
- The Nar Valley Way is an important recreational feature providing access to the river and connectivity, via the rights of way network with surrounding landscapes.
- Historically common land was extensive, but due to enclosure and afforestation, Litcham Common is the only surviving example.
- Settlement density is low being characterised by isolated Halls and farm houses, with small villages generally set above flood level at the valley crest as at East Lexham, West Lexham, South Acre and Castle Acre (the latter in King's Lynn and West Norfolk). At Litcham settlement spreads onto the valley floor.

- Opportunities for recreation and access are facilitated by the Nar Valley Way which intersects the centre of the character area, in addition to a network of rights of way.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Physical/Natural

- FI.2 The River Nar rises as a spring in the Upper Chalk resulting in distinctive chalk river characteristics. The river course is narrow and displays a wide range of natural physical features including riffles, pools, gravel beds and meanders as it flows westwards across the landscape. The entire course of the River Nar is designated as a SSSI, in view of its quality as a chalk river habitat encompassing areas of wet woodland, pasture and meadows on the valley floor.
- FI.3 Land adjacent to the river course is seasonally flooded, pastoral land. This is the dominant land use of the character area, although extensive wet woodland and carr woodland along the river course and further woodland associated with Lexham Hall and Narborough Hall is also characteristic. Although much of the woodland is native broadleaf, small plantation blocks and areas of coniferous planting are present. The fields are variable in size and shape. Fields on the valley floor are characterised by a geometric pattern of field drains and bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Areas of unmanaged scrub remain within and on the edges of some fields.
- FI.4 The sandy soils have in the past supported extensive heathland, although this is now limited to small, isolated blocks as at Newton Heath and Litcham Common. The importance of heathland is recognised by the Norfolk EcoNet Mapping Project which classifies the valley sides as being a 'heathland, grassland and woodland' enhancement area. The valley floor is a chalk stream 'core area'.

Historic Character

- FI.5 Two Scheduled Monuments are located within the character area; Camphill, a military site at Narborough and a disc barrow at Litcham. The weirs, bridging points and settlement along the course of the River Nar further signify the history of human activity within the character area.
- FI.6 Faden's Map demonstrates that in 1797 the valley was already settled and contained two Halls with extensive associated parkland. The estate character is still evident, parkland woodland, avenues of trees and driveways remain as features of the landscape. Both Halls appear in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
- FI.7 Common land and heathland was once extensive throughout the character area, although this has now been significantly reduced by both enclosure of and conversion to woodland e.g. a large area of Beeston common has become 'The Warren Woodland'.

Settlement and Built Character

- FI.8 Settlement density is low being characterised by isolated Halls and farm houses scattered along rural roads on the valley sides. For the most part settlement is at the edge of the valley on the boundary with the adjacent character area. At Litcham

and West Lexham settlement spreads onto the valley floor. Litcham displays examples of brick, timber framed and flint buildings, with 20th century development. On the opposite bank of the river is Castle Acre, a small town, within the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. The town is a prominent feature of the valley established at the crossing point of the Nar and Peddar's Way. Landmark buildings include the Priory and Motte and Bailey Castle.

Perceptual and Visual

- FI.9 This is a varied landscape which is essentially unified by the valley landform and consistent land use of pasture and woodland. The well managed and designed parkland landscapes of Lexham Hall and Narford Hall are an important and distinctive element of the valley; their influence is extended through blocks of mixed estate plantation woodland. The valley has a strong, rural character.
- FI.10 Views are generally contained by landform and by woodland vegetation, either as plantation woodland or field boundary hedgerows. The skyline is characteristically wooded, although views to landmark features such as Litcham church tower are also a feature.

EVALUATION

Positive Landscape Features of Significance and Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- FI.11 The following are judged to be the key landscape sensitivities which are fundamental to the character of the landscape.
- The grazed pastures and meadow on the valley floor;
 - The chalk river and associated biodiversity interest
 - Riffles, pools and meanders associated with the natural river course;
 - Wet woodland and carrs on the banks of the river;
 - The remnant areas of heathland at Litcham Common and Newton Heath;
 - The designed, historic settings of Lexham Hall and Narford Hall;
 - Views to a generally wooded skyline punctuated by views of Litcham and West Lexham church towers.
 - The Nar Valley Way which has a high recreational value;
 - The low settlement density and tranquil character.

Visual Sensitivities

- FI.12 The containment provided by the landform and land covers allow for only occasional longer views. The glimpsed views and setting of landmark features such as the church towers at Litcham and West Lexham are sensitive as are the views to an

undeveloped wooded skyline. Views of the designed, historic landscapes of Lexham and Narford Hall are a further important feature.

Current State of the Landscape

FI.13 This is traditional chalk valley landscape that is still managed by active grazing. It is visually unified and coherent landscape defined by the consistent land use and valley landform. The main landscape elements of pastoral fields and woodland are in good condition, although some areas of colonising scrub creates localised areas of more marginal character.

FI.14 The wet woodland, grazing pasture and wet meadows, heathland, and chalk river course form a range of diverse habitats. The SSSI designation demonstrates the ecological richness of the landscape.

Landscape Change

Past Change

- Loss of commons and heathland through Enclosure and woodland planting;
- Introduction of plantation and coniferous species;
- Expansion of settlement at Litcham.

Future Change

FI.15 The Local Plan does not highlight any future change within the character area, although development pressure is evidenced by recent expansion at Litcham. Potential future change may arise through implementation of chalk stream conservation and heathland enhancement and expansion strategies through the Norfolk Ecological Mapping Project.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The overall management objective should be to conserve the rural character of the *Nar Chalk Valley*, with its areas of parkland and commons, and support opportunities to enhance natural floodplain habitats and maintain water flows and high water quality of the chalk rivers.

Guidelines

Landscape Management

- Conserve existing wet woodland adjacent to the River Nar;
- Conserve and manage areas of pasture and meadow along the valley floor;
- Conserve and enhance remnant areas of heathland and commons and seek opportunities to expand this habitat;
- Conserve and enhance the parkland landscapes associated with the Halls;

- Safeguard water flows and water quality in the chalk river to conserve the habitats value of the river and maintain the pastoral character of the valley floor and floodplain habitats.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the distinctive built features of the valley such as the mills, bridges and weirs;
- Conserve the sparsely settled character of small villages and hamlets. Maintain the small scale villages and seek to avoid further expansion onto the valley floor;
- Conserve the setting of landmark features such as church towers;
- Ensure that any development reflects the local vernacular;
- Conserve the rural lanes and road network;
- Conserve the undeveloped valley crests.



8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1. The assessment indicates that different landscapes have different opportunities for conservation, enhancement and restoration. The overall management objectives for each type are expressed as follows:

- **Conserve** i.e. the main objective is to conserve the existing character of the landscape;
- **Enhance** i.e. there are opportunities to enhance existing character through introduction of new elements and features or different management of existing ones;
- **Restore/re-create** i.e. there are opportunities to restore/re-create some key aspects of the landscape, or create new landscapes through landscape restoration.

8.2. The following gives a brief summary of the management objectives for each landscape type:

A: River Valleys

8.3. The primary objective should be to conserve the range of pastoral and riparian habitats, in addition to exploring opportunities for landscape enhancement, particularly as part of the after use design of mineral extraction sites within the valleys.

B: Settled tributary farmland

8.4. The primary objective should be to enhance the tributaries which thread through the arable farmland, both to enhance biodiversity and to restore the sense of connection to the adjacent river valleys. The settled rural character, which contrasts with the adjacent arable plateaux, should be conserved.

C: Brecks - Plantation

8.5. The primary objective should be to conserve the existing balance of structural woodland cover and the sense of physical/visual containment, in addition to exploring opportunities for further habitat creation, such as heathland restoration.

D: Brecks - Heathland with Plantation

8.6. The primary objective should be to conserve and enhance existing areas of heathland and calcareous grassland, and wetland habitats such as the meres, in addition to remaining historic parkland/estate landscape features. Opportunities should also be sought to enhance the agricultural landscapes through habitat re-creation, e.g. heathland.

E: Plateau Farmlands

8.7. The primary objective should be to enhance the arable landscape through restoration and reinforcement of hedgerow boundaries and exploration of

opportunities to re introduce habitats such as heathland and grassland, to meet the objectives of the Norfolk Ecological Network Mapping Project.

F: Chalk River Valley

- 8.8. The primary objective should be to conserve the chalk watercourses and associated wetland vegetation, in addition to exploring opportunities to enhance natural floodplain habitats.

APPENDIX I
Field Survey Form

**BRECKLAND DISTRICT LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT: LANDSCAPE TYPE
FIELD SURVEY SHEET**

Photograph Nos: _____
 Location: _____ Date: _____
 Direction of view: _____ Time: _____
 OS Grid Reference: _____ Weather: _____

DRAFT LANDSCAPE TYPE _____

DRAFT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: _____

Keywords describing the landscape:

**Location and
Boundaries**

Physical Features

LAND

<input type="checkbox"/> Flat	<input type="checkbox"/> Cliff/precipice	<input type="checkbox"/> Escarpment	<input type="checkbox"/> Broad valley
<input type="checkbox"/> Rolling	<input type="checkbox"/> Rock outcrops	<input type="checkbox"/> Ridge	<input type="checkbox"/> Narrow valley
<input type="checkbox"/> Undulating	<input type="checkbox"/> Plain	<input type="checkbox"/> Knoll	<input type="checkbox"/> Deep gorge
<input type="checkbox"/> Steep slopes	<input type="checkbox"/> Plateau	<input type="checkbox"/> Basin	<input type="checkbox"/> Gully
<input type="checkbox"/> Gentle slopes			

WATER

<input type="checkbox"/> River (size.....)	<input type="checkbox"/> Streams	<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage channels	<input type="checkbox"/> Lake
<input type="checkbox"/> River Meanders	<input type="checkbox"/> Broads	<input type="checkbox"/> Flooded gravel pits	<input type="checkbox"/> Pond

LAND USE CONSULTANTS

Land Cover

Land Use							
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farmland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forestry
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parkland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic Parkland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leisure/Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Vegetation Cover							
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amenity grassland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hedgerow trees
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perm. pasture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Common	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small farm woods	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hedgerows
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pasture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parkland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shelterbelts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scrub/bracken
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ley/improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avenues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Copses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heath/ Moor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rough grazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conif woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scattered Trees	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wetland/Aquatics
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wet Meadow	<input type="checkbox"/>	Decid. woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orchards	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Landscape Elements/Features
 Subtle
 Evident
 Conspicuous

<input type="checkbox"/>	Motorway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Farm buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fortifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nucleated settlement.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dual Carriageway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manor/Parkland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Isolated Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	Linear settlement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	Landmark Building	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dispersed settlement.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Lanes Track	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hill forts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial workings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sunken Lane	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighthouse/beacon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Round towered churches
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bridleway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wind turbines	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moats	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Footpath	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mast/poles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tumuli	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Railway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ridge and furrow	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Field Patterns

<input type="checkbox"/>	Banks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence - rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geometric	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ditches	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence – ‘urban’	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sinuous	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walls - rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hedge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irregular	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large

Wall – ‘urban’

Hedgerow trees

Regular

Other

Perception

VIEWS	distant	framed	intermittent	panoramic	corridor
SCALE	intimate	small	medium	large	
ENCLOSURE	confined	enclosed	semi-enclosed	open	exposed
VARIETY	complex	varied	simple	uniform	
TEXTURE	smooth	textured	rough	very rough	
COLOUR	monochrome	muted	colourful	garish	
MOVEMENT	remote	vacant	peaceful	active	
UNITY	unified	interrupted	fragmented	chaotic	
NATURALNES	undisturbed	restrained	tamed	disturbed	

S

Settlement within the landscape

Size _____

Pattern _____

Density _____

Age, style and materials _____

Relationship to the landscape _____

Settlement edge character _____

EVALUATION

POSITIVE LANDSCAPE FEATURES OF SIGNIFICANCE

Feature	Why it is significant

INHERENT LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY (Consider: Positive features of key significance and sensitivity of the area as a whole, i.e. function & relationship to other areas and sense of place/identity)

Key Landscape Character Sensitivities

Key Visual Sensitivities

STRENGTH OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Consider: Representativeness in relation to landscape type & other key characteristics (positive/negative) that influence sense of place/identity).

CONDITION OF THE LANDSCAPE/CURRENT STATE OF THE LANDSCAPE
(Consider the functional, visual and ecological perspectives)

KEY ISSUES/VISIBLE FORCES FOR CHANGE

Past

Present and

future_____

DETRACTING FEATURES

<input type="checkbox"/>	Pylons	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence – ‘urban’	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Road signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paddocks	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Degraded hedgerow	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncharacteristic building materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wall – ‘urban’	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large scale industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Conserve_____

Enhance_____

Create_____

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

Riverine Habitats
Renew/create_____

Enhance_____

LAND USE CONSULTANTS

Conserve _____

Agriculture
Renew/create _____

Enhance _____

Conserve _____

Field patterns/boundaries
Renew/create _____

Enhance _____

Conserve _____

Trees and woodland
Renew/create _____

Enhance _____

Conserve _____

Buildings/settlement/development
Renew/create _____

Enhance _____

Conserve _____

Mineral workings/reclamation

Renew/create _____

Enhance _____

Conserve _____

Transport corridors/linear features

Renew/create _____

Enhance _____

Conserve _____

APPENDIX 2
Stakeholder Consultation Report

**BRECKLAND LANDSCAPE
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
REPORT OF
STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS
JAN 18th 2007**

**Prepared for
Breckland District Council
by
Land Use Consultants**

January 2007

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I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1. Breckland District Council commissioned Land Use Consultants (LUC), in 2006, to undertake a landscape character assessment (LCA) for the whole District. The study builds upon the 'Wind Turbine Development, Landscape Assessment, Evaluation and Guidance' undertaken for Breckland Council and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council which defined landscape types for the two unitary authorities.
- I.2. Effective stakeholder consultation is key to the process and success of landscape character assessment, ensuring a wide range of views and values are represented. For the Breckland LCA, two participatory workshops were held on January 18th 2007 in Breckland District Council Chambers, with the attendance of 29 participants attending the first workshop and 7 participants attending the second. (see Appendix I for full list).
- I.3. The consultation technique aimed to achieve active participation and to generate information appropriate to inform the district-wide landscape character assessment. The overall aim being to allow people who live and work in the district to understand and contribute to the process of LCA, rather than simply being consulted on the final report.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- I.4. The objectives of the stakeholder consultation were to:
 - explain the process of LCA and relevance to Breckland – why it is being undertaken;
 - validate the characterisation map – boundaries, names, key characteristics, experience;
 - understand perceptions of what people value as important/special about Breckland District and why;
 - gather information on landscape change and input/validation of the landscape strategies.

WORKSHOP EXERCISES

- I.5. In addition to a presentation from consultants, two workshop exercises were held. Information on each is set out below:

Exercise 1: Carousel: What Is Special About The Breckland Landscape and Why?

- I.6. The purpose of this exercise was to determine "what is special" about various aspects of the landscape; what needs to be conserved and why. The information will be used to add local perspectives on the landscape to the report.

Exercise 2: Testing The Character Maps And Descriptions

- I.7. The purpose of this exercise was to seek participants' opinions on the landscape character areas identified by the assessment; the boundaries, the area names/titles and the key characteristics, the perceptual experience of the landscape and management strategies.

Note that the format of the two sessions was slightly different, the second session having a lower number of participants concentrated on Exercise 2 considering those areas with which participants were most familiar.

2. EXERCISE 1 WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE BRECKLAND LANDSCAPE AND WHY?

2.1. The following tables show the features of the Breckland landscape which participants consider to be important and why. These comments were prompted by the following headings:

- Views and Landmarks
- Heritage/Historic Places
- Access/ Recreation Spaces/Areas
- Natural Landscape/Biodiversity
- Market Towns, Villages and Built Character

VIEWS AND LANDMARKS

What is important	Why is it important
Churches e.g. Views to Hockering Church	One thing to see in flat landscape-unique in skyline
Towns/Village greens	Large number and in good condition
Village signs	Prevalent in the area but all different
Trees/Hedgerows	Need to replace trees. New developments to include more trees and hedgerows.
Wind turbines	Now a feature in Breckland but is this a good thing?
Wind mills	
Views from relief over lower ground	To get a distant view and a sense of space
Small scale views e.g. Hockering Wood	
Views of wilderness e.g. wetland and heathland	Provides contrast
Pine lines-twisted	Distinctive
Absence of pylons	They are not prominent

What is important	Why is it important
Traditional field patterns	
Views through 20 th century plantations	Drives through forest
Rivers and large lakes	
Corn exchanges	Distinctive to Breckland
Country estates	
Big skies-impressive sunsets	Strong sense of place
Unlit villages	Dark skies
Cart shed-open	Historic value
Gressenhall work house	Distinctive land mark of historical importance
Views to Dereham church from the High Street	Distinctive view
View from the top of Buckenham across to Wendling	Long distance views
Harling Drove	Good walking route-needs re-opening
Views down the Ouse and Thet river valleys	

HERITAGE/HISTORIC PLACES

What is important	Why is it important
Churches	Varied styles
Use of local materials	
Country estates	Evidence of historic/economic growth. Feudalism and industrialism
Gressenhall Work House	Historic record
Dispersed rural	

What is important	Why is it important
settlement	
Bylaugh Hall	
Thetford Priory Nunnery	Religious history
Castle Hill	Iron age/Norman 2 nd largest man made mound
Rabbit warrens-warren lodge	Historic evidence of agriculture
Historic routes e.g. Peddars Way, Ickniel Way	
Boadicea camps	Historic settlements
Castle mound, Thetford	Historic
Battle grounds	Historic use continuing
Historic orchards	Traditional land use
Grimes Grave	Flint
Relict features such as pill boxes	Clues to the past

ACCESS/ RECREATION SPACES/AREAS

What is important	Why is it important
Thetford Forest	Lots of things to do, wilderness, walking, aerial assault course
Peddars Way	Long history
Formal sports grounds	Need to be more-Dereham area deficient
Access to water	Limited-more needed
Landed estates	Sense of history
Battle Grounds	Sense of history
Golf courses	Fitness/exercise/openness
River valleys and associated long distance	Walking opportunities

What is important	Why is it important
paths	
Former railway line (MNR)	
Sandy soil activities e.g. horse riding	
Lynford Lakes	
Quiet Roads	
Need for 'breathing space' around Dereham	
Do certain areas need to have restricted access- to protect wildlife etc?	
Interaction between town and countryside- not currently good enough	'breathing spaces'

NATURAL LANDSCAPE

What is important	Why is it important
Open space	Breathe/fresh air
'Island quality' of whole district	Isolated, a place apart/ recharges batteries
Heathland/Ridge landform as a result of wind blow	Unique feature with mix of heath and chalk grassland. See Brecks File – part of Brecks Partnership for more info (detailed study undertaken)
Woodlands and forests	Very serene- no noise. Opportunities for walking/access
Pingo trail	
Biggest area of windblown sand and pingos in the country	Threatened by Thetford growth point. Change not in sympathy
Breckland Heaths	Unique feature. Note that large heathland areas are important e.g. STANTA but also very important in

What is important	Why is it important
	landscape terms are the small islands of heath that remain across the district and their potential to extend/create links
Soil and rocks	Sand, chalk and flint create a distinctive built character See Breckland Society for info on built character of district Building materials e.g. clay lump buildings
Climate	Dry/Semi desert: Creates a distinctive landscape
Big skies	Across whole district, but especially notable feature of the plateaus (disused airfields)
Dark skies	Absence of light pollution across whole of district including villages. Limited to market towns
Rabbits/warrens	Have helped to shape the landscape
Waterways	Opportunities for recreation/sailing
Trees and hedges	
Wetlands-marsh, fen, riparian vegetation	Valued for habitat/ beautiful/unspoilt and an important part of the water management system
Historic parklands	Distinctive landscape in the district
Ancient woodland-extensive areas	e.g. Foxley Wood - Unique experience
Verges	Contain remnant flora
Pockets of pre enclosure fields across the district	Historic patterns, outgrown oak hedges
Neolithic landscape of Grimes Graves	Unique mining landscape
Distinctive habitats and species e.g. stone curlew Important BAP Habitats and Species	Rare species
Common at Old Buckenham	Largest area of common in England

What is important	Why is it important
Thetford Forest	Diversification opportunities/regeneration of heathland

TOWNS AND VILLAGES

What is important	Why is it important
Natural building materials (flint-red brick-render-clay lump)	Vernacular pre-industrial
Town and village greens	
Scale and proportion of buildings	
Traditional farm buildings	
Consistency of design-although this has been threatened by modern generic development	Creates a sense of place
Traditional village signs-these need to be conserved and recreated.	Creates a sense of place

EXERCISE 2: TESTING THE CHARACTER MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS

CHARACTER AREA NAMES

- 2.2. The following table summarises participants' comments on the character area names from both the afternoon and evening session. LUC have discussed all comments and the table below shows the LUC response.

Existing Name	Suggested Name	LUC response
A2: River Blackwater	Upper Yare	✓
A4: River Wensum	River Wensum and Blackwater	✓
A5: River Tud	Upper Tud	✓
B2: River Thet Tributary Farmland	B2a. River Thet Tributary Farmland	✓
	B2b. No suggestion-although proposing that the character area centres around the A11	
	B2c. The proposed name for this area was 'The Golden Triangle' – a colloquial name for the Buckenhams/Banham/Kenninghall. Alternative suggestion was 'Guiltcross' – a reference to the old Hundred name	
B3: Blackwater Tributary Farmland	No suggestion but feel it needs to be more geographically specific	✓
B7: Oxborough Tributary Farmland	Gooderstone to Oxborough Tributary Farmland Gadder Tributary Farmland	✓
C1: Thetford Warren	The Brecks of Thetford Forest	✓
D2: Breckles Heath	Stanta Heath	✓
D3: Quidenham	Harling or Harling Heathlands	✓
E1: North Lopham Plateau	Lophams Plateau	✓
E2: Snetterton Heath Plateau	Concern that Snetterton is in the far west of the character area, but no consensus as to what the name should be.	✓
E4: Watton Ridge Plateau	Wayland Plateau	✓
E5: Shipdham Plateau	Central Breckland Plateau	✓

Existing Name	Suggested Name	LUC response
E7: Beeston Settled Plateau	Beeston Plateau	✓

- 2.3. Proposed name changes are shown in brackets for each character area in the following sections.

BOUNDARIES, KEY CHARACTERISTICS, PERCEPTUAL/ EXPERIENTIAL LANDSCAPE AND ISSUES/ VALUES

- 2.4. The following tables takes each Breckland District character areas in turn and details participants' comments on boundaries, the key characteristics and the perceptual/experience of the landscape and the management strategy. The tables incorporate comments from both the afternoon and evening sessions. The tables show LUC's response in the following way:

✓= comments included in the report

x=comments not thought to add sufficiently to the LCA report

Character Area A1: River Thet

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Extend into south of CI	Agree that the river continues west of Thetford, but the river forms a subtle landscape feature as it flows through Breckland Forest and it is considered that it should remain as a feature of CI rather than a character area in its own right.
	Key Characteristics	
	No comments	-
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	No comments	-
	Landscape Strategy	
	Conserved/managed for tourism and recreation	✓

Character Area A2 River Blackwater (Upper Yare)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Possibly extend to north west to include Yare under the B1135	Agree- boundary changed
	Key Characteristics	
4	Mention loss of existing wetland landscape	✓
7	Not dense 'mixed' woodland- there is a 'mosaic' of woodland types	✓
	Add areas of open water-views across	✓
	Mid Norfolk Railway	✓
	Floodplain/grassland lost to changed uses and re-alignment of Yare tributaries	✓

	Horsiculture	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	No comments	-
	Landscape Strategy	
	Conserve	✓
	Floodplain	✓
	Rural character	✓

Character Area A3: River Wissey

	Boundaries	
	OK	-
	Key Characteristics	
7	Question the historic information	LUC to check
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	No comments	-
	Landscape Strategy	
	Conserve	✓

Character Area A4: River Wensum (*River Wensum and Blackwater*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	Note the Blackwater is a significant tributary and perhaps should be included in name and identified under location and boundaries
	Key Characteristics	
	Add comment on remnant pockets of heath	✓
	Some ancient woodland	✓
6	Not just willow, alder and poplar – much ash, oak, hazel and birch. Also Black poplar is distinctive	-
9	Add comment on network of mills. Note saxon cathedral at North Elmham and Viking burial mounds	✓ (Cathedral is in the adjacent <i>Wensum and Tud Tributary Farmland</i> character area)
8	Change cSAC to SAC. Note that the whole river is designated as a SPA. Note Dillington Carr SSSI and Mill Common SSSI	✓

	Add Foxley Wood – largest area of semi natural woodland in Norfolk Billingford Wood?	x - Foxley Wood is in the adjacent <i>Wensum and Tud Tributary Farmland</i> character area
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	No comment	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	Conserve and enhance-water meadows	✓
	Use econet biodiversity information to add to guidelines	✓
	Conserve watermills	✓
	Conserve and enhance-re-instate hedges	✓
	Anything to add to restoration of mineral sites?	✓
	Re-instate ditches	✓ (Conserve and enhance ditched field boundaries)

Character Area A5: River Tud (*Upper Tud*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Possibly extend to B1135	Agree-boundary changed
	Key Characteristics	
	Get rid of reference to Shaws	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	OK	-
	Sense of clearly crossing a valley	✓
	Well defined	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	Conserve	✓

General Comment A & B: For all river valley (A) and tributary farmland (B) landscapes - Management should seek to make links between the valleys and the tributaries extend up into tributary farmland landscapes. The landscape type B is important as the transition between the high and low land.

Character Area B1: Little Ouse Tributary Farmland

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
	Key Characteristics	
	Feels like Suffolk (different character)	✓
6	Ripped out hedgerows	✓
5	Lopham – important areas of heath RAMSAR site	✓
	Ribbon development at North Lopham	✓
	Banham Zoo	✓
	Historic character at Banham and Kenninghall	✓
	Wattle and daub houses-not flint	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	Historic	✓
	Open	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	Note ribbon development – should not perpetuate this characteristic	✓

Character Area B2: River Thet Tributary Farmland

	Boundaries	LUC response
	<p>Split into three-</p> <p>B2(a) River Thet Tributary Farmland – this is the western end of B2, including Stow Bedon, Mount Pleasant and majority of farmland between Attleborough and Ellingham.</p> <p>B2(b) AII Corridor: The Group felt strongly that the LCA should recognise the landscape impact of the AII corridor –Area B2(b) would start from Wroo Farm, and continue up to and including Besthorpe.</p> <p>B2(c) The Group felt that the character of Old and New Buckenham was different to the western end of draft area B2. The Group suggested that this area could be extended to include Banham and Kenninghall (currently in B1).</p>	<p>B2 has been split into two. B2 covers land to the east of the AII and the Buckenham extending south to Kenninghall.</p> <p>The new B3 (<i>The Buckenham Tributary Farmland</i>) includes land to the north and west of the AII.</p> <p>Note: no new character area has been created for the AII. This will be brought out as a feature of both B2 and B3 write-ups.</p>
	Key Characteristics	
	B2a. Agree with key characteristics	✓
	B2b. AII- the influence this has on the landscape, not only as a feature in its own right (lights, noise etc) but its influence on the future of the landscape and the likelihood of change.	✓
	B2c. The Group felt that the character of Old and New Buckenham was different to the western end of draft area B2. This is down to heavier soils (clay), less forest/Brecks influences and larger settlements.	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	B2a. Agreed with B2 write up	✓

	B2b. The Group felt strongly that the LCA should recognise the landscape impact of the A11 corridor – and the influence this has on the landscape – not only as a feature in its own right (lights, noise etc) but its influence on the future of the landscape and the likelihood of change	x
	B2c. more open aspect	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	B2a. Conserve	✓
	B2c. Conserve	✓

Character Area B3 (B4): River Blackwater Tributary Farmland

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Re-draw northern boundary and relate to E5-more open character	Agree-changed
	Key Characteristics	
8	Refer to historic green lanes	✓
6	Localised variation in enclosure hedges	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	Contained and intimate	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	Enhance/Restore	✓
	Conserve historic green lanes	✓
	Hedgerows	✓
	Develop more permitted paths	✓

Character Area B4 (B5): River Wissey Tributary Farmland

	Name	LUC response
	OK	-
	Boundaries	
	OK	-
	Key Characteristics	
9	Necton Hall long gone, parkland turned over to agriculture	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	Delete 'tamed'	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	Conserve/Enhance	✓

Character Area B5 (B6): River Wensum and Tud Tributary Farmland

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
	Key Characteristics	
	Sink holes in chalk	✓
	Very flat land at Yaxham-small scale drainage pattern	✓
	Vernacular building materials- Norfolk red brick, clay lump-both found at Yaxham	✓
	Noise from A47	✓
	Mention areas of woodland	✓
	Note the very human scale of the landscape around Dereham – settlement pattern and agriculture very different to plateau landscapes north of Swaffham “patchwork knitted effect”	✓
10	Note old park at Gressenhall. Bylaugh Park is a major feature of the landscape	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	Noise from A47	✓
	Important 'breathing space'	-
	Landscape Strategy	
	No comment	

Character Area B6 (B7): River Nar Tributary Farmland

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Need to separate the River Nar out as a separate character area/landscape type. The upper extent of the tributary farmland could be encompassed in E9.	Agree- a new landscape type has been defined-type F- chalk streams , and character area F1 The Nar Valley
Key Characteristics		
	Need to refer to rural road network	✓
	Churches at Brisley/North Elmham	x - These are not within this character area.
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	Ok-need to be updated once River Nar is separated out	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	Needs to be updated once River Nar is separated out	✓

Character Area B7 (B8): Oxborough Tributary Farmland (Gooderstone to Oxborough Tributary Farmland)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
Key Characteristics		
1	Don't think that undulations are a particularly characteristic feature	✓
3	Topographical range not experienced	✓
7	Geometry varies-not all small and man made enclosures	✓
	Bring out the Gadder as a feature	✓
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	Big skies	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	Conserve and Enhance	✓
	Wetlands and Fens	✓
	Conserve big skies	✓

General Comment B: For all tributary farmland (B) landscapes - Management should seek to conserve small scale 'human' scale character – pattern of roads and

tracks which is very different to the more open landscapes of the plateau and the more intricate river valleys.

Character Area C1: Thetford Warren (*The Brecks of Thetford Forest*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	The most southerly section could become AI?	x- see Character area A1
	Needs to exclude Ragmere	x
Key Characteristics		
	Straight roads, distinctive pattern	✓
	Should reflect the forest more- emphasise 'the forest'	✓
	Need to pull out info on heathland- heathland reversion-forestry strategy	✓
	Rabbit warrens	✓
	Forest rides	✓
	Sandy soils	✓
	Question the term 'deal rows'	✓
	Round towered church at Weeting	✓
	The Row- longest terrace of thatched cottages	✓
	The flying clock of sheep- sheep that are moved around to manage grasslands traditionally	✓
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	A tranquil landscape	✓
	Recreational opportunities need to be improved	✓
	Aeroplanes detract from sense of tranquillity	✓
	An empty landscape	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	Enhance/Restore	✓
	Historic features	✓
	Opportunity to create the Brecks/Grass Heaths – balance with Forestry Plantations	✓
	Conserve- thatched buildings	✓
	Create improved recreational opportunities on drove roads west of Weeting	✓

Character Area D1: Swaffham Heath

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Possibly extend B6 into D1 (Narford Hall)	The area surrounding Narford Hall has been incorporated in the new F1 character area linking it with the river Nar.
Key Characteristics		
1	Add reference to underlying chalk	✓
8	Historic parklands and Plantation are separate features	✓
10	Question whether views of wind turbines detract from sense of tranquillity. Be less subjective	✓
11	There are limited recreation possibilities	-
	Lakes	-
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	Question whether turbines detract from landscape experience	✓
	A1065-locally prominent	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	Conserve	✓

Character Area D2: Breckles Heath (*Stanta Heath*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Consider taking forestry plantation out of D2 and put them in C1- because of historic significance	x-No change
Key Characteristics		
	Marl pits	✓
	Roudham Heath should be included as an area of 'true heathland'	✓
	Stanta needs to be reflected more- determines this type	✓
	National Nature Reserves and Meres- Longmere and Ragmere	-
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	No Comment	
Landscape Strategy		
	No Comment	

Character Area D3: Quidenham (*Harling Heathlands*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Takes in a lot of heathland-should the boundary be drawn tighter to the forestry	x-heathland is an important element of this landscape type.
	Key Characteristics	
	Needs to mention Boadicea's Grave between Quidenham and Kenninghall	✓
	River crossings at Shadwell and Harling	-
	Include historic value of the estates	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	Needs to include the A1066	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	No comment	-

Character Area E1: North Lopham Plateau (*Lophams Plateau*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Is the western boundary correct?	x-western boundary defined by contours
	Key Characteristics	
	Historic wealth in this area e.g. Lopham Weavers	x – Lopham Smock Mill and former linen weaving were within character area BI <i>Little Ouse Tributary Farmland</i>
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	Large scale	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	Enhance and restore- Large scale restoration e.g. gorse and sands	✓
	Create/Renew-Pines, heathland	✓
	Enhance- banksides- erosion problems	-

Character Area E2: Snetterton Heath Plateau

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
Key Characteristics		
	Note differences between west – All more industrial and settlement and east – few villages and sparse settlement	✓
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	No comment	-
Landscape Strategy		
	Conserve – east Create/improve - west	✓

Character Area E3: Old Buckenham Plateau

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
Key Characteristics		
	Barren	✓(Simple, empty)
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	No comment	-
Landscape Strategy		
	Conserve	✓
	Monitor urban fringe development around Attleborough i.e. Foundry Corner/ Burgh Common.	✓
	Improve access to the countryside	✓

Character Area E4: Watton Ridge Plateau (*Wayland Plateau*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
Key Characteristics		
	OK	-
	sparsely populated	✓
	dispersed settlement	✓
	heavy soils	-
	no distinguishing features	✓
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	'barren'	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	conserve the landscape.	✓
	Regenerate RAF Watton airfield- return it to grassland/woodland/farmland	✓

Character Area E5: Shipdham Plateau (*Central Breckland Plateau*)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
Key Characteristics		
5	Question whether the field pattern is irregular	✓
7	Bring out more information about the settlements- scattered farmsteads	✓
7	Introduce information about the evolution of villages	✓
6	More information about the historic processes and evolution of heritage assets	Depends on HLC data when available for this character area
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	Long views valued during the day time	✓
	Elevated roads	✓
	Light pollution	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	Enhance/Restore	✓

Character Area E6: North Pickenham Plateau

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK	-
Key Characteristics		
7	Question distinctiveness of marl pits	✓
11	Question degrading impact of airfield	✓
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	No comment	-
Landscape Strategy		
	Conserve	✓

Character Area E7: Beeston Settled Plateau (Beeston Plateau)

	Boundaries	LUC response
	OK- subject to HLC data	Check HLC if available
Key Characteristics		
	Need to mention mineral workings	✓
	Quality 'climate' relatively	✓
	Highest point in Norfolk (E7 or E8)	LUC to check – this is one of the highest points in Breckland District
	Airfields on plateau	✓
Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape		
	Not felt to be intimate	✓
Landscape Strategy		
	Development pressures – extraction/waste/industrial development of former airfields (Beeston). Opportunities for restoration of mineral sites – potential to restore to heathland. Industrial development on airfield sites on the plateau has knock on effect on the tributary farmland – e.g. traffic on rural lanes	✓
	Enhance/Restore	✓
	Scope for mineral restoration	✓
	Relatively intact	✓

Character Area E8: Dereham Plateau

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Scarning Fen-move into B5 (check spelling)	Agree-this has been incorporated in B5
	Key Characteristics	
	Highest point in Norfolk (E7 or E8)	LUC to check
	711B soil type-heavy clay-poor draining	✓
	Largely unchanged history	✓
	Landscape centred around Dereham Park	✓
	Lanes are line ditched and double banked e.g. Shilling Lane, Old Drove Lane	✓
	Veteran trees	✓
	Airfields on plateau	✓
II	Note potential commercial use of rail in long term	✓
	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	No comment	-
	Landscape Strategy	
	Development pressures – extraction/waste/industrial development of former airfields (in E7 at Beeston). Opportunities for restoration of mineral sites – potential to restore to heathland. Industrial development on airfield sites on the plateau has knock on effect on the tributary farmland – e.g. traffic on rural lanes	✓(Also at Swanton Morley within this character area)
	Conserve historic landscape	✓
	Conserve veteran trees	✓
	Conserve pattern of rural roads	✓

Character Area E9: Whissonsett Plateau

	Boundaries	LUC response
	Take boundaries further south along a lower contour line	Agree-small boundary change made.
	Key Characteristics	
	Post enclosure	✓
	Brisley Common an important feature	✓
	Population density was greater before enclosure	✓
	Veteran trees	✓

	Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape	
	V. low population density	✓
	Landscape Strategy	
	No comment	-

General Comments

Biodiversity: (Scott Perkins): the report needs to draw out biodiversity more – in terms of habitats and key species. Must refer to Econet and Reg Lands work, plus also see KLWN methodology for incorporating ecological info. In particular, use EcoNet biodiversity information to add to all guidelines. (Norfolkbiodiversity.org)

Building Character: See information by Breckland Society

Brecks: Check Brecks Partnership website- e.g. for detailed heath surveys

3. EVALUATION AND NEXT STEPS

EVALUATION FORMS

- 3.1. At the end of the workshop evaluation forms were provided to each participant. 20% of participants (6 of the 29 present) completed and returned the forms. All reported that they found the evening interesting and useful, although more time would have been useful. All said they would like to be involved in any follow up event.

NEXT STEPS

- 3.2. LUC is in the process of completing the final draft landscape character assessment, incorporating comments made by workshop participants. The final draft report will be submitted to Breckland District Council in March 2007. There will be further opportunity to comment on the Landscape Character Assessment in Summer 2007 as part of the Local Development Framework consultation.
- 3.3. Land Use Consultants would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants for their attendance and the provision of extremely useful information.

APPENDIX I

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Breckland Consultation Workshop Attendees

Name	Organisation
Afternoon Session	
Peter Francis	Breckland DC
Adrian Stasiak	Breckland DC
Tom Nash	New Buckenham PC
Brian Frith	North Lopham PC
Paul Thorogood	Norfolk County Council
Ray Reynolds	Attleborough TC
George Hayes	Dereham Area Partnership
Mike Garrod	Upper Yare Partnership
George Crummett	Upper Yare Partnership
Peter Lowings	Yaxham PC
Gilbert Addison	Breckland DC
John Hiskett	Norfolk Wildlife Trust
David Ovenden	Dereham Area Partnership
Michael Ward	Breckland DC
Robin Goolden	Wensum Valley Project
Gordon Bambridge	Breckland DC
David Gurney	Norfolk County Council
Colin Baron	Colkirk PC
David Yates	Norfolk County Council
Jill Glenn	Saham Toney PC
B Harold	Saham Toney PC
Andrew Gayton	Breckland DC

Eileen Powell	Beachamwell PC
Jill Ball	Breckland DC
Frank Woodward	Necton PC
Judith Cantell	Norfolk County Council
David Franklin	St. Edmundsbury DC
Ben Campbell	Great Hockham PC
Lynne Finnigan	Suffolk CC
Susan Glossop	Thetford TC
Ray Key	Breckland DC
Elizabeth Thomas	Forest Heath DC
Robert Kybird	Breckland DC
Evening session	
Scott Perkin	Norfolk County Council
David Burchell	Narborough PC
Brian Rayner	Narborough PC
Jane Scarrott	Weeting Clerk
Ann Morgan	Weeting Councillor
Lucy Evers	Gressenhall PC
Colin Clegg	Swanton Morley PC

WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

Name	Organisation
Kate Ahern	LUC
Andrew Tempany	LUC
Holly Robinson	LUC
David Spencer	BDC

Andrea Long	BDC
James Campbell	BDC

APPENDIX 3

Tables Showing Landscape Classification and Boundary Justification

EXPLANATION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES/CHARACTER AREAS AND SUMMARY OF BOUNDARY CHANGES

Breckland and Kings Lynn Wind Turbine Sensitivity Study	Breckland Landscape Type	Breckland Landscape Character Area	Boundary changes and justification
Types 1-6 wholly outside of Breckland within Kings Lynn and therefore omitted from the classification			
Type 7: Farmland with Woodland and Wetland	The small area within Breckland has been encompassed within Types D and F.	F1 and D1	The course of the River Nar and floodplain has become character area F1. The surrounding higher ground has been encompassed within character area D1
Type 8: Settled Farmland with Plantations	The small area within Breckland has been encompassed within landscape type D.	D1 and C1	The area of Settled Farmland with Plantations is judged to share similar topography and land use to character area D1, and where there is plantation woodland to the south with C1.
Type 9: Rolling Open Farmland	The small area within Breckland has been encompassed within landscape types E and B	E9 and B6	The small area of Rolling Open Farmland was not judged to be significantly different in character to warrant a separate character area. The farmland shared similar characteristics with both landscape types E and B, the boundary line between the landscape character areas was drawn based on topographical differences.
Type 10: Plateau Farmland	The plateau landscape type has become Landscape Type E: Plateau Farmland. It has been split into 9 character areas	E1: Boundary remains unchanged	
		E2: Split in two at Buckenhams	Split made due to a lower lying topography
		E3: large area to the south has been encompassed within B2	Split made due to lower lying topography and settlement pattern
		E4: Small part of former plateau to the north of Watton encompassed within B4	Split made due to lower lying topography
		E5: Extended south into B4	Split made due to lower lying topography Subdivided with E7-Cornation Plantation marks natural break.
		E6: Subdivided from E7	E6 has a markedly lower settlement density
		E7: Subdivided from E6 and E5	Split made due to lower settlement density and localised areas of woodland

EXPLANATION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES/CHARACTER AREAS AND SUMMARY OF BOUNDARY CHANGES

Breckland and Kings Lynn Wind Turbine Sensitivity Study	Breckland Landscape Type	Breckland Landscape Character Area	Boundary changes and justification
		E8: Small section to SW of Dereham incorporated within B6	Land use and topography shared more characteristics with the Settled Tributary Farmland landscape type.
		E9	Extended southwards to encompass elevated land.
Type 11	Type B: Settled Tributary Farmland. It has been separated into 8 character areas	B1: Little Ouse Settled Tributary Farmland	Has been separated due to a greater density of tributaries and a lower population density.
		B2: The Buckenham Settled Tributary Farmland	Separated due to its higher settlement density.
		B3: The Settled Tributary Farmland	Taken out an isolated area of Brecks Plantation to the south. Extended westwards to encompass tributary.
		B4: River Blackwater Settled Tributary Farmland	Some absorbed within River Blackwater Valley due to topography. Heads of the valley have been refined to correspond with contours. Extended into Central Breckland Plateau on northern side due to topography.
		B5: River Wissey Settled Tributary Farmland	No change
		B6: River Wensum and Tud Settled Tributary Farmland	Absorption of some of Landscape Type E (E9) due to topography. Includes part of former Upper Tud Valley Encompasses part of former Landscape Type 8: Rolling Farmland.
		B7: River Nar Settled Tributary Farmland	A large section of land within this character area formerly defined as Settled Tributary Farmland has become Type E Plateau Farmland.
		B8: Gooderstone to Oxborough Settled Tributary Farmland	This character area was formerly Type D. This has been re-classified as Type B due to the influence of the River Gadder.
Type 12: The Brecks Plantation	Type C: The Brecks Plantation	CI	This area remains largely unchanged although it does extend to include a section of the former Type 8 'Settled Farmland with Plantations'.
Type 13: The Brecks Heathland with Plantation	Type D: The Brecks Heathland with	D1: Swaffham Heath	A large section of D1 has become character area B8

EXPLANATION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES/CHARACTER AREAS AND SUMMARY OF BOUNDARY CHANGES

Breckland and Kings Lynn Wind Turbine Sensitivity Study	Breckland Landscape Type	Breckland Landscape Character Area	Boundary changes and justification
	Plantation	D2: Stanta Heath	Localised areas have become Type B due to tributaries and localised areas of wetland
		D3: Harling Heath	There has been a boundary change to the east to encompass part of Landscape Type E (E1) with a plantation land use.
Type 14: River Valleys	Type A: River Valleys	A1: River Thet – No change	
		A2: Upper Yare	Extended north-west at Garvestone .Boundary has been extended southwards to follow the 55m contour line at Woodrising.
		A3: River Wissey – No change	
		A4: River Wensum and Blackwater – No change	
		A5: Upper Tud – Alteration to western end of the valley relating to watercourse and vegetation.	

APPENDIX 4
Glossary of Terms

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
Built Form	The characteristic nature of built development.
Characteristic	A distinctive element of the landscape that contributes to landscape character for instance a particular hedgerow pattern or sense of tranquillity.
Conserve	Strategy where the emphasis is conservation of existing character and of particular features that contribute to this character.
Coppice	A traditional form of woodland management where trees are cut regularly on a cycle to promote growth from their bases.
Deal Rows	A local term for the Scots Pine windbreak hedgerows or tree lines within the Breckland landscape.
Enclosure	The placing in private hands of land to which there was previously common rights.
Enhance	Strategy where the emphasis is on restoring elements that have been lost or declined and on enhancing character. This may include improvements to landscape management practices and the introduction of positive new elements or features.
Fen	Fens are peatlands. Two main types of fen occur: Topogenous fens where water movement in the peat or soil is generally vertical (e.g. basin fens and floodplain fens) and Soligenous fens where water movements are lateral (e.g. mires associated with springs, rills and flushes and valley mires). They are dynamic semi-natural systems requiring appropriate management in order to maintain the open fen communities and associated species richness.
Guidelines	Guidelines outline the actions required to ensure that distinctive character is maintained.

Term	Definition
Landscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape character areas	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape character types	Distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic land use and settlement pattern.
Meres	Lakes formed when ice sheets retreated, carving out hollows in the underlying bedrock, and filling with meltwater from the glaciers.
Pingos	Water bodies created by the contraction of frozen pockets of ground water during the thaw following the last Ice Age.
Re-create	A strategy that provides the opportunity to create or accelerate change towards a new positive landscape character.
Restore	A strategy which focuses upon restoration or renewal of landscape features or characteristics that have been or are currently being lost or degraded, alongside active management of the remaining resource.
Sensitivity	A judgement of how sensitive or vulnerable a landscape component is to change.
Skyline	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.
Vernacular architecture	Architecture which is indigenous to a specific place and adapted to both the environment and to the user's need. (The term 'vernacular' is derived from the Latin vernaculus, meaning 'native').