



**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**FOR GREAT AND LITTLE CHESTERFORD PARISHES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**  
**UTTLESFORD DISTRICT, ESSEX**

**on behalf of**

**The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

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### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Extract from Essex Landscape Character Assessment for Landscape Character Area C1 – Cam Valley (pages 69-74)
- Appendix 2 – Extract from the Landscape Character of Uttlesford District for Landscape Character Area A1 – Cam River Valley (pages 274-277)
- Appendix 3 – Methodology for Analysis of Landscape Capacity
- Appendix 4 – Parish Character Area Analysis Sheets (1-18)
- Appendix 5 – Tables of Landscape Sensitivity, Landscape Value and Landscape Capacity for the Parish Character Areas

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) was originally instructed by The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in May 2015, to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) to inform the preparation of The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan. Following the submission of a first, incomplete draft of the assessment in July 2015, the production of the Neighbourhood Plan stalled, until it was reactivated in 2016. In December 2016, HDA was recommissioned to complete the LCA. The original brief for the assessment sought to assess the landscape character of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford Parishes, which lie within the Uttlesford District of Essex. The assessment was to determine the parishes' local landscape character, identifying key characteristics and sensitivities, both in terms of character and visibility. The report also seeks to set out landscape capacity and development guidelines, should development sites come forward in the future.
- 1.2 This LCA is based on current good practice and recognised methodology (Ref 1). It identifies character areas within the Parishes, which have been assessed so as to define the character of the Parishes and setting to the villages and determine their sensitivity to, and capacity for, development.
- 1.3 Natural England describes landscape character as the landscape features which make an area unique. It is defined as "*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another*"(Ref 1).
- 1.4 The report divides the landscape into areas of common landscape character, listing the key landscape characteristics and landscape and visual sensitivities of each area. This analysis will highlight areas of the Parishes which are sensitive and of low landscape capacity where future development would be inappropriate. Landscape sensitivity and value may not be completely uniform across an entire character area and therefore the capacity across a character area may vary slightly. This is commented on in Section 5 where particularly relevant.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Desk Study**

2.1.1 A comprehensive desk-top assessment of the local area was undertaken to form the basis of the assessment and assist in identifying the parishes' landscape character areas. The desk study data considered included the following:

- Geology and soils;
- Topography;
- Land use (based on aerial photography);
- Regional landscape character areas;
- District landscape character and capacity assessments;
- Historic landscape characterisation (Ref 2);
- Development Plan designations including local landscape, nature conservation, and heritage designations;
- Key public rights of way (e.g. long distance footpaths) and notable view points; and
- Areas at risk of flooding.

2.1.2 The original data was initially gathered in 2015, therefore as part of the updating of the report, the data was revisited to ensure that the baseline was up to date. The data has been analysed and set out in working plans, tables, figures and text, and used to review the existing published landscape character assessments and provisionally subdivide the single District character area into draft landscape character areas appropriate to the Parish scale. The study area boundary has been defined as the combined boundary of the two parishes which is contiguous with the approved Neighbourhood Plan area, however the landscape beyond the study area boundary was also considered to ensure character areas were fully defined.

### **2.2 Field Assessment**

2.2.1 The assessment is underpinned by field assessments carried out during June 2015 by an experienced Associate Landscape Architect, assisted by another Landscape Architect and overseen and reviewed by the Director of Landscape. Field assessment involved travelling extensively throughout Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford Parishes and the immediate surroundings, with additional focus on the relationship between the villages and the surrounding landscape including the influences of the River Cam and the ridges rising to either side of the valley.

2.2.2 The field assessment involved recording variations in landscape character including (list is not exhaustive): local topography, existing land uses and vegetation structure, condition of landscape elements (trees, hedges etc.), streams/ditches, character of the built edge of settlements, intervisibility between settlements, local landmarks and visual detractors, and key views. A working photographic record was produced to support the survey work.

### **3 GREAT AND LITTLE CHESTERFORD PARISHES LANDSCAPE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 The aim of landscape structure analysis is to identify the main elements which contribute to the character, structure and setting of the settlement. This section includes an evaluation of the existing published Landscape Character Assessments (sections 3.2 and 3.3, Plan HDA 1 and Appendices 1 and 2) and the local landscape context of the Parishes, (section 3.4) which looks at the settlements of Great and Little Chesterford in detail and sets out our initial analysis of the area (Plans HDA 1 – 3).

#### **3.2 Landscape Character Context**

3.2.1 There are national, regional and district scale landscape character assessments that cover the landscape within and around Great and Little Chesterford Parishes. At the national scale, Great and Little Chesterford Parishes lie on the southern edge of National Character Area 87: 'East Anglian Chalk', very close to the northern boundary of NCA 86: 'South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland'. These NCA cover large geographical extents and as such are not analysed further in this assessment, as more detailed data is available.

3.2.2 The Parishes lie within the county of Essex, though they are bordered immediately to the north by South Cambridge District, in Cambridgeshire. As the Parishes lie within Essex, reference has been made to the Essex Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) undertaken in 2003 (Ref 3). This county-wide LCA places the Parishes primarily within the Cam Valley (C1), with the eastern edge of the Parishes lying within the North Essex Farmlands (B2). The key characteristics of Area C1, as described within the LCA, are as follows, though an extract from the LCA for this Character Area is included at Appendix 1:

- Broad valley. Strongly rolling valley sides in the north, gentler slopes to the south;
- Predominantly large-scale, open arable farmland on the valley slopes;
- Enclosed character of the valley floor with lush riverside vegetation;
- Nucleated settlement pattern; and
- Extensive historic parkland between Littlebury and Newport.

3.2.3 The Essex LCA describes the landscape condition of the Cam Valley character area as follows:

- Hedgerows on some valley sides are in poor condition due to lack of management and intensive arable farming practices;
- Some valley floor pastures are in poor condition due to overgrazing;
- The extensive areas of historic parkland are in good condition (*located outside the Parishes*);
- The condition of the settlements is good; and
- Gravel workings, chalk pits, pylons and the M11 currently create some localised visual intrusions in the landscape.

### **3.3 District Assessment**

3.3.1 The Parishes fall within Uttlesford District of Essex. A joint Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) was commissioned by Braintree District Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Chelmsford Borough Council, Maldon District Council and Uttlesford District Council in 2006 (Ref 4). The LCA places Great and Little Chesterford Parishes within one Character Area – A1 – Cam River Valley. The area's key characteristics, as described within the LCA, are as follows, though an extract from the LCA for this Character Area is included at Appendix 2:

- Rolling, open landscape of chalky boulder clay with wide views from higher ground;
- Well vegetated riverbanks, with shrubs, trees and water meadows along the winding narrow river corridor;
- Large-scale downland reflecting late enclosure, with rectilinear field pattern;
- Ancient town of Saffron Walden; and
- Dispersed settlements on valley sides connected by busy B roads.

3.3.2 The Uttlesford LCA sets out the following suggested landscape planning guidelines, which are of relevance to this assessment:

- Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements;
- Maintain cross-valley views;
- Consider the landscape pattern and structure of large woodland areas and the role that they have in the composition of views to and from the area;
- Ensure that new woodland planting is designed to enhance landscape character and that species composition reflects local character;
- Ensure any new development on valley sides is small-scale and that it responds to historic settlement pattern, form and building materials; and
- Encourage the re-use of redundant agricultural farm buildings, especially red brick or black timber-framed and boarded barns.

### **3.4 Great and Little Chesterford Villages and the Local Landscape Context (See Plans HDA 2 - 4)**

3.4.1 Great and Little Chesterford Parishes are located approximately 4 miles north of Saffron Walden and approximately 11 miles south of Cambridge. The Parishes are centred on the nucleated settlements of Great and Little Chesterford, located within the River Cam valley, between the B184 Walden Road/Springwell Road and B1383 London Road. The Parish boundary extends north to the southern edge of Hildersham Wood (Hinxtton parish in Cambridgeshire), east to Great Chesterford Common (Hadstock parish in Essex), south-east beyond Chesterford Research Park (Saffron Walden parish in Essex) and south to just below Springwell Farm (Littlebury parish in Essex). The western boundary of the parishes is, for the majority of its length, defined by the Cambridge to London mainline railway. However, to the west of Great Chesterford, the boundary extends west beyond the railway to incorporate Smock Mill House and a section of the M11 motorway. The

parish of Great Chesterford also extends west beyond the M11 (spur onto the A11) to the west of the Stump Cross junction into a triangular piece of land with a sewage works on its northern edge. (See Plans HDA 2 and 4). The nearest villages are Ickleton, 1 mile to the west, Hinxton, 2 miles to the north-west, Littlebury, 2 miles to the south, Little Walden, 2 miles to south-east and Hadstock, 3.3 miles to the east. The high ground of the plateau, forming the north-eastern and eastern parts of the parishes, are devoid of settlement, other than occasional farmsteads. Saffron Walden is the nearest town, located approximately 4 miles to the south of Little Chesterford and accessed via the B184, which forms the eastern boundary of both villages.

3.4.2 The topography of the Parish is split between the river valley, along which the villages are located, and the steep slopes and plateaux, which lie to the north-east through to the south-east of the villages. For the purposes of this report, the plateau from the north-east to south-east is referred to as the Chesterford Ridge and the plateau and slopes to the south-west to west are referred to as Strethall Ridge (including Coploe Hill and Heavy Hill) on the opposite side of the Cam valley. The area of the parishes to the east of the B184 is visually dominated by the chalk downs and Chesterford Ridge, whereas to the west of the B184, the landscape is more visually contained and influenced by urbanisation. The landform and drainage of the Parishes are an integral part of the local landscape character and provide a unique sense of place.

3.4.3 Great and Little Chesterford Parishes have a number of heritage assets including five scheduled monuments and the historic core of Great Chesterford village itself, much of which is designated as a Conservation Area. The remnants of the Roman fort and town (1-3 on Plan HDA 2) are designated as Scheduled Monuments, as are the remains of a Romano-Celtic temple (4) and an ancient moat (5). The Conservation Area covers the majority of Great Chesterford village and contains approximately 65 listed buildings, which showcase a range of styles and reflect different time periods. There are nine listed buildings in Little Chesterford, and six listed buildings elsewhere in the parishes. The Churches of All Saints (Great Chesterford) and St Mary the Virgin (Little Chesterford) date back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century and the villages have been in existence since at least the Saxon Period. There has been a school in Great Chesterford since 1514.

3.4.4 Great Chesterford village has a number of local amenities including a doctor's surgery, primary school, church, community centre, local store, and pubs. The community centre also provides outdoor facilities for village residents. (Refer to Plan HDA 8) Little Chesterford has a small village hall (off the High Street).

3.4.5 The land use within the Parishes is predominantly arable agriculture, with some grazing pastures adjacent to the river and to the south of Great Chesterford Community Centre.

These latter fields are generally horse paddocks and are of a much smaller scale than the arable fields, which are large, open and expansive. The arable agriculture is intensive, which has led to the large field sizes with few boundaries. Where boundaries do exist these are generally hawthorn hedgerows. There are blocks of woodland throughout the Parishes, some of it recorded as ancient woodland, as listed by Natural England (Ref 5), which is of historic importance, while other woods are more modern. Much of the woodland is on the hill-slopes or plateau which provides a sense of enclosure in the otherwise open landscape. The River Cam (or Granta) flows south to north through the Parishes. A corridor of land, between 4m and 200m wide, forms the extent of the 1 in 1,000 year flood zone of the River Cam (as defined on the Environment Agency website). The Parishes contain numerous other minor watercourses including streams, field drains and ponds. The river is a significant feature within both villages and has shaped the settlement pattern, transportation routes and open spaces within the villages.

3.4.6 Chesterford Research Park was a former manor house (built in 1856), and was used as such until about 1925-36 when it was unoccupied and fell into disrepair. It was used as a hospital and ammunition store during the Second World War, until an explosion caused it to close. It again fell into disrepair, until it was sold in 1952, and was made into a Research Park, with laboratory and office accommodation. It has extensive parkland surrounding its many buildings. Despite its ridge top location, most views into the Research Park from the villages are restricted by the surrounding woodland.

3.4.7 Numerous public rights of way cross the Parishes allowing public access and enjoyment of the landscape. The Icknield Way Trail is a 110 mile historic route that runs from the Peddlars Way National Trail in Suffolk to the Ridgeway Trail in Buckinghamshire, (which is a variation on the Icknield Way path). This Trail allows access for horse riders and cyclists, as well as walkers. 5.5km of the Icknield Way Trail crosses Great Chesterford parish, between Great Chesterford Common and Junction 9 of the M11. Where the Icknield Way Trail leads up the slopes of the Chesterford Ridge and Strethall Ridge, it is often open in places and users are afforded panoramic views. The rights of way between the villages of Great and Little Chesterford and to the south of Little Chesterford are in alignment with the vegetated watercourses and are much more intimate and enclosed in character.

### 3.5 **Great and Little Chesterford Parishes– Key Elements**

- **Water:** Great and Little Chesterford are riverside villages. The River Cam and its use as a water source is a principle reason why they became settled. The pattern of the villages is set perpendicular to the course of the river, with the routes of the major roads and the railway also influencing settlement pattern, though the positions of these are primarily dictated by the shape of the river valley.
- **Heritage:** There is a considerable amount of historic interest, both within the villages as part of their built form and present in the surrounding landscape, as exemplified

by the five Scheduled Monuments. The built heritage is reflected in the local vernacular and the materials used in construction including brick, thatch and pargetting.

- Location and character: The villages are nestled in the River Cam valley. The plateaus and ridges above the villages help to visually contain the villages. The M11, which runs to the west of the parishes, cuts through the Strethall ridge, predominantly in cutting, but for some sections, traffic is visibly prominent from some viewpoints in the parishes on the distant eastern side of the valley. The characteristics of the landscape within the villages are a key contributor to the 'sense of place' of the villages.
- Views: Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute.
- Nucleated and compact settlement pattern largely contained by a mature landscape structure.

## **4 PARISH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS: ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Landscape Characterisation**

4.1.1 Drawing on the initial and updated desk study, the field assessment and landscape structure analysis above, the study has divided the landscape into Parish-scale landscape character areas which possess homogenous characteristics. Great and Little Chesterford Parishes have been divided into the following eighteen Parish Landscape Character Areas, as shown and listed on Plan HDA 5 (with a detailed area of Great Chesterford shown on Plan HDA 6):

- 1 Chesterford Ridge
- 2 Chalk Upper Slopes
- 3 Chalk Lower Slopes
- 4 Chesterford Research Park
- 5 River Cam Floodplain
- 6 Transport Corridor Farmland
- 7 Little Chesterford
- 8 Great Chesterford Historic Core
- 9 Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland
- 10 Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)
- 11 Great Chesterford Industry
- 12 Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)
- 13 Mill House Farmland
- 14 Great Chesterford Backlands
- 15 The Chesterfords Hinterland
- 16 Little Chesterford Backlands
- 17 Springwell Farmland
- 18 Bordeaux Pit Farmland

### **4.2 Analysis of Parish-Scale Landscape Character Areas**

4.2.1 The characteristics of each Parish-scale landscape character area have been analysed against criteria identified in Topic Paper 6 of the Countryside Agency's Landscape Character Assessment Guidance, along with identification of any designations, and consideration of the historic landscape characterisation of the area. This information forms the basis for the landscape sensitivity, value and capacity assessments. A detailed methodology for the analysis can be found in Appendix 3.

4.2.2 Detailed analysis sheets for each Parish-scale character area can be found in Appendix 4. For each character area there is list of relevant designations and planning policies, an analysis of landscape character, the key issues and management prescriptions for each character area, and a breakdown of landscape sensitivity, the landscape value of the area and the resulting landscape capacity. The tables setting out how the judgements for landscape sensitivity, landscape value and landscape capacity have been derived are included at Appendix 5.

## **5 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY**

- 5.1 Landscape capacity is defined as the extent to which the landscape is able to accommodate change without significant effects on landscape character, reflecting the inherent sensitivity and value of the landscape. A landscape of high sensitivity or value therefore has a low landscape capacity.
- 5.2 In order to assess the sensitivity of the Great and Little Chesterford Parish character areas to development, assumptions have been made as to the likely built form of any new residential development (potential for industrial/commercial development has not been assessed). It has been assumed that dwellings would generally be a maximum of two storeys in height. There would be an expectation for open space provision and a landscape framework to be incorporated, with tree planting of appropriate scale, building on an existing landscape framework which could achieve a good fit in the landscape and form a logical extension to the villages, in keeping with the existing settlement pattern.
- 5.3 Sensitivity and value ratings range from Major, Substantial, Moderate to Slight. Areas judged to have Major or Substantial sensitivity or value indicate that development would have significant detrimental effect on the character of the landscape. Development in these character areas should only be on a very small scale and proposals would need to demonstrate no adverse impacts on the setting to the settlement or the wider landscape, and be consistent with Local Plan policy. The landscape sensitivity and landscape value tables, along with assessment criteria and scoring for each character area are shown in Appendix 5 (Tables 1 and 2). Of the 18 Parish character areas identified, it was considered that those primarily of built development (five areas consisting of Areas 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12) thus areas of townscape, would not lend themselves naturally to landscape capacity assessment. In these areas, the only capacity for development would be minor infilling or redevelopment of currently occupied plots (which may result in loss of employment land if this is replaced by residential uses).
- 5.4 The landscape sensitivity of the Parishes is mixed, ranging between Slight to Major. Of the 13 Parish character areas assessed, one has Major sensitivity (Area 1), seven have Substantial sensitivity (Areas 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 15 and 17), four have Moderate sensitivity (Areas 9, 13, 16 and 18), and there is one character area with Slight sensitivity (Area 14).
- 5.5 The landscape value of the Parishes is also mixed, with one area (Area 9) being assessed as having Substantial landscape value, nine areas (Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 15, 17 and 18) having Moderate landscape value and three areas (Areas 6, 14 and 16) having Slight landscape value. There were no character areas with Negligible or Major landscape value.

- 5.6 The resultant landscape capacity is listed in Appendix 5, Table 3 and indicated on Plan HDA 7. Landscape capacity ratings range from High, High/Medium, Medium, Medium/Low, Low and Low/Negligible. A capacity rating of Medium or above identifies a landscape character area with the capacity for limited development, having regard for the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent local landscape character areas.
- 5.7 No Parish character areas were assessed as having High/Very High landscape capacity. One Parish character area has been assessed as having High capacity (Area 14), another area has Medium/High capacity (Area 16) and two areas having Medium capacity (Areas 13 and 18). These areas have some capacity for residential development without significant harm to the local landscape character.
- 5.8 Whilst more suitable for development in landscape terms than the other character areas, careful consideration must be given to the extent and design of any developments within these areas, taking into account landscape conditions to avoid harmful effect on the surrounding landscape character. There may be capacity within the villages and around the settlement edge of the villages for small-scale residential additions, which would have significantly lower impacts on the character and appearance of the area than a large village extension.
- 5.9 At this point, it is worth summarising those sites for which planning applications have recently been submitted and are committed, and thus are helping to satisfy the need for new houses, primarily in Great Chesterford. The table below lists recent planning applications pertaining to the sites indicated on Plan HDA 6:

**Table of Recent Planning Applications (in Great Chesterford)**

Site Ref Plan HDA 6	Name of Site	Character Area	Reference to adopted Local Plan 2005	Description
1	Land south of Stanley Road and Four Acres	10	Part of Site GtCHE2 in 2014 Local Plan for 60 dwellings	Bellway Site 50 dwellings now built - 12/5513/OP granted on 12 July 2013 with RM, ref: 13/3444, approved 13 February 2014
2	Land off Bartholomew Close	10	Part of Site GtCHE2 in 2014 Local Plan for 60 dwellings	12 dwellings granted on 16 October 2014, ref: 14/0425 with RM refused, ref: 16/1247 on 1 September 2016
3	Land behind Acre Croft	14		3 dwellings 15/1424, RM 16/0328
4	Land behind Gelderds	14		Ashbee House and Webb House built – 12/6006 April 2013
5	Land east of Rose Lane	14		Morris House and Ruskin House built – 0742/12 granted September 2012
6	Thorpe Lea, Walden Road	14		31 dwellings 15/2310/OP granted on 13 June 2016
7	The Nursery, London Road and New World Timber Site	12	Site GtCHE1 in the 2014 Local Plan	42 dwellings was approved on 8 December 2014 (ref: 14/0174/FUL).
	Land off A11	2 & 3		Crematorium ref: 15/3782 granted 8 April 2016, RM 17/0099 pending (determination due 10 March 2017).

- 5.10 The following paragraphs assess the landscape capacity of the 18 Parish character areas identified. This assessment excludes those character areas of townscape, for example, Areas 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12. Area 7 coincides with the village core of Little Chesterford which has extremely limited space for any infill development and it has well defined settlement edges.
- 5.11 Area 8, the Great Chesterford Historic Core, is protected from inappropriate development by Conservation Area Policy. Developable land in the village core is again extremely restricted, though there are three grazing fields to the north of Carmen Street and Jacksons Lane. These fields bring a rural influence to the village core and make an important contribution to its landscape character, thus potential development on these fields should be resisted.
- 5.12 Area 10 (Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)) is located to the north of Great Chesterford. It is adjacent to the northern edge of the Conservation Area (Area 8). New development has been permitted on the Bellway Homes site off Stanley Road, which is complete. There was also an approved outline planning permission for 12 dwellings to the rear of Bartholomew Close, though a reserved matters application has subsequently been refused. The housing stock within this area is generally more modern than within the Conservation Area, with a larger ratio of bungalows to houses.
- 5.13 A Community Centre is located within the most westerly part of Area 10. The centre is set in one of the few Public Open Spaces within Great Chesterford, which comprises the only sports facilities within the village. Therefore it is unlikely to be suitable for development. The centre and adjacent sports facilities are accessed off the B184, and are located on the edge of the village. An area to the east of the Bowling Club (included within Area 10) was designated as a Community/Education Site in the withdrawn 2014 Uttlesford Local Plan (GtCHE3) and now contains allotments and is laid to mown grass.
- 5.14 Area 11, Great Chesterford Industry, lies to the south-west of Great Chesterford; it is bounded by the railway to its south-western edge and the B1383 and Ickleton Road to the north and north-east. The area is in mixed use, though dominated by the large offices of Plextex Ltd and the railway station. There is only limited scope for development within this area due to its built up nature and the limitations imposed by transport corridors.
- 5.15 Area 12 (Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)) is split into two areas; one on the southern edge of Great Chesterford and the other to its south-west (and west of the railway line comprising Smock Mill House). The southern area is bound by the railway line to the south, is bisected by the B1383, the western edge lies adjacent to an existing small industrial area (Area 11), and is limited to the north by the river and its floodplain. There

is existing planning permission to develop approximately 42 dwellings on the former New World Timber Frame site adjacent to the recent development at Ash Green. Any redevelopment of Smock Mill House would, as described for Area 6, be difficult to access and subject to high noise levels due to the proximity of the motorway.

- 5.16 One Parish character area has a Negligible/Low capacity for development (Area 1), seven have a Low capacity (Areas 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 15 and 17) and one has Low/Medium capacity (Area 6). The area with Negligible/Low landscape capacity is Area 1, the open plateau of the Chesterford Ridge, which is visually exposed, with wide ranging views and too remote from existing settlements to be suitable for development. Development within this Character Area should be avoided as it would be out of character with the openness of the landscape in Area 1.
- 5.17 The areas with Low landscape capacity are Area 2 (Chalk Upper Slopes), Area 3 (Chalk Lower Slopes), Area 4 (Chesterford Research Park), Area 5 (River Cam Floodplain), Area 9 (Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland), Area 15 (The Chesterfords Hinterland) and Area 17 (Springwell Farmland). Development within these Character Areas should be avoided as it would be out of character, though there may be limited capacity for small amounts of development (for example, in association with existing farmsteads). Area 2 is a broad swathe of land from the northern edge of the parishes through to the south-east. Any development in this area will be highly visible from the villages and the Strethall Ridge. Development would also be out of character with the open landscape of the area. There is also limited infrastructure with only minor roads/tracks through the area.
- 5.18 Area 3 (Chalk Lower Slopes) is a large area of fairly low-lying land to the east of Great and Little Chesterford, adjacent to their settlement edges. The landscape character is influenced by views towards the villages and the B184 that forms the western boundary of the area. The northern end and eastern fringes of the area start to slope upwards and any development would have to consider views from the Strethall ridgeline. A crematorium has recently been granted permission to the north of the Stump Cross junction, at the northern end of Area 3 (ref: 15/3782). There is also a Scheduled Monument (Romano-Celtic temple (4)) within the northern part of Area 3, near Dell's Farm, that would need preservation. The B184 restricts connectivity between this area and the existing settlements and provides a clear, defensible boundary to potential development.
- 5.19 Area 4 (Chesterford Research Park) is separated from the surrounding landscape by blocks of woodland. Due to its current land use as employment land, it is unlikely that there would be any residential development outside of this usage in the foreseeable future. Area 5 is to the south of Great Chesterford. The character of this area is dominated by the

River Cam/Granta, and much of this area is at risk of flooding which would prohibit development. Development within Area 9 (Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland) and Area 15 (The Chesterfords Hinterland) should be restricted, because, in the case of Area 9, it could affect the nationally important Scheduled Monuments located in this area. Area 15 fulfils the important function of settlement separation between Great and Little Chesterford. Similarly, Area 17 lies to the south of Little Chesterford and provides the village with its rural setting.

- 5.20 The one character area with Low/Medium landscape capacity is Area 6 (Transport Corridor Farmland), which is broken up into two areas; a southern area to the south of existing housing at Smock Mill House, and a northern area bound by the railway line to the west, the B1383 to the south-east, and the M11/A11/B184 interchange roundabouts to the north. The transport corridors create definitive, immovable boundaries. Any development would be physically limited by the railway and roads, and would have to be mitigated sufficiently to reduce noise and vibration issues. Development within this Character Area should be resisted, because it would be inconsistent with the existing settlement pattern.
- 5.21 The land south of Smock Mill House (southern part of Area 6) has limited potential for development as access to this area is restricted by the railway and roads and a level crossing. The proximity of the M11 means that noise levels may be a restriction to any development in this area. The northern part of Area 6 has been the subject of planning applications in the past for motorway service areas/motels, none of which have been approved. This northern area is also occupied by a sewage works, which would restrict any development within close proximity. There is also a risk of flooding from the river at the point closest to Ickleton. The area west of the M11 has more affinity with Ickleton than with Great Chesterford, and performs the useful function of reinforcing settlement separation.
- 5.22 Two areas that have been identified as having Medium landscape capacity, and thus may possess areas suitable for limited development. These are Area 13 (Mill House Farmland) and Area 18 (Bordeaux Pit Farmland). Area 13 (Mill House Farmland) forms an important gateway site into Great Chesterford from the junction off the M11/A11. The area south of the footpath (17-12) which crosses this area, is more suitable for development than the more disconnected area to the north. An area proposed as a Community/Education Site (Site GtCHE3 on Plan HDA 6) lies outside Area 13 on its southern edge, and has been included within Area 10, because even though it is open, it is fenced off and laid to grass and allotments, which are land uses more akin to Area 10 than Area 13. (Note: an outline application for a children's nursery on this site has been refused (30 January 2017; ref: 16/3182)).

- 5.23 Area 18 (Bordeaux Pit Farmland) is a narrow strip of land adjacent to the potentially intrusive railway, that on the whole, would be unsuitable for development (particularly the County Wildlife Site of the Pit). However, there may be potential to develop on the settlement edge of Great Chesterford, immediately adjacent to Ash Green, or in association with Bordeaux Farm.
- 5.24 There is one area of Medium/High landscape capacity, Area 16 (Little Chesterford Backlands). This area may be suitable for limited development as it is, in part, contiguous with the settlement edges, though any potential development would need to be sensitive to the constraints this area possesses. Area 16 is an area of regenerating scrub opposite Rectory Farm which has development potential due to its low-lying level setting, and has extensive existing vegetative screening from Great and Little Chesterford. An access point has already been constructed off the B184. The ecological potential of this site would need to be assessed as part of any potential development proposals.
- 5.25 Only one area has been identified as having High landscape capacity, Area 14 – Great Chesterford Backlands. A large proportion of Area 14 (Great Chesterford Backlands) has in recent years been the subject of several planning application. Four large dwellings have been constructed off Rose Lane and three others have been given permission to the rear of Acre Croft (accessed off the High Street). Land along the southern boundary of this area (east of Footpath 17-7, north of the Icknield Way Trail, and accessed off Walden Road) has been granted outline permission for 31 dwellings. Remaining land in this area with development potential is now extremely limited.
- 5.26 This study has identified that a large proportion of the landscape of the Great and Little Chesterford parishes has substantial landscape sensitivity and moderate landscape value, which is consistent with the contrasting landscape of open chalk uplands and the more intimate Cam Valley, though this is a landscape that is not designated. It follows therefore, that in a landscape of such contrasts there will be, throughout the parishes, large areas that have negligible/low to low/medium landscape capacity for future development. The landscape east of the B184 (Character Areas 1, 2 and 3) is largely open, rural in character and exhibits many of the key characteristics of the agriculture-dominated chalk farmlands. Development in these character areas would be inconsistent with the existing settlement pattern of the parishes. To the west of the B184, there is potential for some small-scale development, though this should be contiguous with the settlements and where settlement edges are currently ill-defined. Character Areas on the periphery of Great Chesterford, in particular, have been subject to several new developments (in Areas, 10, 12 and 14).

## **6 VILLAGE INTERNAL SPACE ASSESSMENT**

### **6.1 Great and Little Chesterford Village Characters**

- 6.1.1 This section focusses on an evaluation of the local landscape context of the villages, which looks at the open spaces within the village settlement boundaries in order to assess which spaces contribute highly to the setting of the villages and which spaces could be improved. For the most part, private land, particularly gardens, has not been included as part of the assessment. Many properties within the villages have extensive gardens, which contribute to the character of the villages, particularly those within the Great Chesterford Conservation Area, however, this document focusses on the key public spaces which define the internal character of the villages. Open spaces that are accessible to the public, or are visible from public rights of way are likely to have a higher contribution to the perceived open space character of the village.
- 6.1.2 Great Chesterford is a fairly compact, nucleated settlement, located in the valley of the River Cam, to the west of a ridge of high ground forming part of the Great Chesterford Common. The village lies between the B184 and B1383 and is bound on the western edge by the Cambridge to London mainline railway. Great Chesterford Conservation Area covers the majority of the village and contains approximately 65 listed buildings (mostly Grade II), including All Saints Church (Grade I) and Great Chesterford C of E Academy School (Grade II).
- 6.1.3 Little Chesterford is a smaller, more compact, linear settlement, also located in the valley of the River Cam. The High Street runs perpendicular to the B184 and B1383, with the majority of the housing in the village lining this one street. There are nine listed buildings within the village (eight are Grade II and The Manor is Grade I), including St Mary the Virgin Church (Grade II).
- 6.1.4 In addition to the connections provided between the villages by the local, though busy, road network, there are public rights of way that connect the villages. From Rose Lane, on the south side of Great Chesterford, Footpath 17-7 heads southwards towards Little Chesterford (listed as Footpath 34-1 south of the parish boundary) along the eastern banks of the River Cam. The footpath continues to the south of Little Chesterford towards Springwell Farm (Footpath 34-4), where another footpath heads eastwards beyond Joseph Farm, to the south of Chesterford Research Park. The Icknield Way Trail, a nationally promoted long distance route, also passes through Great Chesterford. From the network of public rights of way, non-motorised users enjoy views of the countryside through which the paths pass, though on this whole the paths cross private land. Although this private land is enjoyed for recreational purposes as afforded by the paths which cross it, this land cannot be included as open space for the purposes of this assessment. However, any

development proposals that may come forward that affect the enjoyment of views from these paths would need to consider the sensitivity of footpath users.

6.1.5 The character of the landscape within the village settlement boundaries is markedly different from the surrounding landscape, as it is small-scale, intimate and has close associations with the river that is common to both villages. Water is a significant feature within the villages and has shaped the settlement pattern, routes and open spaces within the village. The villages also have significant tree cover with trees in gardens rather than extensive areas of woodland, though there are also mature trees lining watercourses and hedgerow boundaries. Both the vegetation, the frequent stone (flint panel) or brick walls, and the lack of front gardens, particularly to the older buildings, provide the intimacy and feeling of enclosure that pervades the villages. In Little Chesterford, although the houses are generally set back further from the road, with boundary screening vegetation, this also provides a sense of privacy. The large rear gardens and frequency of open spaces, within the Great Chesterford Conservation Area in particular, reinforces the rural character of the village. The eastern edge of the Little Chesterford and the northern and southern edges of Great Chesterford are higher density developments with smaller gardens and fewer areas of open space.

6.1.6 For the purposes of this assessment, the open spaces within the villages have been subdivided into categories. These reflect the land use of the open space and the land ownership, both of which are important factors to consider when assessing the contribution that the open spaces makes to the village landscapes as a whole. The distribution of open spaces within Great Chesterford is shown on HDA Plan 8. The list of categories includes:

- Formal recreation areas – There is a recreation ground adjacent to the Community Centre to the north-west of Great Chesterford, which comprises a cricket pitch, a football pitch, a bowling green, two all-weather tennis courts and an equipped children's playground and skate park. To the south of the entrance to the Community Centre is a small formal park area laid to grass and shrubs known as Jubilee Gardens. Hall Gardens are a small area of open space laid to paving and shrubs/trees opposite the primary school. A children's play area also exists off Pilgrims Close. In Little Chesterford, the recreation field is to the south of the church and village hall. The field slopes away to the river on its southern edge.
- Educational recreation areas – Great Chesterford C of E Primary School has a play area to the north of the school buildings, including a hard-surfaced football pitch, but the school's playing fields (two grass football pitches) are detached from the school, located to its west (accessed off Carmen Street).
- Allotments – There are no allotments in Little Chesterford, although new allotments were opened in Great Chesterford in 2016. Former allotments off Rose Lane in Great Chesterford have now been built on by Ruskin House and Morris House.
- Semi natural greenspace – Horse River Green, off South Street in Great Chesterford is a public open space with mature trees and seating overlooking the river and fields beyond. Fairs are occasionally held here. The churchyards of the churches in both villages are publically accessible and contain a large number of trees; both churchyards slope down to the river. A small green forms the junction of School Street, South Street and Church Street and is known as Coronation Green.

- Private open land/gardens with open views from publically accessible viewpoints that would contribute to the character of the village – These comprise areas of private open spaces or gardens, identified as Important Open Spaces within the Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA, Ref 6), and warranting protection from development (under Policy ENV3 of the adopted 2005 Local Plan). These areas consist of the following:
  - Area A – Grounds of Chesterford House, High Street;
  - Area B – Front grounds of Easby House, High Street;
  - Area C – Grounds of Manor Farm and Brock House, Manor Lane;
  - Area D – Grounds of Bishops House;
  - Area E – Grounds of Mill House (south of the river);
  - Area F – Grounds of The Crown House (indicated as Protected Open Space in the withdrawn Submission 2014 Local Plan);
  - Area G – Grounds of The Dells and paddocks to the west of Jacksons Lane and north of Carmen Street.

6.1.7 There are several walls within the villages that are important historically, as these are distinctive features being constructed of brick with flint panels. The location of these walls within the Great Chesterford Conservation Area have also been identified in the CAA (Ref 6).

## **6.2 Landscape Guidelines for Future Development**

6.2.1 Should any of the internal spaces within the villages come forward for development, due consideration should be given to the effect that development would have on the overall character of the villages. The majority of open spaces within the village of Great Chesterford lie within the Conservation Area, which is protected through national and local planning policy. Any proposed development would need to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. As discussed earlier in the report, the river, public and private incidental open spaces and feature walls are an intrinsic part of the special character of the Conservation Area. As a result, the primary open spaces and routes are particularly sensitive to new development, and should be preserved.

6.2.2 Any new development within the villages should consider their relationship to the open spaces, the river and routes within the villages, should maintain the green and leafy character of the village and should respect the context of their location within the villages. Consideration should also be given to the scale, form and massing of built development, along with the materials to be used.

6.2.3 Development proposed within the villages but outside the Great Chesterford Conservation Area would still need to consider the setting to the Conservation Area and the contribution that the proposals could make to the overall character of the villages.

## 7 REFERENCES

- Ref 1 - Countryside Agency (now Natural England)/Scottish Natural Heritage (April 2002), *'Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland'*  
as updated by  
Natural England (Christine Tudor) (October 2014) *'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment'*
- Ref 2 - Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (2009) *'Historic Environment Character Areas – Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project'*
- Ref 3 - Chris Blandford Associates for Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (the Joint Structure Plan Authorities) (February 2003); *'Essex Landscape Character Assessment.'*
- Ref 4 - Chris Blandford Associates (September 2006); *'Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments'*
- Ref 5 - Natural England/Defra Magic Map Website (2015); *'www.magic.gov.uk'*.
- Ref 6 - Uttlesford District Council (approved April 2007) *'Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals'* (CAA)

## HDA Document Control and Quality Assurance Record

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Project Reference: 752.1  
Document Title: Landscape Character Assessment  
Commissioning Party: The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Issue	Description	Date of Issue	Signed
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2	Second version (v.2)	February 2017	<i>C.Marsh</i>
3	Third version (v.3)	February 2017	<i>C.Marsh</i>
4			

	Personnel	Position
Author	Christine Marsh	Associate Landscape Architect
Approved for issue	Brian Duckett	Director

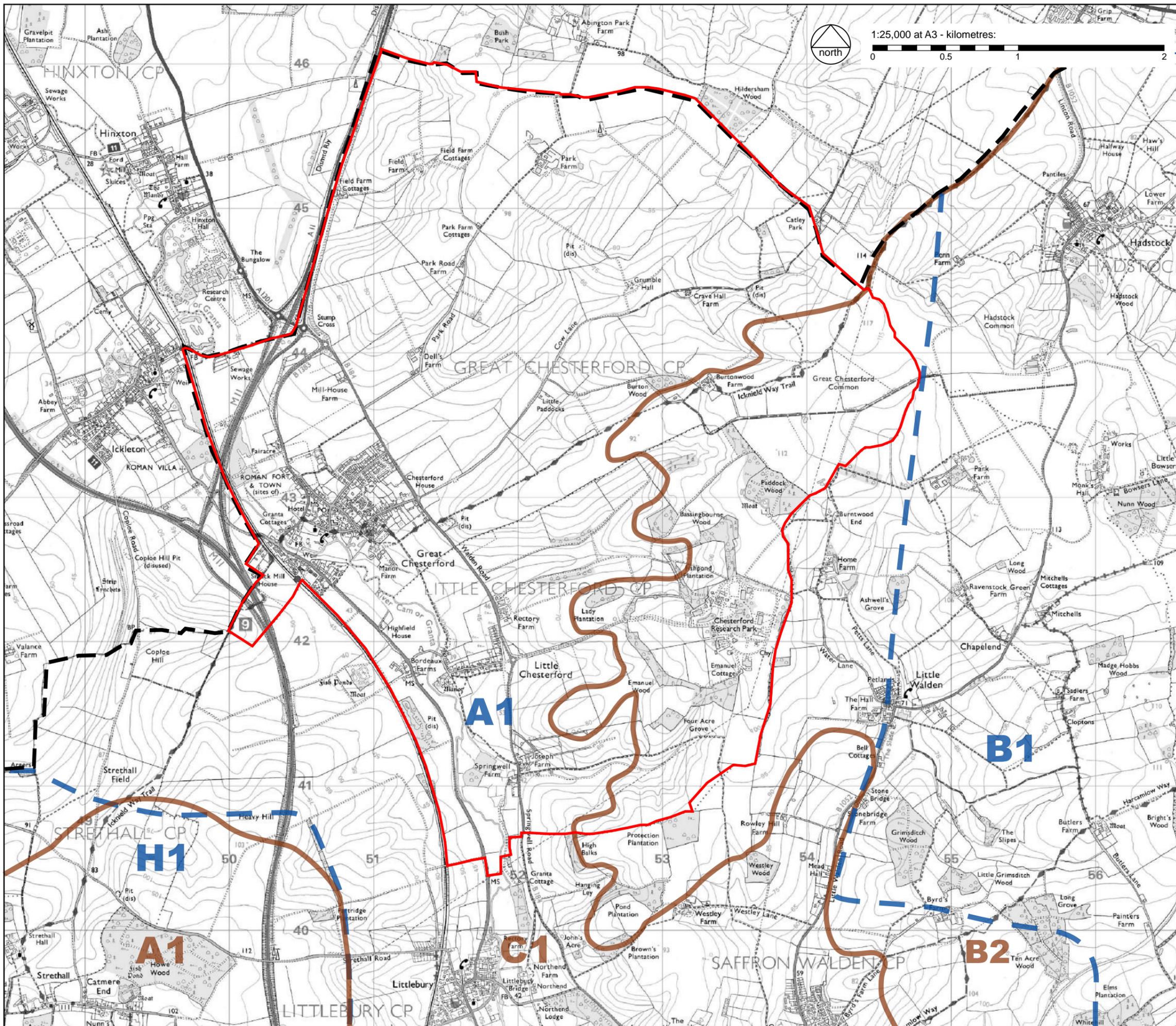
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- KEY**
- Great and Little Chesterford Parish Boundaries
  - County Boundary
  - Essex LCA
  - Uttlesford LCA
- A1** - North - West Essex Chalk Farmland
- B2** - North Essex Farmland
- C1** - Cam Valley
- A1** - Cam River Valley
- B1** - Ashdon Farmland Plateau
- H1** - Elmsdon Chalk Upland

CLIENT:  
The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Published Landscape Character Areas

SCALE AT A3: 1:25,000      DATE: February 2017

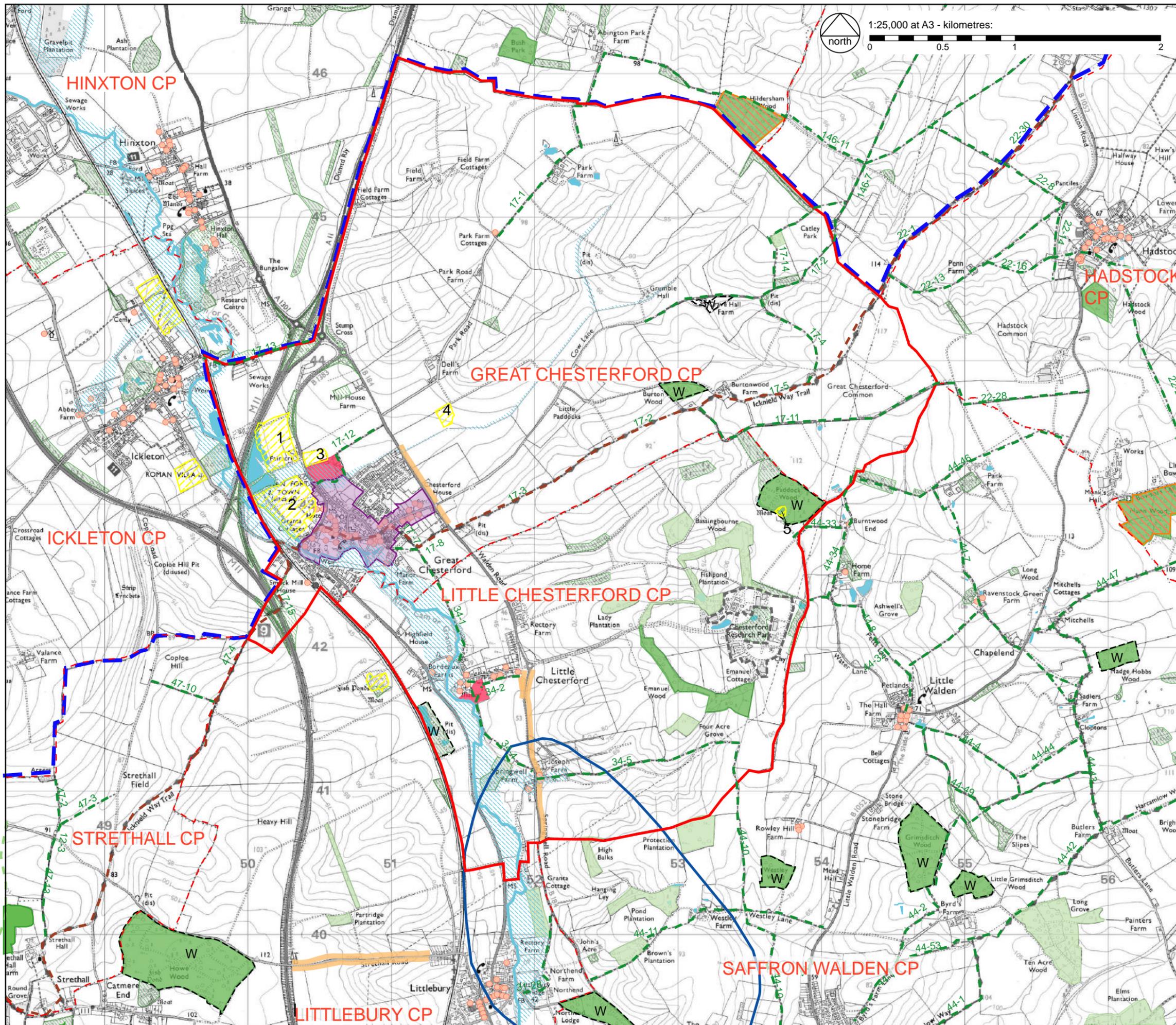
752.1/9      **HDA 1**

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- KEY**
- Great and Little Chesterford Parish Boundaries
  - Parish Boundaries
  - County Boundary
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Scheduled Monument (1-5)
  - Listed Building
  - Conservation Area
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Important Woodland
  - Other Woodland
  - W County Wildlife Site
  - Special Verge
  - Icknield Way Trail
  - Public Right of Way
  - Watercourse and Pond
  - Flood Risk Zone
  - Groundwater Protection Zone
  - Recreation Land
  - Chesterford Research Park

NOTE: Flood Risk Zone estimated from Environment Agency website

CLIENT:  
The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Landscape Designations and Constraints

SCALE AT A3: 1:25,000      DATE: February 2017

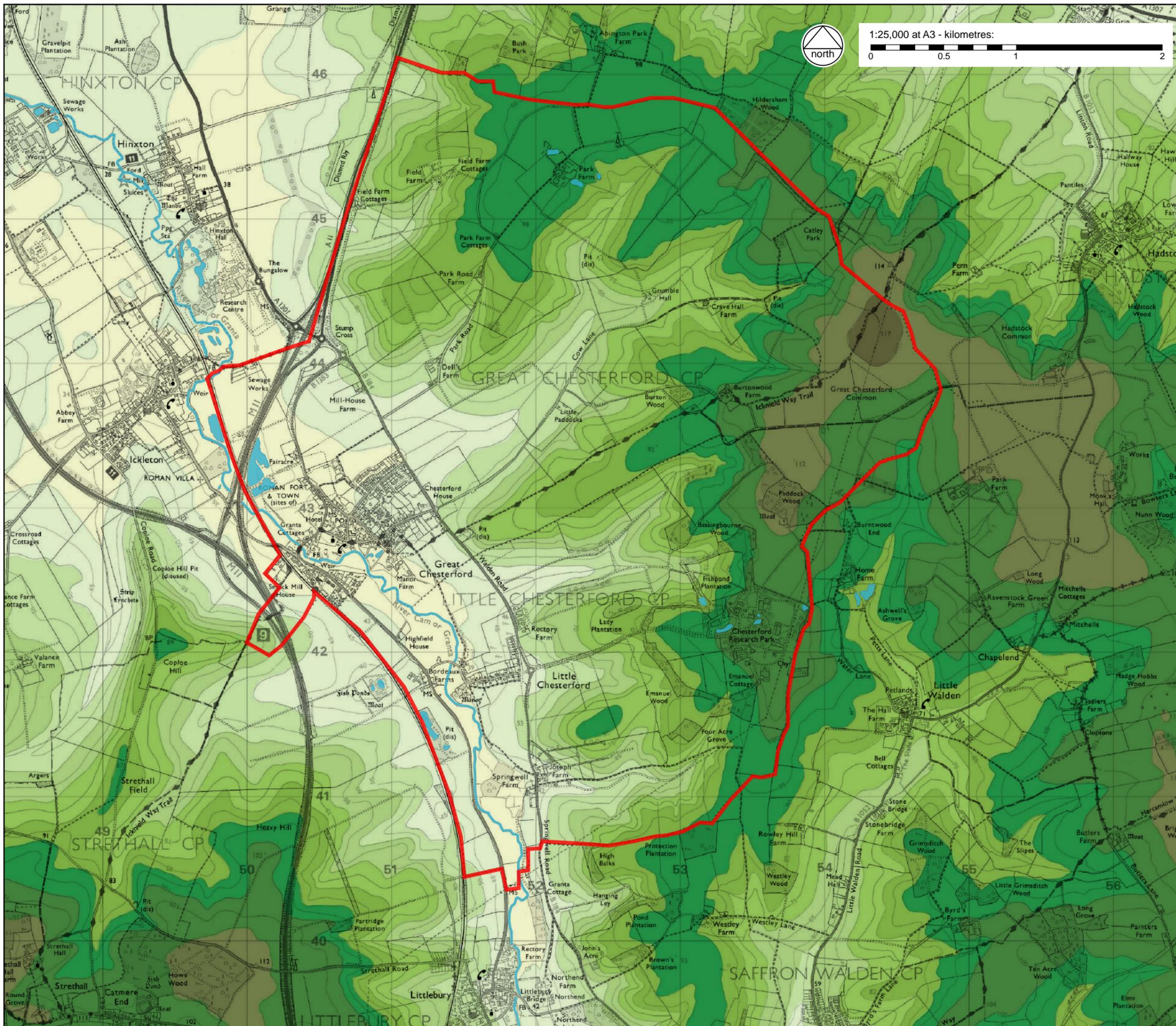
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1:25,000 at A3 - kilometres:



**KEY**

-  Great and Little Chesterford Parish Boundaries
-  Watercourse
-  Waterbody

**Contour Levels**

-  120m
-  110m
-  100m
-  90m
-  80m
-  70m
-  60m
-  50m
-  40m
-  30m

CLIENT:  
The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Topography

SCALE AT A3: 1:25,000

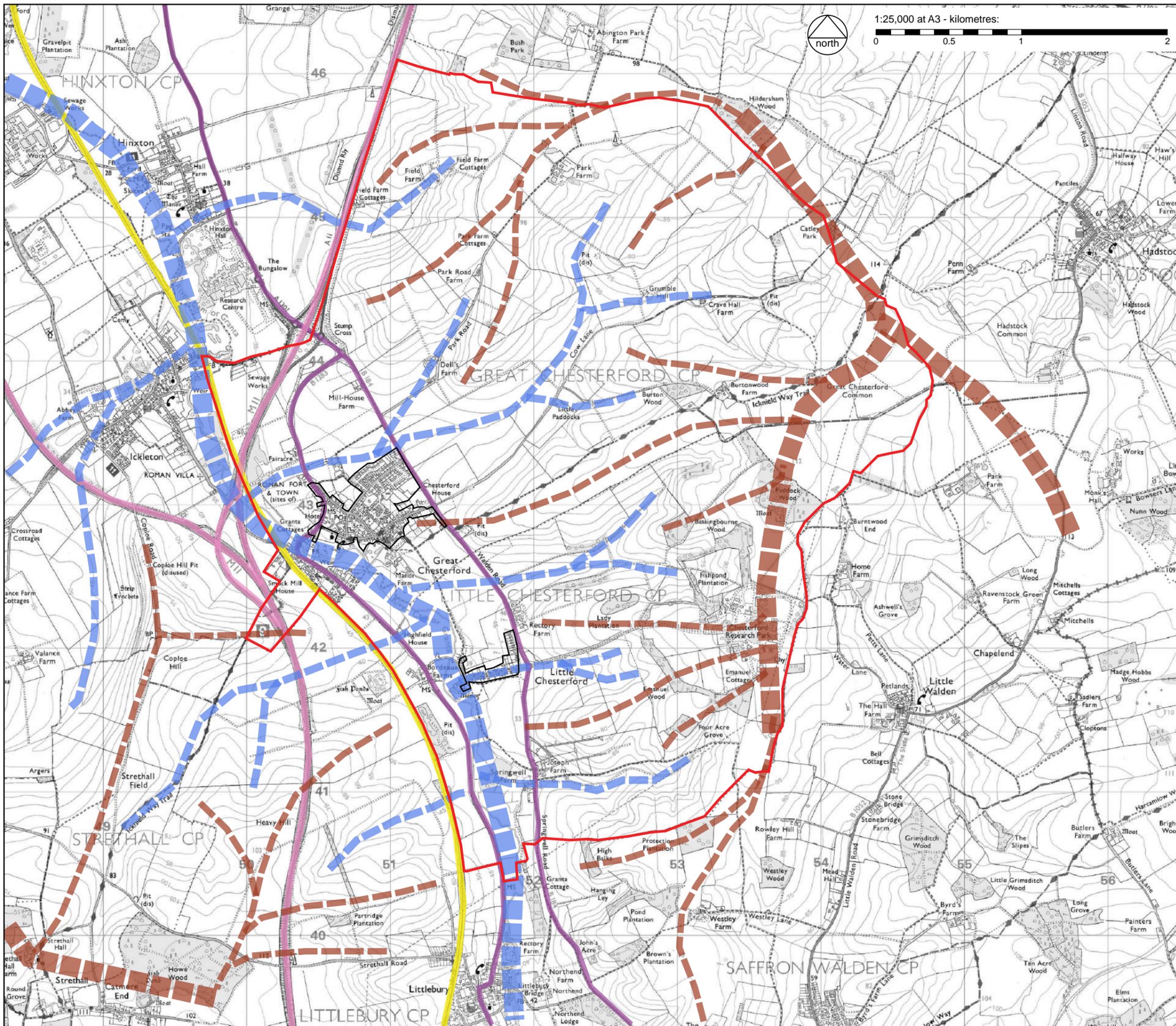
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752.1/2D **HDA 3**

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1:25,000 at A3 - kilometres:  
 0 0.5 1 2

**KEY**

- Great and Little Chesterford Parish Boundaries
- Major Ridge
- Minor Ridge
- Major Valley
- Minor Valley
- Railway
- M11/A11
- B184/ B1383
- Existing Settlement Boundary

CLIENT:  
 The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
 Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
 Topographical Analysis and Infrastructure

SCALE AT A3: 1:25,000      DATE: February 2017

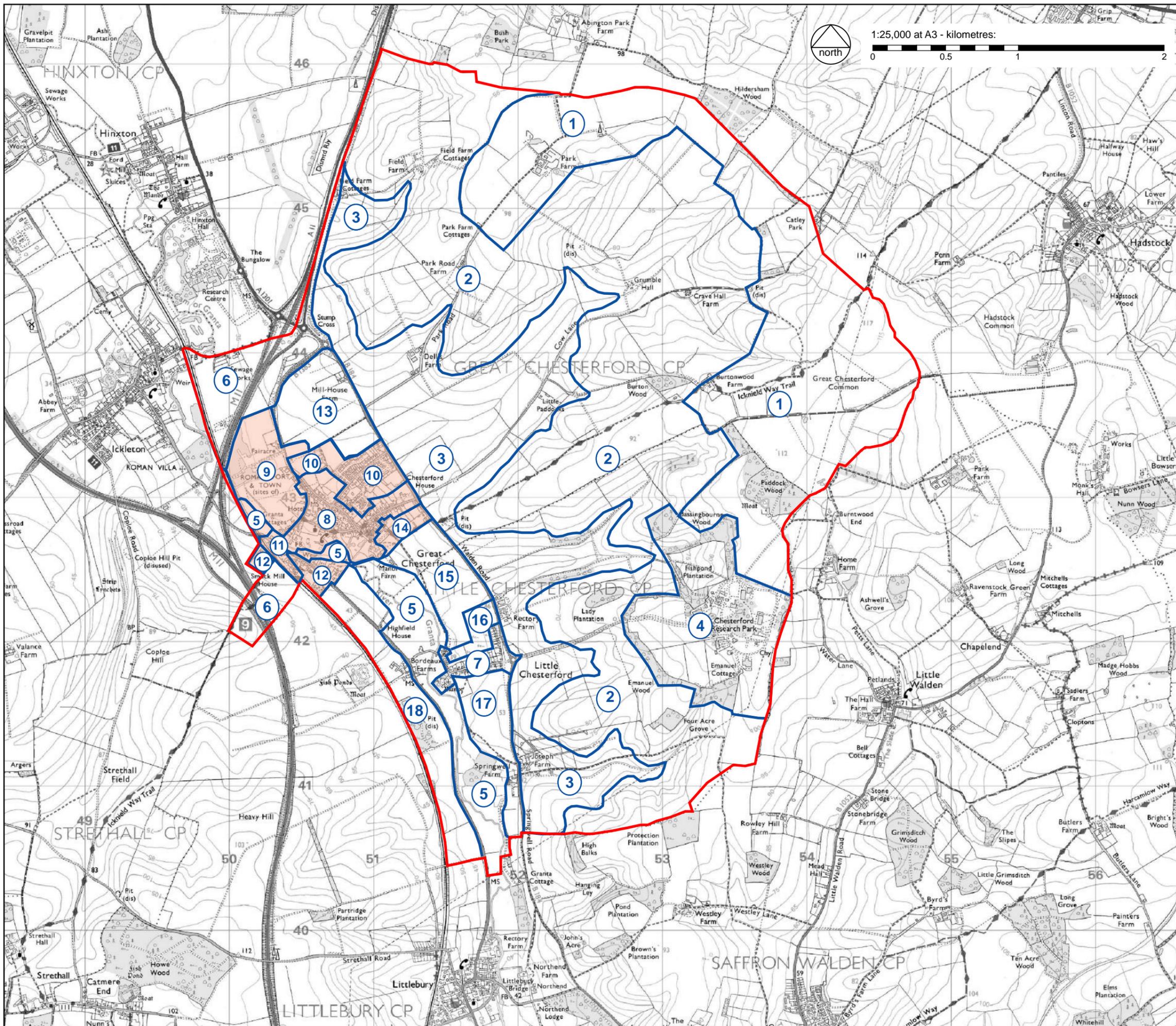
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**KEY**

- Great and Little Chesterford Parish Boundaries
- Character Area Boundary
- Great Chesterford - see detailed plan

- Character Areas:**
1. Chesterford Ridge
  2. Chalk Upper Slopes
  3. Chalk Lower Slopes
  4. Chesterford Research Park
  5. River Cam Floodplain
  6. Transport Corridor Farmland
  7. Little Chesterford
  8. Great Chesterford Historic Core
  9. Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland
  10. Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)
  11. Great Chesterford Industry
  12. Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)
  13. Mill House Farmland
  14. Great Chesterford Backlands
  15. The Chesterfords Hinterland
  16. Little Chesterford Backlands
  17. Springwell Farmland
  18. Bordeaux Pit Farmland

CLIENT:  
The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Parishes Landscape Character Areas

SCALE AT A3: 1:25,000      DATE: February 2017

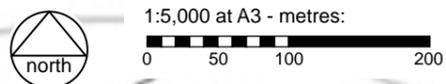
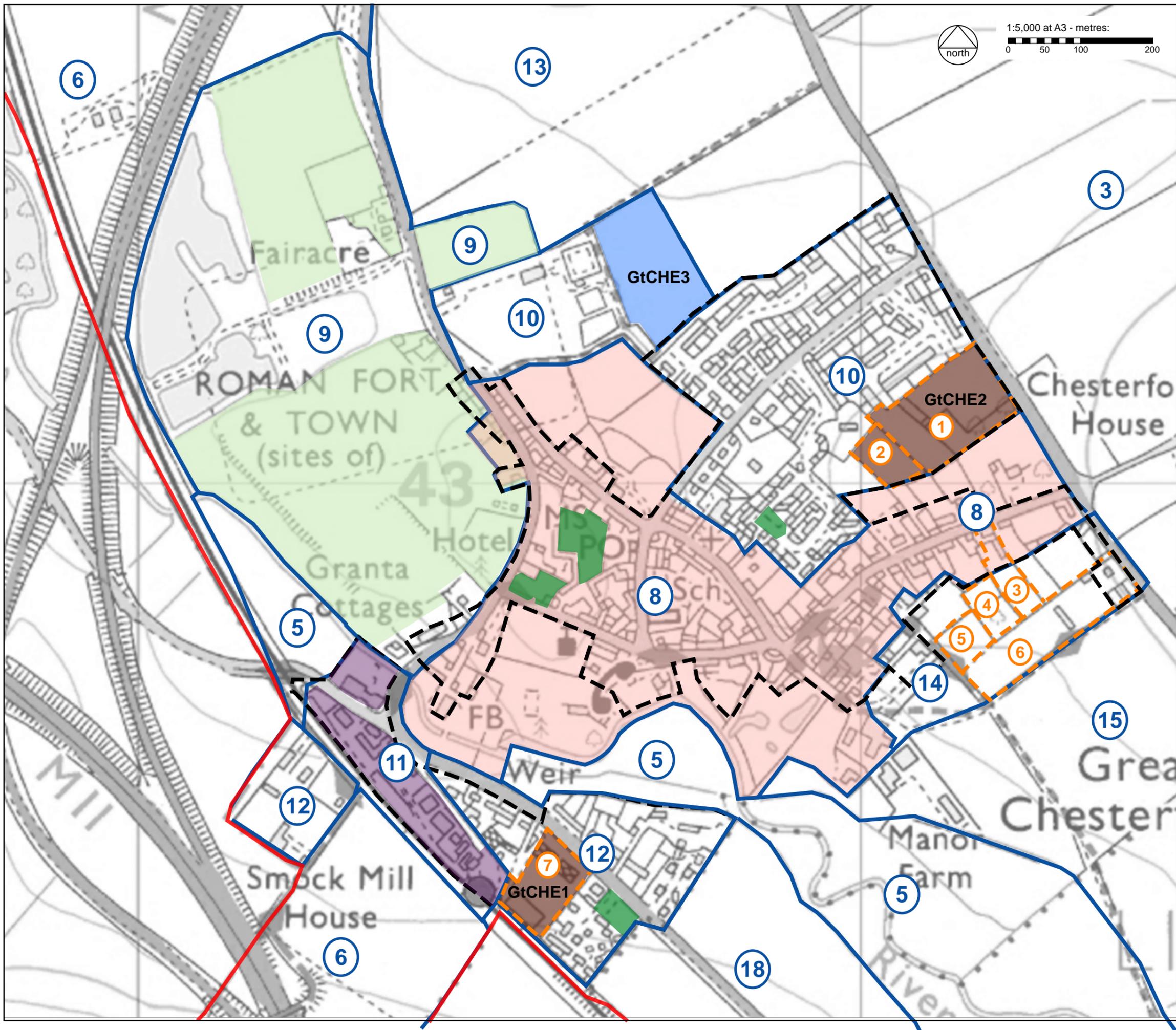
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- KEY**
- Great and Little Chesterford Parish Boundaries
  - Character Area Boundary
  - Settlement Boundary \*
  - Conservation Area \*
  - Allocated Residential Site \*
  - Employment Sites \*
  - Protected Open Space \*
  - Community / Education Site \*
  - Ancient Monument \*
  - Recent Planning Applications

- Character Areas:
3. Chalk Lower Slopes
  5. River Cam Floodplain
  6. Transport Corridor Farmland
  8. Great Chesterford Historic Core
  9. Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland
  10. Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)
  11. Great Chesterford Industry
  12. Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)
  13. Mill House Farmland
  14. Great Chesterford Backlands
  15. The Chesterfords Hinterland

\* As shown on Pre-submission Consultation Map 44.3 of Uttlesford Local Plan, April 2014

CLIENT:  
The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Landscape Character Areas - Great Chesterford Detailed Plan

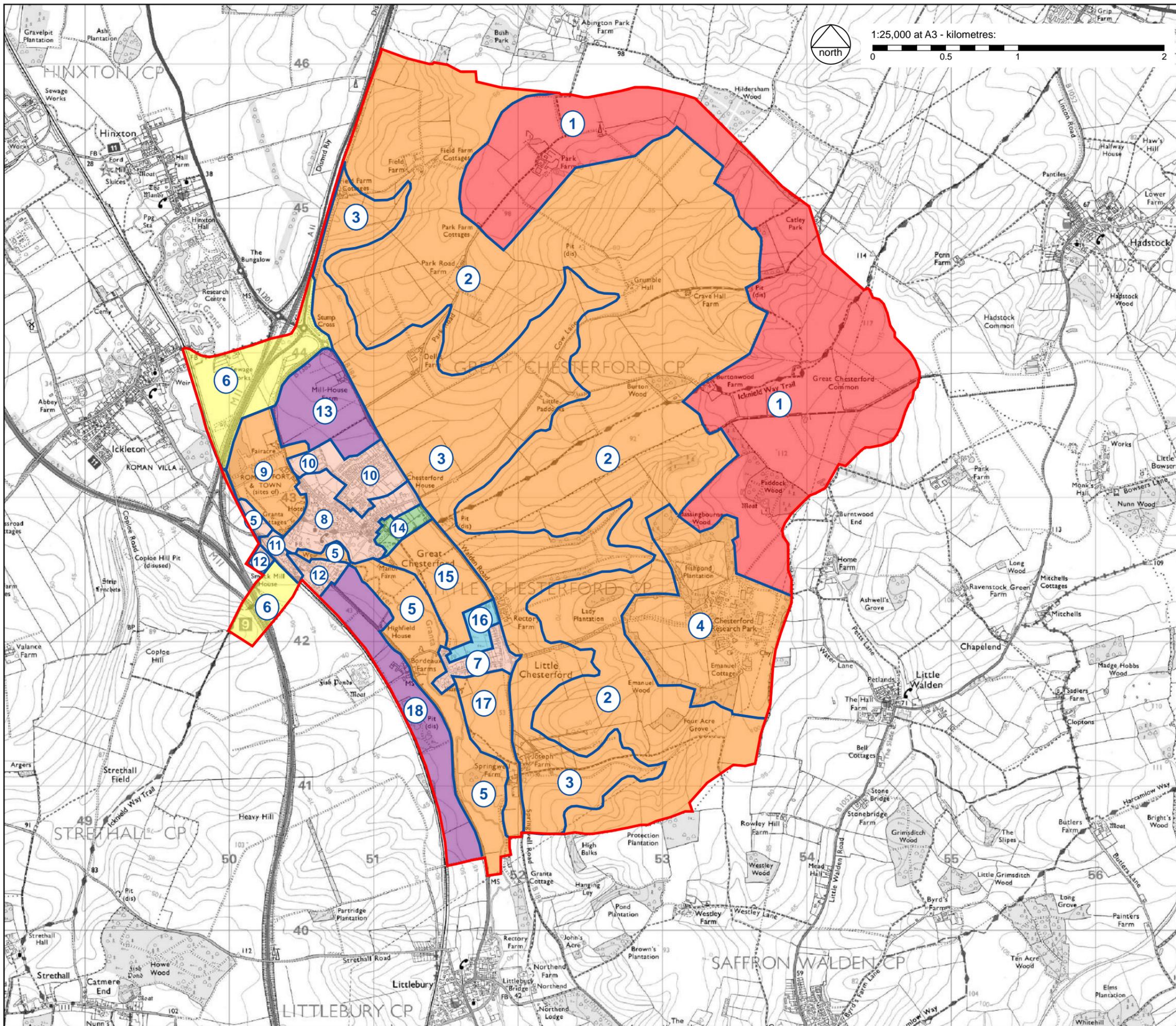
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**KEY**

- Great and Little Chesterford Parish
- Boundaries
- Character Area Boundary

**Landscape Capacity**

- High
- Medium/High
- Medium
- Low/Medium
- Low
- Negligible/Low
- Built Development - not relevant to capacity study

- Character Areas:**
1. Chesterford Ridge
  2. Chalk Upper Slopes
  3. Chalk Lower Slopes
  4. Chesterford Research Park
  5. River Cam Floodplain
  6. Transport Corridor Farmland
  7. Little Chesterford
  8. Great Chesterford Historic Core
  9. Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland
  10. Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)
  11. Great Chesterford Industry
  12. Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)
  13. Mill House Farmland
  14. Great Chesterford Backlands
  15. The Chesterfords Hinterland
  16. Little Chesterford Backlands
  17. Springwell Farmland
  18. Bordeaux Pit Farmland

CLIENT:  
The Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Landscape Capacity

SCALE AT A3:  
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752.1/7A **HDA 7**

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Community Centre

Jubilee Gardens

G

School Playing Fields

Hall Gardens

Great Chesterford Primary School

F

D

E

Great Chesterford

C

A

B

- KEY**
-  Conservation Area
  -  Allocated Residential Sites
  -  Proposed Community/Education Site
  -  Formal Recreation Area (Note 1)
  -  Education/Recreation Area (Note 2)
  -  Greenspace
  -  Important Open Spaces (from CAA, April 2017; Note 3)
  -  Tree Preservation Order
  -  Listed Buildings
  -  Watercourse
  -  Pond
  -  Flood Risk Zone
  -  Special Reserve
  -  County Wildlife Site
  -  Public Houses
  -  Doctor's Surgery
  -  Church

Note 1: Play Area on Pilgrims Close is Protected Open Space (2014 LP)  
 Note 2: Playing Fields are Protected Open Space (2014 LP)  
 Note 3: The Crown House is Protected Open Space (2014 LP)

CLIENT:  
The Chesters Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PROJECT:  
Chesters Neighbourhood Plan

TITLE:  
Great Chesterford Internal Space Assessment

SCALE AT A3: NOT TO SCALE      DATE: February 2017

752.1/6A      **HDA 8**

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Map to Site  
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 MA REFERENCE: 1042  
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 001838 (2 of 4)

**Appendix 1 – Extract from Essex Landscape Character Assessment for Landscape Character  
Area C1 Cam Valley**



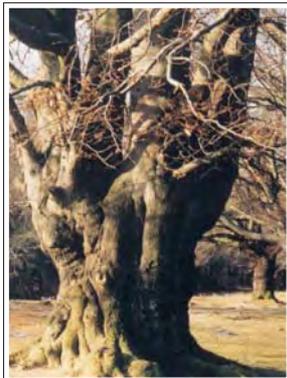
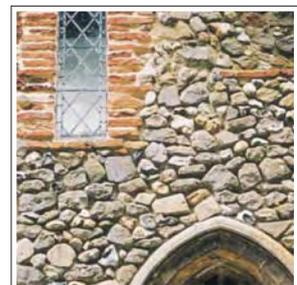
# Essex & Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan Review

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## ESSEX LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Final Report

2003



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**CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES**

*Environment Landscape Planning*

#### 4.4 River Valley Landscapes (C)

4.4.1 The River Valleys are a significant component of the county's topography, character and identity. The valleys to the north are steeper and more deeply cut, becoming shallower as the rivers flow either south into the Thames or east into the North Sea. Only the Cam flows northwards. The Stour, Colne, Blackwater, Chelmer and their tributaries rise in the Glacial Till Plateau to the north, and flow east to form extensive estuaries at the coast. The Crouch flows east across the south of the county, and joins the Roach to form a further estuary. The Rivers Lee, Mardyke and Roding flow southwards into the River Thames estuary. The valleys contain river corridors that are frequently of landscape, nature conservation and heritage value.



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

- The river valleys dissect the boulder clay plateau. They are smaller and steeper in the upper valley reaches, revealing underlying gravel and sand deposits on the valley sides.
- Parts of the valleys are extensively modified by reservoirs, current and reclaimed gravel pits, landfill sites, artificial wetlands, river realignments and canals.
- Smaller, intimate tree-lined valleys with small rural settlements contrast with the more developed major river valley floodplains.

- Organic field shapes are common as they are defined by the valley topography.
- The high ground of the plateau allows ‘tunnelled’ views through deciduous woodland to the valley bottom.
- The river courses are often marked by their associated vegetation.
- Settlements along the valleys reflect the historic use of them for access into the county.

4.4.3 Typical hedgerow species are Hawthorn, Oak, Ash, with occasional White Poplar, Crack Willow, White Willow, Alder, Oak, Field Maple, Goat Willow, Black Poplar, Elm.



4.4.4 The River Valleys comprise eight Landscape Character Areas within the study area:

- Cam Valley (C1)
- Stort Valley (C2)
- Lee Valley (C3)
- Roding Valley (C4)
- Chelmer Valley (C5)
- Blackwater & Brain Valley (C6)
- Colne Valley (C7)
- Stour Valley (C8)

#### 4.4.5 *Cam Valley (C1)*

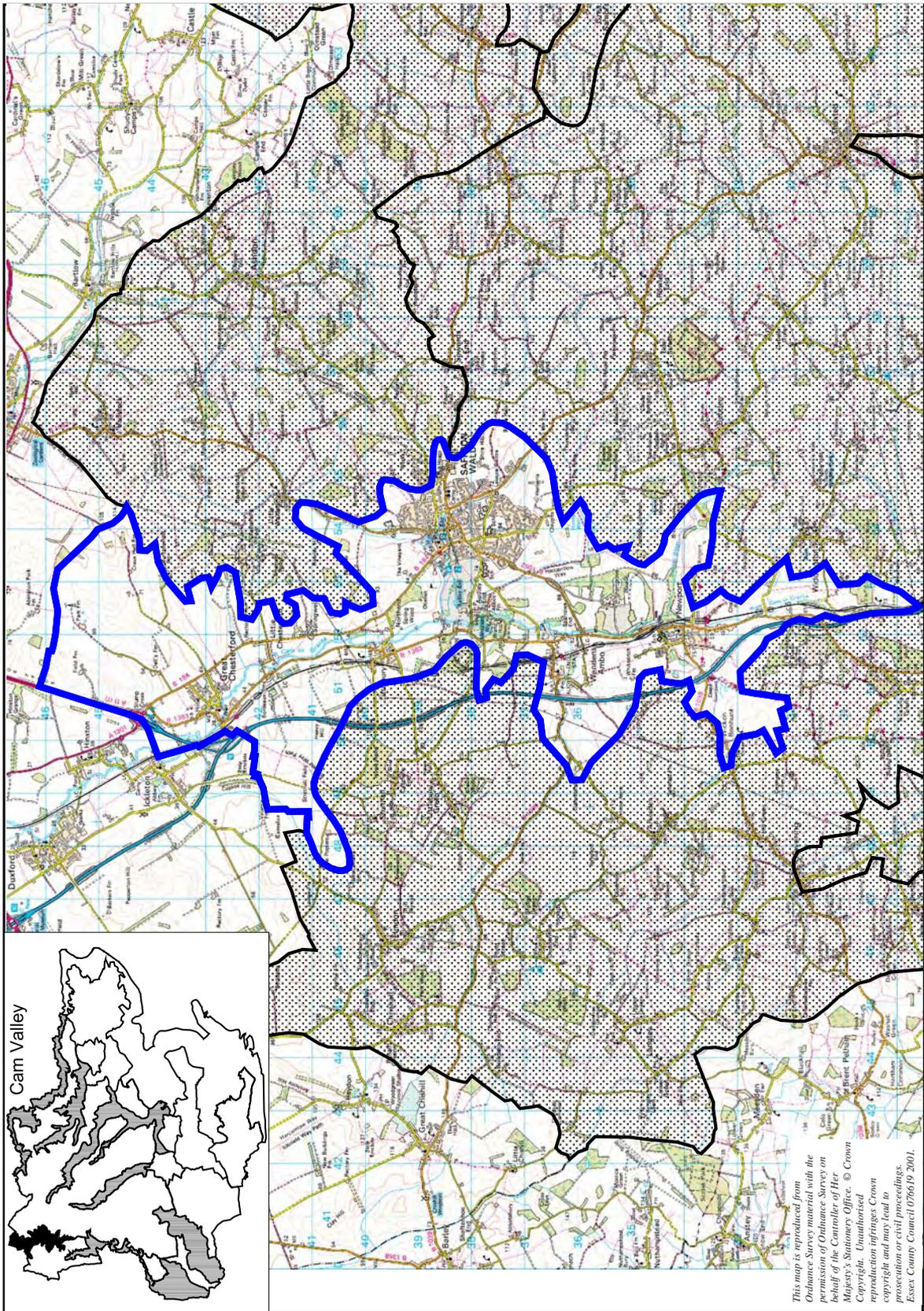


##### *Key Characteristics*

- Broad valley. Strongly rolling valleysides in the north, gentler slopes to the south.
- Predominantly large scale, open arable farmland on the valley slopes.
- Enclosed character of the valley floor with lush riverside vegetation
- Nucleated settlement pattern.
- Extensive historic parkland between Littlebury and Newport.

##### *Overall Character*

The Cam Valley is a wide and relatively deep valley, with distinctive smooth undulating chalkland hillslopes in the north, becoming shallower and gentler to the south. Large regular arable fields on the valleysides are divided by very broken hedgerows with few hedgerow trees. In contrast, the valley floor has a more enclosed intimate character with dense riverside trees/woodland and small fields. Historic parks such as Audley End and Shortgrove introduce a strong pastoral character to the valley between Littlebury and Newport with sweeping grasslands studded with parkland trees, as well as boundary woods and treebelts following the contours. A string of small villages are situated along the lower slopes of the main valley, and the small town of Saffron Walden occupies a tributary valley to the west. The M11 and a pylon route are locally visually prominent in the landscape.



## ***Character Profile***

### *Geology*

- Upper/Middle Chalk, Sand and Gravels.

### *Soils*

- Well drained brown calcareous soils and flinty sandy loams. Seasonally waterlogged alluvial soils.

### *Landform*

- Broad valley up to 1.5 km wide/65 m amplitude of relief. Strongly rolling valleysesides with a flat valley floor in the north. Tributary valleys create marked spurs and ridges. Gentler slopes south of Newport with a narrow valley floor.

### *Semi-natural vegetation*

- Remnant chalk grassland in roadside verges on the valleysesides. Calcareous fen/marsh, alder carr woodland on the valley floor.

### *Pattern of field enclosure*

- Large scale mostly regular field pattern on the valleysesides, and low trimmed or fragmented hedges. Small linear fields on the valley floor divided by drainage ditches or hedges.

### *Farming pattern*

- Arable land use on the valleysesides, pasture and arable on the valley floor.

### *Woodland/tree cover*

- Typically open valleysesides, with a few isolated plantations and treebelts. However, between Littlebury and Newport a much higher tree cover associated with parkland woods/treebelts.
- Strongly vegetated river course with strips of wet alder/willow woodland and poplar plantations.

### *Settlement pattern and built form*

- Strong nucleated settlement pattern (unusual in Essex). Small to medium size villages, single small town of Saffron Walden, and only a few isolated farms on the valleysesides.
- Historic vernacular varies from brick and flint, more common in the north, to pink, white and green colour wash plastered timber frame buildings, some with decorative pargetting.
- Wealth and variety of architectural detail in the historic core of Saffron Walden.

### *Communications*

- Historic roads and lanes skirt the edge of the floodplain/lower valleysides, only crossing the valley at a small number of bridging points.
- The present day M11 follows higher parts of the western valleysides and crosses the valley in the far north.

### *Other landscape features*

- Two very large historic parks of Audley End and Shortgrove Park (18th Century Capability Brown landscapes) occupy the valley between Littlebury and Newport.
- Saffron Walden Church tower/spire is an important local landmark dominating the town and the surrounding landscape.
- Large common with maze in Saffron Walden.
- Iron Age hillfort of Ring Hill.
- A few disused chalkpits. Active chalk quarry near Newport. (Sand and gravel workings near Little/Great Chesterford).
- Pylon route crossing the valley near Littlebury is visually prominent.

### *Landscape Condition*

- Hedgerows on some valleysides are in poor condition due to lack of management and intensive arable farming practices.
- Some valley floor pastures are in poor condition due to overgrazing.
- The extensive areas of historic parkland are in good condition.
- The condition of the settlements is good.
- Gravel workings, chalk pits, pylons and the M11 currently create some localised visual intrusions in the landscape.

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

- Significant past influences on the development of the landscape include its early use as a communications route, late enclosure of the valley side open fields, and the establishment of large, parkland estates.
- Intensification of arable farming since the Second World War has led to the loss/fragmentation of hedgerows on the valleysides.

- Commons, meadows, parkland and visually prominent chalkland slopes surrounding Saffron Walden are an important part of its setting and character, and would be vulnerable to large scale development.
- Small scale infill and expansion of the smaller settlements is also a likely pressure for change, and respect for their landscape setting and character is an important issue.
- Continuing decline in traditional grazing of riverside meadows due to expansion of horsiculture is a current and likely future trend.

**CAM VALLEY (C1)  
SENSITIVITY EVALUATION**

TYPE/SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT/CHANGE	KEY LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND ACCOMMODATION OF CHANGE ISSUES	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY LEVEL
1. Major urban extensions (>5 ha) and new settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> <li>• Integrity of undisturbed valley floor and of historic parklands.</li> <li>• Coalescence of small settlements.</li> </ul>	H
2. Small urban extensions (<5 ha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape setting of towns.</li> </ul>	M
3. Major transportation developments/improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> <li>• Integrity of valley floor and of historic parklands.</li> </ul> <p><i>Alignment and appropriate design of landform would be critical.</i></p>	M
4. Commercial/warehouse estate/port development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> <li>• Integrity of undisturbed valley floor and of historic parklands.</li> </ul>	H
5. Developments with individual large/bulky buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> </ul> <p><i>Siting, massing, form and colour are critical.</i></p>	M
6. Large scale 'open uses'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> <li>• Integrity of valley floor.</li> </ul> <p><i>May be opportunities for restoration of hedgerows and chalk grassland.</i></p>	M
7. Mineral extraction/waste disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually exposed valleysides.</li> <li>• Landform character.</li> <li>• Integrity of undisturbed valley floor and of historic parklands.</li> </ul>	M
8. Incremental small scale developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character and setting of the smaller settlements.</li> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> </ul>	M
9. Utilities development, i.e. masts, pylons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some visually exposed valleysides.</li> </ul>	M
10. Decline in traditional countryside management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition of valley floor meadows and valley side hedgerows.</li> </ul>	M

Table to be read in conjunction with paragraphs 1.4.15 – 1.4.17

**Appendix 2 – Extract from Landscape Character of Uttlesford District for Landscape Character  
Area A1 Cam River Valley**

## **7.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF UTTLESFORD DISTRICT**

## **7.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF UTTLESFORD DISTRICT**

### **7.1 General**

7.1.1 This section of the report provides the detailed ‘profiles’ of Landscape Character Areas within Uttlesford District, structured as follows:

- Location of character area (map)
- Boundaries of character area (map)
- Photograph
- Key characteristics
- Overall character description
- Visual characteristics
- Historic land use
- Ecological features
- Key planning and land management issues
- Sensitivities to change
- Proposed landscape strategy objectives
- Suggested landscape planning guidelines
- Suggested land management guidelines

The profiles should be read as a whole when used to inform decision making. Where Landscape Character Areas fall within two or more adjacent District/Borough areas included in this Study report, the same profile has been included within the respective section. In such instances, a cross-reference is noted in the respective Character Area profile(s). Reference should also be made to other studies for neighbouring authority areas including:

- South Cambridgeshire District/Cambridgeshire County Studies
- Hertfordshire County Landscape Character Assessment Studies

7.1.2 The following Landscape Character Types and Areas have been identified within Uttlesford District (see Figure 7.1), and are described in the following sections:

#### **A - River Valley Landscapes**

- A1 - Cam River Valley
- A3 - Stort River Valley
- A5 - Pant River Valley
- A6 - Upper Chelmer River Valley

#### **B - Farmland Plateau Landscapes**

- B1 - Ashdon Farmland Plateau
- B2 - Hempstead Farmland Plateau
- B3 - Bumpstead Farmland Plateau
- B7 - Debden Farmland Plateau
- B8 - Thaxted Farmland Plateau
- B10 - Broxted Farmland Plateau
- B11 - Lindsell & Bardfield Farmland Plateau
- B12 - Hatfield Forest Farmland Plateau
- B13 - Rayne Farmland Plateau
- B14 - Roding Farmland Plateau
- B15 - Pleshey Farmland Plateau

B16 - Felsted Farmland Plateau

**H - Chalk Upland Landscapes**

H1 - Elmdon Chalk Upland

H2 - Arkesden Chalk Upland

H3 - Langley Chalk Upland

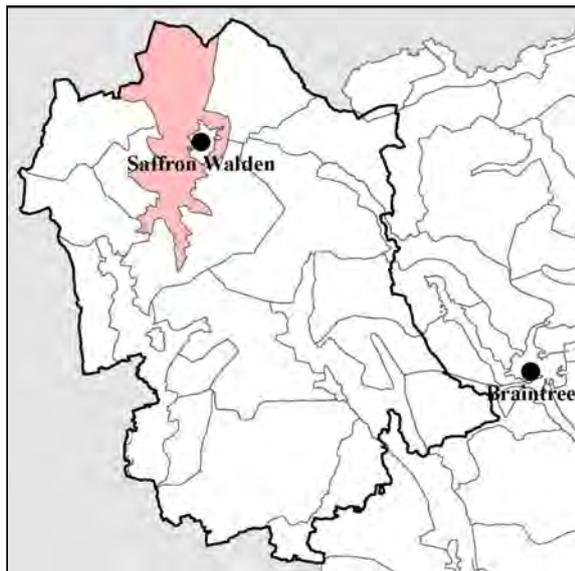
H4 - Berden and Farnham Chalk Upland

## **7.2 River Valley Landscapes**

7.2.1 This Landscape Character Type contains the following Landscape Character Areas:

- V-shaped or u-shaped landform which dissects Boulder Clay/Chalky Till plateau
- Main river valley served by several tributaries
- Flat or gently undulating valley floor
- Intimate character in places
- Wooded character in places

## A1 CAM RIVER VALLEY

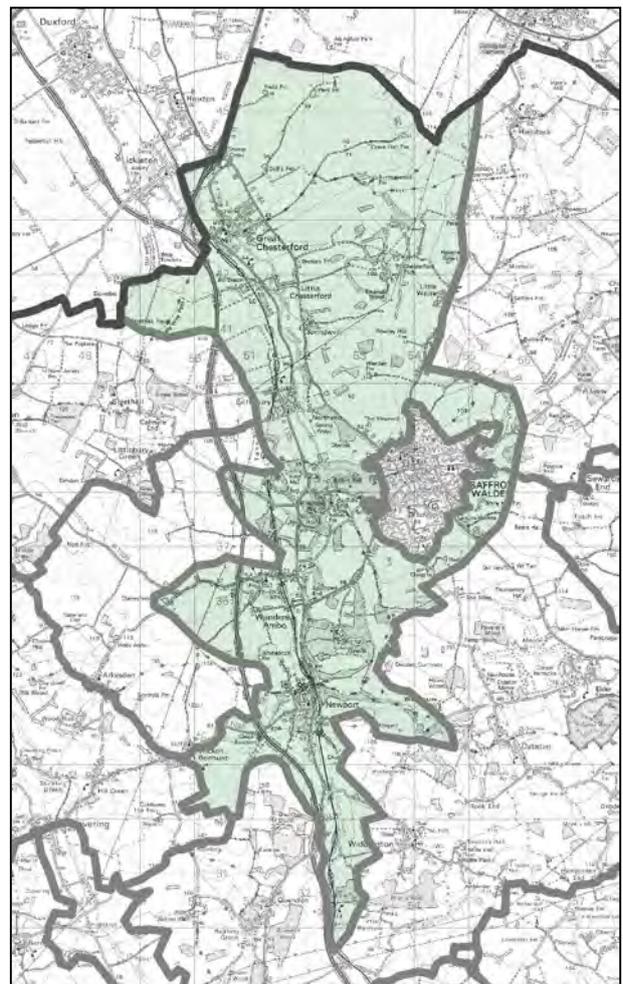


### Key Characteristics

- Rolling, open landscape of chalky boulder clay with wide views from higher ground.
- Well vegetated riverbanks with shrubs, trees and water meadows along the winding narrow river corridor.
- Large-scale downland reflecting late enclosure, with rectilinear field pattern .
- Low hedges and few trees mainly in small copses.
- Ancient town of Saffron Walden.
- Dispersed settlements on valley sides connected by busy B roads.

### Overall Character

The Cam River Valley extends from the Cambridgeshire-Essex boundary south to Newport where the M11 and the B1383 roads converge. It is a broad rolling landscape that drains the River Cam and its tributaries, Debden Water and Wicken Water. The eastern slopes are dominated by the historic settlement of Saffron Walden, with its imposing church. This side of the river valley is characterised by large farms and small villages connected by small lanes. In contrast, the western slopes are more diverse, with small quiet villages, and many busy roads. The eastern slopes are a large-scale landscape of primarily arable fields, with some grazing pastures. Dense blocks of trees, including some ancient woodland, punctuate the western slopes where the field boundaries are typically organic in shape. The M11, the railway line and the B1383 run north-south through the



western slopes of the Cam River Valley. Disused clay pits and chalk pits can be seen in places on the lower slopes. On the eastern slopes, the settlement pattern is dispersed, with isolated farmsteads and nucleated villages such as Little Walden and Little Chesterford. Colour-washed thatched or mellow red brick houses are found throughout the valley which enhance its visually rich heritage, and there are some outstanding old barns. Great Chesterford is a larger village, with business parks and significant commercial areas. Field pattern is regular, bounded by gappy hedgerows, drainage ditches and occasional trees. Views from the higher ground are often framed by distant patches of woodland and scattered copses. The narrow course of the River Cam meanders within its floodplain between Great Chesterford and Shortgrove Bridge. The river corridor is fringed by trees which delineate its shape within the patchwork of pasture and plantation woodlands that line the valley floor. Audley End - an outstanding Jacobean manor set in its eighteenth century Capability Brown landscape park is a distinctive area of local character. In the upper reaches, arable farmland covers steep slopes descending almost to the river's edge. The village of Littlebury, with its picturesque setting along the River Cam and its historic houses in many shades of colour-washed plaster, also possesses the former King's Mill - an old watermill that bridges the river behind the village.

### **Visual Characteristics**

- Attractive panoramic views from the eastern slopes to western valley slopes framed by distant blocks of trees.
- Views of towns and villages from higher ground.
- Valley sides descend quite steeply from rolling arable fields to the river and its tributaries and dramatic views are possible from the ridges.
- Large ancient town of Saffron Walden, and its distinctive church spire can be seen from many directions due to its position on the higher slopes.
- Intimate views on the lower slopes of wooded river valley floor.
- Intimate scale of villages and towns contrasts with large-scale modern agriculture.
- Hedgerow loss is visible in the landscape.
- Urban fringe settlement often not well integrated into the landscape.

### **Historic Land Use**

Evidence of historic land use within the Character Area is dominated by large common-fields of the Cambridgeshire and Midland type, which developed here, a field-type that is rare in the rest of Essex. Some of these were enclosed by agreement in the early post-medieval period, the remainder being enclosed in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, partially as a function of the parliamentary enclosure act. The main historic landscape features include:

- The valley of the River Cam which forms a natural routeway through the ridge.
- A series of parks - Shortgrove, Audley End and Chesterford - which are strung out along the river valley itself and on the valley slopes.
- Winding lanes, dispersed hamlets and greens, with ancient woodlands on the higher ground.

### **Ecological Features**

This Character Area is dominated by widespread arable agriculture surrounding settlements. However, the area does contain 16 sites of nature conservation value. These include:

- Debden Water SSSI (220 hectares) - comprising open water and lake side habitats.
- Eight CWSs comprising ancient and semi-natural woodland including Burton Wood, Paddock Wood and Emanuel Wood, Spring Wood, Westley Wood, London Jock Wood, Brakey Ley Wood and part of Pounce Wood.
- Eight CWSs comprising pasture or road verges with unimproved grassland or fen including Little Walden Road Quarry, Byrd's Farm Lane, Ashdon Road, Audley Park Pastures, Audley End Park Wall, Spring Hill Fen, Newport Churchyard and Crave Hall Meadow.

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

- Potential for erection of new farm buildings, which would be conspicuous on the skyline.
- Potential pressure for increased use of narrow and minor lanes especially during peak tourist periods.
- Potential pressure from urban expansions on the edges of Great Chesterford and Saffron Waldon.
- Potential pressure for increased use of narrow and minor lanes due to development of Chesterford Park.
- Pressure from potential expansion of villages within adjacent character areas infringing upon the generally open character of the area.
- Potential further decrease in hedgerows and tree cover due to agricultural practice.
- Potential for pollution of the River Cam from fertiliser and pesticide run-off from surrounding valley side and farmland plateau areas.
- Potential decrease in hedgerows and tree cover due to pressure from adjacent agricultural land use.
- Potential loss of riverside marshland and pastures due to agricultural encroachment.
- Visual intrusion of potential road expansion linked to pressure of traffic on minor roads, especially during busy tourist periods.
- Intrusion on tranquillity with potential of increasing traffic on minor roads due to proposed development at Chesterford Park.

### **Sensitivities to Change**

Sensitive key characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include the patchwork pattern of pasture and plantation woodlands, which would be sensitive to changes in land management. The open skyline of the valley slopes is visually sensitive, with new development potentially being highly visible within panoramic inter and cross-valley views. Intimate views from lower slopes to the wooded river valley floor and views to the valley sides from adjacent Landscape Character Areas are also sensitive. Historic integrity is relatively strong with a dispersed historic settlement pattern and several winding lanes, greens and ancient woodlands. Several important habitats for wildlife and biodiversity are scattered throughout the area (including 16 County Wildlife sites and an open water SSSI). Overall this character area has relatively high sensitivity to change.

### **Proposed Landscape Strategy Objectives**

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

### **Suggested Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements.
- Maintain cross-valley views.
- Consider the landscape pattern and structure of large woodland areas and the role that they have in the composition of views to and from the area.
- Ensure that new woodland planting is designed to enhance landscape character and that species composition reflects local character.
- Ensure any new development on valley sides is small-scale and that it responds to historic settlement pattern, form and building materials.
- Encourage the re-use of redundant agricultural farm buildings, especially red brick or black timber-framed and boarded barns.

**Suggested Land Management Guidelines**

- Develop strategies to deal with peak flows of traffic in tourist season, particularly near Audley End.
- Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows and restore where possible.
- Establish arable field margins.
- Conserve and manage areas of ancient woodland as historical landscape and nature conservation features.
- Consider the visual impact of new farm buildings on the valley slopes and encourage the planting of tree groups around visually intrusive buildings.

## **Appendix 3 – Methodology for Analysis of Landscape Capacity**

### Appendix 3 – Methodology for Analysis of Landscape Capacity

#### Analysis of Parish-Scale Landscape Character Areas

The characteristics of each Parish-scale landscape character area is analysed against criteria identified in Topic Paper 6 of the Countryside Agency’s Landscape Character Assessment Guidance, along with identification of any designations, relevant planning policy, and consideration of the historic landscape characterisation of the area. This information is then fed into the landscape sensitivity and landscape value assessments.

#### Landscape Sensitivity

LCA	Inherent Landscape Qualities (Intactness and Condition)				Visual Contribution to the Distinctive Setting of the Settlement	Inconsistency with Existing Village/Settlement Form/Pattern	Contribution to Rurality of Surrounding Landscape	Sensitivity 1-4 Negligible 5-8 Slight 9-12 Moderate 13-16 Substantial 17-20 Major 4 8 12 16 20	Final Assessment Landscape Sensitivity
	low	high							

#### Landscape Value

LCA	Landscape Designation		Other Designation (Nature Conservation, Heritage, Amenity, Flooding, including Flood Zone)	Contribution to Setting of Village/Settlement/ Outstanding Assets	Special Cultural/Historic Associations	Perceptual Aspects (e.g. Scenic Beauty, Views, Tranquillity, Wildness)	Landscape Value 1-5 Negligible 6-10 Slight 11-15 Moderate 16-20 Substantial 21-25 Major 5 10 15 20 25	Final Assessment Landscape Value
	low	high						

In order to assess the sensitivity of the landscape to development, assumptions have been made as to the likely built form of any new development areas. It has been assumed that buildings would be two storeys in height. There would be open space provision and a landscape framework with tree planting of appropriate scale, area and design to ensure that the development achieves a good fit in the landscape.

Sensitivity and value ratings range from Major, Substantial, Moderate, Slight and Negligible. Areas judged to have Major or Substantial sensitivity or value indicates that development would have significant detrimental effect on the character of the landscape. Development in these character areas should only be on a very small scale and proposals would need to demonstrate no adverse impacts on the setting to settlement or the wider landscape.

### Combining Landscape Sensitivity and Landscape Value to give Landscape Capacity

The landscape sensitivity and landscape value ratings are combined to give an overall assessment relating to landscape capacity. Landscape capacity is defined as the extent to which the landscape is able to accommodate change without significant effects on landscape character, reflecting the inherent sensitivity and value of the landscape. A landscape of high sensitivity or value therefore has a low landscape capacity:

		<b>Landscape Value</b>				
		<b>Major</b>	<b>Substantial</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Slight</b>	<b>Negligible</b>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	<b>Major</b>	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/ Low	Low	Low/ Medium
	<b>Substantial</b>	Negligible	Negligible/ Low	Low	Low/ Medium	Medium
	<b>Moderate</b>	Negligible/ Low	Low	Medium	Medium/ High	High/ Medium
	<b>Slight</b>	Low	Low/ Medium	Medium/ High	High	High/Very High
	<b>Negligible</b>	Low/ Medium	Medium	High/ Medium	High/Very High	Very High

Landscape capacity ratings range from Very High, High, Medium, Low and Negligible. A capacity rating of Medium, in relation to a village settlement, identifies a landscape character area with the capacity for limited development, say of up to 30 dwellings, having regard for the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent local landscape character areas. A capacity rating of Low identifies a landscape character area with a very limited capacity for development, with a potential for up to 10 dwellings, where the setting and form of the existing settlement would be maintained. Negligible capacity would not accommodate new development and re-use of existing buildings would need to be compatible with the character of the surrounding landscape and land use.

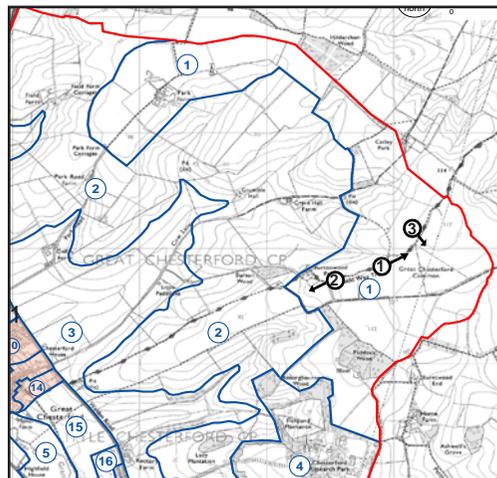
The landscape value, sensitivity and capacity assessments of each Parish scale character area are summarised in tabulated form in Appendix 5 below. Landscape sensitivity and value may not be completely uniform across an entire character area and therefore the capacity across a character area may vary slightly. This is commented on in Section 5 of the report, where particularly relevant.

A final assessment of each character area is then undertaken to assess the landscape capacity in relation to the overall settlement pattern and morphology of the village to ascertain whether development would form a logical extension to the village, consistent with the existing settlement pattern.

## Appendix 4 – Parish Character Area Analysis Sheets

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Chesterford Ridge</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Woodland (Paddock Wood; also County Wildlife Site)</li> <li>• Scheduled Monument (Moated site on southern side of Paddock Wood)</li> <li>• Listed Building (Park Farm Cottages)</li> <li>• Icknield Way Trail (17-5)</li> <li>• Public Rights of Way (17-1, 17-4, 17-11, 17-14)</li> <li>• Hildersham Wood SSSI (beyond parish to north)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High chalk plateau forming north and east boundaries of parishes (bordering Cambridgeshire to the north).</li> <li>• Historic pattern of open, large, arable, rectangular fields, offering extensive views. Remnants of large common-fields exist (as at Great Chesterford Common); these are rare in the rest of Essex. The area was enclosed in 18th/19th centuries, as part of the parliamentary enclosure act. Medieval pattern of sparse and highly dispersed settlement, comprising isolated farms and cottages; Burtonwood Farm and Park Farm.</li> <li>• Levels range between 95m and 117m AOD (at Great Chesterford Common). The plateau is broadly level forming the watershed between the Chesterfords to the west and Hadstock and Little Walden to the east.</li> <li>• Hedgerows form field boundaries, some more intact than others. Gaps allow long range views across the Cam Valley towards west, and M11/A11.</li> <li>• Intermittent woods, including an Ancient Woodland, an 'Important Woodland' (west of Catley Park) and other woodlands of more recent origin. Predominantly of native deciduous species.</li> <li>• Views to the south are contained by the woodland surrounding the Research Park.</li> <li>• The homogeneous features of this Character Area continue eastwards beyond the parish boundary.</li> <li>• The plateau forms the eastern skyline when viewed from the settlements.</li> <li>• Park Farm has a row of Cypress trees on north edge which are visible from distance. Although trees are non-native and inconsistent with wider landscape, are a distinctive landmark.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in loss of chalk grassland and hedgerow overmanagement and fragmentation.</li> <li>• Improve management of existing hedgerows and vegetation lining roads/paths.</li> <li>• Improve management of existing woodlands and plant new woodland blocks using characteristic species.</li> <li>• Vulnerability to large scale development. Tall structures would be visually intrusive and disrupt existing skyline.</li> <li>• Conservation of existing views.</li> <li>• Retain strong skylines and clear ridges.</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of bio-diverse habitat within Area.</li> <li>• Preserve and protect archaeological sites including scheduled moat at Paddock Wood.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Major</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible/Low</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Icknield Way through large arable field.



2. Panoramic views.

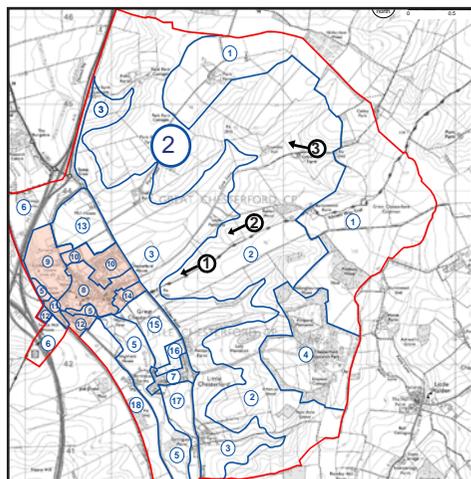


3. Wooded areas on skyline

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Chalk Upper Slopes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Woodland (Burton Wood; also County Wildlife Site)</li> <li>• County Wildlife Site (Crave Hall Farm)</li> <li>• Icknield Way Trail (17-2, 17-3)</li> <li>• Public Right of Way (34-5 south of Four Acre Grove)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steep, upper slopes of east-west orientated dry valleys, primarily in arable use on chalky boulder clay. Western boundary to Character Area follows the 65m contour, above which the contours are more closely spaced, in contrast to the more gentle slopes below.</li> <li>• Large, rectangular field pattern, with managed hedgerow boundaries, creating an open landscape with views across a series of dry valleys, though these views are restricted by intervening minor ridges. Panoramic views across Cam valley towards M11/A11 cutting through plateau on opposite side of valley.</li> <li>• Isolated pockets of woodland, including the ancient woodland of Burton Wood, 'Important Woodlands' of Lady Plantation and Four Acre Grove, and two other more recent plantations. More wooded aspect to southern part of character area, where tree belts around Chesterford Research Park have an influence.</li> <li>• Lack of settlement within Character Area restricted to isolated farmsteads of Field Farm, Park Road Farm, Grumble Hall and Crave Hall Farm. Field Farm and its associated cottages are located in an incised valley orientated towards Hinxtton, such that they are screened from the rest of the parish by the enclosing landform.</li> <li>• Relatively inaccessible landscape with limited public rights of way and roads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in over management of hedgerows, leading to them becoming fragmented. Hedgerow trees becoming over mature and not being replaced. Opportunity to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>• Vulnerability to large scale development. Tall structures would be visually intrusive and would disrupt the existing skyline.</li> <li>• Conservation of existing views.</li> <li>• Maintain the tranquillity of the area.</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of biodiverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area

Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. View from Icknield Way Trail towards Great Chesterford



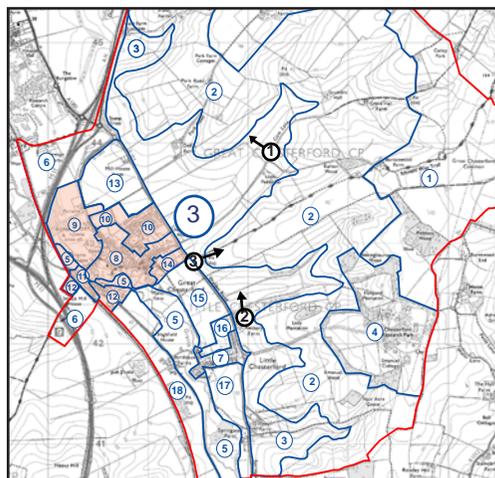
2. View from Icknield Way Trail towards Great Chesterford



3. View from Crave Hall Farm

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Chalk Lower Slopes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduled Monument (Romano-Celtic temple, 400m south of Dell's Farm)</li> <li>• Listed Buildings (Joseph Farm and Springwell Cottage)</li> <li>• Abuts Conservation Area (at Chesterford House)</li> <li>• Special Verges (B184, east of Great Chesterford and south of Little Chesterford)</li> <li>• Icknield Way Trail (17-3)</li> <li>• Public Right of Way (34-5)</li> <li>• Groundwater Protection Zone (southern end of area)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shallow slopes of dry valleys lying to the east of the B184 Walden Road/Springwell Road. This road forms the transition between the chalk slopes to the east and the flatter valley landform to the west. The eastern limit of the Character Area is formed by the 65m contour.</li> <li>• Large rectangular fields in arable use, similar in character and pattern to adjacent character area to the east, resulting in an open landscape.</li> <li>• Minor roads aligned along bottom of incised valleys, including Park Road, Cow Lane and the access road to the Chesterford Research Centre.</li> <li>• Lack of woodland restricted to recent plantations.</li> <li>• Lack of settlement, restricted to isolated farms along the B184 (Joseph Farm (plant nursery), Rectory Farm (in small-scale industrial/employment use), Little Paddocks (kennels) and Field Farm Cottages by A11). This Character Area is influenced by adjacent urban land uses within Great and Little Chesterford and tranquillity is disturbed by traffic along the B184.</li> <li>• Disused chalk pit forms local feature of historic and biodiversity value (at junction of Icknield Way with B184 Walden Road).</li> <li>• Application for single dwelling in pit (ref:UTT/15/3481/FUL) – Refused.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in over management of hedgerows, leading to them becoming fragmented. Opportunity to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>• Vulnerability to large scale development. Tall structures would be visually intrusive and would disrupt the existing skyline.</li> <li>• Conservation of existing views.</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of biodiverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> <li>• Preserve and protect existing archaeological sites including the scheduled Romano-Celtic temple south of Dell's Farm.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. View from Cow Lane across to Park Farm.



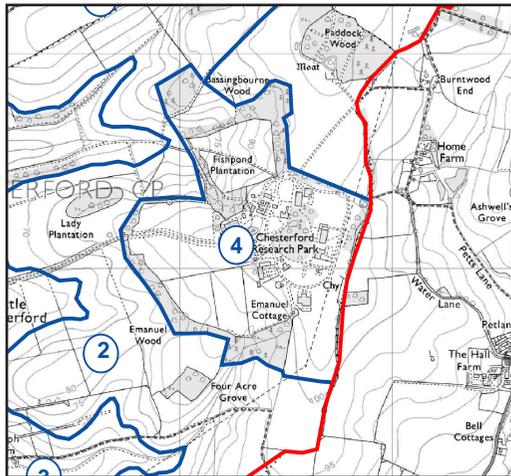
2. View from south of B184 across Research Centre access road to Chesterford Ridge.



3. Junction of Icknield Way and B184 with vegetated disused chalk pit.

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>4</b> Chesterford Research Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Woodland (Emanuel Wood)</li> <li>• Other 'Important Woodland'</li> <li>• Policy S5 - Chesterford Park Boundary</li> <li>• Policy E2 - Safeguarding Employment Land</li> <li>• Chesterford Park Local Policy 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located at eastern extremity of Little Chesterford parish on chalk ridge consisting of 150 acres of historic parkland (dating from late medieval and post-medieval, formerly Walden Park), now including a seven-hole, par 3 golf course. The parkland is not designated.</li> <li>• Most wooded Character Area, with tree belts forming the perimeter of the area. Emanuel Wood is Ancient Woodland and forms the southern edge of the Character Area. Other woods include Bassingbourne Wood and Fishpond Plantation.</li> <li>• Visible from M11 but not from the villages of Great and Little Chesterford, where the views are obscured by landform (intervening minor ridges) and vegetation.</li> <li>• Secure site which is not open to the public and with no public rights of way.</li> <li>• Mixture of ages of buildings with potential to expand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of existing woodland around perimeter of Character Area to maintain its screening effect and reinforcement with new woodland blocks to help screen views that are currently possible from the opposite side of the valley.</li> <li>• Maintain wooded skyline.</li> <li>• Potential increase in traffic if park expands, which will put pressure on local infrastructure. Seek provision of cycleways into the park.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area



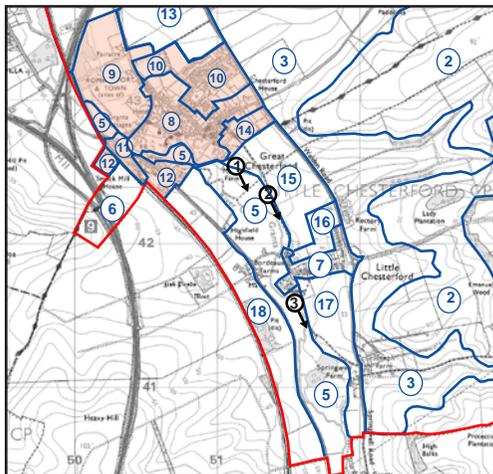
Photograph/s showing key characteristics



Picture from Chesterford Research Park Website

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>River Cam Floodplain</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood Zone of River Cam</li> <li>• Listed Building (Bordeaux Farm)</li> <li>• Public Right of Way (along eastern edge of area; 17-7 and 34-4)</li> <li>• Abuts Conservation Area (between Horse River Green and King's Mill)</li> <li>• Groundwater Protection Zone (at southern extremity of area)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat, alluvial floodplain of the River Cam/Granta with medium and large-scale linear arable and grazing fields, following meandering course of the river. The larger part of this Character Area lies to the south of Great Chesterford, though the Flood Zone continues through Great Chesterford to either side of King's Mill.</li> <li>• Field boundaries are predominantly hedgerows, with larger trees along the course of the river. Large poplar plantations exist to the west of Springwell Farm creating a more wooded appearance to the southern end of this Character Area.</li> <li>• Where the B1383 forms the western boundary of this Character Area, this also defines the extent of the Flood Zone.</li> <li>• Devoid of buildings, except for Bordeaux Farm. Urban influences occur where the river passes through Great Chesterford.</li> <li>• Pleasant, circular walks using Public Rights of Way and the arable cropping offsets from the river are popular to the north and south of Little Chesterford.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in over management of hedgerows, leading to them becoming fragmented. Opportunity to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>• Maintain cropping buffers between arable crops and the river, or promote conversion of arable land to pasture adjacent to the river.</li> <li>• Conservation of riverine views through retention and enhancement of tree lined river with new planting and improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of biodiverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Willows along course of river



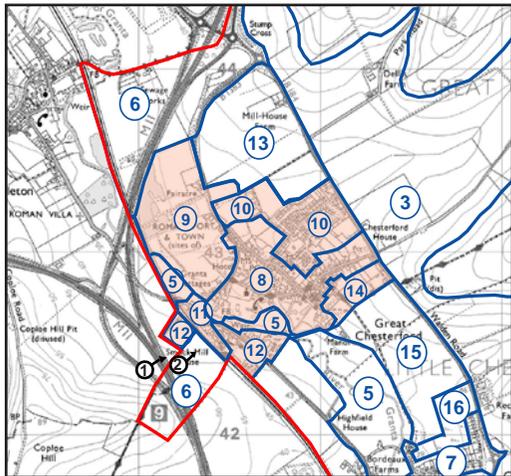
2. Riverside vegetation



3. Riverside vegetation

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Transport Corridor Farmland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Icknield Way Trail (17-15 onto 47-4)</li> <li>• Public Right of Way (follows County boundary, adjacent to sewage works (17-13))</li> <li>• Flood Zone in far north-west corner</li> <li>• Poor Air Quality Zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two zones: the area north of Great Chesterford is dominated by the M11 and A11/A1301 Stump Cross junction, whereas the area south-west of Great Chesterford is crossed by the M11, just south of Junction 9 (M11/A11). Both zones are affected by traffic noise, with potential air pollution issues.</li> <li>• The northern zone consists of arable fields to the south of the A11 and mixed uses in a triangular area to the north of the A11, bound to its west by the railway line, with a sewage works along the northern boundary.</li> <li>• The northern part of the northern zone has more affinity with the village of Ickleton to its west and this separation from Great Chesterford is reinforced by dense vegetation along the elevated M11/A11, which helps reduce the visual dominance of traffic. To the north, beyond the County boundary, lies a Research Centre (Genome).</li> <li>• Land north of the M11/A11 has been disturbed by importation of inert material to restore the land. Given this area's proximity to Ickleton and Hinxton it may have potential for redevelopment to land uses associated with existing development to its north.</li> <li>• The southern zone consists predominantly of arable fields, with an area of grassland to the east of the pedestrian bridge over the M11, which carries the Icknield Way Trail over the motorway. The north-east boundary is formed by the railway line, beyond which are views into Character Area 11 (Great Chesterford Industry), particularly from the overbridge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in over management of hedgerows, leading to them becoming fragmented. Opportunity to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>• Continued management of vegetation lining the motorway and major road junctions to maintain its screening qualities.</li> <li>• Development opportunities would need to take into consideration noise and air pollution constraints</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of biodiverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Slight</p> <p>Capacity = Low/Medium</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Vegetation screens the site (right) from the M11

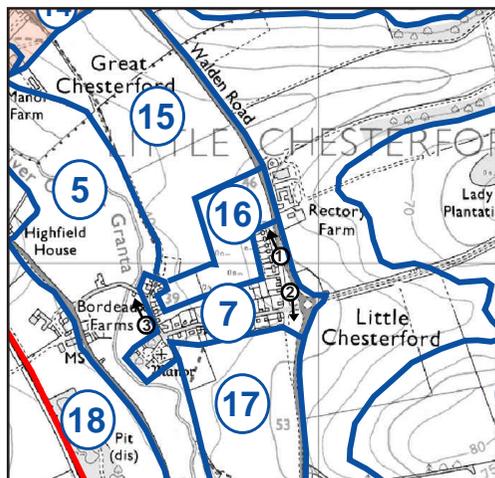


2. View into the site from south-west of Smock Mill House

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Little Chesterford</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed Buildings</li> <li>Public Right of Way (34-2)</li> <li>Within Development Limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small historic hamlet of linear form along single road of the High Street, with newer development along former alignment of Walden Road. Nine Listed Buildings, including Grade I Manor House and Grade II* St Mary the Virgin Church, both at the western end of the village.</li> <li>Dense rear garden planting limits views into wider landscape.</li> <li>The B184, Walden Road, has been realigned to accommodate a new roundabout access to the Chesterford Research Park, leaving the former alignment as cul-de-sacs. The existing roadside vegetation now provides screening for the properties along Walden Road.</li> <li>Potential for infill development extremely limited, due to compact settlement pattern, with large back gardens and area to north of Kings Farm providing the only open spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen existing vegetated interface between built development and adjacent countryside.</li> <li>Conserve existing views of historic buildings.</li> <li>Maintain rural character of village.</li> <li>Pressure for village extension. Any potential infill developments to be commensurate with character of the village and local vernacular style.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity</p> <p>Landscape Value</p> <p>Capacity</p>

Parish character area

Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Housing along Walden Road screened from the realigned B184 by trees.



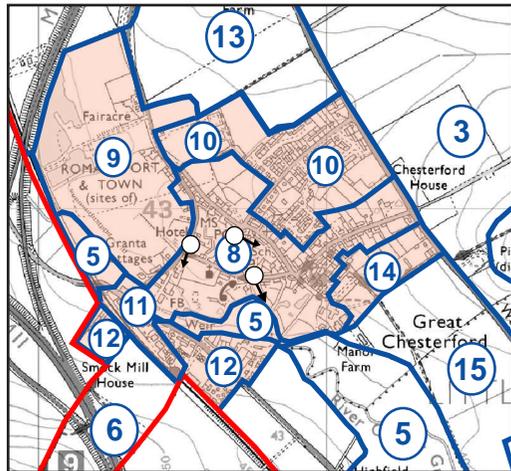
2. Former alignment of the B184 with views into Character Area 17.



3. Housing within Little Chesterford

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>Great Chesterford Historic Core</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Area</li> <li>• Listed Buildings</li> <li>• Icknield Way Trail</li> <li>• Public Rights of Way (leading into the village (17-12, 17-8 and 17-7))</li> <li>• Flood Zone (River Cam forms southern boundary)</li> <li>• Tree Preservation Orders</li> <li>• Protected Open Spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic core of village reflecting its medieval origins, with mix of ages and styles.</li> <li>• There are approximately 65 Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, which is a high density compared to its geographical extent. The majority of the Listed Buildings are Grade II, apart from All Saints' Church, which is Grade I. The Listed Buildings are predominantly timber-framed and plastered, with half of them dating from the 17/18th Centuries.</li> <li>• Boundary walls constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. These reflect local geology and create a sense of place.</li> <li>• Important public open spaces punctuate the urban fabric of the village, including small central triangular green (at junction of Church Street, South Street and School Street) and Horse River Green near the church.</li> <li>• Good provision of village facilities; public houses, local shop and a primary school.</li> <li>• Lack of parking spaces due to age and style of housing stock, thus cars are parked on the roads, leading to congestion along the narrow roads of the village.</li> <li>• Three fields on the northern edge of the Conservation Area, to the west of Jackson Lane and north of Carmen Street are currently used as horse paddocks. These fields form an important open space within the Conservation Area. They are enclosed by trees on the boundaries, except for their frontage with Carmen Street.</li> <li>• Potential for infill development extremely limited, due to compact settlement pattern. Infilling of large, vegetated gardens should be resisted due to their important contribution to the character of the village and due to access issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen existing vegetated interface between built development and adjacent countryside.</li> <li>• Conserve existing views of historic buildings.</li> <li>• Maintain historic character of village.</li> <li>• Pressure for village extension. Potential development to be commensurate with character of the village and local vernacular style.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity</p> <p>Landscape Value</p> <p>Capacity</p>

Parish character area



1. Horse River Green adjacent the river



2. New Housing that was designed to be in-keeping with existing listed buildings



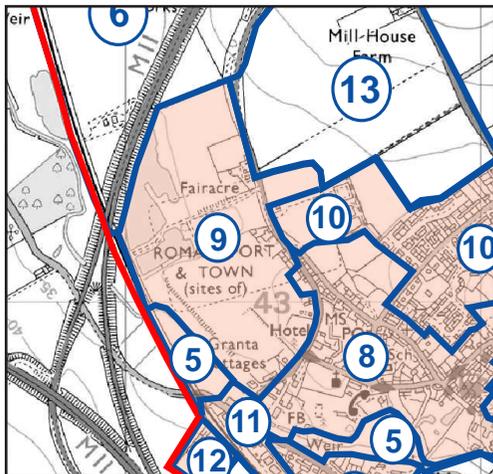
3. Great Chesterford C of E Academy School

Photograph/s showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>9</b> Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduled Monuments (Roman town and fort)</li> <li>• Abuts Conservation Area (which lies to south of area)</li> <li>• Flood Zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area predominantly of large, flat, arable fields encroached upon by houses on northern edge of village and at Fairacre, with an area of lakes formed by mineral extraction separating it from the railway and M11/A11 on embankment along its western edge. Tranquillity of area affected by adjacent roads, motorway and railway.</li> <li>• Archaeological remains of former Roman town and fort and Roman and Anglo Saxon cemeteries, dating from between 2nd Century AD and 450 AD, survive beneath the arable fields in three separate areas of Scheduled Monuments.</li> <li>• The B1383 Newmarket Road forms the eastern and southern boundaries of the area, except for the smallest of the three areas of Scheduled Monument, which lies to the east of the B1383, north of the Community Centre.</li> <li>• Garden planting around houses restricts views into arable fields onto which they back. Area of woodland to west of The Crown House also adds to treed frontage to B1383. Vegetation around Fairacre protrudes to break up the expanse of the arable field.</li> <li>• Vegetation around the lakes forms a visual barrier between the arable fields and the road/rail infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for development extremely limited due to need to preserve and protect existing archaeological sites of Roman fort and town, which are Scheduled Monuments of national importance.</li> <li>• Improve management of habitats in and around the lakes formed after former mineral extraction to increase biodiversity of the area.</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of biodiverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

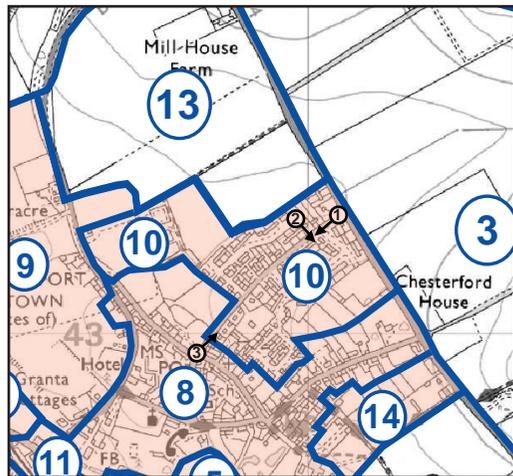
Parish character area

Photograph/s showing key characteristics



Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>10</b> Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within Development Limits</li> <li>• Proposal Site GtCHE2</li> <li>• Protected Open Space (Pilgrim's Close)</li> <li>• Abuts Conservation Area (in vicinity of King's Mill)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Townscape character of built development comprising a mixture of two-storey houses and bungalows, more modern than majority of properties within the Conservation Area.</li> <li>• The potential for further development in this part of the village has already been realised with planning permission being granted for 50 dwellings which are currently under construction off Stanley Road and 12 dwellings accessed off Bartholomew Close (GtCHE2).</li> <li>• Northern edge of existing housing is visible from the B184 Walden Road, though garden planting provides some screening. This boundary forms a weak permeable edge to the adjacent Character Areas (13 – Mill House Farmland and 3 - Lower Chalk Slopes).</li> <li>• Village community centre is a distinctive prominent building set in an area of local sports facilities, including open playing fields. This is an important community resource which is well used.</li> <li>• Gardens are generally small with limited planting, except for No 18 Jackson Lane, which has a large treed garden (subject to a Tree Preservation Order).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen existing vegetated interface between built development and adjacent countryside.</li> <li>• Very limited potential for future development.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity</p> <p>Landscape Value</p> <p>Capacity</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Bungalows on Jackson's Lane



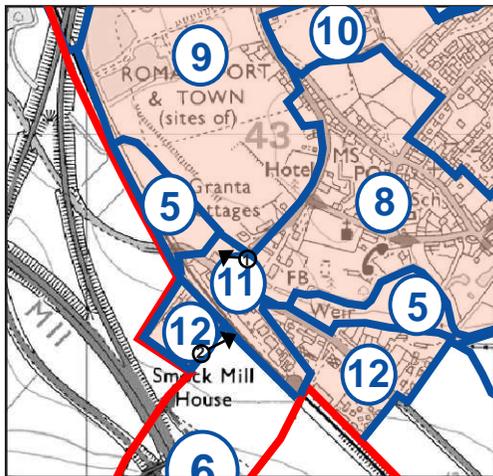
2. New development off Stanley Road



3. View up Jackson's Lane from Carmel Street

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>Great Chesterford Industry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within Development Limits</li> <li>• Employment Site</li> <li>• Listed Building (Station Building)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Townscape character of built development comprising mostly modern industrial and office buildings accessed off B1383 London/Newmarket Road, including Oliver House, Icen House and Plextek.</li> <li>• Linear development pattern of area dictated by alignment railway line, London Road and extent of flooding from River Cam/Granta. These features are also a restriction to the future expansion of this area.</li> <li>• Lack of parking leads to a cluttered and busy environment. The Station forecourt is particularly congested.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited potential for future development.</li> <li>• Opportunities to introduce more tree planting.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity</p> <p>Landscape Value</p> <p>Capacity</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Plextek office building on London Road

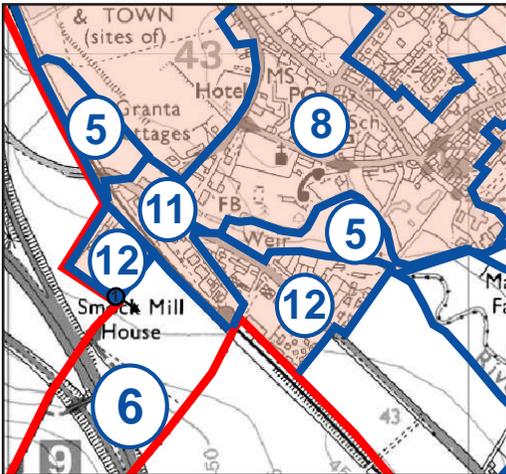


2. View of industry from Icknield Way Trail adjacent to Smock Mill House.

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>12</b> Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within Development Limits</li> <li>• Proposal Site GtCHE1</li> <li>• Protected Open Space (adjacent to B1383 and Ash Green)</li> <li>• Abuts Conservation Area (in vicinity of King's Mill)</li> <li>• Abuts Flood Zone of River Cam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Townscape character area in two parts. The larger part forms the southern approach to the village to either side of the B1383 London Road and includes recent housing development at Ash Green and Granta Close. Mix of housing styles with bungalows predominantly along B1383 London Road. Views of housing at Ash Green and Granta Close are possible when approaching the village along the B1383 from the east.</li> <li>• The smaller part is separated from the rest of the village by the railway line, and includes a small cluster of properties and their associated large gardens, including Smock Mill House (a former corn mill).</li> <li>• Vegetation restricted to gardens, though those that back onto the river are quite extensive restricting views from the north and the Conservation Area.</li> <li>• The potential for further development in this Character Area has already been realised with planning permission being granted for 42 dwellings on the site of former greenhouses at the New World Timber site (GtCHE1). Potential development in the area south of the railway line would need to consider noise and air pollution constraints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen existing interface between built development and adjacent countryside.</li> <li>• Limited potential for future development.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity</p> <p>Landscape Value</p> <p>Capacity</p>

Parish character area

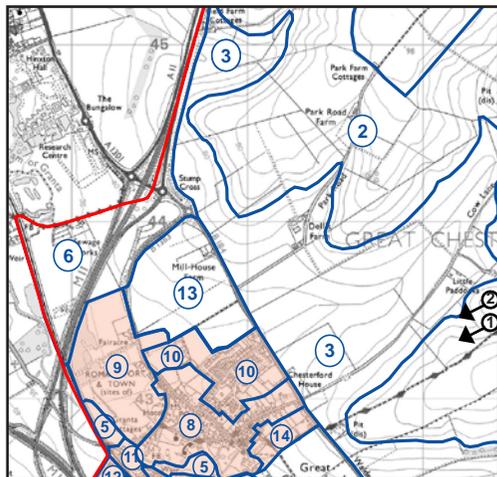
Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Distant view of Ash Green from footpath adjacent Smock Mill House

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>13</b></p> <p>Mill House Farmland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outside Development Limits, but includes Proposal Site GtCHE3 – Community/ Education Site</li> <li>• Public Right of Way (17-12)</li> <li>• Abuts Scheduled Ancient Monument in south-west corner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large, flat, arable fields forming northern setting to Great Chesterford. Area bound to north and west by B1383 and to east by B184, thus tranquillity of the area is reduced by traffic noise. Dense planting along the B1383 Newmarket Road and around the junction of the A11/A1301/B184 restrict views of traffic particularly in summer.</li> <li>• The landscape is flatter and more enclosed than the chalk lower slopes (Character Area 3) to the east. Boundary vegetation between the fields is sparse, but a block of woodland to the west of Mill House Farm breaks up the expanse of arable field.</li> <li>• This Character Area forms an important gateway into Great Chesterford, and is a buffer of open land between the village and dominating road infrastructure to the north.</li> <li>• Weak permeable northern edge of Great Chesterford abuts this Character Area.</li> <li>• The area is crossed by a public right of way which provides links between the village and the wider countryside to the east. The field south of this footpath has more affinity with the village than the fields further to the north.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure for new housing development. Any potential developments to be commensurate with character of the village and local vernacular style.</li> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in over management of hedgerows, leading to them becoming fragmented. Opportunity to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>• Strengthen existing interface between built development and adjacent countryside.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Medium</p>

Parish character area



Photograph/s showing key characteristics



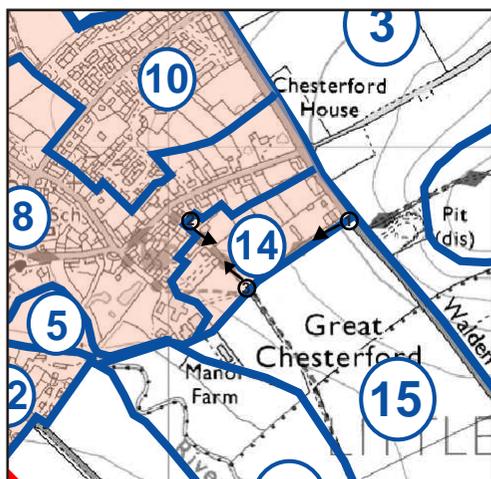
1. View from Chesterford Ridge



2. View from Chesterford Ridge

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Great Chesterford Backlands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outside Development Limits (except for The Gorse and properties fronting B184)</li> <li>• Ickneild Way Trail (17-7 and 17-8)</li> <li>• Public Right of Way (across south-west corner (17-7 and 17-8))</li> <li>• Abuts Conservation Area (along northern boundary)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-contained and well vegetated former back gardens to properties on High Street, including car park for The Plough public house and two private tennis courts. Area includes properties accessed off Rose Lane and off B184. Area forms transition between historic built development of the village centre and the open arable fields to the south.</li> <li>• Southern boundary to Character Area defined by tall dense hedge, to the south of which lies a footpath (Ickneild Way Trail), therefore views from the path and adjacent arable land into this Area are restricted.</li> <li>• Area of former allotments off Rose Lane was granted planning permission for two dwellings (30th August 2012; ref: 12/0742 Ruskin House &amp; Morris House – now built).</li> <li>• Land rear of Geldards granted permission for two dwellings (16th April 2013; ref: 12/6006 – Ashlee House &amp; Webb House – now built).</li> <li>• Land rear of Acre Croft granted permission for three dwellings (20th November 2015; ref: 15/1424).</li> <li>• Land at Thorpe Lea granted outline permission for 31 dwellings (13th June 2015; ref: 15/2310).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect setting to Conservation Area.</li> <li>• Pressure for new housing development. Any potential developments to be commensurate with character of the village and local vernacular style.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Slight</p> <p>Landscape Value = Slight</p> <p>Capacity = High</p>

Parish character area



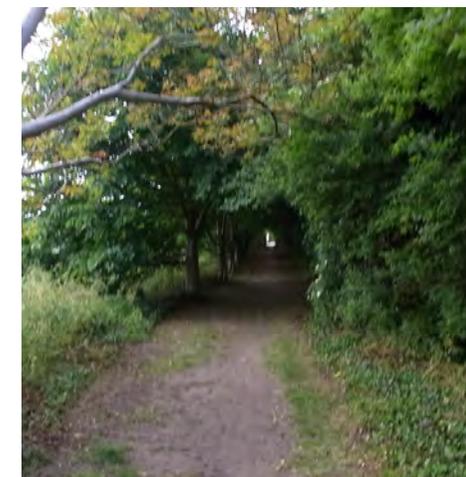
Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Track/Footpath to Manor Farm. Trees on right screen Area from footpath.



2. New development on old Allotment site.

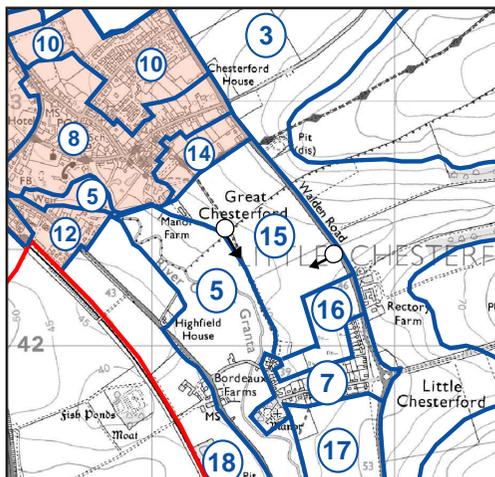


3. Footpath through Area into the village.

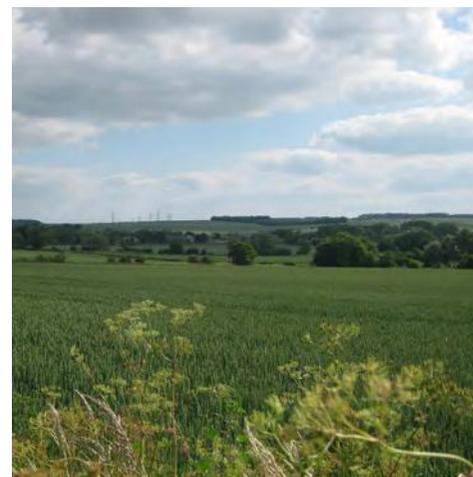
Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>The Chesterfords Hinterland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Right of Way (17-7/34-1)</li> <li>Abuts Conservation Area (at Manor Farm)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large flat arable fields to west of B184, extending to the Flood Zone on the western edge of the Character Area, forming the important function of settlement separation between Great and Little Chesterford.</li> <li>Disturbance due to traffic on B184. Lack of hedgerows along the B184 allows road users open views across the open rural landscape of this Character Area towards the vegetation lining the River Cam and beyond to the opposite side of the valley with glimpses of traffic along the B1383.</li> <li>Hedgerow boundaries are variable in quality, with the most vegetated section lining the west side of Footpath 17-7, restricting views in this direction. The boundary between the two parishes is lined with intermittent vegetation.</li> <li>Views of the settlement edges are partially obscured by garden planting in the case of Great Chesterford and by scrub in Character Area 16 in the case of Little Chesterford.</li> <li>Large outbuildings to south of Manor Farm encroach on the northern end of the Character Area, as does an area of hardstanding and surrounding grass at southern end, adjacent to Little Chesterford; these features are not characteristic of this Area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pressure for new housing development. Any potential developments would need to be contiguous with the existing settlement pattern and commensurate with the character of the villages and their local vernacular style.</li> <li>Settlement separation to be maintained.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area

Photograph/s showing key characteristics



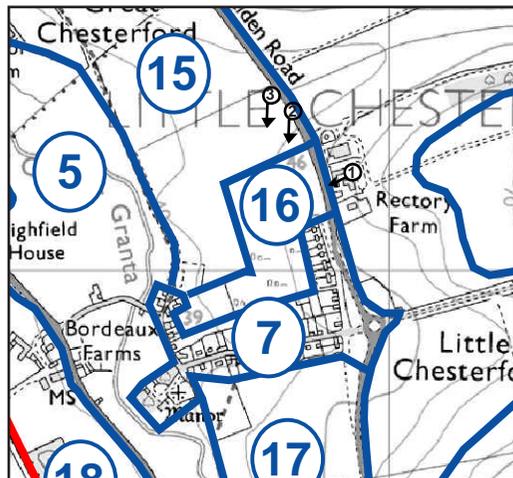
1. Leylandii forming screening around barns at Manor Farm



2. View across to Strethall Ridge

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>16</b> Little Chesterford Backlands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Right of Way (34-2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field of scrub copse (approximately 1.64ha) to north of Little Chesterford enclosed by tall vegetation which prevents views into the area from the wider landscape. A new access into the field has been created off the B184 Walden Road, opposite Rectory Farm.</li> <li>Well vegetated area with no apparent commercial use. This field is a discrete Character Area, disconnected from the village by surrounding vegetation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pressure for new housing development. Any potential developments would need to maintain existing screening vegetation and be commensurate with the character of the village and its local vernacular style. Development of this Area would not compromise the openness of the adjacent Character Area 15.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Slight</p> <p>Capacity = Medium/High</p>

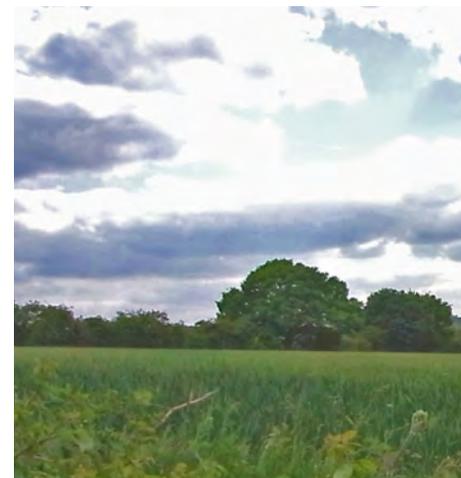
Parish character area



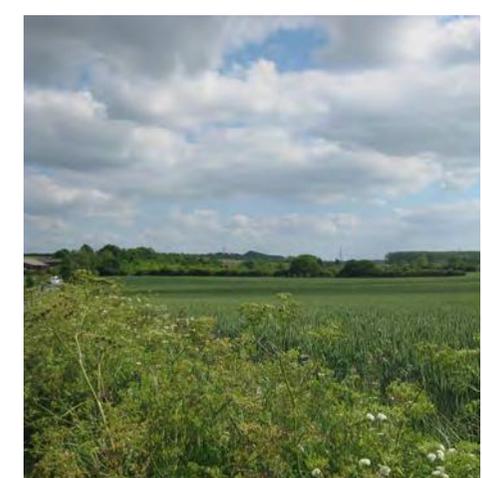
Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Scrub copse opposite Rectory Farm



2. View into the area from B184

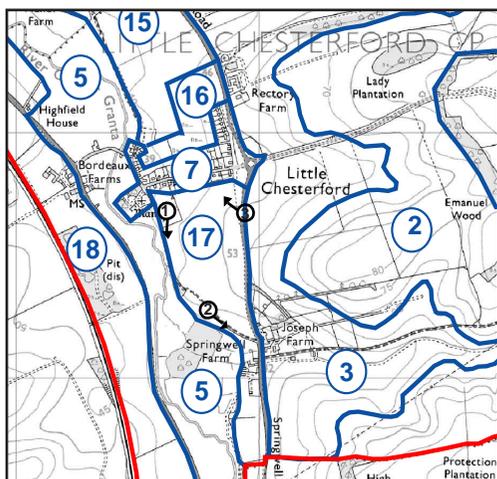


3. Vegetation screening Little Chesterford

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>17</b></p> <p><b>Springwell Farmland</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed Building (Springwell Farm)</li> <li>Groundwater Protection Zone (at southern extremity of area)</li> <li>Special Verges</li> <li>Public Right of Way (34-2 and 34-5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large arable fields to the north and south of Springwell Farm, which itself is set within pasture. Area includes the sports field on southern edge of Little Chesterford. Gently sloping land to the west, towards the river.</li> <li>Disturbance due to traffic on B184. Low hedgerows along the B184 allows road users open views across the open arable fields of this Character Area towards the vegetation lining the River Cam including the large poplar plantations in Character Area 5. Views extend across the river towards the B1383, the railway line and the vegetation around Bordeaux Pit on the opposite side of the valley.</li> <li>Away from the B184, which forms the eastern boundary of this Character Area, the area is relatively tranquil with quiet country walks possible along the river. From these footpaths some views are exclusively rural, with no views of settlement.</li> <li>Springwell Farm and its associated buildings are clustered in a slight depression of a localised valley cutting through the area, segregated from the rest of the area by intervening vegetation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural intensification has resulted in degradation of hedgerow cover. Opportunities to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>Encourage diversity of crops and areas of bio-diverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> <li>Maintain the tranquillity of the area.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area

Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. View to the south of Little Chesterford from footpath 34-4



2. View towards Springwell Farm from footpath 34-4

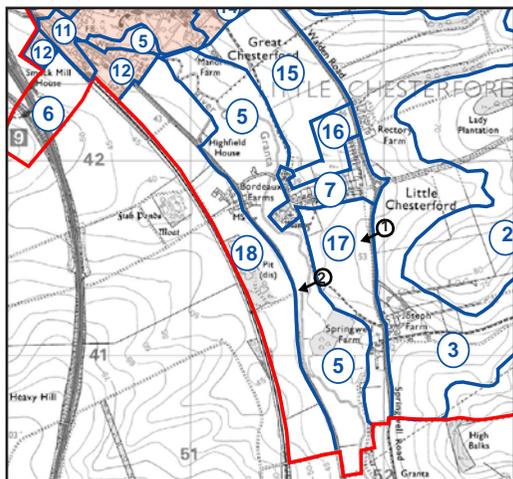


3. View towards Little Chesterford from B184 across the area

Character Area	Designations and policy	Landscape analysis	Key issues and management prescriptions	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 5 for analysis)
<p><b>18</b></p> <p><b>Bordeaux Pit Farmland</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Wildlife Site – Bordeaux Pit</li> <li>• Groundwater Protection Zone (at southern extremity of area)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow strip of flat, arable fields between the mainline railway to the west and the B1383 London Road to the east, including the field to the east of the B1383 to the south of Granta Close, but outside the Flood Zone of the River Cam.</li> <li>• Vegetation dividing the fields is minimal making views into and out of the area possible. Views of vegetation along the River Cam help to screen views to the east, however, to the north of Little Chesterford, views are possible through gaps across to the B184 and the rising downland beyond.</li> <li>• Tranquillity of area reduced by proximity to mainline railway and busy B1383.</li> <li>• Bordeaux Pit is an area of dense vegetation around a series of ponds created from former mineral workings. The site is managed by Saffron Walden Angling Club.</li> <li>• Isolated from villages, except at northern end of Character Area which is adjacent to recent residential development of Ash Green and Granta Close (within Character Area 12). This existing settlement edge forms a harsh contrast between built development and the adjacent arable fields, but creates a straight, strong settlement edge which extends to the east along the southern edge of Character Area 14.</li> <li>• The cluster of farm buildings around Little Bordeaux is the only built development in this Character Area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural intensification has resulted in degradation of hedgerow cover. Opportunities to enhance hedgerows and improve hedgerow management.</li> <li>• Encourage diversity of crops and areas of bio-diverse habitat within the Character Area.</li> <li>• Management of open grassland at Bordeaux Pit to improve habitat for invertebrate fauna.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Medium</p>

Parish character area

Photograph/s showing key characteristics



1. Distant view into the area from B184



2. View into the area from riverbank

**Appendix 5 – Tables of Landscape Sensitivity, Landscape Value and Landscape Capacity for the Parish Character Areas**

Appendix 5 - Table 1 Landscape Sensitivity

No	Landscape Character Area	Inherent Landscape Qualities (Intactness <sup>1</sup> and Condition)					Visual Contribution to the Distinctive Setting of the Settlement				Inconsistency with Existing Village/ Settlement Form/ Pattern					Contribution to Rurality of Surrounding Landscape					Sensitivity					Final Assessment Landscape Sensitivity
		Low			high																					
1	Chesterford Ridge	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	Major
2	Chalk UXpper Slopes	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X					X	Substantial
3	Chalk Lower Slopes	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X					X	Substantial
4	Chesterford Research Park	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					X	Substantial
5	River Cam Floodplain	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X					X	Substantial
6	Transport Corridor Farmland	X	X				X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X	Substantial
7	Little Chesterford																									
8	Great Chesterford Historic Core																									
9	Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X							X	Moderate
10	Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)																									
11	Great Chesterford Industry																									
12	Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)																									
13	Mill House Farmland	X	X				X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X						X	Moderate
14	Great Chesterford Backlands	X	X				X					X					X	X							X	Slight
15	The Chesterfords Hinterland	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X					X	Substantial
16	Little Chesterford Backlands	X	X				X	X				X	X				X	X	X						X	Moderate
17	Springwell Farmland	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					X	Substantial
18	Bordeaux Pit Farmland	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X						X	Moderate

<sup>1</sup> "from visual, functional and ecological perspectives" p53 The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, 2002

Appendix 5 - Table 2 Landscape Value

No	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Designation		Other Designation (Nature Conservation, Heritage, Amenity, Flooding, including Flood Zone)	Contribution to Setting of Village/ Settlement/ Outstanding Assets	Special Cultural/ Historic Associations	Perceptual Aspects (e.g. Scenic Beauty, Views, Tranquillity, Wildness)	Landscape Value					Final Assessment Landscape Value
		low	high					1-5 Negligible	6-10 Slight	11-15 Moderate	16-20 Substantial	21-25 Major	
								5	10	15	20	25	
1	Chesterford Ridge	X		X X X	X X X X	X X X	X X X X			X			Moderate
2	Chalk Upper Slopes	X		X X X	X X X X	X X X	X X X X			X			Moderate
3	Chalk Lower Slopes	X		X X X	X X X X	X X X	X X X			X			Moderate
4	Chesterford Research Park	X		X X	X X X	X X X	X X X			X			Moderate
5	River Cam Floodplain	X		X X X X	X X X X	X X	X X X			X			Moderate
6	Transport Corridor Farmland	X		X	X X	X	X			X			Slight
7	Little Chesterford												
8	Great Chesterford Historic Core												
9	Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland	X		X X X X X	X X X X	X X X X X	X X X X X				X		Substantial
10	Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)												
11	Great Chesterford Industry												
12	Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)												
13	Mill House Farmland	X		X	X X X X	X X	X X X			X			Moderate
14	Great Chesterford Backlands	X		X X	X X	X X X	X X			X			Slight
15	The Chesterfords Hinterland	X		X X	X X X	X X	X X X			X			Moderate
16	Little Chesterford Backlands	X		X	X X	X	X X X			X			Slight
17	Springwell Farmland	X		X X	X X X	X X	X X X			X			Moderate
18	Bordeaux Pit Farmland	X		X X X	X X	X X	X X X			X			Moderate

**Appendix 5 - Table 3 Landscape Capacity**

No	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
1	Chesterford Ridge	Major	Moderate	<b>Negligible/Low</b>
2	Chalk Upper Slopes	Substantial	Moderate	<b>Low</b>
3	Chalk Lower Slopes	Substantial	Moderate	<b>Low</b>
4	Chesterford Research Park	Substantial	Moderate	<b>Low</b>
5	River Cam Floodplain	Substantial	Moderate	<b>Low</b>
6	Transport Corridor Farmland	Substantial	Slight	<b>Low/Medium</b>
7	Little Chesterford			
8	Great Chesterford Historic Core			
9	Great Chesterford Archaeological Farmland	Moderate	Substantial	<b>Low</b>
10	Great Chesterford Housing (Northern)			
11	Great Chesterford Industry			
12	Great Chesterford Housing (Southern)			
13	Mill House Farmland	Moderate	Moderate	<b>Medium</b>
14	Great Chesterford Backlands	Slight	Slight	<b>High</b>
15	The Chesterfords Hinterland	Substantial	Moderate	<b>Low</b>
16	Little Chesterford Backlands	Moderate	Slight	<b>Medium/High</b>
17	Springwell Farmland	Substantial	Moderate	<b>Low</b>
18	Bordeaux Pit Farmland	Moderate	Moderate	<b>Medium</b>

Note: Character Areas shading in pink are primarily of built development, thus as areas of townscape, do not naturally lend themselves to Landscape Capacity Assessment.